**Strategia Netherland**

Diploma Course in Monitoring and Evaluation

**Assignment Two**

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

Indicators are of great importance for M&E. thus, indicator development is a core step in building the matrix, and this drives all subsequent data collection, analysis, and reporting.

An indicator is a variable whose value changes from the baseline level at the time the program began to a new value after the program and its activities have made their impact felt. At that point, the variable, or indicator, is calculated again. An indicator is a measurement .it measures the value of the change in meaningful units that can be compared to past and future units.

An indicator is a measure of a concept, phenomenon or behavior. It does not necessarily reflect the entire phenomenon itself, but an aspect of it. An indicator provides evidence that a result has been achieved, or signals that progress is being made towards the achievement of a result.

Indicators enable the measurement of actual achievement against planned or expected results, in terms of quality, and timeliness. They always include at least one variable. Therefore, indicators can be:

Quantitative, i.e. have a numerical value (number, percentage or ratio), e.g. number of technicians trained; or qualitative, i.e. reflect perception, judgments or attitudes (e.g. perception of end-users about the project).

Good indicators must have the following qualities

**Qualities of Good Indicators**

**Action focused.** Indicators should lead to action. If stakeholders cannot imagine what to do with the data from an indicator, then it probably isn’t a good indicator.

**Important.** Stakeholders should agree that the indicator and the data it will generate make a relevant and significant contribution to determining how to effectively respond to the epidemic.

**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 are also 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.

**Timebound:** There should be a time limit within which changes are expected and measured.

In summary, Good indicators provide good information – i.e. accurate information, useful information, critical information – on performance, achievement and accountability. More precisely, good indicators are quantitative metrics that provide information to monitor performance, measure achievement and determine accountability. They provide basic information on the past, present and possible future course of an activity, programme and/or behaviour.

**Examples of indicators:**

An example of an indicator is the gas gauge in your car. The gas gauge shows you how much gasoline is left in your car. If the gauge shows the tank is almost empty, you know it's time to fill up. Another example of an indicator is a midterm report card. It shows you whether a student is doing well enough to go to the next grade or if extra help is needed. Both of these indicators provide information to help prevent or solve problems, hopefully before they become too severe.

Indicators can be useful as proxies or substitutes for measuring conditions that are so complex that there is no direct measurement. For instance, it is hard to measure the 'quality of life in my town' because there are many different things that make up quality of life and people may have different opinions on which conditions count most. A very simple substitute indicator is 'Number of people moving into the town compared to the number moving out.'

**More examples of indicators**

Decrease in prevalence of water borne diseases

Increase in proper hand-washing practices

Increase in household income

Increase in per unit yield of maize crop

Increase in survival rate of the livestock

1. 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:
2. **Critically evaluate the implementation programme of free primary education for the first 2 years**

Since the signing of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), the government of South Sudan has been working to provide education opportunities for all its citizens regardless of their age. The Alternative Education Systems (AES) was formalized in 2002 under the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM) Secretariat of Education (SoE) and confirmed by the CPA (2005) to provide education to out of school children, youth and adults including organized armed forces.

In 2011, the government of South Sudan implemented the free primary education policy, which was a campaign pledge to the voters through MOEST. The FPE initiative focused on attaining Education for all (EFA) and in particular, Universal Primary Education (UPE). And as was expected in a country where a substantial proportion of children were out of school, the response was overwhelming. In many schools, the head teachers found themselves with more children to enroll than their capacity could hold. Due to the limited space and facilities, the heads turned many children away. Since the government had not given an age limit, even those who were ‘over-age’ were enrolled and this worsened the congestion in school (UNESCO, 2012). Key concerns were access, retention, equity, quality and relevance and internal and external efficiencies within the education system (MOEST), 2012. Most classes were too large to be handled by a single teacher. On average, the pupil ratio in most schools was 1.3. This had a lot of implications on teaching and learning. The teachers were not able to give individual attention to the learners, especially to the slow ones, and this made it difficult for schools to offer quality education. Teachers were also unable to take full control of classes. Indiscipline was therefore, rampant in schools (UNESCO, 2012).

