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**AFRICA CENTER FOR PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

**ASSIGNMENT SUBMITTED IN FULFILLMENT OF AWARD OF CERTIFICATE IN MONITORING AND EVALUATION.**

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**COURSE: CERTIFICATE IN MONITORING & EVALUATION**

**MODULE: TWO (02)**

**ASSIGNMENT: TWO (02)**

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**ASSIGNMENTS:**

1. What are the qualities of a good indicator? Give an example
2. As part of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Universal education is a right for all children. Different governments have implemented free primary education in order to achieve this goal. With example from your country please explain the following:
   1. Critically evaluate the implementation program of free primary education for the first 2 years.
   2. Analyze the unintended outcomes of free primary education on job creation within the same period

c) What would the monitoring exercise in free primary education wish to achieve for the following stakeholders?

* + - Donors
    - Primary School managers
    - Government

1. You have been contracted by UNICEF to undertake the role of a consultant in a project (joint partnership between them and the Ministry of Gender and Children) a program that gives direct funds to families staying with orphaned children, to plan a monitoring system for the same.
   1. What are the advantages of participatory evaluation methods?

b) Formulate the steps in planning a monitoring system.

**1. What are the qualities of a good indicator? Give an example**

An indicator is a means of measuring actual results against planned or expected results in terms of quantity, quality and timeliness. In other words an indicator is evidence that helps us to measure progress towards achieving results (Source: RBM hand book on developing results chain, CIDA, December 2000).

Clear: Each indicator must be clearly measurable (unambiguous definition) and hence required a precise definition. For example- nature of Extension Officers and quality of Diplomats is not correctly measurable but we can measure quantity of production such as tones, crop yields.

**Relevant:** an indicator should measure an important part of an objective or output. For instance it should related to the objects or output stated

Economic: The information obtained should be worth of time and money. Monitoring information need to be timely. Further data collection can be expensive and often required a lot of staff time. A tradeoff between the ideal indicator and ease of collection is therefore important.

Adequate: The indicator must have adequate information. They must respect what they claim to be. Manager and other user need to be involved in selecting indicators to ensure that they include required information.

Monitorable: The indicator need to relate to action that management can take otherwise the data remain unused and therefore not worth collecting.

Good Indicators can said to be roaring **(ROARS)**:

**Relevant:** It measures an important part of an objective or output;

**Objective:** If two people measure the same indicator using the same tool, they should get the same result. The indicator should be based on fact, rather than feelings or impressions (another way to say this is to say that it should be Measurable);

**Available:** Indicators should be based on data that is readily available, or on data that can be collected with reasonable extra effort as part of the implementation of the (sub-) project.

**Realistic:** It should not be too difficult or too expensive to collect the information (related to the next one in the list);

**Specific:** The measured changes should be attributable to the project, and they should be expressed in precise terms.

Good Indicators can also be said to be **SMART**

**Specific:** The measured changes should be expressed in precise terms and suggest actions that can be taken to assess them

**Measurable:** Indicators should be related to things that can be measured in an unambiguous way

**Achievable:** Indicators should be reasonable and possible to reach, and therefore sensitive to changes the project might make

**Replicable:** Measurements should be the same when made by different people using the same method

**Time bound:** There should be a time limit within which changes are expected and measured

In summary, indicators should be limited in number (you CAN have too many), comprise a mix of both quantitative and qualitative, be practical to collect and not dependent upon experts, and most importantly, tell us something about the project.

1. **a) Critically evaluate the implementation program of free primary education for the first 2 years**.

Implementation is the nemesis of designers, it conjures up images of plans gone awry and of social carpenters and masons who fail to build to specifications and thereby distort the beautiful blue prints of progress which were handed to them. It provokes memories of “good” ideas that did not work and places the blame on second (and second-class) member of policy and administration team . . . (Honalde 1979, p. 6)

Free primary education is fundamental in guaranteeing everyone has access to education. As part of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Universal education is a right for all children. Thus to achieve the 2040 millennium Development goal, free primary education has been introduced and made compulsory by governments in many developing countries, since majority of families often cannot afford to send their children to school, leaving millions of children of school-age deprived of education.

