PROCEEDINGS FROM THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON NATIONAL EVALUATION CAPACITIES

Use of Evaluation in Decision Making for Public Policies and Programmes

CO-HOSTED BY THE EVALUATION OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH AFRICA

12–14 SEPTEMBER 2011, JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

Evaluation Office

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Several organizations and key people made the 2011 International Conference on National Evaluation Capacities a success.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Evaluation Office and the Public Service Commission of South Africa, as co-hosts, worked effectively as partners to organize the event. Both offices are grateful for the opportunities this yielded for the respective offices and look forward to further collaborations.

The Conference was made possible thanks to generous support provided by development partners: the Governments of Finland and Switzerland. The organizers also appreciate their substantive contributions as members of the Advisory Group and participants of the conference.

Advisory Group members were most valuable for effectively guiding the organizers in the conceptualization, organization and implementation of the conference. Advisory Group members include:

- Professor Chen Zhaoying, Deputy Director-General, China National Centre for Science and Technology Evaluation;
- Mr. Diego Dorado Hernandez, Director de Evaluacion de Sinergia, Departamento Nacional de Planeación in Colombia;
- Ms. Riitta Oksanen, Senior Advisor, Development Evaluation, Office of the Under-Secretary of State, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland;
- Dr. Rachid Benmokhtar Benabdellah, President de le Observatoire Nationale de Developmment Humain in Morocco;
- Ms. Angela Bester, Director of Deloitte & Touche, Republic of South Africa;
- Ms. Ronette Engela, Deputy Director-General of Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation, Republic of South Africa; and
- Mr. Hans Peter Wyss, Program Manager Focal Point, Management for Development Results Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation SDC, Division Global Institutions.

The organizers acknowledge and thank the presence of Dr. Sean Phillips, Director General of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation in the Presidency of South Africa; Mr. Ben Mthembu, Chairperson of the Public Service Commission of South Africa; Mr. Agostinho Zacarias, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in South Africa and other distinguished participants, for taking part in the conference.

In addition, the organizers appreciate their UNDP colleagues, including their Johannesburg Regional Service Centre colleagues, UN in South Africa and evaluation professionals from evaluation offices in the UN and multilateral systems for their participation in the conference and logistical support, and the Evaluation Office staff that made the event possible: Azusa Kubota, Charita Bondanza, Conception Cole, Roberto La Rovere, Sukai Prom-Jackson, Marina Blinova, Ana Rosa Soares as well as the support by the Conference Intern Harshi Hettige. From the Public Service Commission administration support team, the organizers thank Noqobo Gcwaba, Ricardo Mahakanya, Barry Momberg and Mocheta Monama.

The reflections and the proceedings of the conference also depended on the work of the Chairs and Rapporteurs, and we thank them for their contribution.

FOREWORD

OBJECTIVES OF THE CONFERENCE

The broader purpose of the conference was to provide a forum for open discussion on issues confronting evaluation in countries, enabling participants to draw on the innovative experiences of others. The conference was also intended to promote the understanding of international standards in evaluation and to advocate for evaluation as a means to manage for development results, thereby improving public accountability and learning. To enhance the understanding and appreciation of evaluation as a powerful tool of public accountability, the conference's objectives were to:

1. Share experiences from countries that have different levels of development of national monitoring and evaluation systems (including those that may be considering creating one), or that have important experiences with other types of evaluation efforts;
2. Identify lessons and constraints in implementing national monitoring and evaluation systems; and
3. Identify supply and demand for technical assistance in strengthening institutional capacities for national monitoring and evaluation systems under the umbrella of South-South and triangular cooperation.

PREMISE FOR THIS FRAMEWORK REPORT

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Evaluation Office and the Office of Public Service Commission of South Africa co-hosted the second International Conference on National Evaluation Capacities (NEC). The Conference was a follow-up to the 2009 Conference on National Evaluation Capacities held in Casablanca, Morocco. The 2009 Conference brought together national partners from over 20 countries and regional/global experts in evaluation, generating collective peer exchange and learning, which provided opportunities for South-South partnerships and cooperation in evaluation.

Evaluating public policy performance is a fundamental step towards fostering

accountability and good governance and improving the overall effectiveness of development efforts. Efforts to build and sustain effective national evaluation systems face several challenges, including institutional design, political dynamics, limited technical skills, poor access to tools and resistance to change.

To guide the selection of topics and enhance the quality and value of the conference, the UNDP Evaluation Office and the Office of Public Service Commission of South Africa surveyed evaluation practitioners in the UN system and select countries that have public policy evaluation systems. Participants of the 2009 NEC Conference chose the theme of the 2011 Conference, 'Use of Evaluation in Decision-making for Public Policies and Programmes'. The 2011 Conference identified the main elements that support the development of national evaluation capacities: enhancing the quality and use of evaluations, developing technical capacities and securing adequate funding to conduct evaluations.

Similar to the 2009 Conference, lessons and outcomes were summarized in the conference proceedings, which will further contribute to knowledge sharing and South-South cooperation among countries that are strengthening their evaluation-related efforts.[1]

This report provides a conceptual framework for the conference theme in order to introduce and support the discussions and experiences shared by papers submitted by participant countries. To increase relevancy for policy makers, this report presents a set of select papers by conference participants and provides country examples that support its analysis.

Mashwahle J. Diphofa
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Office of the Public Service Commission
South Africa

Juha I. Uitto
Deputy Director
Evaluation Office
UNDP

1. Available at <http://www.undp.org/evaluation/workshop/nec/2011/index.html>.

OPENING SESSION: INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

WELCOME ADDRESS BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH AFRICA, COMMISSIONER MR. BEN MTHEMBU

The Chairperson, esteemed international and local guests, all protocols observed. It is my pleasure, as Chairperson of the Public Service Commission of South Africa and co-host of this 2nd International Conference on National Evaluation Capacities, to extend a warm South African welcome to you all.

I wish to specifically recognize the UN Resident Coordinator of South Africa, Mr. Agostinho Zacarias. I also wish to recognize and thank Ms. Azusa Kubota and her colleagues from the United Nations Development Programme Evaluation Office, New York, whom we have worked so well with over the past months to put together this impressive programme.

When I looked at the participant list, I was indeed humbled by the stature of the delegates whom we have here today—from across the globe and representing over 20 countries. This in itself is an impressive achievement, and augurs well for global cooperation. I know that individually and collectively you bring in an impressive and rich experience that we shall gain over the next three days. I wish to congratulate you all for your excellent papers, which represent country and practitioner expertise and experience. As we listen and engage we will naturally enhance our own evaluation capacity, and in feeding this back to our countries, help build a better tomorrow and consistent with the motto of the United Nations, a better world.

I thus thank you again for supporting this event, and we hope to be graceful hosts to you for your stay here. I wish you everything of the best, and may your deliberations be fruitful and illuminating. Thank you.

WELCOME ADDRESS BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF SOUTH AFRICA, MR. SEAN PHILLIPS

Resident Coordinator of the United Nations in South Africa, Dr Agostinho Zacarias;
Heads of United Nations Agencies in South Africa;
Chairperson of the Public Service Commission, Mr. Ben Mthembu:
Directors–General Mr. Mashwahle Diphofa;
Distinguished guests and Ladies and gentlemen:

On behalf of the Presidency, I would like to extend a warm welcome to all the conference participants and visitors to our country. It is an honour to welcome you to South Africa and to the UNDP Conference on National Evaluation Capacities, and I hope that you will be enjoying your stay in our beautiful country over the next few days.

This conference takes place at an opportune time for South Africa. We have recently embarked on a new trajectory for monitoring and evaluation.

The South African government created the department of Performance Monitoring and Development in February 2010. The department was created following recognition that despite increases in government expenditure on public services over the years, efficient, faster and better service delivery remained elusive. In addition, with the global financial and economic crises, we—similar to governments all over the world—faced a decline in revenue and need to be prudent with the resources we have to continue to impact positively on the lives of our people.

The government undertook to do more with less by improving efficiencies and eliminating waste. The government also committed to work harder, faster and smarter to build a strong developmental state that responds to the needs and aspirations of our people.

Our first step was to develop an outcomes approach to guide and measure the work of all of government. The government agreed to a set of outcome priorities that formed the basis of performance agreements between the President and Ministers in which expected outcomes where stipulated. These performance agreements where then further articulated in a series of Delivery Agreements for outcomes in 12 key sectors. For each sector, we have publicly spelled out what we want to achieve, and what the contribution of all role-players will be. We have published these Delivery Agreements on the Presidency's Web site. Furthermore, we have developed a detailed monitoring system—called the Programme of Action—that provides a quantifiable basis of indicators and targets to monitor our progress with implementing the Delivery Agreements. This information is presented quarterly to the Cabinet and is also publicly available.

A next area of focus has been front-line service delivery monitoring. In the Presidency and Premier's offices we monitor the quality of services from the perspective of a citizen. This involves hands-on monitoring of service delivery institutions that interact directly with the public, including municipalities, clinics, schools, etc. We note whether government is meeting the expectations of the citizens. We identify the specific places where improvement initiatives should be targeted and then proceed to facilitate interventions to address identified weaknesses.

Our mandate also includes assessing the management practices in individual departments, including human resource practices, financial management, strategic management and governance and accountability. The scores achieved in the assessment will form part of the Heads of Departments' annual assessment process.

Through these initiatives, we seek to change the management culture in government from one that is rigid, unresponsive and bureaucratic to one that is more appropriate for the 21st century. In collaboration with other departments and organizations at the administrative centre of government, we will be addressing the challenges associated with this change process by focusing on communicating the required changes as widely as possible and putting in place various initiatives to assist government institutions to change.

We note with pleasure that the UN Development Assessment Framework, for the work of its 17 agencies in South Africa, seeks to align your measures of success with the outcomes approach of the South African government. We believe this provides you with a strong and credible monitoring approach. As noted by Deputy Minister Fransman during his address to the UN Country team retreat, "in working with our national, provincial local authorities, as well as civil society, [the UN country team] should support and enhance, in a coherent manner, the effectiveness of government's development efforts. Government's objectives are aimed at securing a better quality of life for all citizens in South Africa."

The theme of your conference brings a pertinent focus on national evaluation capacities. You aim to enhance the understanding and appreciation of evaluation as a powerful tool of public accountability and learning. By providing this platform, UNDP participants are able to discuss issues confronting evaluation practices in other countries and draw upon the innovative experiences of the international community. We have a keen interest as a country on these deliberations as it will impact on the development of our own evaluation work. We have just completed a draft evaluation framework for the country and are in the process of consultation to incorporate various views and positions on this framework. The draft framework is available on our Web site and all comments would be welcome. I am sure that we will learn from the international community represented here to further develop our work.

I wish you the best in your endeavours over the next three days. Thank you.

RECAP OF 2009 CONFERENCE, MR. JUHA UITTO, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, OFFICER IN CHARGE, UNDP EVALUATION OFFICE

Key points that emerged from the previous conference

The 2011 Second International National Evaluation Capacities conference is a follow-up to the conference held in Casablanca in December 2009. The first conference was co-organized with the Observatoire National du Développement Humain in Morocco, and brought together close to 80 participants from 20 countries and prepared the ground for the formulation of longer-term initiatives to strengthen national capacities for public policy evaluation through South-South cooperation.

The main outcomes of the discussions at the first conference in Morocco are as follows:

Overall, it was recognized that the institutional set-ups for evaluating public policies and programmes in many countries in the South are evolving and are being consolidated. The expectations are growing for countries to develop national evaluation systems. The conference reconfirmed the close relationship between planning, monitoring and evaluation, but while planning has been strengthened, some countries do not make an explicit link between evaluation results and planning. It was concluded that only independent evaluation could question the rationale and assumptions of public policies.

Consequently, independence of evaluation needs to be solidified and institutionalized. Considerations regarding the independence of evaluation and the location of the evaluation function in public administration triggered interesting discussions. Concerns about potential conflicts of interest were raised with regard to self-evaluation.

Participants in the first conference raised a number of issues directly related to the theme of this year's conference, 'Use of Evaluation for Public Policy and Programmes'. In fact, the theme was selected based on the outcomes of the past conference.

First, it was concluded that the quality and use of evaluations are directly linked. For evaluations to be useful, it is important that they are credible and reliable. However, while the participants did recognize the need for sound technical capacity and adequate funding to conduct evaluations, it was also agreed that the political will and commitment to evaluate public policies were the most important factors.

Secondly, distinctions between capacities for managing, conducting and using evaluations were acknowledged. The capacity to use evaluations was considered completely different from those who conduct and manage evaluations, as users of evaluations are decision makers, not fellow evaluators. This distinction was considered to be a very important one to take into account in efforts to strengthen national capacities related to evaluation. It is thus not only the capacity to initiate, commission or conduct credible, high-quality evaluations that is important. It is equally important that decision makers recognize the need for and existence of such evaluations, and that there is a will to use them for decision-making.

The 2009 proceedings provide a more detailed synthesis of the discussions, as well as the papers presented by the participants. As recommended in 2009, the 2011 conference was designed to dive into the topic of use and discuss challenges and opportunities faced by governments around the world in this regard.

Recommendations from the 2009 conference

At the end of the previous conference, the following opportunities and challenges related to evaluation capacities were identified by participants:

- There is scope for further exploration of technical capacities for evaluation among universities and national and regional research institutions to complement those present—or often lacking—within the government;
- There are opportunities to reinforce institutional capacities to develop evaluation policy and coordination at the national level;
- There is a recognized need to use built-in quality assurance mechanisms for evaluations, to comply with evaluation norms and standards and to set up codes of conduct and ethical principles for evaluation; and
- There is need to facilitate networks of evaluation practitioners and national evaluation capacities. Translating key documents into national languages was identified as a step forward.

The Casablanca conference recommended that the theme of the next conference be on use and follow-up to evaluation. This recommendation is one that is known to be implemented, evidenced by the participants of this conference. It was also recommended that future conferences involve not only evaluators, but also ministries of finance, general audit bodies and national parliamentarians and civil society organizations. Again, based on the 2011 participants, this was also implemented.

There was broad consensus that the conference requires active follow-up and an exchange of information through a Web-based portal to facilitate, continue and expand the network that had been created in Casablanca. As this did not fully happen, one lesson learned from the 2009 conference is that follow-up shall be taken more systematically after the 2011 conference ends.

CONCEPTUAL NOTE

2ND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON NATIONAL EVALUATION CAPACITIES

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK ON USE OF EVALUATION: AN INTRODUCTION[2]

[1]The global community is increasingly recognizing the role of evaluation in fostering democratic governance and accountability. By presenting transparent evidence and analysis of public policies' effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability, evaluation has become part of the democratic dialogue in many countries. Policy makers must use good evidence to convince their citizens that public policies and programmes are working. To ensure that the evidence evaluations provide influences policy, evaluators need to engage with policy makers to help them answer their most pressing questions. By providing civil society with information that allows them to assess government performance and influence decision-making processes, evaluations enhance the quality of democracy and policy processes (Feinstein 2009). "Evaluation use is too important to be merely hoped for or assumed" (Patton 2008). However, evaluation use is also seen as the 'Achilles Heel' of most evaluations (Horton et al. 2003).

Evaluation designs that focus on end use are based on a principle that recognizes that no matter how rigorous or elegant, evaluations are not truly effective unless their findings are put to use. Focusing on use from the start of the design process enhances the likelihood that governments and stakeholders will act on evaluation findings and lessons learned. Therefore, enhancing the value of evaluation depends on enhancing its use (Feinstein 2002, Patton 2008, UNEG 2010).

Using evaluation findings generates new knowledge and strategic direction, influences changes in attitudes, and improves the efficiency of operations and resource use. By promoting use, policy makers can strengthen accountability by better demonstrating to stakeholders and the public (and, increasingly, the media) whether a programme is credible and transparent.

This report first outlines an overview of evaluation and presents different types of evaluation uses. It then discusses conceptually the main factors that influence and facilitate (or

2 Authored by members of the UNDP Evaluation Office, the Conference Advisory Group and the Office of Public Service Commission.

limit) the use of evaluation, and then lists a number of examples drawing on the experiences of evaluators (the producers of evaluations), users and policy- and decision makers. It concludes by raising common considerations and points of discussion that emerged during the conference.

THE TYPES AND NATURE OF EVALUATION USE

Evaluation (as well as, or in conjunction with, monitoring) can strengthen the basis for effective management, foster learning, generate knowledge and support public accountability functions (UNDP 2009). A systematic use based on evaluative evidence enhances public organizations' credibility and helps promote a culture of efficiency, transparency and effectiveness.

The main purposes of evaluations (accountability and learning) are complementary; accountability creates an incentive framework for learning. They often occur simultaneously if the evaluation is external, although the same purposes, primarily learning, can exist when the evaluation is planned into decision-making.

The use of evaluation also comprises different types of deliverables, such as evidence, evidence-based findings, recommendations drawn from evidence and evidence-based findings, and lessons that can be shared beyond those immediately involved in the evaluation.

One clustering made by Patton (2008) argues that evaluation use can be one or more of:

- **Instrumental:** when it influences decision-making;
- **Conceptual:** when it generates thinking, knowledge, understanding;
- **Process:** refers to how individuals or organizations are affected by participating in evaluations; and
- **Political or symbolic:** when it is used to justify decisions that have already been made.

Instrumental use of evaluation is common in policy or programme improvement. Governments tend to use evaluation information for accountability, learning and to improve governance and transparency.

The political or symbolic use of evaluation corresponds to that of an "authorizing environment" (Moore 1995) in which the public can be persuaded that a programme should either be continued or cancelled. This use offers the chance to legitimize (or delegitimize) a programme by providing evaluation information on its performance or results. This use leads to evaluations becoming "seals of approval" (Feinstein 2002).

Patton's (2008) framework on "utilization focused" evaluations entails that in order to enhance the likelihood that evaluation findings are used and that the evaluation process will lead to learning, evaluations should be done for and with specific intended primary users and for specific intended uses. The precondition for this is that processes that lead to evaluation use must be explicitly planned and facilitated. Steps in that framework, largely in line with those found in other evaluation guidelines and manuals, include:

1. Identifying the primary intended users of the evaluation;
2. Gaining policy makers' commitment to use the evaluation and focusing the evaluation accordingly;

3. Determining evaluation questions and the best methods to address them;
4. Analysing and interpreting the findings and reaching conclusions; and
5. Disseminating the evaluation findings.

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE AND FACILITATE EVALUATION USE

Research on evaluation use has revealed that the target audience is more likely to use the evaluation if they understand and feel ownership of the process and findings. The sense of ownership increases if they have been involved from an early stage. Actively involving the primary intended users at the onset prepares the groundwork for the use of the evaluation. A number of factors determine the use of evaluation, including:

- Relevance;
- Timing and timeliness;
- Quality and credibility;
- Response to and acceptance of recommendations;
- Characteristics of the evidence deriving from evaluations;
- Capacity to produce and to use an evaluation; and

Relevance

Relevance is the extent to which an evaluation addresses important issues. Relevancy is linked to the evaluator's capacity to supply the demands of the intended audience. If an evaluation is not relevant, there will not be demand for it.

Timing and timeliness

Cultivating an awareness of decision maker's schedules and the overall country context will enable scheduling evaluations so that findings are available for decision-making and planning processes. Timeliness in producing interim and final evaluation documents is crucial to this process. Unnecessarily lengthy data collection and consultations diminish evaluations' usefulness; timeliness in presenting the evaluation report and recommendations is critical, particularly when the use is for policy.

Quality and credibility

Evaluations' quality and credibility derive from the availability of good monitoring information, the use of proper methods and approaches (UNEG 2010), the perceived quality of the evaluators, and the independence, impartiality and transparency of the entire process. Quality is determined not only by the choice of evaluation process, but also by factors such as whether the final product meets the need and demand for evidence, leads to well-justified and actionable recommendations, and is documented in an attractive and easy-to-read and -digest report.

Quality and credibility are crucial because low-quality or unreliable evaluations have the

same potential to influence policy and decision makers as high-quality credible evaluations; focusing on quality is important to providing correct evidence. A technically sound evaluation is a cornerstone of credibility, though credibility does not necessarily lead to the results and recommendations being put into practice.

Response to and acceptance of recommendations

An evaluation's recommendations should be evidence-based, logically follow findings and conclusions, must be clearly formulated, and must be presented in easily understandable, concise, user-friendly ways to the target audiences. The utility of recommendations also depends on management and decision makers' proper response to the recommendations, followed by appropriate dissemination of the results and proper use of the findings. Dissemination is as important for use and accountability as developing the knowledge products (UNDP 2009) and should be an open and transparent process with government and civil society.

Characteristics of the evidence deriving from evaluations

The evidence policy makers need from an evaluation must be unbiased, independent, not driven by an agenda, rigorous, derived from best practices, applied correctly to arrive at robust and credible findings, substantive through the use and discussion of new knowledge, relevant to the appropriate context, actionable with clear and applicable policy recommendations, easy to understand and to explain, and comprehensive through the incorporation of lessons from other evaluations. The critical factor, however, is that it must answer a real need.

An evaluation is significantly flawed if it does not address critical questions raised by policy makers or civil society. Without such analysis, it is unlikely to be useful to its intended audience. Therefore, policy makers and users in general must be vested in the evaluation process as early as possible—and throughout the process—in order to identify and address such questions. This will also increase the evaluation's perceived relevance and stakeholder ownership (see UNEG 2010). Establishing reference or consultative groups to advise on the approach and provide feedback can enhance evaluation quality and increase the likelihood that the recommendations will be accepted, owned and acted upon.

Capacity to produce and to use an evaluation

Despite an evaluation's relevance, capacity gaps can hinder its production and use. For example, there may be no capacity to produce it or an organization may lack incentives to use existing capacities to produce it (Feinstein 2002). In addition, without the human capacity to use an evaluation, its relevance will have no bearing on how it is put into practice. This entails the need to develop human capacities to use evaluations, to distil the findings and lessons learned, and the political will to ensure effective evaluation use.

While evaluations are generally intended to provide information for decision-making, in practice many barriers limit the use of evaluation results for policy making, particularly where decisions such as resource allocation or future programme direction are made at higher levels.

Classifying the factors that affect evaluation use

Factors that affect evaluation use are intrinsically related to how the evaluation is conducted in the organizational setting in which the evaluation is conducted (and hence to the evaluator or evaluation team), and the locus of where the findings are to be used (e.g. in a policy or an institutional setting).

In terms of how the evaluation is conducted, the primary considerations for use involve the cited aspects of relevance, credibility, quality, ability to generate actual and meaningful findings, the evaluator's process of communication and the timeliness of reporting. The user-friendliness of communicating results and recommendations is particularly vital. In terms of the setting where findings are to be used, key aspects determining use are political considerations; commitment of users; presence of people who genuinely care about results and act upon them; and the decision-making, political and financial climate.

From the literature and recent international debates on use of evaluation for policy, crucial factors that facilitate actual use—from both the evaluators' and the policy makers' perspective—and the related aspects that must be minimized in order to avoid the risk of the evaluation going unused include those listed in Table 1. The factors listed are supported with the real-life experiences from NEC conference participants as described on pages 12–14.

INSTITUTIONALIZING RESPONSES TO RECOMMENDATIONS, FOLLOW-UP, AND IMPLEMENTATION

The Norms and Standards for evaluation in the UN System (<www.uneval.org/normsandstandards/index.jsp>) state the need for response and follow-up as a means for evaluations to contribute to knowledge-building and to organizational learning. Standard 1.4 suggests that UN organizations ensure appropriate evaluation follow-up mechanisms; that the recommendations are used and implemented in a timely fashion and findings feed into planning. Formal, well-timed, structured management response systems that clearly state what can or cannot and will or will not be implemented will greatly facilitate this practice.

Evaluations that wish to gain value through use must address real and specific questions (in addition to general and abstract questions) and actual primary intended users and concrete uses (in addition to possible audiences and potential uses). During the process, evaluators should discern what is most relevant and meaningful to users; users should learn what the evaluation can provide that can make a difference. Evaluations focused on use actively identify users and key questions and reactively listen to intended users, responding to what they learn of the context in which the evaluation unfolds. Such evaluations foster interactive, back-and-forth dialogue to determine what is important, relevant, credible and useful. Evaluation questions and designs flexibly adapt to an increased understanding of the context, needs and changing conditions.

EXAMPLES FROM NEC PARTICIPANT COUNTRIES OF USE OF EVALUATION AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

This section is based on papers presented at the conference, selected on the basis of

documented country progress on the use of evaluation and the relevance of their examples to illustrate theories on evaluation use. The cases briefly summarized below are those from the following countries and lead authors or presenters from the following institutions:

- Benin (Bureau d'Evaluation des Politiques Publiques; Observatoire du Changement Social);
- Malaysia (Implementation Coordination Unit, Prime Minister's Department);
- Mexico (Consejo Nacional de Evaluación de la Política de Desarrollo Social);
- Sri Lanka (Ministry of Traditional Industries and Small Enterprise Development and the Department of Foreign Aid and Budget Monitoring in the Ministry of Finance and Planning); and
- Tanzania (Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, Presidents' Office-Public Service Management and Ministry of Finance).

These papers provided concrete examples of national use of evaluations for policy and decision-making.

Benin

In Benin, the Office of Evaluation of Public Policies was set to assess and report on progress on issues for the government, with support from UNDP. A diagnostic study of national evaluation capacities showed the low use of evaluations in management practice. However, evaluations done by the Office have been useful to assist the government in decision-making. Evaluations are presented to the Council of Ministers, which approves them and bases decisions partly on the recommendations. The Council of Ministers then instructs ministries and departments responsible for implementing the recommendations. The evaluations allow decision makers to use information to better guide future interventions.

The evaluations have broader impacts as well. The evaluation process represents an opportunity to answer questions for implementing structures and partners. Following the publication of results, evaluations are an advocacy tool to obtain new resources and support actions by the Council of Ministers. Evaluations inform stakeholders about progress and difficulties in implementing policies, benefiting civil society and beneficiaries. The distribution and dissemination of evaluation results help mobilize civil society and local communities around policy issues. Lastly, the Office of Evaluation of Public Policies uses evaluations to communicate changes, to propose new reforms and to inform the public and technical and financial partners. This facilitates mobilization that can increase implementation effectiveness and new intervention design.

Following the 2009 NEC conference, Benin organized a series of evaluation days in 2010 (Journées Béninoises de l'Evaluation) to give continuity to evaluation learning.

Malaysia

In response to a public demand for value for money and a media demand for transparency and accountability, the Government of Malaysia allocated funds and established outcome

TABLE 1: FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE AND FACILITATE THE USE OF EVALUATION

POSITIVE ASPECTS/FACTORS ON USE OF EVALUATIONS…	NEGATIVE ASPECTS/FACTORS…
Evaluators' side	
Engage policy makers in defining the choice and design of what to evaluate.	…disconnect of the evaluation from the programme or policy design.
Develop a working relationship with policy makers to understand their views, concerns and how an evaluation can address them.	…unilateral, using only own decisions on design and conduct of evaluations.
Flexibly consider alternate designs to accommodate political constraints without compromising on rigor or objectivity.	… inflexible approaches to evaluation.
Have sound data systems and national evaluation capacities.	… not having institutionalized systems for evaluation in the country government.
Design short-term evaluation outcomes while continuing to design long-term measures.	… only measures long-term outcomes and neglects immediate impacts.
Use participatory or self-assessment methods to create dialogue and follow-up and to understand if programmes work, what works, what does not work, and why.	…evaluations only asking 'what has worked' but not asking 'why or why not'.
Actively participate in policy conferences, meet key policy makers and contribute to civil society debates—while maintaining independence.	… begin policy engagement only at the start of the research, hence far too late.
Remain engaged as a technical resource for policy makers even after publishing evaluation reports, particularly to facilitate scaling up recommendations.	…end engagement at the completion of the evaluation report.
Maintain rigor and absence of bias in the evaluation and reporting of results, even when a close relationship with users has been developed.	…not reporting negative results that could lead to learning lessons.
State key hypotheses and key questions ahead of time.	… shift evaluation objectives midway in the process.
Explain policy findings in light of a wide body of research and how one evaluation links to the wider body of existing evidence.	…discussing only one's own set of evaluation results.

Continues >

Continued > Table 1: Factors that influence and facilitate the use of evaluation

POSITIVE ASPECTS/FACTORS ON USE OF EVALUATIONS…	NEGATIVE ASPECTS/FACTORS…
Be willing to evaluate replication of programmes that have succeeded in other contexts, not just new ones.	….conducting only new evaluations and neglecting those that have succeeded elsewhere.
Frame discussion in easy to understand language, communicate in a style policy makers are familiar with and customize messages to target audiences.	…excessive technical jargon.
Timely identify evaluation users and involve them early in the process.	… forgetting to involve the users of the results and of the lessons learned.
Policy makers' side	
Target those who are open to using the evaluation evidence, together with factors such as political agenda, budgets and bureaucratic abilities.	… political agenda, budget limitations and excessive bureaucracy, trumping the evidence.
Help train staff, establish monitoring and evaluation units, recruit technically competent people and motivate them by recognizing their contributions.	… low capacity to consume, generate or institutionalize the evaluative evidence.
Set up or maintain institutions that allow innovation, critical thinking and tolerance to the risk linked to possible negative evaluation results.	…risk-aversion by users and their defensive attitude.
Work with the most receptive agencies having absorptive capacity for use and with government staff that has the culture most open to learning.	…inability to build open-minded government coalitions that can support new programmes.
Adhere to agreements in terms of timing, approach, use and scaling up of recommendations (even with strong staff or governments turnover).	…changing the rules of the game and not ensuring the institutional continuity in evaluations.
Convince policy institutions to demand that evaluations are conducted in the form of contribution to the civil society debate.	… lacking pressure from civil society or others to conduct evaluations.
Governments should have dedicated, well-resourced evaluation units and remain independent in terms of budget, staffing and reporting.	...as long as they are not too close to the government.

evaluations of completed programmes and projects. Policy-level evaluations are performed at the end of each Five-Year Plan for the Economic Planning Unit in order to review and prioritize national planning. In order for new project bids to be considered by the Economic Planning unit, outcome evaluations are required. Input from previous outcome evaluations

will be crucial for ministries to prepare bids for new financial years. Findings are used in prioritizing programmes and projects and in devising alternate implementation methods. Evaluation results are part of the performance indicators of the Secretary/Director General of the respective ministry or agency. Primary users of evaluation findings are the Economic Planning Unit, the treasury and the ministry or agency. Evaluations are generally used as planning tools for national budgeting.

Mexico

In Mexico, the Consejo Nacional de Evaluación de la Política de Desarrollo Social (CONEVAL), the Ministry of Finance and Audit Ministry are in charge of evaluating public programmes. CONEVAL has autonomy and the technical capacity to generate socio-political and poverty information. It provides information to decision makers to make policies and programmes efficient and inform citizens about the results of social policy. The Specific Performance Evaluation assesses the performance and progress of planned goals of social programmes based on summary information contained in the Performance Evaluation System. These evaluations, which describe the most relevant results and findings of each programme, are intended for use by decision makers as ministers, programme managers, congressmen and policy analysts. Since 2008, CONEVAL has coordinated around 130 Specific Performance Evaluations per year, supporting decision-making and contributing to accountability.

Sri Lanka

In Sri Lanka, the Department of Foreign Aid and Budget Monitoring took actions to establish a Web-based Evaluation Information System (EIS) to ensure the effective dissemination of evaluation findings, lessons learned and findings synthesis. The EIS provides sector-wide synthesis to ensure feedback and to assist in integrating the evaluation findings into planning, budgeting and policy making. Public availability of evaluation reports through EIS is used to improve transparency and public accountability.

The Department of Foreign Aid and Budget Monitoring undertook an independent evaluation to assess the progress on implementing commitments made under the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. An evaluation reference group was formed to advise, while a management group coordinated the evaluation. This enabled the Department to identify impediments to implementing the Declaration and helped the government take suitable actions to ensure effective implementation of Declaration principles. Moreover, evaluation findings were fed into a global evaluation process, enabling the OECD-DAC Evaluation Network to undertake a synthesis of the evaluation across countries and donors. These findings were also useful in formulating the Accra Agenda for Action at the high level forum on Aid Effectiveness.

Tanzania

In Tanzania, the Ministry of Finance developed a process to systematically collect and analyse

poverty data. This system used surveys and census data to support a poverty reduction agenda by feeding baseline and progress data about changes in poverty levels into Annual and Millennium Development Goal reports, generating reports on regional trends in poverty indicators. For example, the system reveals large improvements in infant and child mortality indicators. This system informs policy-making process and tracks the progress of programme outcomes.

PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS AND MAJOR ASPECTS DISCUSSED DURING THE CONFERENCE

This section highlights and summarizes some of the major ideas that were used to generate discussion and reflection during the NEC conference.

- Evaluations are most useful if they are timely and feed into budget debates and programme improvements. That an evaluation is not immediately used does not mean that it is not useful; it may be used some time in the future. Presenting evaluative evidence can influence policy even if not directly or immediately.
- Organizations, governments and policy makers need practice, experience, incentives and the will to become adept at using evaluations for learning and improvement. The evaluation field is paying increasingly more attention to building capacities for evaluation—in conduct, management and use—into programmes and organizations.
- There are strong linkages between evaluation quality and use. There are also crucial linkages between an evaluation's user-friendliness and its capacity to communicate. Hence, there is need for capacities to support dissemination and knowledge management.
- It is important to distinguish between capacities to plan and produce evaluations and the capacities to use evaluations.
- To promote evaluation use, it is worth strengthening not only the incentives and capacities to produce an evaluation, but also incentives and capacities to use evaluation findings. In addition, there are also psychological barriers (e.g. misunderstanding of evaluations and criticism) that should be overcome in order to enhance the likelihood of evaluation buy-in and use.
- Evaluation users are ultimately people and individuals. This "personal factor" (Patton 2008), refers to the presence of an identifiable individual or group that truly cares about the evaluation and its findings and will use it to inform policy or change. These people are "champions" of use of evaluation for policy and organizational change.
- As use ultimately depends on the users, the conference aim was that participants, individuals or national groups, together with UNDP, become champions of evaluation capacity and use for more effective policy in their own governments and countries.

