

THE IMPACT OF TARGETTING CHILDREN IN DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTIONS

LESSONS FROM NORTHERN GHANA

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5TH JUNE 2014*

INTRODUCTION

The African Evaluation Association in the last few years has been interrogating the subject “Made in Africa Evaluation”.

This presentation looks at impact evaluation with a slight departure from the technical literature that guides this kind of evaluation. It raises a number of questions such as

- When in the life of an intervention should impact evaluation be carried out?
- Are development actors in a hurry to measure impact?
- What is the role of the African story telling in evaluation?

BACKGROUND

- Project started in 1988 –
 - A day nursery and primary school to take care of children while their mothers engaged in household and income earning activities. 35 kids.
 - A small clinic to get community health nurses to come and offer ante-natal advice and train traditional birth attendants
 - A latrine to halt open defecation and prevent the possible
- In January 2014 – I paid a visit to the community – 26 years down the line.
- I spent 2 days in the community to listen to stories

THE CHANGES!!

- The clinic that took care of the community has now been taken over by the government and evolved to a Health Centre with services to 71 communities and is staffed with a medical assistant, 4 midwives, 6 community health nurses, 5 Enrolled Nurses, 2 Decease Control Nurses, 2 Psychiatric Nurses, 3 Labourers, 4 Support staff.
- It is taking care of average – 20 to 30 patients a day during the dry season and 50 to 80 a day during the rainy season when the prevalence of malaria is high.
- Support from UNICEF and central government enabled the expansion of the clinic.
- Now in 2014, the stats for the schools are:
 - Junior High School – 148 pupils and 8 Teachers.

THE CHANGES

- Primary A, – 143 pupils – 6 teachers
- Primary B – 242 pupils 12 teachers
- 4 of the first two batch of students have postgraduate qualifications, three of the four are lecturing in Universities and one is the Director of a national NGO.
- The community can count 10 former students with university degrees.
- The household of all the students who are gainfully employed



THE COMMUNITY COMMENTS AND QUIZ

- The most repeated and emphasized statement from the community was that – by targeting their children the project had changed their economic status.
- They said the NGO who started the project came back 5 years after the beginning of the project asking to know the impact of the project in the lives. “why are they not here after 26 years?” they asked.
Community members repeatedly said
- These community reactions prompted the questions I asked at the beginning of the presentation

LESSONS

- Evaluators may want to include a culturally acceptable methodology of evaluation in our technical evaluation methodologies.
- Causality in impact evaluation may have to be revised with beneficiary communities

I hope this will add to ongoing debates on impact evaluation

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION