

# **Giving National direction through Evaluation: Uganda's evaluation of its Poverty Eradication Action Plan (1997-2007)**

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# Preamble

## **This presentation:**

- Presents the process of evaluation of Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) 1997-2007 in Uganda;
- Aims at sharing experiences on the use of evaluation and
- Covers: an introduction/ background;
  - Specific objectives of the PEAP evaluation
  - Evaluation questions and theory of change
  - Scope
  - Designing evaluation
  - Challenge of establishing counterfactual to the PEAP
  - Management and quality assurance
  - The dissemination and use of evaluation
  - Conclusion.

# 1.0. Introduction

- The evaluation of Uganda's Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) (1997-2007) is a rare example of a nationally-driven evaluation of a country's poverty reduction strategy.
- PEAP was updated in 2000/01 and in 2003/04. By 2007, the Government decided a new direction and new type of plan was needed,
- set about designing a broad ranging evaluation that would provide a measure of what had been achieved under PEAP, and set the direction for the new plan.

## 2.0. Background

- When the National Resistance Movement (NRM) came to power in Uganda in 1986, the country had been through two decades of political and economic turmoil.
- GDP per capita had been reduced to 58% of the 1970 level, and subsistence agriculture had increased from 20% of GDP to 36% over the same period.
- Household Budget Survey of 1992 revealed that 56% of the population were living below the poverty line, hence development of Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP).
- The PEAP was intended to provide a framework for policies to address poverty over a 20-year period.
- The policy approach behind the PEAP was to enable the poor to benefit from market opportunities while extending access to and improving the quality of basic social services,

### **3.0. Specific Objectives of the PEAP Evaluation**

- Determining how effective the PEAP had been as a consensus-building mechanism for the expression of national development aspirations, looking at what results had been achieved.
- Determining how effective the PEAP had been in delivering results: as an instrument of prioritization, strategic resource allocation and accountability; and
- Identifying and highlighting specific practices from the decade of Uganda's PEAP that would best inform the formulation of the third revision of the PEAP.

## 4.0. Evaluation Questions and the Theory of Change

- The specificity of the questions was central to the quality and utility of the evaluation. To determine the scope, it was necessary to look at the theory of change of the PEAP and which were not accounted for?
- The PEAP series of objectives, became thematic pillars, all with objectives and indicators, and with reference to operational structures and entities.
- Construction of a broad framework based on the logic of the PEAP over its three iterations to determine the causal relationships over the decade
- The dimensions that pertained to the underlying structural and environmental factors that influenced the PEAP were not well captured.

## 5.0. Scope

- Results and Performance
- Political Economy
- Institutional Arrangements
- Partnership
- Economic Transformation and Sustainable Poverty Reduction

## 6.0. Designing Evaluation

- The PEAP evaluation was an interesting mix, focusing both on impact-orientated questions related to the achievements of the PEAP, and looking at the underlying policy and process elements that contributed to these results.
- Initially, it was hoped to focus the impact assessment work on identifying counterfactuals in order to answer the question: what would outcomes have been in Uganda in the absence of the PEAP?
- Four methods were suggested by the evaluation team to identify counterfactuals to the PEAP: before-and-after comparisons, with-without comparisons, simulation exercises and contribution analysis.
- However, as the evaluation progressed, it became clear that due to data limitations, time constraints and feedback on the initial proposals, it was not possible to undertake rigorous counterfactual analysis

## 7.0. The challenge of establishing a counterfactual to the PEAP

- With/without comparisons at whole economy level were infeasible owing to the difficulty in identifying an appropriate comparator country for the relevant period.
- General Equilibrium Model-based simulation exercises were ruled out
- Of the other two approaches, neither of which identify a strict counterfactual, the opportunity to use regression analysis for undertaking rigorous before/after comparisons was constrained
- Some elements of contribution analysis were used during the impact assessment, though it was infeasible to apply the whole six-stage approach.
- Contribution analysis which was to elaborate convincing evidence-based performance stories became central to the impact assessment work.

## 8.0. Management and Quality Assurance

- An evaluation sub-committee (SC) was set up to lead on designing the ToR, overseeing the selection of the consultants, reviewing the evaluation process and products , and disseminating the findings and lessons;
- A Reference Group (RG) was also formed to provide independent and expert opinion on both the evaluation design and quality of the evaluation products.
- A team of experts acted as a buffer between the Reference Group and the evaluators, to ensure stability and progress in the exercise.
- Evaluation team composed of 10 consultants, and an internal reviewer.

# 9.0. Dissemination

- From design to completion, the evaluation ran from July 2007 to June 2008.
- The findings and recommendations from the evaluation were shared as widely as possible given the breadth of the PEAP,
- The dissemination process began with a briefing to Cabinet followed by workshops to discuss the findings and recommendations
- A one-day workshop on the Government's interpretation and response to the findings and recommendations was the preparation of a Government White Paper on the evaluation
- A Task Force preparing the National Development Plan, the successor to the PEAP, engaged fully in the dissemination and follow-up activities to the evaluation.
- The NDP sought to redress this, by costing the interventions outlined in the Plan, and taking steps to realign the budget and accountability mechanisms accordingly.

# 10.0 Use of the Evaluation

- The evaluation found that while poverty had reduced substantially during the PEAP period, it was uneven, with an urban bias and with growth tending to benefit the better-off.
- Investment productivity did not improve during the PEAP period, with constraints and inefficiencies in the use of human capital and poor infrastructure.
- Reflected the lack of attention paid to infrastructure and other potential drivers of the economy, such as agriculture.
- The NDP took this analysis, and agreed that a new policy mix was required, still recognizing the poverty reduction objective and thought to improve economic infrastructure to reduce the cost of doing business, to promote competitiveness and encourage foreign investment, to transform agriculture to raise farm productivity, and to raise the quality of human capital to transform economic growth.

# 11.0 Conclusion

- The evaluation highlighted serious deficiencies in the coordination of Government business, and its oversight. coherent and harmonized messages and demand pressures on service delivery arms of Government.
- As a result the role of the Prime Minister in overseeing service delivery has been strengthened, and the oversight and monitoring and evaluation functions strengthened;
- The evaluation of the PEAP provided extremely valuable and accessible information of what worked and what didn't during the decade of the PEAP between 1997 and 2007,
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- The evaluation resulted into the successor National Development Plan (2010/11 – 2014/15) with the theme “***Growth, Employment and Social-economic transformation for prosperity***”. The effects will continue to be seen as the NDP is implemented and monitored.

*Thank you for listening*