NATIONAL EVALUATION CAPACITIES

PROCEEDINGS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON NATIONAL EVALUATION CAPACITIES
15-17 DECEMBER 2009, CASABLANCA, KINGDOM OF MOROCCO

United Nations Development Programme

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CONCEPT NOTE

INTRODUCTION

There is general consensus that evaluating the performance of public policy is an important instrument for good governance. There is, however, a gap between this general agreement and the actual implementation, use and sustainability of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems, processes and tools on the ground. Well-intentioned efforts to develop these systems face obstacles associated with institutional design, political dynamics, poor managerial and/or technical capacity, and resistance to change. At the same time, innovative practices developed within particular contexts in developing nations may yield important lessons worth sharing.

The Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) reiterated an earlier request for UNDP to support national evaluation capacity in programme countries. The UNDP Evaluation Office, in cooperation with the Moroccan National Observatory for Human Development, organized the International Conference on National Evaluation Capacities in Casablanca from 15 to 17 December 2009. The aim was to provide a forum to discuss issues that face programme country partners, to deepen their understanding of evaluation as a powerful tool for public accountability, to learn from solutions in other developing countries and, possibly, to identify common strategies to establish evaluation systems that are relevant and have a sound political and institutional basis. It also aimed to provide a platform for sharing experiences in strengthening the institutional capacities and/or enabling conditions for evaluation of public policies, programmes and institutions.

BACKGROUND

Many governments have improved their understanding of the value of M&E to assess which public initiatives work well, which do not work well and most importantly, why. Monitoring and evaluating the performance of public policies, programmes and institutions can help increase their effectiveness, providing more accountability and transparency in how public resources are used, informing the prioritization in the allocation of public resources and assessing their effectiveness in attaining their desired development results, such as reducing poverty, improving welfare or enhancing the equality of opportunities. When M&E systems and tools emphasize the results of public policy, a virtuous learning cycle generates opportunities for improving the systems, structures and processes associated with successful policy implementation.

Many national governments are conducting evaluation of public policies, while others are designing centralized M&E systems for national development plans and programmes. There

is great diversity with respect to the functions as well as the models and tools developed, and much variation can be observed in their degree of maturity and institutionalization within each country's public administration.

Key challenges include setting up appropriate institutional structures and incentives to motivate both the supply of and the demand for solid evidence to inform public decision-making; developing managerial and technical capacity to ensure sustainability and the application of robust methodology; and developing a results-oriented public sector culture that embeds the effective use of M&E within the broader purpose of generating credible evidence to enhance understanding and support decisions about development results. While the systems for monitoring and evaluation are conceptually linked, the conference will pay particular attention to evaluation, more specifically, to the evaluation of national development projects, programmes or policies and to the creation of national results-oriented M&E systems in service of development effectiveness.

In this vein, two problems represent a common denominator to most M&E experiences and tend to slow the institutionalization of results-oriented M&E systems. The first is the low demand for evidence about performance and the scant use of the information generated through evaluation efforts from the part of its expected consumers. Of particular concern are, on the one hand, the poor quality of the evidence generated by M&E systems, and on the other, the lack of interest from legislative bodies and citizens, key players in democracies with the authority to demand accountability for results vis-à-vis public investments. The second problem is the poor integration of institutions and actors associated with the effective evaluation of public policies, programmes and institutions, as well as the lack of convergence among cycles of various public administration processes relevant to broad M&E efforts, such as planning, budgeting and personnel.

Information sharing and collective reflection among peers as well as opportunities for reciprocal learning can support national capacities. The conference brought together national partners, regional experts in evaluation and UNDP professionals. It provided an opportunity to build awareness about the importance of evaluation and to discuss institutional, technical and methodological issues in institutionalizing national M&E systems. The conference provided a good platform to discuss experiences, identify challenges and draw lessons that can later take the form of technical assistance, under the umbrella of South-South or triangular cooperation.

OBJECTIVES

The broader purpose of the conference was to provide a forum for open discussion on issues confronting evaluation, enabling participants to draw on the recent and innovative experience of other countries. The conference also promoted understanding of international standards in evaluation, and advocacy for evaluation as a means of managing for development results, improving public accountability and learning. To enhance the understanding and appreciation of evaluation as a powerful tool of public accountability, the conference had the following three specific objectives:

a) To share experiences from countries with different levels of development of national M&E systems, including those that may be considering creating a system and have important experiences with other types of evaluation efforts;

b) To identify lessons and constraints in implementing national M&E systems;

c) To identify supply and demand for technical assistance in strengthening institutional capacity for national M&E systems under the umbrella of South-South cooperation.

AGENDA

The agenda covered institutional issues regarding the normative framework to conduct evaluation. It also addressed technical and methodological issues such as selection of evaluation methods, randomized approach, outcome evaluations and the Millennium Development Goals, underpinning evaluations from a human development and human security lens. The conference focused on how national evaluation capacity issue can be addressed through collaboration among national governments, national professional associations and development partners.

The framework proposed by Ospina (2001)[1] and developed by Cunill y Ospina (2003)[2] identifies the challenges associated with the institutionalization of M&E results-oriented efforts by posing three questions: 1) 'evaluation for what?', which refers to the purpose of evaluation; 2) 'what to evaluate, and at what level?', which refers to the scope of evaluation; and 3) 'how to use information yielded by evaluation?', which links information usage to evaluation purpose. Two more questions of relevance to evaluation capacity development can be added for the purpose of the conference: 4) 'how to ensure an enabling environment?', which pinpoints obstacles and opportunities for capacity development, and 5) 'how to enhance evaluation practice?', which refers to evaluation expertise and know-how.

Using this framework, the conference invited participants to reflect on issues clustered around five areas of inquiry: vision, purpose, structures and capacity, methodology and accountability. Not all the areas were necessarily covered during the conference, since it was organized around the particular areas emerging from commissioned papers and conversations with participants. Yet this framework was still considered as the base to ensure that discussions addressed state-of-the-art concerns in the field.

PROCESS

The conference was structured around papers commissioned for the occasion. Participants were asked to present brief papers for plenary discussion on one of four main themes:

1. Current evaluation practices of public policies at the national level: governance, independence and credibility;

1. Ospina, Sonia, 'La evaluación de la gestión pública: conceptos y aplicaciones en América Latina', en Reforma y Democracia, No. 19, 2001, Venezuela, CLAD, pp. 89-122, 2001.
2. Cunill, Nuria y Sonia Ospina (eds.), 'Evaluación de Resultados para una Gestión Pública Moderna y Democrática. Experiencias Latinoamericana', Venezuela, CLAD - Editorial Texto, C.A., 2003.

2. Evaluation quality and existing capacities at national and regional level: national evaluation practitioners, research institutions, evaluation associations and networks;
3. Supporting the demand for evaluation as an instrument of accountability: who are the key actors and how to ensure the use of evaluations;
4. Towards an enabling environment for evaluation capacity at the national level: what type of support is needed?

PARTICIPANTS

Participants were senior policymakers of countries in which national M&E systems are taking shape and national, regional and international evaluation specialists.

The conference brought government officials in charge of national M&E systems to share experiences and expectations in the transition from individual or ad hoc monitoring and evaluation initiatives to a more systematic nationwide monitoring and evaluation system and its capacity development challenges.

The following criteria were used to invite countries and institutions:

- Variation in the degree of development/maturity of evaluation efforts, to ensure a range of experience represented, and to allow for reciprocal peer learning;
- Representation of countries that have explicitly expressed interest and see the value of sharing experiences.
- Representation of countries where innovative approaches have succeeded and are sufficiently institutionalized to suggest they may offer relevant lessons for others in an earlier stage of creating systems.
- Coverage of geographical areas.

We expect that the conference provided an opportunity for reflection and learning that identified new trends for evaluation of public policies, programmes and institutions.

MAIN OUTCOMES OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON NATIONAL EVALUATION CAPACITIES

BACKGROUND

Evaluating the performance of public policy is considered a fundamental ingredient in fostering accountability and good governance and improving programme effectiveness. Efforts to build and sustain effective evaluation systems face challenges of institutional design, political dynamics, limited technical skills and resistance to change.

Innovative practices in developing nations may yield important lessons. Many national governments evaluate public policies and have designed centralized evaluation systems for national development plans and programmes. The intention is to increase both the supply of and the demand for credible evidence to inform public decision-making. Successive General Assembly resolutions and UNDP Executive Board decisions have encouraged the United Nations development system and UNDP in particular to support national evaluation capacity in developing countries.

Expected Contribution

The *raison d'être* of the conference was to provide a forum for discussion of issues confronting countries and to enable participants to draw on recent and innovative experiences of other countries. The conference promoted understanding of international standards in evaluation and advocated for evaluation to contribute to better management for development results and to improving public accountability and learning. It also prepared the ground for the formulation of longer-term initiatives to strengthen national capacities for public policy evaluation through South-South (or triangular) cooperation.

About 80 participants attended the event. They included senior government officials in charge of or associated with national evaluation systems from 20 developing countries and evaluation experts and staff from evaluation offices of United Nations organizations, multilateral development banks and bilateral aid agencies. A full list of participants is attached.

MAIN OUTCOMES OF THE DISCUSSION

Institutional set-up for evaluating public policies and programmes

Expectations are growing for countries to develop national evaluation systems. Experience was shared regarding why and how these systems emerged and their legal framework and institutional set-up. While many acknowledged that the demand for evaluation often originated from international partners, all recognized the national political process as the ultimate factor shaping national systems. In some countries the legal framework for evaluation stems from a constitutional mandate.

Countries shared experiences about what is evaluated, and in most cases it is a combination of outputs, outcomes, effects and impacts. There are myriad evaluation practices. Some countries moved from sub-national and sectoral approaches to national systems, while others, after having established national systems, are now devoting attention to sub-national capacities.

The close relationship between monitoring and evaluation

Participants recognized the close relationship between planning, monitoring and evaluation. Generally speaking planning has been strengthened, but some countries do not make an explicit link between evaluation results and planning. There is progress on monitoring, but clear links to evaluation are lacking. More resources are dedicated to monitoring programme output and outcome indicators to inform decision-making. While monitoring is a necessary component of the systems, there was consensus about the need to credit the importance of evaluation and provide resources for it.

It was stated that only independent evaluation could question the rationale and assumptions of public policies and assess whether the policy design was right ex ante, while monitoring focuses on the effectiveness of implementation.

Independence of evaluations

Considerations regarding the independence of evaluation and its location in the public administration triggered interesting discussions. In some countries independent evaluations of public policies are submitted to parliament, while in others they remain within the executive branch, in the office of the prime minister or president or the ministries of finance or planning. In some countries auditor-general offices are performing evaluation functions. While self-evaluations can yield useful information, there were concerns about potential conflicts of interest and the need to strengthen independence for accountability purposes.

Distinctive evaluation capacities

During the conference a distinction was made regarding capacity for managing, conducting and using evaluations. Conducting an evaluation involves both producing the study and communicating and disseminating it, which requires specialized technical capacity. Managing evaluations requires a broad understanding of evaluation but can be done without the specialized skills to conduct evaluation. The capacity to use evaluations was considered completely different; users of evaluations are decision-makers and in some cases

policymakers. It was considered important to take these distinctions into account to better assess needs and strengthen appropriate national capacities.

Quality and use of evaluations

Participants recognized the need for sound technical capacity and adequate funding to conduct evaluations. But they agreed that most important is the political will and commitment to evaluate public policies. Participants recognized the role of evaluation in fostering democratic governance and accountability through transparent information regarding the effectiveness of public policies. The technical soundness of evaluation is a cornerstone of credibility, but it does not guarantee the results will be used. Institutionalization of evaluation systems also requires decision-makers to understand and use the information produced.

Timeliness of evaluation was identified as important to enhance its use. In some cases, lengthy (and expensive) data collection and consultation processes have diminished the usefulness of evaluations.

Participants mentioned the need to 'evaluate the evaluators' through peer reviews, meta-evaluations and other mechanisms to sustain the quality of evaluation functions.

Technical capacity and the political economy of evaluations

The evaluation of public policies and programmes is embedded in political processes. Therefore both technical and political dimensions need to be considered. The role of government, as the entity responsible for establishing policies and the normative framework, is critical to the process. Nevertheless, parliaments and civil society were recognized as important players for establishing checks and balances. Questions were raised about the role of the private sector, including the business sector, and its relation to demand and supply of evaluation. Partnerships with evaluation associations were also discussed.

Governments need to play a lead role in evaluation, as it is one of their instruments to promote effective public policies and transparency. It was agreed that countries should build their own evaluation standards, linking to international standards and principles while consulting with all actors, including civil society and other political parties, so standards will be rooted in the national context.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The workshop was enriched by the diversity of experiences and practices presented. Participants benefited from the exchange and were able to reflect upon their own experiences based on other initiatives and examples. The recommendations are intended to orient further work to strengthen national capacities in evaluation. Many of the suggestions for follow-up were related to the countries themselves and not necessarily to future common initiatives. Several opportunities and challenges related to existing evaluation capacities at national and regional levels were identified by participants:

- Exploration of technical capacities for evaluation among universities and national and regional research institutions provides opportunities to work with these institutions in further developing capacities and promoting specialized training in evaluation.

- There are also opportunities to reinforce institutional capacities to develop evaluation policy and evaluation coordination at national level.
- Regarding challenges for governments, there is a need to use in-built quality assurance mechanisms, comply with evaluation norms and standards, and set up codes of conduct and ethical principles for evaluation. It is also important to balance the use of self-assessments (which may compromise independence and result in conflict of interest) and independent evaluations.
- There was broad consensus that the conference requires follow-up and exchange of information. It was agreed that follow-up events should be organized regularly (annually or bi-annually), including regional events. It was also agreed that a web-based portal would be useful for ongoing exchanges and for asking questions.
- In terms of themes to be discussed at future events, some of the suggested topics were follow-up to evaluation recommendations (how and by whom?) and use of evaluation. There were also requests to discuss norms, standards and good practices in more depth, as well as efforts to identify and disseminate such practices.
- As for the participants in future events, it was recommended to involve ministries of finance, general audit bodies and national parliamentarians and civil society organizations, as opposed to focusing exclusively on technical ministries.
- The need to facilitate networks of evaluation practitioners and national evaluation capacities was recognized. Translation of key documents into national languages was identified as a concrete need.

STATEMENT BY MRS. SARASWATHI MENON, DIRECTOR, UNDP EVALUATION OFFICE

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentleman,

On behalf of the Evaluation Office of the United Nations Development Programme, I would like to welcome all of you to this conference on National Evaluation Capacity. I would like to thank the Government of Morocco for hosting this conference and the Moroccan National Observatory of Human Development for co-sponsoring the event. We are grateful that so many of you have travelled far to Casablanca to join us here in this conference.

Tracking the results and impact of public action on people's well-being is an important responsibility of governments around the world. This duty has been addressed in a variety of ways, some more rigorous than others. All these efforts have had a common purpose: to understand what works well and, importantly, why some policies or actions work better than others. When this information is shared more broadly with decision-makers and citizens it becomes a strong impetus for influencing public policy and making it more effective.

Evaluation can make a major contribution to tracking the results of public action. The objective assessment of the achievement of results by using rigorous and standardized approaches can provide the basis for a systematic and useful understanding of how and where public efforts should be directed to achieve better results. This conference seeks to explore the links between national evaluation systems and more effective public policy. We will examine current evaluation practices; the quality of evaluation; the demand for evaluation as an instrument of accountability; and the creation of an enabling environment for evaluation capacity at the national level. These themes are neither exclusive nor exhaustive. They reinforce each other and are intended to generate discussion of a wide range of issues that you consider important.

In sponsoring this conference, we began with three considerations.

First, national evaluation systems have existed in various forms for decades, in some cases going back to the 1950s, and were developed to meet specific national needs. In the countries of the South they were often defined in the first flush of independence and self governance as part of a system to track progress and engage citizens in nation building. These systems were nationally driven and oriented and were managed as an integral part of national systems. There was little learning across countries.

Second, in looking at national evaluation practices, there have been interesting innovations from which many can learn. We are all familiar with the standard development evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact. These criteria were constructed primarily around the assessment of development projects in the context of aid and international development cooperation. At the national level, however, we have seen the introduction of other criteria such as equity and innovation, which privilege other dimensions of people-centred development.

Third, the extensive discussion on evaluation capacity development among international development practitioners appears to assume that the approaches and systems of evaluation in the bureaucracies of international development partners should be replicated in national systems. We are not convinced that this is fully correct. Many of us in multilateral and bilateral development agencies have invested in fine-tuning evaluation systems that address our specific organizational and governance needs. However, these systems do not mesh naturally with national systems. Nor are they always effective in addressing the accountability concerns of citizens of developing countries regarding development cooperation within national development.

Based on these three considerations, it is our premise that sharing information on approaches and innovations in evaluation at the national level will be of value to all of us who want to use evaluation to improve results. We share the same challenges: to develop a culture in the public sector to encourage the supply of and demand for evaluative evidence to inform decision-making; to develop technical and institutional capacity; and to apply sound evaluation methodology. Sharing experience in these areas across the countries of the South will, we feel, provide the most relevant knowledge and good practice to enable each country to develop their own responses.

Sharing such information may also contribute to partnerships among countries of the South in addressing the challenges they face in evaluation. In the longer run such cooperation could lead to the identification of areas where standards may be developed for national evaluation systems.

UNDP is hosting this workshop because we aim to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and innovative experience across the countries of the South to help accelerate development. We look forward to a very productive discussion over the next three days. Thank you once again for your participation.

Royaume du Maroc, Premier Ministre
Kingdom of Morocco, Prime Minister

STATEMENT BY MR. RACHID BENMOKHTAR BENABDELLAH, PRESIDENT, MOROCCAN NATIONAL OBSERVATORY OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Madam Director of the UNDP Evaluation Office
Madam Acting Resident Representative of UNDP in Morocco
Distinguished Resident Representatives of UN Agencies in Morocco

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a real pleasure for me to take part in the work of the conference organized jointly by the Evaluation Office of UNDP and the National Observatory for Human Development on the theme of national capacity for public policy evaluation.

This conference is an opportunity to share knowledge and exchange experiences on strengthening institutional capacities and the conditions for evaluating public policies and programmes.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all the participants and especially our foreign guests who have sometimes come from afar to share their experiences with us.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This conference comes at a time when the evaluation of public policies in Morocco is receiving increasing attention in the public arena. Indeed, its foundations are irreversibly part and parcel of new approaches to strategic planning, contracting and partnership that have marked several fields of public action, such as health, education, social development or other areas of human development, whether on the central level in government departments or in the territories, with contractual commitments of the communities.

In addition, this conference is taking place in a context marked by the recent establishment of the National Observatory for Human Development, which is less than four years old. This organization has been tasked with continuing to analyse and evaluate the impact of human development programmes and to propose measures and actions that contribute to the development and implementation of a national strategy for human development, in

particular through the National Initiative for Human Development (NIHD).

Very briefly, this initiative was launched by His Majesty King Mohammed VI following a thorough review of human development in Morocco during its first 50 years of independence. It aims to reduce poverty in 403 rural municipalities and exclusion in 264 urban communities that are among the poorest and most excluded, using multi-sectoral public investment and support for income-generating activities. The NIHD, which also includes a component targeting those who are most vulnerable, is perennial and original due to the approach to its deployment, for which all local stakeholders are invited to become involved in the specific institutional mechanisms. Based on this approach, the NIHD is a privileged instrument for the convergence of actions and programs of the State, local associations and civil society. Finally, the budget for its implementation is ten billion dirhams, used as leverage to attract additional financial contributions in order to double that amount five years after this programme starts.

In this regard, given the stakes of the NIHD and its implications on the conduct of public policy, the 2008 report from the National Observatory for Human Development has been devoted to the midterm review of this initiative. It thereby responds to His Majesty the King's decision as clearly shown in the May 18, 2005 Royal Speech: "Steeped in the culture of evaluation and the need for all stakeholders to be accountable in the exercise their functions, a culture that we intend to embed in the management of public affairs, we will meet in three years to evaluate the results of this new initiative and measure the resulting tangible positive changes in people's lives."

This midterm review is a prelude to the evaluation of the impact of the NIHD that will be conducted in 2011, as will be presented to you this morning.

This Royal recognition of evaluation should give new impetus to the practice of evaluation in a context where public decision-making must face many challenges. These challenges are related to the unceasing complexity of the economic environments, the constraints on public finances and growing imperatives assigned to public policies that must respond to citizens' aspirations for the quality of services rendered and, beyond that, integrate the principles of sustainable human development for which the NIHD should be regarded as a novel process of experimentation, learning and accumulating experience.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Evaluation has many purposes. Evaluation is first of all judging the implementation methods, strategies, incentive systems, logic of the stakeholders, appropriateness of the objectives in terms of results, etc. The goal is to understand the phenomena observed and in particular the differences between the goals and the results. Evaluation is the basis of any corrective, reactive and/or proactive policy: understanding what happened or is happening, in order to answer important questions that will allow us to make crucial decisions for the present or the future.

Indeed, evaluation is also taking an interest in the function and effects of public action, which is particularly useful for decision-making and implementation of policies, but also for their appropriation by the stakeholders. In this sense, evaluation becomes a vehicle for learning so that the actors responsible for public policies can better understand the issues on

the ground, the processes in which they are participating and their appropriate objectives.

Evaluation is, finally, better comprehension of the issues and the social utility of public action. The evaluation should be an important time for debate and discussion on its meaning and its conduct, by helping to identify results as well as causes.

From the decision-making tool to the discussion phase, evaluation seems to fall within the rationality of the evidence and arguments, serving the common good. But its implementation is difficult and cannot be improvised.

Its success depends on respecting the principle of independent assessment, which guarantees expression of the diverse legitimate views of the stakeholders, decision-makers and beneficiaries. But compliance with a strict methodological approach based on proven methods and effective and innovative tools is just as important. This was highlighted at the national seminar organized by ONDH in Rabat last June on the importance of information systems in conducting any assessment.

Similarly, in order for it to be developed in the sphere of public action, the evaluation must be carried out, because of the multifaceted nature of both human motivation and the problems to be solved, through a multidisciplinary approach. Such an approach allows for the intersection of diverse analytical techniques and knowledge that goes far beyond monitoring activities (administrative, budgetary, etc.), which has important consequences in terms of human resource training. Finally, its appropriation by government officials and public services, through communication and awareness activities, is necessary. Finally, evaluation is a must for a good democracy where the rules of transparency and accountability are imposed on everyone, governments and elected officials.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The three days of work at this conference will begin the process of sharing good public policy evaluation practices. They should help forge a shared vision of assessment and will participate in the dissemination of a culture that is increasingly imposed on all public decision-makers, enhancing the quality of the information disseminated to citizens.

The comparison of experiences and dialogue that you will engage in at this conference will enable us, I hope, to identify avenues for reinforcing our abilities and our mechanisms in the area of evaluation.

I thank you and wish our work every success.

COUNTRY PAPERS

BENIN

BRAZIL

COLOMBIA

COSTA RICA

ETHIOPIA

MAURITANIA

RWANDA

SENEGAL

SOUTH AFRICA

SRI LANKA

UGANDA[3]

3. The country papers named are included in this document. Some oral presesentations delivered at the conference—those from Ghana, Guatemala, Haiti, India, Malaysia, Morocco, Niger, Tajikistan and United Republic of Tanzania—were not available for this publication.

NATIONAL EVALUATION SYSTEMS: INSTITUTIONAL SET-UP

BENIN: CAPACITIES ON EVALUATION OF NATIONAL PUBLIC POLICIES

BY ARISTIDE N. DJIDJOHO[4]

INTRODUCTION

The modes of government intervention to drive the development of States have changed considerably in recent decades. Out of concern for efficiency, public entities have modernized their approach to integrate a greater portion of the management process. In this regard, the results-based management approach is promoted to ensure better-quality public policy, and also to ensure its effectiveness in relation to its objectives.

Evaluation as a management practice and tool, which has developed during the same period, is now an important function related to development. Governments facing the challenge of demonstrating accountability and efficiency promote evaluation to meet this challenge and enrich knowledge useful for improving citizens' living conditions.

The Beninese government, like other developing countries, understands these issues and is committed to reforming government to make it more efficient and modern.

This paper describes Benin's experience in developing the evaluation function. It first presents the issues faced in developing evaluation, then summarizes the efforts undertaken in recent years to develop the function. Next it presents the results of the assessment of national evaluation capacities and introduces the prospects for their reinforcement and the types of support considered necessary.

ISSUES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF EVALUATION IN BENIN

Since 2003, Benin has been engaged in public administration reform by introducing results-based management. However, an assessment of the public administration showed that it still faces significant dysfunction. This results particularly from the poor capacity of public employees to manage records, as well as conflicts of interest and mismanagement or even corruption.

This situation hinders the efficiency of public administration and therefore interferes with efficient and effective implementation of development policies. In addition to the challenges of managing public policies, the administration is faced with conflicts of interest that preclude the active participation of stakeholders, particularly civil society and representatives of beneficiaries, in determining and driving public policy.

4. Coordinator, Office of Evaluation of Public Policies.

Evaluation is now an essential tool for governance. It involves strengthening management systems by using the medium of public action evaluation. In an extremely volatile economic environment characterized by limited resources and the increasing needs and expectations of the people, priorities require:

- Streamlining the government's rate of expenditure;
- Ensuring the quality of public expenditure;
- Improving decentralized governance;
- Providing new solutions to the challenges encountered;
- Continuing to modernize the economy while responding sustainably to expectations.

The complexity of governance in the modern world requires officials to have more knowledge for optimal decision-making. Ensuring that public action responds to these challenges requires:

- Providing decision-makers with reliable information;
- Drawing lessons from the implementation of public policies;
- Informing all the stakeholders involved in driving public policy;
- Uniting stakeholders and beneficiaries around the agreed-upon objectives;
- Pledging credibility and good governance to the various partners of the State.

While recognizing the limitations of evaluative practice, it is expected to play a dominant role in enriching collective knowledge with a view to achieving changes and significant reforms. Knowledge contributes to the institutional reform process and to compliance with good governance and accountability in public action.

Three major challenges arise from these issues:

1. **Quality of assessments:** The objective at the national level is to define and promote methods, norms and standards to ensure the quality of evaluations and the usefulness of evaluation reports.
2. **Integrating evaluative practice into administrative organizations:** It is necessary to have a national regulatory framework that promotes the institutionalization and the practice of evaluation in order to ensure its usefulness, quality and permanence.
3. **Establishing an institutional framework that regulates and promotes evaluation practice:** The goal is to create an institutional environment that unites stakeholders to take part in the evaluation process by providing optimal conditions for their sustained cooperation and mutual reinforcement.

PRACTICE OF EVALUATION IN BENIN

The evaluation function was formally institutionalized in June 2007 with the creation of the Department of Forecasting, Development and Evaluation of Public Action. In June 2009 it became the Ministry of Forecasting, Development, Evaluation of Public Policy and Coordination of Government Action. This new assignment is consistent with the 2006-2011 Strategic Development Guidelines for Benin and is part of the reconstruction

of a development authority to serve the public interest and promote the private sector. All operations involving the government and the use of its resources, or any public funding that responds to development needs (policies implemented in the framework of the Growth Strategy for Poverty Reduction [la Stratégie de Croissance pour la Réduction de la Pauvreté], in particular), can be subject to an evaluation order.

Within the Department, the Office of Evaluation of Public Policy (Bureau d'Evaluation des Politiques Publiques, or BEPP), is responsible for evaluating national public policies and making them operational. The BEPP, which reports directly to the Minister of State Responsible for the Coordination of Government Action, addresses:

- Priority public policies;
- Programmes and major projects implemented by the central public administration;
- Professional practices;
- Activities of the public services or development agencies.

In the context of managing the public policy evaluation function, various documents have been developed to operationalize evaluation procedures. Evaluations of policies and strategies of priority economic sectors have also been conducted by the Office of Evaluation of Public Policy with the assistance of independent consultants.

To establish an effective national evaluation system enabling accurate and useful assessment of public policy, in April 2009 the Office of Evaluation of Public Policy, along with the UNDP Regional Evaluation Office for West and Central Africa, conducted a mission to identify the needs for development of the evaluation function. This mission permitted the collection of opinions and needs of national government organizations and institutions, local authorities, the private sector and civil society organizations. The analysis of the institutional mechanism for evaluation in Benin showed:

- Weak institutionalization of the evaluation function within the public administration, reflected, among other things, by the virtual absence of bodies with a clear evaluation mandate, poorly developed relationships between institutional stakeholders and a predominance of the control function (internal and external);
- The absence, until the establishment of the BEPP, of evaluation structures, whether independent or not, with responsibility for leading, creating or carrying out actions in the framework of the overall assessment of the public policies implemented;
- Absence of representation of local groups and decentralized services within the institutional evaluation system (the evaluation function is virtually absent at the decentralized level, at least vis-à-vis the State);
- Low demand for evaluation by the State, although it is quickly evolving. This finding is explained mainly by a lack of human and financial resources, the stakeholders' perception of the value and use of evaluation, the lack of political will or even the predominance of the control function;
- Strong and growing demand by donors in civil society organizations (a requirement for accountability of public action);
- Several opportunities for promoting greater institutionalization of the evaluation function (public reforms, decentralization, changes in the terms of public aid for development).

However, there are real opportunities in the Beninese context that should enable better anchoring and a more mature practice of evaluation, in particular:

- Clear political will;
- Human resources, particularly within the private sector, that are available but not yet organized professionally (no code of ethics);
- Decentralization as well as gradual changes in the terms of development aid (more emphasis on the use of national systems and mechanisms through implementation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness);
- Civil society organizations and development partners that have accumulated significant experience with evaluation.

These consultations have resulted in significant opportunities to improve the civic dialogue on government policies and increasing acceptance and commitment of stakeholders to implement public policies. To this end, the Office of Evaluation of Public Policy has established an institutional framework for evaluating public policies that should contribute to the development of a national evaluation system by making assessment a national priority.

The institutional framework for evaluation has identified all relevant public and civil society institutions and partners at national level. The institutional framework aims to eventually lead to a national evaluation programme that provides useful information on the impact of public policies, the effectiveness of their implementation and the population's involvement in defining policies that fulfil their aspirations.

The BEPP is the core of the institutional framework, which includes:

- Advisory or oversight bodies;
- Government organizations (central, sectoral and decentralized);
- Associated organizations at local level;
- Technical and financial partners;
- Non-government stakeholders (civil society, associations, networks of evaluators, NGOs, universities).

The BEPP is preparing to make the institutional framework operational. A National Evaluation Council is also planned to serve as a framework for cooperation among institutional organizations. In addition, the Office of Evaluation of Public Policy has undertaken (with financial support from UNDP) a diagnostic study of evaluation capacity in Benin with the objective of:

- Proposing the best institutionalization scenarios to make the evaluation function permanent in Benin;
- Improving the office's intervention strategy by adapting it to the national context and the government's vision for evaluation;
- Establishing a national programme to develop evaluation capacity in government and partner institutions.

DIAGNOSTIC STUDY ON THE ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL CAPACITY

A team of international and national consultants was recruited by UNDP Benin to conduct the diagnostic study, which is now in its final phase. This study aims to:

- Provide a baseline for comparing the situation in Benin with that of other countries in West and Central Africa in terms of sharing experiences;
- Provide the BEPP with an intervention strategy for evaluation of public policies;
- Prepare for implementation of a programme to strengthen national evaluation capacities.

The intervention strategy and the programme to strengthen evaluation capacities should promote the dissemination of evaluation practices throughout the development process, through both planning and implementing development actions, programmes and policies.

The first results of the diagnostic study confirmed the analysis by the mission to identify needs. They further noted:

- Absence of a national evaluation policy and an incentivizing regulatory framework;
- Weak management capacity of the government;
- Low participation of non-government stakeholders in the evaluations;
- Inadequate monitoring by management;
- Insufficient incorporation of the results of evaluations in implementation of programmes, projects and policies;
- Difficulty of translating recommendations into operational measures;
- Little use of evaluation results;
- Insufficient funding to implement the recommended measures;
- Lack of specific budgets and organizations for evaluation;
- Predominance of project and programme evaluations over policy evaluations;
- Weak national capacity, particularly in human resources;
- Lack of specialized training on evaluation.

OUTLOOK

These results demonstrate the importance of evaluation to state reform. It is important for modern management to be implemented in public administration in Benin and for evaluation to be part of this modernization effort. The BEPP's mandate is therefore to evaluate public policies, while playing an advisory role to administration evaluation bodies to ensure quality. The BEPP also acts as the principal intermediary for technical and financial partners in matters of adopting the use of evaluations in accordance with the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action.

To strengthen human resources, a specialized evaluation training programme should be established for staff with evaluation responsibilities and people who wish to increase their

knowledge in the field. Under the coordination of BEPP, this training could be developed in a modular form in compliance with international standards. The programme will be subject to professional certification or academic accreditation in connection with the universities of Benin and in coordination with key evaluation stakeholders in Benin.

Capacity building should also emphasize management and supervision of the evaluation function, since most evaluations are conducted according to the 'make do' approach.

Therefore, the priority actions to be supported by multilateral and bilateral partners within the framework of South-South cooperation are:

- Promote results-based management;
- Develop a national evaluation policy;
- Strengthen the capacity of the BEPP;
- Strengthen the BEPP's public policy evaluation process;
- Develop and disseminate a practical guide to evaluation in Benin, including quality norms and standards;
- Inventory and periodically update evaluations in Benin and disseminate an annual schedule of evaluations;
- Coordinate with technical and financial partners and ensure their systematic participation in evaluation processes.

Other medium-term actions can be planned, namely:

- Support demand for evaluation by establishing an evaluation support fund (documentary resources and financial support);
- Strengthen the BEPP's advisory support and quality assurance role;
- Increase lobbying for mandatory government accountability.

CONCLUSIONS

Evaluation is a consistent scientific approach that is essential to the management process. The findings in Benin reinforce the government's will to develop this little-used link.

Evaluation establishes important learning channels that stimulate demand for change. A national evaluation system should be established in Benin to create, through the evaluation of public policies, new synergies concerning the definition and implementation of public action. These synergies will help achieve the government's policy objectives and ensure the well-being of the population, which is the main target of public action.

This is therefore a major challenge for democracy and governance. It is important to develop South-South partnerships to learn from similar policies and promote replicable examples. It is also essential to engage with national and regional stakeholders by developing a framework for dynamic and open discussions.

In recognition of the importance of the field of evaluation and its usefulness as a development tool and its contribution to knowledge, Benin intends to elevate the rank of evaluation to a national priority.

BRAZIL: NATIONAL EVALUATION CAPACITY— GREAT ACHIEVEMENTS BUT STILL A LONG WAY TO GO

BY JOANA MOSTAFA[5]

INTRODUCTION

Undertaking such a complex job as the evaluation of public programmes and policies is an inglorious task for a nation. Measuring such an effort would require an inventory of past evaluations or the definition of proxy indicators that could grasp its extent. In this paper I attempt the second endeavour, with much simplicity. Additionally this paper describes and critically assesses one of the pillars of Brazil's evaluation capacity: the evaluation system linked to the Quadrennial Development Plan (PPA) of the Government of Brazil. Two analytic challenges remain.

First and foremost is the challenge of impact. Evaluations are only worth the trouble if they serve as effective inputs to change. If evaluations themselves do not become a cause for programme overhaul, proxy measures can be misinterpreted as indicators of a strong 'planning-implementation-evaluation-planning' rationale when there isn't one. On the other hand, undertaking few but effective evaluations will be interpreted as insufficient. To partially tackle this flaw I draw some conclusions on the effectiveness of the PPA evaluation system.

Second is the challenge of defining evaluation. Fortunately that can be reasonably solved by assuming that:

> Evaluation is the systematic assessment of the operation and/or the outcomes of a programme or policy, compared to a set of explicit or implicit standards, as a means of contributing to the improvement of the programme or policy.[6]

This assumption is not random; it is in tune with the current dialogue in the Brazilian evaluation field. Adoption of this definition of evaluation is linked to the pragmatic necessity of investigating not only final impacts but programme operation and the causal processes

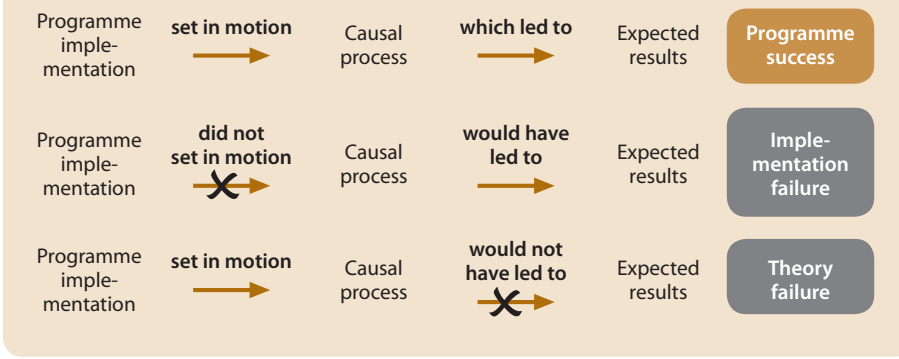
5. Social policy and economics researcher, Research Institute of Applied Economics, Federal Government of Brazil.

6. Weiss, Carol, *Evaluation: Methods for studying programs and policies,* second edition, New Jersey, Prentice Hall, 1998, p. 4.

put in motion by government interventions. In fact, most of the government's effort regarding evaluation refers to the questions in figure 1.

In essence, programme impact has to be traced back to a reliable description of programme components and to the validity of the transmission mechanisms or causal processes put in motion by the programme. If not, programme success or failure cannot be explained, and thus cannot be maintained, improved or corrected. Therefore, it is equally important for government to evaluate final impacts and interim results, as well as process adherence to programme theory.

FIGURE 1. EXPLAINING THE EFFECT OF A PROGRAMME OR POLICY



Source: Weiss, Carol, *Evaluation: Methods for studying programs and policies,* 1998.

BRAZIL'S EVALUATION SCENE: ACTORS, INSTITUTIONS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

The Brazilian evaluation field has grown dramatically in recent years, from virtually no activity to vibrant dialogue and practice. It is difficult to trace the first supporters of this renascence, but there is little doubt that an important push came from multilateral and foreign government development agencies.