In south Sudan, after attainment of independence in 2011, the Constitution of the Republic of South Sudan has clearly spelt out that basic education must be free and compulsory to all children in this country. It was therefore the mandate of the General Education Sector to ensure translation of this enactment into actual deeds.(General education act 2012). The Ministry was also mandated to develop appropriate policies and strategies for guaranteeing this noble task and to ensure that other related roles such as the oversight and equity issues are dealt with properly. These tasks were to be delivered by the Ministry’s directorates and secretariats, centers and a teacher development and management service and their respective departments through the stewardship of the senior management of the Ministry. Therefore, the mandate of the Education Sector was to respond to the Transitional Constitution (2011) Article 33 of the Republic of South Sudan and Vision 2040 which among others states that by 2040 South Sudan should be an educated and well informed nation and in so doing the Sector is committed to put the best strategies in place. These strategies are tailored towards achieving the Vision through addressing issues related to enrollment, efficiency and improving the financial management and accountability of the Sector.

Despite the introduction of Free Primary Education in south Sudan, research evidence shows that there has been concern with quality of instruction offered (UNESCO 2013), even when governments have put a lot of emphasis on access and transition. For instance, the South Sudan government moved fast to announced the introduction of free primary education across all the nation without employing more teachers to reduce class size with the numbers in employment being an outcome of class size and pupil–teacher ratio stood at 117: 1. It is expected that if Free Primary Education would be effective and sustainable in south sudan, it should be a program that in the long term is accessible to all beneficiaries and provides opportunities to all school-age children to gain access to quality education for a full cycle of basic education.

Policy implementation and the factors that affect the process of implementation can be discussed using three approaches—the “top-down,” the “bottom-up,” and the interactive approaches commonly used in policy analysis. The Free Primary Education policy initiative/ implementation program in south Sudan was a directive implemented using the top-down model, without the application of the other two. That is bottom – up and interactive model. Top-down strategies refer to a rational, unitary, and linear process, usually from the top, whereas the bottom-up is more of a communicative process, usually from the bottom ([Darling-Hammond, 1990](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488)), and the interactive model is more complex, incremental, and ongoing policy process ([Haddad](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488) [&](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488) [Demsky, 1995](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488)). In the public policy arena, some policies require the bottom-up, the top-down, or the incremental policy process or a combination of these approaches.

Thus, 1 to 2 years after abolishing tuition fees in 2012, enrollments increased and dropout rates rose. Experts attributed this phenomenon to declining quality of education due to a massive surge in enrollment, overcrowding of classrooms, and lack of textbooks and shortage of trained teachers ([Oketch, Mutisya, Ngware,](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488) [&](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488) [Ezeh, 2010](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488)).

Therefore, Free Primary Education led to a large influx of children into the schools, which resulted into an “access shock.” The shock resulted into classrooms that were overcrowded, children learning in double and triple shifts, acute shortages of teachers and teaching and learning materials like textbooks, and large numbers of overage pupils who should have been taking adult education classes instead of being in the same class with 13-year-olds who would have been their children or grandchildren

The increase in enrollment saw an increase in demand for teachers in south Sudan. However, there was insufficient shared knowledge in approaches for training teachers to fulfill their demand. More recently, the government adapted teachers training to include the education for all paradigms. This is to say that teacher preparation programs encompassed the meaning and knowledge of what teachers were to expect in classrooms in the era of UPE.

In top-down strategies, policy implementation is seen as a rational process, planned in advance, and strictly controlled by a central authority. Implementation requirements are outlined as a list of conditions that, if fulfilled, enables implementation to take place ([Darling-Hammond, 1990](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488); [Walker](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488) [&](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488) [Gilson, 2004](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488)). According to rational thought in policy analysis, the gap between the policy objectives and effective implementation is seen as the result of failing to plan and control the implementation process adequately ([Walker](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488) [&](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488) [Gilson, 2004](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488)).

According to [Darling-Hammond (1990)](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488), top-down strategies in policy implementation are not constructive; rather, they constrain the translation of policy into practice. She argues that “local agencies must adapt policy rather than adopting them . . . ” ([Darling-Hammond, 1990](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488), p. 341), and when teachers and administrators have opportunities to learn constantly and make decisions during the process of implementation, the effect of the policy will persist beyond few years after the implementation. However, in the context of south Sudan, in top down communication from the Ministry of Education to schools, government officials including State and county education officers did not try to listen to the voices of teachers concerned, showing the unidimensional process in top-down policy process.