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MAIN OUTCOMES OF THE 2ND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON NATIONAL EVALUATION CAPACITIES

BACKGROUND

The 2nd International Conference on National Evaluation Capacities opened on 12 September 2011 at the Protea Hotel Balalaika in Johannesburg, South Africa. Ms. Azusa Kubota and Mr. Indran Naidoo welcomed the conference participants and introduced the distinguished guests who provided opening remarks: Mr. Ben Mthembu, Chairperson, Office of Public Service Commission of South Africa; Mr. Agostinho Zacarias, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in South Africa; and Mr. Sean Phillips, Director General, Department of Performance monitoring and evaluation. Mr. Juha Uitto, Deputy Director, Evaluation Office, UNDP provided a recap of the 2009 NEC conference in Casablanca, Morocco. He touched upon the key points and recommendations drawn from the previous conference. Ms. Azusa Kubota and Mr. Indran Naidoo closed the conference, with final remarks by Mr. Mashwahle Diphofa, Director General, Office of Public Service Commission; Mr. Ernest Fausther, Officer in Charge, UNDP Johannesburg Regional Service Center; and Mr. Juha Uitto.

The tone of the conference and its theme, 'Use of Evaluation', chosen based on the ideas of participants of the past NEC conference in 2009, was set by the preparation of the Conceptual Framework by the NEC Conference Advisory Group with inputs from the UNDP Evaluation Office and the Office of Public Service Commission. Mr. Rachid Benmokhtar Benabdellah (Morocco) presented it on behalf of the advisory group and the NEC organizers. The main issues addressed in the presentations were anticipated in this session and included:

- How to maintain balance and independence of the evaluations;
- How to make evaluation more timely, while also pursuing effective monitoring;
- Dissemination of evaluation findings and use for policy;
- How to handle useful evaluation findings, both good ones, welcomed by decision-makers, as well as the negative ones; and
- The importance of champions of evaluation, and of the independence of individual evaluators.

Use of evaluation for public policy and programmes was the first plenary session. Ms. Sudha Pillai (India) spoke on the role of evaluation in planning in India; Mr. Velayuthan Sivagnanasothy (Sri Lanka) presented the role of evaluation in influencing the policy from the Sri Lankan perspective, Mr. Indran Naidoo (South Africa) described the use question in South Africa (with examples and lessons from the Public Service Commission), and Mr. Walter Mauricio Aguilar and Mr. Diego Dorado presented their ideas on how to advocate for changes in public policy through effective evaluation in Colombia. The discussion focused on the importance of institutionalizing the evaluation function. The main points highlighted were the:

- Need for positive linkages between planning departments and independent evaluation departments in governments;
- Use of evaluation to explain implementation of public policies and to inform stakeholders;
- Importance of the participation of civil society at all levels in evaluation;
- Importance of joint evaluations, and of recipients and donors working together in doing so;
- Independence of evaluators (both political and financial) as a key to quality of evaluations;
- Importance of the search for 'champions' to promote effective evaluations in different countries; and
- The need to evaluate the evaluators, despite a generalized lack of clarity on the ways to do so.

Systemic factors contributing to use of evaluation was discussed in a first panel session. Mr. Aristide Djidjoho (Benin) presented on the use of evaluation and development in a national assessment in Benin; Mr. Prajapati Trivedi (India) spoke on the Indian experience with the performance monitoring and evaluation system for government departments, and Mr. Henry Morales from Guatemala talked about multi-stakeholder participatory evaluation systems in the field of public policy.

The ensuing discussion focused on factors enabling the environment and the institutional frameworks that can contribute to the use of evaluation. Some of the main points highlighted during the discussion were the:

- Government involvement as a key factor in allowing effective follow-up of actions and recommendations from evaluations and dissemination of evaluations among stakeholders;
- Importance of multi-stakeholder participation in evaluation systems;
- Need to understand differences and interdependence between monitoring and evaluation; and
- Increasing the roles of developing National Evaluation Policies, of professionalizing the evaluation function and of developing national funds and councils for evaluation as possible next required actions for some countries.

The session was concluded with a suggestion to develop an International Index that allows evaluating the evaluation systems.

Impact of audits and budgeting in evaluation were discussed in a second panel session. Ms. Selma Maria Hayakawa Serpa (Brazil) presented ways to promote accountability and enhance programmes and policies through instrumental use of evaluations carried out by the Brazilian Court of Audit. Following, a video by Mr. Mohammed Chafiki from Morocco was presented on the case of gender responsive budgeting as a tool for public policy evaluation. The following discussion mainly highlighted:

- How audits are exercises that can contribute to the evaluation of policies and integration of evaluation in the budgeting process, in order to improve the effectiveness of public policy; and
- The need to launch a discussion in the evaluation community on the respective roles of audit and of evaluation in order to analyse, from an international perspective, issues such as methodology, standards, data quality, causality, credibility of conclusions and competences of the auditors, as practices in doing so vary depending on cultural and other factors.

Use of evaluation for public policy and programmes were discussed in a second plenary session. Mr. Yonghe Zheng (China) spoke on the roles of users in enhancing the utility of evaluation with reference to the international evaluation on the funding and management performance of the National Natural Science Foundation of China; Mr. Albert Byamugisha (Uganda) presented on giving national direction through evaluation, with his country's case of evaluating its Poverty Eradication Action Plan; Mr. Mohamed Benkassmi and Mr. Mohammed Mouime from Morocco described their example of an information system for evaluating human development public policy; Ms. Hortensia Perez (Mexico) presented the key elements of evaluation as a decision-making tool, referring to the performance evaluation experience in Mexico, and Ms. Junia Quiroga from Brazil analysed the strengths and weaknesses in using evaluation results in decision-making for social programmes, with reference to the evaluation system of the Ministry of Social Development and the Fight Against Hunger in their country.

Monitoring and how it facilitates use of evaluation was discussed in a third panel session. Ms. Hernan Rodriguez Minier from the Dominican Republic described his country's experience in the design and implementation of a monitoring system as a community methodology to measure progress and impacts of the Millennium Development Goals and National Development Strategy; Mr. Ronald Mangani from Malawi presented on use of evaluation in managing for development results, Mr. Seydou Yayé (Niger) talked about the process of Project Advancement Control with reference to the case of the Programme to Combat Poverty in Niger; Mr. Bahodir Eshboev presented strategic development goals and priorities of the national monitoring and evaluation system of the Republic of Tajikistan; and Mr. Ekingo Magembe from Tanzania described the importance of monitoring and evaluation in

achieving national development policies and programme targets.

The discussion focused on emerging monitoring and evaluation priority challenges, in particular the need to learn from the experience of other countries, strengthen monitoring and evaluation capacity, use best practices, establish unified monitoring and evaluation networks with development partners, promote with the private sector and investors the use of monitoring and evaluation data, institutionalize monitoring and evaluation activities across government departments and set targets and baselines to help conducting monitoring and evaluation.

In terms of data and information management, the issues discussed dwell on the scarce availability and uneven quality of data (particularly for MDG monitoring), the lack of common methodologies to collect data, the lack of standardized and harmonized formats (which contributed to uneven report quality) and the need to be able to count on data that comes from all players, not just from a few (e.g. the government). In terms of sustainability, it was observed that changes in government and the end or discontinuation of projects can threaten proper monitoring and evaluation.

Establishing evaluation systems, taking use of evaluation into account were discussed in the fourth panel session, included a presentations by Mr. Ryan Cooper from Chile on the Compass Commission, Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab; Ms. Ana Morice (Costa Rica) on assessing the impact of strategies to reduce child mortality in Costa Rica; Ms. Shahrazat Haji Ahmad on the Malaysian experience on the use of evaluation; Mr. Mohamed Fadel of Mauritania on using evaluation in decision-making for public policies and development programmes; Mr. Darinchuluun Bazarvaani from Mongolia on the evaluation of the implementation of the MDG-based comprehensive National Development Strategy and using evaluation results; and Mr. Farkhat Kassimov (Kazakhstan) on the experience, challenges, immediate outcomes and future prospects from the case of the Kazakhstan's government performance evaluation. The discussion that followed highlighted a range of aspects:

- Challenges in promoting political commitment, to balance between participation and independence of evaluations;
- The need to strengthen national capacities to manage the evaluations as a critical factor to deal with staff turnover, with the lack of political support and lack of involvement of the key actors, and with budget constraints;
- The impact of the lack of legal frameworks, in relation to the need to guarantee changes implemented after evaluations;
- Issues with financing evaluations, the government commitment to funding evaluations being a way leading to more ownership of the information generated by evaluations;
- The need to institutionalize and strengthen the professional capacity for evaluation, including enhancing mechanisms to communicate the results, findings and recommendations;
- The need to synchronize evaluations with planning cycles and budgeting processes; and

- The fact that when users of evaluation do not participate actively and from the beginning in the process, the recommendations have a much lower probability of being used.

On the first day, publications, posters and evaluation materials were displayed. Zambia's Ms. Prudence Kaoma had a poster on the Conference's theme; Ms. Marcia Paterno Joppert (Brazil) on the demand and recent developments of monitoring and evaluation in Brazil; Ms. Ana Morice from Costa Rica portrayed her country's experience on assessing the impact of strategies to reduce child mortality; and Thania de la Garza and Hortensia Pérez from Mexico shared their experience on focusing on follow-up recommendation mechanism for the improvement of public policies.

Towards longer-term initiatives on national evaluation capacity, the final plenary, allowed significant further reflection and discussion, as well as to recap the emerging issues and lessons. The main points that were raised or revisited were:

- Evaluation being a key component of public policy, yet it may not be interpreted as such in many countries. It is crucial, therefore, to promote public participation and have it integrated constitutionally;
- The promotion of use of evaluation should allow broader access and democratization of information for the data to be validated and to allow the public to make their own assessment of the reality;
- Evaluations should be disseminated by independent bodies to communicate the results properly, credibly and in full (i.e. both the positive and negative findings and recommendations);
- Evaluation may be used as a tactic in a political context. The sustainability of the evaluation process, in fact, has to do with how it links with the overall political process. Yet a common feeling is that government should not evaluate itself;
- For evaluation to be used, useful communication strategies must be developed. Findings need to be better synthesized in ways appropriately directed at possible evaluation users;
- Some factors influencing the use of evaluation are directly linked to whether there is an enabling democratic environment within an evaluation culture permeating in the country's society;
- Appropriate institutional frameworks, with the existence of national or sectoral departments with their own funding and agenda, laws and rules for evaluation, may contribute significantly to promote evaluation use;
- Evaluation report formats should present the government's performance in more homogeneous and user-friendly ways;

- Evaluations should be integrated in countries' legal framework, possibly in developing national evaluation policies. Some national contexts, however, may not be ready for such integration;
- Evaluations depend on the state of the country's democracy. For example, monitoring and evaluation in a closed country is not very feasible or useful. Transparency, therefore, appears to go hand in hand with democracy;
- The importance of differentiating between types of evaluation. Process evaluations may be faster and have greater impact, while if results are not in time for an administration, they can help the next one, and possibly other countries too;
- The importance of defining the arbiters of evaluations, because evaluations may depend on the demand of those who have to implement the results and may exclude the evaluated civil society; and
- Governments may need support to understand and make the distinction between driving and requesting an evaluation and how to make proper use of it once completed.

The discussion ended with opening the question of 'who may evaluate the evaluator'.

Themes raised as potential focus for the next conference were around the existence of different types of use and their relation to different types of evaluations; evaluation as an important part of the policy cycle; ways of fomenting political will to support evaluation use; and how to improve the quality of information and information systems to support evaluations. Examples of best practices from countries that implemented and improved evaluation practice have also been requested.

In terms of location, suggestions were received about having the next conference in the Latin America and the Caribbean region, with emphasis to also bring experiences from countries from that region. Several individual countries expressed an interest to host the next conference.

Monitoring mechanisms for conference follow-up were proposed, including a reflection process in each country, starting with the synthesis of the conference, calling for different actors within the country to share their collective reflections; exchanging experiences regionally, starting by means of an Internet portal to be provided by UNDP; and UNDP publishing such experiences. It was also suggested that before the next conference, each country follows up on their papers.

COUNTRY PAPERS

BENIN

BRAZIL

CHINA

COLOMBIA

COSTA RICA

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

GUATEMALA

INDIA

MALAWI

MALAYSIA

MEXICO

MOROCCO

NIGER

SOUTH AFRICA

SRI LANKA

TANZANIA

UGANDA

USE OF EVALUATION FOR PUBLIC POLICY AND PROGRAMMES – CHALLENGES, FACTORS AND OPPORTUNITIES: COUNTRY CASE STUDIES

SOUTH AFRICA: THE USE QUESTION – EXAMPLES AND LESSONS FROM THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

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COUNTRY CONTEXT

South Africa is a middle-income country with a diverse population of approximately 50 million people. The newest democracy in Africa, it achieved democratic rule in 1994 and adopted its constitution in 1996. Given the legacy of colonialism and apartheid, its stark geographic and economic landscape mirrors racial patterns. Since the advent of democracy, citizens have had high expectations that the democratic government would bring about economic and social transformation, and citizens generally look to the government to lead and effect change. The model of a pro-poor, interventionist and transformative South African developmental state has been working in the sense that policies and government programmes seek to ensure that political mandates are met.

The South African state has a bias towards redressing apartheid and thus focuses its programmes on effecting pro-poor and transformative programmes. In order to achieve this political mandate it requires strong monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and oversight in order to ensure the free flow of quality information on progress so that timely interventions can be made. Institutions supporting democracy (termed the Chapter 9 and 10 bodies in the 'Constitution of the Republic of South Africa') are prominent, and joined by the common purpose of upholding constitutional values and principles. Over the past 15 years, these newly mandated bodies working in the pursuit of good governance have developed a sophisticated oversight infrastructure that embraces most of the performance areas of government. Good governance is the extent to which there is transparency, efficiency, accountability and sound human resource management.

South Africa has a vibrant media, and much of the country's discourse focuses on issues of government performance. The bodies mentioned in this paper contribute to this discourse, largely by having produced some form of M&E. The work of these bodies focuses on different performance areas and become the subject of debate. Active citizen and political interest

in government performance results implies a high demand for performance results, thus creating good conditions for M&E to flourish. By focusing on results and examining different evaluation purposes, this paper demonstrates the tangible benefits that stem from M&E.

M&E WITHIN THE OVERSIGHT ARCHITECTURE

South African democracy occurred parallel to the international movement over the past two decades of increased concern regarding the quality of public services. The increase in M&E as an activity, profession and function within government reflects a quest for credible and independent information on the performance of entities, the government in particular. It is no longer adequate for governments to report on their own progress; independent oversight has become mandatory, and the results of such reviews and assessments must be publicly available and disseminated without pre-release censorship.

M&E addresses a very real and direct public concern, as all citizens are interested parties in various roles (e.g. taxpayers, voters). Democracy necessitates that there be ongoing engagement between government and citizens as part of the accountability process; policy makers require M&E for activities such as policy review, implementation and improvement.

The following areas provide notable evidence of the value of M&E. M&E contributes to accountability, transparency and efficiency, with M&E evidence potentially forming the basis of policy and programme review. In addition, M&E has grown as a profession and is of public interest in that several stakeholders use M&E to debate matters of public concern. Given the various deliverables of M&E, a multi-pronged approach is required so that an M&E activity achieves the following:

- Stipulates clearly the evaluation framework, and through this the key performance questions to be asked;
- Demonstrates how different evaluation frameworks intersect with each other and promotes collaboration (rather than competition) among M&E actors;
- Ensures data integrity by specifying norms and standards for data gathering, validation, use and storage;
- Targets different decision makers with different evaluation results and with a clear understanding of what is expected from a particular evaluation intervention;
- Reports on the uptake of findings and recommendations so that there is a clear sense of how M&E activities affect policies and practices;
- Achieves all three M&E outcomes—transparency, accountability and learning—by recognizing the dynamic and interrelated nature among M&E purposes; and
- Contributes to democracy by providing evidence for debate and engagement, thus preventing an abuse of power.

The South African context, which has many producers and users of oversight data, illustrates how this approach relates to the supply and demand aspects of M&E. Suppliers/producers of oversight data (by M&E-related bodies) include the Public Service Commission (PSC),

Public Protector, Auditor-General, National Treasury, the Department of Public Service and Administration and Statistics South Africa. Among demanders/users of information are entities that are compelled to use it (e.g. departmental management), groups that require it for their own oversight (e.g. parliament), and groups that would draw on the information for their own research or advocacy purposes (e.g. academia, citizens).

The Presidency's Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation supports a Ministry that provides an overarching structure that guides M&E in the country, and is responsible for driving the government's outcomes approach. Evaluation results complement the work of the Presidency, which has the highest political authority to act.

The nature and primary purpose of evaluations

Given strong national efforts, driven by bodies such as the PSC, the Auditor-General and the Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation, evaluations are undertaken and serve many purposes. Each of the oversight institutions in the country employs a combination of strategies to ensure that their particular mandates are met. The country subscribes to evaluation, which is a part of the thrust of the developmental state and which is also a legitimate activity stemming from the fact that M&E is reflected within the constitution as a mandatory function. Furthermore, government policies stipulate the need for evaluation, and this has been followed through in practice where programmes and policies are regularly evaluated. An evaluation policy has recently been adopted, after extensive consultation, thus supporting the evaluation function. Though the practice is not uniform throughout the country, attempts have been made to standardize practice though norms and standards. Oversight institutions' primary purpose remains accountability, which is in line with various constitutional provisions related to good governance. Attendant benefits, even if difficult to discern in the short term, include greater transparency about programme performance, and thus greater dissemination of results and learning.

Evaluation efforts cover a spectrum of areas and a range of issues and priorities. Different institutions conduct evaluations of policy, programmes, projects, specific interventions, initiatives and other areas. These generally occur in contexts such as standards of accountability, transparency, relevance, public interest (e.g. anti-corruption initiatives), redress and human resource practices. The evaluation of poverty reduction projects has received much attention, but of greatest public interest has been the monitoring and evaluation of service delivery.

Service delivery has been evaluated using different methodologies, and results triangulated drawing from other evaluations sources (e.g. non-government sector). The assessments have been against principles for Batho Pele, which is a normative set of what citizens can expect. The methods used to evaluate service delivery include compliance assessments, audits, citizen forums, inspections and appraisals. There is a significant amount of data on service delivery in different sectors and at different levels of analysis (national, provincial and local), which allows for effective interventions. The results are made publicly available for engagement and customized for management action (which the PSC then follows up on).

CONSTITUTIONALLY DRIVEN M&E

There are distinct advantages to having constitutionally-driven M&E, such as enjoying universal status and respect, a guaranteed independence and high levels of credibility.

Mandated M&E efforts ensure that M&E is taken seriously and not viewed as an option. The constitutional provision for M&E, which the PSC is tasked with, and under which it is supposed to conduct in a manner which is fair, without fear, favour or prejudice, means that the PSC enjoys access and authority.

The nine values and principles for public administration are extensive in scope, and each of the nine values and principles is informed by a further set of policies and procedures. Engaging in an assessment of any of these requires identifying targets, norms and standards, which must be underpinned by a measurement system that allows for quantification of the values and principles. It is thus a complex task. The PSC has defined each of these in performance terms. For example, when assessing professional ethics there is an explicit understanding of what successful performance in the area means, how it can be measured and reported upon. There would thus be credible indicators, standards, methods for data collection, scoring and reporting systems for each. This has made the often lofty and intangible values and principles real and concrete. These principles are put into practice through the results for each area, whether generated for departments or entities.

The PSC has translated its constitutional mandate into a differentiated M&E system, which has provided it with the following:

- The ability to communicate confidently about the source, need and purpose of M&E across the country. This has resulted in a clearly defined M&E programme, which has also helped to galvanize support for M&E;
- The ability to choose evaluation issues due to its mandate to act on request or on its own accord. This has reinforced its independent status and the perception that it is not a political structure, but rather one that serves the country as a whole; and
- The ability to engage a range of actors with the common purpose of advancing M&E, which has resulted in the growth of the South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association, thus building M&E capacity in the country.

DIFFERENTIATED M&E PROGRAMME

It is expected that M&E should lead to the attainment of some purpose or goal. In this case, the national development plans would include the Millennium Development Goals, within which are clear targets that the country needs to achieve. The work of the National Planning Commission will become important, as the diagnostic analysis of development issues is critical for tracking purposes and assessing the extent to which policy and other interventions ameliorate problems.

It was recently launched and through the process of consultation currently underway, before proposals are formally adopted, greater clarity on what constitutes success in each of the areas should emerge. The Outcomes Approach of the presidency clearly defines goals to be achieved, thus making it possible to monitor and evaluate progress over time. The country has several frameworks for measuring critical elements that make up development, such as the budget (and efficient use thereof), human resource management, service delivery, corruption measures and public participation.

Citizens

The PSC has taken a deliberate approach to ensure that citizens are engaged with government performance. The most accessible accountability tool is a toll-free facility that operates in all 11 South African official languages 24 hours per day, 365 days a year. The system has categorized and sent over 9,000 cases to the appropriate departments for attention. In many cases, the PSC intervened directly through investigation. Through this facility, the PSC has helped to recoup the equivalent of $13,000.

Information from this M&E system assists in decision-making, as it provides departments with a reflection of what is taking place within them. In addition, political and administrative leadership have reporting requirements for actions taken to address referred cases. Aggregated information enters the public domain, providing the basis for debate, and provides the basis for generating more empirical data on corruption-related issues. Studies have indicated that reporting of incidents is really reporting of allegations of corruption, and not necessarily an indication of actual corruption. Only through investigation into the voracity of each of the allegations can a more accurate picture emerge as to what the actual incidents of corruption are.

Announced and unannounced inspections conducted by the staff of the PSC have provided a means for assessing how services are experienced. Service delivery inspections conducted at institutions such as clinics, police stations and courts have resulted in action-oriented reports that have been presented to the political and administrative leadership for action. There is substantial evidence that in sectors that have undergone inspection, service delivery has improved. The PSC has been able to triangulate this data with data from its other M&E activities, and there is now a solid body of work that reflects how citizens perceive and experience government services.

Parliament

As a key user of M&E, it is important that the Parliament maintains relations between oversight bodies and itself. With power to summons and call to account, Parliament is a critical client of the PSC. Recently, different parliamentary committees have used PSC work. For example, the Portfolio Committee on Human Settlements used a PSC report on the department's governance to review its focus on how the programme is delivered. The rich oversight information generated by the PSC and Auditor-General provides the Parliament the ability to more effectively direct political and administrative leadership.

Engaging with the Parliament increases the respect accorded to evaluation reports. National and provincial government departments that are being evaluated are aware that reports will be reviewed by the various parliamentary committees. There are 140 of these entities in the country. The fact that there are different users with different levels of authority interrogating evaluation results generated by the PSC and other institutions, evaluated departments are beginning to take the exercise of evaluation seriously. The process of presenting findings to parliament and the provincial legislatures and committees facilitates the dissemination of information in the public domain, which further helps advance transparency and use. Some of the more successful evaluation endeavours include reports (e.g. 'The evaluation of the Department of Human Settlement') that lead to debate (by Parliament

and then followed by the media) regarding its findings and where department leadership was asked to comment on the report's recommendations. Parliament and its committees are key to transforming evaluation findings into action; the good relationship between the Parliament and the PSC has helped advance M&E in the country.

Departments

There are different ways in which the PSC engages with departments, which are key service delivery units. The evaluation process helps to clarify the extent to which departments have successfully translated policy into tangible programmes, and the extent to which the process has been efficient and effective. A factor that contributes to overall departmental performance is the quality of staff management, which includes recruitment and selection and performance management. Therefore, an assessment of a department is a reflection of the overall quality of the leadership (political and administrative), strategic management (staff, resources, stakeholders) and the extent to which the developmental state is successful in a particular policy area.

The PSC engages with departments in all of the areas mentioned (e.g. reviews of policy, investigations into maladministration and other forms of reviews), and produces comparative data that indicates how departments perform in areas such as grievance management, managing financial misconduct and performance management. The most comprehensive assessment of departments is done through the Public Service Monitoring and Evaluation System, which has thus far assessed 150 departments and produced province- and sector-specific reports. The system allocates a score for each of the nine focal areas, termed the constitutional values and principles for public administration, and produces the basis for engagement on performance. Not only does it draw on performance information from other oversight bodies, but it also generates primary performance data. The process of engaging with results is also empowering, following the normal process of presenting draft findings for response, engaging with the management of departments on the scores, and making and tracking the implementation of recommendations.

The System is under a review process in order to make it more flexible to cater for the different sectors and to increase its diagnostic and evaluative elements. The initial System was standards-based, focused more on departmentally provided information, reduced evaluator discretion and placed a greater emphasis on compliance. As the public service evolved, it was decided to allow greater flexibility for diagnosis and to ensure that the administrative information on performance is validated through visits to service delivery sites. The aim is to gain a more comprehensive assessment of departmental performance. In time, this will include greater collaboration with other central M&E agencies in order to ensure, for example, that there is no duplication of effort and that issues such as outcomes are considered.

Broader society

There will always be perceptions that the evaluation function is not sufficiently independent and is captured by some interest groups. This can and has been addressed by working actively with stakeholders so that the value of the discourse becomes a factor in ensuring that findings are irreproachable and the evaluation's independence is respected. The PSC has

engaged actively with a cross-section of society to ensure that it is perceived as genuinely advancing broad social dialogue on the evaluation of government.

Communication strategies have been used to draw in greater sections of society to engage on evaluation findings. The media (print, radio and television) help disseminate messages from engagements such as hearings, inspections, round tables, seminars, talk shows call-ins and conferences. M&E use has also been improved through collaboration with academia, the media, research institutions, non-governmental organizations and M&E professionals. This can be noted in the increase in citations of PSC work. The PSC is exploring technology as a means of accelerating report dissemination.

EVIDENCE OF USE: TOWARDS RESULTS BASED DECISION-MAKING

The PSC monitors all of its recommendations through a systematic tracking system, from the point at which they leave the PSC to the point where they reach departments. The purpose of tracking is to ensure that recommendations are not lost; a deliberate dissemination strategy that forces decision makers to react to findings by the PSC prevents this from happening.

Not all reports necessarily require a response. In such instances, these would contribute to knowledge generation. It is important that the intention of each report is known up front. However, in most instances the evaluation reports require a management response, and it is thus necessary to realistically establish what this means in practice; by whom, by when and when a response would be viewed as valid. The PSC learned that it was not adequately directing its initial recommendations, but the centralized tracking system improved recommendations' uptake.

There are now several instances in which the PSC can claim that an evaluation has led to change. Examples include policy review (the term of appointment of heads of departments) and adjustment to overarching programmes related to rural development. More specifically, at a departmental level, the PSC can track whether a change that has been recommended has been implemented. The follow-up on inspected sites of service delivery has also shown improvements, which once again demonstrates how a proactive M&E approach can provide assistance. The more M&E units are called upon to make presentations, the greater the receptiveness to acting on results. This helps to deepen the accountability framework.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This paper has shown how a comprehensive approach is required to ensure use. It has indicated the need for infrastructure to be in place, an enabling environment and demand and desire for results. This has taken place in South Africa due in part to the urgency for social change and its historic circumstances. This paper has indicated that there are several M&E players, all of which contribute to the oversight infrastructure. It is important that they collaborate so that there is no evaluation fatigue. Critically important, is that there must be a directed M&E effort, which entails delineating the clients in order to establish both individual and collective needs, and then addressing these through customized evaluation products, approaches and services. In conclusion, evaluators compete for decision makers' time and attention. This requires strategic and strong communication so as to demonstrate that M&E leads to evidence-based decision-making.

SRI LANKA: USE OF EVALUATION IN PUBLIC POLICY – SRI LANKAN EXPERIENCE

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INTRODUCTION

After bringing the three-decade-old war to an end, Sri Lanka has achieved many positive developments. Sri Lanka's economy has continued to grow at a rate of over 6 to 7 percent per year and, despite local and global challenges, has successfully reduced its level of poverty from 22.7 percent in 2002 to 7.6 percent in 2010. Sri Lanka has achieved near universal literacy and has made remarkable progress in social development (reducing maternal and infant mortality in particular), and is well on track to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

His Excellency the President Mahinda Rajapaksa devised the 'Mahinda Chintana—Vision for the Future', which sets out the government's development strategy for a planned period through 2020. The development strategy focuses not only on higher economic growth, but also on higher quality of growth in each sector and on poverty reduction. The thrust of this national development strategy is to share the benefits of economic growth across all segments of society with equity, social inclusion and environmental sustainability. Sri Lanka is concerned with the need to efficiently and effectively manage public expenditures to achieve better outcomes and results. As such, monitoring, evaluation and results-based management approaches were given high priority in the public sector.

Sri Lanka is one of the few countries in the world that has had a separate ministry for monitoring and evaluation for a long period of time. This oversight ministry was known as the Ministry of Plan Implementation. Although there was a need to reduce the number of ministries, the government continued to maintain a separate department for monitoring and evaluation functions—the Department of Foreign Aid and Budget Monitoring (DFABM).

NATIONAL EVALUATION CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

In the early 1990s, the then-Ministry of Plan Implementation established a Post Evaluation Unit (with the technical support of the Asian Development Bank). The major focus and the scope of the technical assistance included:

- Introducing appropriate methodology, techniques and procedures for post-evaluation[2] dissemination of findings to relevant officials;
- Engaging external consultants for short periods to assist in providing on-the-job training to officials of select line ministries and agencies, planners and evaluators and to assist in developing guideline and procedures for post-evaluation;
- Providing in-depth training for select senior staff at the Post-Evaluation Office of the Asian Development Bank; and
- Providing computers and ancillary equipment and software and developing a computerized evaluation information system for storing and retrieving post-evaluation findings.

Through this technical assistance, a core group of officials were trained on post-evaluation, and they have gained considerable skills, capabilities, knowledge and professional orientation in the field of post-evaluation. The technical assistance also helped to institutionalize post-evaluation within the government.

The mandate of the Post-Evaluation Unit was to undertake post-evaluation of completed projects and provide feedback to the planning, budgeting and policy-making process. The Asian Development Bank and UNDP supported the strengthening of the national evaluation system in government.

NATIONAL EVALUATION ARRANGEMENTS

The Department of Foreign Aid and Budget Monitoring of the Ministry of Plan Implementation undertakes ongoing, ex-post and impact evaluations of selected mega-projects[3] and disseminates evaluation findings to concerned stakeholders. In undertaking evaluations, the Department gives due consideration to OECD-DAC (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development–Development Assistance Committee) evaluation criteria (e.g. the relevance of the project strategy, efficiency of implementation, effectiveness, impact and sustainability). In order to maintain evaluation quality, the Department also considers the OECD-DAC Evaluation Quality Standards. On the invitation of donors, the Department of Foreign Aid and Budget Monitoring participates in joint evaluations with donors, which helps create national ownership and builds local evaluation capacity. The Department also

3. Evaluation of a development intervention after it has been completed. It may be undertaken directly after or long after completion. The intent is to identify the factors of success or failure, to assess the sustainability of results and impacts, and to draw conclusions that may inform other interventions.
4 Mega-projects are projects with a value of more than US$5 million.

undertakes diagnostic rapid assessments through field visits of problem projects and submits flash reports to facilitate troubleshooting of projects that are behind schedule. Given the human resource constraints, the Ministry of Plan Implementation decided to outsource the evaluation of priority mega-projects.

EVALUATION INFORMATION SYSTEM

In many countries, a key problem has been the inability to access evaluation information available on completed and ongoing development projects and programmes. Evaluation lessons and findings are important and useful to improve the quality of new projects and programmes, particularly as it helps to avoid past mistakes and builds on best practices in the formulation and design of new projects.

Having recognized the importance of the systematic use of evaluation and feedback arrangements, DFABM took action to establish a Web-based Post-Evaluation Information System to ensure effective dissemination of evaluation findings, lessons learned and findings synthesis. This evaluation information provides sector-wide synthesis in order to ensure more effective feedback and to assist in integrating evaluation findings into planning, budgeting and policy-making processes. Public availability of evaluation reports through the Evaluation Information System is expected to improve public accountability and transparency.

Evaluation answers questions of what works, in what context does it work, and what does not work and why. The responses are important for planning and programming and contribute to development effectiveness. The Evaluation Information System enables development practitioners to access evaluation information anywhere and at any time, thus empowering them to make evidence-based development decisions. The establishment of the Evaluation Information System is considered a critical milestone in the Sri Lankan evaluation initiative, as it is expected not only to improve aid effectiveness but also to promote a learning culture. UNDP extended support for developing the System.

POLICY EVALUATION: EVALUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PARIS DECLARATION ON AID EFFECTIVENESS

Sri Lanka strongly believes that the five principles of the Paris Declaration (national ownership, alignment, harmonization, managing for development results and mutual accountability) are fundamental to improving aid and development effectiveness. In 2009, DFABM (with UNDP support) evaluated the implementation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. An evaluation reference group was formed to advise the evaluators on the design and practices of evaluation, and a management group coordinated the evaluation.

The evaluation identified impediments to implementing the Paris Declaration and helped the Government of Sri Lanka take suitable actions to ensure effective implementation of Declaration principles. Moreover, the evaluation findings were fed into the global evaluation process, enabling the OECD-DAC Development Evaluation Network undertake a synthesis of the Paris Declaration evaluation in 8 countries and 11 donors. These findings were useful in formulating the Accra Agenda for Action at the High level forum on Aid Effectiveness, held in September 2008 in Ghana.