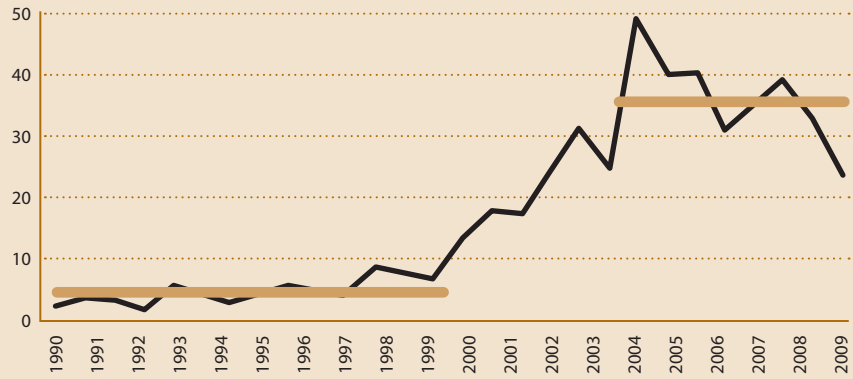
Most evaluation effort is either implemented directly by government ministries and associated research institutes or contracted out by government to Brazilian public universities. Thus, as in many other countries, it is essentially government that evaluates (or commands the resources for evaluation of) its own programmes and policies. Figure 2 summarizes these institutions and products (for a contact list see annex 1).

The academic production on evaluation is quite straightforward to assess. A simple Google Scholar search reveals surprising figures that confirm the novelty of the evaluation effort in Brazil. The frequency of papers whose title includes the words 'programme' or 'policy' and 'evaluation' has grown from an annual average of 10 between 1981 and 1995 to over 70

FIGURE 2. BRAZIL: THE EVALUATION SCENE (2009)

PARADIGM	PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION	TRANSMISSION MECHANISMS	RESULTS
Evaluation focus	• Laws, norms, regulations • Production and expenditure monitoring	• Implicit theory of change • Interim indicators for internal monitoring	• Ex-ante: government development objectives • Ex-post: government popularity and re-election
State processess	• Auditing: TCU (legislative branch accounts court) • Sector ministry • Ministry of Planning: PM/SPI • Ministry of Budget: PM/SOF (secretariat) • Vice-presidency	• Sector ministry • Ministry of Planning: PM/SPI • Research institute (IPEA)	• Sector ministry • Research institute (IPEA) • Federal and state universities • State-level research foundations • Marginal evaluations implemented by WB, UN, IDB
Products	• Operational audits • **Quadrennial Development Plan (PPA) Annual Evaluation** • Government Priority Programs Annual Evaluation	• **Quadrennial Development Plan (PPA) Annual Evaluation**	• Sporadic formal evaluations, mostly executed by government agencies or contracted out to public universities • **Quadrennial Development Plan (PPA) Annual Evaluation**

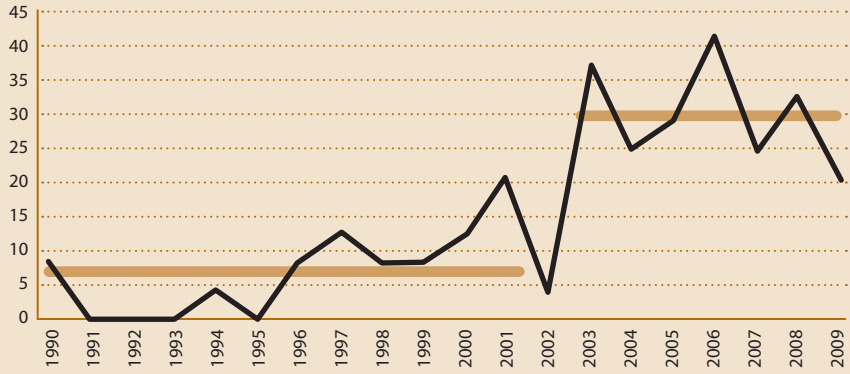
FIGURE 3. GROWTH IN SCHOLARLY ARTICLES CITING EVALUATION



Source: Google Scholar, December 2009.

FIGURE 4. GROWTH IN SCHOLARLY ARTICLES CITING SPECIFIC EVALUATIONS

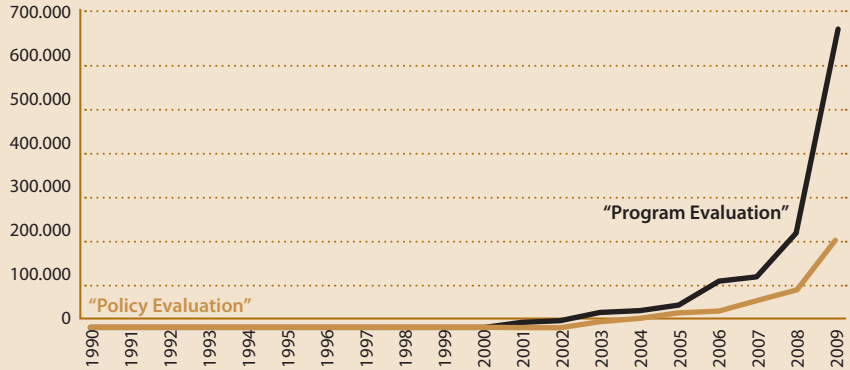
Brazil: Frequency of Articles that Cite Campbell, Heckman, Weiss, Shadish, Cronbach or Rubin



Source: Google Scholar, December 2009.

FIGURE 5. GROWTH IN PUBLICITY ON GOVERNMENT EVALUATIONS

Brazil: Frequency of Government Webpages Mentioning "Program Evaluation" and "Policy Evaluation" and the Specified Year, but not the Subsequent Years



Source: Google Scholar, December 2009.

from 2002 onwards (figure 3).

The number of articles citing specific evaluations has similarly grown (figure 4).

Finally, government has increasingly publicized, produced and discussed programme and policy evaluation, as can be seen in figure 5.

TABLE 1. BRAZIL: NUMBER OF SELECTED GRADUATE AND POST-GRADUATE COURSES (2009)

GRADUATE AND TECHNICAL COURSES		POST-GRADUATE COURSES	
Public policy management	7	Environment and ecology	62
Public administration	49	Public health	75
Social sciences	98	Education	142
Economics	55	Economics	70
		Urban and regional planning	29
		Sociology	75
Total	**209**	**Total**	**453**

Source: Ministry of Education website and Capes website, December 2009.

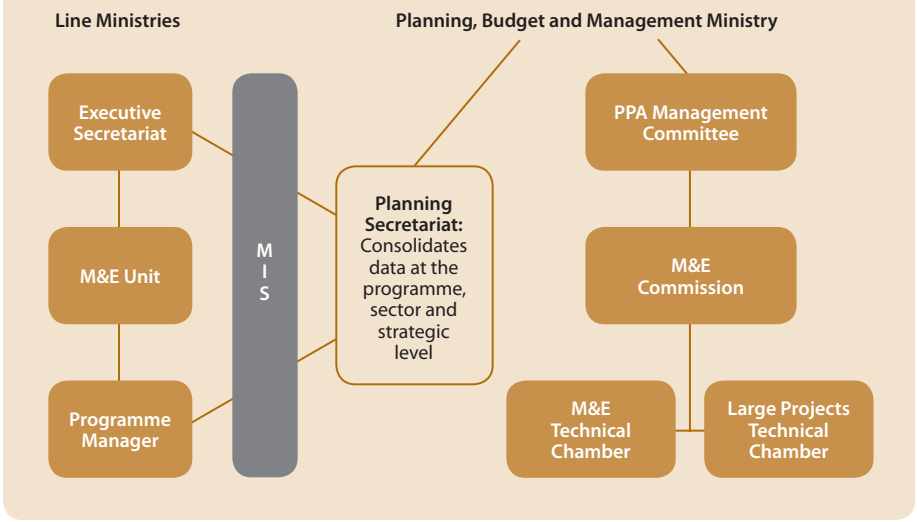
Notwithstanding past evaluation efforts, assessing the capacity for evaluation is a rather different matter. It would be ideal to perform a survey of professors' profiles, post-graduate courses that include evaluation disciplines and the institutional capacity within government. Even without this capacity, the number of graduate and post-graduate courses that should theoretically promote evaluative knowledge and culture somewhat illustrates this potential. In the past seven years seven public policy management graduation courses emerged that might indicate a trend of renewed interest in public administration, already well established as a field (table 1).

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EVALUATION SYSTEM

During the 1996-1999 PPA, the federal government piloted a radical reform to integrate planning activities with budget and management tools. The intention was to promote constant monitoring and revision of planning and budgeting, based on measured results. This model changed the organization of budget categories, condensing and simplifying the previous structure into programmes. These corresponded to the 'solution to problems precisely identified' and were measured. The idea was then to integrate an evaluative tool to monitor the goals set for each programme. The full expansion of this idea came in the 2000-2003 cycle.[7]

7. Garcia, Ronaldo Coutinho, 'A Reorganização do Processo de Planejamento do Governo Federal: O PPA 2000-2003', Texto para Discussão n. 726, IPEA, May 2000, at <www.ipea.gov.br/pub/td/2000/td_0726.pdf>.

FIGURE 6. FLOW OF INFORMATION BETWEEN LINE MINISTRIES AND PLANNING



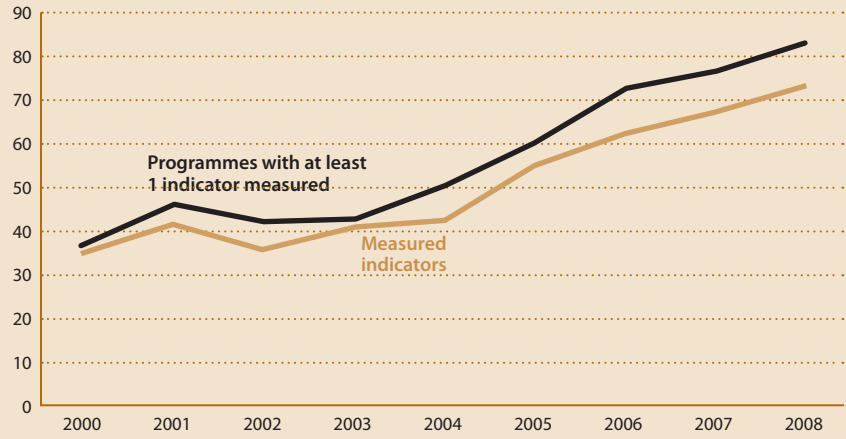
The evaluative system under the PPA was institutionalized in 2004, with the creation of an M&E Commission under the Ministry of Planning, Budget and Management to provide specific M&E guidelines and support. In the same year M&E units were established in every line ministry to provide technical support for evaluation. Figure 6 shows the flow of information between line ministries and planning, which is supported by a management information system (MIS-SIGPLAN).

Some of the basic characteristics of the evaluation system are: (i) it is recommended to all programmes but is not mandatory; (ii) it takes place annually; (iii) it is ex post; (iv) it aims to evaluate process and outcomes; (v) it includes a self-evaluation questionnaire for use by programme managers; and (vi) it is summarized at three levels: priority level, ministry level and programme level.

Notwithstanding these previous efforts, an important leap in the government's evaluation culture took place with formulation of a specific methodology by the Research Institute of Applied Economics (IPEA), a federal agency linked to the planning ministry. The methodology uses logic models as a basis for explicit programme theory and performs evaluation planning.[8] The IPEA logic models were applied to over 60 programmes involving around 700 civil servants between 2007 and 2009. This contributed immensely to

8. For the methodology see: Helder Ferreira, Martha Cassiolato e Roberto Gonzalez, 'Uma Experiência de Desenvolvimento Metodológico para Avaliação de Programas: O Modelo Lógico do Programa Segundo Tempo', Texto para Discussão n.1369, IPEA, Jan. 2009, at <www.ipea.gov.br/sites/000/2/publicacoes/tds/td_1369.pdf>.

FIGURE 7. PERCENTAGE OF INDICATORS MEASURED



Source: Ministry of Planning, Budget and Management.

harmonizing programme objectives among managers, organizing programme structure and setting valid, relevant and quantifiable indicators for each programme.

Over the years, the system improved monitoring and evaluation practices within line ministries as shown by the percentage of indicators actually measured over those originally intended to be measured (figure 7). In 2008 a total of 778 indicators was set to be monitored at the beginning of the cycle, and 571 were actually computed, a completion rate of 73 percent. Just five years earlier the completion rate was 41 percent.

CHALLENGES AND THE WAY FORWARD

One fundamental challenge arises from the fact that the evaluative effort is meant to inform planning of challenges faced by programmes, on the assumption that the Ministry of Planning is empowered enough to promote changes. Has this been the case in recent Brazilian government history? Hardly.

The point is, a technical solution does not make up for the loss of technical and institutional capacity in all ministries that took place during the recession of the 1980s and 1990s. Furthermore, the period of structural adjustment led to a culture of short-term, budgetary cash control over medium- to long-term planning capacity, and thus, management. The fact that budget decisions prevail over planning and management discredits evaluation efforts. In this environment, where planning does not really have enough power to promote change or to favour planning over short-run budgetary restrictions, evaluation becomes meaningless. It serves the purpose of transparency and reporting, not transformation.

Another challenge emerges from the fact that the PPA implied a total fusion of budget and planning. This forced planning to lose its selective nature. As a result, the PPA evaluations

end up producing poor indicators for all budgetary items, while concentrated effort is put into quality evaluations of government priorities and innovative proposals. The result is a lack of planning or evaluation for non-budgetary activity.

Some of the operational challenges related to the PPA evaluation system are: (1) the programme structure is not detailed enough for MIS-SIGPLAN to be used as an internal management tool, causing duplication of work; (2) the indicators end up being too broad to encompass activities that lie under each programme; (3) the annuity aspect and the questionnaire do not account for programme diversity (such as investment with longer maturities, decentralized expenditures and implementation); (4) the self-evaluation aspect implies a greater conflict of interest (which is present anyway in every evaluation sponsored by the programme manager); and (5) ministries have insufficient institutional capacity to generate, contract and oversee formal evaluations.[9]

The challenges are great, but the effort made to date shows the viability of moving forward with positive expectations. There is little doubt that the government would benefit from continuing the logic models effort. It should also try to deepen selectivity of planning and evaluation efforts. Despite some recent improvements, priorities are still too broad. Finally, the government should organize an institutional and funding structure to support rigorous evaluations, whether qualitative or quantitative.

In conclusion, Brazil is showing a growing institutional capacity to boost evaluative efforts. The recent growth in evaluative activity has been substantial, in both government and academia. In this setting the design and improvement of an evaluation system linked to the PPA has increased incentives to evaluate government programmes and contributed to a results-based public management over the past nine years. Nonetheless, challenges remain, given the low level of formal qualitative and quantitative research, especially using experimental or quasi-experimental methods.

9. Many of these critiques are shared by a World Bank qualitative evaluation of the PPA evaluation system, which has not yet been published.

ANNEX 1. PUBLIC SECTOR THINK TANKS WITH PROVEN EVALUATION CAPACITY

Horizontal

Applied research: Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada (www.ipea.gov.br)
Research: Virtually all federal and state universities: USP, UNICAMP, UNESP, UFMG, UFRJ, UERJ, UPFE, UFBA, UFRG, UFSC, UFPR
Auditing court: Tribunal de Contas da União (http://portal2.tcu.gov.br/TCU)

Sectoral

Health: Fundação Oswaldo Cruz (www.fiocruz.br)
Education: Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais (www.inep.gov.br); Secretaria de Educação Continuada, Alfabetização e Diversidade (www.mec.gov.br)
Social assistance: Secretaria de Avaliação e Gestão da Informação (www.mds.gov.br/sagi)
Environment: Instituto Brasileiro do Meio Ambiente e dos Recurcos Naturais Renováveis (www.ibama.gov.br)
Agricultural development: Empresa Brasileira de Pesquisa Agropecuária (www.embrapa.br)

State-level research centres

São Paulo: Fundação Sistema Estadual de Análise de Dados (www.seade.gov.br); Fundação de Desenvolvimento Administrativo (www.fundap.sp.gov.br)
Minas Gerais: Fundação João Pinheiro (www.fjp.gov.br)
Pernambuco: Fundação Joaquim Nabuco (www.fundaj.gov.br)
Bahia: Superintendência de Estudos Econômicos e Sociais (www.sei.ba.gov.br)

UGANDA: NATIONAL EVALUATION CAPACITY

BY MARGARET KAKANDE[10]

OVERVIEW OF THE EVALUATION EFFORT

Policymakers in Uganda favour evidence-based decision-making, and they seek proven, successful programmes. This makes evaluation critical, as it is the only mechanism through which policymakers can be assured of what works and why. However, evaluation practice in government has been rather weak, as most focus has been on monitoring. With the advent of management-for-results practice, there is now a renewed desire to strengthen the evaluative capacity at all levels.

Evaluation takes place in various institutions in Uganda. Recently impact evaluations have been assigned to the Office of the Prime Minister, the overseer of government business. However, in the past civil society organizations (CSOs) sometimes conducted impact evaluations as part of their efforts to advocate for specific policies. For example CSOs conducted an impact evaluation of the structural adjustment policies of liberalization, privatization and civil service reform. On the other hand, research and academic institutions have also been evaluating policy impacts as part of their routine operations.

The Office of the Prime Minister has a directorate of monitoring and evaluation. This directorate is supposed to coordinate national evaluation activities, although actual evaluations are at times conducted by independent consultants. There are also efforts to engage directorate staff in evaluations in collaboration with other institutions.[11] (See annex 1 for a chart showing the relationships among the evaluation institutions.)

At the lower project cycle level (midterm and ex ante), evaluations have been conducted by the institutions that implemented the programmes. Post-programme evaluations have been conducted for many sector programmes by independent consultants. National evaluation activities have been largely funded by donors, though the demand for them has come mainly from the national government.

10. President, Uganda Evaluation Association.

11. Staff are planning to evaluate the impact of the resettlement of internally displaced persons in northern Uganda in collaboration with staff from the Economic Policy Research Centre, Uganda Bureau of Statistics and others.

NATURE AND SCOPE OF EVALUATIONS

In Uganda policies, programmes and projects are evaluated at national, sector and project level. The volume of evaluations has been inversely proportional to their level—that is, projects have been the subject of the greatest number of evaluations while policies have received the fewest. This has been attributed to the fact that, in moving from project to programme to policy, evaluations become more complex. This may be a reflection of the evaluation capacity constraints among the country evaluators.

In Uganda, there are three levels of evaluations:

- **Ex-ante evaluations** are undertaken to predict what will work and the socio-economic frameworks within which it will occur. These are aimed at mitigating the negative effects of new policies while enhancing the effectiveness of their implementation. A few have been performed for policies deemed controversial, such as the land use policy. This Poverty and Social Impact study was conducted as a collaboration between the Ministry of Lands, Ministry of Finance and Economic Policy Research Centre. The study, which took six months, consisted of statistical analysis of national data sets and a participatory consultation of a representative sample of beneficiary communities. The study findings were primarily used by the Ministry of Lands to finalize the National Land Use Policy.

  Ex-ante evaluations, undertaken for policy planning, are focused mainly on the risks that need to be minimized for effective implementation. In a way these assessments test the programme theory underlying the policy or programme design.

- **Midterm evaluations** of various programmes have been conducted by independent consultants for implementing institutions. These are mainly sector-level evaluations conducted for donor-funded programmes. A midterm evaluation takes anywhere from three weeks to several months, depending on the size and complexity of the programme or project being evaluated. The results are used to inform future operations of the programme or project with a view to improving service delivery. Midterm evaluations usually entail an assessment of programme or project management; review of achievements and challenges; and examination of efficiency, relevance and sustainability. So to a large extent such evaluations are focused on activities, processes, outputs, organizational performance and, to a limited extent, service delivery.

- **Impact evaluations** have been conducted for both national and sectoral policies, programmes and projects. The most significant was that of the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP, 1997-2007), which doubled as Uganda's poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP). The evaluation of the 10-year programme was aimed at assessing the effectiveness and relevance of national strategies in fostering pro-poor growth. The national evaluation focused on impacts, outcomes and service delivery, with some reflection on activities and processes. The exercise, which lasted more than six months, was aimed at informing the government's shift from the PEAP to a five-year national development plan.

USE OF EVALUATIONS

The main users of the few national policy evaluations conducted to date have been the government and development partners. Some demand-driven evaluations have been conducted, usually to inform policy shifts. The national PEAP evaluation, for example, was for policymakers, including the President, Cabinet and Parliament, as well as planning technocrats. To ensure ownership and use of the findings, key stakeholders were consulted during the design. To ensure objectivity and credibility of the results, the evaluation was commissioned to a reputable independent firm, while coordination was undertaken by the government evaluation agency, the Office of the Prime Minister. The coordinating agency was assisted by a multi-stakeholder steering committee that supervised the evaluation and provided quality control services. The evaluation report was published and widely circulated. A summary version was prepared along with summary thematic reports for specialized readers. The reports were launched nationally and later shared through the Internet.

With the practice of management for results, diverse stakeholders appreciate the value of evaluation, and demand is increasing. Funding is the biggest challenge, coupled with the weak evaluation capacity in the country. Another problem is timelines. Evaluation studies need ample time, which may not synchronize easily with policymaking processes.

INFLUENCE OF EVALUATION RESULTS

At the sectoral and programme levels many decisions have been based on both midterm evaluations and post-evaluations. But at the national level, evaluations have had two major influences on policy decisions in Uganda:

1. The government implemented structural adjustment policies from the late 1980s to the early 1990s. Economic growth was strong, ranging from 5 percent to 6 percent annually, but complaints about household poverty were rampant. Civil society groups argued that structural adjustment programmes were irrelevant and detrimental to poor countries. The government was debating abandonment of its stringent economic management stance.

   However, an analysis of cross-sectional poverty data prepared in collaboration with the World Bank and the Statistics Department for the period 1992-1999 revealed that income poverty had sharply declined. This underscored that prudent economic management may not be sufficient but was a prerequisite to sustained poverty reduction. This work informed the government's decision to maintain its economic policies. This was the genesis of the government's quest for evidence-based decision-making.

2. The findings of the PEAP evaluation showed that the country fell short of various goals because of poor implementation resulting from weak monitoring and supervision of public programmes. As a result, the government has stepped up its monitoring efforts by creating new units, including a budget monitoring and accountability unit in the Ministry of Finance.

DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNICAL EXPERTISE

Monitoring and evaluation in Uganda is conducted by a wide range of skilled personnel, including economists, statisticians, accountants, auditors and other social scientists. Most of these individuals mainly monitor, having limited advanced evaluation skills. A capacity assessment conducted by the Uganda Evaluation Association in 2003 ascertained that the individuals performing monitoring and evaluation activities had varying capacities.[12] Around half (48 percent) had some rudimentary research skills while a quarter (24 per cent) had basic monitoring and evaluation capacity. However, a dismal 3 percent had the skills needed for advanced impact evaluations, and 3 percent had skills in quantitative data collection. Just 4 percent could carry out quantitative data analysis. Only 2 percent had the expertise to perform qualitative data collection and analysis. Although the sample was small, it indicated the level of expertise available in Uganda. It was also noted that many evaluators (43 percent) had been involved in project evaluations, but only 16 percent had participated in programme evaluations and none had performed a policy evaluation. It was clear that the limited number of evaluations at the programme and policy levels was partly a reflection of the limited capacity to undertake these complex analyses.

However, the assessment made clear that there was an adequate supply of qualified personnel to manage systems for data collection, storage and dissemination; management information systems; and financial information systems. The Makerere University Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics offers training in data collection, quantitative analysis and dissemination, as do the Faculty of Economics and Management and Institute of Information Technology. Various university departments train students in research methodology. However, the adequate supply of support personnel does not translate into a critical mass of 'professional evaluators' for Uganda.

Although there is no explicit strategy for training public managers in monitoring and evaluation, the Uganda Management Institute offers a short course on monitoring and evaluation. This course provides basic knowledge on the subject.

The evaluation capacity within the government varies across ministries and departments. However, the skills most lacking in government are those needed for the most complex evaluations, those of national policies. Since the Office of the Prime Minister is responsible for these evaluations, to a large extent this capacity has to be built there.

The Uganda Evaluation Association was formed in 2002 as an independent institution to promote the practice, use, quality and ethics of monitoring and evaluation. Among its main objectives are:

1. Build capacity for evaluation through formal and informal training skills exchange, and other avenues that support professional development.
2. Create a national network to facilitate sharing and exchange of up-to-date literature, methods, procedures and practical evaluation frameworks among evaluators.
3. Promote professionalism in evaluation by defining standards and guidelines to evaluation practice.

12. The assessment was conducted for 49 members of the Uganda Evaluation Association working in government, parastatal organizations, the private sector and NGOs.

As a first step, the association has established a collaborative initiative with the Uganda Christian University aimed at designing a comprehensive skills training package.

CONCLUSION

There is a quest for evidence-based decision-making in general and evaluation in particular in the government of Uganda. The evaluation practice is still limited at the national level partly due to capacity constraints. However, efforts are being made to foster professionalism within the evaluation fraternity, and these efforts will need international support.

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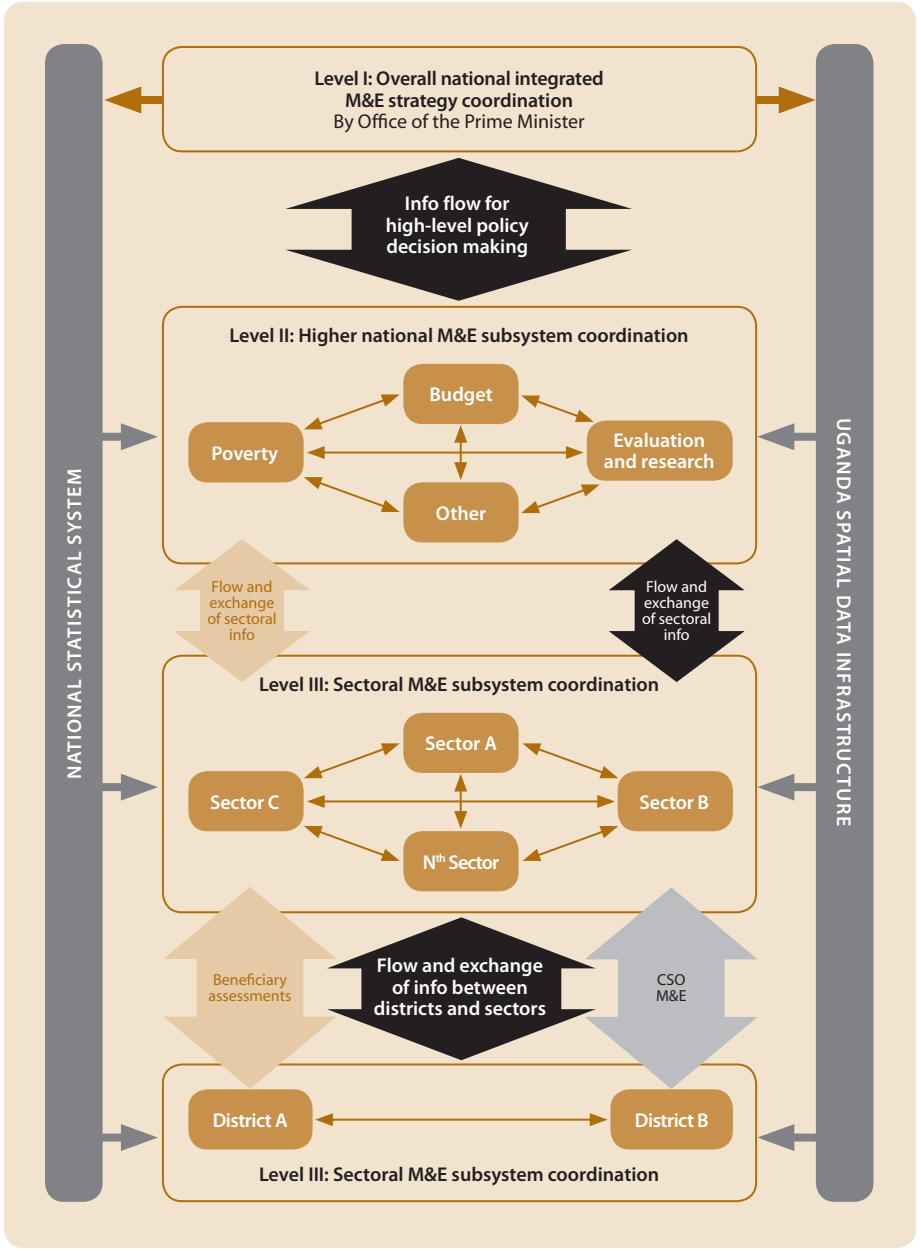
ANNEX 1. THE NATIONAL INTEGRATED M&E FRAMEWORK



SENEGAL: THE SENEGALESE EXPERIENCE WITH EVALUATION: OVERVIEW OF THE NATIONAL PLANNING SYSTEM

BY ABABACAR DIALLO[13]

PROSPECTIVE STUDY FOR PLANNING IN SENEGAL

A prospective study was undertaken with the time horizon of a generation (25 years) involving a global reflection on Senegalese society and on its natural and international environments. This study involves a retrospective reflection and also unveils a broad range of plausible scenarios for the future as well as the paths that must be taken to arrive at each scenario. This basic reflection must be evaluated and adjusted every 19 years to better assess the evolution of the overarching direction of society and to anticipate changes in its international environment.

This study will lead to the definition of strategic axes representing long-term trajectories that would guide Senegal in a scenario of harmonious development. The prospective choices for the long term (25 years) are intended to clarify and guide strategic decision-making in midterm (6 years) orientation planning.

Orientation Plan for Economic and Social Development

The Orientation Plan for Economic and Social Development establishes a six-year horizon for implementation of exit strategies and the intermediate objectives that must be reached to move progressively from the current situation (a conservative case based on current trends) towards the long-term future to which society aspires. The plan sets out a midterm vision shared by all actors involved in social and economic development. It can be revised at the three-year mark.

Triennial Public Investment Programme

The Triennial Public Investment Programme is the instrument used to execute the orientation plan. It has a horizon of three years, and during the first year the consolidated investment budget is integrated into fiscal law. The programme is reviewed each year.

13. Head, Sector Planning and Project Evaluation Unit, Ministry of Economy and Finance.

Primary tasks of the programme

- Identification and feasibility study by technical ministries;
- Development of macroeconomic framework by the planning directorate;
- Evaluation and selection of project, programmes and reforms by the planning directorate and the economic and financial cooperation directorate;
- Creation of a physical and financial balance sheet for projects by the economic and financial cooperation directorate.

Policy evaluation methodology

- Identification of objectives: response of investment programmes and reforms to the problems at hand and to the policies in the development plan;
- Analysis of implementation methods: accounting and contribution of projects and reforms with the orientations and programmes retained in the development plan;
- Examination of the participative process in searching for solutions and for internal and external mobilizations around the objectives and issues raised by the plan;
- Study of the effect of the agreed-upon course of action and the investments made to boost the economy, as well as their potential impact in terms of changes in behaviour or in the environment regarding long-term national development.

Tools used to evaluate projects and programmes

- Software using the 'effects method' to evaluate directly productive projects;
- A tool for monitoring investments at the regional level;
- A tool for studying regional disparities for investment purposes;
- A tool for monitoring the labour market;
- A tool for monitoring educational trends;
- A scorecard for social indicators;
- A RAPID Model, for increased awareness of population policy;
- A macroeconomic model for triennial reflections.

EVALUATION OF THE PLAN

The evaluation of the plan is conducted in several stages involving both internal and external actors. It is led by department managers charged with planning, evaluating and selecting programmes and the monitoring and ex-post analysis of public action programmes developed by the Macroeconomics and Synthesis Commission. This exercise also allows evaluation of plan implementation and creates an opportunity to assess the interest in and capacity to explore other approaches to evaluation, programming and monitoring for global development strategy actions.

The exercise also makes it possible to prepare the annual plan advancement report. This report, sanctioned by the Macroeconomics and Synthesis Commission, is submitted to the Interministerial Council for Monitoring the Execution of the Plan to relay pertinent information about adjustments and improvements to strategies. This approach requires:

- Adherence to the strategic orientations of the plan;
- Development of a macroeconomic framework oriented towards simulations (impact of current policies on various selected scenarios or trends), the search for variants (alternatives or leeway options strategy managers) and both the retrospective and prospective observations regarding the evolution of the economic, regional and international environment (based on factors pertaining to the chosen development strategy or what could be influential in the long term);
- A system to monitor the development of action lines across successive investment programmes and the reforms undertaken;
- Rapid availability of an exhaustive balance sheet (published less than two months after the deadline for the physical and financial execution of projects) supplemented by a precise account of capital spending for the year. The ministry in charge of controlling the plan thus has access to the precise reference points to carry out technical arbitration and finalize the future triennial plan as well as objective recent data to revitalize static situations and accelerate the mobilization of resources (boost investments);
- Strengthening participation by local actors in developing and evaluating the anticipated effects of projects and programmes, from the preliminary selection stage through the planning process (with choice in terms of the appropriateness of the global development strategy), and the complete implementation of the project and its expiration (real ex-post project effects);
- Increased participation of socio-economic sectors to obtain a shared vision of the pace of progress in the country;
- Availability of a meso-economic impact assessment (ex-post or while the plan is still being implemented) to allow decision-makers to verify that the triennial programmes are aligned with the strategies they must execute. This exercise will allow adjustment of strategic orientations to align with long-term goals (strategic axes);
- Strengthening of capacities in analysis and monitoring of economic policies.

Difficulties encountered

- Weak planning capacity of technical ministries;
- Strong competition between the finance and planning functions;
- Lack of adherence to system procedures;
- Insufficient quality and quantity of technical staff;
- Poor quality of evaluation tools used.

New apparatus for evaluation follow-up

- No ex-ante evaluation because no project/programme files were received;
- The ex-post evaluation is conducted according to requests and available resources;
- Alignment of the poverty reduction strategy paper (2006-2010) with MDGs:
  - Increased involvement of the policy department in the public policy evaluation process;
  - Five thematic monitoring groups; secretariat function undertaken by the policy department.

Results

- Increasing importance of monitoring and evaluation activities
  - Systematic with partners;
  - Weakness in the intra-ministerial exchanges about project files (sectoral triennial public investment programme not discussed);
  - Weak connections between the sector monitoring system and the plan (planning units eliminated in 1990).

Constraints

- Lack of funding dedicated to the evaluation of policies and programmes;
- Files presented by technical ministries lacking in quality and number;
- Absence of guides to evaluate projects that are not directly productive and to evaluate policies;
- Low level of diversity in evaluation techniques (the effects method was the most commonly used);
- Insufficiency of policy evaluation;
- Absence of a standardized framework for evaluating projects and programmes;
- Difficulties in collecting statistical data required to measure sector performances;
- Institutional instability in ministerial departments;
- Lack of harmonized methodologies for collecting information for projects;
- Weak correlation between sectoral indicators and national strategy indicators;
- Diversity in data sources;
- Insufficient ongoing training for technical ministerial evaluation agents;
- Lack of analysis and real substance on the relevance and efficacy of sectoral policies and difficulty in establishing a strong correlation between budgetary allocations and sectoral results.

CONCLUSIONS

- Evaluative practices are not conducted regularly or continuously.
- Public policies are poorly evaluated, focusing primarily on projects and programmes and not on public policies.
- There is poor understanding of the quality of public services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

There is a need to revitalize the national planning system by:

- Harmonizing the relationship between finance and planning and their integration into an approach to global development;
- Redefining the missions of various institutions;
- Improving mechanisms to coordinate and circulate information;
- Operationalizing planning units within technical ministries;
- Strengthening the capacities of technical ministry agents, planning units and other actors;
- Regularly publishing and using evaluation results;
- Training evaluators in specific fields;
- Strengthening the functioning of evaluation monitoring apparatuses;
- Developing norms and quality standards for evaluation;
- Developing an evaluation reference and templates for all types of evaluations;
- Promoting evaluative research;
- Formalizing the Senegalese network of evaluators (Seneval);
- Institutionalizing policy evaluation and involving all actors;
- Generalizing the results-driven management approach by systematizing the medium-term sectoral expenditure framework in all sectors of social and economic life to promote the programme approach from within the technical ministries.

CHALLENGES OF NATIONAL MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEMS

COLOMBIA: SINERGIA—COLOMBIA'S SYSTEM OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION

BY DIEGO DORADO[14]

OVERVIEW

Since the early 1990s Colombia has achieved significant advances in designing and implementing an institutional framework oriented towards performance-based management. The Constitution itself requires this system as a strategic instrument for Colombia's public administration. However, the design and implementation of the system has necessitated a series of structural reforms to construct a normative framework that facilitates both the design and the operation of the performance-based management instruments, such as monitoring and evaluation.

In this respect, the most significant reform is related to the Law of the National Development Plan (Law 152 of 1994). It establishes the key elements to be taken into account in monitoring and evaluating public policy and requires this process to be based on the plan's strategic guidelines and priorities. The National Planning Department was appointed to lead this process as the entity in charge of constructing and consolidating the system of monitoring and evaluation (SINERGIA).

With this in mind, the National Planning Department started to develop a system to provide better information for use in decision-making related to formulation and implementation of public policies and to improve efficiency in allocation of public resources. Also, the National Council for Economic and Social Policy (CONPES) in 1994 established evaluation guidelines for government agencies, aiming to strengthen public investment management capacity.

In addition, the system has focused on producing information to assess achievement of the goals in the National Development Plan. For this purpose, in 2002 the National Planning Department introduced the application SIGOB, an information system for oversight of relevant indicators. It is the main source of information for management follow-up by the Office of the President. SIGOB was the first generation of SINERGIA and provided the conceptual and institutional framework and the basic tools for monitoring and evaluation. This first phase has been devoted to methodological soundness and conceptual maturity, to

14. Director, Public Policy Evaluation, National Planning Department.

foster a culture of performance-based management and establish a process for learning how to implement it. This has led to advances in terms of understanding the institutional context needed for a more efficient monitoring and evaluation system relevant to public administration needs.

In 2004 CONPES redefined the institutional framework in the National Planning Department to implement performance-based management. CONPES determined that SINERGIA must have three principal components: one for monitoring the goals of the National Development Plan, one for evaluating public policy and one for disseminating results and ensuring accountability.

This new organization represents the start of SINERGIA's second generation. During this phase the system has encountered various challenges related to improving it and to the use of the information it produces, such as the linkage between the goals of the National Development Plan and the allocation of resources to fulfil them.

At the beginning of the new century, evaluation of public policy was not completely understood as a tool for implementing performance-based management. This led to the need to (i) redefine the incentives for evaluation as a tool to understand the results of State interventions; and (ii) use evaluation as an input for decision-making among policymakers. These challenges were addressed by strengthening the operational scheme for implementation of SINERGIA. With this in mind, the focus of systems operations was shifted from a sector analysis based on agencies to a sector analysis oriented to understanding programme dynamics.