The FPE implementation in 2015 was critical to attaining the EFA as a key objective to realizing the UPE goal (MOEST, 2012). The goal of the government was to have education and training for development translated. The MOEST is mandated with this mission and it works with stakeholders to provide, promote and coordinate quality lifelong education training and research for South Sudanese sustainable development and responsible citizenry. The ministry is responsible for providing appropriate regulatory framework, develop policies and guidelines, provide support, mobilize resources for education sector inputs and coordinate human capital development through education and training. The overall goal of MOEST and the government is to achieve EFA by 2017 in tandem with international commitments (MOEST.2012).

Nyamute (2006) notes that the current cost of FPE is beyond the normal education budget allocation. The fact that the country's economy has not been performing as expected in recent year’s means that it cannot support the realization of the UPE goals without the infusion of outside funds. Yieke (2006) adds that after the initial euphoria, it was noticed that there was lack of a sustained and comprehensive communications strategy for FPE. There was lack of consultation and information on the roles of various key stakeholders. As a result of this, there was confusion amongst teachers, parents, school committee members, sponsors and local donors. At the same time, there was lack of clear guidelines as far as FPE was concerned, and many issues were rushed without these being addressed adequately.

Total of 2 million South Sudanese children and youth do not attend school. Despite South Sudan’s Education Act of 2012, which dictates that primary education be free for all, the harsh realities of an ongoing civil war-including displacement, hunger, forced recruitment by armed groups and schools destroyed or occupied by combatants-has left South Sudan with the highest proportion of out-of-school children in the world.

Approximately **68 percent** of the country’s children and youth remain out of school. And girls are disproportionately affected, with an overwhelming **76 percent** not attending. What’s more, for those children who are able to access education, the quality is severely lacking. Only one-third of South Sudan’s teachers have been trained as teachers.

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

Free primary education in South Sudan is an important part of the social and economic growth of the country. The provision of free education in South Sudan is one of the great initiatives taken by the South Sudanese government. More children have access to an education i.e. increase in the number of children in schools.

Free primary education in South Sudan was to increase effective education policies in early childhood. This can be easily eliminate illiteracy among the learners. From the different groups of people starting from adults to children this education system has shown tremendous rise in the increase of student’s enrolment of the students in the country.

The government also built and supported boarding schools in the country. A national feeding programme was also launched in these areas.

Primary school completions rates have increased from 62.8% in 2005 to 80.0% in 2012. Concurrently, transition rates from primary to secondary schools have also increased by just over 10%. More girls have also been integrated in the system, nearly attaining gender parity at the national level. Textbook ratios have also improved, providing every child with one textbook who previously could not afford it.

* They have increased the number of public schools in the country
* Recruitment of more teachers and have provided them with adequate materials for learning
* Employment of the merits and sacking the corrupt officials
* Proper financial management of the schools the principals were trained accordingly.

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

**Donors:** It was apparent from the outset that free primary education would need support from donors or lending agencies if it were to succeed. However, in each country some international agencies were skeptical or reluctant and joined in the initial criticism about lack of planning, the decline in quality, the lack of capacity, and the near impossibility that the programs could be sustained. When one institution (such as UNICEF, Ireland Aid, the Department for International Development, or the World Bank) followed the government is lead and made interim arrangements, others soon followed. Support the government to achieve international and national commitments on education and gender by focusing on education issues in both supply and demand sides:

For the supply side, establish gender sensitive education in all institutions and support infrastructure development such as constructing new schools and improving infrastructure of existing school (including providing lunches, school materials, adequate WASH and MHM facilities as well as adopting and promoting inclusive approaches in education and infrastructure to disadvantaged groups (orphan, street children and children with special needs).

For the demand side, focus on targeted gender interventions to bring long-term sustainable and transformative changes to address the deep-rooted gender norms: given long standing patriarchal norms, gender stand-alone programming is required to ensure transformational changes in the community; Male family members hold the power to decide whether girls will go to school or not or at what age they will get married. It is thus crucial that the interventions are targeted at men and boys but also women and girls, the elderly as well as at key change-makers in the community to further internalize the importance of education. A possible way to do so would be to engage the out of school men and women in ALPs and connecting it to livelihood opportunities. It is also necessary to extend ALP funding to rural and disadvantaged areas and ensure to include women, men, and young female and male adults.

