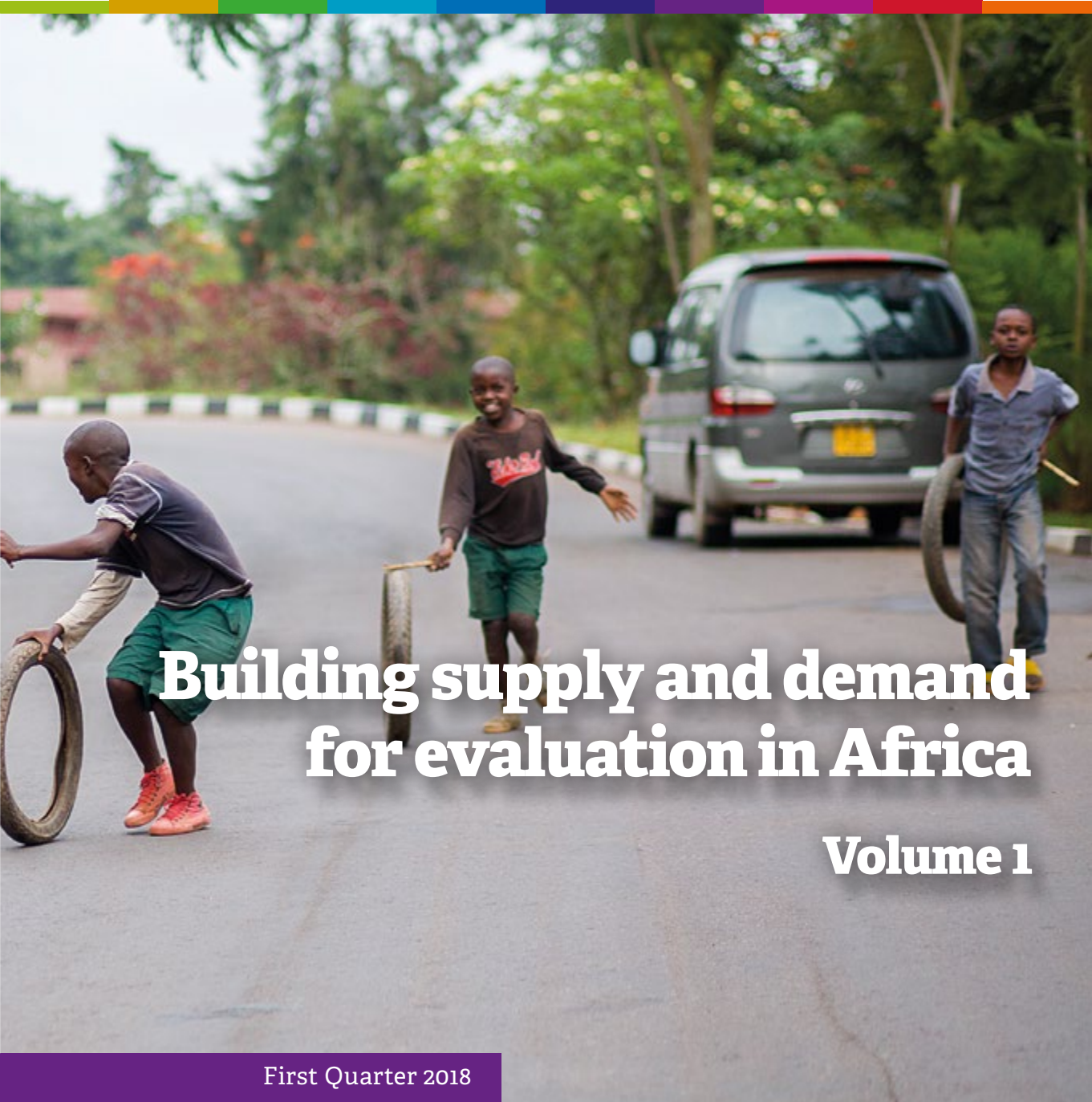


eVALUation Matters

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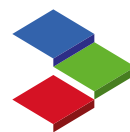
Building supply and demand for evaluation in Africa

Volume 1

First Quarter 2018

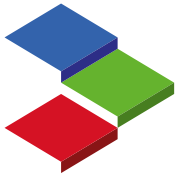


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eVALUation Matters

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First Quarter 2018

Evaluation plays a critical role in the effective implementation of good governance structures in Africa, in promoting accountability, learning, development effectiveness, and sustained and rapid economic growth.

The lack of an evaluation culture hinders good governance based on evidence-informed decision-making. But creating an evaluation culture requires more than enacting a policy or even having an evaluation unit - there must be buy-in from government ministries and agencies, to parliaments, to the grassroots level. There must be a steady supply of high quality evaluations, and the demand for these evaluations in order to ensure their use.

When decision-makers want to use evidence from monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems to assist them in making choices, then there can be said to be a demand for M&E. On the supply side, when there is sufficient national capacity to supply M&E personnel / practitioners and information, and those in research and academia are improving on M&E methodologies, the same can be said of adequate national M&E supply.



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“National Evaluation Policies are likely to prompt demand and use of evaluations in countries. Building an evaluation culture enhances effectiveness, efficiency and accountability in the management of development policies and programmes”.

Francis Mwaijande, PhD

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Q2 2018

Building supply and demand for evaluation in Africa (Volume 2)

Q3 2018

AfDB 2018 Evaluation Week special edition

Q4 2018

Gender and Evaluation

Q1 2019

Best Practices and Innovation in Evaluation

Call for contributions:

Evaluation Matters is a quarterly magazine issued in both English and French, by IDEV, Independent Development Evaluation of the AfDB. We welcome topical articles from writers' original work and will be pleased to consider contributions for the themes in the above Editorial Calendar. See details at <http://idev.afdb.org/en/document/editorial-calendar-2018>



Find eVALUation Matters at <http://idev.afdb.org/en/page/evaluation-matters-magazine>



From the Evaluator General's Desk

Let me begin by wishing all our readers a belated but happy and healthy New Year. IDEV and I look forward to another year of discussing, debating and learning on evaluation-related topics. We very much appreciate the insightful articles, views and comments from you. They stimulate thinking on not only subjects in evaluation, but development while contributing to the global body of knowledge.

This year, we start by examining the theme of Building Supply and Demand for Evaluation in Africa. Both sides of the equation are important. The call for contributions yielded such a wealth of material that we will devote two editions to this topic. Later in the year we intend to delve into another important current issue, namely gender and evaluation.

While living in Tanzania, I came across a quote from Mwalimu Julius Nyerere: "You cannot develop people. You must allow people to develop themselves." At IDEV, we view the practice of evaluation and the promotion of an evaluation culture as key underpinnings and potent forces for development. That is why we contribute to building the continent's capacity to undertake and use evaluations. Our approach to evaluation capacity ►►

► *development rests on ownership by the people. African countries have to own and lead the process. Recognizing that both supply and demand are important, we place equal efforts in both. Increased transparency and availability of evidence will help citizens hold their governments accountable. And good quality evaluations will provide the necessary tools in this cause.*

We also recognize that evaluation capacity development is a long-term process, and that long-term support is crucial to sustain gains. It is a huge task. Fortunately IDEV is not

alone, as this edition of Evaluation Matters shows. Governments, parliaments, civil society organizations, academic and training institutions, development partners, and specialized agencies all have a role to play. As Africa seeks to transform by rapidly industrializing and integrating the continent, expanding access to energy, clean water and sanitation, improving its position on the global human development index, and feeding its growing population, promoting a culture of evaluation and accountability is ever more urgent to transform the lives of its people.

Evaluation plays a serious role in good governance, promoting accountability, learning, evidence-informed policies and programs, development effectiveness, and sustained and rapid economic growth. However, creating an evaluation culture requires more than just enacting a policy or having an evaluation unit. First there has to be political will, buy-in and cooperation from various stakeholders including ministries, departments and agencies, as well as parliamentarians and civil society. Then there must be a steady supply of high quality ►

“creating an evaluation culture requires more than just enacting a policy or having an evaluation unit”.



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► *evaluations (implying availability of evaluators), the demand for these evaluations in order to ensure their use, and the capacity to use them effectively. Yet Africa faces many challenges in both the supply of and demand for evaluations and evaluators.*

This edition of Evaluation Matters delves into some of these issues, examining challenges both on the government and the legislative side in building an evaluation system. On the government side, we know of the experiences of countries on the issue of lack of a national evaluation policy and its consequences. On the legislative side, we focus on parliaments and parliamentarians. In ensuring accountability for public resources and overseeing the executive, they value the outputs of independent evaluations and assessments. Yet there are challenges and constraints limiting the demand for and use of evaluation in parliaments and by parliamentarians. The African Parliamentarians' Network on ►►

- ▶ *Development Evaluation is working to change the evaluation demand and supply dynamics.*

We also hear different views on building the supply and demand for evaluation in Africa. Articles from Cameroon and Liberia assess the respective country contexts and how evaluation systems and structures have been adapted to be fit for purpose. In addition, we hear the regional perspective through the work of CLEAR-AA on evaluation and results in Africa, showcasing the current trends.

The next edition of Evaluation Matters (Q2 2018) continues on the theme of "Building Supply and Demand for Evaluation in Africa", and will cover topics such as South-South Cooperation for peer learning and more views on building the supply and demand for evaluation at country and institutional levels.

Happy reading!

About the Evaluator General

Rakesh Nangia is the Evaluator General for Independent Development Evaluation at the African Development Bank. Prior to joining the AfDB, he spent 25 years at the World Bank, where he held several positions including Director of Strategy and Operations for the Human Development Network and Acting Vice-President for the World Bank Institute. He attended the Indian Institute of Technology in Delhi and Harvard University and holds degrees in business administration and engineering.

Evaluation, a driver for democracy and development towards Sustainable Development Goals success in Africa

An increasing worldwide demand for transparency and accountability is driving the development of national evaluation systems. In Africa, countries are at different stages of development with regard to their evaluation systems but they all face a common challenge: building evaluation capacities which produce needed data to support better decisions. There are no “one size-fits-all” solutions when it comes to promoting evaluation capacity and the development of evaluation systems for countries, but there is sufficient global knowledge that has been generated and sustained through practice and networking, and this knowledge can help enhance national evaluation systems.

At a civic level, evaluation can help demonstrate institutional accountability and be the critical link to provide information for citizens to judge and monitor actual performance against political promises. This is particularly relevant in regard to promises of more sustainable and equitable development as reflected in the 2030 Agenda. The pursuit of evaluation is thus supportive to enhancing democracy and development on the African continent.

*Indran Naidoo, Independent Evaluation Office
of the United Nations Development Programme*

Key Messages

- Evaluation is often overlooked as to its capacity to advance democratic values, with philosophy and practice intersecting with democratic principles. Over and above a performance improvement imperative, evaluation has the potential to advance democracy if it is entrenched in institutions responsible for delivering public services, and if it ensures accountable and transparent use of public resources.
- Evaluation culture is growing in Africa, shown by the embrace of evaluation principles across the continent, the growth of professional associations, increased global professional participation in evaluation, and its entry into thought leadership. All this could support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- African countries can benefit from world-wide networking, knowledge and experiences in evaluation in order to build their own evaluation capacities. This will result in sound, credible and efficient evaluation systems that enable informed policy decisions, and bring about the changes their societies are yearning for.

Continental and country integration, through globalization and democratization, challenges classic hegemonies

“**F**OR the last two decades, important social and economic progress has been achieved in many countries, but reducing poverty and inequality remains a fundamental challenge, particularly in Africa. All over the world, democracies are facing greater development challenges while citizens' expectations are higher than ever. A more informed society, driven by innovations and technological development, is now eager to reap the benefits of more sustainable development. Today, political

authority is fragmented and there are multiple actors involved in policy-making. Basic principles for governance, such as accountability, transparency and effectiveness, are no longer concerns reserved for international organizations, governments and national institutions - ordinary citizens are demanding a bigger role in the decisions that affect their lives.

In this setting, a question may be asked: does evaluation strengthen democratic systems? Hanberger (2004) argues that governance, democracy and ►



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► evaluation affect one another in different ways and because these are interdependent phenomena, evaluation affects them simultaneously. Though evaluation is unlikely to bring about democracy all by itself and contributing to making a society more democratic might not be the primary goal, evaluation has implications for governance and democracy (Naidoo, 2016).

Whether an evaluation serves democracy or not depends on many factors: the contextual and political context, the type of evaluation, the institutional and legal framework where it evolves, and the objectives that are to be achieved. Piccotto (2013) highlights that evaluation “is inherently a political activity. It is inextricably confronted with issues of power distribution and rights”. Thus, in order to maintain its objectivity, evaluation needs protection from any attempt of control as well as from pressures and threats that entities, groups or individuals with vested interests might exert.

A growing evaluation culture in Africa: AfrEA’s voice

Despite an uneven, and comparatively lower, engagement of African countries in evaluation practices, an evaluation culture is rapidly expanding across the continent. The African Evaluation Association (AfrEA) reports that the number of formal and informal national evaluation associations in the region has increased from six in 1999 to more than 45 today. With an approach “made in Africa”, AfrEA is promoting strong evaluation practices to support “evaluations that contribute to real and sustained development” (AfrEA, 2017). The Third AfrEA Conference, held in Cape Town in 2004, was particularly important for the region and confirmed that Africa must lead in its own development. AfrEA’s flagship

publication, the African Journal of Evaluation, not only contributes to stimulating intraregional collaboration and strengthening African views on evaluation but it also showcases Africa as an increasingly diverse and dynamic continent.

“to build demand for accountability and use of evidence in decision-making”.

Discussions at AfrEA and other forums point to a growing demand for evaluation and a better relationship between governments and civil society, which continues “to build demand for accountability and use of evidence in decision-making” (AfrEA, 2017). State institutions and development partners are already improving their policies through evaluation evidence; the private sector is using evaluation for business purposes; while civil society and non-governmental organizations are participating in the evaluation process and raising awareness on the use of evaluation as an accountability tool. Nevertheless, the system also reveals important weaknesses on the supply side, such as the lack of planning for the evaluation of policies and programmes, which makes funding difficult.