SRI LANKA EVALUATION ASSOCIATION

The Sri Lanka Evaluation Association (SLEVA), as a civil society organization, plays a catalyst role in advocacy, awareness creation, training and helping to develop standards, ethics, methodologies and best practices to improve evaluation culture. Its membership comprises academia, researchers, private sector consultants, government officials and non-governmental representatives with an interest in evaluation. SLEVA works closely with DFABM in building evaluation capacity and culture in areas such as evaluation training, sharing evaluation best practices, supporting the organization of evaluation forums to discuss evaluation topics, holding international and national conferences on evaluation and promoting community of evaluation practitioners in the country.

STRATEGIES TO STRENGTHEN NATIONAL EVALUATION SYSTEMS

DFABM has identified the following strategies to strengthen the National Evaluation System:

Sensitization of policy makers on the importance of the evaluation

- Advocate and sensitize at the political and policy level on the importance of evaluation and ensure its acceptance and placement in key decision-making centres of the government in order to create local demand for monitoring and evaluation; and
- Ensure that evaluation institutions are linked to the planning, budgeting, resource allocation and policy functions of the government and that evaluation concepts are integrated into all areas of the development cycle.

Legal and budgetary support

- Develop a legal foundation to make evaluation mandatory. Use law, decree, cabinet decision or other high-level pronouncements to legitimize evaluation concepts and results-based monitoring and evaluation systems;
- Provide sufficient financial allocations for developing evaluation in all line ministries; and
- Ensure that there is a balance between monitoring and evaluation. Preferably, separate evaluation from monitoring to ensure balanced resource allocation for evaluation.

Sound institutional arrangement

- Strengthen institutional arrangements to place evaluation in a strategic location and to ensure its effective feedback; and
- Establish links between evaluation exercises 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 (quality of evaluations)

- Develop evaluation standards, guidelines and ethics to ensure high-quality evaluations. Ensure scoping sessions are conducted to clarify the evaluative questions, to ensure that the potential users' needs considered and that the timing of the evaluation is appropriate;
- Encourage the National Evaluation Association to actively promote evaluation culture; and
- Develop standards and criteria for good evaluation in collaboration with civil society (e.g. SLEVA) and undertake meta-evaluations to ensure quality evaluations.

Strengthen evaluation guidelines and systems

- Strengthen localized guidelines for systematic evaluations.

Strengthen methodologies and practices

- Make evaluation 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 under time, budget and resource constraints. Ensure that consistent, localized evaluation methodology and terminology are considered essential;
- Re-examine the approaches and tools for evaluating the multiple dimensions of development. Encourage the use of diverse or multiple methods and participatory methods for lessons learning utilization-oriented evaluations; and
- Encourage more joint evaluations instead of donor-driven evaluations in order to enhance ownership and facilitate more effective feedback.

Evaluation capacity development

- Strengthen professional evaluation capacities within the government through continuous staff training;
- Promote in-country evaluation faculty development programmes in the Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration (the government arm for training) and in universities at graduate and postgraduate levels; and
- Strengthen the documentation centre on evaluations, promote the exchange of experiences and access to best practices and sharing of databases.

Strengthen the feedback arrangements

- Improve dissemination of evaluation reports through in-house workshops and seminars, customized reports, evaluation summary reports, press briefings and the Post-Evaluation Information System;

- Establish strong feedback arrangements among evaluation, planning, decision-making, policy formulation, project appraisal, programme management, budgeting and resource allocation functions;
- Ensure action is taken on the recommendations in evaluation reports. Wider dissemination of evaluation information should preferably be shared with the Parliamentary Committee on Public Accounts and the evaluation report should be placed in the library of the Parliament and disseminated to the media. User-friendly evaluation synthesis or summary reports should be widely circulated;
- Stimulate evaluation issues in the country's development dialogue and sector programme assistance. The evaluation units must have active involvement in the planning of new programmes; and
- Incorporate evaluation lessons into new project concept documents or project submission formats so that past mistakes are not repeated. Revise project submission formats to incorporate evaluation lessons of past projects.

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

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

In many countries, including Sri Lanka, the wider dissemination of evaluation findings continues to remain a challenge. Evaluation and planning institutions seem to function in isolation and do not have effective or formalized feedback arrangements to integrate lessons learned into the planning and design of new projects. These institutional gaps defeat the very purpose of evaluation. Therefore, it is necessary to establish strong linkages among evaluations, policy formulation, reforms, planning, budgeting and resource allocation functions. The Government of Sri Lanka has identified the need to establish strong feedback mechanisms.

While recognizing the demand side of the equation for creating local demand for evaluation with a utilization focus, the supply side of the equation that includes skills, procedures, methodologies, data systems and manuals must also be addressed—as is the need to focus on national evaluation capacity development. However, making evaluation information available does not necessarily mean effective utilization. It is hard to justify the existence of an evaluation system that is not utilized effectively. Sri Lanka was able to address some of these issues with the technical assistance support of the Asian Development Bank and UNDP.

It is necessary to examine the balance between learning and accountability. While independent evaluation is important for ensuring objectivity, too much emphasis on accountability-focused, donor-driven independent evaluation functions can constrain lessons learning and feedback. Hence, the Sri Lanka evaluation system recognizes the importance of lessons learning and ownership.

For too long, many countries have not adequately responded to the criticisms that

ex-post evaluations are done late and viewed as 'post-mortem' exercises that do not contribute much to strategic decision-making. It is necessary to recognize the importance of lessons learning and performance accountability. Increasingly, concurrent evaluations are encouraged for mid-course corrections. Also, the Sri Lanka evaluation system encourages donors to undertake more joint evaluations in order to ensure national ownership, lessons learning and capacity building.

Despite enormous methodological and technical challenges (e.g. attribution problems), it is recognized that institutionalizing evaluation is the way forward to ensure results orientation in development work. Moreover, development policy and aid tend to shift from projects and programmes to sector-wide approaches and as such, evaluation approaches need to cover policies, sectors and thematic areas on a country-wide basis. Policy evaluations, sector evaluations and thematic evaluations are becoming equally important and the Sri Lanka evaluation system has given much emphasis to such evaluations.

There has been a general tendency to monitor rather than to evaluate. It is necessary to give equal importance to evaluations by finding the optimal balance between the two activities. Sri Lanka is mindful of these aspects and evaluation is viewed from a wider country-based context.

CONCLUSION

Sri Lanka strongly believes that an evaluation's utility is the prime criterion for judging its worth, regardless of its technical, practical or ethical merit. In order to have an impact, evaluation activities need to be disseminated and communicated, which will ensure behavioural changes and action. Hence, the wider use of evaluation findings in planning, budgeting and policy-making processes is considered fundamental to ensuring development effectiveness.

COLOMBIA: EVALUATION PROCESSES – EXPERIENCES TO SHARE

BY DIEGO DORADO
Director of Public Policy Evaluation of the National Planning Department

INTRODUCTION

Through its Public Policy Evaluation Office (DEPP), Colombia's National Planning Department (DNP) continually seeks out best practices and new challenges to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation components of the National System for Evaluation of Management and Results (SINERGIA).

The evaluation component develops the concept of 'effective evaluations', which aims to ensure that findings and recommendations are useful for policy decisions. This concept is based on the value chain tool, which helps establish evaluations' requirements, hypotheses and scope by drawing on the knowledge of public policy processes (e.g. inputs, procedures, outputs, outcomes and impacts). One of the virtues of effective evaluation is the active participation of stakeholders throughout the evaluation process, which leads to the rapid implementation of the evaluation's recommendations and helps legitimize the evaluation.

Since 2010, the DEPP has followed a standardized process that begins with identifying and selecting evaluations and ends with monitoring the recommendations' implementation. Developing evaluation processes represents a significant achievement in that the parameterization process provides guidelines and methodological and technical information for entities and the general public at the national, departmental and municipal levels. This contributes to widespread understanding of the evaluation and promotes evaluations of public policies.

In this context, the Strategic Policy Evaluations process is composed of five sub-processes. Each of these sub-processes is the product of collaborations between the implementing entity(ies), DNP and DEPP technical management. Since 2006, this model has led to the completion of 58 SINERGIA-led evaluations and the compilation of 241 evaluation exercises

by actors such as academic institutions, research centres and public entities. The SINERGIA database, Evaluation Radar (*Radar de Evaluaciones*) includes these evaluation exercises.

The DEPP has a broad portfolio of assessment methodologies that meet the needs of each intervention. The methodologies are defined during the initial stages of the evaluation process after the selection of the evaluation.

Through technical cooperation, the DEPP has received contributions from state and international institutions that aim to improve public policy evaluation methodologies. For example, the Peer to Peer programme, developed by the United Kingdom and sponsored by The World Bank, ensures an institutional framework for controlling, monitoring and implementing public policies, primarily those related to delivering public services.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF SINERGIA

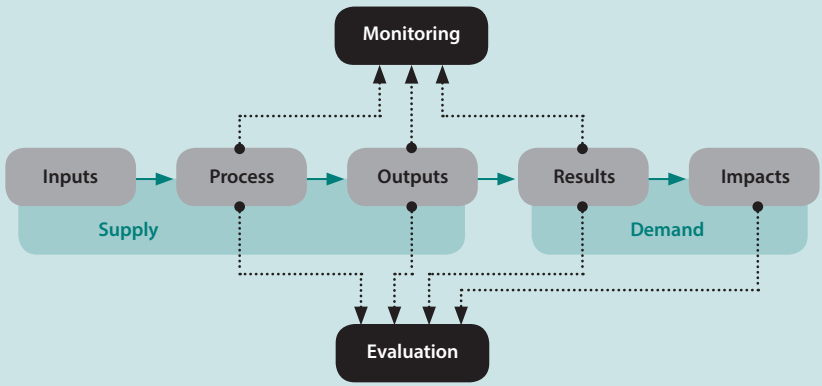
With the goal of strengthening SINERGIA's mission to support the government in staying on track and improving performance as a means to achieve its public policy objectives, the decisive task of achieving conceptual and operational coordination of monitoring and evaluation was undertaken two years ago.

In order to maximize coordination, SINERGIA made precise public policy knowledge the cornerstone of its operations. Thus, it developed the knowledge necessary to carry out its responsibilities based on the theory of change and the value chain.

A complete monitoring and evaluation of public policies requires a clearunderstanding the policies' background and the transformation processes that benefit society.

The value chain is divided into supply and demand for public goods. On one hand, there are the inputs, processes and products, and on the other, the short-term results or outcomes

FIGURE 1. THE VALUE CHAIN



and long-term results or impacts. Monitoring and evaluation are crucial for decision-making along the value chain.

Based on the needs of the Government of Colombia, four characteristics frame the evaluation of public policies:

- **Oriented towards decision-making:** an evaluation is considered effective if it enables decisions to take action to improve the public policies evaluated;
- **Standardized processes:** clearly defining the assessed product chain increases the probability that the assessment will be effective;
- **Permanent support:** technical supervision of evaluations enables results that are based on evidence and not on external evaluators' biases; and
- **Stakeholder participation:** stakeholder involvement (including programme managers and public policy formulators) at the outset of the design process increases evaluations' effectiveness. Further, the evaluation gains legitimacy to the extent that stakeholders have been part of the process and the evaluation results are shared with them.

To implement this framework, SINERGIA developed a subsystem focused on evaluations. SISDEVAL, the National System of Evaluations, is based on three premises:

- **Invest to know:** the depth of the analysis of evaluations is directly related to their cost;
- **Effective evaluations:** since 2010, the Government of Colombia has carried out evaluations based on a process outline. Such processes are included within the Quality Management System of the DNP; and
- **Evaluation Radar:** the DEPP and other national and regional entities carry out evaluation studies, which are vital inputs for decision-making.

THE EFFECTIVE EVALUATION PROCESS

In a context that seeks to improve and search out better citizen information, DEPP and DNP incorporated the Effective Public Policy Evaluations process into its Quality Management System.

The Effective Evaluation Process involves the national government throughout the course of evaluation implementation (see Figure 2). As such, external consulting firms conduct the implementation phase. Stakeholders thus participate throughout these processes in the design and implementation of the public policy to be evaluated. This participation is crucial because it is directly related to the legitimacy of evaluation results.

The five phases of the Effective Evaluation Process are:

1) Selection of policy to be evaluated;

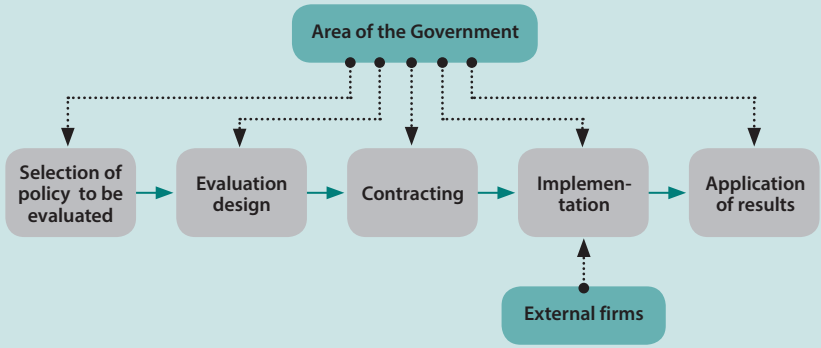
2) Evaluation design;

3) Contracting

4) Implementation; and

5) Application of results.

FIGURE 2. EFFECTIVE EVALUATION PROCESS



1) Selection of the policy to evaluated

The initial phase of the evaluation process, selecting the policy to evaluate, defines the evaluation agenda. The agenda comprises the set of strategic policies to be evaluated for a given period of time (one or multiple years).

The DEPP manages a selective evaluation system, framed within a system defined by supply and demand. This phase begins by identifying strategic public policies defined within the National Development Plan. It then reviews the evaluation commitments of National Economic and Social Policy Council documents[4] and those set during the country's credit operations with multilateral entities.[5] Finally, requests from decentralized and regional entities are accepted and prioritized, leading to evaluations of select policies of those entities.

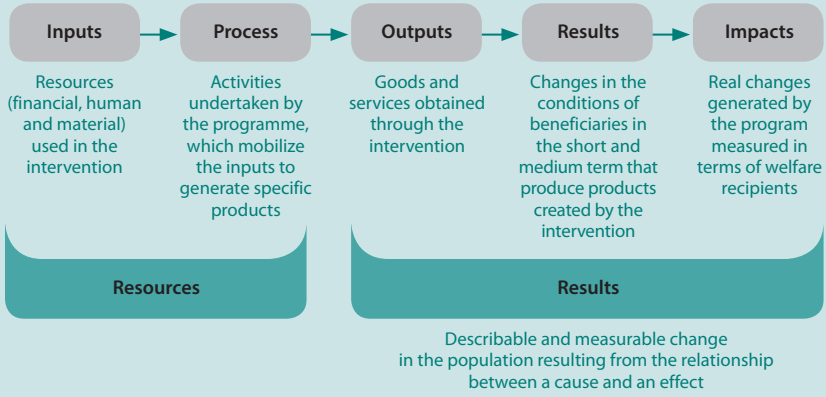
After selecting policies for evaluation, they are prioritized in the DNP Steering Committee. To legitimize the evaluation agenda in all spheres of government, the agenda is presented to the National Economic and Social Policy Council. Once approved, the agenda is published and disseminated to government actors and the evaluation community.[6] Finally, the evaluations are defined by government agreement and respond to UNDP strategic priorities.

4 The National Economic and Social Policy Council is conceived of as a technical entity in charge of formulating public policies and making decisions tied to economic and social planning (e.g. approving the Annual Operation Plan for Investment). In this sense, as policy makers are responsible for allocating investment resources, it has the ability to set evaluation priorities. A National Economic and Social Policy Council document is a technical instrument of coordination and planning through which the government draws economic and social lines. Source: SISCONPES.

6 Regarding the relationship with the Multilateral Bank, in addition to channeling resources for evaluations based on international borrowing, Colombia is exploring the development of memorandums of understanding with multilateral banks so that the design of evaluations associated with the operation are part of the evaluations agenda and fulfill this double purpose, serving the goals of the credit transaction and public policy goals pursued by the government.

7 For the 2011 evaluation agenda (Spanish-language only), see <http://www.dnp.gov.co/PortalWeb/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=KAUDYCxgOho%3d&tabid=1157>.

FIGURE 3. VALUE CHAIN AS THE BASIS OF THE THEORY OF CHANGE



Source: Adapted from Menon, S., J. Karl and K. Wingnaraja, 2009.

2) Evaluation Design

The evaluation scope and methodology are defined during the design phase. Before devising the methodological approach, there is an in-depth study of the theory of change behind the public policy (see Figure 3).

The links of the chain represent the causes and effects of public policies. This enables identifying the interrelated goods offered by the state and the impacts sought for societal welfare, and defining service bottlenecks (which in turn defines the need for an evaluation). After the hypothesis has been set, questions for the evaluation are formulated, and the methodology[7] necessary to respond to the proposed scope is devised. Once the evaluation methodology in place, the resources necessary for the evaluation (e.g. staff, schedule and cost) are determined.

3) Contracting

The consulting firm is selected during the contracting phase. Based on the design selected for the evaluation, terms of reference are developed, the selection process is opened and tenders are received. The firm with the best staff, experience in similar projects and technical proposal is selected.

4) Implementation

The selected consulting firm conducts the evaluation's implementation phase. As the consulting firm develops this phase, the government plays an active and vital role, ensuring that the implementation is conducted according to the scope defined during the evaluation

7 SINERGIA currently applies five assessment methodologies, each of which is represented by a link on the value chain: Evaluation of Operations, Institutional, Executive, Results and Impact.

design. For this phase, teams of stakeholders (evaluation monitoring committees) responsible for discussing and establishing concepts for evaluation products are established.

5) Application of results

After the consulting firm delivers its products, the evaluation enters the application of results phase. The goal of this phase is to disseminate evaluation results through official channels to decision makers and stakeholders so that the results serve as inputs and feedback to the public policy cycle.

This phase is implemented through different communication mechanisms. The consulting firm provides one of the mechanisms, a series of summary sheets (written in simple and clear language) that consolidate the evaluation results. The consulting firm also develops audio-visual supports to complement the summary sheets.

In addition to dissemination agreements, a document is developed containing the conclusions and recommendations to be implemented. An agreement with the evaluated policy's executing agency is established in order to ensure that the agency implements the evaluation's recommendations in accordance with best practices and that the evaluation contributes to improved interventions.

The communication strategies vary according to the target audience. In line with The World Bank document, 'The Road to Results',8 the audience and products are defined in order to devise an outreach strategy for the evaluations. To this end, SINERGIA has defined a series of communication products to promote evaluation use: technical evaluation sheets, awareness-raising meetings and publishing the results in widely circulated print media (e.g. 'Public Policy Bulletin' and DNP and SINERGIA Web sites).

In 2011, evaluation dissemination was achieved through several different communication strategies (see Table 1).

TABLE 1: COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES USED TO DISSEMINATE EVALUATIONS IN 2011

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY	NUMBER OF EVALUATIONS
Publication of most relevant results on the SINERGIA Web site	22
Dissemination of results through the 'Política Pública Hoy' bulletin	2
Awareness-raising meetings with stakeholders	7
Dissemination of results through the publication of press releases in the DNP Portal and the Rebecca	2

8 Morra, L. and R.C. Rist, 2009.

These strategies have enabled stakeholders and decision makers involved in the programmes to know and assume ownership of the evaluation as a key management input. The strategies have also provided civil society with an understanding of programme results and access to information that for years has been confidential, leading to an increase in levels of political control. This has contributed to promoting managerial accountability and transparency.

In operational terms, evaluation results and recommendations have improved key decision-making in programme performance through expansion, redesign and adopting good management practices.

A CASE STUDY OF EFFECTIVE EVALUATION: EVALUATION OF THE *AGRO INGRESO SEGURO* PROGRAMME

What is the *Agro Ingreso Seguro* programme?

Agro Ingreso Seguro (AIS) is a Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MADR) programme. The programme's goals are to protect the income of producers affected by external markets and to improve competition in the national agricultural sector in a time of economic internationalization. This programme was implemented under the criteria of Law 1133 of 2007, regulated by Decrees 2594 of 2007 and 3064 of 2008, and as a strategic project in the '2006-2010 Development Plan'.

In accordance with Law 1133, the AIS programme budget since 2008 must be at least 500,000 million Colombian Pesos (roughly US$277,000), adjusted for inflation, equivalent to approximately 60 percent of MADR investment resources. Over 90 percent of the resources assigned to the programme are implemented in the APC, which includes the Rural Capitalization Incentive, the Special Credit Line, the Technical Assistance Incentive and the call for irrigation and drainage, evaluation instruments contracted[9] by the MADR with the technical support of the DNP.

BOX 1. *AGRO INGRESO SEGURO* EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS

The AIS evaluation made important recommendations, which were accepted and implemented by the programme managers. The evaluation noted:

- The importance of technical assistance to improve the productivity of small producers (only 10.8 percent of the beneficiaries evaluated had technical assistance);and
- There was no implementation of the monitoring and evaluation system (which was designed in the baseline), demonstrating the absence of continuous and relevant information.

With the restructuring of the AIS, a new program was created called Rural Development with Equity. The program includes some of the evaluation's recommendations in its approach:

- Targeting small and medium producers;
- Promoting cooperatives and economies of scale;
- Integral support;and
- Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

10 Performed by the Unión Temporal Econometría SA and Sistemas Especializados de Información SA.

Objective of the Evaluation

The general objective of the evaluation was to determine the impacts of the AIS programme.

Methodology and information gathering

AIS programme evaluation components integrate aspects relevant to the assessment of aggregated impact policy. **Efficiency** was measured through monitoring system indicators, **effectiveness** was determined through an evaluation of impacts during the quantitative and qualitative phases of the evaluation, and **strategy** was assessed according to information provided by departmental distribution matrices.

Main conclusions

Programme management and results

- MADR has not set up a programme monitoring system and therefore is not generating continuous and relevant decision-making information.

Programme impacts

- Small agricultural producers increased their unit cost of production, reduced investment levels and despite increased revenues, failed to positively impact net income;
- The AIS programme did not impact the use of technical assistance, except in the case of large producers and some companies;
- There was no evidence of the systematic use of training for producer households;
- There was evidence of increased agricultural machinery use by companies and households with permanent crops; and
- There were positive impacts on technological innovations (such as improved seeds) for the beneficiaries of irrigation and drainage.

Main recommendations

- To define sectoral instruments, AIS incentives should be coordinated with other programmes;
- AIS should incorporate geographical considerations and focus on resource allocations;
- AIS should avoid dispersion of resources and ensure minimum efforts to support producers (preferably small partners);
- AIS should structure support programmes for small producers from the initial phase through to the commercial and marketing phases where possible;
- For small producers, associative processes should be encouraged as a means to facilitate access to services (e.g. training, technical assistance, transportation and marketing) that correspond to off-farm activities that typically require economies of scale, particularly when local supply of these services is limited; and

- The national government should strengthen land titling activities; secure land titles stimulate investment and development of agricultural activity in general.

CONCLUSION

The Colombian experience indicates that an evaluation is effective if its conclusions and recommendations are taken into account during decision-making processes. Elements identified to ensure this effectiveness include:

1. Standardized evaluation processes;
2. A highly qualified team to lead the evaluation process in order to raise the technical level of the evaluation;
3. An inter-sectoral evaluation agenda with areas and policies that are strategic for the government;
4. A participatory process with government actors involved in the policy evaluation;
5. A broad portfolio of assessment methodologies that respond to the needs of the policy to be evaluated; and
6. Use of different communication mechanisms to provide decision makers with access to evaluation results.

Colombia is assuming important challenges with regards to monitoring and evaluation of public policies. This stance strengthens the national model by constantly seeking opportunities to improve practices by monitoring the implementation of an evaluation's recommendations. These processes are augmented by stakeholders' active participation and efforts to expand the monitoring and evaluation model to the regional level as applied to specific contexts by local authorities. To improve the system, the implementation of monitoring and evaluation cloudsourcing and crowdsourcing is also being pursued as an information management tool to innovate and better connect more stakeholders to the system.

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CHINA: THE ROLES OF USERS IN ENHANCING UTILITY OF EVALUATION

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE INTERNATIONAL EVALUATION ON THE FUNDING AND MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE OF THE NATIONAL NATURAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION OF CHINA

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INTRODUCTION

At present, both evaluators and decision makers recognize the need to enhance the utility of evaluations. However, utilization rates are quite low. The authors of this paper often hear some users complain that evaluators are too concerned with evaluation methodology and that quite often, the evaluation does not offer enough support for ongoing management and decision-making; evaluation results are usable but not very useful.

The utilization of evaluation depends on both demand- and supply-side factors. This paper primarily discusses factors from the demand side. The two authors come from demand and supply side respectively. The facts and viewpoints presented in this paper are based on the authors' direct involvement in the latest evaluation practice in China, International Evaluation on the Funding and Management Performance of the National Natural Science Foundation of China (hereafter the NSFC Case). The NSFC Case is the most influential case up to now, and represents good practice from China. It is widely acknowledged in the science and technology community in China.

The paper first presents an overview of the national evaluation effort in China and a brief introduction of the NSFC Case. It then focuses on the discussion of the roles of the users and how they fill these roles. The lessons learned are obtained from the case analysis. The paper concludes with pending issues for discussion.

OVERVIEW OF THE NATIONAL EVALUATION EFFORT IN CHINA

Establishing an evaluation system within the public administration system in China has become an urgent need in the Chinese government, and has been drawing growing public attention. Since 2005, the top leaders of China have called for government departments to be accountable for the results of public expenditure. Government departments are now required to establish a performance evaluation system in order to provide objective assessments of policies, programmes and projects.

China did not have a law or regulation for government performance evaluation prior to 2000. In 2000, the Ministry of Finance (MoF, the leading body of public-sector performance evaluation) released several regulations for performance evaluation that indicated that government's programmes and key projects should be regularly evaluated. The People's Congress of China revised the Law on science and technology advancement, which became effective in 2008. The law stipulates that the state will establish and improve the science and technology evaluation system. This is the first time in China that evaluation became a constitutional requirement in a law.

There were already some performance evaluation pilot activities, which were carried out by line ministries or local governments in China since the 1990s. For example, over the past 10 years, the Ministry of Science and Technology has carried out several national research and development programme evaluations. A few line ministries and local governments have also carried out evaluation activities, primarily at the project level. The evaluation methodology, framework and methods used in evaluations in China are similar to those used in other countries.

In China, the main users of the evaluations are usually commissioners who use the results to improve their job. Evaluations appear to have greater influence on improving the implementation of the projects or programmes, but have a lesser influence on high-level decision-making. The evaluations' influence depends mostly on the top leaders in government departments. Currently, few evaluation reports have been publicly published, though some report summaries have been published. There is no consistent dissemination strategy for evaluation reports. The utilization of evaluation reports lacks an institutional arrangement. A framework for feedback, dissemination and learning loops with policy makers and programme managers has yet to be established.

China has not yet established a national evaluation system. There is weakness in the institutional arrangement for evaluation: no annual work planning or regular budgeting for evaluation activities, and no implementation guidelines for different types of evaluation. At present, evaluations have not been integrated into management and decision-making processes and are not a mandated regular activity. By examining existing and ongoing evaluations, it can be seen that building a national evaluation system should start with pilot work for core national programmes and key projects.

Government officials and experts in China have drawn on lessons from the international experience. However, as evaluation is a tool produced from a 'Western' management tradition, it is a challenge to determine whether these lessons are applicable, or applicable to the same extent to the China context.

THE NATIONAL NATURAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION OF CHINA CASE: INTERNATIONAL EVALUATION ON NATIONAL NATURAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION OF CHINA FUNDING AND MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE

Background

China has been rapidly increasing its public funding for research and development. As it has done so, the need for understanding funding performance has become increasingly necessary and urgent. The National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC), as a key player in basic research funding, has undergone remarkable development in the past 25 years. Recognizing the unique and influential role of NSFC, its funding and management performance has attracted substantial interest and attention among high-level decision makers and the broad science community.

Following extensive preparation work, NSFC decided to undertake an evaluation. This initiative was positively appreciated by the MoF, which also provided extensive evaluation support. Jointly commissioned by MoF and NSFC, the evaluation was formally launched at the beginning of 2010; it was completed in September, 2011.

Dual objectives of the evaluation

The evaluation examined NSFC funding and management performance over the past 25 years and, from an international perspective, assessed its strengths, weaknesses and the challenges facing it.

The NSFC Case serves two primary uses:

- **Accountability:** To independently assess the overall performance of NSFC funding and management during the past 25 years; and
- **Lesson learning:** To improve NSFC funding and management performance; to develop a set of forward-looking guiding ideas based on a global perspective, and to support the redefining of the NSFC strategic role within the National Innovation System of China.

The modality of the evaluation

As a comprehensive performance evaluation, which covers broad scientific research areas, it assessed NSFC performance from the perspective of funding and management over 25 years, rather than from the agency's internal perspective. Rather than focusing on individual NSFC-supported projects, the evaluation focused on overall NSFC contributions and added value to fostering basic research in China.

The evaluation adopted a modality of 'domestic preparation followed by international evaluation'. 'Domestic preparation' entails that the National Centre for Science and Technology Evaluation (NCSTE), a professional evaluation organization in China (with NSFC support), was responsible for evaluation design and for preparing evidence for the evaluation. 'International evaluation' means that an international evaluation committee (IEC) was responsible for evaluating the overall performance of NSFC funding and management based on NCSTE-prepared evidence, its own investigations and international comparisons.

TABLE 1: TEN ISSUES UNDER FOUR DIMENSIONS OF THE EVALUATION

STRATEGIC POSITIONING	Issue 1: NSFC strategic positioning in China's national innovation system Issue 2: Funding strategy
FUNDING PERFORMANCE	Issue 3: Contributions to original innovation Issue 4: Promoting the balanced, coordinated and sustainable development of scientific disciplines Issue 5: Fostering innovative talents Issue 6: Supporting national demands and Challenges
MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE	Issue 7: Modality of funding management Issue 8: Funding instruments Issue 9: Peer review system
IMPACT	Issue 10: Impact of NSFC funding

Scope and contents of the evaluation

The scope of the evaluation covered four dimensions: 1) NSFC strategic positioning, 2) funding performance, 3) management performance, and 4) impact on China's science and technology system. The terms of reference for the evaluation defined 10 issues to be explored under these four dimensions (see Table 1).

Organization of the evaluation

The leading group of the evaluation is composed of leaders of NSFC and MoF; it was responsible for steering the evaluation. An evaluation office, a temporary unit established specifically for the evaluation, was responsible for coordinating and managing the evaluation. The IEC, a mixed Chinese/international panel, conducted the evaluation and provided the final evaluation report. The NCSTE was responsible for designing and implementing the evaluation, collecting information and preparing evidence for the IEC.

Methodologies and implementation of the evaluation

An evidence-based approach was applied during the evaluation's domestic preparation. Adequate evidence was made available to the IEC for analysis and evaluation. NCSTE established a core team responsible for collecting and cross-checking evidence from various sources and for preparing the 'Synthesis Evidence Report', which was structured in order of the 10 key issues and evaluation questions defined in the terms of reference. The evaluation findings were given as a combination of the evidence prepared by NCSTE and IEC's own observations and international comparisons.

Use of the evaluation

The primary deliverables of the evaluation consisted of 1) a 'Domestic Preparation Document I: Evidence Synthesis', prepared by NCSTE and a 'Domestic Preparation Document II: Case

TABLE 2: USER GROUPS AND PRIORITIES IN UTILIZING THE EVALUATION

USER GROUPS		EVALUATION COMMISSIONER	ACCOUNTABILITY	LEARNING
PRIMARY USERS	MoF	●	●	
	NSFC	●	●	●
SECONDARY USERS	NPC		●	
	Line ministries			●
	Local governments			●
POTENTIAL USERS	Universities, researchers			●

Collection', prepared by the evaluation office; and 2) a 'Report on the International Evaluation of NSFC's Funding and Management Performance', prepared by the IEC.

The use of the evaluation was considered to be a key issue to be addressed during evaluation design. During implementation, some management policies were changed based on the evaluation's findings. For example, NSFC decided to prolong the funding term of some programmes from three years to four years and to increase the project funding scales. There will be a series of follow-up activities to ensure that evaluation is used appropriately.

THE ROLES OF USERS IN ENHANCING UTILITY OF EVALUATION

Users at different levels

The NSFC Case includes users at different levels: MoF and NSFC are the primary or intended users; line ministries and local governments are secondary or unintended users of the evaluation; beneficiaries of the NSFC (e.g. universities and researchers who get support from the fund), are potential users of the evaluation.

In discussing users' roles in enhancing the utility of the evaluation, this paper focuses on the MoF and NSFC, which had dual positions in the evaluation—primary users and commissioners of the evaluation. Such instances of dual positions are relatively common in China. In most cases, the evaluation is commissioned by the primary users, or at least primary users are part of the commissioner group. Further, when the roles of the MoF and NSFC are described, this paper focuses on their efforts to enhance the evaluation's utility, rather than comprehensively examining all activities and roles during the evaluation process.

Table 2 shows that for the evaluation, there were differences in user priorities. For example, the MoF placed accountability at the top of its priorities.

The roles of primary users in the main stages of the evaluation

As the primary users and commissioners of the evaluation, MoF and NSFC played important roles in the evaluation.

Planning and commission

Evaluation is not institutionalized in China. Whether an evaluation will be conducted is generally determined on an ad hoc basis. The initiative MoF appreciated the prospect of an evaluation, and provided extensive support. If it had not been for the joint launch and entrustment of this evaluation from MoF and NSFC, it would be almost impossible for the evaluation to have a series of planned and completed follow-up activities (as stated below), and it would be difficult for the evaluation to generate influence on decision-making in line ministries and local governments. If it had not been for the joint launch and entrustment of this evaluation from MoF and NSFC, there would not be such a case.