All of this work was led by the Office of Evaluation of Public Policy in the National Planning Department, assisted by key stakeholders in other units, such as the Ministry of Finance and the Office of the President. Also helping were those responsible for formulating the national investment budget in the National Planning Department.

SINERGIA is now moving towards a new phase, oriented to creating a strategic view of the sectors and identifying the delivery chain associated with each of the goals in the National Development Plan. Public policy monitoring will provide timely information while allowing the evaluation agenda to address the most relevant issues. As a result, formulation of public policy will respond to the public policy cycle.

COLOMBIA'S EVALUATION EFFORT

The experience acquired in designing and executing evaluation projects over the past 15 years has led to the recognition of SINERGIA as one of the most advanced systems of the Latin America region. Since 2001 Colombia has been undertaking greater numbers of evaluations, and today SINERGIA is not the only entity evaluating public policies. Academia, think tanks and other civil society organizations are also performing such studies. As a result, today more than 200 evaluations of public policy are available, and nearly 30 more are expected to start soon. The idea is to increase the flows of information to inform policymakers' decision-making processes, allocate resources more efficiently and ensure that public policies are consistent with the needs of the population. However, to understand the evolution of the evaluation process in Colombia, it is important to recognize that evaluation projects arise from the public policy cycle and that the design is based on the logical framework of the programme.

EVALUATIONS IN THE PUBLIC POLICY CYCLE

The public policy cycle (figure 1) refers to the process by which public policies are formulated, implemented, monitored and evaluated. However, the key factor of this process is its cyclical nature. This is what justifies the need for monitoring and evaluation as a learning tool that permits the retro-alimentation of the process.

The design of evaluation projects in SINERGIA responds primarily to a need for information in order to close the cycle. The purpose of evaluations is to provide pertinent inputs for formulation of government programmes. The evaluation is understood as a rigorous study of the causalities derived from the programme's intervention. The information produced is more detailed than that emerging from

FIGURE 1. PUBLIC POLICY CYCLE

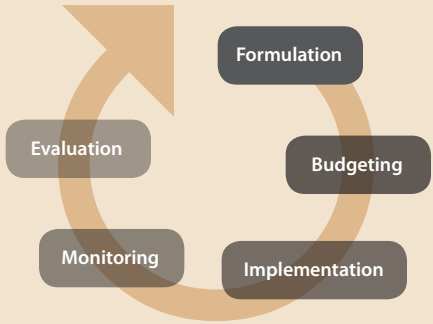
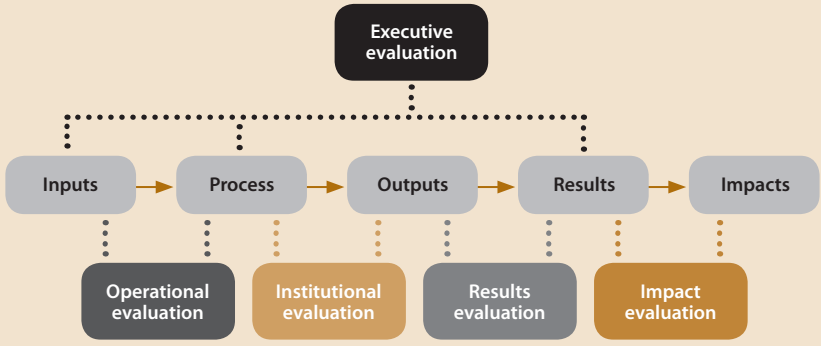


FIGURE 2. LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

FIGURE 3. TYPES OF EVALUATIONS



monitoring indicators, which enables the evaluation to provide recommendations oriented to improving the programme and designing more efficient government interventions. Therefore, the type of evaluation to be performed depends on the stage of the programme and the type of questions the policymaker wants to assess (figure 2).

Figure 2 presents a simplified version of the logical framework in which it is possible to identify the value chain behind the programme. SINERGIA can identify a type of evaluation for each stage of the logical framework. This ensures that the analysis of causality is appropriate for what the policymaker wants to know. Figure 3 shows the type of evaluation associated with each stage of the logical framework.

SINERGIA'S EVALUATION AGENDA

Given that SINERGIA has identified a type of evaluation for each stage of the logical framework, it is clear that each type has a different scope and target population. Notwithstanding that various types of evaluation use similar analytical techniques, the differentiation remains relevant because it affects the formulation of recommendations. The evaluation types are:

- **Executive evaluation:** Begins by studying the programme design and analyses links between the design and the implementation process. The main source of information is administrative records and programme documentation.
- **Operational evaluation:** Performs a deep analysis of the programme's macro and micro processes. The objective is to use project findings as inputs to ensure that outputs are produced in the most efficient way.
- **Institutional evaluation:** Studies the institutional framework behind the programme and analyses the structure of incentives and of the programme.
- **Results evaluation**: Analyses programme improvements in terms of the welfare of the beneficiaries and studies how delivery of outputs affects the population.
- **Impact evaluations:** The most rigorous type of evaluation, it constructs experiments to determine the effect of programme intervention on an individual relative to the individual's condition in the absence of the intervention.

The country's portfolio of evaluations has been diversifying since 2002. The first evaluations led by SINERGIA were impact evaluations of the social support network.

LINKS BETWEEN EVALUATION AND OTHER MONITORING EFFORTS

Though there are differences between monitoring and evaluation, it is important to understand how they complement each other. For example, the information that results from monitoring is a useful input for developing the evaluation agenda. This is because the indicators used to oversee management of the goals in the National Development Plan permit the analyst to identify the stage within the delivery chain that is not working. The scope of the evaluation can then be shifted to clarify what is happening at that stage.

In the last decade Colombia has improved significantly the supply of information systems available for monitoring. Today three information systems can be used to follow up on programmes and projects to ensure consistency with the work plan and the goals: (i) SIGOB, the monitoring system of the government's goals; (ii) SUIFP, the unified public investment system; and (iii) SISCONPES, the monitoring system of political guidance.

THE USE OF EVALUATIONS

Evaluations are designed and executed to provide feedback on public policy. They should focus on understanding the causalities behind outputs, results and impacts, to improve the efficiency of public policy implementation. For this reason, the stakeholders who use evaluation results are policymakers, programme directors, the Ministry of Finance and the National Planning Department (the agency in charge of long-term strategic planning and formulation of the public investment budget).

However, the stakeholders' interaction is led by the Office of Evaluation of Public Policy of the National Planning Department, which is the technical secretary of SINERGIA. It has three evaluation committees, one covering social protection, one covering competitiveness and business development, and one covering modernization of the State. The committees are meant to ensure that the evaluation agenda and the analysis of its results are consistent with the country's macroeconomic reality, allocation of public resources and the strategic information needs of each sector. This approach makes it possible to assure that evaluations are relevant and timely and that the type of evaluation selected is the best choice to obtain the information requested by the policymaker.

It is worth mentioning that evaluations are conducted by external consultancy firms, think tanks or universities, to assure independence of the results and recommendations. Designing the terms of reference for these tenders is the responsibility of the Office of Evaluation of Public Policy, supervised by the three committees named above.

Since evaluations are executed by third parties, it is important to establish revision protocols to assure the quality of the information and the trustworthiness of the data used as input. For this purpose SINERGIA has establish a correction process led by the relevant committee, assisted by an expert in the application of evaluation methodologies. This ensures that project outputs turn out to be useful and coherent.

The indicators and variables also undergo a rigorous review. The protocol for this review is focused on ensuring that the instruments used to asses a programme are compatible with the data, have no information bias and are representative of what one wants to know.

SINERGIA also has a database of peer reviewers, mainly academics, recognized for their expertise in the study of sector behaviour and of how state intervention can change long-term trends. These reviewers revise the products corresponding to the evaluation project and develop a technical note with their impressions of the study. The content of the note is shared with the corresponding committee and the team executing the project. This exercise is very important because the review serves to verify the quality of the analysis and the information produced by the evaluation.

SINERGIA has a vested interest in developing strong and rigorous performance-based management tools. The Office of Evaluation of the National Planning Department has a vested interest in constructing technical capacity in the public administration so that officials can use these management tools in their daily duties. To help them, SINERGIA has designed a short course that teaches the basic instruments and tools needed to understand the key facts. It also covers the necessity of implementing a performance-based management in Colombia's public administration.

Evaluation results are presented in seminars and other events to disseminate the policy recommendations widely. This informs people about how programme implementation is being adjusted based on the feedback received.

COSTA RICA: MONITORING, FOLLOW-UP AND EVALUATION OF STRATEGIC ACTIONS

BY CARLA MORALES ROJAS[15]
AND JUAN MANUEL CORDERO[16]

INTRODUCTION

The modernization of the state is a central concern for democratic systems. It translates into permanent action focused on strengthening the management of public affairs and efficiently operating planning, budgeting and evaluation systems to assess the impact of public policies on the quality of people's lives.

Costa Rica's Ministry of National Planning and Economic Policy (MIDEPLAN) is responsible for strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation of public management strategic actions. It also provides advice at the highest level to promote corrective policies necessary for the different sectors to achieve the targets set by each administration.

MIDEPLAN's functions are established by the following legal instruments: Act 5525 of 1974 (*Ley 5525*), which created the Ministry and the National Planning System; Decree of 1994 (*Decreto*), creating the National Evaluation System; and Act 8131 of 2001 (*Ley 8131*), on Financial Administration and Public Budgeting and its corresponding regulations. These instruments, in conjunction with institutional planning units, service comptrollers and internal auditors, create the supporting institutional framework for the ministry's planning, monitoring and evaluation activities.

NATIONAL PLANNING SYSTEM

The National Planning System, led by MIDEPLAN, is comprised of the institutional or sectoral planning units of ministries and other public agencies, as well as the coordinating and advising instruments, such as advisory councils and commissions and inter-institutional committees. Besides elaborating current and prospective diagnostics of the national development process to assess potentially significant internal and external events (such as

15. Deputy Minister of National Planning and Economic Policy.
16. Deputy Minister of Social Development.

policy proposals in the government agenda), MIDEPLAN must design a national development plan (NDP) for each administration. In a participatory process, all sectors, leaders and new authorities present their strategic proposals for each thematic or sectoral area.

The current administration decided to organize all the executive branch institutions, both central and decentralized, and the autonomous institutions into 16 sectors encompassing close to 94 institutions. This complies with the strategic orientation of the NDP and enables implementation of its strategic actions. The NDP establishes mandatory regional and sectoral policies and objectives for public agencies, ministries and other institutions. The current NDP (2006-2010) includes eight national targets[17] linked to economic growth, employment and poverty, among other issues; 84 sectoral targets; 141 strategic actions; and 492 targets associated with 16 sectors;[18] as well as 730 targets associated with 95 public institutions. In addition, the 'Contract with the People' reflects the authorities' commitment to achieving the established targets.

The NDP also provides a guiding framework for institutions to formulate their annual operational plans and budgets. It supports the president's constitutional mandate to lead, plan, coordinate, organize, manage and evaluate the objectives, policies, programmes and strategic projects for the comprehensive development of the country.

However, the State's strategic planning is only a cog in the wheel, allowing it to define targets and ways to achieve them; this is what defines institutional activity. The other basic piece is monitoring and evaluation of public affairs management, which in the case of Costa Rica focuses on the strategic actions outlined in the NDP.

NATIONAL EVALUATION SYSTEM

The National Evaluation System (SINE) is limited to the executive branch. Since its inception, it has been viewed as a 'self-assessment' follow-up and monitoring tool for the government's strategic activities. Its purpose is to aid the executive branch (ministers, executive directors, departments and even the president) by providing information that helps in decision-making on issues pertaining to advancement of the NDP.

SINE also ensures application of an evaluation module to other strategic government programmes through assessment and monitoring of specific policies, plans, programmes and projects. Starting in 2009, public investment projects related to NDP goals have been incorporated into the monitoring and evaluation system.

17. National targets: (1) Combating corruption in the entire public sector. (2) Poverty and inequality reduction. (3) Promoting economic growth and employment. (4) Improving the quality and expanding coverage of the education system. (5) Stopping crime growth rates, drug trafficking and addiction, and reversing the growing sense of insecurity among the population. (6) Strengthening public institutions and systematizing government priorities. (7) Recovering and expanding transportation infrastructures. (8) Enhancing foreign policy and reclaiming Costa Rica's prominent international role.

18. Sectors: Social and poverty reduction, education, health, public safety and crime prevention, culture, finance, productive, foreign trade, tourism, infrastructure and transportation, science and technology, work and social security, financial oversight and monetary policy, environment, energy and telecommunications, government coordination and foreign policy.

EVALUATION TOOLS AND PROCEDURES

Considering the three target levels described by the NDP—national, sectoral and strategic actions—that have to be annually reviewed to measure progress, MIDEPLAN developed a series of methodological instruments to facilitate the work of institutions and directing ministries (*rectorías*). The sectoral and institutional programming, monitoring and evaluation annual matrix was formulated along these lines. This tool was designed to programme and evaluate progress towards the targets defined by the NDP, identifying each sector, the institutions that are part of it, planned activities for the year and budget allocation for that sector. Figure 1 shows features related to each year's evaluation, noting progress or delays with respect to the previous year, as well as progress by sector. It includes a box for institutions and/or directing ministries to introduce justification or corrective actions for each target.

Each minister must provide this information for each sector. After systematizing the data, the ministers send to MIDEPLAN consolidated, semi-annual sectoral reports in January and June. The January report covers the entire year and is used to assess progress on NDP targets during that period. It is also sent to the national comptroller general (oversight body), the cabinet and institutional leaders. The mid-year report monitors progress on the targets during the first six months and is meant primarily to help orient ministers in their decision-making or corrective actions. The report is also sent to institutional leaders, the cabinet and especially the president.

To implement all these prescriptions, every year MIDEPLAN issues the technical and methodological guidelines for sectoral and institutional strategic programming and sectoral monitoring and evaluation. The guidelines "aim at improving the quality of sectoral and institutional strategic programming, sectoral monitoring and evaluation of NDP targets, PNIP's[19] public investment projects and institutional budgets, generating strategic information for the public management, results and accountability evaluation processes".[20]

FIGURE 1. SAMPLE ANNUAL PLANNING MATRIX

Matriz de Programación, Seguimiento y Evaluación Sectorial e Institucional de las metas de las Acciones Estratégicas 2008 y del periodo PND 2006 – 2010.

Sector:
Instituciones:

Nivel: Sector/ Institucional	Planeación Sectorial CCC-PND 2006–2010 e Institucional			Programación Anual 2008		Evaluación 2008 Resultado de las metas anuales al 31 de Diciembre 2008				Seguimiento Sectorial Avance Acumulado de la meta del periodo CCC			13 Institución Responsable	14 Justificación y Medida Correctiva
	1 Acción estratégica	2 Meta	3 Indicador	4 Meta anual Programada	5 Presupuesto Estimado (en Millones de C)	6 Resultado	7 Presupuesto Ejecutado (en millones de C)	8 % de cumplimiento de la meta	9 Clasificación del resultado	10 Avance acumulado	11 % acumulado	12 Clasificación del avance de la meta del período		
Sectorial														
Institucional														
Sectorial														
Institucional														
Institucional														
Sector/ Institucional														

19. PNIP is the National Public Investment Plan.

20. MIDEPLAN, Methodological Guideliness, available at www.mideplan.go.cr/content/view/87/438/; visited 1 October 2009.

MIDEPLAN formed a three-party commission that includes MIDEPLAN (planning), Ministry of Finance (budget) and the National Comptroller General (budget and oversight) to discuss issues such as the guidelines. This has helped to create consensus and establish the evaluation process not only as an auditing or sanctioning tool but also as an instrument for transparency and decision-making aimed at achieving better results in public policy.

The movement towards a goal-oriented public administration is a very positive sign, although challenges and obstacles certainly persist. One of them is long-term planning that enables impact assessments and extracts commitments from those in power. Long-term planning aims not to impose solutions but to set goals for those entrusted to govern on behalf of the people while allowing officials to choose their own ways to achieve the goals.

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF SINE

Based on the evaluation process defined by SINE and the financial administration and public budgets legislation, here are some of the advantages and disadvantages faced by the executive branch.

Advantages

- The monitoring and evaluation process allows the government to control official, first-hand data on public policies, programmes and projects.
- An effective communication system supports reporting of progress and delays, allowing for short-term correction of original plans at strategic and operational or programme levels.
- The regulations force the institutions and the system as a whole to periodically monitor and evaluate, ensuring proper data follow-up and production.
- Applying a more systematic approach to monitoring and evaluating government targets could facilitate implementation of policy impact evaluations in the long term. This would aid the design of public policies based on identified needs and previous implementation experiences, successful or not.

Disadvantages

- In certain situations, even merely programming changes to the NDP can have unexpected results, thus collaterally affecting its strategic targets.
- Political activity at executive level could impede appropriate implementation of corrective actions.
- Public information on the NDP could be minimized.

The current institutional framework separates the design of the NDP from its budgeting and evaluation system and approach from the final expenditure reports (despite efforts to correct this problem). This has had several practical consequences, such as:

- There is no clear link between government priorities and a systematic resource allocation to address them.
- Budgets have been focused on the short term, making it impossible to establish multi-year targets and budgets to implement public policies with a more strategic (rather than programmatic) focus.
- There is insufficient coordinating capacity between institutions (Finance-MIDEPLAN) and no direct link between planning and budgeting.

On the other hand, a sectoral approach for government organizations has been tested since 2006, establishing 'sectoral liaisons' in charge of planning, monitoring and evaluating each sector and all its institutions. This institutional design, however, still lacks a track record. Thus, it is important for it to develop organically and distinguish itself from the institutional planning units that are currently the more programmatic elements in the public evaluation system.

CURRENT AND FUTURE CHALLENGES

- **Change of culture:** It is interesting that people reject evaluations because they see them as punishment. This frame of mind must be changed. It is important to stress that in the new culture evaluations are not meant to disqualify institutions or programmes but to improve them and maximize their benefits. Evaluating becomes a necessary process for the optimal use of state resources.
- **Evaluation and project cycle:** Evaluations should be part of the project cycle, not an optional element, because programmes often leave no evidence of true results and impacts, both negative and positive. In some countries, like Mexico, part of the project budget is allocated to its own evaluation. This ensures that enough money is available to assess whether the project path is correct or needs to change.
- **Planning for the short, medium and long term:** This benefits the more revealing evaluations, those that enable changes in the administration's course of action in all stages of project and policy development. A thorough analysis of the country's needs will lead to a planning and evaluation system oriented towards comprehensive development.
- **Perfecting routine planning and evaluating processes:** This is closely related to the previous items. It is important to change the mentality of managers and users, use information systems to facilitate contact between the parties interested in the evaluation and institute planning schemes across the board. This approach will bring public administration closer to its targets and goals and to using budgetary instruments for that purpose.

- **System sustainability:** The sustainability of Costa Rica's monitoring and evaluation systems can be guaranteed mainly by reinforcing the sectoral approach to planning and evaluation and their connection to SINE. This approach has benefits in terms of:
  - Maintaining the current Decree on sectoralization and ensuring it is in force in the future;
  - 'Reconstructing' the automated M&E information system by sector;
  - Naming sectoral liaisons in an organic way, distinct from institutional liaisons;
  - Reinforcing and updating SINE's monitoring and evaluation techniques and practices and aligning them towards results-based management where the budget is already determined in the plan.

Costa Rica has made an effort to move towards results-based management, strengthening its evaluation culture and its advantages. But there is still a distance to go. The path to a better public management is already laid out, but Costa Rica (and Latin America in general) needs to commit to establishing long-term planning systems, with quantifiable targets for each administration. This approach would enable evaluations aimed at improving projects, policies and programmes, and it would create appropriate accountability.

ANNEX 1. CASE STUDY: SOCIAL AND POVERTY REDUCTION SECTOR IN COSTA RICA

Sixteen public activity sectors were created in Executive Decree 33151-MP of 8 May 2006, named 'Executive Power Organic Regulations' (amended by Executive Decree 33178-MP of 14 June 2006 and by Executive Decree 34582-MP-PLAN of 4 June 2008). Each sector was placed under the responsibility of a directing minister to improve coordination and policy management between the Executive and other public agencies.

One of the newly created sectors, Social and Poverty Reduction Sector, is currently under the direction of Dr. María Luisa Ávila Agüero, Minister of Health. When the system of sector-directing ministries was established, the Arias Sánchez Administration decided to create an instrument named 'Contract with the People.'[21] It is signed by each directing minister jointly with the President and the Minister of Finance. The contract requires the directing minister and the minister of MIDEPLAN to act as guarantors. It assigns them the responsibility to act in coordination to monitor the implementation of strategic initiatives, which allows assessment of progress and generates useful and timely decision-making information. The contract also calls for each directing ministry to select its sectoral and institutional liaisons, who are responsible for monitoring strategic activities.

Through its sectoral liaison, the ministry in charge of the Social and Poverty Reduction Sector has established a close relationship with MIDEPLAN, and the sectoral liaison has become the contact point for institutional liaisons. The ministry's coordination with MIDEPLAN on one side, and with sectoral institutions on the other, has facilitated direct, continuous contact with the institutional planning units. It has also enabled compliance with legal methodological requirements and helped institutions to move towards effectively achieving the 2006-2010 NDP targets. In addition, it has facilitated processes aimed at enhancing the technical capacities of the personnel operating the planning units and of the institutional liaisons in programming methodologies, monitoring and evaluation, indicator formulation and design of public investment projects.

On the other hand, the quarterly, semi-annual and annual reports created by the sectoral ministry offer quality and timely information on the 37 targets established by the Social and Poverty Reduction Sector. These are implemented by 24 public institutions, facilitating the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms of the social targets defined in the NDP, as well as the accountability of institutions and directing ministries.

The institutional information received by the directing ministry is systematized in a sectoral matrix. This has proved very valuable for political decision-making at the highest level and for supporting the allocation of additional resources to programmes that have achieved the results sought by the administration.

As for the targets showing slower progress, the directing ministry issues guidelines for institutions to implement corrective measures and double their efforts to ensure progress.

21. See: www.mideplan.go.cr/images/stories/mideplan/analisis_desarrollo/contratos/social_y_lucha_contra_la_pobreza.pdf.

This has allowed institutions to improve results in selected social programmes and assist specific populations (seniors, children, youth, poor women, people with disabilities and indigenous people).

The greatest satisfaction for the directing ministry has come from the improvement of national indicators in poverty, health, education, housing and employment, among others. This, in turn, improves life conditions for the population at large, but especially for the poor, the vulnerable and those who face social exclusion.

Based on the results achieved to date, the directing ministry can assure that more than 85 per cent[22] of the institutional targets set in the NDP will be achieved by 2010. This proves that the sectoralization system, in coordination with MIDEPLAN, has been effective at creating a technical-political dynamic with a significant impact on annually programmed institutional targets. This experience undoubtedly shows a strengthening of monitoring, follow-up and evaluation mechanisms, both at the sectoral and institutional levels.

22. See Annex 1, 2008 NDP Target Achievement. Annual results.

ETHIOPIA: EVALUATION IN ETHIOPIA: INSTITUTIONAL SETTING, EXPERIENCES, CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS

BY GETACHEW TEKLEMARIAM ALEMU[23]

INTRODUCTION

'Evaluation' is arguably one of the most vaguely defined words in development theory and practice. Many definitions are roaming around, though finding an all-inclusive definition is difficult. Hence, the concept of 'evaluating' development interventions, moving from policy to programmes and on to projects, has remained a slippery, debatable and sometimes divergent concept.

Since the 1980s, however, consensus has more or less been reached between least developed countries and development partners on the essentiality of evaluating the performance of development interventions so corrections can be made and lessons mainstreamed. The importance of doing so is multi-faceted. For the government, evaluation results can be instruments for measuring achievements, sorting out weaknesses, mobilizing local resources and maintaining popular legitimacy. For the citizenry, evaluation is a key way to hold the bureaucracy accountable. To development partners, evaluation is the way to track the effective, efficient and accountable use of resources in line with the envisioned objective of development interventions. Evaluation results also meet the needs of other stakeholders with varying interests.

Like other countries striving to instil democratic governance, ensure sustainable development and reduce poverty, Ethiopia has put in place a monitoring and evaluation system to follow up the progress of its development policies, sectoral development plans, programmes and projects. It has been operational since the 1960s. With the coming of the poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSP) process, the country has harmonized its development plans with the PRSP and Millennium Development Goal planning to realize an integrated system.

This has benefited the country in three important ways. First, the process has reduced the cost of managing development interventions by avoiding a separate institutional setting for

23. Development Planning and Evaluation Expert, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, and member of the Executive Committee, Ethiopian Evaluation Association.

each of the three interventions. Second, it has improved targeting of the poor by providing a multi-dimensional framework for addressing poverty and development. Last but not least, it has made the process of delivering public services slim, responsive, transparent and cost-effective.

That being the case, however, the country's monitoring and evaluation system has faced serious problems, and continues to. The problems range from inadequate attention to evaluation, overlapping institutional mandates, lack of strategic-level commitment, poor quality and relevance of evaluation information, lack of integration between systemic components and poor accountability structure.

This paper briefly reviews the institutional setting, experiences, challenges and prospects of evaluation in Ethiopia. It is limited to development interventions done solely by the public sector, by public-private partnerships or through collaboration of government and development partners. It first discusses the institutional set-up of evaluation, then deals with the evaluation experiences of the country. Next it addresses the major challenges facing the system and outlines future prospects before concluding with important reflections.

INSTITUTIONAL SETTING OF EVALUATION IN ETHIOPIA

Ethiopia was an African pioneer in adopting development planning as an instrument to ensure national economic growth, regional development and overall socio-economic well-being. To this end, national development plans have been employed in the country since 1960s. Nevertheless, the focus, methodical approach and institutional structure have changed with time.

The post-1991 situation is unique, however, in its more comprehensive approach to development planning. The Agricultural Development Led Industrialization (ADLI) was adopted as a guiding policy framework, with subsequent institution of other sectoral strategies. In terms of poverty reduction efforts, Ethiopia has implemented two PRSPs and is preparing the third one. The first PRSP, named Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Programme, lasted for three years, 2002/03 to 2004/05. Its successor, Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty, spanning 2005/06 to 2009/10, is in its last year of implementation. In each of these, the government underscored a commitment to its foremost objective: poverty reduction. In general, the institutional structure of evaluation could be seen in terms of four major perspectives:

1. Evaluation of development strategies put in place by the governing party to guide the overall development of the nation;
2. Structural setting for evaluating the PRSPs;
3. Evaluation of sectoral development programmes;
4. Institutional structure for evaluating high-impact projects.

The ADLI document identifies 'continuous learning' and 'management of improvement' as two of the important focal points for ensuring the success of national development polices and strategies. For this, the governing party has instituted a three-tiered governmental structure under the federal government, including regions, zones and *woredas*. Local government is

designed so that sectors at every level can communicate with respective sectoral units at the higher tier. Hence, two-way communication machinery is put in place vertically, while experience-sharing platforms are instituted horizontally. Therefore, evaluation of policies is both a technocratic and a political task.

The planning structures that bind the tiers of governments also integrate them operationally to evaluate policies. But at the end of the day, the viability of policies is decided by the higher political decision-making body of the governing party. Thus, the role of local governments is to implement the policy in collaboration with each other and with their respective references. Nevertheless, local governments are also constitutionally mandated to plan, implement and evaluate their own development plans autonomously, yet in tandem with the policies and strategies adopted by the federal government.

It can almost be said that this part of the institutional structure of evaluation is more a political machinery than a technical one. Meanwhile, there is a strong backward and forward linkage with the other three institutional settings of evaluation. Even more important in this regard are the stringent reporting and feedback mechanisms between *woredas* and zones, zones and regions, and regions and the federal government through the many other cross-cutting platforms of communication.

The second institutional structure of evaluation in Ethiopia is the evaluation of medium-term development plans, or PRSPs**.** The system was built on the welfare monitoring system programme led by the welfare monitoring unit of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED), established in 1996. Information is generated by the Central Statistical Agency and MoFED, using surveys and analytical studies tailored to provide precise socio-economic data. Sectoral ministries and NGOs are also part of the system. To have strong capacities in information generation, the government established a national medium-term statistical programme and a national strategy for development of statistics. The strategies foresee development of an efficient and sustainable statistical system. A central data bank is being established, aiming for one-stop access to information in a user-friendly way.

An important milestone in terms of data accessibility was establishment and strengthening of the ETHIO-INFO database. In this regard, support from development partners under the umbrella of the Development Assistance Group has been paramount. The outputs of the process at this level of evaluation are annual progress reports. They have been of vital importance in grasping lessons, informing stakeholders, mobilizing resources, strengthening inter-institutional collaboration and, most important, measuring the performance of plans. The reports have created a learning environment for the government, development partners, the community and other stakeholders.

Supplementing the annual progress reports, intensive evaluation studies have been undertaken on selected sectors, interventions and strategies, allowing evidence-based adjustments. Such studies have covered agriculture, small and medium-size enterprises, urban development and civil service capacity. The coordination of MoFED, Central Statistical Agency, sector ministries and development partners concerning evaluation at this level has been commendable. Yet this does not mean it has been without problems. Though it might be unrealistic to say that evaluation results have to be value free, it is indubitable that they shall be credible. For this to hold true, the independence of the evaluating units must not be compromised.

The first problem of the country's evaluation system at this level emerges from the fact that it is supply-driven, top-down and self-serving. This has put the credibility of evaluation results under question. The second problem is poor collaboration among systemic components, overlapping mandates and time lag in disclosing results. Poor coordination between line ministries and regional bureaus has remained the major obstacle to generating and compiling essential evaluation information on time. As a result, there is a lag of up to one year in disclosing evaluation information, a serious hindrance to developing timely corrective policy measures. The third and most important problem is the lack of evaluation capacity. This is a factor in all federal, regional and local implementing agencies. It has laid its shadow on the quality of evaluation results. Last but not least, the incomprehensibly varied demands of diverse development partners have burdened the system.

The third component of the system relates to sectoral development programmes. These programmes, part of the national medium-term development plans, are owned and administered by sectoral agencies. Among these programmes are the education sector development programme, administered by the Ministry of Education; health sector development programme, by the Ministry of Health; and small and medium enterprises development programme, by the Federal Small and Medium Enterprise Agency. The evaluation of these sector development programmes is a collaborative effort of the ministries, regional bureaus and development partners. Yet, through the sectoral annual performance reports, this level is integrated with the previous one. Meanwhile, it is unique in involving many independent evaluations conducted by international development agencies, bilateral cooperation agencies and international financial institutions, in accordance with their respective interests. In spite of its strengths in terms of stakeholder participation and responsiveness, this level of evaluation shares most of the problems mentioned in the previous level.

The last and arguably messiest level of evaluation in the country is project-level evaluation. Despite long years of experience in project-based interventions, the country still does not have an integrated project evaluation system. Specifically, ex-post evaluation and impact evaluation are the forgotten ends at this level. The government has not given sufficient attention to integrating project-level evaluation with the above-mentioned three levels of evaluation. As a result, a huge hole exists in the nation's overall policy evaluation framework. The absence of a standardized project evaluation mechanism in the public sector has made the playing field so messy that everyone evaluates and no one learns. Although finance and economic development units at federal (MoFED), regional and *woreda* level are responsible for project evaluation, the system has not been integrated. In addition, the overall evaluation framework is facing a huge challenge in terms of tracking resource use, avoiding duplication of efforts, mainstreaming accountability and enhancing evaluation demand.

EVALUATION EXPERIENCES

The attitude towards evaluation in Ethiopia is generally negative. People emphasize the accountability part of the task, downplaying the learning side. The bureaucracy is less efficient in learning from evaluation results, whether it be policy, programme or project evaluation. Despite the fact that evaluation is an effective instrument to mainstream good

governance, the inadequate attention it receives has impaired its role. Another common attitude is viewing evaluation as an imposition from development partners and international financial institutions. This has hampered the learning environment. Without a strong national evaluation association and professional networking, standardized evaluation has remained in the shadows. Accordingly, everyone is counting himself/herself as an evaluator. This has created ambiguity in the development circle as to the worthiness of doing evaluations.

Nevertheless, even with all its problems, the country's evaluation system has borne some fruit. This is expressed in the rising demand for on-time release of annual progress reports and the increased use of evaluation results in project and programme design and academic research. Had this been supplemented with awareness creation schemes, strengthening the toddling Ethiopian Evaluation Association, tailored courses and training on evaluation and comprehensive capacity building programme, the result would have been praiseworthy.

CHALLENGES

The evaluation system of Ethiopia is facing many challenges. These include:

- Inadequate attention to evaluation, both at strategic and grass-roots level, which can be partly attributed to mismanagement of previous experiences;
- Unclear roles and responsibilities among evaluating units at different levels;
- Lack of commitment, emerging from the tendency to look at evaluation as an imposition from development partners and international financial institutions;
- Poor quality and irrelevant information, in terms of ignoring outreach, effect and impact of policies, programmes and projects in designing information collection platforms;
- Poor accountability for failures;
- Lack of integration among actors in the evaluation systems at different levels;
- Problems of mainstreaming lessons drawn from evaluation results;
- Limiting the scope of evaluation to financial and physical dimensions, partly to avoid the very important yet sensitive dimension of evaluating the politics;
- Excessive dependence on reports rather than first-hand information-gathering and cross-referencing mechanisms;
- Poor evaluation capacity at both individual and systemic levels, partly a result of the little attention given to evaluation at the strategic level;
- Poor integration among components of the system, partly a result of 'mandate overlap' between government agencies and conflicting interests between stakeholders;
- Poor culture of evaluation as a society and as a nation.

PROSPECTS

Despite the long list of problems in the country's evaluation system, there are some prospects. Among them are:

- Recent formation of the Ethiopian Evaluation Association and professional efforts to advance the agenda of standardized evaluation by creating awareness and establishing customized professional standards;
- Recent embrace of a more stringent and full-fledged programme evaluation by development partners;
- Publication and dissemination of evaluation guidelines by MoFED;
- Growing attention to the role of evaluation as an instrument of good governance;
- Expansion of higher education institutions, which might at some point provide more tailored evaluation courses;
- Growing demand for evaluation results from diverse development actors.

CONCLUSIONS

Though Ethiopia has constitutionalized and institutionalized evaluation, it has not optimized its benefits. The nation's institutional structure has a four-tiered evaluation system, whose tiers are meant to feed each other and create a complete system. Yet different problems at different levels have impeded the systemic integration. In addition, the little attention given to evaluation and the tendency to shy away from accountability have hindered evaluation from playing its role in creating a positive learning environment and a flexible institutional setting. However, the growing demand for evaluation results could be taken as an opportunity to strengthen the practice, standardization and utilization of evaluation in the nation. For this to hold true, all actors in the development circle have to work jointly. Not least, evaluators, as professionals, have to stand for their valuable profession and the invaluable benefit it could offer for the well-being of the society through networking.

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RWANDA: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY: MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEMS

BY BARNABÉ SEBAGABO MUHIRE,[24]
FRANÇOIS SEKAMONDO[25]
AND GODFRE KABERA[26]

INTRODUCTION

To monitor and evaluate the performance of the Economic Development & Poverty Reduction Strategy 2008-2012 (EDPRS), the government of Rwanda has decided to institute an integrated results and performance framework. This complex of instruments, processes and institutional arrangements is used primarily, but not exclusively, by the government to monitor progress towards achieving objectives. These objectives are usually expressed as a set of targets that serve as values for particular indicators at specific dates. For the framework to be useful, its data and information streams and associated decision outcomes are integrated into the planning and budgeting process. In this way it can strengthen priority setting and realism in sector plans; domestic accountability; predictability of resource mobilization and allocations; efficiency in planning and budgeting where resources are constrained; clarity of cross-sector strategic outcomes; and identification mechanisms of future costed investment in core strategic areas. The framework also can serve as the basis for resource mobilization and predictability of donor support. This integrated monitoring and evaluation framework has been in place since 2008.

The EDPRS results framework enhances accountability in two ways: One, it enhances the government's political accountability to the electorate. Regular publication of outputs and outcomes achieved during the EDPRS period allows political leaders to hold senior civil servants to account for delivering the government's programme. Two, it assures mutual accountability of government and donors. The apex of the EDPRS monitoring system is a

24. Director of Planning, Reform and Capacity Building, Ministry of Public Service and Labour.
25. Social Sector Policy and Programmes Expert, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning.
26. Policy Analyst and Research Expert, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning.

series of linked indicator matrices from which the common performance assessment framework (CPAF) is derived. It contains indicators to be used by the government and all donors in assessing the government's performance. It is complemented by another matrix, the development partners' assessment framework (DPAF). This is composed of indicators based on the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, which are used by the government and all donors to assess donor performance.

The integrated results framework for the EDPRS consists of three components: the national results and policy matrix, the CPAF and the DPAF.

EDPRS NATIONAL RESULTS AND POLICY MATRIX

The EDPRS National Results and Policy Matrix is a policy coordination instrument that builds on the logical linkage between desired performance targets and the policy actions necessary to achieve them. For the purposes of this matrix, it is useful to distinguish between policy actions, outcomes and impact. Governmental implementation of policy actions through the annual budget generates results and outcomes. Some actions provide opportunities for individuals to consume or invest in goods and services supplied by the government, such as schooling and health care. Other actions, such as good roads and an efficient legal system, provide opportunities for business to operate profitably. Individuals and firms that take advantage of these opportunities generate values for outcome/result indicators, such as school enrolment rates or company profitability. Finally, the process of consuming and/or investing in these goods and services enhances key performance indicators such as GDP growth.

The matrix provides a clear mapping of stakeholders' responsibilities for achievement of EDPRS performance targets and the potential linkages and synergies within and among sectors to achieve identified performance set at outcome level.

Purpose of the matrix

The matrix has three main purposes. First, it serves as a planning tool to improve public sector performance and aid effectiveness. It fulfils this function by helping policymakers to recognize problems in policy implementation and identify poor policy outcomes sufficiently early to allow corrective action. In contrast to the management information systems of projects and line ministries, which track implementation progress and results on a daily, weekly, monthly or quarterly basis, the matrix is not designed to report more frequently than once or possibly twice per year. However, it brings together quarterly data to spot problems and provide feedback to the relevant authorities.

A second purpose of the matrix system is to halt, and if possible reverse, the trend towards adopting ever longer lists of indicators to monitor national development performance.

