

## **Emerging Evaluator Report on the 4<sup>th</sup> Biennial SAMEA conference**

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First and foremost, I want to express my sincere gratitude to SAMEA for offering me this golden opportunity to attend the conference. It was a life changing experience which I will forever be grateful.

I was so fascinated by the fact that South Africa has a department on performance monitoring and evaluation. This shows political will to improve monitoring and evaluation at a national level. I have noted however, that South Africa has so many good policies on paper which are not being implemented. I hope the department of performance monitoring and evaluation will make use of the political will and move from just having well written policies to practice. Together we can bring about a change in monitoring and evaluation in Africa.

I was also very delighted to see a delegation from my country, Uganda. As an emerging evaluator, I knew very little about performance monitoring and evaluation of Ugandan programmes at a national level. I was so heartened to know that my government is taking the first steps in improving monitoring and evaluation at a national level. This motivates me to pursue my career dream further of becoming an M&E specialist in the public health field across Africa.

I felt highly honoured to present my abstract twice during the conference in the emerging evaluator sessions. I gained confidence while presenting before professionals and I learnt a lot as I listened to the other emerging evaluators present and as I interacted with them.

The greatest opportunity was the opportunity to network with many M&E professionals and share experiences. I was able to get contacts of various professionals including those from my country who I can work with to improve my M&E career.

I enjoyed the whole conference. The administrative aspect was well done. The hotels were good and in reach to the conference venue.

I felt the poster presentations could be improved. If possible, time could be allocated for poster presentation besides tea break, where the presenters are given an opportunity to say something about their poster, say in 3 minutes time. They could be run as parallel sessions just like the oral presentation.

Otherwise the conference was very enriching. I will apply the lessons learnt in my M&E career and I hope to attend more of the SAMEA conferences, not as an emerging evaluator but hopefully as an M&E specialists. I have a dream to start biennial M&E conferences in Uganda as well.

Thank you again for the sponsorship.