Inception and design

Inception and design require strong professional evaluation expertise. However, this evaluation demonstrates the critical roles of users during these stages. It is generally believed that inception and design require strong professional evaluation expertise. This evaluation demonstrates that apart from professional evaluation expertise, the roles of users are also critical during these stages. The roles of MoF and NSFC were reflected in determining which questions the evaluation should answer, ensuring that the evaluation was targeted to the demands of users, and responding to concerns and debates. The institutions discussed various users' perspectives with the NCSTE team regarding the conception framework of the evaluation, and identified the 10 key issues and evaluation questions (see Box 1).

Implementation

During the implementation stage, NSFC carefully kept the principle of evaluation independence (i.e. assurances that the NCSTE team had the flexibility to conduct their work

BOX 1. KEY ISSUES OF THE EVALUATION

In order to ensure that the evaluation was a policy-focused, strategic level work, the 10 key issues were closely linked to user demands and responsive to concerns and debates.

Issue 1: The MoF was concerned with "NSFC's strategic positioning in the national innovation system of China." Over the past 25 years, large changes have been taking place in China's science and technology policy, the institutional structure and the research environment. Consequently, key questions include: is NSFC's strategic positioning is still adequate? and what adjustments need to take place in the future?

Issue 8: it is the common concern of decision makers and researchers as to how to further improve NSFC funding. NSFC uses 22 funding instruments to meet the needs of various specific target groups and immediate and long-term strategic objectives. In the face of the rapid increase in application pressure in NSFC funding activities, there is an urgent need for a systematic analysis and deepened understanding of the underlying driving forces of these developments and their potential impact on the efficiency and the quality of NSFC funding activities. Regarding funding instruments of NSFC, corresponding key questions include: Is the portfolio of funding instruments appropriate and suitable for the NSFC's funding strategies in different period of time? Does it reflect good international practice? How well are the NSFC's funding instruments managed and operated?

without interference, access to all relevant information and freedom to select target groups for interviews or focus group meetings, and the leeway to independently present recommendations, conclusions and findings). These assurances made, NSFC, as a user, did not passively wait for the evaluation report. Instead, it maintained contact with the IEC and NCSTE team, provided coordination and support requested by them, judged the credibility of messages in the evaluation report, and was responsible for providing management response during the report drafting stages. NSFC set up an evaluation office, which acted as the evaluation manager. The office was responsible for liaising between the leading group and the evaluation team. According to the requirements of the terms of reference, NSFC also prepared a volume of case-based evidence for the evaluation.

Follow-up

The different organizations' roles and responsibilities for follow-up activities were clearly delineated at the start of the evaluation. When MoF and NSFC received the evaluation report, they were aware that IEC and NCSTE had completed a reasonably good job on the supply side, and now it is left for the demand side to ensure that the evaluation influences decision-making and management The following is a series of planned and completed follow-up activities:

- Report the main results of the evaluation to the State Council;
- Conduct a one-week seminar to discuss the main results of the evaluation, identify possible actions in NSFC strategy and funding management and promote evaluation-based learning in NSFC;
- Distribute the evaluation report to line ministries, the National People's Congress and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference;
- Explore opportunities to use the evaluation in budgetary processes;
- Arrange events to disseminate the evaluation experience to line ministries and local governments; and
- Release the report to the public.

Lesson learned

Though the evaluation has been completed, some follow-up activities will continue. At present, according to the feedback of the evaluation, it is agreed that this evaluation was a good practice in China. It may be too early to summarize the lesson learned from this evaluation. Below are select observations and understandings regarding how evaluation users can enhance its utility:

- Enhancing an evaluation's utility is determined by efforts from both the supply and demand side. Producing professional evaluation products is an important step, but it is not enough to ensure they are influential to the decision makers and management.
- Primary users should understand why they need an evaluation. When the evaluation was launched, the leadership of MoF and NSFC demonstrated a strong will to make the evaluation a policy tool to improve performance and to redefine NSFC's strategic

role within the NIS of China. They conveyed their support to the evaluation through the principle of "full-hearted support, but completely free from intervention," as said by NSFC staff. This ensured the open access to required information and free choice of targeted groups in the evaluation process.

- According to the case, there is another success factor—the user and commissioner involved MoF, a powerful leading ministry in China.
- Evaluation use should be addressed at the initial stages and built into the evaluation work plan. Follow-up activities, such as publication and dissemination, should also be fully budgeted and planned for at the evaluation planning stage.

PENDING ISSUES

Should evaluation be used in a direct way or in a 'soft' way? The use of an evaluation is first reflected in creating a relationship between performance evaluation and budgeting. In international practice, are there good examples of linkages between performance evaluation and changes in budget? If budgets are informed by evaluation—but without a simple relationship between evaluation and budgeting (i.e. evaluation results are used in a 'soft' way)—how should the utility of an evaluation be assessed?

How should the user's role and evaluation independence be balanced? Users often face conflicts of interest. In some cases, it may be sensible to ensure that users support, but not disturb the evaluation process. In the NSFC case, a good mechanism can allow the users to play full roles and simultaneously ensure evaluation independence. This evaluation is not necessarily a special case; its model can provide experience and knowledge to be shared with others, though this issue needs further discussion.

Whether the users should and are likely to further discover the potential value of the evaluation? The evaluation generated a set of findings and recommendations and a large quantity of evidence and information. In addition to applying the evaluation's findings and recommendations, will users discern added value from the evaluation by further studying the evidence and information based on their own experiences and observations?

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UGANDA: GIVING NATIONAL DIRECTION THROUGH EVALUATION

UGANDA'S EVALUATION OF ITS POVERTY ERADICATION ACTION PLAN (1997-2007)

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THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL POVERTY ERADICATION ACTION PLAN

When the National Resistance Movement came to power in Uganda in 1986, the country had been through two decades of political and economic turmoil. Gross domestic product (GDP) per capita had been reduced to 58 percent of the 1970 level, and subsistence agriculture had increased from 20 percent of GDP to 36 percent over the same period.[10] The 1990s saw the introduction of fiscal measures seeking to control spending and inflation, and the merging of finance and planning functions to ensure fiscal discipline. This resulted in a period of macroeconomic stability where economic growth averaged just over 7 percent per annum and inflation was reduced to single digit figures after 1992. Political stability was addressed through the development of a new constitution, and elections to a constitutional assembly (or Parliament) were held in 1994 (the constitution was passed in 1995).

Parliamentary and Presidential elections were held in 1996. During the campaign, candidates, including the incumbent President, became increasingly concerned that the growth and stability experienced in the country since 1986 was not reaching the poor. The first household budget survey of 1992 revealed that 56 percent of the population was living below the poverty line, living primarily in rural areas. In November 1995, a national seminar on poverty was called, which included civil servants, academics, civil society and donors. The outcome of this was a decision to develop a poverty eradication action plan (PEAP).

10 Reinikka and Collier. 2001. *Uganda's Recovery: The Role of Farms, Firms and Government*. Washington DC: The World Bank.

The PEAP was intended to provide a framework for policies to address poverty over a 20-year period. This goal was defined by an ambitious target of reducing the proportion of the population living below the poverty line to 10 percent by 2017. The policy approach behind the PEAP was to enable the poor to benefit from market opportunities and extend access to and improving the quality of basic social services—while maintaining the fiscal discipline that was started in the pre-PEAP era. The PEAP preceded and played a role in inspiring the poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP) process introduced by The World Bank as part of the 1999 Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) dialogue. Uganda was the first country in the world to quality for HPIC support when the PEAP was deemed in 2000 as meeting the requirements of a PRSP. [11]

While the goals of the PEAP remained unchanged from 1997, two revisions to the plan itself were made; one in 2000 and a second in 2004. These revisions involved making adjustments and additions to the content of the PEAP in response to changing political and economic conditions in the country and in response to research undertaken on progress towards the targets set. Among the changes made was the introduction of pillars under which multidimensional strategies were developed. During its implementation, major social and economic policies were introduced under the umbrella of the PEAP pillars, such as universal free primary education, primary health care initiatives, a plan for agriculture modernization and a ten-year roads sector plan. Through the PEAP, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development played a central role in design, implementation and oversight.

THE DEMAND FOR AN EVALUATION

Prolonged GDP growth and reduced dependency on external assistance increased the Government of Uganda's overall confidence in managing its economy and improving the welfare and opportunities of its population. But while the poverty headcount steadily reduced over the PEAP period, there remained major constraints to human and economic development across the country and increasing evidence of corruption and weak accountability. By the mid-2000s, some revival of support for a more interventionist role for government to accelerate national development was emanating from within the ruling party. By 2007, it became clear that there would be a need for a new PEAP that would update the National Resistance Movement's 'mixed economy' approach, and that longer-term planning was needed akin to the East Asian Tigers where rapid economic and equitable growth was attributed in part to strong long-term central planning. This was supported by the relatively newly formed National Planning Authority, with a mandate to lead national planning across the country.

In July 2007, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development established a 'PEAP Revision Task Force'. The Task Force was composed of representatives of the three coordinating institutions of government, the Ministry itself, the National Planning Authority and the Office of the Prime Minister (which is constitutionally mandated to lead government business in Parliament and to coordinate the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of government policies and programmes). At the Task Force's first meeting, it was proposed

12 Government of Uganda. 2008. 'Independent Evaluation of Uganda's Poverty Eradication Action Plan 1997- 2007', Volume 1, Synthesis Report. Office of the Prime Minister.

that the revision process be made up of three elements: the preparation of the revision to the PEAP itself, macroeconomic modelling work to provide scenarios for investment, and an evaluation of the PEAP over the period 1997–2007 to provide lessons to guide the revision.

This initial demand for an evaluation to learn lessons from the past experience of the PEAP came from within the Task Force, not from a wider audience. Within the Task Force, discussions centred on: the management and leadership of the evaluation, who should be responsible, and who should implement the evaluation in order to ensure its independence and credibility; the focus of the evaluation to best serve the needs for which it was to be designed; and the use and timing of the evaluation, where it was stressed that the evaluation must be completed to feed into the revision process. Even within this context, there were detractors, with some Task Force members suggesting that an evaluation was either not necessary, as the lessons were already evident, or that a light review should be conducted (rather than a fully-fledged evaluation) in order to produce quick findings. In short, establishing demand early on in the process was challenging. Nevertheless, the Task Force sanctioned the proposal, and the Office of the Prime Minister began leading on the design.

FOCUSING THE EVALUATION

As an overarching framework, the PEAP provided the direction for national policy and programmatic formulation in Uganda, but did not prescribe specific interventions. This provided an early challenge for shaping the evaluation—determining what role the PEAP played over this extended period in its different forms (the original PEAP, revision one and revision two), and what shape the country would be in had the PEAP not been created.

Evaluation objectives

Initially, the terms of reference for the evaluation focused on relevance, effectiveness and the highlighting of specific practices to inform the next revision. However, Task Force members considered it less important to focus on relevance (i.e. the relevance of the PEAP in guiding national policy), given that there is no easily constructible counterfactual to the PEAP and that the purpose of the evaluation was to focus primarily on what could be learned from the PEAP experience rather than whether or not it was a good idea in the first place.

In terms of the role of the PEAP, the Task Force determined that it was in effect intended to be a consensus-building instrument to guide national development, and hence the evaluation should focus on this aspect of its effectiveness. In turn, the findings from this should guide the shape of the new PEAP.

Ultimately, the question of relevance was dropped, and the evaluation focused on how effective the PEAP had been as a consensus-building mechanism, on what results had been achieved under the PEAP and the specific requirement to look at practices to inform the new PEAP (see Box 1).

Evaluation questions and the theory of change

Having established the focus, the next debate was on the areas of investigation and the evaluation questions to be posed. The Task Force recognized early on in the evaluation process that the specificity of the questions would be central to the evaluation's quality and its utility. If the questions are either too broad or too narrow, or focused on less important matters,

BOX 1. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE PEAP EVALUATION

- Determine how effective the PEAP has been as a consensus-building mechanism for the expression of national development aspirations, in guiding national policy, and the extent to which it is the appropriate vehicle to do so in the future;
- Determine how effective the PEAP has been in delivering results: as an instrument of prioritization, strategic resource allocation and accountability; and
- Identify and highlight specific practices from the decade of Uganda's PEAP that will best inform the formulation of the third revision of the PEAP with a view to achieving the 2017 poverty eradication target.

then the evaluation will not serve its purpose.

To determine the scope, it was necessary to look at the theory of change of the PEAP. What results were targeted? How did it expect to achieve them? What were its operational modalities? Which underlying factors were recognized as influencing the achievement of results, and which were not accounted for? The PEAP was focused on a series of objectives, which then became thematic pillars, all with objectives and indicators and with reference to operational structures and entities. The evaluation subcommittee constructed a broad framework based on the logic of the PEAP (over its three iterations) in order to determine causal relationships over the decade. However, it was also recognized through this process that the framework focused largely on one dimension of the evaluation objectives—the results. The dimensions that pertained to the underlying structural and environmental factors that influenced the PEAP were not well captured. Therefore, the subcommittee returned to these questions, and devised five streams of work: results and performance, political economy, institutional arrangements, partnership and economic transformation, and sustainable poverty reduction (see Box 2).

BOX 2. SCOPE AND QUESTIONS OF THE PEAP EVALUATION

- Results and performance: What progress has been made against the fundamental PEAP objectives of reducing income poverty and inequality, improving human development and increased GDP growth? What factors have contributed to these changes?
- Political economy: What have been the relevance, ownership and leadership of the PEAP over time among the key stakeholders? How flexible has the PEAP been to changing environments? How comprehensive was the PEAP in attempting to reduce poverty?
- Institutional arrangements: How effective was the institutional framework that linked the PEAP as the national development plan and the sectors, ministries, local government and non-governmental entities responsible for planning, budgeting and execution?
- Partnership: To what extent did the PEAP increase the focus, harmonization and reduction in transaction costs in dealing with different development partners? Economic transformation and sustainable poverty reduction: To what extent has the PEAP served to guide reforms in economic management, in facilitating trade and the private sector? What has been the impact of investment in social sectors in terms of economic return (e.g. employment generation, economic diversification)?

In each of these streams, a series of questions were posed that sought to understand the factors that played a role in PEAP successes and failures. By bringing together these streams, an overall assessment of the effectiveness of the PEAP could be made, focused in particular on what can be learned to guide the next revision.

To ensure that these streams and questions resonated with the PEAP and potential users of the evaluation, the terms of reference was circulated widely across the Government of Uganda, within the non-governmental community and among the global evaluation and policy specialist community. Comments and suggestions were fed back into the terms of reference, which formed the platform for the evaluation.

DESIGNING THE EVALUATION

The evaluation design focused on the methodologies employed that are best suited to the questions posed, and on the nature of the intervention logic. The PEAP evaluation was an interesting mix, examining impact-orientated questions related to the achievements of the PEAP and looking at the underlying policy and process elements that contributed to these results. This presented particular methodological challenges.

Initially, the evaluation team hoped to focus 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. Each method had its strengths and weaknesses, but it was hoped that elements of each could be used. However, as the evaluation progressed it became clear that due to data limitations, time constraints and feedback on the initial proposals, it would not be possible to undertake a rigorous counterfactual analysis.

Based on this assessment of possible methods, the Task Force decided that contribution analysis was the most appropriate approach. This method does not seek to identify a counterfactual, but has been developed as an alternative approach for use in circumstances when counterfactual analysis proves extremely difficult or infeasible. The purpose of contribution analysis is to draw links between inputs/outputs and wider outcomes, not by trying to precisely quantify the range of different factors that influence outcomes but rather, through careful and logical analysis, to make judgments about the importance (and strength) of these different influences. There is no presumption of providing proof of these relationships.[12] Rather, contribution analysis seeks to draw 'plausible associations' between inputs, outputs and the wider outcomes, thereby reducing the uncertainty about the 'difference' a programme is making.[13] A truncated version of the six steps (from identifying the results chain to assessing alternative explanations and assembling the performance story) was used given time and data constraints. The evaluation team also selected some policies under the PEAP that seemed most significant to its high-level objectives and to make the best use of available data and information.

13 Riddell et al. 2008. 'Assessing and Measuring the Impact of Aid: Evidence, Challenges and Ways Forward', Synthesis Report to the Advisory Board for Irish Aid, Oxford. Oxford Policy Management.
14 Mayne. 2001. 'Addressing Attribution through Contribution Analysis: Using Performance Measurement Sensibly'. *Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation* 16(1).

The methods employed varied according to the areas of investigation. The evaluation was effectively divided into five components, based on the streams of work. The results and performance team used contribution analysis and some regression on the data available in key results areas. The investigations into areas such as political economy and institutional arrangements largely utilized interview-based techniques and documentation analysis to plot the trends and relationships over the PEAP decade.

Evaluation findings were presented in two documents: a volume that synthesized the findings and relationships between the streams into a single synthesis report, and a volume that had chapters on each work stream. Lessons learned were presented at both levels.

MANAGEMENT AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

Since 2005, the Office of the Prime Minister has begun to establish itself as the central institution responsible for coordinating the monitoring and evaluation of the PEAP, recognizing that this function would enable it to more effectively oversee the implementation of policies and programmes and assess their contribution to the PEAP objectives. In 2006, the Office of the Prime Minister conducted the first annual review of the PEAP, and had also begun designing and conducting evaluations of public policies and programmes through the establishment of a Government Evaluation Facility, itself overseen by a subcommittee composed of representative of key government and public/private research institutions.

Given this operational reality, and given that the other members of the Task Force were the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (which led the design and coordination of the PEAP and was therefore too close to the operations to be independent in the evaluation) and the National Planning Authority (which was to lead on the PEAP revision process), Task Force Members agreed that the Office of the Prime Minister would lead on the evaluation.

Having designed the terms of reference, it was agreed that an international firm (or firms), would be commissioned to lead the evaluation implementation. This was put out to tender, and an international firm was recruited.

The Task Force established two mechanisms in order to ensure quality in the process and the use of the evaluation. First, an evaluation subcommittee was set up with membership from the three institutions responsible for the PEAP revision. This subcommittee lead on designing the terms of reference, oversaw the selection of the consultants, reviewed the evaluation process and products and disseminated the findings and lessons. The subcommittee met almost twice per month during the 12-month process, and with full quorum. Central to its effectiveness were its small size (just five members), its clear focus on the evaluation and the strength of purpose and quality of the relationships among members.

The second mechanism was the Reference Group. The objective of the Reference Group was to provide independent and expert opinions on both the evaluation design and the quality of its products. Experts from academia in relevant public policy areas from Uganda and evaluation experts globally were invited to participate. Six were ultimately selected, coming from a variety of nations and institutional backgrounds. The subcommittee acted as a conduit between the Reference Group and the evaluators in order to ensure efficiency in the interactions and to provide a chairing role on points of contention over the approach and methodology. The Reference Group met virtually throughout the exercise—providing comments through teleconference and emails—a cost-efficient and effective functionality.

The evaluation team comprised 10 consultants and an internal reviewer. This sizeable team reflected the breadth of the PEAP and the evaluation itself. The consultants were divided into teams based on the streams of work, with an overall team leader in charge of coordination, management and production of the synthesis report. Experience, maturity and ability were central facets of the evaluation team's management tasks—dealing with a large team, interfacing with the subcommittee and accessing a wide spectrum of stakeholders in Uganda (including the Prime Minister).

THE DISSEMINATION AND USE OF THE EVALUATION

From design to completion, the evaluation ran from July 2007 to June 2008. The Task Force decided early on that the evaluation findings and recommendations would be shared as widely as possible given the breadth of the PEAP and the importance of generating debate on how the evaluation recommendations should be followed-up, both within and beyond the context of the next PEAP.

The dissemination process began with a briefing to the Cabinet. This was made possible through the interest stimulated in the evaluation and its process. While there was little interest or engagement at the start of the process, the interviewing of over 100 persons during it, including senior government officials, initiated sufficient interest to ensure that when the product was ready, people were keen to read what it had to say. Alongside this, the PEAP revision process had begun to take shape. It was agreed that the PEAP was to end, to be replaced by 5-year National Development Plan. Discussions on the shape of the National Development Plan had already begun.

Following the Cabinet briefing, a one-day workshop was held in June 2008 where the findings were presented to an audience of over 200 people from across the spectrum of public, private and non-governmental actors. This in turn led to a recommendation that in order to do justice to the evaluation, a one-week series of one-day workshops should be held with clusters of government institutions and partners. The focus of the workshops was to look in detail at the findings and recommendations and to start preparing a government response. Full one-day workshops were held in 2008, attended by central institutions; service delivery ministries, commissions and agencies; accountability, internal and external relations ministries and commissions; and with development partners. A government response matrix was established, focused on key evaluation findings and recommendations: impact, implementation, prioritization, resource mobilization and other issues. In this, each group responded to each major finding and recommendation. These were then discussed and synthesized at a follow-up evaluation committee meeting.

The Cabinet's interest in this process lead to their requesting that the evaluators return to Uganda to discuss the findings with them a second time. The consequence of this process, and the one-day workshops on the government's interpretation and response to the findings and recommendations, was the preparation of a government white paper on the evaluation. The white paper outlined the main findings, recommendations, government's response and the proposed actions, including the responsible parties and a time-frame for action. Follow-up on these actions has been done annually through the Government Performance Reports presented and discussed at Cabinet Retreats.

Alongside this, the Task Force was preparing the National Development Plan (the successor to the PEAP), engaged fully in evaluation dissemination and follow-up activities. A number of critical issues and lessons learned from the evaluation were discussed and influenced the Plan. These included the reflection that the PEAP had not provided operational guidance to achieve its results (e.g. a failure to clearly align the budget to the PEAP targets). The Plan sought to redress this by costing the interventions outlined in it and realigning the budget and accountability mechanisms accordingly.

The evaluation found that while poverty levels had lowered substantially during the PEAP period, the reductions were 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. This, in part, reflected the lack of attention paid to infrastructure and other potential drivers of the economy (e.g. agriculture). The National Development Plan considered this analysis, and recognized that a new policy mix was required. The Plan still recognized poverty reduction as an objective, but sought to improve economic infrastructure in order 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. The National Development Plan's theme, "growth, employment and socio-economic transformation for prosperity," reflects this.

The evaluation highlighted serious deficiencies in the coordination and oversight of government business. These issues impacted the way in which the central institutions (i.e. the Office of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, the National Planning Authority and the Ministry of Public Service) sought to work together to apply coherent and harmonized messages. These issues also affected service delivery demand pressures. The role of the Prime Minister in overseeing service delivery has been strengthened, and the Office's oversight and monitoring and evaluation functions strengthened. Specific initiatives that had been started and built on the recommendations include formulating a national policy on public sector monitoring and evaluation. The policy outlines the roles, responsibilities and minimum standards across the public service.

In the area of evaluation, the Office of the Prime Minister established a Government Evaluation Facility. The Facility provides a systemic basis for expanding the supply of rigorous assessments to address public policy, poses major public investment questions surrounding the effectiveness of government interventions and addresses underlying constraints to improved public service delivery.

In summary, the evaluation of the PEAP provided extremely valuable and accessible information of what did and did not work during the decade of the PEAP between 1997 and 2007. The evaluation was debated and subsequently drawn upon in drafting the successor National Development Plan. The effects will continue to be seen as the National Development Plan is implemented and monitored.

MEXICO: KEY ELEMENTS OF EVALUATION AS A DECISION-MAKING TOOL – SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE EVALUATION EXPERIENCE

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Developing an effective results-oriented budgeting system is more difficult than theory suggests. Such a system is not only needed to build and reinforce the evaluation culture, but also to create comprehensive and practical tools to display evaluation outcomes. Experience also implies that if the utility of information used in decision-making processes is evident to the final clients (the decision makers), then the use of evaluation results will increase.

During the 1970s, the Government of Mexico (with the assistance of international organizations) made its first attempts to establish systematic evaluation practices. Several isolated exercises were conducted to evaluate federal programmes. Later, during the 1990s, there was a major step forward on the evaluation of social programmes with the beginning of the *Progresa* programme (now called *Oportunidades*), because its evaluation strategy was designed concurrently with its implementation.

In 2001, in order to obtain information about the achievements of public programmes, the Mexican Congress determined that autonomous agents of the ministries operating the programmes should conduct evaluations of programme design, implementation, beneficiary satisfaction and impact. Although this effort improved social programme efficiency, it was still not possible to identify complementarities and similarities between them, and it remained unclear how to use the resulting information for planning or budgeting decisions.

Since 2004, the evaluation process in Mexico has been institutionalized through the approval of two laws: the General Law of Social Development and the Budget and Fiscal Responsibility Law. These laws clearly identify the actors in charge of evaluating public

programmes: *Consejo Nacional de Evaluación de la Política de Desarrollo Social* (CONEVAL), the Ministry of Finance and the Audit Ministry.

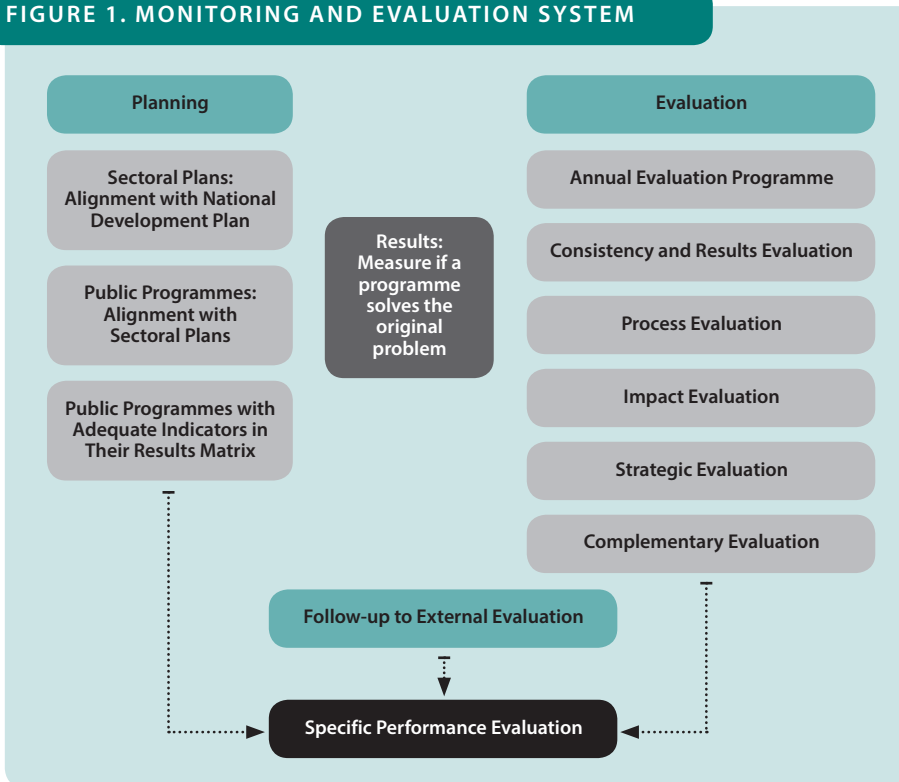
CONEVAL is a federal, decentralized public organization, with autonomy and the technical capacity to generate objective information on the socio-political situation and poverty measurement in Mexico. CONEVAL has two primary functions:

1. Regulate and coordinate the evaluation of national policies on social development and the evaluation of social policies, programmes and actions executed by public dependencies; and
2. Establish the guidelines and criteria used to define, identify and measure poverty, guaranteeing transparency, objectivity and technical rigor.

Both functions provide valid and reliable information to decision makers in order to increase the efficiency of policies and programmes and to inform citizens about the results of social policy.

Focusing on monitoring and evaluation, CONEVAL has being dealing with some challenges:[14]

FIGURE 1. MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM



Source: CONEVAL, 2008, 'Informe de Evaluación de la Política de Desarrollo Social 2008'.

15 Hernandez, G. CONEVAL's M&E System presentation.

1. **Institutional challenges,** which implies defining and implementing rules for those involved, in order to establish the actions and responsibilities for the creation and use of information.
2. **Challenges linking national priorities and needs with public policy** instruments through a casual logic scheme that explains expected results.
3 **Technical challenges** related to defining appropriate methodologies for evaluating policies and programmes, the collection of necessary information to conduct evaluations, and the identification of evaluation organisms.

Some strategies have been devised in order to meet these challenges, including establishing a Monitoring and Evaluation System that approaches planning and evaluating with a results-oriented view (see Figure 1). The planning step aligns social programme indicators (according to the logical framework methodology) with the government's strategic goals.

The evaluation phase includes seven types of evaluation for programmes and policies:

1. **Consistency and Results Evaluations** assess an institution's capacity to achieve its goals. This type of evaluation allows counting with a diagnosis on the institutional, organizational and management capability of results-based programmes. CONEVAL issued a model terms of reference with 51 questions. Among the objectives of the questions are an analysis of programme design based on the results matrix and the obtaining of relevant information on programme operations and results achieved.
2. **Processes Evaluations** analyse the contributions of operational processes to the purpose of the programme. This type of evaluation detects the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the regulatory framework, structure and functioning of programmes, focusing on identifying strategies that may enhance operational effectiveness and enrich programme design.
3. **Indicators Assessments** analyse indicator relevance and range.
4. **Impact Evaluations** measure the effects attributable to programmes. One of the primary challenges in evaluation is determining if social programmes meet the objectives for which they were designed. The development of impact evaluations is relevant; using appropriate indicators establishes a rigorous methodology for determining whether the programme had an impact on economic features or on factors related to beneficiary well-being.
5. **Complementary Assessments** address additional topics not covered by defined evaluations.
6. **Strategic Assessments** are policy evaluations of a set of programmes.
7. **Specific Performance Evaluations** compile information from other evaluations with other available information, providing a strong tool for decision-making.

A Specific Performance Evaluation (EED, by its Spanish acronym) is a summarized assessment of the annual performance of social programmes, presented in a unified format. An

EED presents the progress towards the planned objectives and goals of a social programme, based on a summary of the information contained in the Performance Evaluation System[15] (such information includes external evaluations, internal reports, coverage data and analysis of results, services and management indicators).

The evaluation is directed to decision-making actors (e.g. ministers, programme managers, congressmen and policy analysts). It concisely describes the most relevant results and findings of each programme as determined by the expert opinion of the external evaluator.

In 2008, the challenge was to create a practical tool or report that could be used in the budgeting process—a tool that was limited to 10 pages, was comparable across programmes, and was amicable and easy to understand for readers outside the evaluation field. From 2009 to 2011, CONEVAL had coordinated around 130 EEDs per year.[16] During that time, it improved the format design and content of evaluations based on feedback sessions with evaluators, staff of evaluated programmes and participating agencies, and principal users.

The current evaluation format is nine pages that cover:

- **Results:** advances made in responding to the problem or need for which the programme was created;
- **Management:** the efficiency of delivering goods and services to the beneficiary population and the efficacy of budgetary accounting;
- **Coverage population:** the number of people serviced and their geographic location; and
- **Follow-up of recommendations:** the use of evaluation findings to improve the programme and the achievements of those improvements.

The EED development cycle starts in April, when the official information of the last fiscal year is published (*Cuenta Pública*). This timing provides available and validated indicators values, coverage data and budgeting information. The cycle ends in June, so its results can be used in the following year's budgeting process.

Because of time restrictions, and in order to generate reports and systematic information, EEDs are conducted on Internet-based CONEVAL software, the Development Evaluation System. This tool generates a homogenous format for final reports.

This evaluation is designed for decision makers, but it also responds to three major goals: supporting decision-making processes inside or outside the programme; improving programmes and policies by knowing their results, opportunities and limitations; and contributing to government accountability.

Primary achievements from this three-year evaluation experience include: increasing evaluation readership—people are reading the reports because of the format and

16 The Performance Evaluation System was created by the Budget and Fiscal Responsibility Law as an element of the results-based budget. The system is operated by the Ministry of Finance, but EED has its own module managed by CONEVAL.

17 For EED, see <www.coneval.gob.mx>.

summarized information; increasing interest in developing better information and more accurate data; and functioning as an input to the Ministry of Finance for budget negotiations.

Some tools based on EED results have been created for the budgeting process. One of these is a 'traffic light' system (a simple way to identify programmes' strengths or/and weaknesses, or 'red lights'); another is a one-page programme summary (useful for identifying relevant information); and databases to increase access and ease the analysis of available information.

The EED has evolved and matured, particularly in its implementation mechanism. The participation of all stakeholders is vital, hence since the second year there are two mandatory meetings between the evaluator and programme officers; constant communication is strongly recommended.

There are lessons learned from the evaluation process and culture. First, evaluation is complex, and it is not directly related to increasing or decreasing a programme's budget. It can help to identify strengths and weaknesses, and when analysed in the context of development and governmental priorities, it will support the decision-making process. Second, it is important to know your target audience, to define the purpose of each evaluation, and to make sure that all the actors understand the concepts and the practical language of the evaluation. Third, evaluation for decision-making processes can be less cost-effective in terms of timing and effort if it is not accompanied by strategies to increase its use. Fourth, non-evaluated programmes have an advantage—information on their results is not as clear and available as for evaluated programmes; this may discourage programmes from participating in evaluation exercises.

Thus, CONEVAL enriches and supports the decision-making process by delivering EED Reports to strategic actors. The learning process in the development of the EED has allowed innovation in different key elements of report design, implementation method and coordination among actors during the evaluation process. Together, these present a useful experience to share with other evaluation agencies and countries.

COSTA RICA: USING EVALUATION IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR – CURRENT SITUATION AND CHALLENGES

BY MELANIA NÚÑEZ VARGAS
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INTRODUCTION

Planning—involving spheres for coordination, participation and consultation—has become a fundamental exercise to agree on development agendas for good governance. It intrinsically requires a continuous and relevant flow of information to provide feedback to decision-making bodies.

Planning includes a complex cycle that integrates planning, programming, budgeting, implementation—(which is guided by planning), monitoring, evaluation, oversight and accountability. These phases, if properly coordinated, help to achieve the final objectives: the expected results that mobilize the entire dynamic of the targeted interactions and that, in the case of governments, seek the sustainable provision of goods and services to improve the welfare of the population.