Third, the matrix promotes transparency and accountability in policymaking. Transparency is achieved through publication of a baseline and targets for indicators, which clarify the government's priorities. If an indicator goes off track, thereby prompting analysis that leads to a change in policy, the monitoring system has provided, and is seen to have provided, the evidence for the change.

Matrix monitoring model

The logic of change is that a set of policy actions can positively influence an outcome while, in turn, improvement in a given set of outcomes is part of what characterizes attainment of a given objective. Cutting across individual performance areas or flagships and associated outcomes is the expectation of improvement pertaining to a small set of key strategic results areas, reflecting increased GDP growth, income poverty, inequality and human development.

For each of the key results areas and outcomes one or more indicators have been identified and targets established, and the monitoring and evaluation system reveals success or failure. Data on these indicators come from different sources, but in most cases they are measurable annually. The established schedule of surveys by the Rwanda National Institute of Statistics affords an opportunity for reporting on key strategic results indicators every three to five years.

The matrix identifies key policy actions every year in areas of reform considered high priority for development and poverty reduction. These actions serve as triggers for the release of budget support funds. These priority actions were chosen after close consultations with each sector. For this reason, no changes are made to this matrix without consultation with relevant ministries and public agencies. Some of the policy actions have been expressed in a manner that allows for quantitative observation, although most reflect institutional changes that need to be subjected to more qualitative judgment.

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

To monitor the implementation of the EDPRS at national level, the different implementation working groups/clusters prepare an annual report outlining how they are performing against their stated objectives in the national results and policy matrix. These annual reports list all stated objectives and assess them case by case to determine whether progress is on track to achieve the targets and policies specified. The information has to be collected from the sector M&E frameworks. The idea is that for each key performance indicator, the implementation working groups provide a description of progress to date. If performance has been limited this must be explained. This information is presented in an accessible and user-friendly way (figure 1). The traffic light colour coding rates progress: green indicates 'on track', amber, 'too early to say', and red, 'off track'. Essentially, it is a report card that summarizes progress in a way accessible to non-technicians.

Common performance assessment framework

The national results and policy matrix is used by domestic stakeholders to track progress towards EDPRS goals. The CPAF, selected by development partners in consultation with the government as a subset of the matrix, provides the basis for development partners to hold the government accountable for its use of development assistance. This approach aligns the perspectives of Rwandan policymakers and donors and reduces the transaction costs of monitoring.

FIGURE 1. 'TRAFFIC LIGHT' REPORTS TO MONITOR PROGRESS

INDICATOR (Examples)	PROGRESS (Description and assessment of progress)	'TRAFFIC LIGHTS' INDICATOR OF PROGRESS
Primary school net enrolment	Primary school net enrolment increased from 72% in 2000 to 90% in 2006 and is well on track to achieve the 100% target for 2010. The challenge is to maintain rates at this high level and increase the quality of education.	On track 
Gini coefficient of income inequality	The Gini coefficient increased to 0.50 in 2006, up from 0.47 in 2000. Even with concerted efforts, it is unlikely that the 2012 target of 0.40 can be achieved.	Off track 
Population growth rate	The population growth rate has fallen from 2.9 per cent in 2000 to 2.6 per cent in 2006. Although the 2012 target of 2.4 per cent is within reach, actual population levels are beyond target and a faster reduction in population growth would be desirable.	Too early to tell 

Donor performance assessment framework

Though the CPAF is derived from a broader set of EDPRS national level indicators, mutual accountability between the government and development partners remains incomplete without a mechanism for both parties to assess donor performance. The introduction of the DPAF, based on compliance with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, is used to provide such a mechanism. The government and development partners discuss and agree on indicators included in the DPAF. The matrix facilitates monitoring the outcomes against donor commitments as well as other commitments relating to the volume and quality of aid provided.

EDPRS MONITORING INSTITUTION FRAMEWORK

EDPRS central monitoring secretariat

Monitoring of EDPRS progress is the prime responsibility of the central monitoring secretariat. It is a permanent technical body staffed by economists, statisticians, policy analysts and researchers. The secretariat is responsible for analysing information from a variety of sources including ministry data, management information systems, surveys and sector reviews. It can also conduct detailed research and undertake timely analysis to provide quick solutions to emerging bottlenecks.

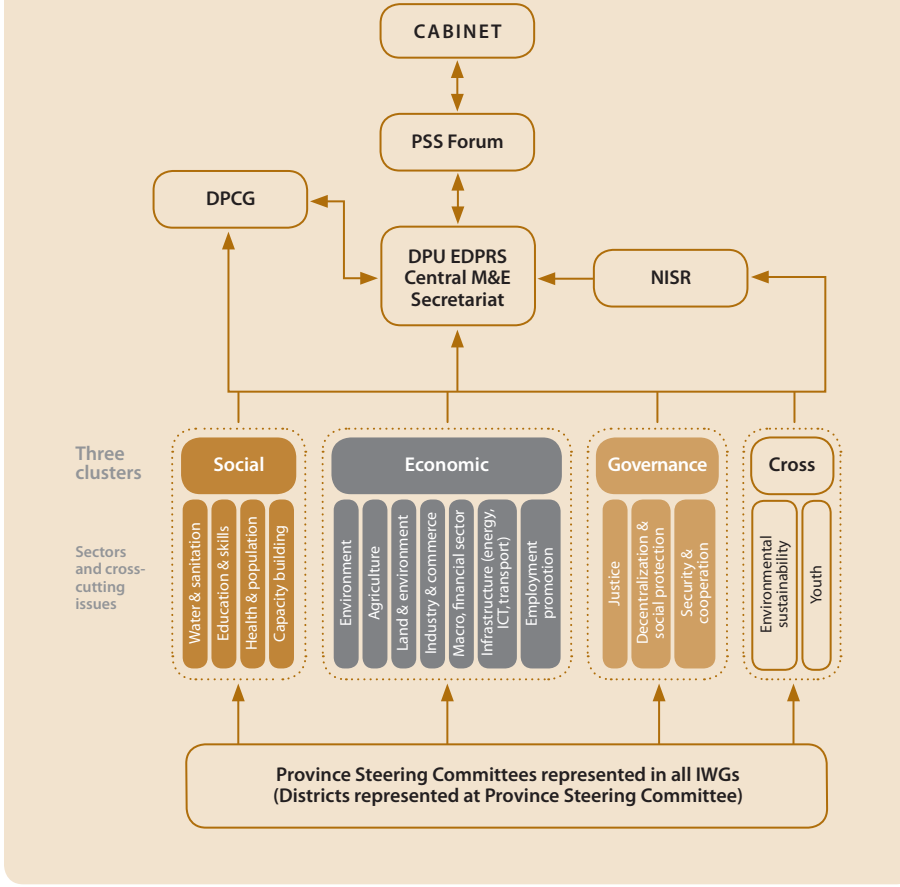
The secretariat works with planning units from all ministries and districts that have a mandate to monitor sector or district development strategies and plans. Since 2008 officers in charge of monitoring and evaluation (EDPRS facilitators) have been provided to all ministries leading development sectors and to the five provinces.

Implementation working groups

For effective implementation and monitoring of EDPRS priorities, three clusters – economic, governance and social – were formed. These clusters are closely aligned to EDPRS priorities and CPAF indicators and policy actions so they can facilitate monitoring and evaluation. Focal points provide monitoring information and analysis to the central monitoring secretariat on implementation progress of the EDPRS and CPAF indicators and policy actions. They obtain this information from the EDPRS facilitators, located for this purpose in the line ministries and provinces. Each focal point serves also as a channel of communication between the central monitoring secretariat and the cluster in his/her area of responsibility.

At the political level, monitoring and evaluation is carried out through a single EDPRS review framework that stresses accountability by the government and development partners (figure 2). The EDPRS progress is reviewed each semester (twice yearly) and annually by the implementation working groups (clusters) using the annual progress report mechanism. It draws on the semester joint sector reviews and quarterly District Imihigo evaluations. The semester and annual progress reports are subsequently submitted to the cabinet. The joint sector reviews are supported by regular public expenditure reviews (which match public expenditures against objectives), public expenditure tracking surveys (which track whether public expenditures reached targeted beneficiaries), citizen report cards and community score cards.

FIGURE 2. EDPRS INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION



SRI LANKA: NATIONAL MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM: EXPERIENCES, CHALLENGES AND THE WAY FORWARD

BY VELAYUTHAN SIVAGNANASOTHY[27]

BACKGROUND

Governments are challenged to respond to the urgency of citizen needs and to be more accountable to them. In the past three to four decades, significant budgetary resources and efforts have been deployed all over the world to accelerate development, reduce poverty, ensure equality and improve social living standards and quality of life. The public is putting governments under growing pressure to show that they are providing results and good value for money.

By fast-tracking public investment programmes, Sri Lanka has been able to maintain an average annual economic growth rate of 5 percent. However, the country has faced challenges in translating this economic growth into poverty reduction. The level of poverty has remained at 22 to 26 percent of the population over the past two decades. This situation called for strengthening the government's planning, monitoring and evaluation system to focus on delivering outcomes and impacts beyond the traditional output focus.

Since the mid-1990s, the concept of managing for development results (MfDR) has been adopted gradually. The basic concept is that shared vision, clear goals and measurement of results will lead to a better future. MfDR is a change management process that emphasizes a shift in focus from inputs, activities and outputs to outcomes and impacts. It promotes the concept of accountability for results.

The government of Sri Lanka fully recognizes the growing international consensus that MfDR is an essential aspect of good governance to improve development efficiency and effectiveness, transparency, accountability and informed decision-making. In the recent past, monitoring and evaluation have expanded globally and diversified into many contexts with many uses. These include decision-making, organizational learning, knowledge development, programme improvement, policy development, impact/outcome assessment, improved

27. Director General, Department of Foreign Aid and Budget Monitoring, Ministry of Plan Implementation.

service delivery, accountability, performance auditing, empowerment and even transformation. Ambitious government systems with multiple stakeholder needs tend to achieve most of these desired uses. A good M&E system should go beyond institutional boundaries to cover national, sectoral, programme and project levels to ensure a results orientation in government. As a signatory to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, the government of Sri Lanka is committed to institutionalizing MfDR throughout the government.

The process typically involves several phases: articulating and agreeing on objectives; selecting key performance indicators (KPIs); setting targets; monitoring performance; analysing and reporting on results against targets; and facilitating management to take timely corrective actions. Different countries approach MfDR differently, as it is not a 'one size fits all' model. Ultimately it should lead to sustainable improvement in the country's development outcomes. The government of Sri Lanka is committed to promoting application of MfDR principles at national, sectoral, agency and project levels and at the planning, implementation and post-implementation stages.

At the planning stage the results-oriented, country-owned National Development Plan and sectoral plans are being aligned with the medium-term expenditure framework (MTEF). The use of performance budgets instead of line item budgets has been growing. Line ministries are required to justify their budgets with well-defined output/outcome indicators. Today what counts is not so much how many clinics have been built, for instance, but whether citizens' health has improved; not how many schools have been constructed, but how many girls and boys are better educated.

Sectoral plans use outcome-based KPIs to set targets and directions. The Department of National Budget and Treasury has revised its budget circulars to focus on results in order to institutionalize performance budgeting systems. The government's three-year MTEF incorporates outcome-based key performance indicators to justify public expenditure.

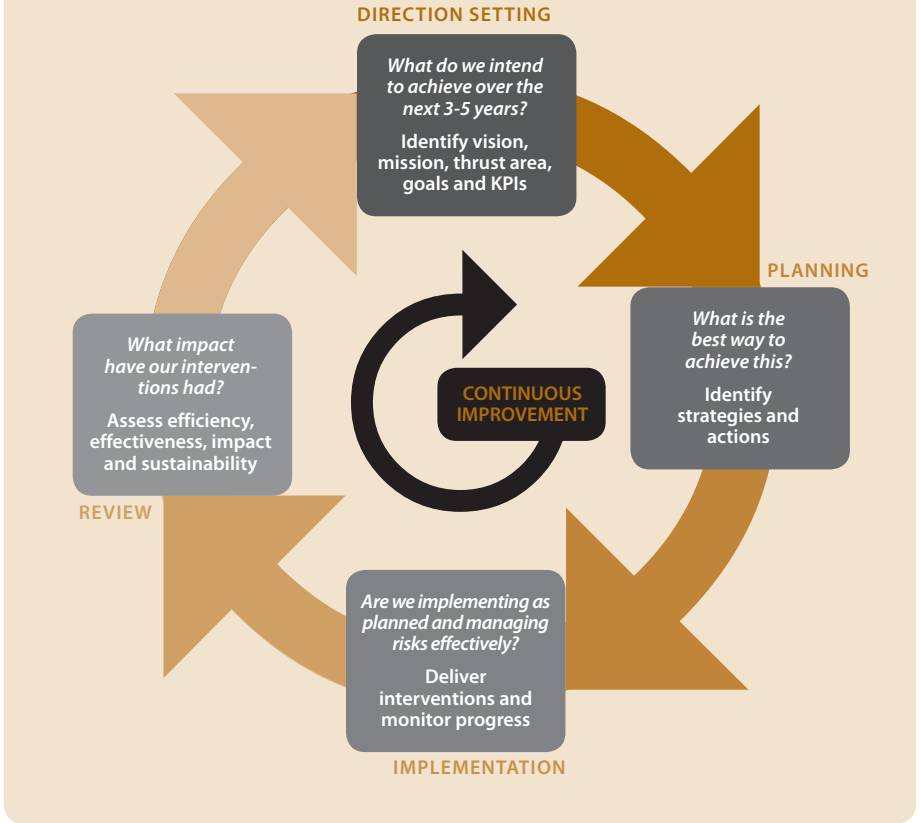
CONCEPT OF MFDR: A 'WHOLE GOVERNMENT' APPROACH

The institutionalization of MfDR is seen as a major shift in focus in M&E arrangements in Sri Lanka. It includes a management cycle of setting directions, planning, implementation and delivering, and reviewing the results, which then feed back into the cycle to improve future planning and ongoing improvement. Figure 1 shows the localized version of the MfDR process in Sri Lanka.

In the Sri Lankan context, organizations that are managing for results must:

- Have a clear vision of what they want to achieve;
- Keep in mind the vision and mission while planning their work;
- Deliver what they planned in a manner consistent with public service ethics, values and standards while meeting standards such as timeliness, quality, quantity and staying within budget;
- Track their progress by monitoring, measuring and evaluating;
- Learn from success and failure to make continuous improvement.

FIGURE 1. MfDR CYCLE



The MfDR approach adopted in Sri Lanka is more of a whole-government approach, covering national, sectoral, institutional and project level. A results focus is being built into the national development strategy, sectoral plans, ministries and projects (figure 2).

ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

In Sri Lanka the monitoring and evaluation of projects, programmes and development initiatives is not a new phenomenon. Efforts to improve plan and project implementation have been a feature of development efforts since the early 1970s. One of the special features here is the separate Ministry of Plan Implementation (MPI), charged to serve "as a National Focal Point for Monitoring and Evaluation of all government development projects and programmes to ensure achievement of results and development effectiveness".

The MPI, headed by a very senior cabinet minister, is mandated with responsibility for monitoring and evaluation of all government policies, programmes, projects and institutions.

FIGURE 2. RESULTS FOCUS: WHOLE GOVERNMENT APPROACH

The Department of Foreign Aid and Budget Monitoring (DFABM), with skills and technical know-how in monitoring and evaluation, is the key functional arm of the MPI. This dedicated institutional arrangement strengthens the role of M&E.

Another key feature is the top-level commitment to M&E, with a focus on MfDR. In the 1990s, with technical support from the Asian Development Bank, the post-evaluation system was strengthened in the MPI, which conducted a number of post-evaluations of projects and programmes. In the late 1990s, UNDP provided extensive technical support to strengthen the results-based monitoring and evaluation system. This enabled officials at national and sub-national levels to understand and recognize the importance of results-focused monitoring. Other factors contributed to the positive enabling environment, such as political will, an overarching policy, coordination for information collection, efficient flow of information from line ministries and projects to the MPI/DFABM, strengthening of electronic information management systems in the MPI and demand for information for

decision-making. Yet challenges remain, such as capacity in government agencies and the large number of ministries, which led to coordination issues.

The MPI has introduced MfDR to track development results of line ministries and their programmes. Logical framework analysis and results frameworks are being increasingly used in planning and M&E. All these developments clearly indicate that the concept of managing for results set out in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness is being institutionalized in Sri Lanka.

The Cabinet of Ministers directed the MPI to monitor all development projects over Rs 50 million executed by the line ministries and submit quarterly progress reports to the Cabinet. The MPI has developed an online, real-time Internet-based electronic monitoring and reporting system to collect, analyse and report progress of all development projects over Rs 50 million. Progress review meetings are held by the MPI with project management units and officials of line ministries on projects that are behind schedule to address issues and ensure efficient and effective implementation. The MfDR principles are being increasingly applied in national M&E systems and related areas. Some of the major achievements and lessons are discussed below.

GOVERNMENT-WIDE PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT SYSTEM AND SCORE CARDS

The government has introduced MfDR with technical support from UNDP to track performance of ministries and institutions using output and outcome indicators. This new management style holds ministries/departments and public officials accountable for results rather than efforts. Ministries and departments receive budget appropriation from Parliament to carry out a specific mandate, which must be translated into detailed management expectations. The results framework of the ministry or department sets out the breadth, depth and meaning of management expectations. By measuring performance against the expectations set out in the results framework, the institution is in a better position to objectively assess its achievements. MfDR translates the vision and mission of public sector agencies into the practicalities of managing the organization better at every level. MfDR implies that everyone in the organization understands the strategic vision and mission, irrespective of their level or position.

A comprehensive performance measurement system was piloted in 2006/2007 with 4 key line ministries (Education, Health, Agriculture, Highways), and it is now operational in 35 line ministries. An MfDR Core Group has been established to drive this initiative, led by the Secretary of the MPI. The performance tracking system will be expanded to all ministries.

The MPI has established an Internet-based MfDR platform in the national operations room—the information arm of the MPI—to maintain an agency results framework and a score card/report card for each line ministry. These are the centrepieces of the MfDR. The agency results framework (figure 3) sets out the ministry's mission and its core business (thrust areas, goals, KPIs) with baselines and medium-term targets. The customized score cards/report cards appear on the computer screen to enable assessment of ministry performance. The score card employs a red-yellow-green grading system to track performance. This 'dashboard'

FIGURE 3. SNAPSHOT OF THE AGENCY RESULTS FRAMEWORK, MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Thrust area 1 – Curative and preventive health services
Strategic objective – Provision of comprehensive Heath service delivery and health actions

NO	GOAL	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	BASELINE 2006	TARGETS				
				2007	2008	2009	2010	DIMENSIONS
1	Reduction of infant mortality	Infant mortality rate	11.2/1,000 live births (2002)	11.0	10.8	10.6	10.4	Effectiveness
2	Reduction of under-five mortality	Under-five mortality rate	4.4/1,000 under-five population 1997 (AHB 2003)	4.0	3.8	3.6	3.4	-do-
3	Reduction of maternal mortality	Maternal mortality rate	38/100,000 live births (2004) (FHB)	36	35	33	31	-do-
4	Reduction of prevalence of underweight (malnutrition) children under five years	Percent of underweight children (weight/age) under five years	29.4% (2000) DHS	25%	24.5%	24%	23%	-do-
5	Reduction of incidence of low birth weight babies	Percent low birth weight babies	17.6 (2005) AHB	16.5	16	15.5	15.0	-do-

serves as an early warning signal, providing alerts about slippage in achievement of targeted outcomes, expressed by KPIs. The framework is not carved in stone; it will continue to evolve as ministries/departments strengthen their management practices.

IMPLEMENTATION OF MFDR

Champion of the initiative

The MPI, responsible for M&E, championed the institutionalization of MfDR throughout the government. A core group was headed by the MPI Secretary and consisted of representatives of the Ministry of Finance and Planning, Department of National Planning, Department of National Budget, Auditor General, President's Office, Prime Minister's Office, Department of Census and Statistics, and selected line ministries. The core group was to provide guidance, direction and leadership for mainstreaming the MfDR in government and to function as a 'think tank' to formulate strategy and an action plan. The core group helped to establish government-wide commitment and ownership. It formulated the strategy and action plan with the technical inputs from the DFABM.

Approval as government policy

The Cabinet of Ministers approved the MfDR initiative and empowered the MPI to lead this initiative throughout the government. The top-level political support that comes with endorsement by the Cabinet of Ministers indicates the political will and policy commitment

to take the initiative forward. The MPI initiated a programme of advocacy and sensitization at policy level.

Strategy and action plan

A comprehensive strategy and plan of action was developed that included capacity development, staff training, advocacy, strengthened information systems, methodology and reporting arrangements. The MPI provided technical support to introduce the MfDR methodology and approach. Each ministry was encouraged to establish a steering committee of senior officers who were expected to function as change agents to take the initiative forward.

Participatory approach and sustainability

Each ministry developed its own agency results framework through a participatory process with MPI technical guidance, helping to create ownership. Workshops held in the line ministries involved all key players, tapping the expertise, skills and experience on one side and the trust, support and networks on the other. This approach aided sustainability of the initiative. The link with the auditor general to measure performance through a performance audit further strengthens the MfDR initiative as a national process.

Linking resources to results

To strengthen results-based budgeting in the public sector, the MfDR has been linked to the annual national budgeting process, starting in 2010. The budget call requires all line ministry secretaries to submit their agency results framework to the Department of National Budget along with 2010 budget estimates. The KPIs should be identified at output as well as outcome levels by the line ministries to justify the annual budget request. Each line ministry developed its agency results framework in close consultation with the MPI and Department of National Budget. The MfDR initiatives in the budgeting process facilitated linkage between resources and results.

Community of practice

Core ministry officials were formed into a community of practice to share their experiences. This helped to establish connections among 'islands' of best practice and facilitated learning from successes and challenges. A quarterly newsletter was prepared focusing on results.

Capacity building

Capacity building is fundamental to institutionalizing MfDR in government. The readiness assessment tool developed by the Asian Development Bank has been used to identify capacity gaps in line ministries and to formulate capacity development plans. Staff received on-the-job training on MfDR methodologies, tools, techniques and practices.

Strategy to action

The MfDR approach encourages ministries and departments to understand the 'results chain' and establish logical links between planned inputs, expected activities/outputs and envisaged outcomes. The MPI took the following key steps to operationalize MfDR in line ministries:

1. **Articulating and agreeing on objectives:** Identifying clear and measurable objectives (results) aided by the results chain/logic model. This involves preparing a vision statement, mission statement, thrust areas and goals. The government's 10-year national development framework, sector plans and localized Millennium Development Goals plus the mandate of the ministries are considered fundamental to articulating and agreeing on line ministry objectives.
2. **Selecting indicators:** Output- and outcome-based KPIs were identified to measure progress towards each objective. KPIs for each expectation in the framework are meant to convey the breadth of the expectation.
3. **Setting targets:** The main aspect of the process is setting explicit medium-term targets for each indicator, to provide direction and judge performance.
4. **Monitoring performance:** A performance monitoring system is needed to regularly collect data on results.
5. **Analysing and reporting:** Results must be reviewed, analysed and reported against targets.
6. **Integrating evaluation:** Evaluation is an integral part of the process, to provide detailed analysis of 'Why?' and complementary performance information not readily available from the performance monitoring system.
7. **Performance reporting and feedback:** Using performance information for internal management accountability, learning and decision-making processes and for performance reporting to stakeholders.

The first three steps are linked to results-oriented planning, sometimes referred to as strategic planning. The first five steps combined are usually included in the concept of performance measurement. All seven steps combined are essential to an effective results-based management system.

In the past, ministry progress monitoring focused heavily on financial progress (budget utilization) and physical progress (activity monitoring). Little emphasis was given to achievement of policy objectives. Issues of implementation and inter-agency coordination were addressed through high-level monitoring meetings held by the president. Now, the MPI submits to the Cabinet of Ministers a quarterly summary of progress on the capital budgets of all line ministries and development projects over Rs 50 million. The emphasis has been shifted to 'synthesis' reporting rather than the traditional production of many reports, which resulted in information overload. Performance agreements are also to be developed to ensure links are established between agency plans and employee performance.

ELECTRONIC PROJECT MONITORING SYSTEM

One of the noteworthy aspects of MfDR is inhouse development of a user-friendly, online project monitoring system (ePMS) in DFABM to track implementation progress, both financial and physical, and results of development projects and programmes. The system provides

access to project information by donor, sector and ministry. It uses early warning signals to identify bottlenecks, delays and other constraints. It monitors results using logical framework analysis, monitors compliance of loan covenants and tracks cash flow, reimbursable foreign aid claims and procurement progress. Flash reports on problem projects help in trouble-shooting exercises and are submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers each quarter. The ePMS also captures feedback from beneficiaries and citizens.

A recent donor evaluation rated ePMS as a success in terms of its comprehensive coverage, periodic updating and use of information for troubleshooting. However, the low level of use of the system by sector ministries indicates an unexploited opportunity, which is being addressed. The Ministry of Finance and Planning uses the system to strengthen project management, and the MPI uses it for troubleshooting.

The ePMS was based on the Malaysian national operations room model used to track progress of development programmes. The Sri Lankan ePMS is not intended for use as a 'policing' function but as a tool to identify projects that are behind schedule or not working well. The system depicts on-schedule, behind schedule and 'sick' projects using a traffic light colour code by sector and ministry classification. Currently the ePMS database holds over 120 projects. The system captures many elements that are fundamental to tracking progress of development projects, including:

- **Project profile:** Summarizes the basic information of the project, including name, source of funding, implementing arrangements, objectives, purpose and outputs, location, cost, timelines and officer responsible.
- **Financial progress:** Tracks cumulative and monthly financial progress against total funds available and annual budgetary targets, and monitors disbursements against targeted disbursements.
- **Activity monitoring:** Breaks down project outputs into components, sub-components, activities and sub-activities. All activities have planned timelines and targets against which progress is monitored.
- **Logical framework analysis:** Shows the 'programme theory' with results chain, measurement system (including KPIs) and risks, helping to track results and major risks.
- **Monitoring compliance of loan covenants:** Tracks compliance of loan covenants of all donor-funded projects.
- **Procurement monitoring:** Tracks procurement progress, a core area in all development projects and an important aspect of managing contracts.
- **Monitoring of major issues:** Tracks major issues affecting project implementation and action taken on such issues, facilitating troubleshooting.

OUTCOME-BASED NATIONAL ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE

Historically, economic growth rates, inflation and employment levels were used as indicators of a healthy economic climate and future prosperity for citizens. However, citizens are

increasingly concerned about their quality of life, measured in terms of indicators like quality of education, health care, safety and environment (safe drinking water and sanitation). In response, the government of Sri Lanka has established a localized MDG results reporting system. An MDG country report is prepared annually, identifying poverty pockets and regional disparities. This information helps government to allocate budget resources for needy areas.

NATIONAL EVALUATION ARRANGEMENTS

Ongoing, ex-post and impact evaluations

The DFABM undertakes ongoing, ex-post and impact evaluation of selected mega projects and disseminates the findings to relevant stakeholders. Evaluations take into account the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria, such as relevance of the strategy, efficiency of implementation, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. OECD/DAC evaluation quality standards are also considered. The DFABM participates in joint evaluations with donors, which helps to create national ownership and build local capacity. The DFABM also undertakes diagnostic rapid assessments through field visits to problem projects and submits flash reports to the MPI to help troubleshoot projects running behind schedule. Given the MPI's human resource constraints, it was decided to outsource the evaluation of priority mega projects. The MPI, in close consultation with the relevant line ministry, decides what areas are to be included in the terms of reference, based also on the information needs of the president, cabinet and other stakeholders. Evaluation results are disseminated to line ministries and project offices for follow-up action. Such evaluation lessons and findings are important and useful to improve the quality of new projects and programmes, especially as it helps to avoid past mistakes and build on best practices in formulating and designing new projects.

Evaluation information system

Having recognized the importance of systematic use of evaluation and feedback arrangements, the MPI has taken action to establish an Internet-based post-evaluation information system to ensure effective dissemination of findings and lessons learned. This information provides sector-wide synthesis to ensure more effective feedback and assist in integrating evaluation findings into planning, budgeting and policymaking. Making evaluation reports publicly available is expected to improve public accountability and transparency.

Evaluation answers the questions of 'what works?', 'why does it work?' and 'in what context does it work?' as well as 'what does not work?' The responses are important for planning and programming, and they contribute to development effectiveness. The evaluation information system enables development practitioners to access this information anywhere, anytime, thus empowering them to make evidence-based decisions. Establishing the evaluation information system is considered a critical milestone in the MfDR initiative in Sri Lanka. It is expected not only to improve aid effectiveness but also to promote a learning culture. UNDP supported development of the system.

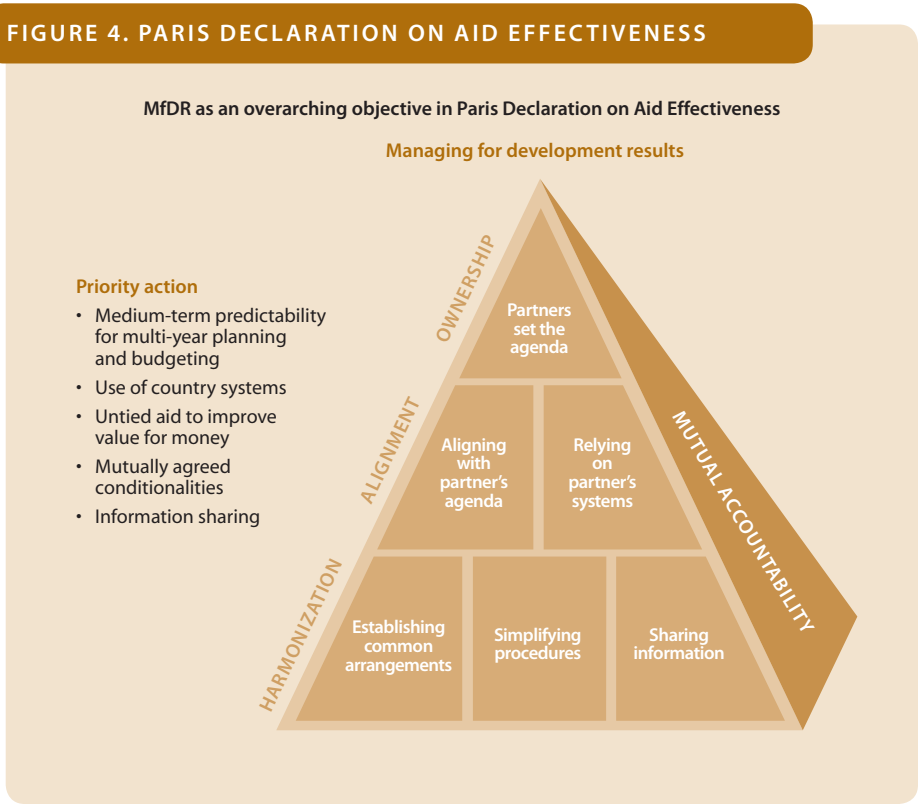
Sri Lanka Evaluation Association

The Sri Lanka Evaluation Association (SLEVA) plays a catalytic role in advocacy, awareness raising, training and development of standards, ethics, methodologies and best practices to improve evaluation culture. Its membership comprises academics, researchers, private sector consultants, government officials and NGO representatives. SLEVA works closely with the MPI in building M&E capacity and culture in areas such as training, sharing of best practices, support for evaluation forums, international and national conferences, and promotion of a community of practitioners in the country.

EVALUATION OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PARIS DECLARATION ON AID EFFECTIVENESS

The MPI and the DFABM evaluated implementation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. The government strongly believes that the declaration's five principles—national ownership, alignment, harmonization, managing for development results and mutual accountability—are fundamental to improving both aid effectiveness and development effectiveness (figure 4).

FIGURE 4. PARIS DECLARATION ON AID EFFECTIVENESS



Hence, with UNDP's support, the MPI undertook an independent evaluation to assess progress in implementation and the results of Paris Declaration commitments. Groups were formed to advise on and coordinate the evaluation.

The evaluation identified the impediments for implementation of the Paris Declaration and helped the government to take action to overcome them. The evaluation findings also fed into the global evaluation process, enabling the OECD/DAC Development Evaluation Network to undertake a synthesis of the Paris Declaration evaluation in 8 countries involving 11 donors. These findings were useful in formulating the Accra Agenda for Action at the High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (September 2008).

The High-level Forum also endorsed the need for several fundamental actions to accelerate aid effectiveness: aid predictability, use of country systems by donors, untying of aid and mutually agreed (rather than imposed) conditionalities. This implies that increasing aid effectiveness requires radical change in behaviour by both donors and development partners. Implementing the Paris Declaration principles and the Accra Agenda for Action is fundamental to the change management process and improvement in development effectiveness.

STRATEGIES TO STRENGTHEN THE NATIONAL EVALUATION SYSTEM

The following strategies have been identified as useful for strengthening the national M&E system. UNDP is providing technical assistance to support selected strategies.

Policy commitment and support

- Advocate at political and policy level to raise awareness about the importance of results-based monitoring and evaluation and ensure its acceptance and use in key decision-making centres of the government to create local demand for monitoring and evaluation.
- Ensure that monitoring and evaluation institutions are linked to the government's planning, budgeting, resource allocation and policy functions and that MfDR concepts are integrated in all areas of the development cycle.

Legal and budgetary support

- Develop a legal foundation to make M&E and MfDR mandatory. Use law, decree, cabinet decision or other high-level pronouncements to legitimize MfDR concepts and results-based M&E systems.
- Provide sufficient financial allocation for MfDR and M&E strengthening in the line ministries.
- Ensure an appropriate balance between monitoring and evaluation, preferably by separating evaluation from monitoring, to ensure sufficient resources for evaluation.

Sound institutional arrangements

- Strengthen institutional arrangements to place monitoring and evaluation and MfDR in a strategic context.
- Establish links between evaluation and performance audit exercises by encouraging partnerships between evaluation institutions and performance audit institutions (e.g. Auditor General's Department) with regard to accountability-oriented evaluations.

Standards, ethics and guidelines

- Develop evaluation standards, guidelines and ethics to ensure high quality of evaluations. Ensure that scoping sessions are conducted to clarify the evaluative questions and to ensure that needs of potential users are taken into consideration and evaluation timing is appropriate.
- Encourage the National Evaluation Association to promote an evaluation culture and MfDR concepts.
- Develop standards and criteria for good evaluation in collaboration with civil society groups and undertake meta evaluations to ensure quality.

Evaluation guidelines and systems

- Strengthen localized guidelines for systematic evaluations.

Methodologies and practices

- Ensure that evaluation is a process within the development policy and project cycle. Expand evaluation to cover projects, programmes, sectors, policies and institutions. Encourage synthesis of project evaluations to provide sector-wide learning. Promote cost-effective rapid assessment methods to reflect constraints on time, budget and resources. Ensure that evaluation methodology and terminology are consistent and localized.
- Re-examine the approaches and tools for evaluating the multiple dimensions of development. Encourage the use of diverse or multiple methods, as well as participatory methods for learning lessons.
- Encourage more joint evaluations instead of donor-driven evaluations.

Evaluation capacity development

- Strengthen the professional evaluation capacity within the government through continuous staff training.
- Promote evaluation faculty development programmes in the Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration (the government arm for training) and in other universities at graduate and post-graduate level. The Postgraduate Institute of

Management of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura has introduced a Master of Public Administration programme that includes in its curriculum MfDR, project monitoring and development evaluation.

- Strengthen documentation of evaluations and promote exchange of experiences, access to best practices and sharing of databases.

Feedback arrangements

- Improve dissemination of evaluation reports through in-house workshops/seminars, customized reports, evaluation summary reports, press briefings and use of the post-evaluation information system.
- Establish strong feedback arrangements among the functions of evaluation, planning, decision-making, policy formulation, project appraisal, programme management, budgeting and resource allocation.
- Ensure action is taken on the recommendations in evaluation reports. Evaluation information should be disseminated more widely, including to the Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee, parliamentary library and the media. User-friendly evaluation synthesis or summary reports should be widely circulated.
- Stimulate inclusion of evaluation issues in the country's development dialogue and sector programme assistance. Monitoring and evaluation units must participate in planning new programmes.
- Incorporate evaluation lessons into concept documents for new projects and project submission formats so that past mistakes are not repeated. Revise project submission formats to incorporate evaluations lessons from past projects.

The ultimate success of evaluation depends on how well the planners and decision-makers utilize the valuable monitoring and evaluation findings and lessons to improve future programmes, projects, policies and institutions.

SUCCESS FACTORS

Sri Lanka's MfDR and M&E systems and practices have been internationally recognized as best practice approaches worthy of scaling up. Senior officials have visited Sri Lanka to study the practices of MfDR and M&E initiatives from Afghanistan, India, Uganda and Yemen as well as the Asia Pacific Community of Practice on Managing for Development Results and International Programme for Development Evaluation Training (sponsored by the World Bank in partnership with Carlton University of Canada). The 'OECD Sourcebook on Emerging Good Practice in Managing for Development Results' (3rd edition, 2008) highlights the Sri Lankan case study on MfDR. The Asia Pacific Community of Practice on MfDR has identified the following factors in Sri Lanka's successful institutionalization of MfDR:

- Strong support from the top and strong and sustained leadership for results-oriented reforms and buy-in. Government policy on MfDR endorsed by the Cabinet of Ministers and champions at national level as well as change agents at various levels of government have been instrumental in advancing this change process.
- The MfDR approach adopted in Sri Lanka is a whole-government approach covering national, sectoral, institutional and project level. It is not just viewed as a technical tool but as a comprehensive way of thinking to achieve outcomes and impacts.
- The cascading approach, which combines top-down and bottom-up approaches and a sequenced approach beginning with pilots and then expanding and mainstreaming them, is a more pragmatic strategy.
- The MfDR reforms complement existing initiatives, strategies and the general reform agenda and are part of the country system. But the perfect should not become the enemy of the good in the MfDR area, as most developed countries are still struggling to achieve satisfactory solutions.