Research shows that teachers are key actors in the teaching and learning process ([Oketch, Mutisya, Ngware, Ezeh,](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488) [&](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488) [Epari, 2010](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488)). Therefore, a policy that is focusing on the teaching and learning process should involve the teachers. However, in south Sudan, teachers continue to be subjected to low social status, in part, because of poor pay, and that teaching is viewed as a profession without much clout ([Wiener, 2010](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488)).

Evidence shows that Free Primary Education was announced barely 1 month before the start of a school term in January 2012. Therefore, rapid implementation was the main priority, and very little time was given for consultation with teachers. Therefore, there was little time if any for teacher induction into the new Free Primary Education policy. According to the [Haddad and Demsky (1995)](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488) framework, the Free Primary Education policy went through two stages: the pronouncement of the policy decision and implementation. In so doing, key stages that would have brought more participation of the teachers were missed. These include; agenda setting and issue identification, planning of policy implementation, evaluation and modification, and subsequent policy cycles.

Therefore, if the teachers in south Sudan were more involved in setting the agenda, planning, and evaluation, to give feedback to the system, the effect of the challenges that reduced the impact of Free Primary Education would have been minimized. Moreover, with such a declaration, what were missed was how teachers receive and translate broad policy, and curricula goals, into meaningful experiences and how these broad goals get passed to the teachers so that they can be key actors in the teaching and learning process.

This goes to emphasize that the success and sustainability of well-intended program depend on how well the objectives of the program are implemented in the classroom ([Darling-Hammond, 1990](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488)). It is paramount to be noted that teachers as key players in the teaching and learning process are central in the success of South Sudan’s Free Primary Education. However, the disconnection between the policy-making process and the reality of implementation by teachers in schools posed major challenges in translating policy objectives into practice.

For instance, during the piloting of the UNESCO cross-sectional survey in January 2013, teachers who were participants in the focus group discussion observed that teachers are often neglected during the crucial stages of education policy process, particularly the Free Primary Education, and this can result in low teacher motivation. If teachers, who are in charge of the teaching and learning processes in the classroom, are excluded or lack necessary information and understanding, they will have little motivation to make the policy work and translate it into practice in their daily activities ([Darling-Hammond, 1990](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488); [Elmore, 1983](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488)).

Available evidence from the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology (MOEST) shows that the current Free Primary Education policy has led to a significant increase in primary school enrollment in the country, from 41.3% in 2011 to 64% (1.5 million) in 2013 (EMIS [20](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488)13). Consequently, the number of enrolled pupils surpassed the available human and physical facilities in the 3,639 public primary schools in south Sudan. Moreover, the teacher-to-pupil ratio rose from the recommended 1:40 pupils per class to 1:117. (EMIS 2013). This further exacerbated the difficulty of delivering lessons in the classrooms for teachers across south Sudan.

Large classes incapacitated the teachers’ ability to organize and manage classes, thereby impairing the ability of teachers to provide attention to individual pupils. This led to deteriorating quality of education, one of the major challenges that eroded the initial gains and became a great concern to teachers ([Majanga et al., 2011](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488); [Ngware et al., 2011](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488); [Oketch, Mutisya, Ngware, Ezeh,](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488) [&](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488) [Epari, 2010](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488); [UNESCO, 2005](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488)).

At one point, teachers were asked to teach in shifts. Thus teachers were reduced to inputs into the teaching and learning process, whose involvement in the Free Primary Education policy that was going to impact on their workloads was not necessary. Moreover, inadequate resources have compounded teachers’ problems in the era of Free Primary Education, with only a half of all the classrooms in south Sudan had chalkboards in the classes that were visible from all parts of the classroom ([UNESCO, 20](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488)14). This, together with inadequacy of resources like learning supplies, furnishings, and appropriate infrastructure, led to teachers’ incapability to fulfill their mandate in various classrooms across the south Sudan.

In addition, the Free Primary Education initiative was more a declaration of political expediency, with rapid implementation as the main priority rather than involving all education stakeholders. There was neither time to plan for implementation nor time for capacity building for teachers. The capacity building would have been in the form of in-service training for teachers to be able to cope with the complexities of increased numbers into the various schools within south sudan. No policy initiative succeeds without improved capacity and motivation of those charged with the actual implementation ([Darling-Hammond, 1990](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488); [Elmore, 1983](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488)). This notwithstanding, it is worth noting that Free Primary Education was a policy that elicited a lot of excitement among the population, teachers included—a policy that was meant to get all children, irrespective of their family circumstances, into school. The excitement however, was short lived for teachers.