The complexity of the cycle requires a careful definition of how it will be put into practice. It is here that the evaluation provides substantive support throughout the cycle. Given the importance of evaluation to the project cycle and its applicability to other phases, it is an essential criterion in the design and execution of all management phases.

Correctly operationalizing proposals in order to guarantee evaluability is crucial to ensuring the effectiveness and quality of policies, plans, programmes and projects; failing to link planning and programming to evaluation incurs high social, economic and political costs. Evaluation should not be treated as an end in itself. Rather, it is an element that ensures logical connectivity among programme elements and identifies the activities necessary to achieve them.

The public management cycle—a process applicable to other intervention areas—requires a flow of information for decision-making and the legitimacy of decisions, and focuses on both management bodies themselves and the beneficiary population. Merely providing information is insufficient if the data does not refer to actual inputs or equate actions with society's objectives and demands.

In this dynamic, evaluation has an irreplaceable role, with a constructive and proactive approach inserting itself at the beginning of the formulation phase to contribute to an effective design. It then highlights areas for improvement and collects lessons learned, helping implementing agencies achieve objectives and commitments, improve management capacities, develop public servants and contribute to national development.

THE PLANNING SYSTEM AND PUBLIC EVALUATION IN COSTA RICA

Costa Rica implemented national development planning by creating the National Planning Office in 1963. The Office acts as an advisory body to the Presidency of the Republic.[17] The Office was later transformed and strengthened, acquiring ministerial status with the enactment of the National Planning Law.[18]

Thereafter, the Ministry of National Planning and Economic Policy (MIDEPLAN) assumed the mandate to guide national development by working with public institutions to improve the country's production and productivity, to increase income distribution and state social services, to foster increased citizen participation in solving economic and social problems, and to improve governance. MIDEPLAN functions include conducting studies and analysing the national reality and public administration, participating in the formulation and adoption of economic and social development policies and plans, and evaluating state programmes and projects.

To this end, MIDEPLAN is responsible for the National Planning System, which comprises the planning units of more than 100 central and decentralized government institutions. The National Planning System is organized in a sectoral structure through coordination and advisory mechanisms that establish comprehensive, coherent and ongoing state actions. The National Planning System is vital to ensuring the comprehensiveness and coherence of the state as the nexus of planning, programming and evaluation between institutions and sectors.

The major product of the National Planning System is the national development plan, a tool that gathers and organizes the government's strategic priorities and forms the basis for defining annual institutional action plans. It also guides the public investment agenda and the country's international cooperation policy (including resource allocations). As such, it integrates the administration's proposed actions for one government cycle. MIDEPLAN is responsible for convoking, organizing, integrating, presenting and monitoring the national development plan; participating institutions formulate and implement the plans. Thus, the national development plan is the product of a participatory process, and starting with its definition, formalizes the platform from which to programme public institutions and the corresponding monitoring and evaluation efforts.

Although MIDEPLAN has been continually planned and institutionalized since its creation, state reforms (particularly those implemented in the 1980s) have weakened the Ministry's functions and its role in agenda-setting and governance. Consequences of this deterioration

18 Law number 3087 of 1963.
19 Law number 5525 of 1974.

include the separation of planning and budgeting and the strengthening of public finance oversight to the detriment of the evaluation of public management and management approaches that varied across sectoral and regional structures. This affected the comprehensiveness, complementarity and subsidiarity of national development agendas; reduced public investment and diminished institutional capacities in project agenda management.

Nevertheless, in recent years, mechanisms have been developed that call for (and in some cases require), revitalizing planning and evaluation with a more comprehensive and coherent perspective.

NATIONAL EVALUATION SYSTEM

Evaluation has been integrated as a key element of governance and as an integral part of MIDEPLAN's work. It has developed into a practice that responds to mandates deeply rooted in public management.

Article 11 of the Constitution of Costa Rica stipulates that public administration shall be subject to "a process of evaluation of results and accountability, and the subsequent personal responsibility of officials for the fulfillment of their duties." In addition, MIDEPLAN's original and guiding mission provides for systematic and ongoing evaluation of policy, objectives, programmes and project outcomes and for reporting national development plan progress to the presidency. The General Law of Public Administration states that the administration must operate under political leadership in such a way that its activities and resources are legally and comprehensively channelled to resolve the country's issues in accordance with the rights of the people.[19]

However, the evaluation of public administration has evolved slowly; it was not effectively institutionalized until the 1990s. In 1995, the National Evaluation System was created through Executive Decree Number 24175, and significantly modified in 2010 by Executive Decree Number 35755.

The National Evaluation System is composed of the Central State Administration, autonomous and semi-autonomous bodies, public companies and non-state public agencies, which administer public resources. Public bodies and private sector firms, Costa Rican Social Security and state universities (members of the National Planning System) are excluded from the National Evaluation System.

On an operational level, the sectoral agencies and ministries, the institutional planning units and MIDEPLAN's Evaluation and Monitoring Area (in its role as coordinator) participate as entities in the National Evaluation System.

National Evaluation System responsibilities include evaluating the compliance and results of actions established in the national development plan. This analysis defines the development plan's level of implementation and contribution to the country's economic and social development, strengthens public sector evaluation and fosters transparency in public management.

The scope of evaluations was extended by the 2001 Financial Administration of the

20 Law number 6227 of 1978.

Republic and Public Budgets law. It established the imperative relationship of the national budget and the institutional action plans to the national development plan and defines the terms and conditions for reporting on both.

Ultimately, the law stimulates evaluation because it addresses programming inconsistencies that can only be corrected through feedback that began during the design phase, including the formulation of goals, objectives and indicators. It also represents an ongoing mechanism to improve institutions' performance through resource and action allocations based on outcomes, public goods and services that contribute to the quality of life.

USE OF EVALUATION IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Evaluation is a comprehensive, continuous, objective and transparent process that measures progress towards achieving the government's commitment priorities. An evaluation provides information for decision-making, strengthens governance capacities and enhances the government's response to society's needs and demands.

The national development plan maintains the most comprehensive evaluation practice in the country. However, the scope evaluations are limited, primarily due to the oversight approach's pre-eminence and evaluations' short time-frames.

National Evaluation System activities involve complex programming, monitoring and reporting, which provide specific scopes, basic collection areas and times, data integration and presentation, and a range of partners. Activities include:

- Defining guidelines for evaluating and training counterparts;
- Evaluating proposals to be incorporated into the national development plan;
- Biannual monitoring of compliance of strategic and operational actions;
- Evaluating progress and compliance with national and sectoral goals in two distinct periods;
- Evaluating compliance of sectoral goals and analysing the context;
- Conducting mid-term and final impact evaluations;
- Assessing and analysing changes in the national development context based on fulfilment of national goals and policies; and
- Conducting strategic evaluations of the government, recently promoted an assessment of the impact or outcome of specific programmes beyond the national development plan.
- Development of these activities has enabled:
- Verification of compliance with institutional programming;
- Justification of budget implementation (with potential sanctions for non-compliance);
- Provision of feedback to implementing institutions and decision-makers (institutions, sectoral ministries, and government council);

- Reporting to political oversight bodies (Comptroller General of the Republic and legislative assembly);
- Maintenance of an ongoing revision of evaluation methodologies in order to streamline the exercise and guarantee that it contributes to improved government management;
- Promotion of the dissemination of information to the public; and
- Maintenance of mechanisms linking public participation to the evaluation exercise (e.g. Letters of Commitment to the Citizen), with direct accountability of management for compliance with objectives, oversight systems of public sector services and an ongoing programme for recognizing best practices in public service.

STATUS OF EVALUATION IN COSTA RICA

Evaluation practice in Costa Rica has focused on the national development plan, which has only recently begun to address the challenge of incorporating evaluation into the spectrum of measurable objectives, strategic programmes and projects.

The overall evaluation system has emphasized monitoring and reporting on activities that lack adequate levels of verification and feedback or freedom to redirect actions and policies.

A systematic review of national development plan evaluation methodologies shows that the country's culture of governance lacks adequate and timely logical coordination between evaluators and those responsible for formulating the plan. This limits the design of targets and indicators with respect to evaluation criteria. Despite important advances, actions taken to overcome this situation seem inadequate, leading to material weakness in the 2011–2014 national development plan period.

While the national structure is sufficiently stable, the legitimacy and influence of the national development plan evaluation is limited at the institutional and sectoral level. The institutional units responsible for evaluations have limited resources and a limited professional profile. Responsible institutions have very little impact, and in general, their roles are limited to recording and reporting information because the institutional organizations favour short-term budget cycles that are detached from four-year planning and public policies. This approach has focused on the objectives of the process without establishing the appropriate accountability systems for non-compliance.

The predominance of institutional logic over sectoral and national perspectives leads to discontinuities and inconsistencies in the agendas, which ultimately result in the poor use of resources and an inability to meet established objectives and targets.

In addition, the public dissemination of information has decreased. National development plan evaluation reports are not broadly disseminated to the public (public reports are primarily made available on the Internet). The volume and technical nature of evaluation information further limits citizens' access to the information, further limiting participation.

Despite these limitations and challenges, there have been valuable successes in terms of building an evaluation culture and practice as an instrument of governance. Successes include establishing a consolidated institutional apparatus with stable human resources. This

has increased the legitimacy of the evaluation system and the coordination with the budget oversight system. In addition, political and citizen monitoring entities have positively received evaluation inputs, which has promoted a dynamic with the potential to be strengthened.

In recent years, advances have been made to expand evaluation to strategic policies and programmes that complement the tracking and monitoring dimension of the national development plan. This expansion will have potential for guiding government thinking; adjusting methodological frameworks for monitoring and evaluation, orienting them towards results-driven management (which marks a different approach with considerable implications); and advancing technological support to facilitate monitoring and reporting. As a result of the redefinition of scope and approach, progress has been achieved in redefining the roles of actors, which has strengthened evaluation offices' role to revitalize the set of actors to support effective evaluation exercises.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

An assessment of the use of evaluation in public management in Costa Rica provides a series of ideas:

- Identifying historical weaknesses in national development plan design and evaluation and reporting methodology draws attention to vital linkages between planning and evaluation. These weaknesses limit the potential to systematically and assertively impact national development and strengthen democracy;
- Shifting the governance paradigm towards a results-driven approach related to a mature evaluation culture (one that is not purely formal and informative character but assumes a leading role in decision-making) will address new challenges;
- Providing feedback for the institutional management cycle and the public sector requires transparency, accountability and mechanisms to ensure that information that is relevant, timely and reliable; and
- The evaluation exercise is a link between the technical and political counterparts, committed to efficiency and good governance. The evaluation can therefore not be seen as an isolated or even complementary process in public administration but should be accepted as an intrinsic phase of institutional management.

In light of lessons learned and its commitment to the population's welfare, MIDEPLAN has identified and promoted a series of measures that include the revision of and changes to the methodological frameworks for monitoring and evaluation. These changes will have a logical and comprehensive impact on the design and planning processes, orienting them towards results-driven management; expanding the evaluation spectrum to strategic policies and programmes; redefining the roles of stakeholders; managing and promoting appropriate resources and systems to achieve the desired parameters (e.g. a general revitalization of the system that complements a process to strengthen accountability mechanisms); conceiving of a global strategy to improve public administration; strengthening the capacity to address the population's needs, aspirations and demands; and contributing to good governance.

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MALAYSIA: PROGRAMME/ PROJECT EVALUATION – THE MALAYSIAN EXPERIENCE

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INTRODUCTION

Malaysia's success in managing and administering development can be attributed to a sound and sustained socio-economic development programme, a committed and modernized bureaucracy (responsive to political leadership and people's needs), and a system of planning, monitoring and evaluation that ensures that implementation always remains on track (Zainul Ariff Hussain, 2003). The need for monitoring and evaluation stems from the public desire for the government to address the issues of programmes' and projects' value for money and fitness for intended purposes. In addition, the media has started demanding governmental transparency and accountability related to meeting people's and stakeholders' needs and expectations (Khalid Ramli, 2007).

In 2005, the Government of Malaysia directed that all federal- and state-level ministries and agencies implement outcome evaluations for all programmes and projects. Outcome evaluations are formal research exercises that examine the short-term effects of a programme or project. Pursuing this directive, the Implementation Coordination Unit of the Prime Minister's Department compiled and produced the 'Guidelines in Conducting Development Program Evaluation' (Federal Government Circular No. 3, 2005).

The 'Guidelines' prescribe six steps to performing an outcome evaluation: 1) identifying programmes and projects; 2) developing the terms of reference; 3) collecting data; 4) analysing data; and 5) writing and 6) presenting reports. In developing the term of reference, an outcome evaluation must match specified key result areas for the national, state and district level. Due to the number of programmes and projects and limitations

in time and manpower, selection for evaluation is based on five main criteria: 1) national interest; 2) priority ministry or agency programmes; 3) programmes and projects targeting a large number of people; 4) high-cost projects or programmes; and 5) projects with high multiplier effects.

THE NATURE OF AN OUTCOME EVALUATION

In an outcome evaluation, the Implementation Coordination Unit monitors and coordinates performance indicators at national, ministry and agency levels; conducts selected programme evaluations, submits and presents evaluation reports to the National Action Working Committee and the National Action Council; and ensures that programmes and projects are implemented consistently. As a secretariat for both the National Action Working Committee and the National Action Council, the Implementation Coordination Unit acts as the clearing house for all evaluation exercises. Milestones for the evaluation process are presented in Table 1.

The evaluation process in Malaysia is focused on outcome evaluations of government-funded programmes and projects. Outcome evaluations are performed on completed projects, utilize secondary data and generally do not take more than three months to complete. This simplified and less expensive approach is necessary to make the evaluations feasible. Evaluations are conducted in three areas: policies, programmes and projects.

Policies are the main thrust as formulated by the government in managing the Malaysian public sector. Programmes refer to the development planning of ministries, departments or

TABLE 1. MILESTONES OF OUTCOME EVALUATION

2005	2006	2007–2010	2009	2010
PLANNING	ENFORCEMENT AND TRAINING	ROLLING	ENHANCEMENT	REVIEWING
Designing the Guidelines Officiating the 'Guidelines in Conducting Development Program Evaluation'	Enforcement and application to all division heads Bilateral training sessions with ministries and agencies are conducted through conferences and workshops; pilot testing on programme evaluation and reporting	Ministries, agencies and statutory bodies embarked on the evaluation program by: Evaluating completed projects to identify outcomes and impacts Presenting the papers in the respective forums	Outcome Evaluation Module was developed and incorporated into the Project Monitoring System	8,343 programmes/ projects have been evaluated Assessment reports (aggregated according to ministries) sent to Public Service Department Evaluation results presented to stakeholders Review and prepare an Action Plan for the 10th Malaysia Plan (2011–2015)

Source: Outcome Evaluation Division, Implementation Coordination Unit.

agencies approved by the Economic Planning Unit to be implemented during the Five-Year Malaysia Plan. Projects are created when programmes are divided by ministries into smaller projects based on factors such as location, type or contracts.

Outcome evaluations of ministry and agency programmes and projects are mandatory. However, national-level outcome evaluations are performed based on request. For example, the Implementation Coordination Unit was commissioned to evaluate the performance of the Ninth Malaysia Plan (2006–2010) and to investigate the Citizen Satisfaction Index for the 2009 fiscal stimulus package. Both evaluations were substantial and contained high-level research in terms of the terms of reference, stakeholder base, time taken to complete the evaluations and the scope of data used.

Every evaluation must be presented to the National Action Working Committee, chaired by the Chief Secretary to the Government. The evaluations are then presented to the National Action Council, the highest decision-making body for evaluation presentation and reporting (chaired by the Prime Minister).

THE USE OF AN OUTCOME EVALUATION

National planning processes use outcome evaluation findings as feedback. For example, the policy-level evaluation (conducted at the end of the Five-Year Plan) highlights the performance of each key result area and provides feedback to the Economic Planning Unit in national planning review and prioritization. In 2010, the Implementation Coordination Unit was commissioned to evaluate the performance of Ninth Malaysia Plan, which covers the Five-Year Plan starting from 2006 to 2010. The three-month research project was presented to Malaysian Cabinet Members in 2011, where the findings were used in the national agenda's mid-term review.

Evaluation findings are also used as feedback in short-term planning processes. For example, starting with the Tenth Malaysia Plan (2011–2015), the Economic Planning Unit will only consider applications for new projects that have projected outcomes. Projected outcomes will be derived and designed from the existing outcome evaluation of programmes and projects in the Ninth Malaysia Plan. Input from previous outcome evaluations is crucial for ministries preparing project bidding in the new financial year.

Evaluation findings are also used to prioritize programmes and projects and, due to limited resources and unlimited demand, to find alternative methods of implementation during short-term planning processes. For example, the outcome evaluation on dredging projects determined that the speed of siltation made targets unachievable; money spent on dredging could not return value for the investment. As a corrective action, priorities were shifted to address siltation sources (e.g. river cleaning projects).

In addition to its use as a planning tool, central agencies (e.g. the Economic Planning Unit and the Treasury) use outcome evaluation findings to assess the efficiency and relevancy of the implementing ministry or agency. For example, central agencies used outcome evaluations to quantitatively identify the contributions of the three implementing ministries to poverty eradication. In this case, the central agencies may increase allocations to a major contributing ministry or decrease allocations in a low-contributing ministry.

Evaluation tools—typically cost-benefit and Citizen Satisfaction Index analysis—can indicate whether a programme or project is fulfilling the criteria of value for money and fitness for its intended purposes. For example, in 2010 the Implementation Coordination Unit was commissioned to evaluate the Citizen Satisfaction Index for the 2009 fiscal stimulus package. The six-month project analysed primary data collected from surveys of more than 6,000 respondents throughout Malaysia. The findings helped the government determine people's level of satisfaction with (and whether they were aware of) actions taken by the government in overcoming the financial crisis.

The aggregated results of programme and project evaluations form part of the key performance indicator for the respective Secretary General/Director General. The key performance indicator, which is calculated at year-end, serves as a report card on the individual performance and will affect his or her promotion. Thus evaluations prompt heads of ministries and agencies to ensure that programmes and projects under their purview are efficiently and effectively delivered.

The primary users of the outcome evaluation findings are the Economic Planning Unit, the Treasury and the evaluated ministry or agency. In general, evaluations are used primarily as planning tools, particularly in national-level budgeting and appropriations processes. In some cases, evaluation findings are used as lesson learned to improve future development of programmes and projects. In the Tenth Malaysia Plan, the Economic Planning Unit adopted an outcome-based approach in their planning. Following this, the Treasury has started a pilot project of adopting outcome-based budgeting with five ministries in 2013 (final adoption is targeted for 2016, the beginning of the Eleventh Malaysia Plan).

MEASURES ADDRESSING CHALLENGES

After five years of outcome evaluations since their inception in 2005, the main challenges are developing human resource competencies and supporting evaluation systems, procedures and processes. Meeting these challenges will be crucial to Malaysia's plan to successfully adopt outcome-based budgeting by 2016.

To address the competency issue, the government is introducing a ministry-level pilot programme, the Outcome Evaluation Champion. This programme includes training on outcome evaluation for select officers from various ministries. Upon certification, they will be appointed as a reference point in that particular ministry. The programme is currently expanding to the state level and is providing ongoing trainings.

To strengthen the evaluation support system, the strategic alliances of ministries (with the central agencies, the Implementation Coordination Unit, the Auditor General Office, the Treasury and the Economic Planning Unit) formed a committee tasked to evaluate the ministries' evaluation research papers. In this respect, immediate enhancements are readily available for every aspect of planning, monitoring and financial analysis. In addition, a database (the Outcome Evaluation Module) has been created to record and store research pertaining to outcome evaluations. The database's primary objectives are to act as a resource for future planning and research and to facilitate comparing programmes and projects over time. Furthermore, the system indicates the feasibility of programmes and projects by

comparing targeted outputs and outcomes to real outputs and outcomes.

The Implementation Coordination Unit developed a National Indicator Databank to assist system users refer and choose outcomes for their programmes and projects and easily match them to the national key result areas. Currently, the Implementation Coordination Unit is reviewing and planning to enhance the 'Guidelines' in order to take into consideration current changes and needs in outcome evaluation, particularly in view of the 2013 integration of the outcome evaluation module with the outcome-based budgeting online system. A National Project Outcome Evaluation Conference is planned in 2012 to commemorate the fifth year of outcome evaluation in Malaysia.

CONCLUSION

Government's fundamental goals are to provide for efficient and effective delivery of services, implement development programmes and projects and maintain national security. Performance measurements must be conducted in order to ensure that programmes and projects meet the expected results and desired outcomes, have value for money and are fit for their intended purposes. Hence, utilizing evaluation tools to analyse past programmes and projects will help guide the government towards balanced decision-making and quantify the value added in future development plans. Finally, outcome evaluations improve best practice approaches and help identify and correct issues raised during project implementation. Hence, outcome evaluation is beneficial in policy and budget planning and in improving programmes' and projects' service delivery.

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BENIN: PRACTICE AND USE OF THE EVALUATION OF PUBLIC POLICIES

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INTRODUCTION

The quality of public policy design in Africa has experienced a marked improvement over the last decade with countries' development and adoption of poverty reduction strategy papers and strategic development guidelines. However, despite improvements in strategies and public policies, the results achieved in terms of development are not yet satisfactory because the implementation of public programmes still suffers from significant shortfalls.

Reduced development assistance and the scarcity of national resources challenge managers and governments to achieve quality in implementing poverty reduction policies. These challenges can be addressed by developing and implementing national evaluation systems to increase government accountability and efficiencies in service delivery.

Several stakes are linked to the dynamics involved in developing national evaluation policies. The most significant are the need to make evaluations useful and to instil a culture and standards that will lead to a sustainable national system of evaluation. Evaluation processes are not always properly used or, at best, are not used to full potential. It is therefore important to evaluate the use of evaluations as they are applied by countries and organizations.

This working document presents the experience of Benin over the past few years. It outlines the efforts the Government of Benin has made to create a national evaluation system in order to disseminate good practices and implement an effective mechanism for monitoring and evaluating the Growth Strategy for Poverty Reduction (SCRP).

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE EVALUATION OF PUBLIC POLICIES

The Government of Benin has recently acknowledged the importance of evaluation. The Prime Minister's Office has established the Office of Evaluation on Public Policies (BEPP) to

assume the responsibility for evaluation and to report to the government on related progress.

With the support of the Evaluation Office of the United Nations Development Programme, Benin conducted a national capacity study on evaluation. The study showed the low use of evaluation in management practices and identified significant dysfunctions, such as weaknesses in existing capacity, disorganization of evaluation activities, reluctance of managers and the scarcity of resources allocated to the few existing evaluation services.

Faced with the difficulties in disseminating information, cooperating for the efficient conduct of evaluations and establishing the basis of evaluations on public policies (EPP) in Benin, the BEPP drew up a global institutional framework that identifies the state and non-state actors called upon to play a role in public policy evaluation processes. This institutional framework specifies their roles in conducting evaluations and sharing information on public policies.

The 'Institutional Framework for the Evaluation of Public Policies' highlights several groups of actors:

- BEPP, a central structure of coordination and execution reporting to the Office of the Prime Minister. BEPP is responsible for conducting evaluations of national sector policies, programmes, projects, public–private partnerships and large state interventions. BEPP reports its results to the government;
- The National Council of Evaluation (yet to be created) will be a structure to promote evaluation practices and compliance with evaluation standards. Providing the framework for evaluation practices to ensure their quality, it will have a consulting and advisory role on matters of methodologies and implementation mechanisms to be applied;
- The National Assembly, Chamber of Accounts of the Supreme Court and the Economic and Social Council, which are the advisory and control bodies;
- The Ministry of Development (at the central level) includes structures for monitoring and evaluation, as do other entities responsible for planning and statistical and economic analysis. These include the Observatory of Social Change; the General Directorate for Development Policies (responsible for ensuring the coherence of public policies); the General Directorate for Monitoring of Projects and Programs; the Department for Monitoring Economic and Financial Programs; and the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Analysis;
- Sectorial-level structures, represented by the Directorates of Programming and the Prospectives of ministries, which are the focal points of the BEPP at the level of their respective ministries. They inform the BEPP about the programmes and projects that are carried out and serve as the gateway for applying evaluations;
- Local-level structures, including prefectures and decentralized government units; and
- Non-state stakeholders, such as non-governmental organizations, associations, beneficiary representatives, universities, research and development institutes, the private sector and technical and financial partners.

This institutional framework has been very well received by stakeholders. With the exception of the National Council of Evaluation, the framework is operational and ongoing, enabling evaluations to be conducted easier than in the past. This institutional framework has also proved to be important in planning and enhancing capacity development of public administration and non-state actors.

This institutional framework and its mechanism for implementing evaluations have led to increased efficiencies. The mechanism has enabled an increased stakeholder participation in formulating recommendations that take their concerns into account. The framework is also used for:

- Identifying evaluations to be conducted;
- Creating evaluation authorities in charge of steering and ensuring the scientific quality of evaluations;
- Ensuring different actors' participation in an evaluation;
- Disseminating results; and
- Monitoring the implementation of an evaluation's recommendations.

Following a conference during Benin Evaluation Day in June 2010, the government acknowledged the conference's recommendations and elevated the evaluation of public policies as a national priority. It is also committed to building national evaluation capacity, developing an evaluation culture and promoting its institutionalization.

IMPLEMENTING THE EVALUATION OF PUBLIC POLICIES

Implementing evaluation process in Benin will be analysed at two levels: the evaluation of public policies and implementing monitoring and evaluation of the SCRP.

Evaluation of public policies

Conduct of evaluations of public policies

Several evaluations are conducted in Benin, both by the state and by technical and financial partners involved in projects. This paper addresses the use of evaluations carried out on national sectorial public policies conducted by BEPP.

Between 2009 and 2011, BEPP conducted several evaluations of public policies in the areas of agriculture, education, rural electrification, public finances, administrative reform, decentralization and health. These evaluations have been carried out in order to ensure the policy's:

- Coherence;
- Effectiveness and efficiency;
- Appropriateness of goals and the means of achieving the goals;
- Effectiveness of organizational and institutional framework; and
- Sustainability of results.

The Office of Evaluation of Public Policy uses a participatory approach involving the sectorial ministries, professional associations, civil society organizations and technical and financial partners. In this regard, evaluation implementation is multidisciplinary and comprised of a wide range of experts and actors representing a broad and independent cross-section of opinion. To ensure the independence of the evaluation, BEPP has adopted an approach of outsourcing by using and building national capacities based on using independent firms for each evaluation. This approach has also led BEPP to develop, with the assistance of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF Benin), a national directory of evaluators.

Evaluations are conducted based on an annual activity programme developed according to defined criteria. Evaluations are also launched at the request of the government to respond to specific concerns.

Use of evaluations

Evaluations conducted by BEPP have shown their usefulness to the government and other actors, assisting in decision-making processes. The results of evaluations are formally presented to the cabinet, which decides upon and approves the reports. Among other matters, the cabinet makes the necessary decisions on the recommendations made and instructs the ministries and related departments regarding implementing the recommendations.

Evaluations are particularly useful for actors inform and be informed. Decision makers are not always well informed on the evolution of a sector, on the policies that are implemented or on dysfunctions in the structures of execution. An evaluation report allows them to have a qualified level of information to better focus on future interventions in that sector.

At the level of executing structures and partners, evaluations improve implementation. The evaluation process is an opportunity to analyse and answer specific questions to improve a project or intervention. Evaluations enable a real exchange of information and create new synergies even before making any results available. Following the publication of results, an evaluation is an advocacy tool to secure new resources or review programming. Evaluations are also used to implement recommendations in practical terms and follow up on the Council of Ministers' instructions.

Evaluations have helped structures identify good practices and take steps to maintain the benefits and quality of their services. Evaluations have also become a valuable documentary source for developing new programmes and design future strategies.

At the level of civil society and the beneficiaries, evaluations inform stakeholders of the progress and difficulties in policies' implementation. Widely disseminating results enables remobilizing of civil society and local community actors around key policy issues.

At BEPP, evaluations are particularly useful for communicating on developments within a sector, proposing new reforms to the government, and informing the population, technical and financial partners, and other state structures in order to create the necessary mobilization to implement the most efficient policies or intervention designs.

BEPP also conducts follow-up activities on the Council of Ministers' recommendations and instructions. This exercise in post-evaluation management is particularly important and likely to lead to the establishment of committees for the recommendations of each evaluation.

EVALUATION OF THE GROWTH STRATEGY FOR POVERTY REDUCTION

Mechanism for monitoring and evaluation

The Government of Benin is aware that its definition of a growth strategy for poverty reduction is not sufficient in itself. It therefore follows that programmes to be implemented under the poverty reduction strategy must contain monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. The technical follow-up of the implementation of SCRP is ensured by the Observatory of Social Change, which also monitors the impact of strategies on poverty and social issues.

Periodic evaluations of previous SCPR implementations have shown that the implementations suffered from weaknesses in the system of data collection and a weak commitment on the part of the actors at the ground level. The mechanisms of the SCRP 2011–2015 address these problems by allowing for wider participation and better use of results. This new system will allow evaluating policies and programmes derived internally or externally.

The new system for monitoring and evaluating the SCRP has the mission of measuring the effects of policies and actions on target groups and on objectives of development (e.g. growth, poverty and social development). These evaluations will enable establishing linkages between programme and project execution to the results in terms of development and the welfare of the targeted groups. The evaluations will be better synchronized with the programming of the sectorial activities, the revision of programmes and sectorial strategies and that of the SCRP 2011–2015. Evaluations will serve to assess the effectiveness of priority programs with regards to long-term policy objectives in the strategy.

In terms of deliverables, the mechanism for monitoring and evaluation will provide outputs such as evaluations of the effectiveness of sectorial strategies and public policies ensured by the BEPP. The mechanism will produce selective studies of the impacts of policies and programmes on poverty as ensured by the Observatory of Social Change. The specifications for evaluations will revised annually and take into account SCRP 2011–2015 priorities.

TOOLS FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION THE SCRP

The Observatory of Social Change has adopted and experimented with two tools for monitoring and analysis of impacts adopted from The World Bank: the Local Participatory Impact Monitoring and Poverty and Social Impact Analysis. The Local Participatory Impact Monitoring tool is an iterative process by which actors commit to analysing household satisfaction of beneficiaries and analysing the effects and impacts services have on standards of living. The tool also requires monitoring the financial, material and human resources allocated to realizing services provided and measuring the performance of the structures involved in providing the services. Poverty and Social Impact Analysis entails analysing the distributional impacts of political reforms on the standard of living of different stakeholders, with particular attention to the poor and the vulnerable.

For implementation, both of these tools require the establishment of a steering committee. The steering committee is constituted not only of technical and financial partners, but also of Benin administration representatives authorized to implement recommendations. The steering committee is the transmission mechanism for the results in order

to help in decision-making processes. At the end of each study, the committee is also assisted by the operationalization of the recommendations under the aegis of the Observatory of Social Change and advice from the Council of Ministers as required.

PROSPECTS: NEED FOR A NATIONAL POLICY OF EVALUATION

The utility of the evaluations carried out in Benin has remained marginal. Several factors have hampered the development of the practice, such as:

- Lack of resources;
- Lack of statistical information;
- Human resources deficits;
- Low demand by officials;
- Limited effectiveness of the monitoring and evaluation units that are only engaged in monitoring to the detriment of the evaluation;
- Poor definition of structures' mandates; and
- Unawareness of evaluation methods.

To improve this situation, many measures have been identified as necessary for evaluation development, such as:

- Increasing the accountability of a central structure;
- Providing necessary financial resources;
- Establishing a legal and regulatory framework;
- Building capacities;
- Raising awareness of decision makers;
- Promoting training; and
- Harmonizing approaches by development partners in accordance with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action.

A National Policy of Evaluation has been developed in order to define the overall framework for planning and implementing evaluations. The National Policy of Evaluation aims to promote institutional responsibility in research and managerial accountability. Its main objectives are:

- Promoting a culture of learning inside the public administration;
- Furthering knowledge management and the dissemination of good management practice;
- Enhancing accountability within the government;
- Systematizing accountability by institutions and citizens.

This policy applies to the government, the central public administration and its decentralized structures and administrations. It is integrated into all other public action by the public authority and can be the object of an evaluation, except for national security interventions.

Key factors affect national evaluation policy implementation, including:

- The professionalization of the evaluative function;
- The reform of follow-up evaluations contained within sectorial ministries through the creation of two units that are responsible for programme evaluation and monitoring and statistics;
- The creation of a National Development Fund for Evaluation to support development efforts of evaluation practices at the national level;
- The creation of a National Council for Evaluation with a mandate to train and develop evaluation practices in Benin;
- The establishment of a regulatory framework laying down the provisions of the various structures responsible for the evaluation process;
- The development and implementation of a programme for building national evaluation capacity;
- The assistance of the government for training and financial or human resources to support local governments wishing to develop evaluation mechanisms within their administrations; and
- The development and contribution of training institutes and national universities to offer continuing education cycles and professional training that make available specific skills in evaluation.

CONCLUSION

The use of evaluation procedures in Benin is in its infant stages and the prospects are good. Concerns over evaluations have been a significant obstacle. The establishment of the Office of Evaluation of National Public Policies and the actions regarding information and communication contribute to gradually overcoming this difficulty. It is expected that in the coming years the process evaluating policies will become more inclusive and participatory, thereby allowing a rational and systematic use of the results of evaluations.

The experience of evaluations on public policies conducted by BEPP proves that optimal use is possible, particularly if adequate support is given to following up the implementation of evaluation recommendations. For the national evaluation policy, it is part of the current program of the government to use the evaluation to increase the effectiveness of public policies for a better management of the populations' real needs. All stakeholders have acknowledged the necessity of developing evaluation practices in Benin; the national evaluation policy is a unifying tool for realizing this ambition. Its implementation will help Benin set an example in the evaluation community by gradually transforming its public administration into a well-performing and learning organization.

