**MIREILLE BLANDINE BAWA-ALLAH**

**MONITORING & EVALUATION DIPLOMA**

**MODULE 2 - ASSIGNMENT 2**

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**EMAIL:** [mimybawaallah64@gmail.com](mailto:mimybawaallah64@gmail.com)

***QUESTION 1: WHAT ARE THE QUALITIES OF A GOOD INDICATOR? GIVE AN EXAMPLE***

To be able to display the qualities of a good indicator, there is a need to explain what exactly is an indicator? One can define an indicator as:

* A measurement, tracking system used in project management is to determine whether the project is progressing according the goals and objectives.
* It drives all subsequent data collection, analysis and reporting. It helps also to track all inputs, outputs, impacts and end results on the target group.
* Taking in consideration the donors, the project manager and the clients and external factors such as political, social, and environmental factors.
* Indicators are required for all levels of result-based monitoring and evaluation systems.
* An indicator is specific, precise and measurable.
* It has to be relevant to the managers because of the focus on performance and improvement.

***What are the qualities of a good indicator?***

According to Dr. Rajiv, Sharma, (An extract from World Bank document) an indicator should have the following qualities:

* *Clear: Precise and unambiguous*
* *Relevant: Appropriate to the set goal Economic*
* *Available or computable with reasonable cost*
* *Adequate: Provides sufficient basis to access performance*
* *Measurable: Quantifiable*

On the other side, (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women) defined indicator as follows:

* *Valid: accurate measure of a behaviour, practice, task that is the expected output or outcome of the intervention*
* *Reliable: consistently measurable over time, in the same way by different observers*
* *Precise: operationally defined in clear terms*
* *Measurable: quantifiable using available tools and methods*
* *Timely: provides a measurement at time intervals relevant and appropriate in terms of programme goals and activities*
* *Programmatically important: linked to the programme or to achieving the programme objectives.*

As an example of an indicator (McFadden, 2016) summarized World Bank Youth Summit (Rethinking Education for the New Millennium) with the following indicators:

* *Innovation and technology in Education: (How can technologies that have successfully disrupted industry after industry help generate new values in education?)*
* *Skills for New Economy (How can reform in education and training help the young generation adapt to the new economy and overcome the epidemic of youth unemployment?)*
* *Gender Equality in Education: (how can we expand the promise of quality education to all children regardless of their gender?)*
* *Education in Crisis Zones: (How can and should education adapt to the extreme conditions that these children endure?)*

According to New Zealand, office of Statistics (27-30 October 2009) on the qualities of a good indicators

* **Valid and meaningful** – an indicator should adequately reflect the phenomenon it is intended to measure and should be appropriate to the needs of the user.
* **Sensitive and specific to the underlying phenomenon** – sensitivity relates to how significantly an indicator varies according to changes in the underlying phenomenon.
* **Grounded in research** – awareness of the key influences and factors affecting outcomes.
* **Statistically sound** – indicator measurement needs to be methodologically sound and fit for the purpose to which it is being applied.
* **Intelligible and easily interpreted** – indicators should be sufficiently simple to be interpreted in practice and intuitive in the sense that it is obvious what the indicator is measuring.
* **Relate where appropriate to other indicators** – a single indicator often tends to show part of a phenomenon and is best interpreted alongside other similar indicators.
* **Allow international comparison** – indicators need to reflect New Zealand-specific goals, but where possible should also be consistent with those used in international indicator programs so that comparisons can be made.
* **Ability to be disaggregated over time** – indicators should be able to be broken down into population sub-groups or areas of particular interest, such as ethnic groups or regional areas.
* **Consistency over time** – the usefulness of the indicators is directly related to the ability to track trends over time, so as far as possible indicators should be consistent.
* **Timeliness** – there should be minimal time lag between the collection and reporting of data to ensure that indicators are reporting current rather than historical information
* **Linked to policy or emerging issues** – indicators should be selected to reflect important issues as closely as possible. Where there is an emerging issue, indicators should be developed to monitor it.
* **Compel interest and excite** - the indicator should resonate with the intended audience.

