**ASSIGNMENT 2**

Name: Rukhshona Rajabova

Occupation: home based M&E consultant

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

Indicators are tools that measure the change, progress and achievements of a project against outputs and outcomes. There is internationally recognized criteria (by USAID - United States Agency for International Development) for quality indicators referred to as “**SMART**” - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound.

Below listed qualities of good indicator:

* Meaning or definition of indicator must be clear
* Data for monitoring indicator is easily available
* Required data is within project efforts and should not require external support for analysis
* Indicators should be gender sensitive and cover social-inclusion, if these are the approaches of intervention
* Indicators should be tangible

To develop indicators to monitor change in capacity, it is important to consider multi-dimensional approach: on the Horizontal level - Enabling Environment; Organizational Level and Individual Level. And on the Vertical level: Institutional Arrangements, Leadership, Knowledge and Accountability. Developing such type of indicator might not always require mixed quantitative and qualitative data. **For instance**:

* Outcome 3: Government, civil society and private sector have increased capacity to provide demand-driven high-quality training programmes.
* Indicator 3: No. and % of students and teachers who report improved organizational capacity and services at the government-run and private TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training) centers.

In practice, each indicator must be accompanied by **Methodological Notes**/Reference Sheets describing in detail:

* Precise definition
* Rational behind indicator
* Disaggregation (sex, age, sector, location, etc)
* Calculation/Unit of Measurement
* Baseline Value
* Plan for Data Collection/Data collection method & instructions;
* Source of Data
* Time schedule for data collection;
* Estimated cost of data collection;
* Responsible team/s.

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 programme of free primary education for the first 2 years**

To achieve MDG Goal 2 “Universal Primary Education” - quality and status of primary education depends on the prioritization of the educational sector and financial capacity of the Government of the Republic Tajikistan. The literacy ratio among population at the age 15-24 reaches about 99% for the men and about 1% less for women in 2015 (Tajikistan State Statistical Agency on Education Annual Report, 2015). For the first two years of implementation, the state budget expenditure for education in absolute terms has increased 26 times. More than 92% of school-age children are enrolled in general, primary and secondary vocational education. However, situation in rural areas differs compared to urban area progress. Electricity shortage limits access to modern technology, internet and computers. In addition, low salaries of teachers causes lack of motivation for teaching and shortage of teachers in primary schools affects the quality of education. Moreover, poor infrastructure and limited access to transport causes low attendance of primary schools in winter (UNDP MDG Tajikistan Progress Report, 2010). The number of women with primary school in all age groups was larger than men, indicating that girls more frequently dropped out of school after primary education, compared with boys (Tajikistan Living Standard Survey, 2007). the biggest challenge for implementing the program is gender disparity. In rural areas, girls are less likely to enroll in schools as parents do not encourage them for the primary education as many get married in early 20s due to cultural norms. Therefore, free primary education to continue studies are less likely attractive. This strategy has a potential risk associated with the fact that the education strategies of households are closely linked to factors such as the mother’s level of education (United Nations Development Fund for Women & Canadian International Development Agency, Gender Equality in Education, UNIFEM/CIDA, E. Mezentseva Report 2007).

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

The government authorities stated that there is a shortage of primary education materials and teaching manuals on specific specializations. Therefore graduates level of knowledge does not comply with the labor market demands and requirements and does not meet the real needs of national economy. In addition, allocated funds are less likely to change the situation, each year there are vast number of graduates but the main reason graduates do not work in the trained sector is low wages.

**a) what would the monitoring exercise in free primary education wish to achieve for the following stakeholders?**

* + - Donors

Country led approach – involving stakeholders in assessments and evaluations conducted in partnership with stakeholders, civil society and local community in order to internalize the process and build the ownership approach.