At the national level, associations and professional organizations are promoting the recognition and integration of evaluation practices and functions in public institutions and policies. The degree of success varies from one to another, but there are some clear examples (such as the South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association (SAMEA)) of what these organizations can accomplish with active membership and thought leadership.

Though evaluation is gaining momentum in Africa, strengthening the evaluation ►

► function still requires backup initiatives. Strengthening national evaluation capacities involves creating the institutional and environmental conditions needed to put evaluation into practice; it also implies stakeholders' participation and adopting approaches that fit the national context. Mostly, what is needed are evaluation capacities to produce evidence of whether the policies, programmes and projects implemented to achieve the national agenda are giving the expected results, and determining if these results are equitable, relevant and sustainable.

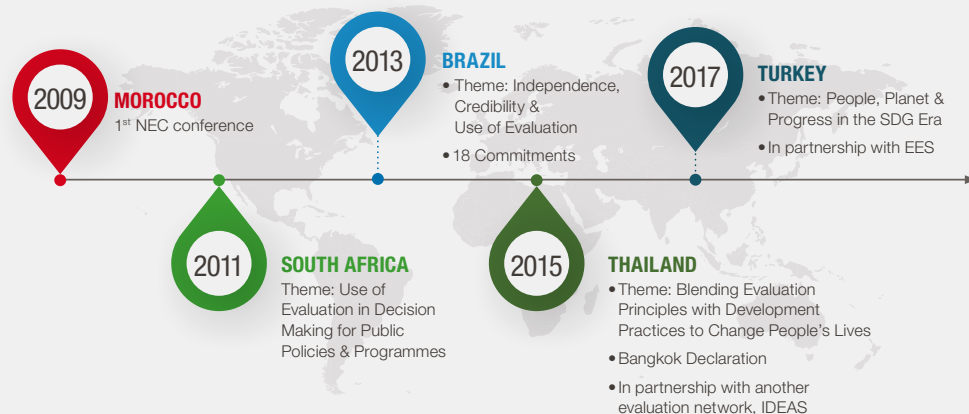
The engagement of Africa with the UNDP NEC series

Over the years, the evaluation community has accumulated a wealth of knowledge in the assessment of development initiatives. Exchanging information, exploring new approaches, sharing innovations, best practices and lessons drawn from past experiences, have become a regular practice among members of the evaluation community.

For the last decade, the Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has been supporting activities to advance an evaluation culture and practice as a tool for accountability and learning. Among them is the National Evaluation Capacities (NEC) Conference series organized by the IEO. Since the first NEC Conference in Morocco, in 2009, the biannual conferences have been an evolving process that have successfully linked theory with practice, vision and ideals with realities (Naidoo and Soares, 2017). One of the conclusions at the 2011 NEC Conference (Johannesburg, South Africa) was that the need for strengthening incentives and capacities, both to produce and use evaluations, is essential. The 4th Conference, in Bangkok (Thailand), adopted a set of 18 commitments to promote evaluation use, define and enhance evaluation processes and methods, engage stakeholders and explore options for institutional structures for managing evaluations. ►►

Timeline of the NEC Conference series organized by UNDP

History & Evolution of NEC Conferences



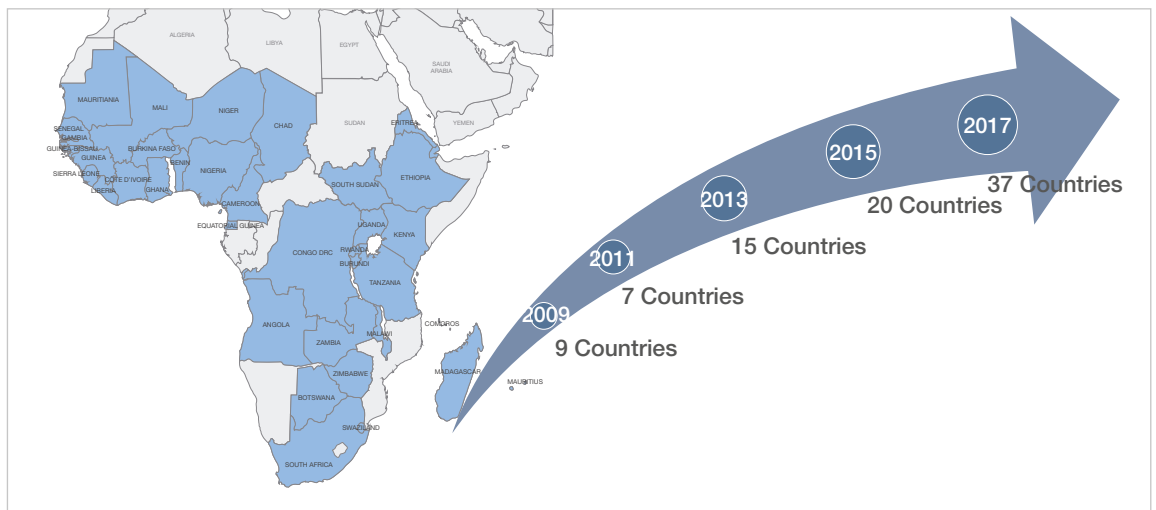
► Since its start, the NEC Conference has grown in participation and scope to become one of the leading events for learning and sharing lessons, innovations, experiences, and perspectives in evaluation. The unprecedented turnout at the last conference, in October 2017 in Istanbul (Turkey), attended by more than 500 participants, illustrates the increasing interest in evaluation. Almost 30 percent of participants from governments and professional associations were from Africa. This wide African representation was possible thanks largely to generous donations from the governments of Finland, Sweden, Norway and the Netherlands, as well as the support of partners such as the Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV) of the African Development Bank, which contributed to a bursary programme for African representation. A total of 37 African countries were represented by 111 participants, including 33 women, allowing all attendees to learn first-hand from the experiences of Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Kenya and Liberia, among others. Overall, the event offered a unique opportunity to explore the implications of the SDGs for evaluation and the development of new partnerships.

One lesson learned from the NEC conferences is that government and partner commitment through long-term investment and change is needed to build national evaluation capacities, but can be diluted if they do not set clear goals and follow-up. Varying levels of development in institutional settings and legal frameworks in the countries reflect their different political contexts, government interests and national development progress. These

“Since its start, the NEC Conference has grown in participation and scope to become one of the leading events for learning and sharing lessons, innovations, experiences, and perspectives in evaluation”.

are aspects of national evaluation capacities that are complex and linked to each country’s development agenda. Thus, they should be taken into consideration when developing future evaluation agendas (Naidoo and Soares, 2017). ►

African countries participating at the NEC Conferences





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► International engagement to support evaluation for the achievement of SDGs in Africa

There are other international entities who support the strengthening of evaluation to advance effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability in Africa. One of them is the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), an interagency professional network that brings together the evaluation units of the United Nations system, including UNDP. While the evaluation units ensure that the work of their respective organizations help to bring about change in the countries, the UNEG provides guidance, coordination, advocacy and support to the evaluation community.

Likewise, the DAC Network on Development Evaluation, that brings together evaluation specialists from development cooperation agencies of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the Evaluation Cooperation Group (ECG), established by the World Bank and regional development

banks (Inter-American, Asian, European and African), contribute to the exchange of information, experience and cooperation for the improvement of individual skills, encouragement of professionalization, standardization of conceptual frameworks and the search for new evaluation methods.

The 2030 Agenda: implications for evaluation and Africa

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted in 2015, entails the most ambitious, comprehensive and complex action plan ever put forth, with the objectives to end all forms of poverty, reduce inequalities, and transform the planet in a more prosperous and sustainable world. The new agenda includes 17 goals and 169 targets that are closely intertwined and interconnected, all reinforcing each other. Indeed, the goals are sometimes ambiguous, with no clear indicators, or indicators for data that does not exist yet. Therefore, to achieve them, it ►►

► is imperative to change from a silos approach to develop and adopt a more holistic perspective which involves all sectors of society.

The 2030 Agenda challenges all Governments to build comprehensive follow-up and review systems to track and inform advancement towards the SDGs (United Nations, 2015). Ten African countries (Benin, Botswana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Togo, Uganda and Zimbabwe) have already complied with the mechanism and presented Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) in 2016 or 2017. Seven more (Cape Verde, Guinea, Mali, Namibia, Niger, Republic of the Congo and Senegal) will do so in 2018.

Compliance with the 2030 Agenda implies that governments must align their national development strategies and plans with the global agenda and build national monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems that fit their needs. Though the 2030 Agenda calls for country-led evaluations, the link between SDGs and evaluation is still weak at national level (UNDP-IEO, 2017). In 2017, an analysis of the first 22 VNRs (four of them from Africa) found that most reports focused more on monitoring than evaluation (Simon et al., 2017). Although this could be partially explained by the practices inherited from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) era, it suggests that understanding the role that M&E systems play in advancing SDGs still has a long way to go.

Other African initiatives to promote accountability

Assessing progress towards SDG achievement is particularly challenging with respect to Goal 16: Peace, justice and strong Institutions. In a working paper on this, Bolaji-Adio (2015) highlights that

indicators might not be enough to assess progress in the areas of governance, peace and security, particularly when it comes to Africa. He argues that the targets under Goal 16 are “complex, inherently political and country-specific” and that more qualitative assessment tools are essential to measure progress.

***“The 2030 Agenda challenges all Governments to build comprehensive follow-up and review systems to track and inform advancement towards the SDGs.*”**

Initiatives such as the Mo-Ibrahim Index and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) can provide some statistical assessment and in-depth analysis to conduct a credible assessment of progress in Goal 16. By compiling data from multiple sources, the Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) is the most comprehensive measurement in this area for the region. It aims to provide a detailed picture of governance performance so African citizens can hold their leadership accountable for the delivery of results. The APRM is a more qualitative mechanism designed to foster improved governance through self-assessment and peer review. Together they offer an opportunity to improve a measuring M&E system leading to accountability, learning, effectiveness and socio-economic growth.

The way forward: finding the right balance

Recent studies (EPAR, 2015, UNDP, 2015 and other cited in UNDP-IEO, 2017) have pointed to important factors ►

► that hinder the development of country-led evaluations. These include political use and resistance to evaluation, limited resources, insufficient understanding of the evaluation function, poor data and the fact that the timing and scope of evaluations are not always aligned with the planning and budget cycles. The gaps translate into low quality reports with no practical impact.

There are several lessons learnt that should be taken into account in order to move forward:

- Country-led evaluation on SDGs is a fundamentally political process. “They require a political constituency that assigns value to, demands and supports the use of evaluative information as a legitimate basis for public policy-making” (UNDP-IEO, 2017, p. 12).
- In the absence of a national enabling environment, evaluation capacity development is likely to be both inefficient and ineffective (UNDP-IEO, 2017).
- Conducting high quality and credible national evaluations requires three basic components: a follow-up and review framework, appropriate funding and capacities for M&E, and the development and integration of new evaluation approaches and methodologies. As seen through the NEC Conference and other initiatives, African countries show varying degrees of development in these three components.
- National evaluation systems need to go beyond the numbers and generation of information about performance.

A sound technical evaluation needs high-quality, rigorous, accessible, timely, reliable and disaggregated data. This type of information combined with relevant evaluative-thinking, ensures a certain quality to the evaluation, but it will not ensure its credibility, neither its use. To be credible, the evaluation process must be independent, impartial and transparent. The use of evaluation in policymaking strongly depends on the quality and credibility of evaluation.

- To add value, a national evaluation system must find a balance between evaluation supply and demand. From the supply side, this means having the capacity to provide sound evidence and evaluative thinking (by producing data, training evaluators, producing reports, providing recommendations, etc.). From the demand side, it implies being able to use the information provided (UNEG, 2012) to influence policy and programme decisions.

Conclusion

There is tremendous potential in the evaluation function and practice to strengthen democracy by helping institutions be more transparent and accountable as well as apply experiences to better decision-making. Evaluation can also help citizens understand if their state institutions are using public resources in the best possible way and if its actions are improving their lives. Whether evaluators, policy-makers and other stakeholders will be able to meet the challenges presented here will depend very much on enabling factors, but above all, it will depend on political will.

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Author's profile

Indran Naidoo is Director of the Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Vice-Chair of the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG). Under his leadership, the evaluation function at UNDP has moved toward full independence, enhancing credibility and expansion of scope and coverage. Indran has also held important oversight positions in South Africa. He holds a PhD from the University of the Witwatersrand, a Masters in Geography, West Virginia University (USA), B.Ed. in Curriculum Development (UNISA) and a B.A. (Honors) in Geography and B. Paed (University of KwaZulu Natal). He has participated in Executive Development programmes at Oxford, Harvard, and Wits Business School. He has also published and presented internationally and is a recipient of several awards and scholarships.



Why Should Countries have National Evaluation Policies?

National Evaluation Policies (NEP) are built on two principles: increasing demand for evaluation and the use of evaluations. When we talk of increasing demand and use of evaluations, we are faced with a chicken vs. egg query, which comes first? Should there be a NEP to guide demand for the use of evaluations? Or should there be a culture for evaluations that would demand a guiding policy?

This article looks at Tanzania, where the lack of a NEP has suppressed the emergence of a culture for evaluations. It argues for having a NEP to promote evaluation culture as well as presents a generation of evidence on policies and development programmes and how, eventually, this enhances accountability, effectiveness, efficiency and equity in development management.

Francis Mwaijande, PhD Mzumbe University, Tanzania

The problem

DEMAND for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) results to inform decision-making in Tanzania is limited due to the absence of a NEP. Indeed, despite the existence of a National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty Monitoring Framework (NSGRP), there is no policy which guides and requires Chief Executive Officers in the government to seek M&E data leading to the evaluation of major and strategic development programmes. The current M&E framework in the country is fragmented across ministries and ministerial department agencies (MDAs) meaning there is neither a harmonized evaluation framework, nor an inbuilt M&E framework and evaluation culture to demand for and use evaluations. The absence of an NEP has led to ill-informed programmes and policy planning, in-efficiency and in-effectiveness in policies and development programme implementation and accountability. Moreover, the few evaluations conducted in Tanzania are done sporadically based on the demand of funding agencies for development programmes.