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

- The wider dissemination of M&E results remains a problem. M&E and planning institutions lack a formal feedback arrangement to integrate lessons into the planning and design of new projects. These institutional gaps defeat the very purpose of monitoring and evaluation. The government of Sri Lanka has identified the need for a mechanism to link M&E with the functions of policy formulation, reforms, planning, budgeting and resource allocation. This issue is now being seriously addressed.
- Donors tend to use their own evaluation systems rather than country systems to ensure visibility of their efforts. The lack of demand for MfDR, shortage of professionals, weak statistical capacity and excess of results frameworks and indicators have been identified as constraints for evaluation in many developing countries.
- In addition to demand for evaluation with a focus on utility, supply issues—skills, procedures, methodology, data systems, manuals—have to be addressed. However, making M&E information available does not necessarily mean effective utilization. The government of Sri Lanka was able to address some of these issues with technical support from UNDP and the Asian Development Bank.
- Attribution of results is a challenge for measuring performance in ministries and departments. In selecting the KPIs, care should be given to attribution issues. Unlike the private sector, the public sector does not have a single 'bottom line'. Many areas of government activities have multiple stakeholders and divergent interests. Target setting itself is a challenging process. It is difficult to get consensus on goals/values and KPIs. Specifying and agreeing on expected results is not easy. The results chain is not always logical. Indicators are missing for some results areas. Targets and baselines are not given, which makes it impossible to set achievable targets. The greatest problem associated with performance management is unrealistic expectations. Outputs are manageable to institutions, but outcomes are the results of collaborative

efforts of other institutions. Agencies can more easily be held accountable for output targets but not necessarily for outcome targets.

- MfDR systems often create information overload, overwhelming decision-makers. It is necessary to understand who needs what information, for what purpose and when. Information should not be overly supply-driven.
- MfDR systems in some countries did not fully achieve expectations because they had a 'stick' but no 'carrot'. Also, performance level slipped partly due to lack of resources and unrealistic expectations. To ensure successful operation of results-based management systems requires incentives for achievement and some form of penalty for slippage. Also, the weak link between agency performance and individual performance is a concern. Moreover, in some cases, MfDR creates fear of being held accountable for performance when cooperation and assistance from outside the organization are necessary for success.
- It is necessary to look at the balance between learning and accountability. While independent evaluation is important for ensuring objectivity, too much emphasis on accountability-focused independent evaluations driven by donors can interfere with learning and feedback. Hence, Sri Lanka's evaluation system recognizes the importance of lessons learning and ownership.
- Many countries have not adequately responded to criticisms that ex-post evaluations are performed late and viewed as 'post-mortem' exercises that do not contribute much to strategic decision-making. It is necessary to recognize the importance of learning and performance accountability. Increasingly, concurrent evaluations are encouraged for mid-course corrections. The government of Sri Lanka encourages donors to undertake more joint evaluations to ensure national ownership, lessons learned and capacity building.
- Despite methodological and technical challenges such as attribution problems, it is widely recognized that institutionalizing evaluation is the way to ensure a results orientation in development work. Moreover, development policy and aid tend to shift from projects and programmes to sector-wide approaches, which requires M&E to cover a country's policies, sectors and thematic areas. Policy, sector and thematic evaluations are becoming equally important, and the government of Sri Lanka has given much emphasis to such evaluations.
- There has been a tendency to monitor rather than to evaluate. It is necessary to give equal importance to evaluation by finding an appropriate balance between the two activities. The government of Sri Lanka is mindful of these aspects and views M&E from a wider, country-based perspective.

CONCLUSION

The ambitious institutionalization of MfDR in Sri Lanka has laid the foundation for a results-focused M&E community within the government. Although MfDR is not yet completely assimilated into the public sector culture, there has been a significant shift towards results-based M&E practices throughout the government.

INDEPENDENCE AND CREDIBILITY OF EVALUATION AT NATIONAL LEVEL

MAURITANIA: EVALUATION PRACTICES IN MAURITANIA—GOVERNANCE, TRANSPARENCY AND CREDIBILITY

BY DIRECTORATE OF STRATEGIES AND POLICIES, MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

In 2001, Mauritania was one of the first countries to establish a poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP). This framework, which makes the fight against poverty central to all policies, was prepared through an approach recognized as participatory by all actors. At a meeting that December, the international community saluted the country's economic and structural reform efforts and affirmed their commitment to strengthening the partnership with the Mauritanian government concerning the objectives of the national strategy for poverty reduction. This support was confirmed when the country fulfilled its commitments under the programme to aid heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) in June 2002. Mauritania's debt to members of the 'Paris Club' of rich countries was then cancelled.

Since 2007, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Development (MAED) has been coordinating the system for implementation, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of the PRSP. During the first three fiscal years of the PRSP, M&E was part of an unchanged institutional framework. The situation improved somewhat with the provision of information (including the Demographic and Health Survey 2000, Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys and general population census for 2001). In addition, the development of several reference tools, such as the medium-term expenditure framework and regional poverty alleviation programmes, have opened new prospects for strengthening the monitoring of PRSP implementation.

Until recently, M&E operational activities directly related to the PRSP were largely concentrated on annual production of the PRSP implementation report. The process each year was almost identical: work of the thematic groups; drafting of thematic reports, with support from national consultants; preparation of a draft summary report; and, based on the draft summary report, interregional workshops and national conferences, leading to a consensus document. It should be noted that these activities are a clear improvement over previous systems for public policy management and dialogue, when economic policy framework documents were the principal reference for the reform activities. However, the monitoring process could be improved by actions such as revitalizing institutional mechanisms;

updating core benchmarks and meeting deadlines for annual reporting; making the design of monitoring more strategic; and further strengthening national statistics to better meet the needs of the PRSP.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE NATIONAL STRATEGY TO REDUCE POVERTY

Objectives

The monitoring and evaluation system is a crucial element of any strategic framework for poverty prevention. Its basic objectives are to (i) monitor poverty in its various dimensions, (ii) monitor implementation of the various PRSP programmes and (iii) assess the specific impact of the main public programmes and the PRSP as a whole on growth and poverty. It must therefore provide information on progress, measure the efficiency and effectiveness of the policies implemented, and contribute to adjusting the measures taken based on the results noted concerning the population's growth and living conditions.

Chain of results

The M&E components are shown in figure 1.

The resources permit implementation of specific measures as part of sectoral and cross-sectoral programmes so that activities can be carried out. Programmes produce results thanks to the products obtained from the activities undertaken. Identification of the corresponding indicators (resources, inputs, activities, products and results) that are most relevant to monitoring the implementation of each of the priority PRSP issues and programmes is the principal basis for building the M&E system.

Components of an M&E system

The PRSP M&E system can be viewed as a whole led by the two functions of monitoring and evaluation, structured around 'activity blocks', shown in figure 2.

Monitoring of poverty refers to monitoring the trends and dynamics of poverty.

Monitoring of PRSP execution is the heart of operational monitoring activities. It aims to capture the degree to which specific PRSP objectives are achieved through the production and use of information concerning the implementation of government policies/programmes that underpin the national poverty reduction strategy.

FIGURE 1. CHAIN OF RESULTS

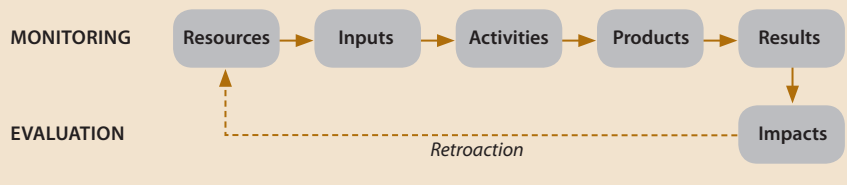
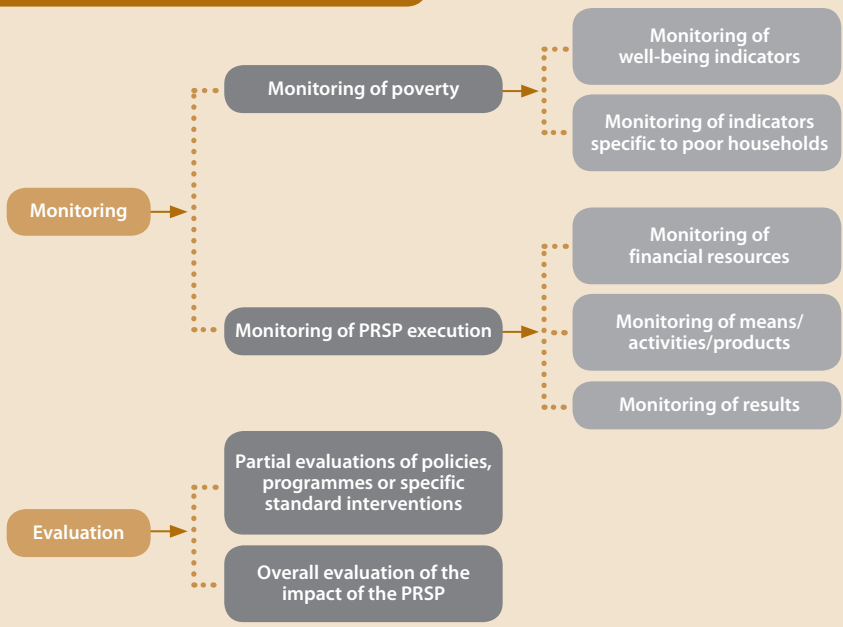


FIGURE 2. PRSP M&E SYSTEM



Monitoring should lead stakeholders to suggest changes in execution of operations or budget allocations, to meet the PRSP's goals more effectively. Monitoring sheets or scorecards and periodic reports are tools to inform stakeholders about performance. The evaluation is intended to:

- Measure and interpret changes in the situation of the poor in conjunction with various public programmes;
- Assess the effectiveness and efficiency of priority programmes in terms of their long-term objectives (defined in the strategy);
- Propose the necessary adjustments to increase the impact of these programmes on reducing poverty and improving general living conditions.

The evaluation system is supplied in part by the monitoring data, especially the performance indicators, but it is also based on impact indicators, which measure characteristics of poverty in space and time. The system also requires the use of various complementary tools (such as programme reviews and special surveys), which generally require more resources, that combine quantitative and qualitative methods and demand expertise in various areas of the PRSP. The PRSP is evaluated through partial impact assessments and evaluations of the PRSP as a whole.

BOX 1. COMPONENTS OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE PRSP

MONITORING OF INDICATORS OF THE POPULATION'S WELL-BEING

These indicators provide information on living conditions of households: per capita income; level of capital (physical, human, institutional, financial); socio-economic infrastructure available; access to basic social services (health, education, drinking water, communication, etc.). The data available particularly through censuses and administrative information systems permits assessment of the country's development according to international standards.

MONITORING OF INDICATORS OF THE WELL-BEING OF POOR HOUSEHOLDS

The analysis of poverty trends and dynamics is concentrated at this level. The indicators collected should permit assessment of the importance of 'input' or 'output' flows for the poverty situation, and the analysis should identify the factors that explain the movements observed.

RESOURCES MONITORING

It seeks to understand (i) changes in the initial allocation of credits, (ii) the level of consumption of financial resources, and (iii) routing of these resources to their final destination. This monitoring, focused on appropriations allocated to priority anti-poverty actions, is organized around three main concerns:

- Identifying the **actual allocations of financial resources** (by source of funding and overall) according to their destination (sector, activity, region, etc.);
- Monitoring the **level of use of the resources** and the rate of financial implementation of the programmes;
- Monitoring the **effective provision of resources to their final destinations** (tracking of expenses to destination or 'step by step' monitoring).

MONITORING OF RESOURCES AND ACTIVITIES/OUTPUTS

This helps to understand the execution of projects/programmes/policies through their inputs and outputs. It therefore:

- **Monitors means** (physical, human and material inputs acquired through funding) implemented as part of the sectoral and inter-sectoral programmes whose common aim is to reduce poverty;
- **Monitors activities** carried out using these means.

This monitoring is performed using a small number of key indicators in relation to the physical quantities implemented (inputs) and obtained (outputs) in the context of the priority programmes. These variables can be understood in the context of programme budgets and the MTEF. It involves assessing the values obtained in relation to the initial planning.

RESULTS MONITORING

It assesses the extent to which the results obtained have achieved the targets. It usually involves annual monitoring of a limited number of outcome variables within priority PRSP sectors.

PARTIAL EVALUATIONS OF THE IMPACT OF THE STRATEGIES

These partial evaluations are conducted regularly as part of implementation of the PRSP. They can provide information on the impact achieved by any particular strategy or action. They intersect with some of the monitoring data (results indicators available) and with the information obtained elsewhere by specific small-scale quantitative and/or qualitative surveys. The purpose of the exercise is to highlight the nature and importance of the effects of a specific intervention generally or on a region or specific social group. It is advisable to plan these partial evaluations according to the PRSP priorities and the importance of the interventions to be evaluated (importance of the resources implemented, for example, or even an innovative measure whose impact needs to be quickly known), taking into account the resources available.

THE OVERALL EVALUATION OF THE PRSP

This evaluation aims to measure the impact of all the policies implemented on growth, general living and poverty. It does not concern the impact of a particular strategy but rather the progress achieved after a period of three to five years. To be of high quality, this sequence of the PRSP process requires a consolidated analysis of all the products of the M&E system: scorecards, progress reports, surveys, partial evaluations and surveys of living conditions of households, which are only able to provide information on changes in poverty indicators.

CONTENT AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION MECHANISM

The 'reference system'

Since 1999, the PRSP monitoring and evaluation mechanism has been discussed widely. Discussions have been largely focused on the statistical information system and the indicators, so they have not resulted in formalizing an overall frame of reference. In fact, an array of indicators and an action plan make up the 'reference system' for the M&E of the current PRSP.

Adopted six months after the PRSP, Orientation Law No. 50-2001 of 19 July 2001 on poverty prevention established a number of principles and guidelines for the National Strategy to Fight Poverty. It also specified the basic tools for planning, monitoring and evaluation activities related to actions to fight poverty:

- Four-year action plans to fight poverty are the main tools for implementing the PRSP. They are accompanied by multi-year public investment programmes that are reviewed annually (article 5). The four-year actions plans are subject to a comprehensive midterm assessment that aims "to highlight the performance report of the action plan in progress, the difficulties encountered in this context, and draw key lessons in order to increase the effectiveness of the public policies to fight poverty" (article 7). The government reports to Parliament on the implementation of each four-year action plan (article 8).
- Programme laws specify the objectives of the poverty alleviation policy and authorize the necessary expenditures (investment and operating) for each action plan in the priority areas (article 6).
- Programme budgets have been put in place since mid-2002 for the sectors of education, health, water resources, rural development and urban development.
- Regional programmes to fight poverty (RPFP) reflect the regional orientations of the PRSP and establish priority activities for each region. Monitoring and evaluation of the RPFP are carried out under the same conditions as the National Action Plan (article 13).

Benchmarks for monitoring and analysing poverty and living conditions

The reference framework in this area is based on the national statistical system relative to the information needs of the PRSP.

Benchmarks for monitoring implementation of the PRSP

The reference system in this area is based primarily on:

- Systematic updating of macroeconomic and sectoral strategies and development of information systems on the planning and monitoring of public activities;
- Improved reporting (progress reports on programmes, annual reports, etc.).

An update of the PRSP is planned yearly. To implement PRSP monitoring requires:

- Development of planning and monitoring capacities in the priority sectors (ministries of Economic Affairs and Development, National Education and Health, and the Ministry Delegate to the Prime Minister);
- Progressive development of programme budgets;
- Adoption of programme laws;
- Implementation of regional programmes to fight poverty;
- Regular implementation of public expenditure reviews relating to priority sectors and presentation of an annual monitoring report on the priority public expenditures and their impact;
- Standard annual audits for all programmes and investment projects.

Benchmarks for evaluation

The PRSP documents do not recommend a strategy for assessing the PRSP's overall impact or that of its major programmes. The evaluation is also usually broad, since it addresses an ongoing process of coordination. In fact, it falls more within the monitoring function than the assessment function.

The 'reference system' thus rests on two pillars:

- The general coordination mechanism, which supports participatory evaluation activities for the entire PRSP;
- Assessment mechanisms and tools, including (i) analysis reports on the impact of public expenditures, (ii) surveys of beneficiaries, particularly on the effectiveness of basic services and (iii) participatory assessments of programmes to fight poverty.

Assessments include:

- A midterm review of the PRSP, involving civil society and donors;
- An assessment of the cost-effectiveness of public spending in priority sectors;
- An overall assessment of the impact of HIPC resources and the PRSP on poverty reduction.

INSTITUTIONAL SYSTEMS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

To monitor implementation of the PRSP, the Mauritanian government has decided to continue the institutional arrangements established to develop it. It relies upstream on an inter-ministerial committee for the fight against poverty, a coordinating committee and a donors' committee. Downstream, the operational coordination of monitoring is entrusted to a technical committee, which has a secretariat of coordination and 13 thematic groups. To strengthen the participatory approach, additional mechanisms include interregional workshops and a vote by Parliament at the end of the report preparation process for each four-year plan.

The M&E reference system is unusual in not defining the specific responsibilities of the various institutions. Instead of a permanent PRSP secretariat under a leadership structure, often used in other countries, it is a 'collegial' structure comprising the senior officials of three institutions (MAED, National Office for Statistics and the Mauritanian Center for Policy Analysis) who oversee monitoring activities. The chairmen of these groups do not have permanent responsibility to produce monitoring information, and the technical services departments have no responsibilities as such.

POVERTY MONITORING AND THE RESPONSE CAPACITY OF THE STATISTICAL INFORMATION SYSTEM

Once the elements of the reference system have been formulated, it is necessary to assess the monitoring and evaluation system. All parties agree that a major effort has been made to rehabilitate the statistical system in Mauritania, but it has its strengths and weaknesses. Thus, for the first component of M&E, the question is to what extent the national statistical system can assess socio-economic conditions in general, measure changing patterns of poverty and understand its determining factors.

Strengths

- It has conducted new statistical operations at a steady pace, updating and considerably expanding the demographic and socio-economic database.
- It has sought to strengthen administrative data systems.
- A social database (MAURITINFO) has been established.
- Several structural actions have been undertaken, primarily concerning planning and monitoring of operations (aside from production of information itself).
- An investigation steering committee has been established to improve quality control.
- Dissemination of information is improved.
- Institutional capacity and decentralization are strengthened.
- More attention is given to regional capacity.

Weakness

- The national statistical system has inadequate capacity to assess socio-economic conditions, measure changing patterns of poverty and understand its determining factors, which are also constraints to establishing an effective M&E system for the PRSP.

MONITORING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PRSP

Strengths

- The first four-year action plan has been reviewed annually and an array of priority investments added to it, as provided in the Orientation Law.
- Annual thematic and quarterly reports were prepared.
- The first regional programmes to fight poverty were developed.
- An internal government reporting system was designed to ensure more effective communication between the ministries and the Prime Minister.
- The major departments and public agencies have received specific M&E systems or are considering them.

Weakness

- There is lack of ownership of the PRSP; despite sustained information and coordination efforts, for many partners it continues to represent a rather formal frame of reference.

THE PRODUCTS OF M&E

These include the products obtained under the procedure established relative to production and approval of the annual report on implementation of the PRSP, as well as other monitoring tools, particularly those used for monitoring the PIP and the sectoral programmes.

Strengths

- The first four-year action plan has been reviewed annually and an array of priority investments added to it, as provided in the Orientation Law.
- Annual thematic and quarterly reports were prepared.
- The first regional programmes to fight poverty were developed.
- An internal government reporting system was designed to ensure more effective communication between the ministries and the Prime Minister.
- The major departments and public agencies have received specific M&E systems or are considering them.

Weaknesses

- Overall, the shortcomings of the information system for monitoring implementation are closely linked to the methods chosen for operation of technical thematic groups, in terms of the content of the monitoring information and the choice of priority projects.
- Only shortened versions of the thematic reports are distributed, although they are by nature more likely to provide inputs for monitoring policies.

THE EVALUATION COMPONENT

This is clearly the least explored aspect of the M&E system. The country does not yet have the strategy, tools or capabilities to evaluate public policies. However, some strengths should be noted in the evaluation of sector strategies. Reviews have been conducted in some areas, and several priority programme evaluation exercises have been conducted in addition to the overall assessment of the PRSP.

THE STRUCTURAL CONSTRAINTS

A number of general and structural constraints hamper establishment of an effective M&E system:

- The multiplicity of stakeholders;
- An administrative culture insufficiently instilled with the principles of results-based management;
- Monitoring services that are insufficiently valued by department officials;
- Human resources and the low degree of development of civil society.

DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

Official Records of Mauritania

Poverty Monitoring
Profile of Poverty in Mauritania in 1996
Status of Poverty in Mauritania in 1998
Profile of Poverty in Mauritania, 2000 and 2008
A System of Indicators for Monitoring Poverty in Mauritania
Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Human Development: Monitoring Indicators, Monitoring and Research Team
Social Indicators
MAURITINFO documentation

Monitoring the implementation of the PRSP
Strategic Framework for Alleviating Poverty, 2001
National Audience for Consultation on the Draft Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper: General Observations, 2001
Report on the Implementation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
Report of Implementation of the PRSP for 2002

Regional monitoring of the PRSP
Regional Profiles of Hodh Gharbi, Assaba and Guidimaka [2]
Toolbox for RPFP

SOUTH AFRICA: EVALUATION PRACTICES OF PUBLIC POLICIES: GOVERNANCE, INDEPENDENCE AND CREDIBILITY

BY CHARMAINE B. JULIE[28]

INTRODUCTION

The primary monitoring and evaluation driver in South Africa is the Public Service Commission (PSC). It was established in the Constitution of 1996 to "investigate, monitor and evaluate" public administration without "fear, favour or prejudice". Accountable to Parliament, the PSC falls outside the responsibility of the executive. As a result, it is perceived as independent and impartial and has the latitude to engage across the socio-economic and political spectrum, which it does with ease. It has been able to produce reports critical of the public service, which employs 1.1 million public servants, and to date has not had its work censored by the executive. Its independence has also enabled it to forge networks and establish partnerships that have enhanced transparency and accountability.

EVOLUTION OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

The original PSC, established in 1912, was fashioned on the British Civil Service Commission. Its primary function was to prevent favouritism in the appointment of public servants. It burgeoned by the 1980s into a vast and powerful statutory body, which ostensibly was apolitical, but in reality played a role in perpetuating the apartheid regime.

With the new Constitution, the PSC was re-established as an institution supporting constitutional democracy. It had multiple mandates, and between 1994 and 1996 evolved from an executive policymaking and implementing body into one focused exclusively on investigating, monitoring and evaluating public administration. With this new mandate, it has become the central M&E player in the country and has also provided support and leadership for the development of M&E at the regional and continental level. Today, it is different from its counterparts in most parts of the world, where the focus remains on administrative issues;

28. Regional Director, Western Cape Office of the Public Service Commission, with support from the Public Service Commission M&E Unit.

the PSC of South Africa has embraced and developed its mandate to become a key player in monitoring and evaluation.

The PSC is managed by a board made up of nine commissioners, one from each of the nine provinces, appointed by the President of South Africa. They may serve a maximum of two terms of five years each and are supported by an office staffed by civil servants. Thus the PSC has adequate capacity and skills to have an impact. The structure has not impeded the speed of its work, and having province-based commissioners aids in 'unblocking' problems at that level. The question of how findings are presented is being addressed by customizing approaches that seek to get the most influence in the shortest period of time (see annex 4 for organization chart).

NATURE AND SCOPE OF EVALUATIONS

The PSC has three focal areas:

- **Accountability:** The goal is to measure compliance with government regulation and policies, and where deviation from norms is identified, rate it as satisfactory or unsatisfactory in conjunction with other oversight or M&E bodies such as the auditor-general. In this focal area non-compliance leads to punitive measures.
- **Transparency**: Given the secretive nature of the Public Service under apartheid, the Constitution requires government to operate transparently. The PSC has produced an unprecedented level of transparency concerning government operations over the past decade. While transparency alone does not necessarily translate into accountability, it provides crucial information that allows civil society to hold government accountable. Most PSC reports provide very specific performance information on various areas of government, making it easy to identify where problems lie.
- **Enlightenment**: The PSC informs the public about its work in various ways, including media briefings, seminars, television and radio shows, roundtables and guest lectures. Stakeholders have had opportunities to discuss issues through conferences with specialized sectors, such as organized labour (Public Service Co-ordinating Bargaining Committee, 2007) and the M&E sector (South African M&E Conference, 2007 and 2009). Enlightenment efforts target different tiers of society and decision-making levels within government (table 1).

The PSC implements various M&E systems, each with a different purpose and relevant protocols. Two of the systems, detailed below, engage with management of departments and citizens.

Transversal public service monitoring and evaluation system

The PSC has designed a good-governance M&E system that assesses departmental performance across the nine constitutional values[29] and principles for public administration. The system, implemented since 2001, has thus far assessed over 100 departments. Indicators

29. As prescribed in chapter 10, section 195 (1) of the Constitution.

TABLE 1. PUBLIC INFORMATION ACTIVITIES OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

SCALE	EVENT/ACTIVITY	ENVISAGED OUTCOME
Continental/ international	Association of African Public Service Commissions in Africa	Increase transparency and accountability concerning governance in Africa, creating an enabling environment for M&E, which is also developing on the continent
	Co-hosted the 3rd African Evaluation Association Conference in 2004	Help improve M&E capacity in Africa, drawing participants from 61 countries to engage on the relationship between evaluation, development and democracy
	Participated in the training programme of the International Programme for Development Evaluation Training	Share South African experiences with the international community
Societal	National anti-corruption hotline	Monitor the connection between government and people, policy and practice
	Measurement of service delivery	Establish adherence to the *Batho Pele* (People First) principles
Departmental	Implementation of the Transversal Public Service M&E System	Provide management advice on how well the values and principles of public administration are being met and thereby prioritizing good governance
Individual	Management of the evaluations of heads of department	By focusing on the highest level of leadership, drive performance management through the public service

are chosen for each principle and value, and assessment takes place according to verifiable standards. Scores are awarded and recommendations are made and tracked. The implementation process seeks to ensure buy-in and takes approximately 3 months. A draft report is presented to the department's top managers, who have 10 days to respond. The response may be considered in reviewing the draft score. Once the report is finalized, the department has 6 months to implement the recommendations, and the implementation is reported to relevant political and administrative structures.

The system is now well known and has reinforced other M&E work, as it also draws on existing evaluations, such as that of the auditor-general. This mutually reinforcing process institutionalizes performance management. The PSC has noted that compliance has improved slowly over time at the aggregate level. However, the pattern has been uneven, and in many cases the uptake on the initial set of recommendations has been poor, resulting in repeated poor assessments for several departments. Given that the system has not changed significantly over time, it is concerning that departments continue to score poorly in some of the areas critical to good governance, such as poor public participation and inadequate decision-making processes. The turnover in management may contribute to the limited improvements seen to date.

Citizen monitoring and evaluation system

Through announced and unannounced inspections, the PSC has tested the extent to which public services are provided according to the People First standards. These eight standards stipulate how government departments should operate and what citizens can expect of

them. Several surveys have been conducted and investigations undertaken, resulting in reports that were presented to political leaders for action. Last year the focus was on police stations, and this year it was on clinics. These reports provide an objective assessment of services provided. By tracking implementation of the recommendations, one can see whether this form of M&E is delivering the expected results.

This approach allows participation by stakeholders, which allows their insights and expertise to be harnessed to help government improve. Such an approach raises credibility and respect, which are important when it comes to producing and presenting evaluation findings.

RESULTS OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

The main purpose of M&E in the PSC has been to improve transparency and accountability and instil a performance ethos. M&E makes an important contribution to the reform and modernization process of government in South Africa. Apart from its very important contribution to democracy, it helps in increasing levels of State transparency and accountability. It has also:

- Improved the receptiveness of government to being measured, which leads to internal review of its operations, thereby instilling a performance ethos. The guidelines by the National Treasury, Auditor-General and Department of Public Service and Administration, particularly regarding planning and reporting, have for the first time quantified what needs to be done and with what resources.
- Increased the level of results orientation. In the past, departmental annual reports largely covered activities. Now they are based on indicators, which assist with M&E.

The use of information

The PSC has translated the constitutional values and principles into interventions and products, which have been directed to different client bases. These include Parliament and its committees, which carry out political oversight based on the evidence gathered from PSC reports; and political and administrative heads of government departments, which use the reports to address areas of concern identified through monitoring and evaluation, therefore improving governance.

The PSC's management of the head of department evaluation framework, its advice on performance agreements and its evaluation of leadership practices through the key performance area 'leadership and performance improvement' contribute to achievement of a high standard of public leadership.

The outcomes achieved are:

- Effective linkage of strategic objectives with agreed individual performance outcomes;
- Improved integrity among the public service leadership;
- Rewards for good performance and corrective actions for poor performance among heads of departments;
- Improved levels of individual and institutional performance.

There are also some requirements for effective functioning of M&E, including:

- Engagement of civil society through conferences and seminars;
- Engagement of the academic sector, by presenting papers, soliciting critical comment on reports (e.g. the State of the Public Service roundtables);
- Organized labour, by co-hosting the Public Sector Co-ordinating Bargaining Chamber conference;
- The M&E community, by co-hosting the African Evaluation Association 2004 event, subsequent support to the association and co-hosting of the 2007 and 2009 biennial conferences of the South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association (SAMEA);
- Continental associations set up to promote good governance, which helped form the Association of African Public Service Commissions, a body meant to support good governance in Africa;
- The media, through regular press briefing on its reports and findings.

This indicates an appreciation of the importance of building strategic alliances and engaging with a cross-section of society. The PSC sees engagement as a tool to influence decision-making and public policy, and it has built a track record attesting to the validity of that approach.

FUTURE STEPS

The PSC is moving into a new phase in which it will more directly support M&E capacity-building initiatives around the country. It will produce guides and assist newly appointed M&E practitioners in many departments. This work will focus on developing expertise in the provinces, given that M&E is concentrated at the national level, despite the fact that most of the departments and the population are not. The PSC seeks to collaborate with SAMEA in this effort.

The PSC augments its work with research by the auditor-general and research units in the country and abroad, attempting to avoid duplication of effort. Through a memorandum of understanding with SAMEA following its 2009 conference, the PSC will work more directly with NGOs and the research sector. The PSC faces no overt competition from other M&E sectors in the country, possibly due to the level of cooperation that has been established.

ANNEX 1. PUBLIC SERVICE TRANSVERSAL M&E SYSTEM: PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND APPLICABLE POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTING PSM&E IN DEPARTMENTS

CONSTITUTIONAL PRINCIPLE	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	APPLICABLE LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS
1. Professional ethics A high standard of professional ethics must be promoted and maintained	Cases of misconduct involving a disciplinary hearing comply with the provisions of the Disciplinary Code and Procedures for the Public Service	• Disciplinary Codes and Procedures for the Public Service • Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council Resolution 2 of 1999 as amended by Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council Resolution 1 of 2003 • Code of Conduct for the Public Service
2. Efficiency, economy and effectiveness Efficient, economic and effective use of resources must be promoted	• Expenditure is according to budget • Programme outputs are clearly defined and there is credible evidence that they have been achieved	• Public Finance Management Act, Act 1 of 1999, Sections 38 to 40 • Treasury Regulations. Part 3: Planning and Budgeting • Public Service Regulations. Part III/B. Strategic Planning • Treasury Guidelines on preparing budget submissions for the year under review • Treasury Guide for the preparation of annual reports of departments for the financial year ended 31 March • National Planning Framework
3. Public administration must be development oriented	The department is effectively involved in programmes/projects that aim to promote development and reduce poverty	• Section 195 (c) of the Constitution
4. Impartiality and fairness Services must be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias	There is evidence that the Department follows the prescribed procedures of the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act when making administrative decisions	• Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, Act No 3 of 2000 • Regulations on Fair Administrative Procedures, 2002 • Departmental delegations of authority
5. Public participation in policymaking People's needs must be responded to and the public must be encouraged to participate in policymaking	The department facilitates public participation in policymaking	• White Paper for Transforming Public Service Delivery (Batho Pele)

CONSTITUTIONAL PRINCIPLE	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	APPLICABLE LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS
6. Accountability Government must be accountable	• Adequate internal financial control and performance management is exerted over all departmental programmes • Fraud-prevention plans, based on thorough risk assessments, are in place and are implemented	• Public Finance Management Act, Act 1 of 1999 • Treasury Regulations. Part 3: Planning and Budgeting • White Paper for Transforming Public Service Delivery (*Batho Pele*) • Public Service Regulations. Part III/B. Strategic Planning • Treasury Guidelines on preparing budget submissions, 2002 • Treasury Guide for the preparation of annual reports of departments for the financial year ended 31 March • National Planning Framework
7. Transparency Transparency must be fostered by providing the public with timely, accessible and accurate information	• The departmental annual report complies with National Treasury's guideline on annual reporting • The Department complies with the provisions of the Promotion of Access to Information Act	• Public Finance Management Act 1999, Act 1 of 1999 • Treasury Guideline for the preparation of annual reports • The Department of Public Government's Guide for an oversight report on human resources • Public Service Commission. Evaluation of Departments' Annual Reports as an Accountability Mechanism. October 1999 • White Paper for Transforming Public Service Delivery (*Batho Pele*) • Promotion of Access to Information Act 2000, Act 2 of 2000 • Departmental delegations of authority
8. Good human resource management and career development practices Good human resource management and career development practices must be cultivated to maximize human potential	• Vacant posts are filled in a timely and effective manner • The department complies with the provisions of the Skills Development Act	• Public Service Regulations, 2001 as amended • Public Service Act
9. Representivity Public administration must be broadly representative of South Africa's people, with employment and personnel management practices based on ability, objectivity, fairness and the need to redress the imbalances of the past to achieve broad representation	The Department is representative of the South African people and is implementing diversity management measures	• Part VI Public Service Regulations, 2001 as amended • Employment Equity Act, Act 55 of 1998 • White Paper on the Transformation on Public Service – 15/11/1995 • White Paper on Affirmative Action in the Public Service, 2001 • White Paper on Disability

ANNEX 2. PUBLIC SERVICE TRANSVERSAL M&E SYSTEM, RESEARCH STEPS

PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTING PSM&E IN DEPARTMENTS

1. Notification to sampled departments
- Send letters to department, Minister, MEC and DG/HoD explaining the purpose, process and requesting a contact person.
- Attach PSM&ES Assessment Framework and list of documents needed.

2. Introductory meeting with department
- Obtain name of a contact person within the department
- Meet with HoD and top management of department to explain the PSM&ES and obtain buy-in.

3. Produce draft report
- Obtain and analyse information.
- Assess performance against defined performance indicator(s) for each principle.
- Identify areas of good practice and/or problem areas.
- Write main and summary report.

4. Presentation of draft results to department
- Discuss results of assessment with HoD and top management of department.
- Give opportunity to submit written comments within 10 days of presentation.

5. Final report
- Include comments of department in report and make amendments if necessary.
- Submit final report to PSC for approval.
- Send approved report to department.

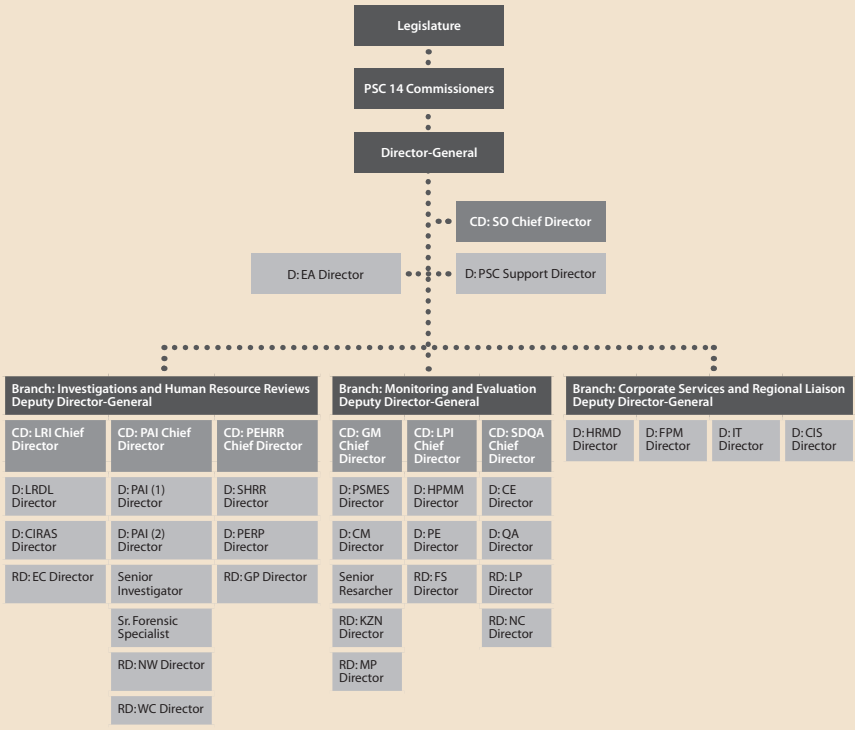
6. Consolidated report
- Collate information of individual reports into one consolidated report.
- Submit report to Parliament and Executive Authorities.

ANNEX 3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE PSC'S TRANSVERSAL PUBLIC SERVICE MONITORING AND EVALUATION TOOL

PSM&E TOOL

ITEM	DESCRIPTION
Reporting period	This reassessment of the department was conducted during the PSC's 2009/10 evaluation cycle and covers the following periods: • Principles 2, 6, and 7: Information obtained from the department's annual report for the 2007/08 financial year • Principles 1, 3 to 5 and 8 to 9: The most recent information up to 18 May 2009 (date of the final draft report)
Introduction and background	The PSC has designed, piloted and implemented a Transversal M&E System that it uses to evaluate the performance of departments against the nine constitutional values and principles governing public administration. Since the introduction of the system the PSC has evaluated 101 departments. During the 2009/2010 research cycle 2 national and 28 provincial departments were evaluated. The results of this report were presented to the Department with a request for comments, which were submitted and incorporated into the Executive Summary.
Methodology	The methodology involves comparing the actual state of practice in the department against at least five standards per principle. Evidence about the actual state of practice is obtained by collecting documents and records and conducting interviews on small samples of specific cases. At the end of the evaluation a draft report is written and the department is awarded a score. Since the same indicators are used every year, the performance of a sample of departments in a specific year can be compared with the samples of previous years, departments can be compared with each other and a department's performance can be compared with its own performance in a previous year when that department comes up for re-assessment. *(The detailed assessment framework is available on the PSC's web page: www.psc.gov.za.)*
Final result of evaluation	**Comparative performance results between the first assessment (2004/05) and the reassessment (2009/10)** The Department's performance and compliance with the nine constitutional values and principles have improved from an average score of 36 percent for 2004/05 to 55 percent for 2009/10, which is indicative of adequate performance against several of the standards. **Strengths** The Department's performance against only four out of the nine principles was above the average performance of 55 percent for the 2009/10 evaluation cycle. These four principles are 3 (90 percent), 4 (100 percent), 6 (90 percent) and 7 (80 percent). Compared to the 2004/05 evaluation, improvement in performance occurred in 2009/10 against principles 1, 3, 4, 6 and 7, with the score varying between 30 percent and 80 percent. **Weaknesses** A cause of concern is the decline in performance during the 2009/10 evaluation cycle against the 2004/05 evaluation in principles 5 (public participation in policymaking), 8 (human resource management) and 9 (representivity). The decline of performance against these four principles is indicative of poor project and human resource management, which needs attention.
Recommendations	**Status of implementation of recommendations of first assessment** When the Department was assessed for the first time in the 2004/05 evaluation cycle 36 recommendations were made of which 18 (or 50 percent) were implemented when the Department was re-assessed in the 2009/10 evaluation cycle. Of concern is that the majority of the recommendations that were not implemented falls within Principle 8 (good human resource management and career development practices) and Principle 9 (diversity management). Consequently the PSC is now making even more recommendations with regard to these principles. In light of the dire need for departments to deliver services, poor human resource management in the Department needs urgent attention. **New recommendations** The PSC made 59 recommendations that need to be implemented within specific time frames. Within six months of receipt of this report the PSC will follow up on the progress made, using the list of recommendations at Appendix A as a template for the feedback report.