* + - Primary School managers

The M&E exercise for school managers would be establishing the following:

1. School Recording System (includes profile data for each student and teachers, finance and budget of school, stationary, equipment, etc);
2. Statistical Data System (keeping all data students, teachers, finance, etc) for policy formulation and monitoring of administrative levels;
3. Resource Management System (designed for management teachers such as recruitment, promotions, salary grades and financial resource management);
4. Performance Evaluation System (this should be carried out by the Ministry of Education to ensure if schools comply with the rules, policies and standards set by the authorities);
5. Student Evaluation System (this includes examination, scoring system and school curriculum).
   * + Government
6. Introduction of a well‐ established system of reporting on programmes and initiatives;
7. Availability of quality and reliable data;
8. Efficient coordination among all departments and stakeholders at all levels;
9. Availability of necessary infrastructure and capacity for implementing the improved system.
10. 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?**

The participatory evaluation methods mainly lies on involvement in the process project partners, beneficiaries, providers and other interested parties or stakeholders. Typically, participation takes place in all phases of evaluation such as design, planning, data collection, analysis and formulation of report and findings. The advantages of the method are mainly seen on:

* Promoting participants and other stakeholders understanding about programme;
* Facilitating participants focus and ownership for the project, and commitment of stakeholder to follow-up with findings or actions;
* Programme or project stakeholders have the opportunity to contribute to the development of findings, recommendations and lessons learned that can improve results for local beneficiaries;
* Better examine local issues by involving key stakeholders and players in evaluation design;
* Promotes learning of programme or project participants and enhance their understanding of each other’s points of view and perspectives;
* Enhance collective and individual evaluation capacities, teamwork and build shared commitment.
  1. **Formulate the steps in planning a monitoring system.**

To plan monitoring system for the above mentioned joint programme between UNICEF and the Ministry of Gender and Children, it is necessary to follow below mentioned main steps:

1. Based on the programme goals and objectives (in a participatory process with specialists from each area and stakeholders) finalize **Logical Framework** (agree on programme outcomes, key output indicators, and major activities and resources required – budget, HR, Financial and Logistic)
2. Develop **M&E Plan**
3. **Determine the monitoring tools required by project;**

* Knowing how information collected will be used
* The capacity of individual/team who will do monitoring
* The availability of resources to conduct monitoring

1. **Determine when monitoring needs to take place**

* The frequency of monitoring depends on the type of indicators and depends on availability of resources;
* Indicators depending on *advocacy, legislative or development of policy* do not need to be monitored more than twice per year;
* *Community development* indicators need to be monitored more frequently but not more than quarterly;
* *Change in satisfaction* levels among stakeholders or beneficiaries need to be monitored more than once or twice per year

1. **Identify required resources**

* ***Financial Resources.*** Depending on the tools (survey questionnaires, FDGs, mobile devices for data collection, etc) would require minimal or substantial financial resources which should be calculated into the budget
* ***Human Resources***. How many project staff are needed?Complex monitoring activities(household surveys, baseline surveys, pre/post tests, FGDs, etc). Planning should ensure that the team has sufficient tools and/or back to efficiently implement their activities.
* ***Time.***  Monitoring activities should involve and allocate time for reflection and analysis but not only focus on timely implementation of activities. ***Learning*** is essential. Time should be scheduled on following up on the identified gaps in data or questions arising from field or stakeholder interviews.

1. **Identify who is responsible for implementing monitoring activities**

* The key duties of M&E officers should be identified. While planning monitoring activities, responsible person/s should have required capacities. Quality assurance of monitoring activities should be included into the plan.

1. **Determine what types of reports are needed and when**

* How often project needs to report and when? What are the requirements of stakeholders and donors? What elements should be included in the report? What are the formats, disaggregation or narratives required by internal and external reporting requirements? Who is responsible for data consolidation, quality assurance and analysis? Monitoring report should be results based and cover all these aspects.

1. **Determine when evaluation need to be conducted**

Evaluation is a part of project cycle and as monitoring needs to be properly planned. Elements such as: ToR, Scope and Methodology, Geographical Areas to be covered and number of beneficiaries should be taken into consideration. Evaluation should be added into the monitoring planning (mid-term or terminal/final) to ensure right timing and sufficient budget is allocated.