On both supply and demand side, ensure affirmative and innovative approaches to promote girl’s education in particular, such as: scholarship program for girls (including uniforms and stationary materials), cash for education for girls; support and work together with the Ministry of General Education & Instruction (MoGEI) and Ministry of Gender in the implementation of policies specifically related to girls’ education and to increasing the number and qualifications of female teachers. This should include the strong implementation of school CoCs and promote provisions which strongly address safeguarding, child rights and child protection concerns, works towards and includes the Strategic National Action Plan to end child marriage by 2030, as well as other developed education policies.

Demand for and ensure Sex, Age and Disability Disaggregated Data (SADDD) is collected, analyses and reported on through internal trainings to staff, administrative school bodies and continued support to education coordination bodies across South Sudan.

**Primary School managers:** Managers: Those people in organizations and institutions who are tasked with the responsibility of achieving goals, and who consciously and continually shape their organizations during the management process. The people tasked with this responsibility are called managers. They set the tone in organizations and influence their subordinates' attitudes towards their work. Managers also forge human relationships and are concerned with time management. Managers have to be effective and efficient. Effectiveness is about doing the right thing, while efficiency is about doing things right (Stoner, Freeman & Gilbert 1995: Christie 2010). This notion is also supported by Bush (2007), who elaborates by stating that management also focuses on implementation and technical issues. In this study, the meaning of management is narrowed down to educational management because the study covers management at all levels of the education system. It is expected that teachers have adequate training and undergo in-service training supported by the Government on a continuous basis. As a result, the teachers should be able to do the following:

* Encourage all parents to take their children to school
* Provide quality education in line with the curriculum
* Prepare and use locally available learning materials and resources
* Make their school gender responsive and have a child-friendly learning environment
* Serve as role models to pupils and ensure discipline during school hours
* Guide and counsel pupils during school hours and advice parents where necessary on the children’s welfare and discipline
* Ensure pupils have all the necessary materials for their learning.
* Co-operate with and seek the support of patents in their work
* Improve teaching methods through in-service training

**Government:** Education is today largely paid for and almost entirely administered by governmental bodies or non-profit institutions. This situation has developed gradually and now taken so much for granted that little explicit attention is any longer directed to the reasons for the special treatment of education even in countries that are predominantly free enterprise in organization and philosophy. The result has been an indiscriminate extension of governmental responsibility. The role assigned to government in any particular field depends, of course, on the principles accepted for the organization of society in general.

In the education sector, governance can be centralized, according to the top-down approach, or decentralized at regional level or even school level. At school level governance is referred to as school-based management. In this case, parents, the principal and the teachers are collectively responsible for the welfare of the school. Such management entails those who have been mandated to govern making decisions and accepting responsibility. Governance further involves all stakeholders having a voice with regard to the direction the organization should take, participation, competition and choices (UNESCO 2009). Enforce strong and practical measures to meet international (Sustainable Development Goal 4) and national commitments on education and gender equality through increased coordination and collaboration with NGOs and WROs to ensure robust implementation of gendered policies and strategies; ensure open discussions on these policies and strategies to engage stakeholders and to further improve ownership from community; support the enforcement of laws that require education to be free and universal for primary school level.

• Promote national initiatives which spell out commitment from government on preventing child marriage and on promoting girls’ education and enforce laws that prohibit CEFM whereby perpetrators should be brought to justice, working together with customary and traditional leaders as well as mass level awareness raising campaigns on CEFM.

• Focus on ensuring teaching as a profession is bolstered by increasing teacher’s salary to also include better learning and professional growth packages/opportunities at national level, across all schools in South Sudan; by providing continuous teacher training; by providing teaching materials across all schools, by developing and implementing school curricula that contribute to long-term shifts in gender norms and by investing all efforts in increasing the number of female teachers and improving their qualifications.