It is safe to conclude by saying that, an indicator has to be S-M-A-R-T, meaning that an indicator has to be: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound.

***QUESTION 2: As part of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Universal Education is a right to 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?***

In Nigeria, the Millennium Development Goals, Universal Basic Education was declared in 1999 andthis section is in line with it: *“Section 18(3) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria which affirms that government shall provide free, compulsory universal education. It is further indicated in subsection (3) that free universal basic education is compulsory “for a period of 9* years” *and that it comprises “(i) a 6 year primary education and (ii) a 3 year junior secondary school education”. The* Nigeria Constitution Review of 1999.

The former Governor of Lagos State launched Universal Free Education in 1999, from primary to secondary school levels. Lagos State has over one thousand primary and secondary schools.

The implementation of free basic education is affected with funding issues. The resource and finance allocated to the office of the chairman in charge of free basic education which is under the state ministry of education, are not enough to face the numerous challenges in schools in the state. There are some schools in state where there are no tables and benches and students sit on pieces of wood and straight on the floor. And some are faced with overcrowded classrooms, and lack of basic amenities such as decent classrooms (without windows, doors, ceilings, writing boards, toilets, portable drinking water, chalks, etc…)

Despite the meagre budget allocated by the state government, the number of students in Lagos state keeps increasing disproportionally to the budget.

It is pertinent to note that out of the 36 Sates in Nigeria, only Lagos state offers free basic education and sponsors the primary school common examination at primary level, junior secondary examination and senior secondary West African examination.

And this makes Lagos is a destination where most people from other states send their children to study in public schools.

And this is one of the reasons, why it is really difficult for the state to implement successfully this initiative.

Instead the following issues are presently the reality in most schools Lagos state:

* Lack of provision of conducive infrastructure like classrooms, special teaching rooms, and teacher’s quarters.
* Lack of provision of teaching and learning materials, like text books, work and exercises books, and stationaries.
* Lack of school grants to cover schools daily operation costs such as funding and administrative duties, etc.
* Lack of power, canteens, drinkable water, furniture, educational tools, writing materials etc.

Despite the goodwill of the government of Lagos state to take up the challenge of initiating of the Millennium Development Goals on Free Basic Primary Education, one can observe that this bold step is marred with a lot of shortcomings.

It will be important to say the state will require a great support from the federal government and donors both local and international to make the program a success and assure a good, sound and reliable basic education system in the state.

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

Despite its challenges in the implementation of Free Basic Education in the state, and out of the 36 states of the federation, Lagos state is the preferred destination for parents to enroll their wards in the government owned schools.

Contrary to the other states of the federation, Fre3 Basic Education in Lagos state is extended till the senior secondary school level.

One needs to ask these questions? Has Lagos state via its ministry of education puts in place the logistic and structures to improve the quality of teachers training institutions in the state?

According to *Vanguard article by Adenipekun, 2009* *on the challenge of providing teachers for schools in the Riverine areas, it is a challenge but what we are doing is to encourage teachers to stay in those areas. We have embarked on building teachers quarters in the riverine areas. We are also providing generators and other modern facilities that will make life easier for the teachers*. *In this state, the major problem they have is infrastructure and they give condition that we must spend a certain amount on instructional materials, on training*.

* Also, Lagos is overpopulated with families coming their children from states, or sending their children to enroll in government schools in Lagos. Because, they are free. There is a congestion in classrooms and this does not always make it easy for teachers to perform their duties. In most case cases, you have a teacher for about 80 to 90 pupils in classroom.
* There is also the issue of poor salaries for teachers which demotivate them.
* Inadequacy of learning materials provided by the government.
* Lack of furniture in classrooms
* Lack of professional M & E personnel.
* Lack of schools inspectors to check the quality of teaching and curriculum.

