

Evaluation's Role in Advancing Educational Transformation in a Global Society (October 15, 2014, 6:15-7:00 p.m., Centennial C)

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Think Tank Follow-up: Summary of Participant Feedback

In this Think Tank, participants were asked to interact in small groups to answer the question, "How might equity & sustainability be addressed effectively in an evaluation of the case study project?"

Case Study Project Summary

The project intervention involved provision of high-quality primary school curriculum via sturdy offline tablets along with LCD projector and daily teacher lesson plans. A sample of 5 pilot and 5 matched comparison schools in and around a major urban centre in a single nation were sampled. Pupils were randomly selected in each classroom.

Key desired outcomes included enhanced student literacy, numeracy, and critical-thinking content. Trained data collectors administered international pre and post tests (EGRA, EGMA) and a custom-developed critical thinking assessment via offline mobile data collection software (Tangerine). Pupil's scores were tracked longitudinally.

Focus groups were conducted with teachers and principals, and an annual parent survey was administered on Parents Day. Teacher and pupil attendance were tracked.

Feedback from 10/15/2014 Session Participants

EQUITY

Tablet use at home -- by who?

--Do male siblings at home use for their own purposes?

--Evaluators have capability to track usage of tablet through internal software

Children's voices - why not included?

--Solo tablet use may not provide opportunity for student voice

--Planned evaluation does not include feedback from students

--Need to talk to them (interviews, focus groups)

Who selects the content?

- Curriculum is multi-country, translations for different languages
- Is it engaging and authentic for students? Local/national input?
- Evaluators should provide formative evaluation such as this to project.

Were the assessments validated?

- Were assessments validated with local/national populations? By whom?

Who has access to the project online?

- Solo tablet use was developed because outside capital areas, little Internet access
- Evaluators should track who has and does not have access

How are parents being engaged?

- Which parents attend on Parents Day? Are less affluent parents/students well represented?
- Might put authentic, local parent/student resources on tablet, as was done in a recent project

SUSTAINABILITY

Maintenance costs

- Are costs built in for tablet maintenance, replacement during project?
- After the project ends, will ministries of education or someone else take this on?

Curriculum costs

- How long will the curriculum be current? Is there a plan for updating it?
- How is the curriculum reviewed for quality purposes?
- Is use of individual lessons being studied/observed?
- After the project ends, will ministries of education or someone else take this on?

Teaching capacity

- Why not train teachers? Was there an effort to train teachers first? This seems like best first step.
- Were teacher trainings conducted over time? If not, how might they occur?
- Evaluators should examine context factors like this.

How can successful school/learning models be disseminated to others?

- How were the evaluators assisting in identifying/disseminating effective practices?

Parental engagement

--If parents had to pay, it might promote their program ownership.