GUATEMALA: MULTI-STAKEHOLDER AND MULTI-SYSTEM EVALUATION SYSTEMS IN THE FIELD OF PUBLIC POLICY

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INTRODUCTION

For decades, evaluation tools have been indispensable in designing, implementing and developing public policies; in aiding institutions in overcoming their weaknesses; and in enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of institutional actions. These instruments were initially promoted by international organizations such as the UN, international financial bodies and aid agencies.

Analysis of the experience and results of monitoring and evaluation tool use suggests that the tools have lacked effectiveness and therefore have had a low impact on ensuring the sustainability of planning processes or achieving intervention targets.

The causes for poor use of evaluation tools include institutional weaknesses of public systems; reliance on international organizations in defining and promoting these mechanisms; lack of systemic evaluation procedures; lack of participatory processes in the definition, design, implementation and monitoring of evaluation tools; and lack of political will of the stakeholders involved with these instruments (including government, international community, international agencies and civil society).

In-depth, critical, objective and proactive discussion and debate about evaluation systems within the framework of public policy are necessary to help find solutions to major challenges and weaknesses countries face, particularly on sensitive issues such as public social investment. The analysis of the effectiveness and efficiency of the evaluation systems from a multi-stakeholder perspective at conferences such as the International Conference on National Evaluation Capacities will contribute to finding possible guidelines that help to clarify and refocus policies through consensus and capacities shared by all bodies and stakeholders

linked to these processes. Further work is needed to build strategic and long-term planning and evaluation systems, as well as to build the human and institutional conditions that will ensure the success of these instruments. Civil society can play a significant role in the field of public policy, primarily in social auditing processes and in pursuing transparency.

CONTEXT

Guatemala's socio-political and economic characteristics require objective conditions in processes related to issues such as the capacity to respond to issues related to democratic life, social stability, economic justice, participation and accountability.

The discussion in this review is based on several situational premises that are fundamental to a systematic analysis of the processes (e.g. measurement capabilities) that are promoted in the context of public policies and evaluation systems. These premises include:

- **Weak states**: In previous decades, Guatemala's political and economic systems have been highly exclusive; political and economic power was concentrated in a small sector of the population. This model led to sustained weaknesses of state institutions. Currently, states are "un-functional" and unable to respond systemically to the multifaceted problems of their populations and societies. Most Central American countries follow this pattern.
- **Vulnerable democratic processes:** Guatemala's socio-economic and structural problems led to civil strife, a constant risk of political crisis, and internal wars. Although most of these conflicts have come to an end, a culture of fear and terror and the persistence of different political powers and interests (along with the growing power of organized crime) continue to create a state of (un)governability. The state of democratic life is in a permanent state of vulnerability.
- **Growing structural problems:** Latin American countries are generally characterized by persistent and growing structural problems. The unequal distribution of wealth and income, coupled with inequitable access to basic social services, has lead to more than 70 percent of the Central American population living in poverty or extreme poverty. This population is living with an extreme deficit in access to areas such as health; education; housing; social, civil and labour rights; leisure activities; social and citizen security; and political participation. Economic and social marginalization and exclusion is extraordinarily high. The indigenous population of Guatemala (which accounts for 65 percent of the population) remains the most vulnerable and affected by this problem, particularly children and women.
- **Externally-dependent economies:** Central American countries and most Latin American nations have been historically dependent on foreign economic and financial assistance, particularly from developed countries and international financial bodies. These countries are experiencing the persistent problem of ever-increasing external debt; economic dependency on agricultural exports; growing economic migration in recent years; and marginal foreign investment. These factors have deepened in recent years, particularly in the exploitation of natural resources and minerals.

CONCEPTS AND APPROACHES

In using evaluation systems to measure institutional capacities, there is a complex and diverse range of concepts and approaches that respond to heterogeneous interests and practices. In this respect, there is a lack of clarity of purpose in public policy and evaluation systems. The practical application of concepts or approaches is generally more related to a short-term vision and the specific political interests of the state or its various institutions. Implementing assessment tools has been driven more by obligation than by strategy, and the concepts and types of methodology are generally replicas of other experiences. Consequently, countries in the region have failed to generate proposals and initiatives that reflect the needs and context of each country.

RELATIONSHIPS: STATE, PUBLIC POLICY AND EVALUATION SYSTEMS

Analysis of the experience of measurement capabilities must begin with the relationships among state functionality, the rationale of public policy operations, and the instruments and tools available to promote evaluation processes.

- Public policy systems have been consistently absent or weak. Further, there is no clear identification or definition of what public policy should be. Though the government makes public policy, other bodies (e.g. academia and civil society) propose policies.
- State institutions have a poor capacity to define or implement systemic approaches to monitoring and evaluation. State initiatives often follow a sectoral logic, lack a systemic view of performance, and fail to incorporate monitoring and evaluation processes into project and programme design. Further, state institutions generally do not foster comprehensive relationships among design, development, planning and implementation of public policies.
- Public investment budgets are limited, which relates to a lack of national development plans, low levels of investment and the influence of political parties and sectoral interests. In many cases, corruption and lack of transparency frequently hamper public investment efforts.
- These factors translate into the absence of a genuine culture of democracy and governance, which is essential to securing the effective political, economic and social development of a country.

COMMON PRACTICES IN THE DEFINITION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF PUBLIC POLICY

The starting point of analysis is understanding public policy as a means to mitigate social and economic inequalities and to promote equality and social justice. A viable and functional evaluation system should respond in an integrated manner to ensure effective and efficient public policy decision-making and programme implementation. Within this conceptual framework, some recurring issues are repeatedly manifested in the development of public policy in most Central American countries.

- Countries typically lack standards as to how incorporate a country approach, a state vision and real prospects for sustainability into public policy.
- Weak (and in some cases non-existent) indicator systems limit effective public policy creation and implementation.
- In practice, public policies lack measurement indicators, have no budget, are short-term and present problems in reaching consensus among different political and economic powers.
- In general, public policy is not seen as a complex process that is systemically linked to a variety of interrelated situations, issues and institutions.
- Government responses tend to seek immediate results in order to prevent political reprisals from society. These actions imply the abandonment of more strategic and sustainable processes that address the identified problems.
- Public investment needs more organized processes, more strategic planning, improved efficiency and effectiveness of spending, increased quality and impact of spending and a focus on long-term sustainability.
- Citizens are demanding greater participation in governance processes, increased efficiency in addressing their demands and programmes that address their social needs.
- Applying evaluation processes to public policy and expenditure has traditionally addressed issues such as short-term responses, criteria influenced by partisan issues, lack of systemic planning, lack of an operating budget, lack of an institutional framework, insufficiently qualified human resources, lack of political will, external technical dependence, lack of a holistic-systemic approach in state operations, and exclusive and non-participatory processes.

COMMON PRACTICES IN THE DEFINITION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF EVALUATION SYSTEMS

The evaluation process can be defined as a series of systemic actions to assess progress and effectiveness in the use of identification tools, design, implementation and outcomes of government interventions in response to a country's social, economic and policy projections and problems. An objective and subjective evaluation system improves decision-making in terms of efficiency, sustainability and durability of results. An evaluation is a basic and strategic tool to improve governance and should be based on a national and long-term vision.

- Political (rather than technical) challenges pose the greatest bar to implementing an efficient and innovative monitoring and evaluation system.
- Evaluation should be understood as an institutionalized culture that enhances the operation, quality, impact and sustainability of social spending.
- There is no culture of public policy evaluation and, as a result, there are no institutionalized evaluation systems. Evaluation processes are not prioritized, as reflected in limited budgets to drive these processes.

- The evaluation instruments that are applied address specific or short-term processes (e.g. government reports and mandatory international reports such as Millennium Development Goal Reports). However, these reports typically lack indicators to measure the quality of these assessments.
- There is not enough qualified staff to implement systemic evaluation processes, creating a dependency on experts that generally come from international bodies; the necessarily national capacities are not being developed.
- The current evaluation system is underdeveloped; it is limited to a control perspective, and is not situated to become a functional means for efficient management or enhanced public social investment.
- The Latin American experience exhibits conflicting views and practices. The decision-making dynamics of immediate administrative or political pay-off does not incorporate factors such as the need for efficient, effective, strategic and sustainable processes.
- Politicized practices characterize policy evaluation processes.
- There are no viable legal or operational procedures for the participation of various sectors and powers in the social, economic and political life of a country (e.g. civil society, media or academia). There is political distrust between state institutions and social stakeholders.
- There are no standards to regulate or create a functional evaluation system; not all public investment entities are integrated into evaluation processes.
- No effective information systems (e.g. national accounting systems) contribute to the implementation of evaluation processes. A permanent system that identifies and generates statistics and qualitative and quantitative information needs to be established and regulated to provide feedback for these processes.
- Increasingly, citizens are calling for states to be more democratic and their institutions more effective.

CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EFFECTIVE EVALUATION SYSTEM

Several characteristics define the application of systemic logic to public governance processes.

- An evaluation system should be understood as an instrument that ensures a democratic system, social justice and development. To achieve these goals, evaluation systems should go beyond simple control-effectiveness relationships of public governance; evaluation should be seen as an institutionalized culture that promotes appropriate social spending, quality, impact and sustainability over time.
- Good governance is a fundamental condition for effective and efficient public policies with achievable goals over the short, medium and long term.

- For an evaluation system to be effective and fulfil its mandates, it must have the political and legal support of the state, its powers and political parties and the general public.
- The state should be responsible for public policy evaluation systems.
- Achieving transparency, one of the greatest challenges to good governance, increases trust, co-responsibility and society's involvement in democratic processes.
- An evaluation system should be impartially governed, without interference by political interests. This will promote objectivity, transparency, consistency between the problems and actions, and the accurate and determined establishment of performance indicators.
- In order to ensure that countries do not overly rely on specialized international bodies for evaluation processes, it is necessary to generate national institutional frameworks, provide staff with extensive training experience and build country-specific organizational, administrative and territorial capacities.
- Evaluation systems, methodologies and procedures should be highly participatory and include stakeholders and sectors from civil society and the state. Consensus-building should be used to establish common goals and to promote the requisite responsibility and social solidarity that are inherent to a democratic culture of evaluation.
- Evaluation must span a set of linked systems: public policy, planning, reporting, monitoring and follow-up. This set of systems requires institutional strengthening which entails improvements in budgeting, organization, qualified human resources and political will.
- A sustainable systemic process demands appropriate methodological instruments to generate quality and effective performance indicators (e.g. impact, outcomes, coordination) to allow for timely decision-making, prevent gaps and limitations in achieving progress limitations and guide required interstate coordination of institutions, agencies and related bodies.
- Information systems (e.g. national accounting systems) that effectively contribute to the implementation of evaluation processes should be established or strengthened. A permanent system to identify and generate statistics and qualitative and quantitative information should be regulated and established. There should be a comprehensive system for managing information in each instance of governance.
- The evaluation system should ensure the generation of timely, reliable, accurate and publicly available information on its processes. Developing a system of indicators will help formulate public policy and improve evaluation system implementation. Evaluative processes should be established for programme design and development, implementation and execution, and feedback and follow-up to generate lessons learned.

CONCLUSIONS

- Citizens are increasingly calling on states to be more democratic and for increased effectiveness of state institutions. The construction of sound, functional, democratic states requires building certainty, confidence, good governance and democratic legitimacy.
- An evaluation system should seek to generate political awareness about the country context. It should be a guide for building consensus from a diversity of approaches and proposals, and should be seen primarily as a great responsibility in terms of promoting efficient and sustainable solutions to deeply rooted and growing problems that generate inequality, poverty and underdevelopment.
- Experience demonstrates that in order to achieve sustainable results and advance capacity-building, states must have a systemic vision, legal certainty, strong political commitment, planning, management, monitoring and evaluation tools, and efficient, quality technical capacities.

BRAZIL: PROMOTING ACCOUNTABILITY AND ENHANCING PROGRAMMES AND POLICIES THROUGH THE INSTRUMENTAL USE OF EVALUATIONS CARRIED OUT BY THE BRAZILIAN COURT OF AUDIT

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INTRODUCTION

The Brazilian Court of Audit (TCU) is an autonomous and specialized organization that supports the legislative branch at the federal level, performing the external control of public administration.

Over the past two decades, particularly after the approval of the Federal Constitution of 1988, TCU improved and developed instruments of control in order to put into practice its responsibility of ensuring the effective control of public expenditures. These changes in control procedures must be interpreted in the context of global movements of administrative reform.

Similar to actions taken by other countries, TCU reviewed its instruments of control in order to make them compatible with new legal demands and dynamics of public administration. As a result, since the 1990s TCU has been carrying out performance audits, which are independent and objective examinations of economy, efficiency, efficacy and effectiveness. These audits have been conducted not only with respect to programmes, but also to

government organizations and activities. The audits' purpose is to make recommendations that contribute to enhancing public management. TCU systematically follows up on these recommendations in order to ensure their implementation.

The objective of this paper is to use case studies to demonstrate the factors that favour the instrumental use of the results of performance audits carried out by TCU. These factors are based on the adoption of a strategy that is geared towards a participatory evaluation and is focused on the problems and needs of the stakeholders in charge of the decisions that ultimately affect the implementation of the programmes' and policies' results.

PERFORMANCE AUDIT AND EVALUATION OF PUBLIC PROGRAMMES

Performance audit, a tool that quantifies the results of governmental action by controller agencies, shows characteristics similar to programme evaluation mainly due to the need of meeting methodological requirements (Rist 1990, pp. 8-9).

To Rist (1990), evaluation tended to develop normative methods and auditing expanded the scope of its work seeking causal analysis. The two functions therefore share common interests, promoting interaction.

Similarly, Barzelay (1997), in a comparative analysis of the performance audits of OECD member countries' government institutions, noted that performance audits present similar characteristics to programme evaluations. This led him to conclude that this form of auditing is, in fact, programme evaluation, because "it entails making or reviewing instrumental judgments" (Barzelay 1997, pp. 241).

Evaluation, according to Weiss (1988), encompasses many definitions. However, all definitions share the notion of judgement of merit based on criteria following specific methods. For Weiss, evaluation is "a 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" (Weiss 1988, p. 4).

Weiss' proposed definition reveals that the purpose of evaluation comprises the goal of the work (why is it being conducted?) and the use of its results (to whom is it relevant?). According to evaluation standards established by the Joint Committee on Standards for Evaluations on education, an evaluation's purpose is defined by its objectives and how the results are intended to be used (Sanders 1994, p. 137).

It is important to note that different purposes require different forms of use (e.g. evaluation of programme effectiveness versus evaluation of its implementation) and have implications on evaluation design; on data measurement, analysis and interpretation; on the form of the report's presentation; in results dissemination; and on the criteria for judging the quality of the evaluation (Patton 2008).

Evaluations serve different interests and intended users, although it is not recommended to meet all purposes within the limits of a single study, though it is possible for a study to address different types of questions.

To reduce the complexity that characterizes the field of evaluation, Patton (2008) proposed six possible approaches, categorized according to the evaluation purposes in order to meet the needs of those interested in its use. The approaches are: summative evaluations (judgement); formative evaluations (improvement and learning); accountability; monitoring; developmental and knowledge generating.

Evaluations that have accountability as a purpose are those whose goal is to examine compliance and identify faults, i.e. to "seek to examine the extent to which a programme observes the legal regulations, guidelines, standards or other formal expectations" (Mark, Henry and Julnes 2000, p. 13).

For Patton (2008), in the public sector, financial and programme audits are intended to examine the government programmes' compliance to their purpose and legal procedures. In the United States, for example, legislative audit agencies', controllers' and other entities' programme evaluation units are responsible for ensuring that programmes are being properly implemented and are effective (Patton 2008, pp. 121-122).

Similarly, in Brazil performance audits are intended to promote the improvement of public management, provide incentives for organizational learning, promote of change in the public sector and offer new information. Further, performance audits should identify problems that are beyond the mandate of the auditing entity, call attention to other challenges, and favour the inclusion of the topic on the political agenda.

CHARACTERISTICS OF PERFORMANCE AUDITS

Performance audits have characteristics that differ from those of traditional audits. These characteristics are the selection of the object to be examined (which has greater flexibility), the methodology employed and the form of communication of the results. In addition, this type of auditing requires creative and analytical capacity of the auditor. By its nature, it is more open to judgements and interpretations, since their reports are argumentative discourses (Brazilian Court of Audit 2010).

The criteria for selection of the object to be investigated incorporate the analysis of four attributes: added value, relevance, materiality and vulnerability (Brazilian Court of Audit 2010).

Once the object or subject of performance auditing has been selected, the next step is to plan the audit itself. This phase of the process comprises the definition of the scope and goals of the audit, based on the identification of the main problems that affect the programme's performance. It also addresses issues to be investigated, criteria for analysis, methodological strategies, procedures for data collection and the expected results of the audit. In the execution phase, data is collected and analysed to develop findings and conclusions (Brazilian Court of Audit 2010).

Identifying main programme stakeholders of programmes and involving managers and their team at the beginning of the audit is another performance audit characteristic. It enables the audit team to correctly identify weaknesses, threats and risks that compromise the programme's performance and ability to achieve results. Further, such preliminary steps will enhance the likelihood that the audit's recommendations will be implemented.

The planning matrix report summarizes the auditing project. The matrix is submitted for discussion and validation through an expert panel, which checks the logic and thoroughness of the audit methodology used, guides the audit team, provides specialized and independent opinions on the project and checks for significant potential benefits.

The expert panel can comprise people from universities and research centres, consultants of the National Congress with interest in the audit's topic, representatives from the Minister-Rapporteur and government internal control, planning and budgeting departments, auditors with expertise in the area examined and representatives of non-profit organizations.

After the completion of data analysis, the results are summarized in a findings matrix, which is then subjected to a second Expert Panel for validation that might include members from the first panel.

The second panel's primary purpose is to check the findings' consistency in order to ensure that sufficient evidence was collected, the analysis was adequate and the proposed recommendations are relevant.

After the expert panels have completed their reviews, the audit team submits the planning and findings matrices for the auditees' final considerations and support. A preliminary version of the report is then forwarded to managers for comments, which are incorporated into the final version of the report to be will be analysed by the TCU.

Once the audit report has been approved, TCU adopts different dissemination strategies to reach external stakeholders, the National Congress, public organizations, state and municipal governments and civil society.

In order to measure the benefits generated by performance audit, TCU has institutionalized systematic follow-up of its deliberations. Follow-up highlights and measures the use of audits as characterized by the adoption of actions. The main objective of follow-up is to verify the extent to which the process of assessment and the recommendations in the final audit report were used by managers to improve the design and implementation of the public programme.

CASE STUDY: PERFORMANCE AUDIT CARRIED OUT IN THE PROGRAMME OF UNIVERSITY FOR ALL AND IN THE STUDENT FINANCING FUND FOR COLLEGE EDUCATION

The University for All programme (ProUni) facilitates low-income population's access to college education. The programme grants scholarships to undergraduate students in private universities, provides tax exemptions to institutions that join the programme (including Social Contribution on Net Income, Contribution to the Financing of Social Security and the Social Integration Program).

Programme scholarships cover full costs for persons with a per capita household income less than one and a half of minimum wage, or 50 percent of college costs covered for those that have per capita household income of less than three times minimum wage.

The Student Financing Fund for College Education (Fies) is an operating accounting fund managed by the National Education Development Fund, an agency of the Ministry of Education (MEC). It provides funding to students regularly enrolled in private college courses with positive review in the MEC index (courses that achieve greater than or equal to three points on the MEC National Evaluation System of Higher Education–Sinaes).

These programmes spent approximately $900 million in 2008 on scholarships. About $200 million of these funds came from tax exemptions and the remainder from fiscal budget resources. The $200 million would have been paid as taxes without the implementation of the programme.

Audit problem

TCU previously found that 50 percent of undergraduate positions available in private colleges were unfilled in 2006, after the completion of the acceptance processes. In contrast, public universities had only 8.5 percent of spots unfilled.

In addition to access issues, TCU found low quality of education and high dropout rates. These issues jeopardized the government's goals for higher education in Brazil.

The objectives of the audit and its main results are described in Table 1.

In response to these findings, TCU formulated a set of recommendations to improve both ProUni and Fies. Changes resulting from these recommendations can already be seen.

Evidence of use

Three years after the audit was conducted, many modifications were made in both ProUni and Fies. In June of 2011, Law 12.443 changed ProUni by regulating tax exemptions received by private colleges. These exemptions became calculated by the actual number of scholarship-receiving students enrolled at the institution. Media attention to this issue highlighted by the audit was important to changing the programme.

Initially, there was little media coverage of the audit report. However, in 2011 one of the largest newspapers in the country published an article based on the report, which produced great impact on the public. The Minister of Education was summoned to congress to discuss the issue. Months later, the legislative change occurred.

When TCU released the report in 2010, the media published the findings on the programme's poor internal controls, which were insufficient to prevent students who did not meet the criteria from receiving scholarships. For example, cross-data analysis revealed that some scholarship-receivers of the ProUni had very expensive cars. In response, MEC entered into an agreement with the Secretariat of Federal Revenue in Brazil in order to exchange information and better focus the programme.

Thus, arrangements for two of the most important aspects pointed out by the TCU were adopted: the question of lack of correlation between the tax exemptions received by private colleges and the number of scholarships effectively awarded. The report also highlighted the need to improve internal control by increasing cooperation between the MEC and the Secretariat of Federal Revenue.

Regarding Fies, Law 12.202/2010 was reviewed to allow for the reduction of the outstanding debt of the students who, after the completion of the course, engaged in teaching activities in public schools for at least 20 hours per week (if the student received a degree relating to the teaching activity), or physician activity with a Family Health Team working in priority regions.

The Law also extended financing to students who attend technical schools. These changes are in line with recommendations of TCU to improve access to and completion of courses in strategic areas of technological and social development for the country.

MEC began to allow loans throughout the entire year, not during specific months as observed during the audit. This was also a TCU recommendation related to programme schedules.

The legislation also improved the programmes in areas that were not directly specified in the audit report, but which were related to the raised issues. Law 12.243/2011 modified the value of ProUni´s additional scholarship to finance educational expenditures of students enrolled in full-time courses. The value of the scholarships became equivalent to that granted by the Department of Federal Police for undergraduate research fellowships. In January 2010, Law 12.202 raised the maximum FIES funding from 70 percent to 100 percent

TABLE 1. AUDIT OBJECTIVES AND RESULTS

OBJECTIVES	RESULTS
Analyse if the forms of implementation of ProUni and Fies reflected goals and norms of the programmes	Decreased use of scholarships offered by ProUni in 2005 (77 percent) and the first half of 2008 (58 percent)
	The mismatch between schedules of ProUni and Fies makes it difficult for students to access scholarships
Analyse the relation between the financial benefits private colleges received and the financial benefits those colleges granted to students who received scholarships	There was a lack of proportionality between the number of scholarships awarded and total tax exemptions—the same tax exemption was granted to private colleges regardless of the amount of scholarships actually awarded
	The difference between the cost of scholarships and the mean value of tax costs incurred by granted scholarships was about 57 percent higher than the average tuition fees charged by educational institutions
Examine the profile of the courses offered	Private colleges offered low-quality courses: 21 percent of the courses benefited by ProUni and 24 percent by Fies obtained a grade less than 3 on the MEC evaluation. 34 percent of the courses of the ProUni and 18 percent of the courses of Fies have never been evaluated
	Priority courses defined by MEC for the granting of scholarships were not adequately covered: 18 percent of students in ProUni and 13 percent in Fies attend priority courses
Analyse the systems of operational control and of monitoring the programmes	Internal controls of the programme were not sufficient to prevent students who did not meet selection criteria from receiving scholarships

Source: Brazilian Court of Audit, 2009.

of tuition. These two modifications aimed to improve access and reduce dropout rates.

Students were then able to use more than one source of funding if enrolled in more than one undergraduate, masters or doctorate programme. There still remains the possibility of extension of up to twelve months of that period. At the time of the audit by TCU, the grace period was of 12 months, and the student had up to one and a half times the scholarship period for paying back the debt.

Finally, the interest rates charged have also changed: today all courses are financed at rate of 3.4 percent per year. Previously, the rates were 3.5 percent, 6 percent or 9 percent per year, depending on the course.

CONCLUSION

The characteristics of the strategy and the approach adopted by TCU for carrying out performance audits enhance the use of audit reports' results as was shown through the evidence

presented in the case studies. Among these characteristics, it is important to emphasize the involvement of the main stakeholders in the construction of the diagnosis of problems and validation of the method and findings. Audit teams are urged to build a constructive relationship with managers and to establish communication channels with managers and their staff. This aims to ensure that primary stakeholders' need for information will be met.

The quality of evaluation should be associated with the construction of a network of relationships with stakeholders. This network facilitates discerning stakeholders' needs, values, beliefs and expectations, while also establishing effective ways of communication, including the media. Good communication with key stakeholders improves identification, examination and analyses of problems that affect the results of the programme. Those are factors that favour the use of performance audits conducted by the TCU.

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MALAWI: THE USE OF EVALUATION IN MANAGING FOR DEVELOPMENT RESULTS – EVIDENCE FROM MALAWI

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the Government of Malawi has been increasing its commitment to expand the use of evidence in policy formulation and resource allocation. This paper uses the national evaluation framework of the implementation of the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS) to analyse how evaluation tools are used to support evidence-based decision-making in Malawi. The paper focuses on instrumental use in terms of enhancing governance, transparency and accountability, and on achieving improvements in the design of public policies and programmes.

The MGDS is the overarching medium-term national strategy for poverty reduction and development planning in Malawi. The broad objective of the MGDS is to institute strategies that will stimulate economic growth, catalyse prosperity and improve the welfare of Malawians. The first MGDS was formulated for the period 2006/7–2010/11. The Government of Malawi is preparing the follow-up strategy (MGDS II). This process, currently being finalized, has benefited from reviews of the first MGDS and from several learning events on Managing for Development Results conducted in 2010.

The MGDS guides the allocation of public resources based on predetermined targets and performance indicators for each sector. The Government of Malawi is therefore placing due emphasis on an output-based budgeting process in its fiscal policy framework. In addition to its direct relevance in national budget formulation, the MGDS identifies the country's sector-specific development priorities. It thus guides the formulation and implementation of programmes by development partners and other non-state actors, both within and outside the national budget.

The Monitoring and Evaluation Division in the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning and Cooperation is responsible for evaluating the performance of various sectors

BOX 1: MGDS PRIORITY AND THEMATIC AREAS

ORIGINAL PRIORITY AREAS

1. Agriculture and Food Security
2. Irrigation and Water Development
3. Transport and Infrastructure Development
4. Energy Generation and Supply
5. Integrated Rural Development
6. Nutrition, HIV and AIDS

REVISED PRIORITY AREAS

1. Agriculture and Food Security
2. Green-Belt Irrigation and Water Development
3. Transport Infrastructure and Nsanje World Inland Port
4. Education, Science and Technology
5. Climate Change, Natural Resources and Environmental Management
6. Integrated Rural Development
7. Public Health, Sanitation and HIV and AIDS Management
8. Youth Development and Empowerment
9. Energy, Mining and Industrial Development

THEMATIC AREAS

1. Sustainable Economic Growth
2. Social Protection and Disaster Management
3. Social Development
4. Infrastructure Development
5. Improved Governance

Sources: Government of Malawi, 'Malawi Growth and Development Strategy 2006-11: From Poverty to Prosperity' (2006), 'Malawi Growth and Development Strategy 2006-11 (Revised)' (2009).

BOX 2: SECTOR WORKING GROUPS

1. Agriculture
2. Integrated Rural Development
3. Environment, Lands and Natural Resources
4. Tourism, Wildlife and Culture
5. Water, Sanitation and Irrigation
6. Trade, Industry and Private Sector Development
7. Vulnerability, Disaster and Risk Management
8. Health
9. Education
10. Gender, Youth Development and Sports
11. Roads, Public Works and Transport
12. Information, Communication and Technology and Research and Development
13. Energy and Mining
14. Economic Governance
15. Democratic Governance
16. Public Administration

Source: Government of Malawi (2008)

against MGDS targets and indicators. Annual MGDS Reviews have been prepared by the Division in the context of the first MGDS. These reviews form the basis upon which this paper conducted its analysis. A report on the final evaluation of the first MGDS has yet to be released.

NATURE OF THE MGDS EVALUATION

The MGDS identified nine priority areas (originally six) and five thematic areas (see Box 1). The MGDS formulation process set both targets and performance indicators for all areas. In order to strengthen the MGDS implementation and evaluation processes, the Government of Malawi divided the five thematic areas into 16 sectors—largely based on sub-themes of the five themes—and established an institutional framework for 16 corresponding Sector Working Groups (SWGs; see Box 2). Guidelines for the institutionalization of SWGs were

prepared in 2008, largely to operationalize the Malawi Development Assistance Strategy prepared in line with the requirements of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action.

Each SWG draws institutional membership from functionally compatible government ministries and departments, development partners, the private sector and civil society organizations. The process of reviewing MGDS performance against set targets is based on the priority areas and the institutionalized SWGs, and is inherently meant to review the performance of both state and non-state actors. However, since many SWGs were not yet fully operational, assessing the performance of non-state actors was not possible in some cases. Annual MGDS Reviews consolidate the SWG evaluation outcomes and present evaluation findings for each of the six priority area and five thematic areas.

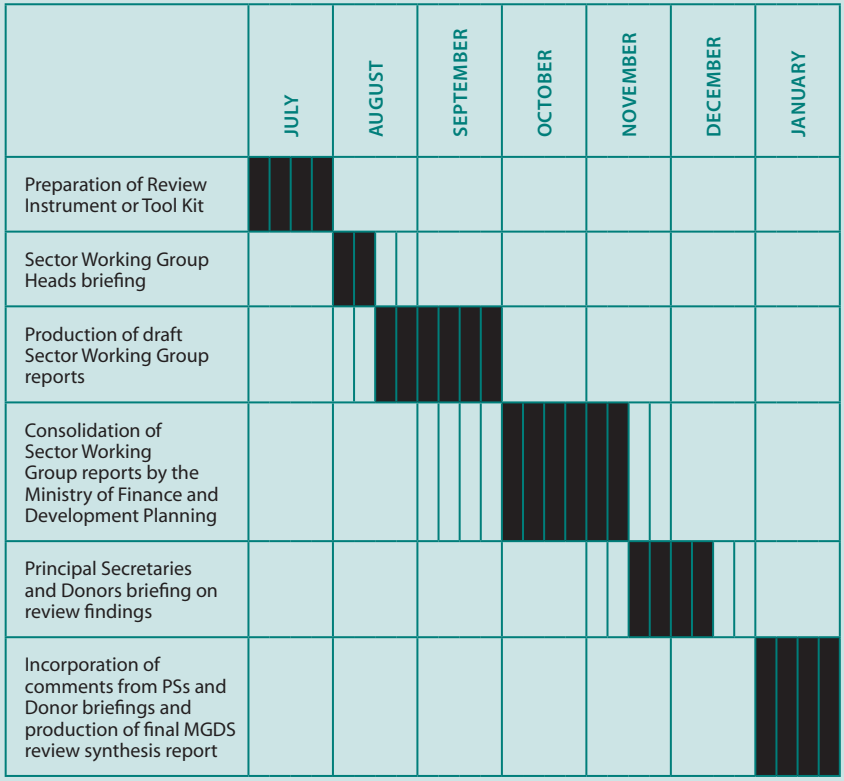
For each MGDS priority and thematic area, the evaluation process focuses on three broad performance indicators: results, budget and development assistance. The results indicator review evaluates implementation performance with respect to achieving core sector and development project outputs, MGDS outcomes and impacts on livelihoods. The budget indicator review evaluates sector performance in terms of national budgetary allocations. In particular, it assesses the extent to which resources were utilized during the review period—actual inputs are associated with registered results. The development assistance (or aid effectiveness) indicator review rates the performance of development partners on the basis of the extent to which the donor's procedures have been harmonized and aligned to government procedures as agreed in select parameters of the Paris Declaration on Aid effectiveness. The development assistance indicator is also reviewed for the degree of aid predictability.

In addition to the MGDS priority and thematic areas, the Annual MGDS Review also evaluates the country's performance against the Millennium Development Goals, in view of their close alignment with the MGDS. This aspect of the Review strongly focuses on outcomes and impacts on livelihoods, as opposed to merely focusing on inputs and outputs.

The Annual MGDS Review provides a framework that enables policymakers to systematically and objectively analyse resource allocations' relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability—and to then effect necessary changes. Moreover, each Annual Review examines an implementation period with clearly delineated targets on outputs, outcomes and impacts; the final MGDS evaluation will ostensibly be a consolidation of the annual reports. Since 'evaluation' inherently includes aspects of 'monitoring', the Annual MGDS Review can be considered an evaluation process for an ongoing MGDS.

The Annual MGDS Review timeline is based on the government's fiscal year, which runs from July (when the review instruments are developed) to June of the next calendar year. The timeline ends with the production of the review report in January of the following year (see Table 1). This timeline facilitates using the review findings in formulating the subsequent annual national budget, both in terms of the determination of resource mobilization (e.g. commitments by development partners), and budgetary allocations. Data on the implementation of the MGDS at each local level is continually collected and analysed through a monitoring process conducted by monitoring and evaluation officers in consultation with local communities.

TABLE 1: ANNUAL MGDS REVIEW TIMELINE



Source: Government of Malawi, '2009 Annual MGDS Review' (2009)

USE OF MGDS EVALUATION

The Annual MGDS Review is the primary tool on the basis of which resources are appropriated in the national budget, which was estimated at $2 billion in 2011–2012, or 31 percent of the country's GDP. In addition, since the MGDS determines the country's development priorities, the evaluation is a key decision-making and programming input used by a wide range of policy makers and decision makers, both within and outside the government. The users are Government of Malawi budgetary vote controlling officers, the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, development partners, members of parliament, civil society organizations and the private sector.