There are two key important words to understand within the concept of NEP: Evaluation and Policy. Evaluation is a systematic, objective and impartial performance assessment on the efficiency, effectiveness and merit of policy or programmes (OECD, 1991). It is also

defined as “an assessment of planned, ongoing or completed intervention to determine its relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability” (Valadez and Bamberger, 1994) with the intention to obtain and incorporate lessons learned into the decision-making process of policy cycle. Goldman (Goldman, et al., 2015) defines evaluation as a “systematic collection and objective analysis of evidence on public policies, programmes, and organizations to assess issues such as relevance, performance, value for money, impact and sustainability”.

“The absence of an NEP has led to ill-informed programmes and policy planning, in-efficiency and in-effectiveness in policies and development programme implementation and accountability”.

Evaluations are considered as tools to generate evidence for learning and improving the management of socio-economic development programmes and policies. Furthermore, evaluation is defined as a process for objectively determining the worth or significance of a development activity, policy or programme for its relevance to its intended output and outcome (UNEG, 2011). Evaluations therefore, help governments and organizations to ►

► develop and measure performance through the predetermined performance indicators of outputs, outcomes and impact. Evaluation must be understood as part of broader outcomes oriented on public management and accountability (Matodzi, 2015).

On the other hand, policies are purposeful decisions made by authoritative actors in political or organizational systems, recognized because of their formal positions, as having a responsibility for binding choices among goals and alternatives for the society (Cochran and Malone, 1995). They are principles or rules to guide decisions and achieve rational outcomes, as they are also defined as 'systems of laws, regulatory measures, and actions concerning a given accountability, (ibid).

What is a National Evaluation Policy?

A NEP can be defined and equated to “a systematic and institutionalized M&E framework in several interdependent organizational entities with the purpose of informing decision-making and securing oversight function” (Hojlund, 2015). It is also a guide for the evaluation process, activities, resources, and utilization of evaluation results. An examination of South Africa, Uganda, Malaysia, and the Philippines as case studies, shows that NEPs are established with the objectives to “improve the performance of [the] public sector through strengthening of the operational, coordinated, and cost-effective production and use of objective information on implementation and results of national strategies, policies and programmes” (IOCE, 2015).

A NEP, therefore is a purposeful course of action for assessing strategic development policies and programmes. According to Bermudez (2015), a NEP is a framework to guide a purposeful conduct of evaluations

in the public sector in support of good governance, transparency, accountability and evidence-based decision making. (Goldman, et al, 2015) define national evaluation as a “...a purposeful course of action that both governments and non-government organizations that are concerned with development management problems taking it to address problems through systematic means of problem identification, agenda setting, developing alternative ways of addressing socio-economic problems, and formulating the policy to guide evaluation functions in the country”.

Should Countries have a National Evaluation Policy?

The need for a NEP can be determined by asking these basic questions: Are there problems that require evaluation; What would evaluation add; and How would a NEP be necessary? To answer these questions, Mackay (1999) argues that evaluation is an important process which helps governments determine budget allocation and plan decision making. It generates data for policy managers to make informed decisions based on evidence. When we consider the complexity involved in the performance measurement of development programmes, such as measuring citizens' access to safe and clean water and sanitation, or access to health services, quality education, reduction on poverty and inequality against targets, a NEP becomes a necessary tool for enhancing accountability, efficiency, effectiveness, and equity in the development management.

EvalPartners (<http://evalpartners.org>) describes ten reasons as to why countries need NEPs. Among these they argue that, “[NEP] sets standards for evaluations at [the] state level, guides state institutions and evaluation practitioners for, establishment of necessary evaluation mechanisms and systems, and carrying out objective ►►



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► and independent evaluations, it will emphasize evaluation as a requirement of development programming. (Goldman, et al., (2015) justifies why a national evaluation in South Africa was necessary as they found that, “by 2008 and 2009 over 13 million people were receiving social grants, however, inequality remained a major problem, there was dissatisfaction in the country with achievements not keeping pace with peoples’ expectations. The South African government saw M&E as a tool for improving government performance on social service delivery” (Ibid). NEPs therefore, become necessary instruments for guiding the practice of M&E within national development programmes as they provide principles and standards for data collection and management, utilization, financing, etc.

Why Tanzania needs a National Evaluation Policy?

Tanzania is implementing its second Five Year Development Plan (FYDP-II) 2016/17 – 2020/21 with the goal to industrialization through 100 targeted industries in each of 26 regions. Achieving this target requires M&E of the implementation process, evaluating performance and drawing lessons for further programming.

Similarly, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which lay out 17 goals, 169 targets and 232 indicators, is described as the “unprecedented statistical challenge” (Lykkeitof, 2017). The immense spectrum of goals, targets, and indicators imply that the complexity of evaluating SDGs calls for systematic data collection and objective analysis on efficiency, effectiveness, equity, relevance and impact to the nation (Lykkeitof, Ibid). The UN General Assembly President describes this complexity for SDG M&E a challenge, and therefore highlights the need for NEP to guide M&E on national and global development frameworks in

order to track SDG progress in respective countries. Mackay (1999) offers possible actions for strengthening national M&E systems such as, government demand for M&E, strengthening supply of M&E, and strengthened M&E systems. As such, these call for a NEP to guide demand and supply of M&E information as well as capacity development in the country.

As example, robust M&E is required to answer the question, to what extent has SDG goal 2 – end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition – been achieved? Data requirements would include targets and indicators as depicted in the following Table 1.

Situational Analysis of Evaluation Policy in Tanzania

An Organizational Capacity Assessment conducted in 2016 and repeated in 2017 (TanEA, 2017) shows that there is no NEP in Tanzania to guide evaluation practice, accountability and learning, despite having a monitoring framework. Amongst mapped countries with NEP (Rosenstein (2015), Tanzania was one of 32 countries without formalized evaluation policies. The policy gap contributes to a low evaluation culture, essentially that there is no culture to demand and use evaluations in development management programmes. Lack of an evaluation culture comprises the demand for evaluations and use for evidence-based decision making.

Developing a National Evaluation Policy

Formulation of NEP is a process that includes multiple stakeholders’ engagement and sequenced activities. In most cases, national policy formulation is a government function, whereby a responsible government agency initiates ►►

Table 1: Data Requirement for Evaluations for SDGs vs Tanzania FYDP

Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere		Location
Objective	Indicators	(role of TanEA)
1.1 By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than \$1.25 a day	1.1.1 Proportion of population below the international poverty line, by sex, age, employment status and geographical location (urban/rural)	Influence positively actors to undertake necessary information on-Evaluating poverty reduction programmes
1.2 By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions	1.2.1 Proportion of population living below the national poverty line, by sex and age	Influence positively actors to undertake necessary information on proportion of population below national poverty line disaggregated by gender and age
	1.2.2 Proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions	Influence positively actors to undertake necessary information of proportion of men women living on poverty
Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture		FYDP indicators
2.1 By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round	2.1.1 Prevalence of undernourishment	
	2.1.2 Prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the population, based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)	Advocate actors to undertake necessary information on Evaluating prevalence of food insecurity
2.2 By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons	2.2.1 Prevalence of stunting (height for age <-2 standard deviation from the median of the World Health Organization (WHO) Child Growth Standards) among children under 5 years of age	Advocate actors to undertake necessary information on prevalence of stunting among children under 5yrs
	2.2.2 Prevalence of malnutrition (weight for height >+2 or <-2 standard deviation from the median of the WHO Child Growth Standards) among children under 5 years of age, by type (wasting and overweight)	Advocate actors to undertake necessary information on prevalence of malnutrition among children under 5yrs

Source 1: IAEg-SDGs



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► the agenda and leads the process. In other instances, Non-State Actors (NSAs) may initiate an agenda and advise the government on the need for a policy. The government buys-in the agenda and takes it up into the institutional framework and engaging the wide spectrum of stakeholders. Formulation of a NEP therefore, is a consultative process that must include all major key actors. It must embrace principles and techniques of all stakeholders' analysis and engagement processes and engage key stakeholders with interest in M&E in development for improving efficiency, effectiveness and accountability. The process for NEP formulation also requires the identification and engagement of a key coordination ministry for managing and aligning the policy to national interests and priorities.

A NEP is a process that requires resources (capacity, time, human, and finance), widely accepted by stakeholders, and formalization of a process following the policy making process. Mackay (1999) identifies Evaluation Capacity Development (ECD) as a necessary step for building an NEP. The ECD requires identification of key ministries, diagnosis of public sector environment, understanding of factors influencing budget decision making, determining the extent of existing demand for evaluation, assessment of evaluation capabilities of the government, bilateral and multilateral assistance agencies and mapping out options for developing evaluation capacity development.

There are different approaches for developing NEP, however, best practice teaches us that a participatory approach involving all stakeholders in government, civil society, NGOs, Academia and Development Partners is likely to deliver all-inclusive policies. In the case of Tanzania, the major steps include:

Step 1: Problem identification: Are there problems that require NEP in the country?

Step 2: Stakeholders analysis for Tanzania's NEP: Who are the key stakeholders of NEP in terms of use of evaluations?

Step 3: Stakeholders engagement in developing NEP: How should the identified NEP stakeholders be engaged?

Step 4: Prioritizing issues in the Tanzania NEP: What issues and steps should be prioritized in the NEP formulation process?

Identification of stakeholders becomes a critical point in the process, these are the people or institutions that are likely to support, benefit or obstruct the process of developing an NEP. Stakeholders' analysis is a process of identifying and aligning people and institutions along the power-interest matrix. It is an important stage in policy formulation that informs whom to work with as they have interest and power, but also who are likely to be potential threats to the policy. The Power-Interest matrix shows those with High and Low power and interest. For example, with the Tanzania NEP, a stakeholders' analysis is indicated in the following Figure 1.

According to Mackay (1999), the identification of key ministries should focus on those ministries whose main functions are likely to make a difference on resource allocation, policy decisions, reforms, investments, public programme implementation. For the case of Tanzania, key ministries attracting evaluation are the Ministry of Finance and Planning due to their role of financial resource allocation, President's Office – Public Service Management (PO-PSM) due to their role on human resource (M&E) capacity development and management. The President's Office Regional Administration and Local ►

Figure 1: Stakeholders Analysis for NEP



► Government (PORALG), is similarly a key stakeholder as it implements major development programmes in Local Government Authorities (LGAs). It is important to note that developing a NEP requires government and Parliament participation as the key users. Other stakeholders include national evaluation societies and national chapters of the African Parliamentarians' Network on Development Evaluation (APNODE). This not only institutionalizes evaluation, but also promotes a culture for the demand and use of evaluation for enhanced accountability, efficiency and effectiveness in development management.

Challenges of Building a National Evaluation Policy

There are many challenges in having a NEP. In the first place, not every nation and every stakeholder will easily agree and adopt evaluations as a helping tool for enhancing accountability. Some have voiced and perceived evaluation as policing and therefore resist evaluations. The very critical challenge is getting government “buy-in” for evaluation. Observations from discussions at the 8th African Evaluation

Association conference in Kampala Uganda, 2017, showed that evaluation is often seen as policing of [watch dog] government operations. This creates a mistrust and dislike of evaluations by the very organizations that should be the recipients of the positive impacts of evaluation. Contrary to the policing perception, evaluation should be positively taken as a helping tool for increasing efficiency, effectiveness, impact as well as learning for future development programming. Governments, being the major stakeholders and users of evaluations, represent key players on demand side for evaluation in all its sectors and development programmes. The International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) (2016) identifies developing a national evaluation policy as one of the critical challenge towards developing a national evaluation capacity. Therefore, it is critically important that the establishment of a NEP becomes an inclusive process of the government and other key stakeholders.

Having champions for NEP in the Parliament to initiate and support evaluation as a tool for improving accountability is key. The APNODE was established in ►►




► 2014 during the 7th African Evaluation Association Conference, with the objective to increase Parliamentary oversight through evaluations (<http://idev.afdb.org>). Attending Parliamentarians committed to the establishment and strengthening of evaluation in respective countries including fostering NEP. The APNODE Tanzania chapter was launched in 2017, with 40 (10.3%) members of Parliament trained on the use of M&E for oversight functions and evidence-based decisions. These are key actors in the NEP process as well as future users of the output.

Conclusion

This article has presented the process of NEP formulation which requires national dialogue and engagement of key stakeholders. Identification of stakeholders in the government, Parliament, civil society organizations and Voluntary

Organizations for Professional Evaluations is of key importance. A preliminary dialogue with stakeholders in the Tanzanian Ministry of Finance and Planning as well as the PORALG, indicated a desire to review the need for and establish an NEP in Tanzania. This article concludes that, in general, NEPs are likely to prompt demand and use of evaluations in countries. Building an evaluation culture enhances effectiveness, efficiency and accountability in the management of development policies and programmes. In summary:

- There is great consensus amongst M&E professionals and practitioners that there are gaps in demand for use of evaluations, standards, and regulating M&E standards.
- There is also a consensus that there are fragmented sectoral M&E frameworks that require a unified policy. ►

- ▶ ■ The Tanzania Evaluation Association as a VOPE is pioneering and working with stakeholders for the establishment of a Tanzania NEP.
- The way forward for Tanzania to have a NEP is to build the desire for strengthening efficiency, effectiveness, equity, and accountability in development management. There is always synergy between countries having an operating NEP with good governance and accountability on development programmes. Tanzania's Five Year Development Plan (FYDP-II) leads industrial transformations for becoming a Middle Income Country by 2025. This can be achieved with an enhanced culture of monitoring, evaluation and drawing lessons from processes and implementation of development programmes.
- NEP is likely to prompt conditions which improve results for management, governance and accountability in development policies and programmes. It also ensures evidence-based decision making in the Cabinet, Parliament, and Local Government Authorities. 

