**2024 National Evaluation Capacities Conference**

**Venue:** Yanqing District, Beijing, China
**Date:** 14-18 October
**Theme:** Responsive Evaluation: For Government, For Inclusion, For The Future

**Title:** Harnessing Local Insights: Practical Approaches and Achievements in Evaluation within African Political Economy Context

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**Abstract:**

The development challenges confronting Africa have prompted various policies and programs by federal, provincial, and local administrations. The impact of these policies is often debated among ruling parties, their opponents, public administrators, and citizens alike. The effectiveness of political economy policies in Africa can be significantly enhanced by integrating local insights into evaluation frameworks. This presentation explores practical approaches and notable achievements in incorporating local knowledge and community voices into the evaluation processes of African political economy policies. Inclusive evaluation systems are crucial for addressing the unique challenges faced by African nations and fostering responsive and impactful policies.

We will explore participatory methodologies such as Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), community scorecards, and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), alongside modern tools like technology-enabled platforms for data collection. These methods capture valuable local perspectives, ensuring that policies are both relevant and sustainable.

Case studies from Nigeria, Kenya, and Ghana will illustrate successful applications of inclusive evaluation practices. In Nigeria, community-driven evaluation of agricultural policies has improved local farming practices. In Kenya, integrating local health knowledge into the evaluation of health interventions has led to better health outcomes. In Ghana, local economic insights have enhanced microfinance programs, boosting local economies and fostering financial inclusion.

The presentation will also address challenges in integrating local insights into evaluations, such as participation barriers, data reliability, and managing biases. We will provide strategies to overcome these challenges and emphasize synthesizing local knowledge with formal evaluation frameworks to create robust systems.