ANNEX 4. ORGANIZATION CHART OF THE PSC



Chief Directorates Legend

CD: SO – Chief Directorate: Special Operations
CD: LRI – Chief Directorate: Labour Relations Improvement
CD: PAI – Chief Directorate: Public Administration Investigations
CD: PEHRR – Chief Directorate: Professional Ethics and Human Resources Reviews
CD: GM – Chief Directorate: Governance Monitoring
CD: LPI – Chief Directorate: Leadership and Performance Improvement
CD: SDQA – Chief Directorate: Service Delivery and Quality Assurance

Regional Directors Legend

RD: EC – Regional Director: Eastern Cape
RD: NW – Regional Director: North West
RD: WC – Regional Director: Western Cape
RD: GP – Regional Director: Gauteng
RD: NC – Regional Director: Northern Cape
RD: LP – Regional Director: Limpopo
RD: MP – Regional Director: Mpumalanga
RD: KZN – Regional Director: KwaZulu-Natal
RD: FS – Regional Director: Free State

Directorates Legend

D: PSCS – Directorate: Public Service Commission Support
D: EA – Directorate: Executive Assistance
D: LRDL – Directorate: Labour Relations Disputes and Litigation
D: CIRAS – Directorate: Complaints, Investigative Research and Advisory Services
D: PAI (1) – Directorate: Public Administration Investigations (1)
D: PAI (2) – Directorate: Public Administration Investigations (2)
D: SHRR – Directorate: Strategic Human Resources Reviews
D: PERP – Directorate: Professional Ethics Research and Promotion
D: PSMES – Directorate: Public Service M&E System
D: CM – Directorate: Compliance Monitoring
D: HPMM – Directorate: HoD Performance Management Monitoring
D: PE – Directorate: Program Evaluations
D: CE – Directorate: Consultative Evaluations
D: QA – Directorate: Quality Assurance
D: HRMD – Directorate: Human Resource Management and Development
D: FPM – Directorate: Financial and Procurement Managment
D: IT – Directorate: Information Technology
D: CIS – Directorate: Communication and Information Services
D: SS – Directorate: Security Services

INTERNATIONAL PRACTITIONERS' BRIEF ISSUES PAPERS

EVALUATION CAPACITY BUILDING STRATEGY: TOWARDS A MATURE PROFESSION

BY ALEXEY KUZMIN[30]

WHAT IS EVALUATION CAPACITY BUILDING?

To define evaluation capacity building (ECB), we begin with a review of definitions provided in the literature. Bamberger (2000, p. 96) provides background for understanding evaluation and its contrast to evaluation capacity building in international development. He emphasizes that "evaluation activities may be limited to specific projects or programs, or they may seek to develop national evaluation capacity to replicate the methods".

Schaumburg-Muller (1996, p. 5) gives a broad definition of the concept of ECB that includes "activities, which provide support for systems of evaluation, audit, feedback, and learning from policies, programs, or projects performed at various levels. Although the concept is defined broadly it excludes activities aimed solely at planning and appraisal activities. Also, the interest focuses on activities, which are not just of a temporary nature but have the aim of supporting a sustainable evaluation function".

Another broad definition is given by Boyle, Lemaire and Rist (1999, p. 6): "Evaluation regime refers to the configuration of evaluation capacity, evaluation practice, organizational arrangements, and institutionalization. Evaluation capacity development refers to activities and initiatives taken to implement the regime".

Mackay (1999, p. 2) defines ECB as "the development of national or sectoral evaluation systems". Picciotto (1998, p. 39) expands the latter definition and comes up with "the ability of public institutions to manage information, assess program performance, and respond flexibly to new demands".

Haarich and del Castillo Hermosa (2004, p. 5) define evaluation capacity as "the whole set of the evaluation system's endogenous elements and subelements". They point out that "the development and improvement of evaluation systems is therefore necessarily linked to the approach of evaluation capacity building". The endogenous elements include the demand and the supply of evaluation processes and reports; resources (technical, human, material) and infrastructures that support the evaluation activities on the supply and the demand side and link those two elements.

30. Senior evaluation consultant and Director, Process Consulting Company.

Compton, Baizerman and Stockdill (2002) suggest conceptual and working definitions of ECB that incorporate the idea of development of a sustainable evaluation effort and support good governance, rational decision-making and accountable performance. According to their conceptual definition, "ECB is a context-dependent, intentional action system of guided processes and practices for bringing about and sustaining a state of affairs in which quality program evaluation and its appropriate uses are ordinary and ongoing practices within and/or between one or more organizations/programs/sites" (p. 8). The three also propose a practical, usable and flexible working definition of ECB: "The intentional work to continuously create and sustain overall organizational processes that make quality evaluation and its uses routine" (p. 14).

Boyle, Lemaire and Rist (1999, p. 5) point out the close connection between evaluation capacity and evaluation practice. For them evaluation capacity is a necessary condition, a supply of 'hardware' for evaluation practice. "Evaluation capacity refers to the human capital (skills, knowledge, experience, etc.) and financial/material resources, and evaluation practice to the actual 'doing' of evaluation. Evaluation practice refers to the definition of the evaluation, the research design, and the execution of the evaluation activity, that is, implementation, results, and impacts on specific public policy. This practice is only possible if you have the supply of 'hardware' (in other words, evaluation capacity)".

Preskill and Boyle (2008, p. 444) propose a broad definition that refers to ECB at the individual, group and organizational levels: "ECB involves the design and implementation of teaching and learning strategies to help individuals, groups, and organizations, learn about what constitutes effective, useful, and professional evaluation practice. The ultimate goal of ECB is sustainable evaluation practice—where members continuously ask questions that matter, collect, analyze, and interpret data, and use evaluation findings for decision-making and action. For evaluation practice to be sustained, participants must be provided with leadership support, incentives, resources, and opportunities to transfer their learning about evaluation to their everyday work. Sustainable evaluation practice also requires the development of systems, processes, policies, and plans that help embed evaluation work into the way the organization accomplishes its mission and strategic goals".

Professional organizations of evaluators make an important contribution to ECB. In fact, ECB is on the agenda of regional, national and international associations. Some authors identify it at the national level with the development of national and international evaluation organizations (Love 2002; Segone, Patel, Rouge and Russon 2003).

The president of the American Evaluation Association, Laura Leviton, in her 2001 presidential address, refers to ECB as building "collective evaluation capacity". She points out that "a collective capacity is more than simply having an evaluation association. It permits evaluators to rely on each other to a greater extent than they do now. Evaluators need more effective ways to accomplish three aims:

1. To influence the program and policy world, which continues to misunderstand, misuse, and sometimes fear evaluation, with adverse consequences for evaluators;
2. To improve the relationships among evaluators themselves, a potential source of strength and influence that has generally lain fallow; and

3. To build on our individual strengths and compensate for weaknesses, by understanding where we can work independently and where we have a duty to collaborate on a product" (pp. 1-2).

Rist (2002) suggests an overarching concept of building an evaluation culture that incorporates many definitions of evaluation capacity development. Rist identifies criteria for a strong evaluation culture:

1. Evaluation takes place in many policy domains.
2. There is a supply of evaluators specializing in different disciplines who have mastered different evaluation methods and who conduct evaluations.
3. A national discourse concerning evaluation is taking place in which the more general discussions are adjusted to the specific national environment.
4. Members of the profession have their own societies or frequently attend meetings of international societies, and at least some discussion occurs concerning the norms or ethics of the profession.
5. Institutional arrangements exist for conducting evaluations in the government.
6. Institutional arrangements exist in parliament for conducting evaluations and disseminating results to decision-makers.
7. An element of pluralism exists, that is, within each policy domain there are different people or agencies commissioning and performing evaluations.
8. Evaluation activities are carried out within the 'supreme audit institution'.
9. Evaluations are not just focused on the relation between inputs/outputs or technical production.

ECB DEFINITIONS: KEY CONCEPTS

Although ECB definitions vary, they can be seen as complementary rather than contradictory. Thus, to describe the essence of ECB we summarized the key concepts presented in various definitions:

1. ECB is two-fold: it enhances both 'ability to do' (potential) and actual 'doing' (practice).
2. ECB is aimed at developing evaluation demand and supply.
3. ECB is aimed at increasing the use of evaluation and its results.
4. ECB requires development and implementation of evaluation systems.
5. ECB requires institutionalization of evaluation.
6. ECB could be and should be implemented at various levels: individual, group, organization, sector, nation.
7. ECB is linked to creation and development of professional evaluation organizations (associations).

TABLE 1. CRITERIA OF MATURITY OF EVALUATION PROFESSION[31]

1. Need for evaluation services and specialists (Mackay 2003; Worthen 1994)	This is the demand side of evaluation activities and a driving force for the development of the profession. Demand can emerge and grow due to internal and/or external pressures.
2. Stable career opportunities in evaluation (Flexner 2001; Worthen 1994)	Opportunity to choose evaluation as a career; long-term plans related to individual professional development and career growth in evaluation; evaluation positions in various organizations.
3. Body of knowledge and set of skills unique to evaluation (Flexner 2001; Worthen 1994)	Evaluation becomes a discipline with a unique body of knowledge that grows due to the contributions made by researchers. Development of evaluation theories. Development of applications of evaluation theories and specific sets of skills to practice evaluations.
4. Educational programmes and other professional development opportunities for evaluators (Kuzmin 2003; Preskill and Boyle 2008; Worthen 1994)	Educational programmes for evaluators are conducted by state and private universities. One can get a certificate or a degree in evaluation.
5. Institutionalization of evaluation (Boyle et al. 1999; Mackay 1999; Rist 2002; Worthen 1995)	Evaluation becomes part of a structured and well-established system.
6. Professional associations for evaluators (Flexner 2001; Kuzmin 2009; Worthen 1994)	Associations develop evaluation guiding principles, standards and ethical codes; influence educational programmes; provide certification of evaluators; and can exclude unqualified persons or persons who violate professional standards and/or ethical norms.

ECB'S CONTRIBUTION TO DEVELOPMENT OF THE EVALUATION PROFESSION

All the concepts mentioned above are indeed important for ECB, but how can we know if the list is comprehensive? To make sure that we have an exhaustive list of ECB characteristics, we need to have an overarching framework for them. Such an inclusive framework could be developed only at the meta-level. We suggest that the meta-level for evaluation capacity development is development of evaluation into a mature profession (Kuzmin 2004).

We propose the criteria of maturity of evaluation profession detailed in Table 1.

TOWARDS A COMPREHENSIVE ECB STRATEGY

If we accept the ECB mission as developing evaluation into a mature profession, ECB goals should be related to the criteria of a mature profession. Hence a comprehensive ECB strategy should include:

- Nurturing the need for evaluation services and specialists;
- Establishing stable career opportunities;
- Creating and maintaining a body of knowledge and a set of skills unique to evaluation;

31. We refer to selected publications that mentioned those criteria in various contexts.

- Developing educational programmes and other professional development opportunities for evaluators;
- Institutionalizing evaluation;
- Building professional evaluation associations.

Compared to existing ECB paradigms, the proposed strategy explicitly suggests at least two additional directions: development of the evaluation body of knowledge and establishment of educational programmes. To be successfully implemented such a strategy requires contributions from government, business and civil society organizations. Only their mutual and systematic efforts can develop evaluation into a mature profession.

Interestingly, ECB experience in the newly independent states demonstrates interdependence of such efforts. For example, the Georgian Evaluation Association (an NGO) helps develop government evaluation awareness and competence, which creates conditions for government to institutionalize evaluation and enhances the need for evaluation specialists and services. In Kyrgyzstan the government involves NGOs in evaluation activities, which increases the number of people working in the field and leads towards establishing a national evaluation network. The International Programme Evaluation Network, with a mission of developing evaluation into a mature profession, established working relationships with several universities and initiated a number of evaluation courses in the Russian Federation. Universities in turn disseminate evaluation information and raise awareness of it among government, businesses and NGOs.

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EVALUATION OF PUBLIC POLICIES IN SOUTH AFRICA: GOVERNANCE, INDEPENDENCE AND CREDIBILITY

BY ANGELA BESTER[32]

INTRODUCTION

Monitoring and evaluation practice in the Government of South Africa is at an interesting point in its evolution. Ten years ago M&E was a term known only to a handful of officials who had been exposed to the practice through donor agencies and other countries. There were trailblazers, such as the Department of Land Affairs, which established the M&E directorate for land reform as early as 1995. Today the Government boasts an M&E architecture that is beginning to approximate those of more developed countries. Many departments have a dedicated M&E unit headed by an official from the senior management service, and the government-wide monitoring & evaluation (GWM&E) framework is gradually being institutionalized. South Africa also has a Public Service Commission with a constitutional mandate to monitor and evaluate public administration. The establishment of the Ministry for Performance, Monitoring and Evaluation in the Presidency following the 2009 general elections has catapulted M&E to greater prominence.

What are the implications for evaluation of public policies in South Africa? This brief paper explores this question from the perspective of governance, independence and credibility of evaluation practice.

WHY INDEPENDENCE AND CREDIBILITY MATTER

Evaluation of public policies is an important tool for promoting accountability of elected officials and public servants, improving or changing policies, and promoting learning within public sector organizations. If the recommendations of evaluations are to be used, the evaluation must be credible. Credibility is influenced by the competence of the evaluation team members and their personal credibility, the quality of the evaluation and the extent to which it meets the requirements of independence. Evaluation independence, quality and

32. Senior evaluation eonsultant.

credibility can be considered complementary facets of evaluation excellence.[33]

Independence lies at the core of credibility. The commonly used definition of independence, from the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, considers an evaluation to be independent when "carried out by entities and persons free of control of those responsible for the design and implementation of the development intervention."[34] This definition also suggests that evaluation is independent when evaluators (i) can carry out their task without political influence or pressure from within the organization, (ii) are given full access to all relevant information required for the evaluation and (iii) have full autonomy in conducting and reporting their findings.

The principle of independence refers not only to behavioural dimensions. Structural arrangements, such as the location of an evaluation unit in a particular organization and the rules that govern the organization, also influence the independence of evaluations. Independence and credibility are part of the approved norms and standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group and other international agencies such as IFAD and the Asian Development Bank.[35]

THE MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM IN SOUTH AFRICA: HOW IT WORKS

The M&E system in South Africa is not a single system but a collection of systems that have evolved over time. Its major components are discussed below in the order of their evolution.

Public Service Commission

The Public Service Commission (PSC) is established in chapter 10 of the Constitution, which deals with public administration. It is constitutionally mandated to investigate, monitor and evaluate the organization, administration and personnel practices of the Public Service. It is also empowered to advise national and provincial organs of the state and promote a high standard of professional ethics in the Public Service. As a body established under the Constitution and reporting to Parliament, the PSC is independent. Yet it cannot afford to be distant as it has to engage with government departments in its advisory role.

Since its establishment as the 'new' PSC in 1999, it has conducted many evaluations on a broad spectrum of issues. These range from evaluation of service delivery of a particular sector to evaluation of policy initiatives such as poverty reduction programmes. One of its signature activities is the annual State of the Public Service Report (SOPS). Covering a different theme each year, the report is organized around nine constitutional values and

33. Picciotto, Roberto, 'Evaluation Independence at DFID: An independent assessment prepared for IADCI', 29 August 2009.
34. OECD, DAC Working Party on Aid Evaluation, 'Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management', 2002.
35. United Nations Development Group, 'Norms and Standards for Evaluation in the UN System', April 2005.

principles of good public administration.[36] The release of the SOPS Report to Parliament is usually followed by a round-table discussion with stakeholders who debate the issues arising from it and propose improvements to its format and processes.

An equally important output of the PSC is the consolidated public service monitoring and evaluation report, which evaluates the performance of individual departments against the nine values and principles. Departments are evaluated against explicit performance indicators. The PSC believes that these evaluations contribute to good governance and improved service delivery.[37] The PSC has published a document, 'Basic Concepts in Monitoring and Evaluation', to support M&E practitioners, senior managers in the Public Service and managers of service delivery units who produce performance information and statistics.

In 2009 the PSC commissioned an independent assessment of its work, which yielded valuable insights that can help to improve performance. The main findings indicate that the PSC is seen as producing sound, high-quality research and evaluation that are of use to policymakers, decision-makers and other oversight bodies such as the legislatures. The PSC is seen to behave independently, firmly and fairly. The findings also highlight limitations, such as its lack of power to compel the changes it recommends, its limited resources and the fact that it has not used its reports more strategically to influence change.[38]

Government-wide monitoring and evaluation system

In the first five years of democracy in South Africa, very few departments engaged in any systematic monitoring and evaluation of their policies and programmes. In the late 1990s there were unsuccessful attempts to introduce government-wide monitoring and evaluation, which led to a renewed effort in 2004.

The 2004 election manifesto of the ruling party identified monitoring and evaluation as a priority: "We will improve the system of monitoring and evaluation to improve the implementation of all these programmes, through stronger monitoring and evaluation units at national, provincial and local levels.....".[39] In 2005 the Cabinet approved a plan to develop the GWM&E system across government. The Presidency was assigned leadership of the effort, with participation by the National Treasury, Department of Public Service and Administration, Department of Provincial and Local Government, South African Management Development Institute, Public Service Commission and Statistics South Africa.

The GWM&E framework integrates M&E principles, practices and standards for use in all spheres of government. It serves as a top-level information system and draws on component systems.[40] It comprises three components or frameworks:

36. The latest SOPS report focused on the readiness of the public service for the Soccer World Cup 2010.
37. Public Service Commission, Republic of South Africa, 'Third Consolidated Public Service Monitoring and Evaluation Report, Research Cycle 2005/2006', March 2007.
38. Public Service Commission, Republic of South Africa, 'An Assessment of the Impact of the Work of the Public Service Commission on Public Policy and Practice in South Africa', May 2009.
39. Election Manifesto of the African National Congress, 2004.
40. The Presidency, Republic of South Africa, 'Policy Framework for the Government-wide Monitoring and Evaluation System', 2007.

- A programme performance information framework that clarifies standards for performance information;
- Social, economic and demographic statistics collected by Statistics South Africa through the census and surveys, as well as statistics collected by other government institutions;
- An evaluations framework to guide the planning and conduct of evaluations.

The policy framework for the GWM&E system, approved in 2007, provides much-needed clarity about its scope and purpose. Initially there was confusion, when the GWM&E system was thought to be an information technology system. Roles and responsibilities also needed clarification as inevitable issues emerged regarding boundaries and overlapping roles.

The policy framework of the GWM&E system outlines seven principles, including aspects of credibility (sound methodology, ethical conduct of evaluations and utilization focus). The principle of independence does not appear on the list, although it had been identified as a guiding principle of evaluation in an earlier draft document on principles and standards for M&E.[41]

Since its inception, the GWM&E system has spearheaded the national development indicators project. The Government has released an annual publication on 76 development indicators linked to government priorities and in some instances to the Millennium Development Goals. Government departments use the programme performance information framework to some extent. This is likely to change over the next year when the Auditor-General expresses an audit opinion on performance information. The evaluation framework is yet to be finalized.

Monitoring and evaluation by government departments

The critical elements of an effective M&E system include:

- Tools, methods, data and information systems;
- An annual or rolling plan of evaluations to be conducted;
- Rules governing how M&E is to be conducted and managed; how and when stakeholders are to be consulted; and how to deal with independence and conflict of interests;
- Standards for reporting evaluations and monitoring;
- Resources in terms of staff qualification and skills requirements and budgets;
- Roles, responsibilities and accountability for M&E.

Other than mandatory legislative and policy reporting requirements such as annual reporting, the Government does not prescribe these elements, so there is a great deal of variation in M&E systems, as confirmed by the evaluation study conducted by the PSC in

41. The Presidency, Republic of South Africa, 'Draft National Guiding Principles and Standards for Monitoring and Evaluation of Public Policies and Programmes in South Africa', June 2006.

2007.[42] The study also found that only a few provincial departments had M&E units with adequate staff and budgets.

Due to capacity constraints, a number of departments engage external consultants to conduct evaluations, particularly for large evaluations. Departments also use external consultants when they need an independent evaluation of policy. The trend is for departments to build internal M&E units to focus on monitoring the department's implementation of policies and programmes and to contract external or independent consultants to conduct evaluations.

The national government aims to provide an enabling environment for M&E in departments, rather than prescribe the details of the M&E system. However, departments have basic ground rules, which presumably will be in the evaluation framework being developed by the Presidency. Given the capacity constraints in a number of departments, they are likely operating without a well-defined departmental framework, especially with regard to governance (rules) for evaluation. As a result, the independence and credibility of evaluations conducted or managed by departments could be compromised. It would be instructive for the national government to assess the readiness of departmental M&E systems to respond to the new approach proposed by the Ministry for Performance, Monitoring and Evaluation.

MINISTRY FOR PERFORMANCE, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Ministry for Performance, Monitoring and Evaluation was established in the Presidency in 2009 following the general elections and is intended to complement the newly established National Planning Commission. While the latter is charged with developing the country's strategic vision, the Ministry is responsible for driving the improvement in government performance through a focus on outcomes. In September 2009 the Ministry issued a 'green paper' titled 'Improving Government Performance: Our Approach'. It named three focus areas for the Ministry:

- Management of outcomes through ministerial accountability for improving delivery performance, meaning that ministers are to be held accountable through performance agreements that commit them to achieving selected outcomes;
- Institutionalizing the GWM&E system through a renewed focus on improving measures of inputs, outputs and outcomes;
- Unblocking service delivery through the establishment of a delivery unit to deal with blockages and non-delivery.[43]

The Ministry intends to effect a change in the approach to M&E. The green paper envisages an outcomes performance management system. It will start with a few politically determined

42. Public Service Commission, Republic of South Africa, 'Report on the Audit of Reporting Requirements and Departmental Monitoring and Evaluation Systems within National and Provincial Government', June 2007.

43. The Presidency, Republic of South Africa, 'Improving Government Performance: Our Approach', September 2009.

outcomes, working backwards to identify a few output measures that could indicate whether outcomes were being achieved. The emphasis will be on outcomes throughout government, and ministers will be required to report on them through specific output indicators. To promote transparency and accountability, the Government has committed to making the results of assessments available to the public.[44] The focus on outcomes is expected to assist Parliament in its monitoring and oversight role.

The outcomes performance management system is intended to complement the GWM&E system. The policy anticipates that, despite the emphasis on monitoring, there will be a need for evaluation of outcomes and impact. It also recognizes the need for other forms of evaluations such as process evaluations.

GOVERNANCE CHALLENGES TO INDEPENDENCE AND CREDIBILITY

The establishment of the Ministry for Performance, Monitoring and Evaluation represents a shift in South Africa's M&E system. While it is too early to judge the extent of the shift, the notion of the president holding ministers accountable has appeal to citizens dispirited by poor service delivery. The elevation of M&E to cabinet ministerial status undoubtedly sends a clear message about the importance of M&E to the government. But this elevated status presents some challenges:

- **The balance between monitoring and evaluation favours monitoring:** The GWM&E system is explicit about focusing initially on monitoring, with emphasis on developing indicators and improving the quality of the information used. The rationale is that institutional capacity has to be built first so that sound monitoring systems and processes can serve as a foundation for effective evaluations. This prioritization of monitoring over evaluation is carried through into the new outcomes performance management system.

  There are risks to maintaining this imbalance between monitoring performance and evaluating implementation and effectiveness of public policies. The outcomes of the performance management system assume that the output indicators selected are those critical to achievement of a particular outcome. Experience shows that the link between outputs and outcomes is seldom clear cut and that evaluation studies are needed to test the causal links. If evaluation continues to be downplayed, there is a risk that the Government continues to monitor less useful indicators and draws incorrect conclusions about the achievement of outcomes.

  Government officials are likely to spend significant amounts of time collating information for the minister's scorecard. Given the capacity constraints in departmental M&E units, especially in the provinces, this could divert resources and attention from evaluations, short-circuiting the feedback loop between evaluation and monitoring.

44. Honourable Collins Chabane, Minister for Performance, Monitoring and Evaluation, Republic of South Africa, 'Address on the Budget Vote for the Presidency for the 2009/2010 Financial Year', 24 June 2009.

The Ministry for Performance, Monitoring and Evaluation has attempted to limit the number of indicators to be tracked, and it appears that 30 to 40 indicators will be monitored. Experience in other countries shows that limiting the number of indicators is not easy. If the number increases, it could perpetuate the emphasis of monitoring performance rather than evaluation of public policy.

There is no doubt that requiring ministers to report to the president on their performance every six months against predetermined indicators will fix their attention on those indicators. A keen focus on key outcomes and indicators is good, provided it doesn't lead to neglect of other important issues that fall outside the performance agreement.

The emphasis on monitoring in the outcomes performance management system and the GWM&E system also presents an opportunity. Ministers and senior government officials might see merit in requesting an evaluation of a particular aspect of policy or its implementation, in order to understand and explain why a particular output target has not been met. However, it would be preferable to have an appropriate balance between monitoring and evaluation. The regular monitoring of outputs and outcomes cannot be a substitute for comprehensive evaluation of public policies.

The challenge posed by the potential imbalance could be overcome if the PSC were to focus its evaluations on the outcomes identified by the Presidency. This can be done without compromising the PSC's independence in determining what it will evaluate and how it will conduct the evaluation; it does not require the PSC to ignore other areas for evaluation, but rather to focus on one or two outcomes as major evaluations in a given year.

- **Independence of evaluations is not on the agenda:** With the exception of the PSC, independence of evaluations is not on the agenda. This is perhaps a reflection of the emphasis on monitoring. As stated earlier, independence is not reflected as a principle of M&E in the government's policy framework.

  The location of the M&E unit is ultimately the decision of the department head, as central government issues no prescriptions. M&E units in departments do not enjoy the same independence as internal audit units that report directly to the department head and are overseen by audit committees of external individuals. There is, however, an endeavour to ensure that M&E units are not in the reporting lines of those responsible for the design and implementation of policies and programmes.

  The outcomes performance management system will largely rely on information supplied by government departments, and M&E units in these departments are likely to play an important role in providing that information. As these M&E units exist largely on the basis of preference by the minister or head of department, their independence is not assured. Information will flow from the M&E unit to the minister without the protection or mediation of an independent entity equivalent to an audit

committee. There is a risk that officials might downplay negative information and exaggerate positive results.[45]

The green paper stipulates that independent processes and moderators or experts will be used where feasible to enhance the integrity of the process. How this will work in practice has not been made explicit in the document.

A number of departments commission external consultants to conduct evaluations. These evaluations are not necessarily independent; rather, they serve to extend the limited capacity within departments. In some instances, departments use reference groups to provide technical guidance to evaluations or steering committees to provide strategic direction. When members of these committees are external to the department, they can provide a check against undue influence by the commissioning department.

- **Capacity constraints in M&E units threaten the credibility of evaluations:** Although many departments are attempting to establish fully functioning M&E units with skilled staff, a number still have capacity constraints. As a discipline, M&E is relatively new to the South African Public Service, though the government's management development institute and universities have introduced short courses in it. The PSC provides guidance through its 'Basic Concepts in Monitoring and Evaluation' document. There is also an M&E forum or learning network within the Government. Organizations such as the South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association and local evaluation networks also contribute to building a community of practice.

  But the capacity gap, particularly in provincial departments, is still large enough to hamper the credibility of evaluations. There is limited understanding of how to establish an M&E unit in terms of its structure, necessary staff knowledge and skills, required policies and procedures, and how to plan a programme of evaluations. Departments are increasingly commissioning external consultants to conduct evaluations, but this does not necessarily guarantee credibility. Terms of reference for commissioned evaluations are seldom clear, and the key evaluation questions are not well articulated. M&E practitioners do not always have the experience or expertise to manage commissioned evaluations. This results in evaluations that have limited value and waste government resources. The GWM&E evaluation framework is supposed to provide guidance on these issues, but it has not yet been completed.

- **Proposed legislation for M&E may not improve it:** The government's green paper states that it may consider introducing legislation, though it does not clarify the likely aim of such legislation. There are already acts, regulations and policies requiring government departments to account for their use of resources and performance.

45. This type of behaviour also occurs in countries with well-developed M&E systems. Refer to Schiavo-Campo, Salvatore, 'Building Country Capacity for Monitoring and Evaluation in the Public Sector: Selected Lessons of International Experience', Economic Capacity Development Working Paper Series No. 13, June 2006.

Legislation to enforce monitoring and evaluation practices will not necessarily improve M&E. An agreed evaluation framework with explicit norms, standards and guidance could be more effective. Legislation could have the unintended effect of getting people to focus on minimal compliance.

GOOD PRACTICE IN ADDRESSING CHALLENGES

The fact that M&E is a relatively new discipline in the South African public sector provides opportunities for innovation and good practices based on lessons learned by others. The independence and credibility of evaluations of public policies can be enhanced in a number of ways:

- **Use of peer review panels:** Whether departments conduct their own evaluations or use external consultants, they can greatly enhance the quality and hence the credibility of evaluations by using peer review panels. Peer review is a standard practice in research and could apply equally to evaluation. The selection of panel members is important to ensure credibility, and selection should therefore be based on technical and professional expertise. Any potential conflict of interest needs to be cleared up at the beginning. The terms of reference of the panel also need to be made explicit from the outset. The Ministry for Performance, Monitoring and Evaluation should consider introducing peer review or expert panels as a matter of course.
- **Use of advisory committees:** Advisory committees can enhance the credibility and independence of evaluations if they have clear terms of reference and members who will add value to the evaluation. Involving an advisory committee throughout the evaluation can help to address concerns during the evaluation rather than at the end of the process. Government departments use advisory committees comprising external stakeholders when it is important to involve particular constituencies. Of course, using advisory committees has risks. They sometimes assume that they have decision-making powers. They often represent a particular constituency, leading them to take a political position on matters. Evaluations can be delayed when advisory committee meetings are cancelled. If government officials do not provide leadership, the advisory committee may feel empowered to act outside its mandate. External consultants conducting the evaluation can find themselves caught between the advisory committee and the client department.
- **Evaluations of the evaluators:** It is essential for entities conducting evaluations to periodically face independent scrutiny. Independent assessment of evaluation bodies can enhance the credibility of these bodies. This is no different than subjecting auditing firms to audit of their practices. Independent assessment also serves to improve the quality of evaluations. The independent assessment commissioned by the PSC on its impact on public policy is a step in the right direction, though it could have been enhanced by the use of a peer review panel.

The PSC could evaluate the independence of M&E units in government departments. For such an evaluation to be thorough and meaningful, it would have to be done against explicit indicators and criteria, such as those described in the OECD/DAC Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results-Based Management. The study on evaluation independence at the UK Department for International Development provides a useful template for such an evaluation.[46]

The credibility of M&E units and the quality of their work can also be enhanced through a regular 'health check'. It can identify capacity gaps and pinpoint areas for training and development, as well as areas where the PSC, the Presidency, National Treasury and other central government departments need to provide further guidance.

- **Use of joint evaluations:** The Government of South Africa and the United Nations jointly commissioned an evaluation of the role and contribution of the United Nations system in South Africa in 2008.[47] It was essential for the evaluation to be independent of the United Nations on the one hand and credible to the South African Government on the other. The terms of reference were agreed to by both parties and the evaluation was managed jointly. An independent team conducted the evaluation, and its work was peer reviewed by an external panel. This model could be adapted for evaluation of government policies and programmes, particularly large programmes or controversial policies. For example, an evaluation could be managed jointly by government and an industry group on a particular issue such as health care.

REMAINING CHALLENGES

- **Creating demand for and understanding of M&E by legislatures:** Both national and provincial legislatures in South Africa are required by the Constitution to exercise oversight over the Executive. M&E reports can assist them in exercising that oversight. Parliamentarians are sometimes not aware of these M&E reports until a department or a diligent parliamentary researcher brings them up. Many new representatives have entered national and provincial legislatures since the 2009 elections, and they will need to be made aware of the potential value of M&E reports. The green paper envisages that parliamentarians will monitor progress made on priority government outcomes. For them to play their oversight role effectively, they will need to be educated about the workings of the outcomes performance management system, how the indicators were developed and collected, and the meaning of the indicators.

46. Picciotto, Roberto, op cit.
47. United Nations and the Republic of South Africa, 'Joint Evaluation of the Role and Contribution of the United Nations System in the Republic of South Africa', 2009.

- **Developing M&E capacity in government:** The challenge of developing M&E capacity in the Government could persist for some time unless more creative solutions are introduced. The Government's primary management and leadership institute (Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy) provides basic training in M&E, and courses are also available at some universities. The number of technically proficient M&E practitioners is still not sufficient to meet the increasing demand. This is a particular issue in provincial departments, where there is competition for the small pool of professionals willing to work in the provinces. A possible solution to the shortage is development of a shared M&E service in those provinces. It would share scarce resources more effectively across a number of departments while allowing M&E practitioners to develop deeper understanding of more than one department. This in turn could foster the integration of action that often eludes government departments that operate in 'silos'.

CONCLUSION

M&E in South Africa is at an interesting point in its evolution. The heightened awareness by those not directly involved in M&E bodes well for the practice in South Africa. There is space for introducing innovative solutions to challenges. However, the lack of attention to independence of evaluations and the emphasis on monitoring could result in weakening evaluation practice.

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NATIONAL EVALUATION CAPACITY: LESSONS LEARNED AND A CONCEPTUAL SCHEME

BY OSVALDO FEINSTEIN[48]

INTRODUCTION

This paper addresses development of an enabling environment for evaluation capacity at the national level. Based on lessons drawn from national evaluation capacity experiences and discussions in the literature, it presents a conceptual scheme and discusses ways to support the development of national evaluation capacity.

LESSONS LEARNED

The lessons learned presented in this paper are based on the author's direct involvement in national evaluation capacity during three decades of work in Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe. They aim to address in a realistic and constructive way the factors leading to an enabling environment for national evaluation capacity and to identify appropriate ways to support it.

1. **Evaluation capacity must be 'unbundled':** Different evaluation capacities should be taken into account, allowing for specialization and division of labour. It is important to distinguish between the capacity to manage evaluations and the capacity to conduct them, as the former does not imply the latter, and vice versa. This has been particularly important since the 1990s, when governments began contracting out and managing evaluations rather than conducting them. It is also important to acknowledge that conducting evaluations involves both production and communication/dissemination. Last but not least is the capacity to use evaluations. As in the case of surveys, the capacity to manage and conduct them does not imply the capacity to use them.[49] These are all different capacities; it is not practical to lump them all together under the single term 'capacity'. It is important to highlight the need to unbundle them, to understand better the different situations at national level and to design more appropriate ways to support the enhancement of national evaluation capacities.

48. Senior evaluation consultant.
49. On the use of evaluations and the capacity to use them, see Feinstein (2002).

2. **Individual training to conduct evaluations is neither necessary nor sufficient for development of national evaluation capacity:** For quite some time evaluation capacity was reduced to 'the capacity to carry out evaluations', and to a certain extent this continues today. However, as indicated by lesson 1, this is inappropriate because there are several important evaluation capacities. Furthermore, this approach has an important limitation in that it addresses the level of the individual rather than that of the organization. Experience shows that enhancing individual capacities without strengthening the organization and the NEC environment can result paradoxically in weakening the organization, and NEC itself. Without an improvement in the environment, the concerned individual(s) may decide to migrate to other organizations or even to other countries.[50]

3. **The focus should be on national—not just governmental—evaluation capacities:** Though the government's evaluation capacity is an important component of NEC, civil society capacities are also crucial. Parliaments and other civil society organizations can (and sometimes already do) use evaluations to become informed about issues on which they hope to influence decision-makers. To do this they need to have the capacity to use evaluations, which includes being aware of their existence and knowing how to search for them. Furthermore, in some countries, such as Chile, the legislature is consulted on the evaluation agenda. In Ghana, efforts have been made to develop the assessment capacities of civil society.[51]

   Civil society use of evaluations can enhance the quality of democracy by providing citizens with information that allows them to assess government performance and influence the decision-making process. One remarkable experience comes from India, where report cards were developed to help civil society in assessing public services, an experience that has been replicated in other regions.[52] Some civil society organizations, such as think tanks, are well placed to conduct evaluations. Their capacity to do so may be developed through a learning-by-doing process if they are given the opportunity to perform evaluations.

4. **Different types of evaluation capacity gaps should be identified:** The practice and the literature on evaluation capacity refer frequently to supply and demand.[53] While this is useful, it is better to consider not only actual supply and demand and the gap between them, but also (i) 'potential' evaluation supply, such as professionals

50. At a recent national roundtable on the UNDP Assessment of Development Results for Chile, it was forcefully stressed that a set of evaluation capacity-building activities aimed at the individual level did not result in strengthening the concerned organization, because after the activity was completed the trained individuals left. It should also be mentioned that the 'capabilities' approach, pioneered by Amartya Sen, is also focused on the individual level (though it can be eventually extended to take into account 'social capabilities').
51. See Mackay and Gariba (2000).
52. See Paul (2002).
53. For example, see Boyle & Lemaire (1999).

in the country who could conduct evaluations but have not had the opportunity; (ii) 'potential' evaluation demand, such as demand for evaluations that is not expressed due to lack of funding; and (iii) 'latent' evaluation demand, such as demand for information that has not been articulated as a demand for evaluation because there is no clear awareness or understanding of evaluation.