Moreover, teachers are not getting the necessary support and guidance from local education officials to ensure that Free Primary Education succeeds. As street-level bureaucrats in the teaching and learning process, it is important to look at how teachers internalize these policies in the process of their classroom delivery and how they can adapt them to the local circumstances in the classroom setting. If teachers are not able to adapt the policy to their local circumstances, they are unable to deliver quality education to the pupils. In short, access to school does not translate into quality education if the teachers’ effective control of the classroom is compromised ([Abuya, Oketch,](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488) [&](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488) [Musyoka, 2013](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488)).

The top-down policy formulation and implementation approach to Free Primary Education in south Sudan did not have mechanisms to listen to the voices of teachers concerned about the declining quality of education. In general, the experiences of teachers with Free Primary Education policy in south Sudan, the challenges they encounter in the classroom, their motivations and its consequence on the quality of education remains less studied.

In the case of teacher training, teachers—face high demand for their services, yet they may lack resources at the organizational and personal level to get the job done ([Elmore, 1978](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488); [Walker](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488) [&](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488) [Gilson, 2004](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488)). This implies that teachers as key actors in policy implementation must possess the necessary pedagogical skills, be supported by the Ministry of Education at the national, local, and by their head teachers within the respective schools, to teach. However this was not considered by the government of south Sudan.

At the Local organizational structures, practices, and policy implementation, Formerly, teachers worked under the head teacher who is always there for them, answerable to the Payam and County Educational Officer, who reports to the State Education Officer. Therefore, policy pronouncements pass through different levels before reaching the teacher who is the implementer in the classroom where it matters most. As such, messages that teachers get have been filtered through the different hierarchical levels. However, this was not the case in south Sudan. Failure of policies like Free Primary Education result from the fact that teachers are expected to construct the meanings from the broad policy for them, and thereby implement what can be fully understood by pupils. Thus, faced with such circumstances, teachers will seek to interpret the policy in the context of their previous experiences and fill the gaps in their understanding of the policy with what is already familiar to them.

In addition, the voice of teachers is rarely heard by policy makers, and they are treated as passive implementers of education reforms decided at the top rather than regarding them as partners. The South Sudan National Union of Teachers (SSNUT) listens to the voices of teachers as concerns of their remuneration. However, little is done about the teachers’ concerns and challenges that they encounter in implementing the policy in the classroom. Moreover, the short period between the announcement barely a month before the beginning of a new school term made the time for implementation too short for SSNUT to have had adequate time to consult the teachers.

Teachers, as key actors in policy implementation, need to be empowered and possess the necessary skills and participate at the national, local, and within their respective schools’ planning and decision-making processes ([Wanzare](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488) [&](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488) [Ward, 2000](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488)). However, in south Sudan, teachers at the primary school level do not have continuous professional development training and workshops. In addition, primary school teachers have limited networking opportunities. This leads to lack of consultation, absence of clear guidelines, and communication strategy on implementation of policies such as Free Primary Education, which in turn has negative consequences on teachers’ performance and pupils learning outcomes.

Effectiveness of the implementation of the policy is mainly focused on quantitative indicators such as financial and material inputs and increase in enrollments instead of the quality of education and learning outcomes. In addition, focusing primarily on the number of teachers and pupil–teacher ratio overlooks important experiences and the voice of teachers in improving the quality of education and leaves teachers disempowered and lacking agency. However, involving teachers in planning, designing, and decision-making stages helps to improve teachers to articulate and understand their own training needs and in the long run, such teachers are able to internalize policy and program objectives better and ensure successful delivery and implementation of policies such as Free Primary Education.

In conclusion, there is no doubt that UPE improved access of children into schools in South Sudan, and enrollment rates increased. However, FPE has had significant negative professional and personal ramifications for teachers as frontline providers of the education services in south Sudan. Teachers were required to implement the Free Primary Education policy about which they had no clear guidelines prior to the pronouncement, let alone consulted on, and whose impact for their daily practice as teachers were largely ignored.