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Challenges and Opportunities in Promoting Development Evaluation at the Legislative Level

The development field has witnessed an evolution of development evaluation from a purely donor-based activity to a tool for administration and accountability by national governments. Based on the experience of the African Parliamentarians' Network on Development Evaluation (APNODE), this article presents the challenges and opportunities faced by users of evaluation, principally parliaments and parliamentarians, in their quest to demand and use evaluation as a tool for parliamentary oversight.

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Introduction

DEVELOPMENT evaluation is a burgeoning tool that can be used as evidence for learning and promoting development effectiveness and sustainable development in Africa. As more African countries democratize, the onus is on governments to become more efficient and accountable. Accountability requires that public officials, whether elected or appointed, respond to the demands of citizens without discrimination.

For development evaluation to make a successful contribution to the implementation of governance and public policy, an enabling environment needs to be created. Parliaments as public sector institutions have the fundamental role of ensuring open and free political deliberations and the representation of citizens. Through their core functions of legislation, representation and oversight, parliaments “sit at the centre of the web of domestic accountability” (Menocal and O’Neil, 2012). They hold governments to account on behalf of the people, ensuring that government policy and action are both efficient and commensurate with the needs of the public. Parliamentarians on the other hand, fulfil three crucial roles in governance. They hold governments to account, establish a transparent and trusting relationship between state and citizens, and enact and scrutinise government expenditures. Fundamental to all of these responsibilities

is a commitment to, and knowledge of, evaluation: of policies, strategies, programmes and projects.

The demand for development evaluation is growing, as African governments are increasingly under pressure to employ effective strategies for stability, security and economic growth as well as be accountable for national resource use. Some countries, such as Côte d’Ivoire, Benin and Senegal, have adopted mechanisms and tools that support the use of development evaluation in the implementation of public policies. Despite the aforementioned, many African parliaments still lack the independence, knowledge and resources to perform their functions (IPU, 2009). As a result, the oversight role of parliament, and its role in shaping development strategies that reflect the concerns of the people, tend to be overlooked. This weakness is compounded by weak institutional or regional entities, where core building blocks for public sector effectiveness and governance – effective budget systems, planning mechanisms, core data, etc. – are lacking (Acevedo et al, 2010). As such, African parliaments have had to grapple with a lack of human capacity to fully understand the use and application of evaluation for development processes.

In response to this shortcoming, suppliers of evaluation within and outside Africa, ranging from civil society, Voluntary Organizations for Professional ►

► Evaluation (VOPEs) and international organizations, among others, are supporting governments to canvass and foster ideas and strategies aimed at increasing the supply of and demand for evaluation at the public sector and legislative levels. The objective behind this is not only to foster an evaluation culture in Africa, but also to build public sector capacity to use evaluation to inform policies and institutionalize effective and sustainable systems in governments.

The role of parliamentary networks on development evaluation in fostering demand for evaluation

Parliamentary networks are one of the ways through which African parliaments' capacities to support the use of development evaluation in decision-making processes can be strengthened. The African Parliamentarians' Network on Development Evaluation (APNODE) ►



APNODE Executive Committee members sign a declaration supporting the Global Evaluation Agenda 2016–2020 – “EvalAgenda 2020” on the 11/11/2016 in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire

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► is a network initiated by African parliamentarians in March 2014 in Yaoundé, Cameroon based on the recognition of the important function of evaluation in national decision-making and the crucial role of parliamentarians, as policy makers, in making good use of evaluation (PFDE and EvalPartners, 2015). The network works towards enhancing the capacity of both parliaments (as institutions) and parliamentarians (as individuals) to improve their oversight, policy making and national decision-making roles. This is done by undertaking multiple activities for bridging the gap between evaluators, who provide the evidence, and parliamentarians, who demand and use it; encouraging parliamentarians and parliaments to institutionalize evaluation; and empowering them to warrant evaluations that respond to their demand.

APNODE goes beyond governments, acknowledging that other stakeholders play crucial roles in development evaluation. As a result, membership is open to individuals and organizations demonstrating a keen interest in the network. These include current and former parliamentarians from Africa and other regions, national parliaments, civil society and private sector organizations, research institutions, national and regional evaluation associations, and development partners. The role of these stakeholders contributes to development, implementation, synergy and partnerships in strengthening Evaluation Capacity Development (ECD) at individual and institutional levels (Kalugampitiya et al., 2014).

APNODE works with both institutions and individuals for whom credible and impartial evidence on what does and does not work is crucial. By facilitating training on the use of evaluation by parliamentarians, and their role in creating an enabling environment for evaluation, APNODE not only

promotes an evaluation culture in regional member countries as part of AfDB's evaluation capacity development initiative, but it also endeavours to build parliamentary capacities as policy makers to effectively engage – in a strategic and meaningful manner – in national evaluation processes, leading to decisions and policies that are equity focused and evidence based.

To date, the network has trained more than 100 parliamentarians on various evaluation themes such as "Championing National Evaluation Policies and Systems", where parliamentary capacities in strengthening national monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems are enhanced to allow for evaluating the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with a "no one left behind" lens on equity focused and gender-responsive evaluation methodologies. Trainings on the mainstreaming of evaluation tools at the legislative level have created opportunities leveraged by parliamentarians to demand and use evidence-based evaluation in their decision-making processes. In addition, workshops on the role of stakeholders in evaluation enable parliamentarians and parliaments to work with key stakeholders such as VOPEs, CSOs and donors in order to influence evaluation at the national level.

Networks such as APNODE provide the facility through which countries in Africa can learn from each other on how to engage their parliaments to use development evaluation at the parliamentary level. For example, in Togo, not only has a national chapter of APNODE been established, but a national evaluation policy has been adopted, managed by the Ministry of Planning and Development. The APNODE Togolese chapter regularly engages with the Speaker of Parliament, thus ensuring that evaluation is a constant theme in parliament. Other African countries can learn from this experience. ►

► In Uganda, parliamentarians now demand the Prime Minister's office to provide periodic reports on evaluation with recommendations by evaluators. This provides current and prospective APNODE members with an exemplary model of how effective evaluation can be used by policy makers at the parliamentary level, as well as how effective evaluation can be in ensuring decisions made are evidence-based.

In Zimbabwe, after their participation in the first APNODE Annual General Meeting held in Abidjan in 2015, members of parliament passed a motion that was tabled and debated, leading to the establishment of the APNODE National Chapter in Zimbabwe. Because the Chapter is based at the parliament, it has been able to successfully sensitize not only its members but also ministers on the importance of development evaluation in decision making processes.

An alternative approach used to engage the parliament in development evaluation is the establishment of a parliamentary caucus. This is the case of Kenya, where the local APNODE Chapter is established as a parliamentary caucus with the overarching objective to enhance the use of evidence by parliamentarians while undertaking their oversight, legislative and decision-making roles. The caucus brought together parliamentary health committees, the executive branch and outside think tanks. The caucus went further to solicit parliamentarians as champions for the use of evidence in discourse.

Challenges in promoting development evaluation at the legislative level

Despite the collaboration of parliaments and parliamentarians with and through parliamentary networks, the mainstreaming of evaluation into parliamentary roles

remains a painfully slow process, mainly due to the following challenges:

- A significant number of donor organizations and institutions do not fund parliamentary networks directly, as most funding is directed to their country offices, who disburse the funds. The issue with this funding modality is that it is often not flexible enough for parliamentary networks whose members come from multiple countries. Secondly, donor organizations have priority countries where most of their funding is channelled to, and this hinders the chances of multi-country partnerships / networks that need support in order to grow and cement their membership. Lastly, the issue of funding may also stem from a lack of adequate understanding of what development evaluation is all about (Tarsilla, 2014) and what it entails by the donor organization, or exactly how the interplay between development evaluation, public policy and development can be achieved in Africa, especially at the national level. This also suggests that low interest for evaluation in Africa is due to ECD not being considered a programmatic area, but an add-on activity.
- In many African countries there is still, unfortunately, exclusive reliance on external expertise which results in evaluations that are inapplicable – no matter how technically sound – due to the absence of an organic link to the administrative apparatus (Schiavo-Campo, 2005). Internally, the government, through the parliament, needs to create strong in-house capacity to design, guide, and contract and monitor both internal and external evaluations. This in-house capacity requires a systemic connection to parliamentarians in whatever manner deemed effective in their respective countries (Schiavo-Campo, 2005). ►►

- ▶ ■ Attracting and keeping parliamentarians interested in evaluation has been a major challenge. This issue lies predominantly with the slow progress in the demand for evaluation and in African countries slowly accepting development evaluation as an important tool in effective policy and decision-making and fostering good governance. Furthermore, development evaluation is not easily accepted by many parliamentarians for various political reasons, such as systematic alignment with the views of the government in place. Even if parliaments have robust power on paper, the political realities inside and outside parliaments make them regularly fail to exercise their duties (Tarsilla, 2014). In addition to the above, parliamentarians suffer a high turnover rate due to the electoral nature of their office, such that capacity can be lost after each election. When parliamentarians gain skills in development evaluation, these skills are lost to their parliament if they lose their electoral seat and/or leave parliament. This means that the demand for evaluation is further hindered, with knowledge and skills transfer at the parliamentary level – in reference to development evaluation – jeopardized. As such, laying a cornerstone for the demand for development evaluation by policy makers, principally parliamentarians, through training, knowledge transfer and application remains a challenge in the establishment of an evaluation culture in Africa.
- Lack of resources and/or capacity is also an issue that has plagued the enhancement of evaluation at the legislative level. Parliament, also known as the legislature, is responsible for making laws. Effective law-making needs evidence to back up results, expectations and consequences. The

law-making function of parliament frequently requires expertise and capacity no one can expect from all parliamentarians especially in a new field such as evaluation. Since parliament does not consist of professional lawyers, and evaluators who can be expected to understand existing laws and suggest what new laws, and evaluate policies, as this function in most cases is reserved for professionals who are mostly outside the legislative jurisdiction, the role of Parliament in this case is therefore a very limited one of discussing legislation and approving it without implementing its oversight role.

“Even if parliaments have robust power on paper, the political realities inside and outside parliaments make them regularly fail to exercise their duties”.

Opportunities in promoting development evaluation at the legislative level

In order to nurture development evaluation in Africa, the continued existence and expansion of parliamentary networks is crucial to create the link between the suppliers and users of evaluation, allowing parliaments and parliamentarians to understand the principles of evaluation. Parliamentary networks have the capacity to bring national parliaments and parliamentarians together, to work jointly towards a common understanding of the need for evaluation for effective decision-making. An increase in parliamentary network membership is therefore an important opportunity to create an enabling environment for learning, ▶

► exchange and cooperation between the suppliers and demanders of evaluation on the continent.

Secondly, from APNODE's experience, for development evaluation to be effective, it

“Effective law-making needs evidence to back up results, expectations and consequences”.

needs to be actively used and promoted at the institutional level. Parliament exercising its oversight mandate at the legislative level offers another opportunity to promote the use of evaluation. It expands parliamentarians' ability to manoeuvre, with development evaluation as the key instrument used to gain insights into the design, implementation and results of policy (Speer et al, 2015). Parliaments have a direct responsibility for putting evaluation on the political agenda, since evaluation of legislation and government expenditure is more often than not triggered by the parliament, whereby it demands evaluation through a parliamentary procedural request (Speer et al, 2015). More indirectly, members of parliament often question ministers on their policies, processes, content, progress, results, etc. Questions on evaluation are part of a broader controlling/oversight and monitoring role of parliament vis-à-vis government (Speer et al, 2015). It is paramount that both parliaments and parliamentarians work together to use evaluative knowledge for policy development and governance decisions at the micro and macro levels. In essence, parliament can stimulate both the demand and supply of evaluations as well as contribute to an enabling environment for evaluation by ensuring that a legal framework is in place and by advocating for evaluation (ECD Uganda, 2014), or as

some APNODE members' countries have done, institutionalizing evaluation into their constitution.¹


Conclusion

Capacity development is a long-term process wherein national governments or regional institutions must own and lead the process and provide long-term support in order to maintain crucial gains. This is more important in an age where development evaluation has moved from a purely donor-based activity to a tool for management and accountability by national governments. The support of governments needs to be more innovative and holistic, focusing on institutional development, individual training, and creating an enabling environment for the promotion of an evaluation culture (OECD-DAC, 2014).

In Africa, the evaluation capacity development journey has only begun. As parliamentary networks continue their efforts – with the support of development partners – to promote an evaluation culture on the African continent by strengthening national M&E systems, establishing regional networks and communities of practice, establishing evaluation platforms, and strengthening national and regional evaluation associations, there is a strong possibility that the architecture needed for sustaining evaluation may start to take hold. But this will only succeed if it is pulled by all local actors – both inside and outside parliaments – and not just pushed by parliamentary networks.

APNODE's experience shows that development evaluation and ECD support must address both the supply (evaluators) and demand (users) side of evaluation, and that as users of ►►

evaluation, parliaments and parliamentarians have an interest in development evaluation. Although challenges such as lack of financial, institutional and human

capacity exist, the opportunities offered by parliamentary networks are there for the seizing. 