These three concepts help in identifying the following gaps during a NEC diagnosis, which is important for designing appropriate support: (i) a gap between potential and actual supply of national evaluation capacities, which may lead to opportunities for 'potential' evaluators to become 'actual' evaluators; (ii) a gap between potential and actual demand, which may require a funding mechanism, such as an evaluation fund that can be tapped to commission evaluations or a consultation mechanism that enables parliament to participate in defining the agenda; and (iii) a gap between actual and latent demand for evaluations, which may require the development of the capacity to use evaluations.

A complementary set of evaluation capacity gaps relates to the different types of evaluations. Some years ago an influential paper was circulated in development evaluation circles about the so-called 'evaluation gap'.[54] The paper, focused on impact evaluation, pointed out an important evaluation gap that had implications for evaluation capacity. But other types of evaluations are also missing or lacking in quality. This can lead to additional evaluation gaps (for example, self-evaluations, process and outcome evaluations), and the corresponding capacities to undertake them.

5. **Experience sharing can help develop national evaluation capacities:** Sharing of experiences is an important tool for developing national evaluation capacity among developing countries. For example, Chile provided support to Mexico to develop its national evaluation performance system and the capacities to operate it. Mexico could also contribute assistance to develop Chile's evaluation capacities in social sectors.[55] Furthermore, in most countries national evaluation capacities have not been developed countrywide, so it is an important challenge to develop sub-national evaluation capacities. This has already begun in some countries, such as Brazil (Belo Horizonte), India (Andhra Pradesh) and Mexico (Queretaro).

6. **National and regional evaluation networks can contribute to NEC:** In recent years several regional and national evaluation networks have been created.[56] As shown in Sri Lanka and other countries, these networks can play a role in expanding NEC and in reducing gaps between potential and actual supply as well as between latent and actual demand.

54. See www.cgdev.org/section/initiatives/_active/evalgap/about/
55. The evolution of the innovative Mexican evaluation system is described in Feinstein and Hernandez Licona (2008).
56. See Feinstein and Beck (2006) and Morra-Imas and Rist (2009).

A CONCEPTUAL SCHEME FOR DEVELOPING CAPACITY

Efforts to develop evaluation capacity at the national level have been going on in all regions for more than 30 years, though some are neither well known nor appropriately documented. The lessons presented in the previous section are an attempt to draw on some of this rich experience. Building on them, the conceptual scheme shown in table 1, anchored in a NEC matrix, may be useful both for a diagnosis of NEC and for considering how to support its enhancement. The matrix combines the different types of evaluation capacities mentioned in lesson 1 with the different 'principals' and 'agents' mentioned in lessons 3 and 4.

The Roman numerals within the cells are used to facilitate reference to the matrix's cells. Thus, I is government's capacity to manage evaluations, IV is government's capacity to conduct evaluations, and so on.

This matrix allows consideration of different actual and possible scenarios. Thus, during the 1970s and 1980s, the emphasis was on conducting evaluations. They were carried out by governments, sometimes with support from international organizations (so IV was the dominant cell of the matrix). In the 1990s, some developing countries (Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico) started to develop government-based evaluation systems. Governments contracted out most of the evaluations while playing a management role (shifting from cell IV to I).[57] There has never been much involvement of parliaments or civil society in evaluations (weak second and third columns, except V). Early in the 21st century think tanks and universities have become more and more involved in conducting evaluations (cells III, VI and IX are almost empty in most countries, whereas V has become significant).

The NEC matrix can be used to think about appropriate national evaluation systems, taking into account national realities and the capacities needed to run those systems. For

TABLE 1. NATIONAL EVALUATION CAPACITY MATRIX

NATIONAL EVALUATION CAPACITIES	GOVERNMENT	UNIVERSITIES, THINK TANKS, CONSULTANTS	PARLIAMENT
Managing evaluations	I	II	III
Conducting evaluations	IV	V	VI
Using evaluations	VII	VIII	IX

57. See Grau, Nuria and Ospina (2008). As part of the process of creating and legitimizing M&E systems, some countries, like Colombia, have laws and decrees mandating evaluation, which could contribute to an enabling environment for NEC. However, as stated in Mackay (2007), "a law or decree on its own does not ensure that the considerable efforts required to build an M&E system will be undertaken". Cunill & Ospina (2008) refer to the Brazilian and Chilean cases as two examples where systems were consolidated without a legal foundation. Taken together, these cases indicate that a legal framework is neither necessary nor sufficient for the development of an M&E system, though it may be help to create an enabling environment for it, and for the enhancement of NEC.

example, in some countries it may be desirable and feasible for the government to manage the process while think tanks/universities conduct the evaluations. These evaluations are used by parliament or civil society, corresponding to cells I, V and IX, the diagonal of the matrix, which would be the critical national evaluation capacities needed to ensure that the system would function.

SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL EVALUATION CAPACITY

Rather than proceeding with ready-made recommendations on how to support NEC, it is important to carry out a NEC diagnosis for a specific country, for which the conceptual framework presented in the preceding section may be helpful.[58] The following activities may be appropriate to support the development of NEC, though their suitability should be assessed case by case:

- **Information:** Support in the search for relevant experiences in developing and enhancing NEC, taking into account different contexts, as well as for potentially useful reference materials, such as diagnosis guidelines;
- **Networking:** Support in linking with or establishing networks of evaluation practitioners;
- **Funding:** Support for training of individuals, including training of trainers, through scholarships, and also for contracting national teams to conduct evaluations or funding study tours and knowledge sharing among developing countries.

These three lines of support could be facilitated by international cooperation, thus contributing to an enabling environment for national evaluation capacity, in line with the recommendations in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, ratified in the Accra Agenda for Action, concerning the reliance on country-based systems.[59]

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58. In addition, Mackay (2007) provides examples of M&E country diagnosis. See also Morra-Imas & Rist (2009) and Feinstein (2009).
59. See Picciotto (2007).

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IMPROVING EVALUATION DEMAND TO FOSTER ACCOUNTABILITY AND PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

BY OUMOUL KHAYRI BA TALL[60]

INTRODUCTION: THE CHALLENGES OF INSTITUTIONALIZING EVALUATION

The issue of how to institutionalize evaluation is inextricably intertwined with the issue of how to develop capacities, both in theory and in practice. Evaluation capacities, in essence, are part of the institutionalization plan, while the plan itself is a dimension of capacity. Evaluation has proved to be an increasingly important component of the management plan for development programmes and policies. Evaluation is increasingly requested by citizens seeking opportunities to contribute to or stay informed about the management of public resources, particularly in terms of transparency and efficacy. The demand for accountability does not come just from citizens from the North, who contribute to official development assistance (ODA), but also from citizens in the South demanding accountability. This is undoubtedly a reflection of growing aspiration for better governance and a larger democracy, though public authorities have been slow to meet this demand.

Demand for evaluation is based in laws and regulations, except in areas where ODA dominates as a main source of public sector financing. But even in these contexts, evaluation is required in the programmes and strategies supported and inspired by donor agencies.

Evaluation was introduced in Africa through ODA, as auditing was previously introduced, as a requirement for implementation of development projects. The improvement in such projects as a result of evaluation has been clearly demonstrated. (What gets measured gets done!) Political analysts are nearly unanimous in recognizing that evaluation is an effective tool of viable development for both nations and communities as long as the demand originates internally and the results of the evaluation are implemented in public policy. Evaluations are primarily intended to shed light on the financial decision-making process. They are also used to further the agenda of donor agencies, whether the agenda is stated or implicit.

For national development actors to prioritize evaluation, they must take initiative and be a driving force behind the effort. This objective must be accepted and facilitated by

60. Chair, Organisation Internationale de la Coopération en Evaluation.

public authorities and supported by the Partnership for Transparency Fund, with the active cooperation of civil society and the national private sector.

For an evaluation to be useful and to justify its cost, it must serve at least one of the following functions:

- **Managerial and decision-making functions:** It allows improvement in business actions, permits a desired action to be undertaken, appraises a positive action (one that produced clear results and may merit repetition or replication, but is at least recognized as a success) and/or terminates harmful, useless or failed actions. This function encompasses everything from budget allocation decisions to performance contracts.
- **Good governance and democracy functions:** It serves as an instrument for accountability by providing information about the quality of public action management and promotes informed dialogue about policy.

SOURCES OF DEMAND FOR EVALUATION

This paper investigates the origins of the demand for evaluation and for specific evaluations undertaken, as well as the channels and means for increasing demand for evaluation in deficit countries, in particular Francophone Africa and the southern Sahara. It sets out to discover the origins of the call for studies and evaluation missions in each country; whether the need originated in the institutional, legal, or regulatory spheres; and the point of view of the actors involved.

Demand at institutional and regulatory levels

In the institutionalization plans analysed to date, governments have played a central role in creating demand for evaluation. It may come from a variety of sources, such as a law, regulation or particular agreement. Demand may also come from regional structures (such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development or the European Union), international agencies or decentralized structures. International cooperation mechanisms appear to be a highly effective driving force if the process is properly planned and implemented, with sufficient participation from the ultimate beneficiaries of the evaluation. This was the case with European Union funds for European countries, but ODA has not seen the same results with African countries.

A study recently conducted on behalf of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development showed that very few countries in Francophone Africa had a specific legal and regulatory framework governing the evaluation process. However, nearly all of these countries' policies refer to the follow-up and evaluation of development programmes. But in practice, at this strategic and political level, the focus has been on planning and follow-up processes to investigate implementation indicators, and activities or control mechanisms such as audits or inspections. Few detailed evaluations of these policies have emerged that would lead to a report documenting results and impacts, particularly of any plans or methodology that were implemented.

The mandate for evaluation in certain strategic documents aimed at poverty reduction or the existence of M&E departments in various ministries is sometimes invoked as proof of a national institutional framework. This is the case in Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea.

Benin has a state ministry charged with evaluation of public actions (Ministry of Economy, Prospective, Development and Evaluation of the Public Action). The authorities in Benin wanted to progressively submit all institutions, including ministries and public enterprises and projects, to evaluations and audits. Several ministerial institutions have mandates related to evaluations: the Inspector General, Chamber of Accounts of the Supreme Court, the Observatory for the Fight against Corruption and the judicial officer of the Treasury, all serving under the Presidency, and the Order of Expert Accountants and Chartered Accountants of Benin. However, of the named institutions, only one (the Order of Expert Accountants) has even an indirect or remote interest in evaluation.

In Niger, the General Directorate of Development Program Assessment exists within the Ministry of Finance. The poverty reduction strategy (PRS) document (implemented by the permanent PRS Secretary) includes a guide to monitoring and evaluation that stipulates establishment of a mid-point evaluation mechanism during the third year of implementation, as well as a final evaluation to be held during the fifth year. An annual review system provides opportunities to monitor the progress and implementation of the strategy. It should help to ensure that the information stemming from these evaluations is disseminated for improved decision-making.

A similar system exists in Mauritania with the director of studies, social development and development strategies in the Ministry of Economy. There are also economic policy documents with monitoring and evaluation plans that include the organization of regional workshops, sector-based reviews and other exercises destined to evaluate policy implementation. One must also note the recent creation of cooperation and planning directorates in Mauritania. They are responsible for monitoring all ministerial departments, as a good step towards institutionalization of monitoring and evaluation. The study of the assessment of evaluative capacities includes the following findings of the institutional plan:

- Poor integration of evaluation function within the State (technical ministries, Court of Accounts, Parliament);
- Predominance of the function of control;
- Virtual absence of function at the decentralized level;
- Few inter-actor or inter-instance relationships;
- More elaborate plans existed with development partners and certain organizations in society at large, particularly with larger NGOs.

Efforts to integrate evaluation institutionally have given rise to a variety of schemes, but in most cases the function of evaluation has been allocated to traditional planning structures (Ministry of Economic Affairs or Ministry of Finance, as in Niger) and/or to control structures, such as the court of accounts.

Actors and instruments at the origin of the demand for evaluation

By and large, the monitoring and evaluation practices revealed in the countries studied are the result of international cooperation through development projects and programmes

funded by the country. This was cited in 7 of 10 cases as the primary reason for conducting an evaluation in the above-mentioned study. However, certain initiatives and experiences carried out by national actors were reported, and while these actors are still timid, their actions reveal an increasing interest in evaluation. The State was the primary actor in these experiences, through national institutions in charge of monitoring and evaluation, but civil society also played a role, for example, in Niger and Benin.

In Senegal, the court of accounts is increasingly involved in evaluation, and even the State Inspector General has seen an increase in competency of local and central policy evaluations. However, these appear to be more declarations of intent, as no effective practices have yet been observed or reported. It is interesting to note that two alumni of the International Program for Development Evaluation Training are serving on the Court of Accounts in Senegal, which may explain that institution's interest in evaluation (2007-2008 data).

In other countries, such as South Africa, legal provisions and requirements of donor agencies have led civil society organizations to develop monitoring-evaluation-reporting systems to address their accountability obligations.[61]

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Success factors identified in the study included the existence of a ministry or other standard-bearer, engagement by public authorities for a decade or so and individualized approaches that back the results of demonstration projects and the exchange of experiences between administrative organizations.

It is worthwhile to look closely at South Africa, which successfully implemented a M&E system with characteristics different from those listed above: a provision in the constitution (chapter 10) gives a legal definition of good governance, enumerating nine principles that support a strong public administration and delegate responsibility to the national public service commission.

Among the numerous obstacles to the DCE that were reported, the most important were the absence of a political-administrative culture of responsibility (even without actual corruption), lack of evaluation auditing and accounting competencies, lack of available information on public performance and lack of institutional mechanisms to promote integration of monitoring results and decision-making evaluation.[62]

OBJECT OF THE STUDY AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

In Africa, particularly in French-speaking countries, evaluation typically falls to development partners. It is perceived as a condition of debt-reduction efforts, and its objectives and reach are of little significance in receiving countries, except for the role it plays in disbursement of

61. Article presented during the 2006 Niamey conference by Beverley Anne Barry, on the institutionalization of evaluation.

62. World Bank, 'Renforcement des capacités de suivi et d'évaluation en Afrique' (Strengthening Monitoring and Evaluation Capacities in Africa) precis from the Department of Operations Evaluation N° 183, Washington, World Bank, spring 1999.

funds. The exercise is organized and conducted as a 'necessary evil', an unavoidable step on the list of programme actions implemented by development partners.

Currently, evaluation is seen as a necessary and final step in implementation of development programmes, a 'formality' used to validate such programmes. Required by donor countries, evaluation is implemented mechanically and sometimes redundantly. The opportunity to conduct a study under conditions leading to convincing results is disregarded. The decision to evaluate a programme is made in advance and carried out when the time comes in a predetermined fashion.

Recent studies have shown the limits of public policy evaluation in Africa. In Mauritania, one of the first countries to have implemented the Strategic Framework in the Fight against Poverty (CSLP) since 2000, the reports on its operation have shown the lack of an effective monitoring and evaluation system. When CSLP was implemented (ex-ante), the process was largely participatory, with large pockets of the population represented through civil society groups. The extent and quality of this participation may be questionable, given the weak organizational capacity of civil society in general, but the participatory nature of the approach was recognized by all.

Inversely, the monitoring of the implementation and evaluation of the CSLP were not seen as effective, as several reports reveal. Strong points observed included:

- The existence of the CSLP in itself, as a global reference framework based on innovative ideas; national appropriation, participation.
- Political commitment to evaluation, particularly of participatory evaluation.
- Reflections in progress pertaining to implementation of an institutional framework and operational plan for monitoring and evaluation of new CSLPs in the planning stage (2005-2008 in Mauritania).
- A dynamic that is dedicated to strengthening M&E, analysis and modelling capacities.

The weak points observed included:

- The absence of a strategic framework or implementation plan for M&E activities, which entail specific validation exercises. If even limited monitoring activities are carried out, no evaluation exists, at least none that has an impact on policy at the global or sectoral level;
- The low capacity of participants in terms of organizational gaps, quality of participation and local involvement;
- The weakness in IT systems for monitoring and data collection. Data lacks coherence and is not always sufficient to monitor indicators for large development initiatives (WCO, CSLP 'Strategic Framework in the Fight against Poverty'; 'DHD, Sustainable Human Development', etc.). For example, in Mauritania, specific indicators were lacking for certain important sectors such as environment, gender, governance and employment, and monitoring problems were seen for transmission channels and intermediate indicators.
- The poor capacity for analysis.

The items submitted for evaluation were primarily projects or programmes. Rarely were public policies submitted in their entirety, with the exception of the poverty reduction strategy documents. Examples of periodic evaluations included in donor support programme action plans, particularly those of the United Nations system, were annual reviews of UNDP country programmes, evaluation of the SRP programme for the German Technical Co-operation in Niger, and evaluation of the decennial education programme (multiple donors, at times with shared evaluations).

Several examples were given of evaluations that affected national strategies and policies: The evaluation of the national strategic framework for the fight against HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases, which will begin with the elaboration of a new 2008-2012 strategic framework in Republic of Congo; the redeployment of civil service agents (1986-1992) in Guinea; the evaluation of the first five years of implementation of decentralization in Benin; and the evaluation of the Adolescent Participation and Development Programme in Cameroon.

The evaluations discussed in various reports were focused primarily on implementation and, to a lesser extent, on how public action affected final beneficiaries. This situation confirms the observation that evaluation is used in execution of projects, programmes and public policies rather than in assessment of their impacts.

EFFECTIVE USE OF RESULTS

The purpose of evaluation is still widely misunderstood and the lack of understanding about the tools and products of evaluation poses a real problem, with reports sitting in file cabinets and recommendations rarely implemented.

Once an evaluation report is produced, it is almost systematically transmitted to donor agencies and typically to the entire public administration and final beneficiaries. Sometimes the evaluation report is kept confidential and sometimes it is presented in a press conference or posted to a website, making it available for public debate, but both of these actions occur less frequently. The study cited also emphasizes that when evaluators' recommendations contradict a widely held belief, evaluation reports are rarely followed up with any corrective measures. One example of this is a case in South Africa, in which the Public Service Commission and Parliament were identified as institutional users for the evaluation.

INCREASED DEMAND FOR EVALUATION

Information and advocacy for the usefulness of the evaluation

The evaluation is evidence for those involved in public operations who need to prove that their policies are relevant and effective. Political decision-makers at national and local levels are thus very interested in using quality evaluations, based on the idea that it is always better to confront the reality of the situation to continue to make progress.

However, to be useful, the evaluation must address subjects that present real concern for the actors involved. At this stage, questions arise: Who is the evaluation for? Who will conduct it? What is the purpose? The focus shifts from an assistance-based evaluation to one based on development, from an externally focused evaluation to an internally directed one, from

an evaluation that is simply endured to one that is desired, and seemingly more useful for questions of national interest. In our opinion, even if the evaluation was introduced to our country under the pretext of assistance, it is time to make it our own and to move forward into an evaluation of our programmes and policies and all sources of funding taken together.

Role of public authorities in creating demand for evaluation

The State must play a somewhat unorthodox role and demonstrate strong political will to make evaluation a common practice and an institutional management tool. The State must therefore create an appropriate institutional framework and a training programme that corresponds to the country's needs and incorporates existing training structures (universities and training centres).

The development of a culture of evaluation and national expertise occurs through the process of institutionalization. However, the question remains as to which should come first. In other words, is the existence of an institutional framework a prerequisite for the existence of a culture of evaluation as we commonly understand it, involving established practices, being well-accepted, having a culture of presenting and distributing information on public action?

The second to last government of the Fifth Republic of Niger created a ministerial post to oversee monitoring and evaluation. Unfortunately, before the ministry began its work, ministerial changes stifled this initiative, which could have led to effective recognition of the culture of evaluation at the upper levels of the State. This situation brings us back to the pressing question of the correct order of actions to structure an M&E sector to the multifaceted and sometimes complex contours. Among the measures recommended, the State has been asked to:

- Advocate to mobilize support for the values of evaluation;
- Systematize training of evaluation experts and make training offered by private organizations accessible;
- Raise the status of evaluation bodies;
- Introduce training in universities and colleges;
- Support networks to promote interest in evaluation;
- Promote citizen participation in evaluations by applying the 'learning by doing' principle;
- Organize an investigation into the state of evaluation locations in the country, to identify competency gaps that must be closed;
- Identify evaluation champions or leaders;
- Encourage the use of evaluation results.

Donor agencies and technical and financial partners

Donor agencies have a role in supporting national actors to implement institutionalization of evaluation action plans. This support may:

- Require that evaluation teams include experts from Southern countries to work alongside experts from the North so they can share competencies;
- Facilitate access to information about calls for bids and resources;
- Encourage national partners to integrate evaluation into their projects and programmes requiring cooperation;
- Encourage participatory evaluations by including them in cooperation documents and allocating adequate resources;
- Support the professionalization of national evaluation associations and networks, such as by allowing them to affiliate with larger networks as in Europe and by providing a framework for the profession;
- Encourage citizen participation, by contributing to promotion of their capacity for action.

Demand for evaluation may also come from regional structures (such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development and the European Union), international agencies or decentralized structures. Properly planned and implemented, international cooperation mechanisms can be highly effective in driving a culture of evaluation. They also need sufficient participation from the ultimate beneficiaries of the evaluation, as was the case with EU funds for European countries. Similar results have not emerged in African countries.

ROLE OF OTHER ACTORS: PROMISING PRACTICES

Civil society is called to play a fundamental role in advocacy and in raising awareness about the roles and benefits of evaluation at all levels. Civil society organizations have intervened to increase the quality of evaluations. An emerging trend in some countries is for civil society to be a 'prescriptor' rather than simply an 'object' or 'actor' in evaluation. For example:

- In Burkina Faso, civil society organizations conduct independent evaluations of the State and participate in CSLP reviews. Some networks made considerable contributions to the 2007 review through evaluations in their sector of intervention.
- In Senegal, civil society groups and local elected officials are increasingly interested in local evaluations.

Evaluation networks are seen as an important link in the M&E plan for a given location, a key element to institutionalization. Networks play an essential role in:

- Developing a national and international community of practice capable of influencing practices and therefore policies;
- Apprenticeships and knowledge management, network construction and sharing of documentary resources;
- Stimulation of critical analysis to improve theories and practices in analysis of public programmes and policies internationally;
- Diversity of exchanges;
- Professionalizing evaluation through work on standards.

ANNEX 1. CONCEPTUAL APPROACH TO DIAGNOSING THE SUPPLY AND DEMAND FOR EVALUATION[63]

Table 1 synthesizes the various diagnostic operations recommended to appraise the supply and demand for evaluation, a list of control questions was initially proposed for each by the World Bank. On the basis of these findings, which should serve to identify both national and sector-level champions of evaluation as well as the road blocks or open hostility expected from certain public actors, the conceptual framework anticipates two final operations to formulate a DCE strategy.

TABLE 1. OPERATIONS FOR THE DIAGNOSIS OF EVALUATIVE CAPACITIES (ACCORDING TO THE WORLD BANK)

DIAGNOSIS OF DEMAND	DCE STRATEGY
1. Survey of ministries (techniques and central) and other key groups (including supervisory bodies) to monitor projects, programmes and public policies, and to define their respective functions and relationships; 2. Analysis of the general framework for public action, particularly as regards the existing incentive scheme (civil servant career) and value system (administrative ethics); 3. Understanding of the factors that actually influence decisions pertaining to sector-based policy elaboration and budgetary orientations (negotiations between priorities); 4. Recognition of administrations' demands for information on the results of their public policies; 5. Recognition of the obligations to evaluate imposed by external forces, particularly supranational donor agencies; 6. Taking stock of public sector reforms, recent or planned (management by results, contractualization, asset-based accounting, status of public function), which present synergies and economies of scale for evaluation.	8. Elaboration of a map of possibilities for the DCE, in terms of the respective strengths and weaknesses of supply and demand; 9. Preparation of a realistic action plan which stipulates, among other things, the DCE level and the pace for executing the planned measures.
DIAGNOSIS OF THE SUPPLY	
7. Examination of the competencies, resources, informational infrastructure and monitoring in the ministries as well as universities and other research institutions and private sector establishments.	

63. Source: Frédéric Varone, 'Report on the study of evaluative capacities (meta-evaluation) in three pilot countries (Niger, Senegal and the Republic of Congo)', organized by the International Organization of the Francophonie, UNDP and United Nations Population Fund, and through close collaboration with the Senegalese M&E network

ANNEX 2. FACTORS THAT DETERMINE THE SUCCESS OF M&E SYSTEMS

An inventory of 14 success factors was developed through implementation of national M&E systems published by the World Bank evaluation group (Keith Mackay). They include:

1. Substantial governmental demand
2. Significant incentives
3. Diagnosis of existing M&E as an initial measure
4. Key role of a powerful 'champion' of the cause
5. Centralized piloting by a competent ministry
6. A not overly complex conceptualization of the system
7. Reliability of data management systems at the ministerial level
8. Extent of use as a measure of success
9. Training in M&E and its use
10. Limited recourse to laws, decrees and governmental regulations
11. Structural plans to ensure M&E objectivity and quality
12. Evidence of long-term effort, requiring perseverance
13. Non-linear and unforeseeable elaboration
14. Regular evaluation of the M&E system itself

ANNEX 3. OVERVIEW OF NATIONAL EVALUATION PLANS (2006)[64]

TABLE 1. NATIONAL EVALUATION PLANS: REPUBLIC OF CONGO, NIGER AND SENEGAL

SYSTEMS	REPUBLIC OF CONGO	NIGER	SENEGAL
By executive power	Oversight of monitoring and evaluation of investments from within the General Directorate of Planning and Development (Ministry of Planning, Zoning and Economic Integration) Centre for the study and evaluation of industrial investment projects (Ministry of Planning, Zoning and Economic Integration)	General Directorate of programme evaluation (Ministry of Economics and Finance) Unit for monitoring and evaluation and an IT system for the permanent PRS secretary (Prime Minister's Cabinet) Oversight of monitoring and evaluation of development actions (Ministry of Zoning and Community Development) Oversight of sector-based ministry planning studies	Oversight of planning (Ministry of Planning and Sustainable Development) Inspection of finances (Ministry of the Economy and Finances)
By legislative power	Various permanent commissions of the National Assembly and the Senate	Various permanent commissions of the National Assembly	Parliamentary commission for general financial economy, planning and economic cooperation
By judicial power	Court of Accounts and Budgetary Discipline	Supreme Court Chamber of Accounts and Budgetary Discipline	Court of Accounts
Other evaluation support systems	Various systems are charged with: • Monitoring programmes (such as the interministerial committee, ad hoc structures in various ministries) • Data collection (such as the National Center for Statistics and Economic Studies), • Supervision (such as the State Inspector General and General Commissariat for Accounts within the Presidency • Consultation (such as departmental and communal councils)	Various systems are charged with: • Monitoring programmes (such as the PRS plan, review of public spending and financial responsibility) • Data collection (such as National Institute for Statistics) • Supervision (such as State Inspector General, General Directorate for the inspection of finances) • Consultation (such as Economic, Social and Cultural Council)	Various systems are charged with: • Monitoring programmes (such as DSRP implementation units) • Supervision (such as State Inspector General and financial control through the Presidency of the Republic) • Consultation (such as Council of the Republic for Economic and Social Affairs, Mediator)

64. Source: Varone, op. cit.

ANNEX 4. RESULTS (EXTRACTS) OF THE STUDIES IN THREE PILOT COUNTRIES (2006)[65]

TABLE 1. PURPOSE OF EVALUATIONS (PERCENT OF RESPONSES TO QUESTIONNAIRE)

EVALUATIONS PERTAINING TO…	REPUBLIC OF CONGO	NIGER	SENEGAL
Projects	45%	48%	27%
Programmes	32%	39%	52%
Public policies	23%	13%	21%
Total	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

TABLE 2. CONTENT OF EVALUATIONS (PERCENT OF RESPONSES TO QUESTIONNAIRE)

EVALUATIONS PERTAINING TO…	REPUBLIC OF CONGO	NIGER	SENEGAL
Implementation	22%	24%	9%
Results	13%	15%	4%
Implementation and results	65%	61%	87%
Total	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

TABLE 3. TIME OF EVALUATIONS (PERCENT OF RESPONSES TO QUESTIONNAIRE)

EVALUATIONS PERTAINING TO…	REPUBLIC OF CONGO	NIGER	SENEGAL
Before	0%	15%	22%
Halfway through	44%	52%	44%
After	56%	33%	34%
Total	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

65. Source: Varone, op. cit.

EVALUATION NETWORKS AND GOVERNANCE: THE CASE OF THE LATIN AMERICAN EVALUATION NETWORK

BY PABLO RODRÍGUEZ-BILELLA[66]

INTRODUCTION

Although evaluation is being integrated more and more into the design and analysis of public policies, there are key differences among countries in the use and dissemination of evaluations. Many factors affect the development, integration and use of evaluation in each country, so it is possible to find almost as many styles of and approaches to evaluation as there are countries. In some regions, like the European Union, these differences seem to be less problematic because they have a clear, common framework that has helped to build a common evaluation culture.[67] However, this is not the case, for instance, in Latin America, which lacks a common framework and where national and regional evaluation associations have differing roles.

This paper explores this issue, paying attention to the role of evaluation networks in supporting governance in the region. It discusses the notion of governance and evaluation culture, in order to provide the conceptual grounds for the introduction of evaluation networks at global and regional levels and then discusses the Latin American Evaluation Network, ReLAC, assessing its relevance as a tool for regional governance.

THE GOVERNANCE PERSPECTIVE AND THE CULTURE OF EVALUATION

The concept of governance has gained great popularity across most of the social sciences during the past decade, although it has been used differently in different contexts. Nevertheless, it is possible to identify some shared characteristics that provide the basis of the governance perspectives (Rhodes 1996:660; Shaffer 2001:18; Bonfiglioli 2003:18-20). These are a strong interest in self-organizing; inter-organizational networks; shifting boundaries

66. Member, Executive Committee, Latin American Network of Evaluation.

67. Although there is some discussion about the existence of a 'European' evaluation tradition, due to the presence of different evaluation traditions from various countries, arising from the way evaluation was introduced in successive waves in different contexts (Stame 2006).

between public, private and voluntary organizations; and indirect and imperfect 'steering' by the state.

For Jessop (1995:310-311) the concept of governance signals a shift to "a broad concern with a wide range of governance mechanisms with no presumption that these are anchored primarily in the sovereign state". The concept of governance is broader than government (which is concerned with the formal institutions and structures of the state). It pays attention to the multiple ways in which governmental and non-governmental organizations interact and to how political power and authority are distributed, both internally and externally, in the state (Goodwin 2003:2).

The literature on governance has shown how top-down and centralized approaches to policy and interventions opened the way for policy to be 'infiltrated' by two related concepts: local context and participation (Ray 2003:2). Development thinking has been strongly influenced by the demand to adopt a people-centred approach (Cleary 2003). This implies that development is no longer seen as uni-dimensional, in which progress is measured primarily in terms of economic growth and accumulation of wealth. There is growing consensus that development is about enhancing individual freedoms, expanding human capabilities, widening choices and assuring citizens of their basic human rights. To go beyond an 'audit culture' (Roberts 2001) and to search for in-depth knowledge of the processes involved in development projects, this paper discusses the establishment and development of ReLAC as a starting point for analysing participation and associated work in the evaluation of development interventions.

Evaluation culture can be defined in the simplest terms as how evaluation is considered by key stakeholders in a particular context. It is also a process of 'reality construction' that allows these stakeholders to see and understand particular events, actions, objects or situations linked with evaluation in distinct ways. Paying attention to issues of culture helps to avoid viewing it as a mechanical or engineered structure but rather as a product of the social interaction of several key actors.

In the field of sustainable evaluation, many evaluations that attempted to uncover the human causes of environmental degradation failed in simplistic and deterministic analysis. They gave insufficient attention to the way in which people act as conscious agents to intervene in the world around them (Jones 1999). To overcome these shortcomings, different people-centred approaches emerged (Cleary 2003).

Several factors influence the development of an evaluation culture (Levine 1981; Toulemonde 2000; Haarich 2005): the political consensus about the objectives of the government, the concentration of services and the public and scientific life of major cities; the level of decentralization or federalism; the legal requirements of performing evaluations; the role of different government offices more or less interested in the development of evaluations; the existence of internationally funded projects (by the World Bank, for instance) that require the integration of evaluation in different policies; civil society; mass media; and the role of international professional networks.

Toulemonde (2000) finds that in the late 1970s evaluation culture spread within policy networks that were open to international trends, especially those of research and

development aid. But this broad diffusion of evaluation on a European scale has not been a strong driving force in the development of evaluation practice beyond the circle of the policies concerned. For Boyle, Lemaire and Rist (1999:3) a friendly or favourable environment for development of evaluation has six dimensions: (1) The development and institutionalization of the social sciences; (2) the existence and maintenance of a trustworthy statistical apparatus; (3) the capacity to staff a national evaluation system; (4) the constitutional relationship between the executive and the legislative branches of the government; (5) the population and geographic size; and (6) the administrative distance from the centre to the periphery of the governmental system.

The different existence of these factors in dissimilar national contexts makes it difficult to find a pure 'culture of evaluation'. This means that the diversity of culture in regions and countries is a permanent source of enrichment and social innovation and that evaluation practice, while getting mature, may escape from uniformity.

What are the problems in the absence of an evaluation culture? (1) Institutional and political constraints are more difficult to overcome; (2) the struggle for adequate budgets demands extra energy; (3) the evaluator is closer to the image of a detective or a spy than a critical friend; and (4) it is more difficult for the evaluation to reflect local and regional priorities.

In the case of Latin America, one common element is the growing demand for evaluation of public policies. Managers and policymakers are using evaluation as a way of making public expenditure more efficient and of fulfilling requirements of accountability. At the same time, there are problems with the design and implementation of evaluations and with the limited use of their results. Evaluations are often used more for financial and administrative control than as a tool of planning and managing. In many cases, evaluation has more to do with generating descriptions and less with the evaluation of these activities and improving planning and decision making.

EVALUATION NETWORKS AND GOVERNANCE

The main purpose of many evaluation networks and organizations is to contribute to the development of a culture that situates evaluation as a key tool to improve the efficacy and efficiency of the design and implementation of social interventions. The term 'network' has become a hallmark of the development industry. Networks have the potential to provide a more flexible and non-hierarchical means of exchange and interaction that is also more innovative, responsive and dynamic, while overcoming spatial separation and providing economies of scale. It is clear that the label 'networks' currently pervades discourses about the relationships between organizations in development, although there has been little research or theorization of such networks (Henry, Mohan and Yanacopulos 2004).

Some authors regard networks as a counter-hegemonic force. Most important is to consider them not as static entities but as an ongoing and emergent process. Networks offer a variety of synergistic advantages, such as the option to work together, availability of resources, access to information, opportunities to share experiences, generation of new policy interventions and development of a collective vision. Networks are flexible, which favours the building of consensus. More than anything, networks hope to have an impact

on the real world—to change reality. However, networks may also have disadvantages. If they are closed, they can inhibit the introduction of new ideas, becoming static structures. In addition, external influences can divert networks from their original purpose.

Evaluation associations and networks at local, national and international levels provide opportunities for evaluators to meet regularly. Members include interested individuals, evaluation practitioners, managers, consultants, teachers, students and officials from all levels of government, educational institutions, research agencies, civil society organizations and businesses. While there were only 3 national and regional evaluation societies in the 1980s, by the late 1990s there were 9, and by the beginning of the 21st century the number had grown to 50 (Segone and Ocampo 2006). Today, according to the records of the International Organisation for Cooperation in Evaluation (IOCE)[68] there are 87 evaluation groups and networks worldwide.

In general, these organizations aspire to improve methods and practice, enhance the standards and quality of evaluation work, develop skills, promote ethical behaviour and standards, strengthen professional independence and provide a forum for exchange, debate and learning. Most of these associations understand evaluation as a profession and practice that can contribute to improve societal, policy and institutional problem-solving and development.

Recognition of the potential benefits of evaluation has also led to efforts to establish international organizations of evaluators. At the global level there are two associations: IOCE and the International Development Evaluation Association (IDEAS). IOCE is committed to building a worldwide evaluation community by becoming a platform for cooperation and partnership, fostering cross-fertilization of ideas, high professional standards and an open and global perspective among evaluators. Its mission (as stated in its constitution) is to help legitimize evaluation and support evaluation societies, associations and networks to help them contribute to good governance, effective decision-making and a stronger role for civil society. As an international organization, IOCE is committed to cultural diversity, inclusiveness and bringing together different evaluation traditions in ways that respect this diversity.

IDEAS is a voluntary association of professional evaluators, development institutions and civil society organizations committed to promoting the theory, methods and practice of development evaluation globally. Its mission is to improve and extend the practice of development evaluation by refining methods, strengthening capacity and expanding ownership, particularly in developing and transitional countries (Gariba, 2006). IDEAS' strategy is to serve as a catalyst for enabling and convening a global development evaluation constituency, while observing the principle of subsidiarity, especially with respect to the emerging community of evaluation practice among country evaluation associations. IDEAS' activities are designed to expand both the supply of and demand for evaluation.

THE LATIN AMERICAN EVALUATION NETWORK

Internationally, evaluation is at the heart of modern developments in governance and democracy. This has to do with the demands of continuous improvement in administrative

68. <http://ioce.net/members/national_organizations.shtml>

performance, greater accountability and transparency (in the interests of citizens as well as policymakers) and effective delivery of results in the public and private sectors and civil society. Evaluation can address these demands by providing feedback on what has worked, deepening the understanding of the processes of policy implementation, designing knowledge systems that allow institutions and systems to learn, and developing capacities to manage effectively and to innovate.

ReLAC is a network of networks designed to help strengthen capacity in monitoring and evaluation and professionalize the evaluation function in Latin America. It seeks to strengthen the culture and practice of monitoring, evaluation and systematization as a social and political process essential for improvement of policies, programmes and projects, aiming for greater transparency and citizen participation.

ReLAC originated in the inaugural assembly of IOCE, in Lima in March 2003, where the networks of Brazil, Colombia and Peru agreed to promote its formation. In October 2004, ReLAC was launched in Peru, where it had its first conference: 'Evaluation, Democracy and Governance: Challenges for Latin America'. The issues addressed included democratic evaluation, methodologies for evaluating human rights programmes, capacity building in evaluation of social initiatives and monitoring and evaluation as a political and social process to strengthen democracy. The discussions reflected the intense focus on promoting a social agenda for the region, with evaluation as a key tool. The objectives of ReLAC are:

- Generate and support opportunities for exchange and reflection among professionals and entities involved in monitoring, evaluation and systematization;
- Promote the development of capabilities in monitoring, evaluation and systematization;
- Develop general principles, procedures, ethical standards and conduct for the good practice of monitoring, evaluation and systematization;
- Promote the development and dissemination of concepts, methodologies and tools for monitoring, evaluation and systematization adapted to the cultural diversity of the region;
- Encourage national and international agencies to practise and use transparent, participatory and equitable systems of monitoring, evaluation and systematization;
- Contribute to development of the international community of monitoring, evaluation and systematization, from the specific cultural and local experience of the region;
- Support the development of organizations and national and sub-regional networks of monitoring, evaluation and systematization.