What are important for teachers to effectively implement a policy like free primary education is that they have to be trained, materials needed for teaching are provided, and that they get regular tips on ways to organize their classrooms for implementation at the classroom level to be successful. However this wasn’t the case in South Sudan.

Given a history of demotivation, low self-esteem, and anger about how their profession is perceived, being ignored during the pronouncement of Free Primary Education may have added to the feeling of being unrecognized and demoralized. Moreover, FPE unanticipated and negative impact on the morale and motivation of the teachers was exacerbated by the pre-existing problems in the teaching profession, hence, undermining the their ability to provide quality education to a vast majority of South Sudanese primary school children and their ability to exercise professionalism. Therefore, the speed with which FPE was implemented and the failure to communicate effectively left teachers isolated in their respective classrooms as the directives and finances were channeled from the top. This ignored the aspects of the policy-making process that ought to be a more interactive and incremental rather than a centrally controlled unitary rational policy-making process ([Haddad](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488) [&](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488) [Demsky, 1995](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488)).

1. **b) Analyze the unintended outcomes of free primary education on job creation within the same period.**

The Free Primary Education led to a large influx of children into the schools, which resulted into an “access shock.” The shock resulted into classrooms that were overcrowded, children learning in double and triple shifts, acute shortages of teachers and teaching and learning materials like textbooks, and large numbers of overage pupils who should have been taking adult education classes instead of being in the same class with 13-year-olds who would have been their children or grandchildren

High dropout rate due to the poor conditions as a result of overcrowding in schools with poor facilities and infrastructures, drop out rose to it peaks.

Large classes incapacitated the teachers’ ability to organize and manage classes, thereby impairing the ability of teachers to provide attention to individual pupils. This led to deteriorating quality of education, one of the major challenges that eroded the initial gains and became a great concern to teachers ([Majanga et al., 2011](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488); [Ngware et al., 2011](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488); [Oketch, Mutisya, Ngware, Ezeh,](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488) [&](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488) [Epari, 2010](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488); [UNESCO, 2005](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015571488)).

PTA that were actively engaged in school management of the schools even historical public school weakened due to mixed messages from the government just because government was paying pupils tuition fee. Almost all school management committee became dull.

There was drastic declined in educational quality following the introduction of free primary education. (Deninger 2003). It should be noted that despite declaration of free primary education by the government of south Sudan, years down the road, the education quality was questionable due lack of trained teachers couple with the high pupils’- teacher’s ration and poor facilities all over the country. All these made most teachers to desert the profession due to low incentive and high workload.

Pressurized the system due to large influx enrollment without proportional increase in school facilities, teachers, schools, staff welfare, all these exerted a lot of pressure on the system or the program which was at first warmly welcomed and later on turning to be a root cause of problems

**2. c) What would the monitoring exercise in free primary education wish to achieve for the following stakeholders?**

* + - Donors

These are individuals or organizations that provide financial support for the initiative. They might include program officers or other representatives of government agencies, foundations, or other sources of financial support. Some Donors have built a formal evaluation into their regular activities,

Therefore, the monitoring exercise in Free Primary Education would enabled the Donors know whether the use of their funds is having an impact on the problems facing communities.

Monitoring exercise in Free Primary Education would also enable the Donors to measure the success of their initiative and report this to their own trustees or constituents.

* + - Primary School managers

Primary School Managers may include staff, administrators, and committee chairpersons. Therefore the monitoring exercise in Free Primary Education would wish to achieve the following for primary school managers; how to improve the functioning of their initiative. How to plan and implement new programs

The evaluation exercise would wish to show them how their efforts and how they can improve and strengthen their efforts for the success of the program.

* + - Government

The monitoring exercise of Free primary Education would also enable the government to know what the initiative has accomplished, so the evaluation should be sensitive to the activities and accomplishments of the initiative

: Because of their responsibilities for making decisions, the monitoring exercise would wish to achieve for the government information about the progress of the initiative.

3. You have been contracted by UNICEF to undertake the role of a consultant in a project (joint partnership between them and the Ministry of Gender and Children) a program that gives direct funds to families staying with orphaned children, to plan a monitoring system for the same.

**a) What are the advantages of participatory evaluation methods?**

Participatory evaluation is the type of evaluation which involves all the stakeholders in a project - those directly affected by it or by carrying it out - in contributing to the understanding of it, and in applying that understanding to the improvement of the work.