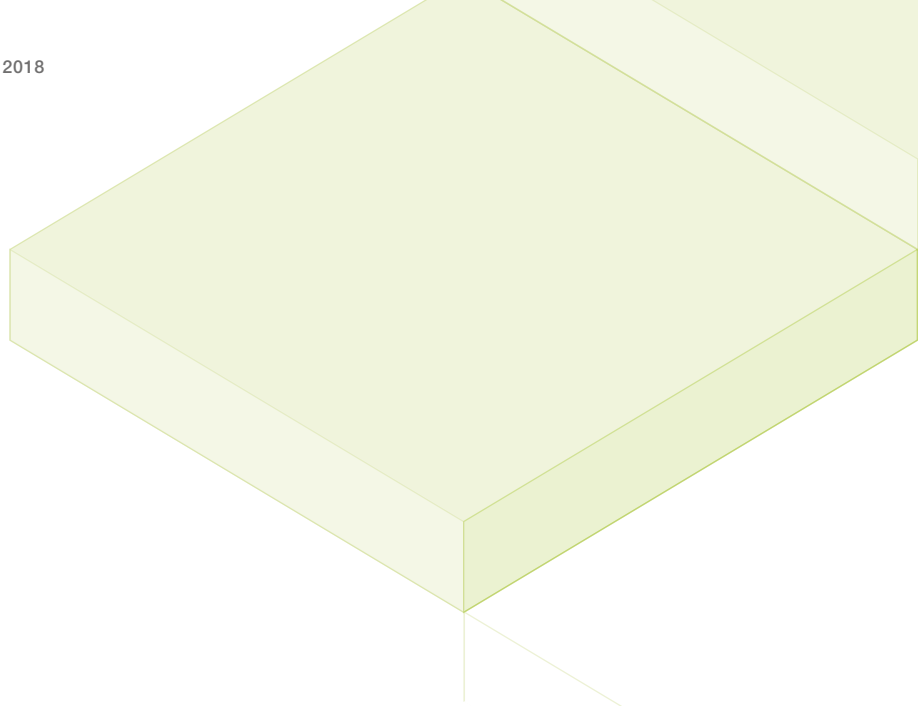


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Trends in Supply and Demand for Evaluation in Africa, a View from CLEAR-AA

Growing levels of interest among African leaders in establishing national evaluation systems signal a positive move in transitioning away from a historically donor-driven agenda towards a country-owned one. While this movement generally remains concentrated within the executive branch of government, there is great opportunity to twin the construction of national evaluation systems with the deepening of democracy by enlarging the number of stakeholders who take part in this nation-building exercise. The skills needed to grow capacity within bureaucracies and legislatures to manage and/or implement high quality evaluations require a collaborative approach in building competency frameworks that create a pathway for career development and upskilling in this burgeoning discipline.

Laila Smith and Candice Morkel, Centre for Learning on Evaluation and Results for Anglophone Africa

Key Messages

- The current culture of evaluation in many African countries is one where evaluations are used as tools for accountability rather than learning.
- Political cycles create instability and often slow down the momentum of institutionalizing evaluation systems.
- There is a growing desire in African countries to resolve the “professionalization debate” in order to address the challenges of “supply” and “demand”.
- There is a need for more research on what works in Evaluation Capacity Development in order to have a greater impact on strengthening the profession of evaluation.
- Evaluation Capacity Development must move beyond the dominance of training as an intervention, and adopt more integrated and transformative strategies for strengthening evaluation capacities.

Introduction

THIS piece outlines four trends in the supply and demand of evaluation in Africa. The first part focuses on shifts in growing country ownership in the use of evaluation from the Executive and the growing demand and use of evaluation by parliamentarians. The second section captures key debates amongst the producers of evaluations and how the providers of Evaluation Capacity Development (ECD), namely universities, are responding to these debates through efforts to try to standardize curricula.

Trend 1: From donor-driven to country-owned national evaluation systems

Donor-driven evaluation has been the norm since the dawn of this emerging practice on the African continent. Drawing from findings of the African Evaluation Database (AFRED) report that covers supply and demand trends over ten years (2005–2015) by the Centre for Research on Evaluation, Science and Technology of Stellenbosch University (CREST), analysis reveals that: ►

- ▶ ■ Donors remain the primary source for the commissioning of evaluations (Mouton and Wildschut, 2017)¹. Of the evaluations reviewed (N=2052), approximately 70% were carried out by a combination of donors (45%) and academic institutions (25%);
- Out of these evaluations where data was available (N=1512), 67% were authored by non-African institutions (predominantly from the West);
- Significantly, who commissioned the evaluation – be it government or donor – determined the types of evaluation carried out and was directly related to the type of methods used. For example, in donor-commissioned evaluations, the dominant methods used were randomised control trials and quasi-experimental designs. By contrast, government commissioned evaluations focused predominantly on mid-term reviews, implementation evaluations, functional reviews and performance audits (ibid.) in order to review progress on policies, programmes and projects. Donors, with a larger budget, have focused on the end-line in terms of the contribution of their investments in having an impact.

“Uganda, Benin and South Africa stood out as being the leaders in establishing national evaluation systems as a response to growing government-driven demand, rather than donor-driven demand, for evaluations”.

Moving from regional to country-level trends, Porter and Goldman, reflecting on a snapshot of the state of monitoring

and evaluation (M&E) in Africa from their observations of a six-nation gathering in 2012², shared lessons on what was emerging in the M&E landscape at a national level. In their view, Uganda, Benin and South Africa stood out at as being the leaders in establishing national evaluation systems as a response to growing government-driven demand, rather than donor-driven demand, for evaluations. These three countries have, since 2012, taken big steps forward in deepening the institutional architecture of evaluation systems. This has included: planning which programmes or policies of national importance should be selected for evaluations; putting in place guidelines for which methods should be used according to the timing of the evaluation in a programme or policy cycle; building a centralized repertoire of evaluations in order to draw from this learning historically; and tracking improvement measures emerging from the evaluations findings.

In 2017, Twende Mbele³ and CLEAR-AA hosted a dialogue on “lessons emerging from established (Uganda, Benin and South Africa) and emergent National Evaluation Systems (Ghana, Kenya)”. Some of the key findings from this dialogue were:

- The importance of a central unit in the Presidency or Office of the Prime Minister mandated to lead evaluation systems. If there is political will, these units/agencies have the authority to deepen systems through a government-wide approach and usually have the technical capacity to drive this political will through a few designated champions.
- The value of having an evaluation policy in advance of the establishment of rules and regulations in order to bring some definition of how the system will work, and how it can allow for impartiality in construction of the system. ▶▶



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- ▶ ■ The need for evaluations to be followed-up in terms of tracking how recommendations are implemented. This is key in ensuring a change agenda emerges from this system construction. Central agencies play a big role in making sure evaluations are successfully implemented. Nevertheless, the real change agents are at lower levels of government, such as those responsible for ensuring use of evaluations by grappling with how best to implement the recommendations.

Trend 2: Widening national evaluation systems to include legislators

In terms of widening National Evaluation Systems, CLEAR-AA has seen the role of legislators as particularly important in their oversight role over the executive, which is where the bulk of power is vested in establishing NES on the continent. Given the fragile democracies of many

African countries, parliaments are themselves limited in their ability to provide sustained evaluation capacity development for their legislators. South Africa is the only country in the region that has its own M&E budget for training content providers and researchers, as these are the staff that weather the storm of political electoral cycles.

Three key insights derived from the capacity building training of South African legislators are:

1. Legislators face challenges in conducting effective oversight missions as the questions asked during these visits concentrate on the activity and output levels of results. Monitoring outcomes is not possible if parliamentarians are not given the tools, guidance or data to do this.
2. Oversight monitoring is work that often occurs outside the formal structure of oversight of existing ▶▶

- ▶ legislative frameworks and therefore lacks authority. Furthermore, the information gathered by individuals/researchers is often not used within formal parliamentary oversight processes. For instance, although the Constitution of a country has primacy in establishing the authority and mandate of oversight work and should be followed for the benefit of citizens, political interests primarily derived from political party dynamics and factors, such as electoral cycles, are often more influential in shaping legislators' behaviour in their oversight function. Party structures and adherence to this political hierarchy can trump the value of good evidence in decision-making.
3. In order to bring findings from constituency work into the formal process of oversight work, the chairperson of a parliamentary committee has the influential role of having findings passed as a petition. This is where the committee would have to either validate the findings or not. In this manner, committee structures have a powerful role to play in using evidence to make recommendations to parliament and in doing so influencing decision-making at the highest levels.

The Supply-side of the equation: Observations on current trends in the professionalization debate

It has been said that “there is no perfect evaluator or evaluation team”, based on the maxim that evaluation is often more art than science (Podems, 2014). In fact, many good evaluators have no formal M&E qualifications, yet are used extensively by donors, whereas a formal qualification in M&E does not guarantee good evaluation practice.

Trend 3: Deepening debates on professionalization

The issue of the formalisation of evaluation as a profession is contested terrain. Although a number of researchers have written extensively on the subject of professionalization, consensus on the matter has not yet been reached. There are a number of challenges in establishing M&E as a profession, many of which have been elaborated by a number of authors (for example Wilcox and King, Buchanan and Kuji-Shikatani, Podems, Goldman and Jacob, and others in the Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation Special Edition published in 2014). These challenges include divergent opinions on which competencies must be standardized in order to cater to all levels and types of practitioners (as not all individuals in the sector are necessarily evaluators – some are commissioners and evaluation managers for example). There also remain some who harbour concerns about how credentialing processes, based on competencies, may exclude and disadvantage some individuals, or be too strict to allow for nuances between various types of evaluations (King and Podems, 2014).

Globally, the debate has not yet been resolved around whether or not the field is ready for formal recognition as a profession (King and Podems, 2014: vii). Although credentialing systems such as those developed by the Canadian Evaluation Society in 2009 and the Japanese Evaluation Society in 2011, have moved the field closer to formal professionalization (Wilcox and King, 2014), not many others have managed to do so since. An observation from CLEAR-AA's work in the region is that the balance seems to have shifted in favour of professionalization, or at least the creation of some kinds of standards and competencies for evaluators amongst African evaluators and those who work in evaluation on the continent. Reflecting on the 2017 conference of the American ▶▶

► Evaluation Association (AEA), there also appears to be growing resolve by academic institutions to provide some parameters for professionals seeking to strengthen their competencies, as well as new entrants hoping to break into the field.

Despite the contested terrain around competencies and professionalization, there is an urgency amongst governments and universities on the African continent to settle the matter. Many more universities in Africa are embarking on initiatives to establish postgraduate M&E programmes to provide for the rising demand for professional qualifications in M&E, including, or as example, the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA). GIMPA, CLEAR-AA's West African partner centre, launched the Postgraduate Diploma in M&E in 2017, and is currently developing the curriculum for a Masters in M&E. There is also still an unabated mushrooming of opportunities for professional development in M&E, both in non-academic institutions, as well as institutions of higher learning. A cursory

glance at recruitment practices also indicates that organisations and governments are requiring specialised qualifications and greater levels of experience in M&E. A recent study by the African Capacity Building Foundation reinforces the CLEAR-AA perspective that leveraging the full implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Africa requires building human capacity in a range of areas, including results-based management (ACBF, 2017).

CLEAR-AA, together with a few institutions from countries across the continent, is currently piloting a standardized set of competencies for M&E, and a standardized postgraduate curriculum in M&E. Some universities have indicated interest in piloting this standardised curriculum. The interest, it seems, stems from consensus that "something" needs to be done to provide quality assurance into the training and education programme of evaluators. The AEA has also taken an interest in the possibility of establishing Africa-wide evaluator competencies and a credentialing process. ►►



► **Trend 4: Moving beyond training towards more transformative and integrated evaluation capacity development strategies**

The challenge facing the demand and supply question in Africa is: what is a good evaluation and/or how good is good enough? It is important to recognize that “evaluators are made, not born” (Lavelle and Donaldson, 2010 in World Bank, 2014), and there is no evaluation deity that bestows a gift of evaluation on certain individuals. The role of capacity development is therefore critical – however, if after decades of evaluation capacity development (ECD) efforts, all indications are that the gap between supply and demand is still significantly large, what are we doing wrong?

One of the key issues may be the absence of accurately measuring what works in ECD. Morkel and Ramasobana (2017) found that there is little empirical evidence that indicates whether ECD processes, activities and outcomes are ultimately effective, as well as very little empirical evidence that helps to interpret how change happens, and how this may shape capacity development efforts. Although more research is needed in this area, there have been very limited attempts by some institutions (with quite a significant capacity building ‘footprint’ in Africa) to measure the effect of training on behavioural change, knowledge, attitudes and practices (ibid.). There is growing consensus, however, that building capacity is about more than just training – an enabling environment has a critical impact on the successful retention and application of skills and competencies.

Even if only African nationals conducted evaluations in Africa, attaining a perfect state of equilibrium between the demand and supply of evaluators, or

evaluation-related professionals, is aspirational but probably not likely. There is no single, internationally standardized set of competencies for M&E to provide direction to government, academia, civil society, donors and the private sector in building capacity and strengthening institutions for M&E. Evaluators are also not the only actors in the professionalization arena, making it even more difficult to establish competencies that will cater to other types of actors, such as commissioners, policy advisors, strategic planners and researchers who are all involved in strengthening the production and utilization of evaluation evidence.

The terms “demand” and “supply” – borrowed from economics – must also be considered cautiously, as they lend themselves to the commodification of evaluation (and evaluation professionals). With the rapid growth in the demand for evaluators and related professionals, it has become highly attractive for individuals to acquire these skills through specialized training in M&E, which is a key driver of the ECD market. Many more individuals are accessing training opportunities, sometimes numerous times across various institutions, and in programmes with varying degrees of overlap.

It is rare, however, for newly trained M&E recruits to “hit the ground running”, and many years of on-the-job training is required before a certain level of proficiency is acquired. This also brings into question the kind of curriculum that is needed to develop the desired sets of skills and competencies – some courses include a workplace-based component, whilst others do not. Some are exclusively face-to-face, whilst blended learning is slowly gaining popularity. There are those who believe that a solid grounding in a professional discipline is a fundamental requirement before developing M&E competencies, while others ►►

► believe that evaluation should be taught as an independent discipline in its own right. There is a need to develop a robust, agreed-upon body of knowledge that provides the foundations of M&E curriculum across institutions as what is taught in any institution is based on epistemological preferences, and is often not applicable across all contexts. The absence of these kinds of standards to guide both providers and consumers of M&E training, prevents us from reaching a state of functional equilibrium, where there are enough local M&E professionals who possess the *right* skill-set for the range of roles required in the sector.