Government of Malawi budgetary vote controlling officers

Budgetary vote controlling officers in the Government of Malawi are typically principal secretaries of government ministries, directors of departments and heads of subvented parastatal

organizations. These officers propose, control and account for their vote allocations. In addition to using the evaluations to assess their performance against set targets for received resources, controlling officers use the evaluations to justify their proposed programmes and budgetary allocations for subsequent years. MGDS review process transparency leads to controlling officers taking great care in their choice of programmes to include in the budget; only projects that are closely aligned to the MGDS are included (except in circumstances where this is not generally expected, e.g. national security).

Government of Malawi Ministry of Finance and Development Planning

The Budget Division of the Ministry of Finance ultimately identifies and allocates budgetary resources in close collaboration with the Revenue Division, the Debt and Aid Management Division, the Economic Affairs Division, the Development Planning Division and the budgetary vote controlling officers. Ultimately, the evaluation informs the ministry's value-for-money analysis and helps determine subsequent resource needs and appropriations.

In order to present a systematic and transparent framework for evaluating the performance of the budget against the results-based planning orientation of the MGDS, the Ministry of Finance produces the Output-Based Budget Document as part of the annual budget documentation package. The document outlines each appropriated vote's overall purpose, what outputs were planned and successfully implemented in the preceding fiscal year, how much was spent on such activities against the budget, and what outputs will be delivered against the appropriated resources in the subsequent year. More importantly, the document identifies, for each vote, the portion of the budget that is aligned to the MGDS. The Annual MGDS Reviews are key input in determining the degree to which the previous year's budgets were actually aligned to the MGDS priorities and themes.

Development partners

Development partners contribute significantly to the national resource envelope, and also implement numerous development programmes outside the government's budget. In 2010–2011, development partners funded about 36.5 percent of the national budget of $2 billion (35.5 percent of GDP). Of this, 21.3 percent was in the form of general budget support provided under the Common Approach to Budget Support (CABS) arrangement between the government and six development partners.[20] While the CABS arrangement has its own evaluation framework, other forms of budget support rely directly or indirectly on the Annual MGDS Review. In particular, project support, which accounted for 47.6 percent of development partners' budget support in 2010–2011, largely uses the Annual MGDS Review in addition to project-specific monitoring and evaluation frameworks. The Review also consolidates results from reviews of performance in sectors that receive dedicated donor funding (34.2 percent of total donor funding in 2010–2011), for example, funding through Sector Wide Approach arrangements in Health and Education, grants to HIV and AIDS activities,

21 CABS development partners currently include the African Development Bank, European Commission, Germany, Norway, the United Kingdom and The World Bank.

and grants in support of the government's Farm Input Subsidy Programme. In addition, the reviews provide a key measure of economic governance, crucial for the provision of International Monetary Fund programme loans. While these loans are generally nominal—they constituted less than 1 percent of donor support in 2010–2011—they provide a strong signal for other development partners to provide funding. Thus, the Annual MGDS Review provides an account of how donor funds in projects and dedicated activities were actually utilized and what they accomplished alongside domestic revenues. Development partners use this information as a key input in determining further assistance.

In addition to budget support, off-budget development assistance (donor funding that does not use government financial systems) is quite large in Malawi. The Government of Malawi estimates that development partners will provide total (direct and indirect) project support amounting to $0.83 billion in 2011–2012. Only 23.7 percent of this will be provided through budget support, while the balance will be provided off-budget. The decision to provide such funding is also guided by sectoral performance as evaluated by the MGDS review process.

Members of parliament

Members of parliament provide checks on the sources and uses of national resources against set objectives. The evaluation provides a transparent tool to conduct such checks. Since the evaluation is conducted by the Executive Branch of Government, which is also responsible for MGDS implementation, members of parliament (i.e. the legislature) use the evaluation to hold the Executive Branch and respective public officers accountable. A comparison of accomplished inputs, outputs, outcomes and impacts against set targets is a key analytical point of the work of the Budget and Finance Committee and the Public Accounts Committee of the Malawi National Assembly. Parliamentary sector committees (e.g. Education, Health, Agriculture, Media and Communication) also have an interest in the evaluation's performance assessment for their sectors, in order to follow up on relevant matters, take appropriate positions in debates and prepare informed committee reports. Additionally, individual members of parliament use the evaluations to validate alleged accomplishments against actual accomplishments to their constituencies.

Civil society organizations

Civil society organizations (CSOs) implement development projects outside the national budget, and are usually funded directly by local and international development partners. The Government of Malawi estimates that non-governmental organizations will administer 13.7 percent of the total that development partners will provide in 2011–2012. Because sector-specific evaluations are designed to cover performance of all SWG member institutions, CSOs have a direct interest in the annual reviews.

The evaluation also assists CSOs in identifying intervention gaps within the MGDS framework and their programming processes. In addition, CSOs operating in the governance sector (e.g. the Malawi Economic Justice Network) use the evaluation to assess trends in the stance of economic governance to help promote an informed electorate. The review is also important to sector-specific advocacy organizations (such as the Malawi Health

Equity Network, the Civil Society Coalition for Quality Basic Education, and the Civil Society Agriculture Network), which closely monitor the performance of relevant sectors in order to advocate for additional public and donor resources, guide sector parliamentary committees on budgetary and related deliberations, and require explanations on variant performance from concerned public officers. The review also informs the technical cost-benefit analyses periodically conducted by the Economics Association of Malawi.

Private sector

The Annual MGDS Review is also used by the private sector, which has a direct interest in a value-for-money analysis of taxation outcomes. The national budget process involves wide consultations with stakeholders and the private sector (usually represented by the Malawi Confederation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry and the Society of Accountants in Malawi), who use the review to formulate views on macroeconomic policies and fiscal policies in particular. Additionally, the evaluation helps the private sector contribute to the national development agenda through corporate social responsibility initiatives.

LIMITATIONS

The MGDS evaluation process has several limitations. First, the MGDS is a very broad-based national strategy, such that almost all areas of public expenditure can be justified on the basis of the MGDS. In such a situation, the divergence of resources from a planned activity to an unplanned activity does not always entail misalignment of resource use from the MGDS. A more focused prioritization process would be more effective in achieving commendable development evaluation results.

Second, the fact that most SWGs are not yet fully operational implies that evaluation focuses primarily on state actors. As such, sectors that are inherently dominated by non-state actors (e.g. governance) can report low scores on the evaluation scale without such scores accurately reflecting sector performance.

Third, because both implementation and evaluation are within the domain of the Executive Branch, some evaluation outcomes can be questioned. The definitions of indicators and the choices of data sets are entirely at the government's discretion, which sometimes leads to questions of objectivity.

Finally, many sectors face critical data limitations. For example, in capacity scans for the 2010 learning events on Managing for Development Results, data limitations emerged as the most important constraint in implementing evaluations. These were evident at district, national and CSO levels.

CONCLUSION

This paper discusses the Annual MGDS Review framework and how it is used as a tool for evidence-based decision-making in Malawi. It is evident from this analysis that controlling officers in the Government of Malawi are greatly influenced by the requirement to account for variations between planned and attained outcomes, and that evaluations greatly influence subsequent resource allocations. It is also clear that these processes facilitate rich legislative

debate and influence programming beyond the boundaries of public office. In sum, the Annual MGDS Review process is a key factor in enhancing economic governance, transparency, resource mobilization and accountability, as well as the design of public policies and programmes. However, the merits of this process could be enhanced through: i) a more focused prioritizing process within the Government of Malawi; ii) full operationalization of Sector Working Groups; iii) the creation of an independent body to assume responsibility for the evaluation function; and iv) improvements in data quality and availability.

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MOROCCO: THE EVALUATION OF PUBLIC POLICIES – THE CASE OF GENDER-RESPONSIVE BUDGETING

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INTRODUCTION

The Moroccan Gender-responsive Budgeting (GRB) experience is part of a global logic that seeks to integrate principles of universal human rights within legal, institutional and governance frameworks. The principles of equity and equality—as related to efficiency and performance objectives—were important factors in the 2002 introduction of gender-sensitive budget reforms. This approach is, moreover, a significant asset to evaluating public policies from a gender point of view and the expected impacts on targeted populations with significantly different needs.

The onset of this process, and the progress made by considering gender equality in the design and evaluation of public policies, is largely motivated by the context of the country's democratization. One of the founding repositories of GRB is in the constitutional progress seen under the experience of democratic transition initiated in 1998, itself based on the constitution of 1996, which is characterized by its preamble's introduction of the universal acceptance of human rights. This process experienced increased impetus by the 2011 adoption of the new constitution that pronounced the equality of men and women in terms of rights (civil, political, economic and cultural).

At the operational level, the pragmatic and progressive approach followed since 2002 to integrate gender dimensions into budgetary planning has enabled Morocco to develop analytical instruments based on dedicated and strengthened budget guides. These guides are reinforced by a set of gender-sensitive synthetic indicators that strengthen public policy monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

EVALUATION OF PUBLIC POLICIES: APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

Approach

A public policy corresponds to a choice of values being implemented to achieve a goal defined by the political power. It is then defined through the objectives that are assigned to it, the means allocated to the achievement of these objectives, the expected results and the nature of the policy's impacts on the target population.

The evaluation of public policies is based on a comparison between the achievements and the initial objectives assigned to public intervention, taking into consideration the intervention's logic (normative dimension). This has the object of making the public action evolve or defining new policies that are more effective and relevant (instrumental dimension).

Evaluating a policy or public action assesses its effectiveness by comparing its results to the objectives assigned to it and the means put in place for it through the design of performance indicators. Therefore, it is an essential tool for decision-making processes.

Methodology

The evaluation of public policies is classified into three stages:

Stage 1: The first stage aims at establishing a reference point that precisely defines the outlines of the policy to be evaluated, identifies the purpose and nature of the evaluation to be carried out, defines of the assumptions of the evaluation, delineates standards and benchmarks for the evaluation, and reconstructs the programme's or measure's logic of intervention.

Stage 2: The second stage comprises data collection and analysis and, through the development of tools and protocols for data collection (quantitative and qualitative), processes information and designs performance indicators.

Stage 3: Taking into account the assessment's objectives established during the first stage and the indicators developed on the basis of the data collected and processed, the third stage develops a value judgement on the actions and formulates and disseminates the evaluation's conclusions and recommendations.

GENDER-RESPONSIVE BUDGETING

Context of gender-responsive budgeting

Awareness in Morocco of the importance of integrating gender dimensions into public policy is the result of a social democratic movement where women's contributions were decisive. The advent of political alternation accelerated this process by offering opportunities to express demands for change in terms of equity and equality under the programme of the government and through the establishment of committees dedicated to legal, institutional and public policy reforms. These efforts led to the progress in democratic processes that took place in Morocco (e.g. new family and nationality code, the code on public freedoms). This process was completed in April 2011, with the unrestricted acceptance of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women.

The initiative for integrating gender into the budgetary programming benefited from an

environment marked by the commitment of Morocco to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, the establishment of the National Initiative for Human Development, the adoption of proportional representation and the national list in parliament, the adoption of the national strategy and plan of action for gender equity and equality in policy approaches and development programmes, the adoption of the Agenda for the Gender Equality 2011–2015 and the adoption of the new constitution, which secured equal human rights for women (civil, political, economic and cultural).

The concept of gender-responsive budgeting and the key gender dimension in budget considerations

GRB takes into account the execution and evaluation of public policy, social relationships, preoccupations and the differentiated concerns and interests of women, men, girls and boys in society and the family. Considering gender equality in budget programming processes aims to improve budgetary resource allocations by ensuring gender equity and improving public policies' effectiveness and coherence. To do this, the tools developed by GRB include the introduction of fairness of gender in performance indicators, which is a step toward accountability and public transparency.

The GRB process was initially faced with an absence of methodological and design references at the national and international levels. A conceptual and instrumental reformulation was necessary, which entailed enrichment from the information standpoint; a mandatory step for the success of the Moroccan experience.

The 2002 launch of budget reform oriented towards performance, which is fully consistent with the principles of the GRB, established 'the Royal Road' for integrating gender into the budgetary programming process.

To materialize this new approach, the Ministry of Economy and Finance (with the support of The World Bank) conducted a 2002 methodological feasibility study of budgetary accounts of gender and infants. The study produced appropriate instruments for GRB, and was followed in 2003 by the Reinforcement of Capacity Building in terms of Gender-responsive Budgets project, in partnership with UN Women. In addition, the 2007 circular from the prime minister called for integrating the gender approach into all policies and development programmes. Similarly, directives by the prime minister accompanied the Project of Law on Finance in 2007 and 2008, recommending the consideration of the gender dimension in all public programmes.

GENDER REPORT: TOOL FOR THE EVALUATION OF PUBLIC POLICY FROM THE GENDER PERSPECTIVE

The national-level adoption of GRB was reinforced by the preparation of the 'Gender Report', which, since 2005, accompanies the Finance Act. This report is a tool of public policy evaluation that adjusts to the differentiated needs of the target population. By analysing gender in public policies and budgets and their impact on the population, the 'Gender Report' reinforces the accountability of commitments made by the Moroccan Government on gender equality and human development. The 'Gender Report' also focuses on policy successes and gaps in terms of the needs of women and men, thus enlightening public decision-making processes.

The preparation process of the 'Gender Report' has experienced several evolutionary phases, following the phases of the GRB programme:

The first phase of GRB implementation (2003–2004) consisted of awareness programmes and capacity-building through the organization of workshops and training sessions for those responsible for planning and budgetary programming at the level of steering ministerial department programmes (e.g. health, education, agriculture and justice), parliamentarians and non-governmental organizations The first phase also included the development of tools and a methodology of work ('GRB Manual' and the 'Guide On Budget Reform').

The second phase of GRB implementation (2005–2008) was marked by the 2005 development of the first edition of the 'Gender Report' accompanying the Financial Law (institutionalized since 2006). The process of preparing the Report is progressive (the number of departments involved in the analysis continues to increase), participatory (ministerial department partners contribute effectively to the drafting of the 'Gender Report') and iterative (the content of the report is updated and enriched each year).

During this period, the 'Gender Report' development process evolved considerably: from 2005 to 2007, the number of departments involved in the 'Gender Report' went from 4 to 17. The policies analysed were evaluated according to an analytical framework based on a gender analysis of the situation, an analysis of public priorities, programmes and projects implemented and a gender budget analysis. The analysed departments were divided by areas of functional activity (e.g. institutional, basic infrastructure, empowerment and capacity-building), strengthening of opportunities and intersectoral area of activity.

While processes to conduct public policy evaluations were being refined, a comprehensive collection of statistics on gender in Morocco was published in 2007. It contained available data in the field of statistics disaggregated according to gender, which constituted an analysis tool enabling identification of priority dimensions on which public action should focus in order to improve the conditions of women and to ensure greater equity in public action.

Since 2008, the 'Gender Report' has had close to 21 departments. An analysis of the performance indicators of the operating and investment budgets has been integrated through the use of reports covering the indicators of calculated objectives. The indicators considered relevant are then accompanied by proposals to make them gender-sensitive in order to better understand the impacts of public policy on target populations.

The third phase of the GRB programme (2009 to 2012) coincides with a new level of improvement in the analytical approaches taken at the level of the 'Gender Report'.

From 2009 to 2011, a cross-sectorial analysis following the human rights approach was integrated into the 'Gender Report'. It was a choice dictated by the national context marked by the need for consistency in the different sectorial strategies implemented and by the reform of the organic law relating to the Finance Act that privileges the concept of missions and programmes in budget allocation.

This approach is based on an analysis of the progress made by Morocco in the various sectors in light of the standards contained in the body of international human rights instruments. Particular interest is given to identified deficits and social groups that are excluded or marginalized in order to make adjustments to the level of policies and programmes. This

analytical approach is based on the principle that all policies and development programmes are aimed at respecting human rights as defined in the 'Universal Declaration of Human Rights' and in other international human rights instruments (e.g. the 'International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights' and the 'International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights').

The new approach, design and philosophy adopted at the level of the 'Gender Report' coincide with the great institutional change the country has experienced through the new constitution. It is pleasing to see this consistency of approach with the place that has been reserved by the new constitution to the issues of equality and equity not only in its preamble, but also in several articles that recognize the rights and institutionalize ways to implement them.

In applying the new approach, the 26 sectorial departments that were analysed are grouped into three thematic axes (following the declination of the generations of human rights):

- **Equitable access to civil and political rights:** Justice, social development, Directorate General of Local Communities, modernization of the public sector, economy and finance, foreign trade, foreign affairs and cooperation and communications;
- **Equitable access to social rights:** INDH, water, energy, habitat, equipment and transportation, health, national education and literacy, professional training and youth; and
- **Equitable access to economic rights**: Employment, agriculture, fishing, trade and industry, tourism, crafts and social economy.

SUCCESSFUL EXAMPLE OF INTEGRATING GENDER-RESPONSIVE BUDGETING: THE DEPARTMENT OF LITERACY AND INFORMAL EDUCATION

Within the framework of the GRB programme, the Literacy and Informal Education Department received specific support to integrate gender concerns into its budgetary programming. In this respect, the Department has implemented a set of actions adapted to its strategic objectives as defined in its emergency programme (2008–2012), which selected the goal of reducing the illiteracy rate by 20 percent by 2015 in accord with the Millennium Development Goals.

In applying the new performance-based budget approach, the Department of Literacy and Informal Education adopted a gender-sensitive set of objective indicators. These include a series of gender-sensitive indicators, such as sex-disaggregated data on the number of new enrolments, illiteracy rates and an annually reviewed illiteracy and school dropout map (per the Regional Academy of Education and Training and by delegation).

PROSPECTS

Future prospects of GRB in Morocco remain favourable in light of the provisions made by the new constitution, which will widely contribute to the institutionalization of gender mainstreaming through a responsible entity for gender equality. Furthermore, the organic law relating to the Finance Act (under validation) reform project will allow Morocco to permanently record the integration of the gender dimension in budget development, execution and monitoring.

Nevertheless, the expected results in terms of performance and impacts covered under the needs of differentiated components of the target population will remain dependent on several initiatives, such as developing convergence and coherence for public policies; strengthening ministries' institutional capacities to develop gender-sensitive performance indicators; coordinating non-governmental organizations in the process; making further refinements to the statistical system in order to establish gender data and territorial indicators; developing institutional communications on the subject (e.g. designing a knowledge management system); establishing a platform of exchange on good international practices; and developing partnerships at a regional level—e.g. the Maghreb and the Euro-Mediterranean zone through the creation of a Regional Centre of Excellence dedicated to a gender approach in a general manner and to a gender-responsive budget more specifically.

MONITORING AND HOW IT FACILITATES USE OF EVALUATION

INDIA: INDIAN EXPERIENCE WITH THE PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM FOR GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

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Today 80 departments and ministries of the Government of India (and 800 responsibility centres under them), are required to prepare a results-framework document. It is a record of understanding between a Minister, representing the people's mandate, and the Secretary of a Department, responsible for implementing this mandate. The document contains not only the agreed objectives, policies, programmes and projects, but also success indicators and targets to measure implementation progress. To ensure the successful implementation of agreed actions, the results-framework document may also include necessary operational autonomy.

This policy was initiated with the President of India's address to both Houses of the Parliament in June 2009, in which she promised that the government would initiate steps within the next hundred days to "establish mechanisms for performance monitoring and performance evaluation in government on a regular basis." Pursuant to this announcement, the Prime Minister of India approved the outline of the Performance Monitoring and Evaluation System for Government Departments (PMES) in September 2009.

This paper discusses the origins, development and experience of implementing this remarkable policy. It is divided into following seven sections. The first section gives and overview of the PMES; the second section examines the rationale for its introduction; the third section reviews the international experience in this area and situates PMES in this context; the fourth section highlights the key challenges facing this policy; the fifth section lists the various uses of evaluation for public policies and programmes; and the sixth and final section looks ahead at the steps required to complete the performance management revolution in India.

OVERVIEW OF PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM

This system both evaluates and monitors government departments' performance. 'Evaluation' compares a department's actual achievements against its annual targets. In doing so, an evaluation exercise judges the ability of the department to deliver results on a scale ranging from excellent to poor. 'Monitoring' involves observing the progress departments make towards their annual targets.

PMES takes a comprehensive view of departmental performance by measuring performance of all schemes and projects and relevant aspects of expected departmental deliverables such as: financial, physical, quantitative, qualitative, static efficiency (short run) and dynamic efficiency (long run). As a result of comprehensively evaluating all aspects relevant to citizens' welfare, this system provides a unified and single view of departmental performance. In addition, by focusing on areas that are within the control of a department, PMES ensures fairness and high levels of motivation.

The working of a PMES can be divided into three distinct periods during a fiscal year:

1. **Beginning of the Year** (by April 1): Design of results-framework document;
2. **During the Year** (after six months after coming into effect – Oct. 1): Monitor progress against agreed targets; and
3. **End of the year** (March 31 of the following year): Evaluate performance against agreed targets.

The results-framework document, prepared by each department, seeks to address three basic questions:

1. What are the department's main objectives for the year?
2. What actions are proposed to achieve these objectives?
3. How to determine progress made in implementing these actions?

The results-framework document consists of five sections:

Section 1: Ministry's vision, mission, objectives and functions;

Section 2: Interrelated priorities among key objectives, success indicators and targets;

Section 3: Trend values of the success indicators;

Section 4: Description and definition of success indicators and proposed measurement methodology;

Section 5: Specific performance requirements from other departments that are critical for delivering agreed results; and

Section 6: Outcomes and impacts of department and ministry activities.

Results-framework documents represent methodological advances over existing practices. First, they introduce explicit prioritization with the help of weights attached to various objectives and performance criteria. Second, instead of a single point target, they introduce the

concept of scale.

Typically, performance evaluation systems suffer from two major conceptual flaws. First, they list a large number of un-prioritized targets. At the end of the year, it is difficult to ascertain actual performance. For example, merely claiming that 16 out of 20 targets were met is insufficient to determine actual performance. It is entirely possible that the four unmet targets were in the areas that are critical to a department's core mandate.

Similarly, most performance evaluation systems use single-point targets rather than a scale of targets, making it difficult to judge deviations from the agreed target. For example, how should a department's performance be evaluated if the target for rural roads is 15,000 kilometres and the achievement is 14,500 kilometres? One evaluator may declare this deviation from target to be close enough, while it is equally plausible for another evaluator to declare this deviation to be a failure of management to meet targets. This uncertain outcome and dependence on subjectivity is the bane of many public management problems.

RATIONALE FOR THE SYSTEM

In addition to these methodological flaws, current systems for accountability for results in government suffer from several limitations. For example, Institutional responsibility for performance management is often fragmented. Departments are required to report to multiple principals who often have multiple (and frequently inconsistent) objectives. A department could be reporting to the Department of Programme Implementation on important programmes and projects; the Department of Public Enterprises on the performance of Public Sector Undertakings under it; the Department of Expenditure on performance related to outcome budgets; the Planning Commission on plan targets; the Comptroller and Auditor General regarding the procedures, processes, and even performance; the Cabinet Secretariat on cross-cutting issues and issues of national importance; the minister in-charge on his priorities; and the Standing Committee of the Parliament on its annual report and other political issues.

Similarly, several important initiatives have fractured responsibilities for implementation; hence, accountability for results is diluted. For example, E-Government initiatives are being lead by the Department of Information Technology, the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, the National Informatics Centre and individual ministries.

Some systems are selective in their coverage and report on performance with a significant time-lag. The comprehensive Performance Audit reports are restricted to a small group of schemes and institutions (only 14 such reports were put before the parliament in 2008) and come out with a substantial lag. Often, by the time these reports are produced both the management and issues facing the institutions change.

The reports of enquiry commissions and special committees established to examine government departments' performance, schemes and programmes suffer from similar limitations.

PMES is designed to overcome these limitations. An effective performance evaluation system is at the heart of an effective performance management system. PMES provides a methodology for calculating an objective and scientifically-based performance score.

PMES IN THE CONTEXT OF INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Similar policies used widely in developed and developing countries

The inspiration for this policy is derived from the recommendations of the Second Administrative Reform Commission (ARC II):

> Performance agreement is the most common accountability mechanism in most countries that have reformed their public administration systems. At the core of such agreements are the objectives to be achieved, the resources provided to achieve them, the accountability and control measures, and the autonomy and flexibilities that the civil servants will be given.

Similar policies are being used in most OECD countries. The leading examples of this policy come from New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States. In the United States, the congress passed a law in 1994 called the Government Performance Results Act. Under this law, the US President is obliged to sign a Performance Agreement with his Cabinet members. In the UK, this policy is called Public Service Agreement. In developing countries, the best examples come from Malaysia and Kenya.

Importance of Management Systems

Management experts agree that around 80 percent any organization's performance depends on the quality of the systems used. That is why the focus of PMES is on improving management control systems within the government.

Response to government inefficiency

Quantity versus quality of government

Governments have responded to perceived dissatisfaction with agencies' performance. These steps can be divided into two broad categories: reduction in quantity of government, and an increase in quality of government services. Over time, most governments have curtailed their focus on reducing the quantity of government and increased their focus on improving the quality. The former is represented by traditional methods of government reform such as golden handshakes, cutting the size of government departments and sale of public assets through privatization. The latter, represented by institutionalizing and promoting good governance and monitoring and evaluation of programmes, policies and projects, is an integral component of this approach.

Trickle-down verses direct approach to performance management

The policies undertaken by governments to increase the quality of government can be further classified into two broad approaches: a trickle-down and a direct approach.

PMES largely falls under trickle down approaches, because it holds the top-levels accountable and the accountability for results trickles down to the lower echelons of management. It creates a sustainable environment for implementing all reforms. The generic names of PMES include performance agreement, performance contracts, memorandum of understanding,

delivery agreements and implementation agreements. These approaches have a sustainable impact on all aspects of performance in the long run, as accountability has a way of trickling down (it never reverses). Hence, holding the top accountable, increases sustainability.

The Direct approach consists of instruments of performance management that have direct and immediate impacts on some aspect of performance. Examples include E-procurement, ISO 9001 certification of government departments and citizens' and clients' charters. These approaches are complementary and not substitutes for each other. PMES in India makes use of these direct approaches by making citizens' charter and grievance redressal systems a mandatory requirement for all government departments in their results-framework documents.

KEY CHALLENGES

There are several key challenges facing PMES implementation. An analysis of results-framework documents prepared by the departments and ministries suggests that the focus of most departments is on process-oriented indicators focusing on the lower end of the results chain. Therefore, a key challenge is to move the department up on this chain towards outcome-oriented indicators (see Figure 1).

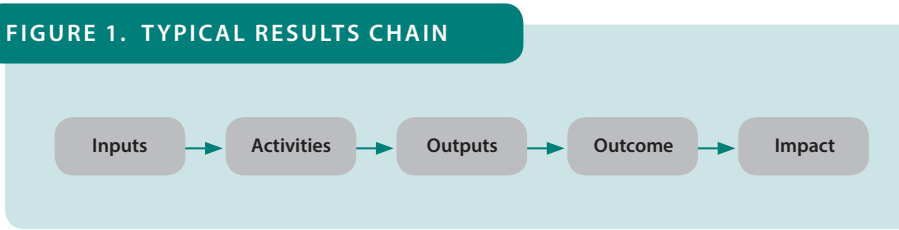
Many government tasks require proactive cooperation among departments. However, departments continue to work in compartments, the so-called 'silos' mentality. This leads to inefficiencies in tasks that require team efforts. To overcome this challenge, the Government of India is considering 'team targets'.

Given the federal structure of the Indian Union, it is important to have a similar performance management approach at the state level. However, the limited capacity of states to implement PMES on their own has prevented its widespread adoption.

PROPOSED USE OF EVALUATION FOR PUBLIC POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

The outcomes of PMES /results-framework document exercises are used for several purposes. The primary purpose is to draw conclusions that are based on a comprehensive examination of all relevant aspects of departmental performance. This is very important as multiple, contradictory pronouncements based on examining particular aspects of a department's mandate can lead to confusion and demoralization.

FIGURE 1. TYPICAL RESULTS CHAIN



Most departments face multiple principals who have multiple (and often conflicting) goals, leading to unclear expectations. Results-framework documents reduce this ambiguity by providing clear goals to public managers, leading to improvements in department management. Results-framework documents mitigate issues of cross-blame or assigning responsibility outside the government for non-delivery and non-performance. Countering this, results-framework documents compel agencies to agree and delineate responsibilities, resulting in greater levels of accountability.

PMES fosters more rigorous policy evaluations. Designing policy typically entails developing a theory of change. For example, to reduce child mortality, a government may do a study and conclude that wider dissemination of oral rehydration therapy is necessary. If after a few years it is found, via results-framework document scores, that the programme was implemented perfectly yet child mortality rates have not come down, then that suggests there were flaws in either the policy and the underlying theory of change. PMES and results-framework documents thus distinguish between managerial and policy failure.

Effective evaluations provide a barometer for measuring departmental performance. Once this accountability mechanism is in place, it is possible to undertake other reforms to increase government departments' autonomy; autonomy can be increased once accountability has been increased via an effective monitoring and evaluation system.

NEXT STEPS

The following key reforms must be completed in a time-bound fashion in order to make PMES fully effective. This is as true for India as it is true for other countries embarking on reforming their government evaluation systems.

Implement performance–related incentives recommended by the Forth, Fifth and Sixth Pay Commissions

The Government of India set up the Sixth Pay Commission in October, 2006, and it submitted its report in March, 2008. These recommendations were considered by the government and a decision was taken to accept them (with some modifications) as a package in August 2008.

The recommendations can be broadly divided into two categories: a) level and structure of benefits, and b) performance-related incentives. Only the former has been implemented.

Payment of incentives based on performance is an old concept. The Fourth and Fifth Pay Commissions had also commented on the issue of rewarding performance. The Fourth Central Pay Commission recommended variable increments for rewarding better performances. The Fifth Central Pay Commission recommended a scheme of performance-related increments for all central government employees. Under this scheme, an extra increment was to be paid to exceptionally meritorious performers, with under-performers being denied even the regular/normal increment.

Given the central role that incentives play in improving the public- and private-sector employee performance, it is urgent to implement a performance-related incentive scheme. The proposed scheme is intended to be budget neutral.

Reform of performance appraisal reports

There is widespread dissatisfaction with the working of the existing performance appraisal report system at all levels in the government. Attempts to quantify and bring objectivity to the system are largely perceived as being unsuccessful. Most officers expect to receive a perfect score of 10—and usually get it—creating a situation where every officer is rated excellent yet department performance as a whole is not considered anywhere close to being excellent. Even though the performance appraisal report system is barely three years old, it is clear that it is also not achieving all its stated goals. The 'General Guidelines for Filling up the Form' state:

> Performance appraisal should be used as a tool for career planning and training, rather than a mere judgemental exercise. Reporting Authorities should realize that the objective is to develop an officer so that he/she realizes his/her true potential. It is not meant to be a fault-finding process but a developmental tool.

Contrary to expectations, the primary purpose of the exercise seems to have become an instrument to judge officers. It is not seen to be playing any role in the development or training of officers. Thus reforming the system is urgently required (the Cabinet Secretariat is working towards it). Essentially, the performance evaluation methodology of the current performance appraisal report system has to be made compatible with PMES evaluation methodology.

When all three systems have been put in place (PMES, performance-related incentive system and performance appraisal report), India will be able to claim that it has a truly integrated performance management system.

MOROCCO: INFORMATION SYSTEM AND NATIONAL OBSERVATORY OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT HOUSEHOLD PANEL FOR THE EVALUATION OF PUBLIC POLICY ON HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

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INTRODUCTION

The National Observatory of Human Development (ONDH) is a young institution that was created in December 2006 as a result of the launching, under the aegis of His Majesty the King Mohamed VI, of the National Initiative for Human Development in May 2005. The ONDH mission is to analyse and evaluate programmes' and public policies' impacts on human development and to propose measures and actions leading to the development and implementation of a national strategy for human development under the framework of the National Initiative for Human Development.

Since its establishment, the ONDH has conducted several studies based on data produced by the national system of statistics and data and by international human development publications. To meet its needs in terms of adequate data, the ONDH has established its own system of information and initiated an ONDH Household Panel survey programme to better accomplish its mission.

This paper deals with the information system of the ONDH and with the ONDH project for surveys of household panels that it recently implemented in order to monitor, analyse and evaluate public policies on human development in Morocco.

Information system

The ONDH information system was developed according to the principles of a results-oriented analysis. It contains a logical framework classified according to the objectives assigned to it in order to define the areas of application and the mechanisms for monitoring reports, surveys and specific evaluation missions.

The information system, *Al Bacharia*, consists of a Web portal, a data bank, a decision-making support system (performance indicators), a virtual documentation centre (electronic document registry and a glossary), a geographic information system and a system of statistical surveys. This paper focuses on the objectives of *Al Bacharia*, the data bank, the performance indicators and the survey panel.

Objectives of *Al Bacharia*

This system has five main objectives and focuses:

1. Developing an information system related to the targeted human development objective and amenable to the evaluation of public policies;
2. Establishing a monitoring system to alert, react, predict and analyse the gaps between the achievements and the objectives of public policy;
3. Analysing the effects of public policies in human development;
4. Becoming a node for information regarding human development; and
5. Developing partnership mechanisms and exchanges and acting as a centre of debate regarding human development.

The *Al Bacharia* information system is part of an ONDH strategic dimension because since its inception, the ONDH has adopted a global vision of the architecture of its information system. Within this framework, a development plan was devised at the start of ONDH work. It is consistent and in line with the strategy, the occupations, processes and technology of ONDH. Resources and infrastructure are continuously adapted in order to maintain a level of global service quality. The constantly evolving system consists of functional modules that respond to specific needs; the global resources and communication networks are also shared.

The data bank

The data bank is the central and unifying data storage system for themes related to understanding and analysing the human development components established by ONDH. The main mission of the data bank is to house and democratize information sharing regarding human development.

The data bank is available to both not only to internal users within the ONDH, but also to external users (e.g. government partners, administration, general public) for the use of tables, maps and documents (downloadable raw data is also available). ONDH staff can use the data bank to construct and add new themes and restorations to the system.