Therefore participative evaluation has the following advantages;

It encourages stakeholder ownership of the project. If those involved feel the project is theirs, rather than something imposed on them by others, they'll work hard both in implementing it, and in conducting a thorough and informative evaluation in order to improve it.

It can enhance creativity in everyone involved. For those who've never been involved in anything similar, a participatory evaluation can be a revelation, opening doors to a whole new way of thinking and looking at the world. To those who have taken part in evaluation before, the opportunity to exchange ideas with people who may have new ways of looking at the familiar can lead to a fresh perspective on what may have seemed to be a settled issue.

It encourages working collaboratively. For participatory evaluation to work well, it has to be viewed by everyone involved as collaboration, where each participant brings specific tools and skills to the effort, and everyone is valued for what she can contribute. Collaboration of this sort not only leads to many of the advantages described above, but also fosters a more collaborative spirit for the future as well, leading to other successful community projects.

It builds self-confidence and self-esteem in those who may have little of either. This category can include not only project beneficiaries, but also others who may, because of circumstance, have been given little reason to believe in their own competence or value to society. The opportunity to engage in a meaningful and challenging activity, and to be treated as a colleague by professionals, can make a huge difference for folks who are seldom granted respect or given a chance to prove themselves.

It demonstrates to people ways in which they can take more control of their lives. Working with professionals and others to complete a complex task with real-world consequences can show people how they can take action to influence people and events.

It empowers stakeholders. Participatory evaluation gives those who are often not consulted - line staff and beneficiaries particularly - the chance to be full partners in determining the direction and effectiveness of a project.

It can provide a voice for those who are often not heard. Project beneficiaries are often low-income people with relatively low levels of education, who seldom have - and often don't think they have a right to - the chance to speak for themselves. By involving them from the beginning in project evaluation, you assure that their voices are heard, and they learn that they have the ability and the right to speak for them.

It teaches skills that can be used in employment and other areas of life. In addition to the development of basic skills and specific research capabilities, participatory evaluation encourages critical thinking, collaboration, problem-solving, independent action, meeting deadlines. all skills valued by employers, and useful in family life, education, civic participation, and other areas.

It gives you a better perspective on both the initial needs of the project's beneficiaries, and on its ultimate effects. If stakeholders, including project beneficiaries, are involved from the beginning in determining what needs to be evaluated and why - not to mention what the focus of the project needs to be - you're much more likely to aim your work in the right direction, to correctly determine whether your project is effective or not, and to understand how to change it to make it more so.

It can get you information you wouldn't get otherwise. When project direction and evaluation depend, at least in part, on information from people in the community, that information will often be more forthcoming if it's asked for by someone familiar. Community people interviewing their friends and neighbors may get information that an outside person wouldn't be offered.

It tells you what worked and what didn't from the perspective of those most directly involved - beneficiaries and staff. Those implementing the project and those who are directly affected by it are most capable of sorting out the effective from the ineffective.

It can tell you why something does or doesn't work. Beneficiaries are often able to explain exactly why they didn't respond to a particular technique or approach, thus giving you a better chance to adjust it properly.

It results in a more effective project. For the reasons just described, you're much more able to start out in the right direction, and to know when you need to change direction if you haven't. The consequence is a project that addresses the appropriate issues in the appropriate way, and accomplishes what it sets out to do.

1. **b) Formulate the steps in planning a monitoring system**

As a management tool, monitoring should be organized at each level of management. Monitoring systems should be linked to annual plans. A first step in designing a monitoring plan is to identify who needs what information, for what purpose, how frequently, and in what form. To develop an effective monitoring system, the following steps might be followed:

A first step towards developing a good monitoring system is to decide what should be monitored. The careful selection of monitoring indicators organizes and focuses the data collection process.

The next question would be how to gather information, i.e. to select methods to track indicators and report on progress (observation, interviews, stakeholder meetings, routine reporting, field visits, etc.).

When to gather information by whom. The monitoring plan should include who will gather the information and how often. Project staff at various levels will do most data collection, analysis and reporting. Staff should agree on what the monitoring report should include.

Progress reports should be reviewed by project staff and major stakeholders. Feedback should be collected by project managers on a regular basis.

The monitoring plan should indicate the resources needed to carry out project monitoring. Needed funds and staff time should be allocated to ensure effective implementation.

**Reference**

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