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

Participatory evaluation is an approach that involves the stakeholders of a programme or policy in the evaluation process. This involvement can occur at any stage of the evaluation process, from the evaluation design to the data collection and analysis and the reporting of the study. A participatory approach can be taken with any impact evaluation design, and with quantitative and qualitative data

**Advantages of participatory evaluation:**

**It gives you 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 apt 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.

**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 bolsters 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 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 spark 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 fits into a larger participatory effort.** When community assessment and the planning of a project have been collaboration among project beneficiaries, staff, and community members, it only makes sense to include evaluation in the overall plan, and to approach it in the same way as the rest of the project. In order to conduct a good evaluation, its planning should be part of the overall planning of the project. Furthermore, participatory process generally matches well with the philosophy of community-based or grass roots groups or organizations.

With all these positive aspects, participatory evaluation carries some negative ones as well.

Whether its disadvantages outweigh its advantages depend on your circumstances, but whether you decide to engage in it or not, it's important to understand what kinds of drawbacks it might have.

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

**Step One: Conducting a Readiness Assessment**to determine the capacity and willingness of the government/organization and its development partners to construct a results-based M&E system. This assessment addresses such issues as the presence or absence of champions, the barriers to building a system, who will own it, and who will oppose the M&E system.

**Step Two: Agreeing on Outcomes to Monitor and Evaluate**addresses the key requirement of developing strategic outcomes that then focus and drive resource allocation and activities. These outcomes should be derived from the strategic priorities (goals).

**Step Three: Developing Key Indicators to Monitor Outcomes**, so the degree to which the outcomes are being achieved can be assessed. Developing indicators is a core activity in building an M&E system and drives all subsequent data collection, analysis, and reporting, both the political and methodological issues in creating credible and appropriate indicators are not to be underestimated.

**Step Four: Gathering Baseline Data on Indicators**involves describing and measuring the initial conditions being addressed by the outcomes. It is the first measurement of the indicators and defines the starting point.

**Step Five: Planning for Improvements**requires setting realistic targets and recognizes that most outcomes are long-term, complex, and not quickly achieved. It is helpful to establish interim targets that specify how much progress towards an outcome is to be achieved each year (or other time period) and the resources needed. Measuring results against targets can involve both direct and proxy indicators and use of both quantitative and qualitative data.

**Step Six: Monitoring for Results**is the administrative and institutional task of establishing data collection, analysis and reporting guidelines; designating who will be responsible for activities; establishing quality control processes; establishing timelines and costs; working through roles and responsibilities; and establishing guidelines on transparency and dissemination of the information and analysis. It is emphasized that, in constructing an M&E system, the challenges of ownership, management, maintenance, and credibility need to be addressed clearly.

**Step Seven: Evaluative Information to Support Decision Making**focuses on the contributions that evaluation studies and analyses can make throughout this process to assess results and move towards outcomes. Analysis of program theory, evaluability assessments, process evaluations, outcome and impact evaluations, and evaluation syntheses are among the strategies discussed that can be employed in evaluating a results-based M&E system.

**Step Eight: Analyzing and Reporting Findings**is a crucial step, as it determines what findings are reported to whom, in what format, and at what intervals. This step has to address the existing capacity for producing the information, and focuses on the methodologies for accumulating and assessing information, and preparing analyses and reports.

**Step Nine: Using the Findings**emphasizes that the crux of the system is not simply generating results-based information, but getting the information to the appropriate users in a timely fashion so that they can take the information into account in making decisions. This step also addresses the roles of development partners and civil society in using the information to strengthen accountability, transparency, and resource allocation procedures.

**Step Ten: Sustaining the M&E System**recognizes the long-term process involved in ensuring the longevity and utility of an M&E system. Six criteria are seen as crucial to the sustainability of an M&E system: demand, structure, trustworthy and credible information, accountability, incentives, and capacity. Each dimension needs constant attention over time to ensure the viability of the system. As noted earlier, building an M&E system does not have to be done according to these 10 steps. One could define a more detailed number of steps, or fewer. The issue is to ensure that key strategies and activities are recognized, clustered together in a logical manner, and then completed in an appropriate sequence.

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