ReLAC's second conference was held in July 2007 in Bogotá, with the theme of 'Contributions of Monitoring and Evaluation to Governance and Democracy'. It was attended by 170 delegates from 22 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean and North America plus Spain. Speakers lectured about the strategic role of evaluation in development; evaluation as a political process; professionalization of evaluation; evaluation of humanitarian aid; and evaluation, accountability and learning.

ReLAC has elaborated a master's (diploma) programme in evaluation, which had its pilot test in January 2008 in Santiago de Chile, offered by the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences. The programme was taught again in January and November 2009.[69] It is oriented to evaluators who want to update and deepen their knowledge with a broad perspective on Latin America and the Caribbean. It recognizes the need for professional evaluators in the region, given that development programmes and projects implemented over the past decades in the region have not produced the expected results. Hence, both academic training centres and evaluators themselves need to upgrade methodologies, exchange experiences and establish parameters and standards of evaluation to account for the new challenges. Among the key skills required for evaluators to respond to the reality of Latin America, the programme has identified these:

- Knowledge of the reality and socio-economic, cultural and political contexts of the region;
- Ability to understand and address cultural and social diversity;
- Capacity for an approach to social change in the context of exclusion, strong asymmetries of power and the dominance of a legalistic and economic approach to evaluation;
- Ability to exercise professional autonomy in institutional settings characterized by little or no transparency;
- Consideration of the approach of rights in the design, implementation and evaluation of development projects;
- Knowledge of the strategic role of monitoring and evaluation for the achievement of development goals.

The master's programme is organized in four thematic modules (table 1).

ReLAC's discussion lists have advertised an increasing number of job postings, primarily from government agencies and non-profit organizations (NGOs, foundations and institutes). The positions offered cover a broad range of areas, including education, environment, child labour, agriculture and socio-economic development (Chianca 2005).

During its brief existence, ReLAC has recorded some important achievements, including greater awareness of the relevance of evaluation, dissemination of current trends and the creation of a community of evaluators who engage in more networking. ReLAC has also fostered the creation of new national networks and has developed a website to link evaluation networks. Its electronic discussion list allows interaction and collaboration among network members. Some of ReLAC's challenges are achieving a sustainable membership, finding ways to avoid overburdening its voluntary leadership and maintaining its current level of activities.

69. The Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences is an academic international organization created in 1957 by the goverments of Latin America and the Caribbean. Its mission is to promote teaching, research and scientific cooperation in the social sciences.

TABLE 1. THEMATIC MODULES OF EVALUATION MASTER'S PROGRAMME

MODULE I: INPUTS AND CONTEXTS	MODULE II: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS
• Evaluation and development in Latin America and the Caribbean • Evaluation and public policy • Ethical dilemmas in evaluation	• Evaluation theory • Evaluation thinking • Evaluation typology • Results-based management and logical models • Rights-based models and evaluation • Principles, rules and standards of evaluation
MODULE III: METHODOLOGIES AND TOOLS	**MODULE IV: SYNTHESIS AND APPLICATION**
• Introduction to evaluation methods • Quantitative methods • Qualitative methods • Indicators construction • Socio-economic, financial and technological components • Institutional and political components • Process and result evaluation • Impact evaluation	• Evaluation design • Evaluation management • Evaluation project

Some of the lessons learned in the context of a national network could be easily applied for ReLAC. Writing about the Brazilian network evaluation, Silva et al. (2006:69) stated that:

> ...democratic contexts create a favourable environment for the development of evaluation networks; given their support for the independence and autonomy of their members, networks are a better strategy for organizing evaluators than establishing a full organization with a hierarchal structure; and a major component of a successful network is people with fresh ideas who are motivated to work. Money is important, but not as important as the people.

CONCLUSIONS

RELAC has been playing an important role in the establishment of national evaluation associations in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as evaluation capacity building. Capacity building can be delivered in many ways, formally and informally, through university or training institution programmes or other means (Bamberger 2006). Following Quesnel (2006:28), the experience of the evaluation community in general shows that the success or failure of evaluation capacity development depends greatly on three conditions:

- Awareness and appreciation at governmental decision-making levels of the importance and necessity of evaluation—in other words, demand for evaluation;

- Institutionalization and meaningful integration of the various evaluation functions in government machinery at national, sectoral, programme/project and sub-state levels;
- Development of human and financial resources to support a professional, dedicated and effective cadre of evaluators and evaluation managers.

Monitoring and evaluation capacity is increasingly acknowledged as a key to improving public sector management. It is possible to identify several trends in governance benefiting from the contributions of evaluation (Russon and de Silva, 2001), including democratization, by promoting citizen participation in government through inclusion, dialogue and deliberation; and 'de-bureaucratization', by promoting public accountability, responsiveness, transparency and efficiency.

A deeply rooted culture of democratic evaluation at all administrative levels can help evaluation practice to fully produce its benefits. This would imply that public managers are prepared to accept and publish reports that contain negative or disturbing conclusions (Toulemonde 2000). This requires the media and politicians to use evaluations without distorting their conclusions. Another factor that could contribute to achieving this goal is the creation and consolidation of national evaluation societies or associations, which help to ensure recognition of evaluation as an integral part of democratic functioning. As Toulemonde (2000) expressed it:

> Another form of maturity is probably at play. In the public sector this involves the progressive shift from evaluation as a constraint to a managerial use of the exercise—something which has largely been achieved—and then to a democratic evaluation culture. The latter stage is still very far from being attained in Europe. My view is that all countries in the European Union are in the process of reaching relative maturity in their evaluation culture. It seems that in the short term some universal lessons are going to be learnt and that specific national characteristics will consequently disappear.

Networks of evaluators also can aid the professionalization of evaluation by generating spaces for discussion and exchange of concepts, approaches and methods. They could have a key role in generating and disseminating knowledge and in putting the professionalization of evaluation on the public agenda. In developing countries, networks could help to deepen the strategic role of evaluation in the development framework. Mature networks could also make evaluation more professional by stating norms, behaviour and ethics codes. And last, but not least, evaluation networks are a means to ensure the independence and authority of evaluators.

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USE AND COMMUNICATION OF RESULTS IN GOVERNMENT PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEMS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

BY EMMA ROTONDO[70]

BACKGROUND

In Latin America government interest is growing in the use of planning, monitoring and evaluation (PM&E) systems as a strategic tool to collect information on the results of public management and policy.[71] PM&E systems can be used as tools to help develop and allocate resources based on the effectiveness of services and outcomes of national development plans, providing evidence of what works. These systems are also expected to yield evidence on the gains achieved by development interventions and how this translates into improvements in people's living conditions.

While demand is increasing for government PM&E systems, views differ on what constitutes the key to success—that is, on what makes these systems work effectively for timely decision making and for informing citizens at several levels. Global experience shows that PM&E systems work best when they combine at least three dimensions: (1) an appropriate institutional/organizational framework; (2) quality data on results and impacts; and (3) a strategy to use and communicate the results so they are fed into decision-making and inform citizens. These three elements can enable PM&E systems to become institutionalized while enabling understanding of these changes and engagement of the actors involved in developing solutions.

70. Coordinator, Programme for Strengthening the Regional Capacity for Monitoring and Evaluation in Latin America and the Caribbean.

71. PM&E systems involve data collection and use processes to obtain evidence of changes created either directly or indirectly as a result of development interventions. It is understood that for a PM&E system to be results oriented, it should include effect and impact indicators and benchmarks in its design, as well as systematic initial, midterm and terminal data collection on an intervention. It also involves reporting systematically on the intervention's outputs, effects and the likelihood of achieving the expected impact. It requires uses, users, time, effort and resources, and it has political, technical and organizational implications.

A review of the literature and research undertaken in Latin America showed the significance of using the results yielded by PM&E systems, in particular the pioneering study by Nuria Cunill and Sonia Ospina (2008),[72] jointly commissioned by the Latin American Centre for Development Management (CLAD) and the World Bank. It entailed a comparative study of government PM&E systems in 12 countries in the region. This paper also drew on some of the conclusions of two research studies conducted by Regional Capacity for Monitoring and Evaluation in Latin America and the Caribbean (PREVAL) on the issues likely to influence institutionalization of national M&E systems.

While the Cunill & Ospina research focuses on national government bodies, the study conducted by PREVAL was a rapid appraisal of PM&E systems in public rural development institutes and agencies. Its aim was to assess the status of PM&E systems, including their strengths and weaknesses and the use and communication of results by decision-makers and citizens at large. The PREVAL study included two appraisals, one on national government bodies responsible for rural development policy[73] and the other on IFAD co-funded project implementation units. The latter is the third round of a series of surveys conducted by PREVAL between 2004 and 2009. For the first time it addressed national government bodies responsible for rural development policy, seeking to obtain a more comprehensive picture by addressing both central government and territorial levels.

Following is a summary of key aspects of Cunill and Ospina's conclusions, followed by the findings of the PREVAL surveys on the status of government PM&E systems, with a special focus on use and communication of results. The aim is to obtain a quick overview of three different government levels: (1) government bodies at central levels; (2) national government agencies responsible for rural development policy; and (3) project technical units with a territorial scope. These conclusions will aid in shaping future processes to strengthen evaluation capacity in public administration in Latin America and the Caribbean, establishing national evaluation systems in line with the challenges facing the development agenda.

PARTICIPATION, USE AND COMMUNICATION OF PM&E RESULTS IN GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

An important feature of M&E systems is that they go beyond technical aspects; they are a political and managerial function whose use should lead to progress in development agendas, which requires leadership and decision-making. A key issue affecting the use of

72. Nuria Cunill and Sonia Ospina, 'Fortalecimiento de los sistemas de Monitoreo y Evaluación en América Latina. Informe comparativo de 12 países', World Bank / CLAD, January 2008. Osvaldo Feinstein, 'Método para el análisis rápido concentrado (Marco) de sistemas de seguimiento y evaluación', IFAD, 1993. Daniel Jesús Ccori and Antonio Pozo Solís, 'Institucionalización del Seguimiento y Evaluación en proyectos cofinanciados por el FIDA en América Latina y el Caribe'. A report on 2004 and 2007 survey results, PREVAL, 2007.

73. The survey researched five countries: Argentina (the General Directorate for Policy Planning and Evaluation of the Under-Secretariat for Rural Development and Family Agriculture), by Emma Rotondo; Honduras (Honduran Secretariat of Agriculture and Livestock), by Alejandro Vásquez; Nicaragua (PRORURAL), by Eduardo Centeno; Paraguay (the National Directorate for Project Management and Coordination), by Antonio Pozo; and Peru (the Ministry of Agriculture's Agro-Rural Programme), by Augusto Cavassa.

M&E systems is the potential consequences of results. Where reports are required to be amended (that is, where there is feedback), it is more likely that the information will have real impact on a public agency, according to the Cunill & Ospina research.

Governments in the region have claimed that accountability is an important purpose of M&E mechanisms, yet they provide few opportunities to include citizens or incorporate them as users. The PREVAL surveys mentioned above highlight the lack of use of existing mechanisms for citizen participation and control. In one instance (SINERGIA in Colombia) the system has a relevant module in place, but user participation nevertheless tends to be marginal and theoretical only. The overall conclusion of Cunill & Ospina is that M&E systems have little impact in terms of improving the roles they are intended to measure, whether planning, budgeting, accountability or improvement of institutions and programmes.

PARTICIPATION, USE AND COMMUNICATION OF PM&E IN AGENCIES RESPONSIBLE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

PREVAL conducted a rapid appraisal on a sample of public agencies responsible for PM&E in rural development and small-scale household farming in five countries. The study addressed the following types of agencies:

- Management planning and evaluation unit in the agricultural sector (Honduras);
- National directorate for policy evaluation (Argentina);
- National directorate responsible for project monitoring in the agricultural sector (Paraguay);
- Special programmes comprising international aid projects aimed at supporting small-scale farming (Peru and Nicaragua).

Monitoring and evaluation actions involve the measurement of first-level outputs or changes based on the achievement of physical and budgetary targets against those planned by projects and programmes either run by the ministry of agriculture or attached to it. M&E instruments are largely aligned, based on guidelines provided by the ministry of agriculture and usually the ministries of economy and finance. However, it is not unusual to find different formats, depending on whether the subject to be monitored is a development plan, the sectoral planning unit and/or the ministry or secretariat of the treasury.

No effect or impact indicators have been developed so far, as these institutions lack the methods and instruments to measure and cross-check indicators. Little work has been done to research the linkages between public systems at the central level and citizens' participation and supervision during the public policy cycle. Nevertheless, PREVAL believes that local experiences with monitoring and evaluation of government and civil society projects are those that need to be documented.[74]

74. These involve citizens' observatories, social audits and local committees for resource allocation (CLAR), which are often integrated with local governments and organizations. See the section on 'Good Practice' on the PREVAL website <www.preval.org>.

Overall, the use and communication of results as part of public PM&E systems is rare, as results are solely delivered in writing to government data-collection agencies. The main uses of data collection are reporting to control agencies (e.g., the general accounting office); complying with payments and services; and reporting to institutions such as the ministry of the treasury and planning secretariat. Other outputs, such as journals, videos and reports, are generally developed by projects funded by international donors, who normally provide the required resources.

The PM&E function at central level rarely has tools or mechanisms in place to involve users, local governments or rural organizations. An exception is the Agro-Rural programme in Peru, which comprises IFAD co-funded projects such as the Cusco-Puno Corridor and the Southern Highlands project. These projects have in place local consultation, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, including local committees for resource allocation.[75] However, these mechanisms both start and end at the local level; they do not influence decision-making at central level. In the case of the secretariat of agriculture and livestock in Honduras, participatory strategic planning processes are being developed in line with a policy to promote the development and strengthening of agricultural and food production chains and free trade agreements. This has been seized as an opportunity to implement medium- and long-term programmes and plans. However, these same processes are not being implemented for operational planning or the remaining PM&E sub-systems. Neither the secretariat nor (consequently) the management planning and evaluation unit has a culture of using participatory methods to develop operational plans or monitoring and evaluation actions.

At a territorial level, based on the data collected at the decentralized sectoral units, there is a general lack of knowledge regarding monitoring and evaluation issues. A large majority of these units do not have dedicated staff to carry out M&E activities. Nor do they have specialist staff to provide advice on issues facing project monitoring and evaluation. This lack of knowledge results in poor implementation of M&E activities.

PM&E IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

In 2004, 2007 and 2008, PREVAL conducted surveys of IFAD co-funded projects to identify the status and progress made by their PM&E systems, as well as their capacity-building and technical support needs. The main issues faced by PM&E systems are low budgets, high turnover among technical staff and lack of political support from ministry departments and management. Other areas that need to be strengthened include the annual operating plan, to make it more results-oriented, and impact monitoring, based on a revision of indicators (prior to project set-up, at project start and at present). To make this happen, it is important to conduct advocacy to persuade the institution accommodating the implementing agencies to take on a results-oriented annual operating plan rather than one aimed at measuring outputs and targets.

Unlike the 2004 survey, the one conducted in 2008 found that 80 percent of PM&E systems were designed with a medium to high level of involvement by project stakeholders. Eighty

75. See video on CLAR on the PREVAL multimedia section, <www.preval.org>.

percent of projects claim that their PM&E systems yield information that is used to inform intervention strategies. This finding is significant when compared to the survey of 2004, when the number of projects reporting this was very low. Only half the projects have PM&E systems in place that provide a high level of support to their management structures, in terms of informing their decision-making to improve the project strategy. Few organizational websites provide information obtained from PM&E systems, and few use web 2.0 tools.[76]

LESSONS LEARNED TO INSTITUTIONALIZE PME SYSTEMS

Key factors and successful dimensions

PM&E systems are necessary for public policymaking and evaluation and for accountability, budgetary decision-making and development management. However, for these systems to be developed and implemented in the best possible manner and to be fully institutionalized requires combined action on at least three dimensions: (1) an appropriate organizational framework (a dedicated budget, PM&E units equipped with qualified staff and leadership at management levels); (2) quality data on results and impacts; and (3) a strategy for use and communication of results, with mechanisms in place to feed data into decision-making.

Research conducted in the region shows a high degree of volatility in PM&E systems due to the fact that context affects the organizational consistency of these systems as well as (more indirectly) the extent to which they are institutionalized. Research also shows that the demand for information produced by PM&E systems somehow ensures that they become institutionalized, but this demand needs to be created and encouraged. There is also a need to raise awareness among high-level authorities regarding the value of PM&Es for achieving impact and the need to invest in measurements, especially at the start, middle and end of the project implementation cycle.

Participatory monitoring and evaluation

Although the concept of participation has been present in the development agenda since the 1970s, a new approach to project evaluation is now advocated. It is based on negotiation and consensus building among all the parties involved to secure shared commitments and responsibilities in terms of management and results. According to this approach, participation in evaluation is not only a matter of involving or consulting people occasionally but rather involving them in decision-making.

This new emphasis is clearly expressed in the opportunities for data collection, analysis and use targeted mainly at the beneficiary population through local governments, in line with their culture. It involves giving a whole new dimension to the role of projects as facilitators striving to open up opportunities and contribute to achieve the vision and mission of target groups. In M&E, it means opening up spaces for organizations, communities, groups and individuals addressed by the project to play a leading role, enabling them to produce evidence of change by using tools tailored to their culture.

76. A project run by PREVAL and funded by IFAD's IMI fund expects to increase the use of web 2.0 tools.

How to involve different stakeholders

For an M&E system to maximize its potential as a learning mechanism, both its development and its use processes need to be participatory, by involving different stakeholders and their diverse concerns. Broadly speaking, any organizational activity involves a variety of actors who are likely to have diverse interests and stakes with regard to M&E systems. For instance, a social organization might expect an M&E system to create lessons that will help improve its current or future undertakings, allowing it to improve its relative standing and competitiveness vis-à-vis donors and increase its ability to secure additional funding to sustain its activities. Donors might expect that an M&E system will allow them to determine whether projects are being implemented according to the terms and conditions agreed and whether their resources are being used to obtain the expected outcomes and impacts. Public bodies (for instance, governments) might expect an M&E system to make it easier to fulfil their commitment to be accountable for their performance and use of budgets.

Success factors[77]

- Political willpower to set up an M&E system oriented to impact and learning, that is to say, a participatory M&E system;
- A participatory approach to design and implementation, involving people from different stakeholder groups (representing gender, age, ethnicity, etc.);
- Inspiring stakeholders to become involved in the development of a M&E system;
- Conceptual and operational clarity of the project;
- Quality change objectives expressed in chains of change and logical models, particularly with regard to developing outcome and impact indicators, as well as a clearly defined project strategy;
- Stakeholder analysis that identifies M&E stakeholders and users and their information needs, including a clear definition of results expected by each stakeholder and feedback on implementation resulting from using the system;
- Formulation of simple, flexible, innovative, suitable tools and instruments to address the needs of each stakeholder group;
- Dissemination of results in forms that are suitable for each audience and its learning needs.

77. These elements emerged from an internal workshop promoted by PREVAL, 'Guidelines for Preparing a Guide on Capacity Building in Monitoring and Evaluation'. It was held in February 2006 and attended by six members of PREVAL's evaluators' community.

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1. AGENDA

EXPECTED OUTCOME OF THE CONFERENCE

The conference will prepare the ground for the formulation of longer-term initiative aimed at strengthening national capacities for public policy evaluation, through South-South (or triangular) cooperation.

WHAT TYPE OF CONTRIBUTION CAN THE CONFERENCE OFFER?

1. Exchange practices at national level (public sector), showcase good practices. Key issues to be discussed: degree of independence, credibility and quality, usefulness, scope (project, sector, country)
2. Help identify opportunities from the supply side at the country level (national evaluation practitioners, companies, research institutions, national and regional evaluation associations and networks)
3. Discuss how to support the demand for accountability at the national level and demand for evaluation as an instrument of accountability for democratic governance. What actors need to be involved?
4. Identify key areas of support for national evaluation capacity (public sector and non-governmental organizations) and how they can be addressed by South-South cooperation.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

The discussions will be organized around presentations on four main topics and a roundtable discussion to explore the way forward

- Theme 1: Current evaluation practices of public policies at the national level: governance, independence and credibility.
- Theme 2: Evaluation quality and existing capacities at national and regional level: national evaluation practitioners, research institutions, evaluation associations and networks
- Theme 3: Supporting the demand for evaluation as an instrument of accountability: who are the key actors and how to ensure the use of evaluations?
- Theme 4: Towards an enabling environment for evaluation capacity at the national level: what type of support is needed?
- Roundtable discussion: Towards a longer-term initiative on national evaluation capacity. What is the way forward?

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON 'NATIONAL EVALUATION CAPACITIES'

15-17 December, 2009
Casablanca, Kingdom of Morocco

DAY 1: TUESDAY, 15 DECEMBER 2009

08:00 – 09:00	Registration
09:00 – 09:30	Welcome Address
	Mr. Rachid Benmokhtar Benabdellah, President, Moroccan National Observatory of Human Development
	Ms. Saraswathi Menon, Director, UNDP Evaluation Office
	Ms. Alia Al-Dali, Resident Representative a.i., UNDP Morocco

Theme 1: Current evaluation practices of public programmes at the national level: governance, independence and credibility

09:30 – 10:00	*Chairperson: Mr. Abhijit Sen, Member, Planning Commission, India*
	Opening remarks by the Chairperson
	Brief issues paper presentation Angela Bester, Director, Deloitte & Touche, South Africa
10:00 – 11:00	Individual presentations by participants
	Morocco: Mohammed Bijaad, Moroccan National Observatory of Human Development
	Costa Rica: Carla Morales, Vice-Minister, National Planning and Economic Policy
	Mauritania: Ould Khattar Dah, Head, Sector Policies Service
	South Africa: Charmaine Julie, Regional Director, Western Cape Public Service Commission
	Rapporteurs
	Charmaine Julie, Regional Director, Western Cape Public Service Commission (to be confirmed)
	Oscar Garcia, Evaluation Advisor, UNDP Evaluation Office
11:00 – 11.20	Tea/coffee break
11:20 – 12.30	*Panel discussion and closing remarks by the Chairperson*
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch

Theme 2: Evaluation quality and existing capacities at national and regional level: national evaluation practitioners, research institutions, evaluation associations and networks

14:00 – 14:30	*Chairperson: Mr. Tony Aidoo, Head, Policy Evaluation & Oversight Unit, Office of the President, Ghana*
	Opening remarks by the Chairperson
	Brief issues paper presentation Alexey Kuzmin, President, Process Consulting Company, Russia
14:30 – 15:00	Individual presentations by participants
	Brazil: Joana Mostafa, Member, Social Policies and Studies Division, Commission of Monitoring and Evaluation of Public Policies
	Malaysia: Mohd Khidir, Deputy Director, Implementation Coordination Unit, Prime Minister's Office
	RELAC Latin American Network of Evaluation: Pablo Rodríguez, Executive Committee
	Niger: Seydou Yayé, Director General, Programme Evaluation and Development, Ministry of Economy and Finance
	Rapporteurs
	M. Joseph Jonas Avrilus, Coordinator, Unit of Coordination and Programming, Ministry of Economy and Finance, Haiti
	Alexandra Chambel, Evaluation Specialist, UNDP Evaluation Office
15:00 – 15:20	Tea/coffee break
15:20 – 16:30	*Panel discussion and closing remarks by the Chairperson*
16:30 – 18:00	Open space: Structured time available for informal exchanges and discussion between the participants
20:00	Official dinner

DAY 2: WEDNESDAY, 16 DECEMBER 2009

Theme 3: Supporting the demand for evaluation as an instrument of accountability: who are the key actors?

09:00 – 09:30	*Chairperson: Juan Manuel Cordero, Vice Minister, Ministry of Social Development, Costa Rica*
	Opening remarks by the Chairperson
	Brief issues paper presentation Oumoul Khayri Ba Tall, President, International Organization on Evaluation

09:30 – 11:00	Individual presentations by participants
	Rwanda: Bernabe Sebagabo, Director, Planning Policies and Capacity Building
	Colombia: Diego Dorado, Director, Evaluation of Public Policies, Sinergia, Department of Planning
	PREVAL Monitoring and Evaluation for Rural Development, Emma Rotondo, Executive Director
	Association Marocaine de l'Evaluation, Ahmed Bencheikh
	Rapporteurs
	Seydou Yaye, Director General, Evaluation of Programmes and Development, Ministry of Economy and Finance, Niger
	Fabrizio Felloni, Evaluation Specialist, UNDP Evaluation Office
11:00 – 11:20	Tea/coffee break
11:20 – 12:30	*Panel discussion and closing remarks by the Chairperson*
12:30 – 14:15	Lunch

Theme 4: Towards an enabling environment for evaluation capacity at the national level: what type of support is needed?

14:30 –15:00	*Chairperson: Eric Shitindi, Deputy Permanent Secretary, President's Office - Public Service Management*
	Opening remarks by the Chairperson
	Sri Lanka: Velayuthan Sivagnanasothy, Director General, Ministry of Finance & Planning, Department of Foreign Affairs and Budget Monitoring
15:00 – 15:15	Brief issues paper presentation Osvaldo Feinstein, consultant, former Advisor and Manager, World Bank Evaluation Department, and Senior Evaluator, IFAD
15:15 – 16:00	Individual presentations by participants
	Benin: Aristide Djidjoho, Coordinator, Office of Evaluation of Public Policies, Ministry of Forecasting, Development and Evaluation of Public Policies
	Guatemala: Fernando Sánchez, Coordinator, General Secretariat for Planning and Programming
	Tajikistan: Rahmonov Abdughaffor, Deputy Chairman, State Committee on Aid Coordination and Investment Promotion
	Rapporteurs
	Captain Donkor, Acting Director, NDPC Monitoring & Evaluation Division
	Juha Uitto, Deputy Director, UNDP Evaluation Office

16:00 – 16:20	Tea/coffee break
16:20 – 17:30	*Panel discussion and closing remarks by the Chairperson*
18:00 – 19:30	*Meeting of rapporteurs and chairpersons*
20.00	UNDP Evaluation Office dinner

DAY 3: THURSDAY, 17 DECEMBER 2009

09:00 – 11:00	**Roundtable discussion:** ***Towards a longer-term initiative on national evaluation capacity: What is the way forward?***
	Chairpersons of sessions 1, 2, 3 and 4 report back to the roundtable discussion
	Panel discussion on emerging conclusions
11:00 – 11:20	Tea/coffee break
11:20 – 12:30	**Identification of follow up initiatives**
12:30 – 13:00	*Concluding remarks*
	Mr. Rachid Benmokhtar Benabdellah, President, Moroccan National Observatory of Human Development
	Ms. Saraswathi Menon, Director, UNDP Evaluation Office
	Rapporteurs
	Oscar Garcia, Evaluation Advisor, UNDP Evaluation Office
	Alexandra Chambel, Evaluation Specialist, UNDP Evaluation Office
14:30	Lunch

END OF CONFERENCE

ANNEX 2. PARTICIPANTS

GOVERNMENTS

Benin

Djidjoho, Aristide, Coordonnateur, Bureau d'Evaluation des Politiques Publiques, et Assistant du Ministre d'Etat

Brazil

Mostafa, Joana, Member, Social Policies and Studies Division, Commission of Monitoring and Evaluation of Public Policies

Colombia

Dorado, Diego, Director, Evaluacion Sinergia, Departamento Nacional de Planeacion

Costa Rica

Morales, Carla, Viceministra, Planificación Nacional y Política Económica

Cordero, Juan Manuel, Vice-Ministro de Desarrollo Social,

Ethiopia

Teklemariam Alemu, Getachew, Expert, Development Planning & Research Department

Ghana

Donkor, P.I., Acting Director, NDPC Monitoring & Evaluation Division

Aidoo, Tony, Head, Policy Evaluation & Oversight Unit

Guatemala

Sanchez, Fernando, Coordinador General, Secretaria de Planificación y Programación

Haiti

Avrilus, Joseph Jonas, Coordonnateur, CoorUnité de Coordination et Programmation

India

Sen, Abhijit, Member, Planning Commission

Malaysia

Khidir, Mohd, Deputy Director, Implementation Coordination Unit in the Prime Minister's Office, Evaluation Office

Bin Hashim, Azman, Member, Implementation Coordination Unit in the Prime Minister's Office, Evaluation Office

Shahril Nordin, J.M., Member, Implementation Coordination Unit in the Prime Minister's Office, Evaluation Office

Mauritania

Zein, El Hassene, Conseiller du Premier Ministre, chargé de l'Economie et des Finances

Hamdane, Yeslem, Conseiller du Premier Ministre et Directeur Général de la Coordination de l'Action Gouvernementale

Ould Khattar, Dah, Chef, Service des politiques sectorielles à la DSP, Ministere des Affaires Economiques et du Developpment

Morocco

Benmokhtar Benabdellah, Rachid, President, Observatoire Nationale de Developpement Humain (ONDH)

Bencheikh, Ahmed, Président de l'Association Marocaine de l'Evaluation

Akalay, Fatima-Zohra, Membre du Conseil, ONDH

Mejjati, Rajaa, Membre du Conseil, ONDH

Herzenni, Abdellah, Membre du Conseil ONDH

Al Batal, Lamine, Membre du Conseil, ONDH

Sayah, Ikbal, Responsable du Pôle Etudes Générales, ONDH

Benkassmi, Mohamed, Responsable du Pôles Enquêtes et Méthodes, ONDH

Mouime, Mohamed, Responsable du Pôle Système d'Information, ONDH

El Mansouri, El Hassan, Coordonateur National du Programme Conjoint SNU/ONDH, Pôle Partenariat et Coopération, ONDH

Doukkali, Azzeddine, Responsable du Pôle Communication, ONDH

Lamrini, Ahmed, Secrétaire Général, Ministère du Développement Social, de la Famille et de la Solidarité

El Hajam, Soulaimane, Coordination National, Initiative National pour le Développement Humain, Ministère de l'Intérieur

Belmlih, Meryem, Chef de Division, Ministère du Développement Social, de la Famille et de la Solidarité

Lamazaini, Rachid, Chargé de Mission, Agence de Développement Social

Bouazza, Abdellatif, Ministère du Développement Social, de la Famille et de la Solidarité

El Hajri, Abderrazak, Ministère du Développement Social, de la Famille et de la Solidarité

Senouci, Saifeddine, Ministère de l'Economie et des Finances

Laalou, Khalid, Ministère de la Santé/ Directeur de la Population

Naciri, Mohamed, Cour des Comptes

Namrani, Hassan, Cour des Comptes

El Kasmi, Ahmed, Cour des Comptes

Hamouch, Farid, Wilaya de Casablanca

Arj, Majdoline, Wilaya de Casablanca

Klikime, Khadija

Maalal, Rachid

Bouahabi, Fatima-Zohra

Niger

Yaye, Seydou, Directeur General de l'Evaluation des Programmes de Developpment, Ministere de L'Economie et des Finances

Rwanda

Sebagabo, Bernabe, Director of Planning, Policies and Capacity Building, Ministry of Public Service and Labour

Senegal

Diallo, Ababacar, Chef de la Cellule primaire de la Division de la Planification sectorielle et de l'Evaluation des Projets

South Africa

Julie, Charmaine, Regional Director of the Western Cape, Public Service Commission

Sri Lanka

Sivagnanasothy, Velayuthan, Director General, Ministry of Finance & Planning, Department of Foreign Affairs and Budget Monitoring

Tanzania

Shitindi, Eric, Deputy Permanent Secretary, President's Office - Public Service Management

Tajikistan

Abdughaffor, Rahmonov, Deputy Chairman, State Committee on Aid Coordination and Investment Promotion

Hkiak, Fatima, Conseillère Technique

Halmi, Mahdi, Associé au Programme, FNUAP

EXPERTS

Argentina

Rodriguez, Pablo, Executive Committee, ReLAC and Member, IOCE

Zaltsman, Ariel, Evaluation Specialist, NYU

Canada

Jabes, Jak, Capacity Development Expert

Mauritania

Khayri Ba Tall, Oumoul, Evaluation Expert and President, International Organisation for Cooperation in Evaluation

Morocco

Bijaad, Mohamed, Secretary General, ONDH

Netherlands

Lange, Piet, Evaluator, Ministry of Foreitgn Affairs, Policy and Operations Evaluation Department

Peru

Rotondo, Emma, Coordinator, PREVAL

Russian Federation

Kuzmin, Alexey, Evaluation Expert and Director, Process Consulting Company

South Africa

Bester, Angela, Evaluation Specialist, Director, Consulting - Business Process Solutions

Spain

Feinstein, Osvaldo, Evaluation Expert, previously Senior Evaluation Officer, IFAD and World Bank

Switzerland

Remmert-Fontes, Inge, Consultant, Capacity Evaluation Development

REPRESENTATIVES OF ORGANIZATIONS

World Meteorological Organization

Cortes, Jorge, Director, Internal Oversight Office

United Nations Joint Inspection Unit

Mounir-Zahran, Mohamed, Vice-Chairman

International Fund for Agricultural Development

Cuna, Luigi, Evaluation Officer, Office of Evaluation

UNICEF

Segone, Marco, Senior Evaluation Specialist, Systemic Management, Evaluation Office

African Development Bank

Manai, Mohammed, Division Manager, Operations Evaluation Department

Tourino Soto, Ignacio, Evaluation Officer, Operations Evaluation Department

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

Berrou, Abadila, Manager, Development Assistance Committee

World Bank

Khattri, Nidhi, Senior Evaluation Officer, Independent Evaluation Group

Centre Africain d'Etudes Supérieures en Gestion

Aw, Boubacar, Director, Institut Superieur de Management des Entreprises et d'autres Organisations

UNDP

Bureau for Development Policy

Colville, Jennifer, Policy Advisor, Capacity Assessments, Capacity Development Group

Regional Bureau for Africa

Kedowide, Francois-Corneille, Monitoring and Evaluation Advisor

Morocco country office

Alia, Al-Dali, Resident Representative

Badry, Tajeddine, Programme Specialist

Barakat, Leila, Communications Analyst

Cheddad, Mohamed, Operations Associate

Madrolle, Renee, Monitoring and Evaluation Assistant

Evaluation Office, UNDP headquarters

Menon, Saraswathi, Director

Uitto, Juha, Deputy Director

Garcia, Oscar, Evaluation Advisor

Chambel, Alexandra, Evaluation Specialist

Felloni, Fabrizio, Evaluation Specialist

ANNEX 3. CONFERENCE ASSESSMENT

EXIT QUESTIONNAIRE: RATINGS BY PARTICIPANTS

Questionnaires were collected from 36 respondents out of an estimated 50-60 participants during the closing session of the conference. Ratings were given on a Likert scale from 1 (lowest) to 4 (highest). The mid-point rating is thus at 2.5 [= (1+4)/2)]. Ratings above 2.5 are thus in the more positive range and those below 2.5 are in the more negative range.

The results show a general **high appreciation** for the individual sessions and the conference structure in general (Table 1).

Regarding the *individual sessions*, the first (opening) and the last (roundtable on emerging conclusions) display the highest averages, both at 3.24. This may reflect a stronger appreciation for sessions dealing with the 'general picture' and summary of the main contents. It may also reflect a trend of attention that peaks at the very beginning and very end of the event.

The lowest (in relative terms) averages are found in correspondence with session 1 and the open space in session 1. Even these averages are well above the 2.5 mid-point, which is quite encouraging. Few comments have been provided on the individual session and there is no clear reason for the relatively lower average grading of session 1, except that this session has received a low number of '4' (highest grades).

The **open space on day 1** received both the lowest average grading and the lowest number of responses (fewer people have attended it) and the **highest variability** of ratings (Standard deviation of 1.010 is the highest). So this section has elicited the **most diverse responses**. The general comments on the conference structure (see below) points to the fact that there is a perceived interest for more informal interaction among participants, but perhaps the organization of this session did not respond to expectations or needs.

Feedback on the *workshop structure* is also very high, with ratings of 3.34 for plenary presentations and 3.22 for plenary discussions respectively (table 1).

PERCEIVED STRENGTHS

The main assets are identified as the opportunity to exchange experiences with others from diverse contexts, with the emphasis on allowing dialogue and exchanges between participants without an externally driven agenda, and the general good quality of papers and event organization.

PERCEIVED WEAKNESSES

These are identified as the length of plenary sessions, long presentations, overlap of themes and issues, and sometimes confusion between monitoring and evaluation. Respondents also complained about the limited time and scope for informal discussions and breakout groups (including the 'open space', which was perceived as loosely connected with the rest of the event). It was also noted that the private sector as an actor in evaluation was not well represented. There were some remarks on session chairs, perhaps in connection with time keeping and the length and heaviness of plenary sessions. It was also noted that English simultaneous interpretation was not always of high quality.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE CONFERENCE ORGANIZATION

Regarding the conference organization, the main recommendations pertain to the opportunity for having a place / board where participants can post ideas throughout the conference.

Ideally, conference documents should be available much earlier and should be translated into all working languages.

TABLE 1. RATING: SUMMARY STATISTICS

QUESTIONS	NUMBER RESPONSES	AVERAGE (1-4)	ST. DEVIATION
A. Did the various sessions help you achieve the workshop objectives?			
Opening Session	33	3.24	0.605
Session 1: Current evaluation practices of public programmes at the national level: governance, independence and credibility	36	2.92	0.493
Session 2: Evaluation quality and existing capacities at national and regional level: national evaluation practitioners, research institutions, evaluation associations and networks	36	3.06	0.664
Session 3: Supporting the demand for evaluation as an instrument of accountability: who are the key actors?	35	3.00	0.632
Session 4: Towards an enabling environment for evaluation capacity at the national level: what type of support is needed?	35	3.06	0.674
Open Space on day 1 (if you attended)	23	2.61	1.010
Roundtable discussion: Towards a longer-term initiative on national evaluation capacity. What is the way forward?	35	3.09	0.732
Roundtable on emerging conclusions	34	3.24	0.689
B. Was the way the workshop was structured and delivered useful in achieving the objectives of the workshop?			
Plenary presentations	35	3.34	0.583
Plenary discussions	36	3.22	0.711

United Nations Development Programme
Evaluation Office
One United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017, USA
Tel. (212) 906 5059, Fax (212) 906 6008
www.undp.org/evaluation