Nonetheless, more research is needed on the actual effects of training programmes as the evaluation discipline gradually gains prominence, and university programmes focusing on evaluation do not appear to be on the decline (Lavelle and Donaldson, 2010 in World Bank, 2014). Although both academic and non-academic institutions have unique roles in the ECD landscape, the CLEAR-AA evaluation capacity development model now carries a more deliberate and focused attention on the role of institutions of higher learning in the evaluation eco-system, as the role of such institutions in teaching and learning provides a strong point of departure for this growing field in Africa. Regardless of who takes the lead in this area, we do not yet know enough about the impact of ECD efforts on strengthening evaluation practice and effectively meeting demand for robust evidence – as more research is needed in this area.

One of the key challenges may be the dominance of training as an ECD strategy. It is widely recognized that training is only one aspect of capacity development initiatives, and that issues in the enabling environment play a critical role in ensuring the effectiveness of evaluation practice at country level. Unfortunately, too many “capacity development” strategies still focus exclusively on training, and are not integrated into a broader intervention that incorporates changes required at policy, institutional and structural levels. Organizations at the forefront of ECD in Africa need to take the lead in ensuring that a more integrated approach to ECD is adopted as standard practice.

Conclusion

In sum, the first section of this article provided an overview of various bodies of work that point to the importance of building country ownership over the systems that drive the commissioning, production and use of evaluations. A wider involvement of stakeholders in the building of National Evaluation Systems is key to this. The second section reinforces the growing interest of the evaluation “supply side” in coherence amongst various stakeholders in the sector around issues of professionalization and standardization (for example competencies and curriculum design). It also highlights the need to move beyond training towards more integrated evaluation capacity development strategies to ensure greater impact on strengthening evaluation practice on the continent.

eVALU



Participants at the launch of the Development Evaluation Training Programme in Africa (DETPA) in Johannesburg, South Africa

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Endnotes

- 1 CLEAR-AA commissioned CREST to construct the AFRED database in order to promote greater scholarly research on evaluation on the continent. The database captures basic bibliographic and other related metadata on selected country papers, terms of reference, presentations, journal articles, conference proceedings/papers/presentations and reports with respect to evaluations for the period 2005–2015. The geographical scope currently covers 12 sub-Saharan Anglophone countries: South Africa, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Ghana, Nigeria, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Botswana and Namibia.
- 2 The workshop, convened by CLEAR-AA, included government agencies from Benin, Burundi, Ghana, Kenya, Senegal, South Africa and Uganda.
- 3 Twende Mbele is a country-driven learning initiative involving Uganda, Benin, South Africa, IDEV at the African Development Bank and CLEAR AA.

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Authors' profile

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Strategies to Increase the Supply and Demand for Evaluation in Africa

Governments in African countries are making efforts to improve good governance, notably by taking evidence-based decisions, but their actions are hindered by the lack or the weakness of an evaluation culture. In most of these countries, the supply of and demand for evaluation are relatively low. The reason is that on the continent, while the decision-makers use monitoring and evaluation (M&E) data from relevant public services or from foreign evaluators, they fail to consider other actors' opinions—universities, civil society and private-sector evaluators.

Moreover, the shortage of training equipment and structures for evaluators compounds financial constraints and the lack of an evaluation culture, as African countries do not deem it necessary to train a significant number of evaluation practitioners and to set a sufficient quantity of dedicated training structures. Therefore, in this article, I propose some actions that may increase the supply and demand for evaluation in Africa.

Elie Walter Mbeck, Independent Consultant, Cameroon

Introduction

AFRICA is a fast-growing continent, and governments have been making efforts to improve good governance, for which the evaluation of public sector actions is essential. Indeed, evaluation contributes to better measuring economic growth and development in terms of level, pace and efficiency. Thanks to evaluation, public servants can be held accountable for their acts. Despite their obvious willingness to assess government actions, many African countries lack a culture of evaluation and, as a result, the level of evaluation supply and demand remains relatively low.

African countries wrongly believed that the design of an evaluation policy or the creation of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) units within public services would be sufficient to establish a culture of evaluation. However, creating a culture of evaluation requires a certain number of prerequisites. Firstly, political will, which shows that the government is aware of the need for evaluation and may be planning to engage in evaluation practice, is necessary. Secondly, African states should spare no effort to improve the quality and quantity of evaluation supply and demand. Thirdly, there is a need for synergy between all stakeholders, including the government, academia, the private sector, and development partners. Improvements in the supply of evaluation depend on this.

Current situation

African countries are making efforts to increase M&E supply and demand, but such efforts are not sufficient and satisfactory in most cases. Field results are ambivalent¹, reflecting isolated efforts in several countries.

“Thanks to evaluation, public servants can be held accountable for their acts”.

One of the major challenges is the lack of evaluation courses in Africa’s academic system. As a result, it is difficult to get trained in evaluation within the region. Where evaluation training institutes exist, they have a low intake capacity and do not have enough lecturers. To curb the shortage of lecturers, these institutions are obliged to hire senior evaluators from the West at a higher cost. Due to this high cost, Africa’s evaluation training institutes tend to have higher training fees that are unaffordable to a large segment of the population, making it a discipline for the “well-off”. This state of affairs excludes training for equally intelligent middle class and poor students.

Moreover, a large number of states on the continent do not have evaluation training institutes. Consequently, nationals of African countries who wish to get ►

► trained in evaluation must avail themselves of options such as travelling abroad, especially to Western countries. For many African countries, scholarships are a good means of accessing training in the West, though in a dispersed manner. Unfortunately, in most cases, the scholarships are small in number (about a hundred per year). In addition, there is the thorny issue of the teaching language abroad. In evaluation, the favourite language is English, which does not give many opportunities to nationals of French – and Portuguese speaking countries of the continent and disadvantages them, unless they take time to master the English language before initiating any training. Even distance trainings, which are efficient means of increasing the number of trained evaluators and are often free of charge, are also in English. However, the various dedicated websites are unknown to the majority of African people; only a handful of the privileged have the opportunity to access the free trainings.

“One of the major challenges is the lack of evaluation courses in Africa’s academic system”.

Some African universities have started offering evaluation trainings in partnership with foreign counterparts. Such joint ventures have led to the relocation of trainings from the West to the benefit of Africa. In Francophone Africa for example, training costs have plummeted owing to a partnership between the national school of public administration (École nationale d’administration publique ENAP) in Canada and universities in countries such as Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea, Mauritania, Niger, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Senegal and Tunisia. As a result, training costs fell by 50 per cent² of their former value (e.g., as compared to

Canada), but they remain very high for the average African.

The supply of evaluation in Africa is highly varied and categorized. Many countries still lack veritable evaluation training facilities, and the public authorities prefer public training facilities to private structures (technical or academic). This leads to reduced capacity for independent evaluation training institutions, and indirectly, to a categorization of evaluators according to the place where they got trained. According to their region of training, evaluation specialists of the continent are classified into three groups:

1. Evaluators trained outside the continent;
2. Evaluators trained in Africa; and
3. Self-educated evaluators.

Evaluators trained outside the continent

African evaluators trained outside the continent typically represent the elite in the field of evaluation, as the institutions having trained them are generally world-famous institutions. Those institutions feature among the most well-known and are members of international networks across several continents. African graduates from such institutions are either from rich families or are scholarship recipients. In most cases, their respective countries regard them as references and they are particularly called on by the government/civil service. Training outside Africa is regularly perceived as being synonymous with the full possession of evaluation skills.

Evaluators trained outside the continent sometimes display a superiority complex vis-à-vis their peers. ►►



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► *Evaluators trained in Africa*

There are more evaluators trained in Africa than those trained outside the continent, because training in the region is more accessible to African people, most of whom cannot afford to finance their studies and their stay outside the continent.

Several countries have negotiated a relocation of evaluation trainings which were previously offered in the North. Such relocation of trainings, such as the above-mentioned partnership between ENAP and universities in several francophone African countries, enables Africans who want to be trained in evaluation but who lack the financial means, to obtain training in their region at lower cost.

Self-educated evaluators

This category is made up of people who have served as assistants to one or more evaluation experts for some time and who proclaim themselves evaluators. This category also comprises certain graduates who have more or less studied, to variable levels of depth, evaluation subjects, or who have gained some experience in this area.

Furthermore, any person working in an evaluation unit of a ministry, public agency or other governmental entity, may be considered a self-educated evaluator. They have not necessarily acquired any adequate training in M&E, but they call themselves evaluators on the African continent (E. W. Mbeck, 2018). ►



► Other key impediments to the supply and demand for evaluation include a **lack of national policy frameworks and guidelines** to support the roll out of coherent national evaluations plans and programs. This comes on top of the shortage or insufficiency of training facilities, the lack of a culture of evaluation among public authorities – which demotivates already-trained evaluators and those to be trained – and the lack of collaboration between academicians and decision-makers (E. W. Mbeck, 2012).

The shortage or insufficiency of evaluation training facilities in Africa can be explained by two main factors:

- There is no political will to promote evaluation, since a good number of governments avoid any evaluation of their actions because they fear being judged or sanctioned; and
- The financial problems affecting African countries.

Findings of research work conducted at the University of Yaoundé 1³ additionally revealed that:

- Governments could reduce public spending on research by 40 per cent of its current value and obtain more reliable and consensually accepted results if they would accept to finance research and lab works.
- Many African governments resort to public-sector evaluation units or, sometimes, to international and national consultants, and tend to work in isolation with only these teams of experts. This significantly reduces evaluation demand and automatically leads to a decrease in supply.

- It is important to involve private sector evaluators in public-sector evaluation activities.

A reinforced collaboration between these entities (government, the civil society and the universities), supported by development partners, will help to better understand the complementarity between self-evaluation (by the government) and independent evaluation (by other actors).

“Improving the supply and demand for evaluation in Africa requires a pooled and coordinated action of all actors – governments, universities, the private sector, associations of evaluators, and development partners”.

Strategies that can improve the supply and demand for evaluation in Africa

Improving the supply and demand for evaluation in Africa requires a pooled and coordinated action of all actors – governments, universities, the private sector, associations of evaluators, and development partners.

Governments should be open to national, non-governmental expertise. A good number of public sector managers and civil servants do not fully understand the rationale behind evaluation, and fear the concept on the grounds that “the political opposition” will use it to belittle the government’s actions. If all stakeholders join their efforts and work as a team, the supply of evaluation is likely to improve both qualitatively and quantitatively in Africa. ►

- To achieve this, a number of measures should be taken.

Firstly, associations of evaluators should increase their visibility at the national level by undertaking activities that help citizens to better understand and appreciate evaluation work. This may include organizing conferences and other public events, realizing commercials, organizing workshops and interviews for secondary school and university students, and other sensitization activities (DSCE, 2009).

Secondly, African countries, with the support of development partners and the private sector, should work to develop the technical and intake capacities of universities and training institutes, so as to enable them to train more evaluators. In addition, these universities and training institutes need to hire more teaching staff to meet the demand of students. In this context, providing subsidies and incentives to trained evaluators is welcome. For now, several African governments simply organize seminars and workshops to train civil servants working in public-sector evaluation units. Such approach is not productive enough, as not only do they spend much money to train a small number of evaluators, but also the training of trainers that should ensure transfer of competences is lacking. With a more significant budget, the public authorities can hire the same experts from abroad to train several trainers who, in turn, will train hundreds or even thousands of evaluators in a relatively short time, thereby improving the quality and volume of the supply of evaluation.

Development partners could fund and encourage the relocation of trainings from developed countries to the African continent. This relocation operation will have the merits of reducing the transportation and living costs of evaluators being trained in Western countries, while enabling a

greater number of Africans to be trained on their continent at a more affordable cost.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the supply and demand for evaluation in Africa is relatively low while the majority of governments advocate for good governance. One of the pillars of good governance is evaluation, and it should be a priority in the development of effective good governance structures.

African countries should reasonably be more open to other evaluation actors and not only to Western and public-sector experts, especially as concerns "independent" evaluations, so as to improve the quality of evaluations as a whole. Indeed, it appears that on the continent, a good number of governments have been hiring the same evaluation specialists, that is, their own teams of evaluators or foreign evaluators. In such circumstances, it is difficult to affirm that the evaluations being produced are independent and reliable, as the evaluators depend directly on governments, and even unconsciously, the evaluations they produce can be biased in favour of their client's objectives.

Efforts must be made by independent evaluation actors to foster collaboration between governments, academia and evaluation practitioners to establish and finance academic work and research – e.g. master's degree dissertations, doctoral theses, articles – in the areas that the government intends to evaluate. This innovative action should improve not only demand for evaluation, but also its quality and quantity of supply.

African countries should solicit support from more developed evaluation-minded countries, partners and institutions to focus specifically on training and ►►

- ▶ creating training facilities with the necessary capacities.

Specialists in evaluation should regularly organize public events covered by the media, symposia and scientific workshops, to sensitize the public on evaluation issues and arouse an increased interest by policy and decision-makers.

Finally, such initiatives can have a more significant impact if development partners and governments are interested in and support African evaluation groups by means of technical assistance and subsidies.

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Endnotes

- 1 Elie Walter Mbeck (2018), *Stratégies de survie dans un contexte de pauvreté en milieu urbain camerounais: cas des marchés de rue dans la ville de Yaoundé*. University of Yaoundé I (UY1).
- 2 Calculation based on the prices applied by the same institution over a 5-year period.
- 3 Survey conducted in November-December 2017 with students of first year of research and some lab officers.

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Elie Walter Mbeck (2018): *Stratégies de survie dans un contexte de pauvreté en milieu urbain camerounais : cas des marchés de rue dans la ville de Yaoundé*. Thesis for a PhD in Geography, University of Yaoundé I, Cameroon.



