**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:**

My country is Cameroon. For lack of information, I will not limit myself exactly for the first two years for the evaluation of free primary education, as specified in the exercise. I will simply make a critical evaluation of Education for All with the information I can collect.

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

The trigger for Education for All is the Dakar Education Forum held in Senegal from 26 to 28 April 2000. He emphasized basic education for all. The Dakar Framework for Action states that by 2015, all children must be able to follow and complete a primary school cycle. It also advocates the elimination of gender disparities.

Following Dakar, the Cameroonian authorities adopted in October 2000 a sectorial education strategy aimed at broadening access to education by correcting disparities between girls and boys and increasing the quality of basic education offer. This followed the presidential speech of February 10, 2000, announcing the free public primary school during its traditional message to youth. This measure was officially applied, from the start of the 2000-2001 school year, in public primary schools throughout the Cameroonian territory. The most striking fact in this decision will be the abolition of tuition fees in public primary education.

It is in this context that a Ministry of Basic Education was created on December 8, 2004 following a reshuffle of the government in order to make more visible and readable the actions of this sector of education. As part of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP, 2003) developed with the support of the Donors, it is planned to provide education for all, and a 100% rate of access and completion of primary school by 2015. This was inspired by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for education.

In the investment budget, the state has undertaken to build 2,500 classrooms a year in primary school. Teachers training schools which were threatened with closure due to lack of enthusiasm of candidates caused by the frustrating treatment of people trained in these schools, have resumed since the massive contracting of teachers in the late 2000s.

In Cameroon, the policy of free primary education currently applied, only concerns the abolition of tuition fees paid by parents. These fees allowed a school to support a number of expenses. With the abolition of these costs, the public authorities have decided to support the different charges according to the July 24, 2000 circular.

From the concept of minimum package in Cameroon context arise two terms commonly used in the school environment. This is the minimum package and the advance cash. The minimum package is an envelope containing a set of didactic and educational materials that are given to each public primary school at the beginning and the middle of the school year to allow an effective start and normal operation of the teaching activities. In principle, the content of the minimum package is made of:

- preparation notebooks for master;

- boxes of chalk;

- ballpoint pen

- envelopes, paper clips, thumbtacks, card folders;

- squared papers;

- reams of paper;

- a box of glue;

- First intervention drugs.

It should be noted that the thickness of the minimum package varies from school to school.

The advance fund constitutes the credits that the State grants to each school for its operation. It is a kind of operating budget that is managed by the departmental delegates. At this level also, the amount allocated to a school takes into account the number of pupils and teachers. These credits are calculated in principle of 2,500 Francs CFA / pupil.

The rubrics that are affected by the advance cash are:

- the school project;

- cultural activities;

- the school council;

- equipment maintenance;

- the operation;

- textbooks;

- performance bonuses;

- practical activities;

- insurance

The immediate consequence of this measure was the increase in pupil numbers at school with an absolute growth rate of 17.4% for the 2000/2001 school year according to a study by Onana (2005).

With regard to the progress made, it should be noted that enrollment in all primary education structures has increased by an average of 3.4% per year, above the average annual increase of 2,9% of the school population of the country. The proportion of pupils enrolled in private primary school sector decreased from 27.0% in 2001 to 22.2% in 2011, a decrease of 5 points over the period. But this figure is still high both in comparative terms at the international level and in absolute terms for a level of education that aims for universal coverage. The private sector's hold on the coverage of primary education remains considerable and it is still far from the target of 87.5% for the public sector provided for by the 2013 Education Sector Strategy by 2015/2020. Apart from the abolition of the required fees and the introduction of the minimum package, the State has also undertaken to strengthen the pedagogical supervision of pupils through the training and massive recruitment of teachers in the public service.

However, it emerges from the Education Sector Strategy Paper (2006) that primary education is far from assured for all school-aged children. The enrollment rate in primary education remains low at 78% in 2004. There is still unequal access to school, especially for girls and children from disadvantaged backgrounds. Regional disparities are still important both in terms of the location of reception facilities, equipment and the distribution of teachers.

Earlier allowances for teachers working in areas other than their home region have been eliminated, resulting in a gradual decline of teachers from the most remote areas to the larger cities(Siakeu (2006)). Faced with such a situation, the poorest parents have to pay the salaries of teachers who are called temporary teachers in the schools for a "quality of education inferior to that of the cities.

In big cities, the situation is not very good even if there is a fairly high number of teachers. Class sizes are plentiful because there are not enough classrooms. In Yaoundé, for example, or in the immediate vicinity, it is not uncommon to meet rooms with enrollments of around 120 students, while the desired institutional ratio is 1 master for 40 pupils maximum.

Since the cancellation of 1,500 fcfa of registration fees, school managers and primary school inspectors make the enrollment of pupils obligatory for the payment of fees, sometimes three times higher than those withdrawn. In short, the operation cost of public primary school is abandoned to parents, Ntchamande (2005).

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

Apart from the withdrawn of the required fees and the introduction of the minimum package, the government has also undertaken to strengthen the pedagogical supervision of students through the training and massive recruitment of teachers in the public service. As Njiale (2006) has shown, "to increase access to primary education over demand, measures should be strengthened to provide free education and guarantee the right to education".

The massive recruitment of teachers in recent years (13000 in 2007, 5500 in 2008, 5525 in 2009 and 6492 in 2010) were possible thanks to a partnership agreement between Cameroon with France (in the framework of the contract of development and deleveraging) and the Bank World.

The lack of teachers in rural areas was managed by the massive recruitment of teachers who were paid by parents of pupils. These teachers, often called temporary, came from the many schools of teachers created during the 2000s.