1. ***What would the monitoring exercise in free primary education wish to achieve for the following stakeholders? Donors – Primary school managers – Government***

It is relevant here to define who is the Donor or Funder, the Primary school managers, and Government. And also to define who a stakeholder is?

According to the study pack, E&M module 2, 2018, *a stakeholder is an individual, a group of people or organizations that have a significant interest in the success or failure of a potential project/program/initiative. They can also be describe as those who may have something to bring to support the project, or those who can resist the project taking place.*

In this case, these three groups (donors, Primary School Managers and, Government). They are all stakeholders in Free Basic Primary Education in Lagos, Nigeria.

And they are all collaborating from the beginning to support this project, and what are their interests in this initiative? That is what I will try to explain.

* The donors or funders: They will need to be part of the project from the “get go”, to be given a clear and timely report, an evidence of community change and the impact as agreed from the beginning of the initiative. In this case, the initiative is partially funded by the government of Lagos, European Union and privates groups in the state.
* The Primary school Managers (Office of chairman of Basic education board) this is the people who are really affected by the degradation of the school community in the state, and they work horrendous condition to pass the knowledge. They are our target and agents of change. This is the group that project team need to work closely with to gather information for the initiative.
* Government, in the case of Lagos state via the ministry of education is an administrator. They are aware of the situation and are also involved in solving the problem.

In the case of Basic Primary Education in Lagos, the approach will be the participatory evaluation, where you have all members of the state involved because this situation all, the government, the University lecturers/researchers, the donors, the schools managers even the parents associations.

The degradation of government schools affect the large part of the community because access to private education is very expensive and not affordable to large part of the state population.

***QUESTION 3:***

1. ***What are the advantages of participatory evaluation methods?***

It is important to first define what is a participatory evaluation method? Evaluation participatory is part of participatory research. It is an approach in which the stakeholders are carried along, and involved in the initiative or project that affect them directly. It is a kind of a team work where members of the community, funders and project office work together for the success of the initiative or project.

In the case stated here, we have the following:

* Community leaders which is the Ministry of Gender and Children
* The evaluator who is the consultant hired for the project
* The funders in this case it is UNICEF
* The beneficiaries who are the families living with the orphans.

The advantages of the participatory evaluation methods are as follow:

* To get buy- in of the community affected for which the project is targeted to.
* The accuracy of the information from the community and beneficiaries
* The involvement of the community which has a sense of belonging
* The community will support the success of the project
* The funders will support the initiative if the outcomes is meeting the objectives set.
* The training of the community members in acquiring new knowledge (for example how to conduct interview, taking notes during meeting, organizing meetings, so on).
* It brings community together if there are conflicts as people of different views will have to work together for the success of the initiative.
* It is less expensive
* The beneficiaries will guide the project with their views and recommendation of the success of the project.
* The community commitment and involvement is a sure way on making it a success.

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

According to Compass website, *a monitoring system is a procedure that helps and assess and track the performance on a program from the beginning and throughout the life of program to conclusion. It is an open document that should be referred to and need to be updated regularly.*

*The planning of monitoring system has to follow a certain chronology as indicated below:*

* *Identify the program goals and objectives*
* *Define the indicators*
* *Define data collection methods and timeline*
* *Identify monitoring roles and responsibilities*
* *Create an analysis plan and reporting templates*
* *Plan for dissemination and donors reporting.*

According to (Sharon Penn, 2017) the following are the steps in planning monitoring systems,

* ***Monitoring Information***

*At the execution stage when the actual tasks of the project are in progress, it is vital to monitor information in order to keep track of what is being accomplished.*

* ***Monitoring Progress***

*Time management monitoring is executed by the project manager to make sure deadlines are being met as the project moves forward. Time sheets are used to monitor the time individual team members spend on tasks within the project.*

* ***Monitoring the Budget***

*Cost management is executed by the project manager to make sure the project comes in at or under budget. Costs within the project are identified and expenses are approved before a purchase is made*

* ***Monitoring Quality***

*To monitor quality effectively as the project progresses, the team and the project manager must set up quality guidelines before the execution phase.*

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