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Author's profile

Elie Walter Mbeck is an expert in development strategies and globalization; he was an expert for the National Committee for the Development of Technologies (CNDT), Ministry of Scientific Research and Innovation, Cameroon, from 2013 to 2017. He was also a consultant with the demographic training and research institute (Institut de formation et de recherche démographiques – IFORD) between 2010 and 2013. He holds a Master's degree in Geography – specialty: "Marginality, Development Strategies and Globalization" – from the University of Yaoundé I. He is currently leading a group of development researchers in social and environmental science, Department of Geography, University of Yaoundé I, Cameroon. He is preparing a doctoral thesis on the topic in this university. "Survival Strategies in Poverty-stricken Rural Areas: The Case of Yaoundé Street Markets, Cameroon". Before working for the university, he was an adviser in development strategies in the private sector (agri-business) between 1996 and 2005. In 2015, Elie was awarded a diploma by the United Nations University Institute for Natural Resources in Africa (UNU-INRA). He is a member of scholarly societies such as CEREG, UIESSP, CODESRIA and ASA, and has conducted many social surveys in urban areas and their neighbourhoods. He is also the deputy leader of the Essos ECC Deacons Council, Yaoundé.



Building Effective Supply and Demand for Evaluation: The Case of Liberia

Supply and demand for evaluation can be thought of on the one hand in terms of the number of institutions that are involved in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and on the other hand the desire to utilize that information in various processes (policy, programming, development planning, etc.) for the purpose of having an impact.

Development planning processes and outcomes provide one of the means through which stakeholders can insist on evidence-based input into development planning. This challenges national governments to take ownership of the processes by strengthening M&E systems, thereby building effective supply and demand for evaluation. Given that national governments are the forerunners and owners of development planning processes and outcomes, strengthening of these processes will lead to increased emphasis on evidence, and translate into policies, programmes and systems that will in turn strengthen supply and demand for evaluation. Global and continental initiatives that are linked to development planning can provide an additional impetus to this trend.

Numene B. Reeves, Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, Liberia

Key Messages

- Supply and demand for evaluation looks at the various institutions involved in monitoring and evaluation on the one hand, and how these institutions make a demand on this information for the purpose of effecting policy, programming and development decisions on the other.
- Development planning provides the platform upon which supply and demand for evaluation can be built and enhanced due to its ability to mobilize development stakeholders to press national governments to be accountable, transparent, results-focused, goal-oriented, etc.
- Global and continental development initiatives that are linked to development plans provide the platform upon which development planning processes and outcomes can be utilized to build supply and demand for evaluation.
- Though relatively new on the African continent, evaluation is speedily growing as a profession and discipline through a growing network of evaluation institutions and has potential for building supply and demand for evaluation.

Introduction

DEVELOPMENT planning refers to the strategic measurable goals that a person, organization, community or a nation intends to meet over a stated period of time (Barker 2007). Nations or communities engage in development planning to enable them to deliver on particular objectives or development outcomes to a targeted beneficiary that will lead to changes in his/her condition. For the most part, development planning is an indispensable part of administering effective development policies and programmes within a country. Thus, it is

important that the process is driven by evidence (Waterstone 1965: 107 in UNESECA 2011: 3). Development planning processes that yield the expected and desired development outcomes are built upon sound principles of accountability and transparency that are driven by a focus on evidence. This generalization will support the application of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) as instruments to guide development planners and provide the requisite information that is evidence-based, thus leading to the successful attainment of development planning outcomes. ►

► Practical engagement with development planning suggests that the failure to effectively utilize M&E as a tool to empirically assess development planning interventions does a great disservice to the building of supply and demand for evaluation. Experience as a development planner over the years has shown that there has been little room for evidence in informing the outcomes of development planning in most developing countries. However, a recent assessment of development planning processes across the continent has shown that the story is changing. With the increasing demand for accountability from governments and other institutions, not just by donor institutions but citizens alike, there is an imperative for more evidence-based application to development planning processes. This imperative not only raises awareness for an increase in the usage of M&E information that informs development planning processes but also stimulates the desire by national institutions to create and build effective supply and demand for evaluation information.

Development planning history: Two perspectives

The early history of development planning on the African continent suggests that development planning, beginning with the 1960s, was centralized and influenced by external actors. With little government ownership of the process, the product, which is the plan, appears less attractive, thus falling short of satisfying the aspirations of purported beneficiaries (UNESECA 2011: 17). According to Mehmet (1975), this description is similar to the development planning history of Liberia.

In this case, development partners and not the State dictated the planning processes. The underpinning of this argument is that there has been little demand on government for accountability and transparency,

particularly in planning processes. With governments not subject to any accountability threshold, the need for any form of evaluative process based on evidence was minimal, and resulted in less demand for evaluation which is further translated to mean limited ownership by government.

Development planning history in Liberia can be categorized under two time periods: pre-war and post-war development planning. Pre-war and post-war development planning in Liberia describe the periods before the civil war in Liberia, which is ideally from the early 50's to 1990's, and the period from 2003 to present. Though there is little-recorded history of pre-war development planning in Liberia, much of the information available speaks to the period beginning in the 1950's with the formation of the joint USA – Liberian Commission for Economic Development (Mehmet 1975: 511). Development planning processes during these periods were less participatory and the institutional framework around the outcomes was void of any empirical form of assessment. The significance of this point is to illustrate that development planning during this period was driven by a “top down” approach where citizens’ participation was limited and there was little attention given to M&E. An observation made by Anonsen (1969) in these expressions summed this point:

“The plan gives no explicit goal for the growth of the economy except that the revenue forecast is based on a 6% increase...”

Evidently, this characterization is illustrative of a process devoid of evidence and points in the direction of limited scope for evaluation and evidence. ►



“a recent assessment of development planning processes across the continent has shown that the story is changing. With the increasing demand for accountability from governments and other institutions, not just by donor institutions but citizens alike, there is an imperative for more evidence-based application to development planning processes.”

► The post-war development planning period provides a shift to a “bottom-up” approach which shows some semblance of an evidence-based approach and demand for evaluation. Beginning with the interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (iPRSP)¹, the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) and the Agenda for Transformation (AfT)², development planning in Liberia took a twist from a business as usual approach of limited interest in accountability on the part of the government, to a relatively more accountable development planning process that is largely country led.

The World Bank Institute (2013: 7) recounts a number of tools used in the process of developing the AfT which included multi-stakeholder diagnostics, multi-stakeholder outcome-based results framework, institutional change process, etc., all of which provide some semblance of an evidence-based approach to the development planning process. Additionally, these development plans are being informed by sectoral plans that are generated from informed studies and engagements at the various sector levels. The understanding that each sector member, including Ministries, Agencies, and Commissions (MACs), is to formulate its individual plan which are subsequently consolidated into sector

plans gives a good impression that the development planning process has been poised for the building of effective supply and demand for evaluation, though there are still challenges.

Though the outcome reports indicate progress in terms of significantly meeting the objectives of these post-war development plans, the non-enabling factors as recounted in the implementation reports of both the PRS (IMF 2012) and the AfT (GOL 2016), cite a number of challenges that affect implementation in terms of the expected impacts. Among these factors is the lack of a robust and strong M&E framework (GOL 2016: 132). Neither the PRS nor the AfT has had a legal framework for M&E. Policy-wise, though there is an M&E policy, the policy is inconsistent across the various plans, and there is a complete absence of legislation to guide M&E activities. Though there is an M&E Unit that is housed in the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (the institution with the mandate to oversee the planning function in the country), the unit lacks the basic resource allocation through the national budget to carry out its functions effectively (GOL 2016: 137). Furthermore, neither of the two development plans has been evaluated for the purpose of assessing its impacts, at least from the government standpoint. These challenges or limitations in the M&E setup in Liberia mar development planning processes and contribute to ineffective outcomes. ►►



► Solution for ineffective development planning outcomes

An M&E system of such a description exposes the problems associated with the lack of an evidence-based approach to development planning. Such a system casts serious negative light on a country's development planning processes and raises the question as to how informed the outcomes are, in terms of their intent to articulate citizens' aspirations and solutions thereof. While there might be several other criteria to validate the effectiveness of the outcomes in terms of their ability to meet people's aspirations, evaluation is the critical piece that provides the empirical backing needed to substantiate development planning results. What this has meant for Liberia is that the lack of an effective instrument for empirically assessing the outcomes of the planning process has resulted in unanticipated outcomes, as is being inferred in the Government's midterm report (GOL 2016).

Demand for evaluation should be seen as the linchpin that links development planning with development outcomes, in this case, development plans. Building an effective evaluation system is one of the ways to deal with the problem of ineffective development outcomes that are a result of an ineffective process. While the government has made efforts to build the supply side of evaluation, there are still issues with developing the demand side for evaluation information from a development planning point of view. A look at some of the current initiatives being undertaken by the Government of Liberia, particularly with regard to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)³, tends to point in the direction of how to build demand for evaluation.

Development planning framework

Already current global and continental development planning initiatives, including the Agenda 2030 and its SDGs, as well as the Agenda 2063, are raising the bar for a more results focused approach to development that is enshrined in the concept of sustainability. For example, the SDGs implementation framework calls for a number of actions to be taken towards implementation. One such approach is MAPS⁴, whose mainstreaming component calls for the integration of the SDGs into a country's plans at all levels (UNDG 2015: 7). With these mainstreaming and integration efforts, countries would have to resort to an effective development planning process that is informative, time-bound, quantitative, sector-driven, inclusive of all stakeholders, able to articulate major shifts in policies and programs, and other cardinal ingredients to achieve the goals. In a nutshell, the development planning process and outcomes upon which the SDGs' implementation is hinged have to be evidence-driven. Additionally, this can be enhanced by an approach that seeks to ensure that countries take ownership of both the planning and evaluation processes. ►



► Country-led evaluations

According to Segone (2009: 23) building an effective evaluation system requires a shift from a joint evaluation process involving both donor and government, to a country-led monitoring and evaluation system. A country-led evaluation is an evaluation in which the partner country and not the donor leads and owns the evaluation process. Under this arrangement, according to Segone (2009: 24), the country makes the determination for the evaluation based on a number of considerations ranging from an understanding of the policy type to be evaluated, the evaluation methodology, and how the information or findings from the process will be communicated.

What country-led evaluation does is to cater to the information needs of the country (Segone 2008:24). It is an agent of change and is instrumental in the support of national development results. As stated above, it reinforces the concept of ownership for development planning processes and their outcomes, and provides the platform upon which to engender supply and demand. A similar concept is espoused in the Bellagio Forum report (CLEAR-AA 2012) in which there is an expression for “African led” or “African driven” evaluation. What this means for development planning is that it provides the basis upon which citizens and other stakeholders can insist on transparency, accountability, and dignity for the continent which are communicated through various development planning instruments. A look at evaluation on the continent and how it has engendered supply and demand help reinforce these points.

Defining demand and supply for evaluation: The African perspective

Historically, while there appears to be an adequate supply of monitoring

information, which can be considered as (part of) the supply side of evaluation, across Africa and in most developing countries, demand for evaluation has been relatively low. Supply and demand for evaluation can be thought of in terms of the number of institutions that are involved in monitoring and evaluation on the one hand, and the desire to utilize said information in various processes including policy, programming, development planning, etc. for the purpose of deriving impact on the other hand (Porter and Goldman 2013: 2). In other words, when monitoring is the dominant part of a government’s monitoring and evaluation system, then there is an indication of a low demand for evaluation. This is a fundamental issue in most African government M&E systems. As pointed out by Porter and Goldman (2015), and has been stated earlier, demand for evaluation in Africa is much more stimulated by donors, which has given rise to M&E structures. However, the story is changing as there is increasing demand being placed on governments for accountability and transparency.

Evaluation as a tool and a profession is relatively new on the African continent. The history of evaluation in Africa goes back to the 1990’s, leading to the formation of the African Evaluation Association (AfREA), an umbrella organization for evaluators in Africa. Since then, there has been an increase in the number of (national) evaluation associations. Liberia is also a member of AfREA in principle, although her membership is not visible in terms of functionality. At the moment, the Liberia Evaluation Association (LEA) functions as an independent body that brings together professional Liberian evaluators rather than evaluation organizations (Liberia AfREA). At least 52 professional Liberian evaluators are members of LEA. Founded in November 2015, LEA’s objective is to bring all stakeholders involved in M&E to a common platform for the purpose ►►

of sharing insights and developing capacity and standards on M&E (Liberia AfREA). Though there is no recorded engagement of LEA, the initiative to have this body as a member of AfREA is a positive step in the right direction. Juxtaposing this initiative to development planning and the potential for evaluation that is being generated, one can relish the fact that such potential will generate and build adequate supply and demand for evaluation, given the new dynamics in development planning that is tied in with countries' commitment to implement global and continental development frameworks and the requirements thereof.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is important to restate that evaluation is crucial to assessing development outcomes and impacts, particularly in developing countries. Achieving this will require the building of effective supply and demand for evaluation. Many

countries have gone ahead to establish monitoring and evaluation frameworks for the purpose of assessing development outcomes, however the emphasis is on monitoring which is regarded as the supply side of evaluation. Development planning can also be one of the many ways of building an effective demand and supply for evaluation. This is on the basis that it is largely undertaken by governments who bear the greatest responsibility for evidence-based accountability and transparency. Additionally, global and continental development trends and programs which are mainstreamed in a country's development planning processes and outcomes, emphasize the need for data integrity that is linked to the building of a strong statistical foundation based on evidence. All of these efforts capture the fact that efforts on the continent to build strong demand and supply for evaluation are yielding positive results through the various evaluation networks and evolving trends in development planning.

