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### Emerging Evaluator conference feedback

First and foremost, I would like to thank the South African Monitoring & Evaluation Association (SAMEA) and its partners for giving me the opportunity as an emerging evaluator to learn more about Monitoring and evaluation through the 5<sup>TH</sup> Biennial SAMEA conference.

It is through this conference that I have formed relationships with different people from different organization, as we have learnt that relationships are essential for accurate monitoring and evaluation. I have learnt a lot at the conference especially in the pre-conference workshops. The workshops opened gave monitoring and evaluation a whole new meaning to me and it also armed me with necessary tools as I get involved in monitoring and evaluation. It made me realize that through monitoring and evaluation surely people's lives can be changed. The other important lesson that I have learned is that as we work with people for the people it is crucial that we get them involved in our evaluation. Community participation is very important to get relevant information. The workshops have impressed and inspired me to really get involved in monitoring and evaluation to improve people's lives.

I have gained more understanding about the elements of good programming, results based management, accountability, the theory of change just to high light a few. All this concepts I feel they are very important in monitoring and evaluation. I am now learning more about the organisations that are doing monitoring and evaluation.

As I am embarking on my Masters journey in the academic year 2016, the conference has really helped me on how to go about in collecting the data, analysing the data as well as interpreting the data most of all it is opened on thinking about community participation. I believe that is it through community participation that my research will be accurate and I will be accountable in everything that I will be doing in my research. I have also learnt about the theory of action and types of interventions which are essential for my research.

The conference didn't just prepare me for my masters but it prepared me to be the evaluator that I need to be. In terms of social development or community development I have learnt that the community members are the most important people in evaluation and forming a relationship with them and getting them involved will result into a successful evaluation

After the conference I have learned to critically think before taking any actions which is now really helping me into getting positive results. I really want to learn are about monitoring and evaluation now more than before. This conference was a learning curve for me and I have also learnt to be more focus. I believe with mentoring and gaining more knowledge on evaluation, I am going to be a successful evaluator. I will forever appreciate and embrace this learning opportunity and I will work hard to show that the investment that was made on me was a good investment.

Thank you once more to SAMEA and its partners for the opportunity.