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

* Primary school managers

Some school officials and teachers do not always allow a good visibility and readability of the government's efforts to provide free primary education by not respecting the instructions of the hierarchy of some, and the open laxity of others. It would be pleasant if:

1. School manager respect rigorously and scrupulously the principles of free education especially with regard to the financial condition of access to school. School principals must stop demanding the payment of fees in any form to parents at the time of enrollment;
2. School principals must stop hijacking or increasing the cost of examinations and competitions or other charges to defraud the parents;
3. School teachers stop adopting adventurous behaviors that make them come to the teaching profession for the sole purpose of looking for a public service number, and once the matriculation number is obtained, they start other activities thus abandoning the children that the Nation entrusts to them.
4. Teachers accept and be proud of their profession which is more than a profession if not a vocation.

* Government

Among the measures that we suggest to the public authorities we have:

Improvement of the quality and quantity of the minimum package. Given the delays and diversions from the distribution chain of the minimum package, it would be advisable to make school principals more accountable by directly allocating them these credits, which are often volatilised in the expenditure circuits because of the multiple intermediaries.

In the same sense, the operating credits called here in advance must also be directly assigned to the principals.

The training of teachers in the competency and curriculum approach should lead to the elimination of the repetitions in progress of the undergraduate cycles in accordance with the decree of 21 February 2006 (see appendix)

Providing pupils and teachers with textbooks and teaching materials should make it possible to improve learning.

The state should encourage the continuing education of teachers and school principals in educational management because a teacher who stops learning must stop teaching.

To encourage school enrollment for girls, the state should recruit a high proportion of women to the teaching profession to develop incentive policies in this area. This strategy can work very well in the northern regions.

The promotion of the status and application of the status of teachers in its entirety must be imperative.

The state should introduce a remoteness and risk premium for teachers assigned to areas that are quite remote and sufficiently isolated. At the same time, the overflow of teachers in urban areas should be decongested for campaigns following a well-defined promotion plan.

The State must highlight the provisions of article 31 of the decree of 19 September 2001 (see annex) which stipulates that

"The evaluation of the school's performance is done in relation to the fixed measures, in particular with regard to school enrollment rates, promotion rates, exam results, school attendance rates, the rates of achievement of planned investments. ".

This new evaluation focused on the obligation of the results can favor the performances of the system.

3. **You have been contracted by UNICEF to undertake the role of a consultant in a project/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?**

To answer this question, it is better to show that orphans are a specific group of children having their particular problems. To work with a special community, it is wise to integrate them in the team in other to have good and accurate results. For this case, we can realise that:

An orphan is a child who has lost one or both parents. Orphans can be considered as vulnerable children. Most of the orphans because of uncertain future, anger and fear are unable to express their feelings which trigger behavioural problems such as aggression. They also suffer of stress of isolation. After losing both parents, almost all orphans end up being separated from brothers and sisters, and taken in by extended family members if those relatives can afford to care for them. Often they are passed around from household to household within the extended family. Many orphans are most likely to experience food insecurity, shortage of clothing and inability to pay for medical care.

All the above presentation let us realise that orphans are facing problems which are not easy to realise if you are not close to them. Involving them in their evaluation is the best way to perform a good consultancy. The advantages of participatory evaluations methods are:

* It gives a better perspective on both the initial needs of the families staying with orphaned children, and on its ultimate effects.

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

The different steps to plan a monitoring system are six or ten depending on the source. In the notes book, six (06) steps where presented:

* Naming and framing the problem/goal;
* Developing a Logic Model for achieving success;
* Identifying research questions and methods;
* Documenting the intervention and its effects;
* Making sense of the data;
* Using information to celebrate and make adjustments

1. Naming and framing the problem/goal: the first step to creating a monitoring plan is to set community representatives and stakeholders, all those with something to gain or lose; to work together to develop a shared vision and mission. In other words, they must identify the program goals and objectives. This starts with answering three questions:
   * What problem is the program trying to solve?
   * What steps are being taken to solve that problem?
   * How will program staff know when the program has been successful in solving the problem?
2. Developing a Logic Model for achieving success: Once the program’s goal and objectives are defined, it is time to define a logic model. This step takes in account the defining of indicators. Program indicators should be a mix of those that measure process, or what is being done in the program; and those that measure outcomes.
3. Identifying research questions and methods: This step deals with deciding what evaluation questions to ask, and how to ask them to get the information needed. We decide also on methods for gathering data and how often various data will be recorded to track indicators. There could be significant results from your project that you are never aware of, because you didn’t look for them. It’s important to select questions carefully. The methods chosen will have important implications for what data collection methods will be used and how the results will be reported.
4. Documenting the intervention and its effects: collecting information needs first defining who is responsible for collecting the data for each indicator. Everyone will need to work together to get data collected accurately and timely. The activities conducted to get information could be:
   * + 1. research into census or other public records, as well as news archives, library collections, the Internet, etc.
       2. individual and/or group interviews;
       3. focus group;
       4. community information-sharing sessions;
       5. survey;
       6. direct or participant observation.
5. Making sense of the data: What do the numbers mean? What do people’s stories and opinions tell you about the project? Once all of the data have been collected, it is time to compile and analyse it. Generally, the information is filled in a results table for internal review and external reporting. Your analysis tells you what you need to know in order to improve your project, and also gives you the evidence you need to make a case for continued funding and community support.
6. Using information to celebrate and make adjustments: The last element of the monitoring plan describes how and to whom data will be disseminated. The goal of monitoring is not just to collect data, but data are collected for particular purposes. We are using the information to celebrate what worked, and to adjust and improve the project.
   * Data are used to inform staff and stakeholders about the success and progress of the program;
   * Data are used to help staff make modifications and course corrections, as necessary;
   * Etc.