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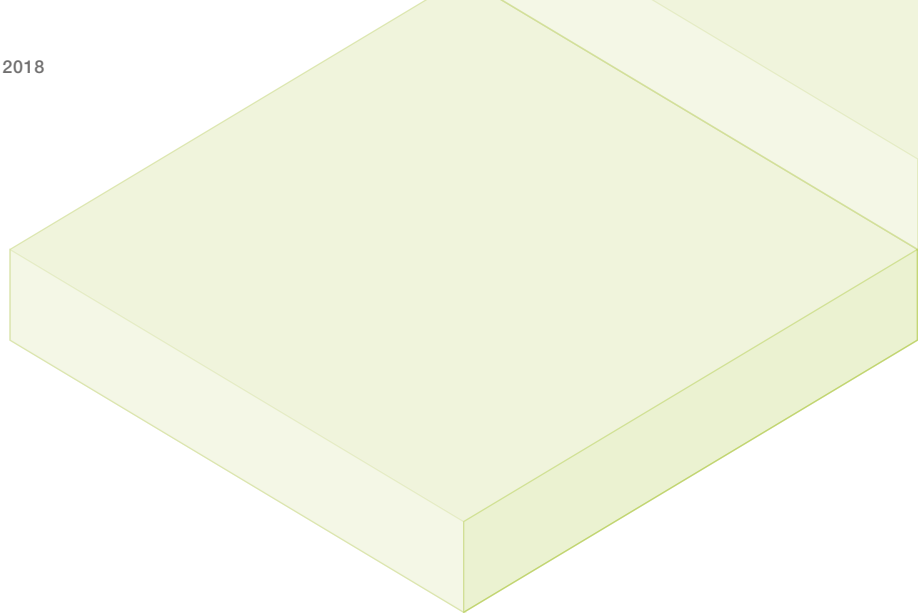
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Endnotes

- 1 iPRSP (interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper) The iPRSP sets out the national socio-economic context, the preparatory process, dimensions of the emerging policy, capacity-building and program choices and priorities for poverty reduction and development, as well as anticipated implementation challenges.
- 2 AfT (Agenda for Transformation) Liberia's second post war development strategy succeeding the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS).
- 3 The global development agenda that replaced the MDGs. Consists of 17 goals, 169 targets and 230 indicators.
- 4 Mainstreaming Acceleration Policy Support.

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Author's profile

Numene B. Reeves is a Liberian who currently works as Assistant Director for Plan Development and Coordination at the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, Liberia. Previously he has served as County Development Officer (CDO) at the erstwhile Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs. Numene has been instrumental in the development of Liberia's post-war development plans including the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) (2008–2011) and the Agenda for Transformation (AfT) 2012–2017 where he facilitated a number of district-level consultations that engendered the 'bottom to top' approach to development planning.



As Assistant Director for Plan Development and Coordination, Numene is responsible for assisting in the formulation of development planning frameworks as well as coordinating the implementation of these plans. He is also one of the focal persons on the mainstreaming and domesticating of the SDGs into Liberia's development planning processes. Numene is a 2015 graduate of the University of Queensland in Australia, where he obtained a Masters of Governance and Public Policy (MGPP) degree. He also holds a Bachelor of Science (BSc) degree in Economics from the University of Liberia in 2006.

1 IDEV looks back on 2017

2017 was a year of adaptability and resilience for Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV) at the African Development Bank. Indeed, against all odds, 9 influential evaluation products were delivered by IDEV to AfDB Management and/or the Board of Directors.

Most of these are being formally presented to the Board and published in the first two quarters of 2018. They include: 2 project cluster evaluations of Bank projects supporting agricultural value chains and rural electrification, thereby promoting learning in the areas of the High 5s; 2 sector and thematic evaluations, focused on Agricultural Value Chains and the Water Sector; 2 Country Strategy and Program Evaluations for Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria; 1 evaluation of the Bank's Regional Integration Strategy and Program in Central



Africa; 1 corporate evaluation of the Bank's Human Resources Management and Strategic Directions, which will inform the new People Management Strategy; and a comparative study of Board Processes, Procedures and Practices across International Financial Institutions.

For more information, please visit the 2017 full year in review at:

<http://idev.afdb.org/en/news/2017-review-year-resilience>

2 IDEV holds first “capitalization workshop” on energy projects to enhance learning within the African Development Bank

On Thursday 1 February 2018, IDEV and the Power, Energy, Climate Change and Green Growth complex at the AfDB held a knowledge workshop to discuss the results of two IDEV project cluster evaluations, of AfDB-funded rural electrification and power interconnection projects. The workshop allowed

IDEV and the Power and Energy complex to discuss the main outcomes of the project cluster evaluations and to draw lessons learned (what worked, what did not work and why) to guide future activities of the Bank in this sector. The workshop was also intended to seek feedback from the energy complex on the usefulness of this

new type of evaluation and to get a sense of how the findings and lessons learned from the evaluations will be used by the complex moving forward.

<http://idev.afdb.org/en/news/idev-holds-first-%E2%80%99capitalization-workshop%E2%80%99D-enhance-learning-within-african-development-bank>



Above: IDEV's first "capitalization workshop" to enhance learning within the African Development Bank. Abidjan, 1 February, 2018

3 APNODE Ivorian National Chapter sensitizes and trains Ivorian Parliamentarians in evaluation

On 16-17 February 2018, the African Parliamentarians' Network on Development Evaluation (APNODE) National Chapter in Côte d'Ivoire, in collaboration with UN-WOMEN and IDEV, held a sensitization and training event for more than 50 Ivorian Parliamentarians.

The event, held in Grand Bassam, Côte d'Ivoire, aimed to sensitize and train parliamentarians on the evaluation of public policies and to facilitate

the implementation of evaluation in the Ivorian Parliament. The Ivorian National Chapter of APNODE was also formally launched at the event. Hon. Imbassou was elected chairperson of the National Chapter.



Above: APNODE Côte d'Ivoire National Chapter sensitization and training workshop, Grand Bassam, Côte d'Ivoire, 16-17 February 2018

4 IDEV and Twende Mbele pave the way for South-South Cooperation for better Performance of African Governments

On 14 and 15 February 2018, IDEV hosted the quarterly **Twende Mbele Management Committee meeting** in Abidjan. A Swahili expression meaning "moving forward together", Twende Mbele is a partnership among three core countries (Benin, South Africa and Uganda) and two regional evaluation capacity development partners (CLEAR Anglophone Africa and IDEV). Officially launched in 2017 at the African Evaluation Association Conference in Kampala, Uganda, it focuses on knowledge sharing, peer learning and collaboration among African countries to build their M&E systems and as a result strengthen government performance and accountability to African citizens.

The Twende Mbele Management Committee also held a **lunchtime presentation for AfDB staff**, to sensitize them about the initiative.

For more information about Twende Mbele, please visit the website at:

- 🌐 <http://www.twendembele.org/>
- 🌐 <http://idev.afdb.org/en/news/idev-and-twende-mbele-paving-way-south-south-cooperation-better-performance-african-governments>



TWENDE MBELE

5 Capitalization workshop discusses lessons learned from the Bank's past Agricultural Value Chains projects

IDEV and the Agriculture, Human and Social Development Complex of the AfDB held a half-day capitalization workshop on Monday 26 February 2018 to discuss the main findings of the recent IDEV project cluster evaluation on Agricultural Value Chains Development and to draw lessons that would impact projects currently being designed under the Bank's Feed Africa Strategy.

- 🌐 <http://idev.afdb.org/en/news/idev-cluster-evaluation-provides-lessons-learned-afdb-next-generation-agricultural-value-chains>



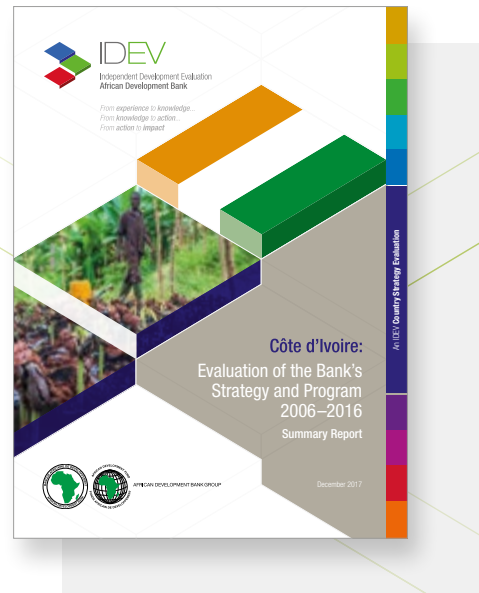
Above: Capitalization Workshop on the IDEV Evaluation of AfDB's Support to Agricultural Value Chain Development in Africa, Abidjan, 26 February 2018

6 Hot off the Press:

Côte d'Ivoire: Evaluation of the Bank's Strategy and Program 2006–2016

In January 2018, IDEV presented to the AfDB Board the findings of the independent evaluation of the African Development Bank's Country Assistance to the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire during the period 2006–2016. This evaluation has a twofold objective of accountability and capitalization of lessons to improve the Bank's future strategies in the country and in transition states more generally. During the evaluation period, five documents framed AfDB cooperation with Côte d'Ivoire, and the Bank financed 35 operations totaling more than UA 1 billion.

The methodological approach used was that of a contribution analysis based on the (re) construction of the theory of change in Bank assistance to Côte d'Ivoire. The evaluation revealed that although there were challenges, the Bank generally had a positive role in Côte d'Ivoire over the period 2006–2016. It has been a reliable partner in supporting the country's process to exit from the crisis and in specific emergency situations. In addition, the Bank has made good use of its various sources of financing and different types of intervention, adapting itself appropriately to the country's circumstances



over the period. But challenges remain, including factors of fragility; social demand related to poverty and inequality; stakeholder expectations of Bank support for projects, programs and policy dialogue; weaknesses in the quality of design, supervision, and monitoring and evaluation of interventions, and their lack of visibility; and the unconventional use of budget support.

• <http://idev.afdb.org/en/document/cote-d-ivoire-evaluation-bank-strategy-and-program-2006-2016>

Nigeria: Evaluation of the Bank's Country Strategy and Program 2004–2016

In February 2018, IDEV presented to the AfDB Board the findings of the independent evaluation of the African Development Bank's Country Strategy and Program in Nigeria from 2004 to 2016. During this period, the Bank approved 62 projects for an approximate total of UA 2.95 billion. The evaluation is intended to inform the next Country Strategy Paper due in 2018, and to contribute to both accountability and learning in the Bank in general. The evaluation had as objectives: to provide credible evaluative evidence on the development results of the Bank's engagement in Nigeria and on how the Bank has managed this engagement; to identify the factors and drivers behind good or poor performance; and to identify lessons and recommendations to inform the design and implementation of future strategies and operations.

The evaluation found that the Bank-funded projects responded to the real needs of the ultimate beneficiaries. However, the timeliness of achieving outputs and outcomes varied significantly among projects, and slow project implementation hampered the

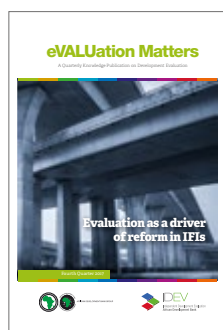


achievement of results. For example, Bank procurement and disbursement processes negatively affected the timeliness of project implementation in several public sector projects. At the same time, the Bank's portfolio included some innovative elements such as the Lekki Toll Road project, which showcased the concept of Public-Private Partnerships in the transport sector and has been considered innovative in the country context.

<http://idev.afdb.org/en/document/nigeria-evaluation-bank%E2%80%99s-country-strategy-and-program-2004%E2%80%932016>

Upcoming Events

Event	Dates	Location
AfDB Annual Meetings	21–25 May 2018	Busan, Republic of Korea
Evidence to Action Event	23–24 July 2018	Nairobi, Kenya
AfDB Evaluation Week	5–7 September 2018	Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire
Global Parliamentarians' Evaluation Forum	17–19 September 2018	Colombo, Sri Lanka
Australian Evaluation Society International Conference	19–21 September 2018	Launceston, Australia
Evidence 2018 Conference	25–28 September 2018	Pretoria, South Africa
The 13th European Evaluation Society Biennial Conference	1–5 October 2018	Thessaloniki, Greece
The Global Evidence and Implementation Summit 2018	22–24 October 2018	Melbourne, Australia
American Evaluation Association Annual Conference 2018	28 Oct – 3 November 2018	Cleveland, USA



Fourth Quarter 2017: *Evaluation as a driver of reform in IFIs*

Recognizing that institutional policies, processes and practices influence performance, and that improvements can make an institution more effective in its quest for results, IFIs are now increasingly subject to scrutiny from the inside out.

<http://idev.afdb.org/en/document/evaluation-driver-reform-ifis>



Third Quarter 2017: *Evaluation in the era of the SDGs*

This issue of Evaluation Matters is dedicated to evaluating the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It discusses the consequences of the paradigm shift from the MDGs to the SDGs and what the world of evaluation should do differently in this new era. Evaluation is acknowledged in Agenda 2030 as crucial to the follow-up and review processes for SDG progress, and evaluators can, and should, make a real difference to SDG achievements by helping point in the right direction for investment efforts.

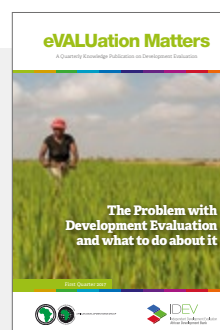
<http://idev.afdb.org/en/document/evaluation-era-sdgs>



Second Quarter 2017: *Comprehensive Evaluation of Development Results: Behind the Scenes*

A comprehensive evaluation has been said to refer to a question, series of questions, or an iterative task that is designed to appraise an activity's goals, outcomes and impact. Its complexity while centered on outcomes, is also a product of the context within which the evaluation is undertaken. Such evaluations further generate meaningful learning such that its viewpoints and recommendations are invaluable to policy/decision makers, and development practitioners.

<http://idev.afdb.org/en/document/comprehensive-evaluation-development-results-behind-scenes>



First Quarter 2017: *The Problem with Development Evaluation and what to do about it*

Development evaluation has been around for a while now. However, the perception is that it does not garner its expected level of influence. Why is there poor assimilation of the lessons learned and recommendations from evaluation? Where do the problems really emanate? Is it from the users of evaluations, or from the evaluators? Is it from the policy or the process?

<http://idev.afdb.org/en/document/problem-development-evaluation-and-what-do-about-it>



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