The data bank's open architecture ensures its sustainability and evolution. The architecture allows adding the necessary technical elements for its functional evolution with tools such as:

- Decision-making (e.g. building performance indicators, developing fine-tuned analyses, developing specific indicators);
- Statistics (correlating data and statistically extrapolating it to define trends or prospects and performing impact simulations); and
- Geographical (elaborating maps or geographic simulations).

The components of the data bank consist of four functional modules, including:

- **The supervision module** is aimed to secure data bank deployment. It provides a centralized solution for the administration of users and rights management. This module allows defining users and groups of users. It also ensures secure access for these users and groups to the various resources of the data bank, such as applications, catalogues and documents.
- **The integration module** allows the creation of tables in the data bank oriented to the decision-making structure. Tables can be populated by direct unit capture or by mass integration. The data bank consists of tables of axes containing dimensions and tables of measurements containing indicators. The integration module allows creating these and managing tables and creating scales for the capture for future units.
- **The valuation module** is used to create catalogues of information. It allows for making available logical visions of the information contained in the data bank classified by field of analysis. The valuation module primarily makes the technical complexity of storage transparent, enabling easy data access. It also allows the transformation of raw data into recoverable, organized and easy-to-understand documents.
- **The user mode** contains two distinct areas, an area for the general public and a limited access zone, which is subject to control. The latter allows users increased freedom in searching for information, and a more comprehensive document content. Moreover, it gives users the opportunity to make inquiries and view the results in either graph or tabular form (simple or cross-table). Lastly, it allows users to retrieve the results of the inquiries or documents, download them in several formats and save them in a dedicated space for subsequent consultations.

The human development data bank opened to the public in January 2012. It is available at <www.albacharia.ma>.

Performance indicators

The performance indicators established by the ONDH compare Morocco to at least 120 countries for the 150 indicators selected in the framework. To accomplish this, a cluster classification is used to create groups (countries) that are relatively homogeneous and coherent. The groups can also be based on the relative observed values for the indicator in question. This method has allowed the identification classes of similar levels within a given collection of objects. It also allows the identification of countries with similar profiles on the basis of the chosen indicator. This segmentation, unlike classifications based on quartiles, can create

groups of different sizes (number of countries), but centred on very close values.

This method has been applied to the indicators retained by the performance indicators covering 11 components: access to services and basic infrastructure; activity and employment; business climate; economy; education and knowledge; environment and natural resources; governance; health and social welfare; population and demography; synthetic indicators of human development; and well-being and poverty.

It is a matter of providing a vision of human development based on a platform of composite indicators and the impacts of public policies as a function of established objectives. The design of these performance indicators took into consideration several fundamental principles, including:

- The goal that statistical restrictions do not constrain the information system, but rather that it responds to new demands and allows the evaluation of policies centred on human development;
- The performance indicators provide information that is evaluated, structured and organized in explicit and visual reading layers. The system explains and qualifies the results of the policies pursued in terms of human development and is open and evolutionary;
- The performance indicators contain, for each indicator, reference data, the years of observation (continuous or isolated), data regarding objectives or commitments made by public authorities, the signage of levels of achievement and a graphical presentation illustrating these results; and
- Each theme is accompanied by a signage allowing the synthesis of observed trends of the country or the studied areas in the theme based on the key indicators that are included in it. These indicators are presented as a graduated bar in four colours: red (for negative trends; insufficient), yellow (for low trends), light green (acceptable trend) and dark green (for good trends).

With the help of this tool, the ONDH evaluates Moroccan performance in terms of human development at the level of the 11 sections embedded within the framework. This evaluation indicates Morocco's position compared to a sample of countries and compares its achievements to public policy objectives.

SURVEYS OF HOUSEHOLD PANELS AND EVALUATION OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PUBLIC POLICIES

Why surveys of households panels?

The primary ONDH mission is evaluating public policy impacts on human development. It is an entity that is specifically responsible for evaluating actions carried out by public actors, and is at the centre of the conduct of evaluation studies.

Since its creation, the ONDH has undertaken several actions in its role of evaluator. In addition to using studies, censuses and surveys carried out at the national level and based on international experiences, ONDH has conducted studies that respond to new questions

of public policy impacts on human development. These studies allowed ONDH to gather different considerations in terms of evaluation and to develop its first annual human development report, directly submitted to His Majesty the King in June 2009.

The ONDH experience revealed a number of difficulties in terms of evaluation tools. The great level of expertise required in evaluation procedures (a relatively young discipline), is far greater than the resources available. In addition, available data poses two problems.

Much of the data needed for evaluation studies is not provided by the organizations producing the data, and where data does exist, it is not updated in a way that is sufficiently regular and frequent. For example, consumer surveys and research on standards of living that form the basis for poverty rate estimations are conducted approximately every five years. Between two given surveys, it is not possible to know how the poverty rate has evolved from one year to the next. In addition, this data only indicates the net change in the rate of poverty; one cannot estimate the rate of chronic poverty (percentage of households or individuals who were poor and who remain so) or the rate of poverty linked to the economic climate (percentage of households or individuals who were poor and who no longer are). These elements are essential for a useful and operational evaluation of policies on human development.

In addition, there are significant difficulties accessing basic data, necessary to conducting rigorous evaluations. In most cases, it is only possible to access figures published by the concerned departments. When additional data is needed, the process is time consuming and will often affect the evaluation studies under consideration.

These considerations led the ONDH to implement the household panels project to provide data for monitoring and evaluating public policies' impacts on human development.

Uses of the ONDH household panel

This household panel is designed by the ONDH to achieve several key objectives. The survey is aimed at simultaneously covering the full range of human development dimensions (e.g. access to infrastructure and basic services, consumption, education, employment, feelings of exclusion, health, housing conditions and comfort, income, participation, social conditions and subjective poverty). This will provide the advantage of having key human development indicators available on the same date, instead of working with indicators produced by different sources at different times and by different methodologies.

The level of sample representation of the ONDH household panel and survey will be valid for all indicators of interest at the regional, national, urban and rural levels. The ONDH recognizes that national-level results do not necessarily produce good evaluations, given the structural differences between urban and rural Morocco. The regional dimension is also strongly relevant and justifies the efforts to be deployed. The household panel will provide relevant results to use in conducting an evaluation. These results will also have the advantage of being very recent and regular (annual).

An important asset that makes the ONDH household panel essential is the ability to conduct cross-correlation and causality analyses between human development situations and the factors that determine them. These analyses constitute a major contribution both to properly conducting evaluations of public policies for human development and to suggesting policy guidelines for action on the determining factors of human development.

The availability of complete files of data on individuals from the ONDH household panel will also provide the opportunity to conduct advanced analyses, to perform public policy simulations and to measure the expected effects. This provides a range of analytical experiments that the ONDH needs in order to refine its evaluation studies.

In addition to the opportunities that the household panel offers to the ONDH, the panels will enable the organization to respond to partner's data needs for public policy and human development studies. This is made possible by the ability to insert components or relevant questions that can meet a specific need of an ONDH partner in the panel data collection questionnaires. Another option offered by the project is to be able to follow specific sub-panels of individuals or households that are of interest to a given partner. Partners can also request that ONDH conduct specific analyses on data collected by the panel.

It is useful to provide concrete examples to illustrate this point. In 2008, in order to conduct its evaluation study of the impacts of the National Initiative for Human Development, ONDH began conducting a reference survey on a sample of targeted areas and comparable non-targeted areas. The second stage of the survey, currently underway, will conclude the study. With the ONDH household panel, the evaluation of the impact will be integrated into the research to allow conducting impact evaluations of the National Initiative for Human Development in the short-, medium- and long terms.

Ministerial departments made several specific requests for evaluation studies that will utilize data from the ONDH household panels. For example, the Employment Ministry expressed the need for an evaluation of new public employment promotion programmes. This would entail identifying a sample of programme beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries to form part of the benchmark (counterfactual) and following them up with surveys over time in order to evaluate the effect of the new programmes on the beneficiary population in the short-, medium- and long term.

The Ministry of Housing wanted to incorporate a set of questions and follow a sample of households who benefited from programs of social housing (and households benchmarks) in order to be able to assess the impact of these programs on the beneficiary population in the short-, medium- and long term.

The Ministry of Education raised a similar request, concerning the factors of school drop-outs, which can be determined by observing and monitoring over time the socio-economic characteristics of the populations concerned and a benchmark population.

These evaluations can only be rigorously conducted with data from the ONDH panel of households. The implications on the other departments in this project are an important guarantee for developing a culture of evaluation in Morocco. To this end, ONDH will be offering all partners sufficient access to the household panel data bank files, allowing them to conduct for themselves appropriate analyses under the framework of professional practices in use.

STATE OF ADVANCEMENT OF THE PROJECT

To implement the household panel, the ONDH proceeded as follows:

1. Consultations with specialists and pioneer global institutions on household panels;
2. Design and materialization of a large experimental study (April 2010–June 2011) to test:

- Methodological instruments (survey questionnaires, frequencies and durations of data collection);
- Alternative methods of collecting data (written questionnaires, computer assisted personal interviewing, telephone);
- The capabilities of private data collection offices.[21]

3. Implementation of the mechanism (July 2011):
   - Research offices;
   - Consultants;
   - Partnerships, cooperation;
   - Network of experts;
   - Reinforcement of the central team;
   - Budgetary resources; and
   - Conclusion.

Evaluation professionals agree on the importance that entities responsible for an evaluation must be independent. Since its creation, ONDH has had this quality essential to the accomplishment of its mission—particularly because it is both politically and financially independent. In addition, the strong political will to institutionalise evaluation is reflected by the fact that the creation of the ONDH was decided by His Majesty the King himself and that the decree document states that the ONDH address its annual report on human development in the country directly to His Majesty.

To carry out effective and useful evaluation studies, it is also necessary to have adequate information and data that is responsive to the evaluation questions. Such data is not always available. Since its creation, ONDH has strived to gather existing data relating to the different dimensions of human development in the country. This data, produced by various ministerial departments, population censuses, demographic surveys, employment statistics, consumption, income, living standards, education and health are quite disparate, incomplete and not produced on a regular basis.

In addition, they only partially answer the substantive issues ONDH must process in its mission to evaluate public policies for human development. For example, it is not yet possible, even with all currently available data, to study the chronic poverty of households (i.e. identify the households and individuals who were poor and remain so, those who were poor but who are out of poverty, or to those who were not poor but who became so between two surveys). The demographic and socio-economic population characteristics would be extremely useful to understanding the determinants of the different types of poverty and

21 ONDH is not a producer of statistics and does not have the human resources itself. It needs to hire private studies offices in the of field data collection.

better informing decision-making processes in the fight against poverty.

By implementing a system of household panel surveys, the ONDH expects to be better equipped to accomplish its mission of evaluation of public policies for human development. The partnerships it establishes with world leaders in the field of household panel surveys and with different national ministerial departments will allow optimizing the use of evaluation procedures in Morocco.

Several ministerial departments have expressed to ONDH their specific needs of data and analysis that this household panel will produce, and that will be used by these department partners to evaluate their own policies and human development programs.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: COMMUNITY-BASED MONITORING SYSTEM TO EVALUATE THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY: THE EXPERIENCE OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

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SUMMARY

For over two decades, national governments and international aid agencies have developed actions to reduce poverty and inequality in countries with high percentages of populations living in these conditions. In most developing countries, the lack of information at the local and community levels has hampered development planning and programmes and has inhibited national- and local-level identification and monitoring of programme and project impacts.

The community-based monitoring system is a process that engages l stakeholders that are based in or have a presence in the municipalities and communities in which programmes and projects are being implemented.

The design and implementation of this methodology for community monitoring aims to:

- Gather information about the economic, social and environmental conditions at the community and local levels;
- Identify actions and frame them within programmes and projects that help to improve the socio-economic conditions of affected populations; and
- Monitor and evaluate implemented actions with the participation of beneficiaries in project areas.

The system has demonstrated that understanding and addressing poverty levels and measuring progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) require community involvement in policy decision-making.

The lack or absence of social power is characteristic of poverty. This limits the potential of those who are excluded and discriminated against to interact on equal terms with other stakeholders, to negotiate and manage proposals or to influence public policy. Recognizing and addressing these factors will affect the type, design and implementation of interventions. In addition, these factors account for the need to design and implement community-based participatory methodologies that generate impacts and empower local stakeholders. This will generate challenges that lead to rethinking the goals and strategies of project monitoring and evaluation. Therefore, policy makers should:

- Ensure that a broad range of stakeholders participate in the design, implementation and impact assessment of proposals; and
- Strengthen the capacities of local and community stakeholders in decision-making and resource management.

The Dominican Republic has launched a community-based monitoring system within the context of a broader monitoring and evaluation framework for the joint programme for strengthening the banana value chain through inclusive markets. Through its work with the joint programme, the community-based monitoring system seeks to influence the achievement of the MDGs, particularly MDG1 (Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger), MDG3 (promote gender equality and empower women), MDG6 (combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases), MDG7 (ensure environmental sustainability), and MDG8 (develop a global partnership for development). In addition, the monitoring system seeks to link actions and outcomes to the National Development Strategy and the National Strategy for Systemic Competitiveness.

For the operation of the community-based monitoring system, monitoring committees were created in three areas of the joint programme's intervention: the provinces of Azua, Montecristi and Valverde. This helped to define local development strategies framed within the objectives of the National Development Strategy. This system not only seeks to provide participatory monitoring to those involved in the joint programme, but has also served as a mechanism to address the MDGs on a municipal scale and assess their progress in development strategies.

INTRODUCTION

In much of the developing world, the lack of local information about the poor hinders development planning and programmes and inhibits efforts to track change. The community-based monitoring system (CBMS) methodology demonstrates that understanding and addressing poverty in a meaningful way requires involving local communities in public policy decision-making. The community-based monitoring system can therefore help governments and international cooperation agencies to develop more effective programmes, to monitor their impact and to measure progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Appropriate public investment is essential for reducing poverty and addressing social inequalities; updated and accurate data is necessary to measure progress and plan such investment. This data is also essential to achieve proper analysis and policy implementation. The '2007 Millennium Development Goals Report' recognizes the necessity of "a sound national statistical system and enhanced public accountability" to support the achievement of development goals.

This report is a brief presentation on the advantages of developing and implementing participatory methodologies for monitoring and evaluation. Participatory methodologies empower local stakeholders in interventions that are being implemented in their communities. This methodology has proven effective in achieving its objectives and can further contribute to development goals by identifying assessments, impacts and proposals to improve programme and project implementation, effectiveness and success.

MEASURING PROGRESS TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE MDGS WITH COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Policy decisions must address the concerns of the poor, build on their knowledge and experience, and involve them in political processes. Engaging communities to work with local authorities in developing planning through the monitoring and use of locally obtained, verifiable information about the real conditions of life is what many CBMS practitioners refer to as 'localizing the MDGs'.

The importance of measuring and monitoring the multidimensional aspects of poverty in order to assess progress towards the MDGs is widely accepted. However, there is less consensus on practical methodologies or how to translate it into policies that work in practice.

Governments are responsible for providing public goods and services to reduce poverty. However, studies conducted across the developing world show that public resource allocations alone do not ensure that services are actually provided or, if provided, that they are efficient or accessible to the poor. The poor, the providers and policy makers must be effectively linked through institutions that promote inclusion and accountability.

In September 2000, 147 heads of state and government and 42 ministers and heads of delegation, gathered at the United Nations General Assembly. The Millennium Summit explored ways to pool nation's combined will and efforts to revitalize international cooperation on behalf of the less developed countries and, in particular, to decisively combat extreme poverty.

They identified goals that included combating poverty and hunger, reversing environmental degradation, achieving improvements in the fields of education and health and promoting gender equality. During the Summit, it became clear that because the lack of development is a problem that affects and concerns the entire world, the formation of a partnership to enrich and reinvigorate international cooperation, while making it more appropriate and effective, should be one of the eight selected goals. These deliberations provided the structure for the Millennium Development Goals.

The Goals were expressed with the greatest clarity possible, and specific targets were set for the progress to be achieved by 2015 in terms of the major economic and social issues

reflected in meeting the approved Goals. Countries also agreed to review the progress on a regular basis in order to ensure that efforts would not fade over time.

In the Dominican Republic, pursuing the MDGs has achieved significant accomplishments in education and in reducing infant mortality and tuberculosis. However, making progress towards the Goals of poverty reduction, environmental sustainability and access to safe drinking water remains a challenge.

Databases and statistical series for measuring, monitoring and evaluating the MDGs at the local and regional levels are poor and inconsistent in methodology, data collection and results presentation. As a result, data sets are not reliable or comparable to other, ostensibly similar data sets.

This particularly problematic in monitoring and evaluation progress towards MDG 3 (promote gender equality and empower women), where national gender capacities are limited by insufficient statistics; data is neither updated nor disaggregated by sex or gender indicators.

In the face of these challenges and constraints, the CBMS provides an organized methodology to collect local information on an ongoing and regular basis. Collected data can be used by local governments, national government agencies, non-governmental and civil society organizations to plan tasks, budget and implement local development programmes, and monitor and evaluate programme performance. Fundamentally, CBMS is a tool to improve local governance and democratic decision-making that promotes increased transparency and accountability in the allocation of public resources.

THE COMMUNITY-BASED MONITORING SYSTEM METHODOLOGY

CBMS has several aims, including assessing the scope of poverty at the local level; developing appropriate plans and programmes to address issues; providing the basis for rational resource allocation; identifying potential beneficiaries for focused programmes; and monitoring and evaluating the impact of projects and programmes.

The CBMS has a series of distinctive characteristics in that it is a household census, not a sample survey; it is rooted in local government and promotes community participation; it calls for performing its tasks with local staff and community volunteers; it has a core set of simple, well-established indicators; and it establishes databanks at all geopolitical levels.

Data can be disaggregated by region, gender, socio-economic status, age, ethnic group and other variables. Because monitoring activities are conducted on a regular basis and the results are processed quickly, the data is useful for ongoing, local-level planning. Furthermore, as results are universally accessible, stakeholders perceive increased value in the results.

The CBMS is an atypical poverty monitoring system because it gathers information from all households in the community. This represents a fundamental contribution to specialized interventions focused on poverty such as cash transfers, health care benefits and other public sector social assistance programmes.

Communities and local governments have ownership of the CBMS and lead data gathering and processing. They are also in charge of the database and are expected to use that information in their annual investment and development plans. Collected data provides crucial information to define socio-economic profiles, project proposals and other

development-related reports. CBMS information also serves as a barometer to measure projects' and programmes' effectiveness.

Successfully implementing CBMS requires community participation. The community is informed at the outset of the objectives and purposes of the survey and provided with pollsters to collect data and personnel to process and analyse the data. Information is collected from all households and the data is then entered and consolidated at the borough (*villa*) level. The processed data is returned to the community for validation and discussion.

THE EXPERIENCE OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN CBMS IMPLEMENTATION

The information obtained from population and housing censuses has been unsatisfactory in terms of timeliness and content, as several towns and municipalities still lack the information required for these censuses. Because local authorities do not consider demographic behaviour, housing and basic services for planning purposes, the process is guided more by popular demand and group interest. This hinders the best use of the scarce resources, which should be based on real planning and the actual interest of the governed.

The Dominican Republic's experience in participatory monitoring and evaluation is still limited, but necessary steps are being taken to promote social methods that will enable communities to participate in the development and monitoring of plans, programmes and projects. The creation of Local Monitoring Committees is an example of such an effort.

Objectives of the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee

A primary objective of the Local Monitoring Committees is to ensure that stakeholders actively participate in the design of project activities, indicators, outputs and outcomes and in the monitoring and follow-up of evaluation activities. Further, the Committee seeks to facilitate stakeholder contributions, suggestions and recommendations for more efficient and effective interventions.

Another principal objective of the Committee is to ensure that programme activities, outcomes, indicators and outputs empower beneficiaries.

Committee tasks

The Local Monitoring Committees are tasked with monitoring the activities performed by each agency and their implementing partners; evaluating the quality and relevance of training received; participating in gathering baseline and MDG information; participating in organizing and facilitating workshops for the systematization of experiences; providing cooperation and support as key informants to consultants for mid-term and final programme evaluations; and channelling recommendations, requests and suggestions from the target population.

Composition and organization

Monitoring and evaluation committees are composed of a minimum of three to five people, one of whom serves as president, another as secretary and the others as supporting members or delegates.

Activities

In practice, these committees operate in the following programmes and projects:

Joint Programme for Strengthening the Banana Value Chain by Growing Inclusive Markets

The joint programme is implemented by seven UN agencies: the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, International Labour Organization, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, Pan American Health Organization, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Population Fund and the World Food Programme. Its headquarters is located in same facilities of the National Competitiveness Council, a government institution that coordinates programme activities. The joint programme's main objectives are to achieve greater competitiveness in the banana sector and to support the achievement of MDGs 1, 2, 3, 6 and 8.

The joint programme works in three provinces, Azua, Montecristi and Valverde. Monitoring Committees were created in Azua and Valverde to monitor and evaluate programme actions and their impact on the MDGs (a third Committee is being established for Montecristi).

The Monitoring Committees have achieved several results, including empowering involved stakeholders in the social and economic sectors, improving implementation of joint programme activities, and increasing awareness of the MDGs.

The National Development Strategy and Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation

Within its strategic line of macroeconomic stability, competitiveness and productive development, the National Development Strategy (NDS) aims to have a production structure that is coordinated and competitively integrated into the global economy. In particular, the NDS aims to promote export development based on competitive insertion in dynamic international markets; increase productivity, competitiveness, environmental and financial sustainability of agro-productive chains in order to contribute to food sustainability, harness export potential and create employment and income for rural populations; develop the manufacturing sector underlying the productive apparatus in an environmentally sustainable manner and facilitate the sector's integration into global markets.

The NDS includes creating provincial and municipal development committees, whose tasks are to participate in developing participatory budgets in municipalities and municipal districts; support the socialization of the NDS; and participate in the development and monitoring of the Municipal and Regional Development Plans.

SWOT Analysis of Local Monitoring Committees

Strengths

- Increases communities' empowerment over their socio-economic issues;
- Develops the capacity to effectively gather information; and
- Improves programmes' and projects' operations through community participation.

Weaknesses

- Low levels of education make training more difficult;
- Committee tasks tend to become centralized in a single person;
- Lack of resources for their sustainability;
- Meetings are held infrequently; and
- The NDS committees operate poorly.

Opportunities

- END Act will promote this type of methodology; and
- Involvement of OFIs in this type of initiative.

Threats

- Changes of government;
- Premature termination of programmes and projects; and
- Involvement of members of opposition political parties.

CONCLUSIONS

Most communities and municipalities in the Dominican Republic do not have the specific or up-to-date information necessary to characterize their socio-economic conditions as a basis for decision-making, public policy and coordination of appropriate strategies to promote development.

This deficit of specific and up-to-date information affects the MDGs in two ways. First, the lack of information hinders the establishment of the baselines required for creating projects and programmes and making policy decisions at the local level. Second, without sufficient information, monitoring cannot be effective. Therefore, it is impossible to determine the impacts of national and local MDG-related initiatives.

The CBMS enables communities to collect the necessary information and data. This ability empowers communities to assess and plan actions to improve their living conditions. With regard to the MDGs, CBMS can provide the required reliable information that will facilitate monitoring and follow-up of activities.

The CBMS helps measure progress towards the MDGs. This system shows that understanding and addressing poverty in a meaningful way requires involving local communities in public policy decisions. This empowers and encourages the poor and significantly improves the engagement among local authorities and communities.

COSTA RICA: ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT OF STRATEGIES TO REDUCE CHILD MORTALITY: THE EXPERIENCE OF COSTA RICA

BY ANA MORICE

Technical Director, Costa Rican Institute for Research and Education in Nutrition and Health; Vice Minister of Health of Costa Rica (August 2008 – August 2011)

BACKGROUND

The population group under one year of age is vulnerable to a range of socio-economic, cultural and environmental factors, as well as disparities in access to health services. Therefore, the infant mortality rate is an indicator that reflects the living conditions of populations and the state of a nation's development.

Because of its relevance to public health, the reduction of infant mortality was incorporated into the Millennium Development Goals. To achieve this target, both globally and within a country, it is necessary to establish monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and tools that facilitate proper management, accountability and effectiveness in implementing national action plans and other interventions.

Costa Rica is a small Central American country. In 2010, it had an estimated population of 4.5 million people with an average per capita income of $7,851. This income places it within the group of medium-low income nations. To reduce income gaps and move towards greater social development, the country has been directing public investment towards social sectors since the mid-twentieth century.

The political will to invest in social sectors was cemented in the Constitution of the Republic of 1949, which prioritized state investment in education, health, housing and sanitation as a development strategy. This strategy has led to the redistribution of resources to universalize services and reduce gaps in the poorest social strata and in zones with lower social development.

As a result of this long-term strategy, in 2010, Costa Rica achieved a Human Development Index of 0.725, a literacy rate of 96 percent, 3.5 percent of the population living in extreme

poverty and a life expectancy of 79.1 years, with women's life expectancy reaching 81.8 years.

The maternal and infant population has always been a priority group within this political-strategic context. Therefore, in addition to programmes to provide universal health care and improve household living conditions, specific policies and plans have been established to protect children, including the currently in force National Strategic Plan for healthy and safe maternity and childhood for 2006–2015.

This report describes the strategies and plans Costa Rica has implemented to reduce infant mortality since the 1970s and describes the mechanisms and methodologies of analysis and monitoring that, since the end of the 1990s, have been used to evaluate the impact and adapt the interventions.

ORGANIZATION OF THE HEALTH SECTOR

Since its origins, the Costa Rican public health sector has adapted to changes in the country context.

Implemented in the late 1990s, the Health Sector Reform revamped the country's health model. The Reform emphasized the level of primary care and tasked the Costa Rican Social Security System (CCSS) with the responsibility to provide comprehensive and universal services to all people.

The CCSS has a network of establishments throughout the country, organized according to problem-solving capacity and referral systems. At the first level, the Basic Integrated Health Care Units (EBAIS) serve populations of around 4,000 inhabitants in each of the country's regions and are the reference for a network of peripheral, regional, national and specialized clinics and hospitals. By law, the whole population has access to health services provided by the CCSS and a set of insurance plans, which are financed by tripartite contributions by the employed, the employer and the state.

In the context of this reform, the Ministry of Health transferred its primary care posts and centres to the CCSS. As a result, the Ministry does not provide health services (unlike other countries). As a governing body within the executive branch, its responsibilities include guaranteeing access to quality health services and protecting the human habitat. To this end, it performs a set of functions aimed at formulating and implementing public policies and strategic plans and instituting regulatory, research and monitoring activities to promote public health. These activities are systematically monitored and evaluated to determine their compliance with goals and to analyse their impact on the health of the population.

ACTION PLAN FOR THE PREVENTION OF INFANT DEATHS

After an accelerated decrease in infant mortality beginning in the 1970s, infant mortality levels stabilized in the 1990s with mortality rates ranging between 12 and 14 per 1,000 live births. In 1998, the country formulated an action plan to resume the downward trend in infant mortality. The contexts and determinants of infant mortality were analysed and the effectiveness of interventions was reviewed. This provided the foundation to define actions to impact mortality risk factors during the first year of life.

Interventions included in the national plan to prevent infant deaths incorporated

strategies to update the immunization schedule; increase the coverage and quality of prenatal, childbirth and post-partum care, neonatal transport and the quality of preterm newborn care; enrich foods with micronutrients including folic acid to prevent neural-tube defects; monitor infant growth and development as an integrating element through prevention actions such as training of childcare workers; and detect and intervene in cases of growth and development problems.

Children throughout the country were provided with an official universal immunization schedule. The current schedule introduced new vaccines against severe infections that lead to disability and death, e.g. meningitis and pneumonia, incorporated in 1998, and beginning in 2006 vaccines against pneumococcal and pertussis (whooping cough) given to mothers and fathers in the post-partum period to protect newborn and infants.

The Ministry of National Planning and Economic Policy is responsible for elaborating and monitoring the National Development Plan, an instrument that integrates the government's strategic priorities in each of its administrations. The Ministry of Health, working with other health institutions, establishes the health targets to be met during each government cycle. As a national priority, reducing infant mortality is embodied in Costa Rica's National Development Plan.

INFANT MORTALITY ANALYSIS SYSTEM

To monitor and evaluate infant mortality interventions and detect opportunities for improvement, the action plan established a National Analysis of Infant Mortality System (SINAMI) to conduct a variety of studies.

Established in 1998 and formalized by Executive Decree 26932-S, SINAMI provides systematic monitoring and evaluation tools. It is structured through a set of interrelated activities developed at the national, regional and local levels to immediately detect and notify of any deaths of children under one-year old.

Once the notification is made to the local areas of the Health Ministry, an analysis of the care received by the deceased child is performed to determine if the death was preventable. Information sources used by the SINAMI include vital statistics, specialized registries, medical records, family interviews and various surveys that complement the analysis of determinants such as access to contraceptive service, prenatal controls and childbirth care.

The death certificate provides SINAMI with a primary source of data. The certificate details basic demographic variables, the place of death and the cause of death. The second data source is an extensive questionnaire that provides an in-depth analysis of each death. It includes variables related to the quality of health care services during pregnancy, childbirth, newborn care and growth-development of children under one-year old.

To implement SINAMI, a network was created that includes local, regional and national commissions composed of interdisciplinary teams, the CCSS and the Health Ministry. It also includes the participation of professionals from diverse disciplines such as obstetrics, paediatrics, nursing, pathology, social work and the statistical field to comprehensively investigate each infant death and identify the factors associated with preventability.

There is also a National System of Maternal Mortality Evaluation, which reviews the deaths

FIGURE 1. SINAMI: FINAL CLASSIFICATION, CRITICAL AREAS AND INTERVENTIONS

CAUSE OF DEATH	DEATH CERTIFICATE	AUTOPSY	FINAL CLASSIFICATION
BASIC			
ASSOCIATED			

CRITICAL AREAS IDENTIFIED IN THE HEALTH SYSTEM

- Family planning ☐
- Prenatal care ☐
- Reference system and transportation ☐
- Hospital services ☐
- Child care ☐

QUALITY RESPONSE OF HEALTH SERVICES
LIVING CONDITIONS OF FAMILY GROUP
CONCLUSIONS OF CASE ANALYSIS

WAS DEATH PREVENTABLE? Yes ☐ No ☐

INTERVENTIONS TO: Health system ☐ Family ☐ Other sectors ☐

of all mothers related to pregnancy, childbirth or the post-natal period to determine the quality of the health care system's response and the conditions of the family and social environment.

Based on data analysis and team discussion, a final classification is established and the preventability of each death determined. Critical points that require improvement are identified at the different levels of the health care system and interventions are directed to the family or other social area sectors (see Figure 1).

The infant mortality analysis commissions meet periodically to discuss findings and develop local, regional and national reports that are analysed by the country's health units and authorities. Based on the results of the SINAMI reports, specific programmes and projects have been developed to control risk factors in the maternal-infant population and changes effected in the organization and operation of the health services. The system also identifies areas in the recording of vital statistics, birth and death certificates that need improved quality and timeliness.

Data was originally logged in databases that were updated and analysed by each commission. In 2010, an online automated information centre was developed to track each variable. This enabled the data to be available on a server housing all of the national data.

Data collected by the infant mortality analysis commissions from 2000 to 2009 was entered and stored in a single database. Analysis of this information enabled the retrospective

evaluation of various aspects related to data quality and the completeness of each variable.

The implementation of the automated SINAMI database system led to higher quality of information, facilitating the capture of data and the monitoring of the completeness and timeliness of all variables. The database also facilitates local, regional and national teams' use and analysis of the information.

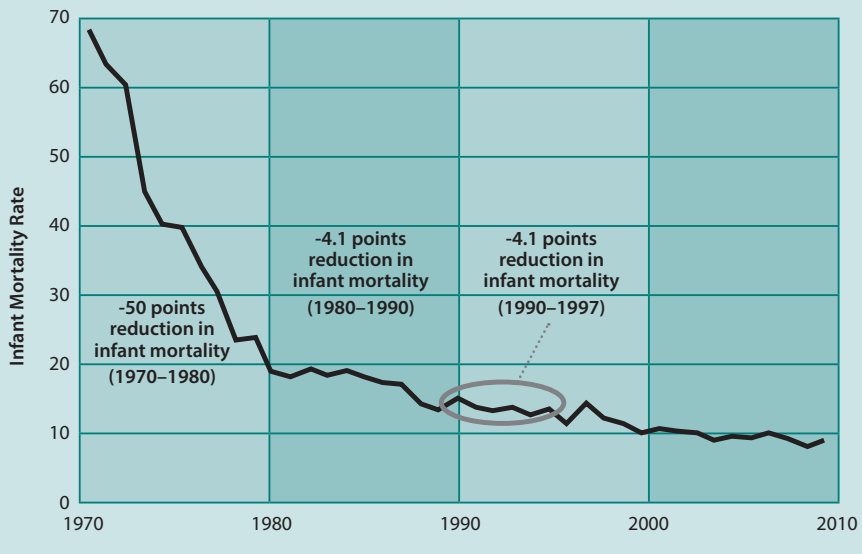
STRATEGIES AND IMPACT OF THE INFANT MORTALITY INTERVENTIONS

During the 1970s, the strategies and interventions to reduce infant mortality were oriented towards improving basic sanitation and providing a safe water supply, expanding electrification and road services, increasing the coverage of primary care programmes and universalizing social security services.

The infant mortality rate declined from 68.4 in 1970 to 19.1 per 1,000 live births in 1980 (a difference of almost 50 points). During that decade, an increase in the population's life expectancy was also achieved (which, in the case of women, represented an increase of 10 years). At the end of the 1980s, the child mortality rate fell to 15.3 per 1,000 live births, but stabilized during the 1990s (see Figure 2).

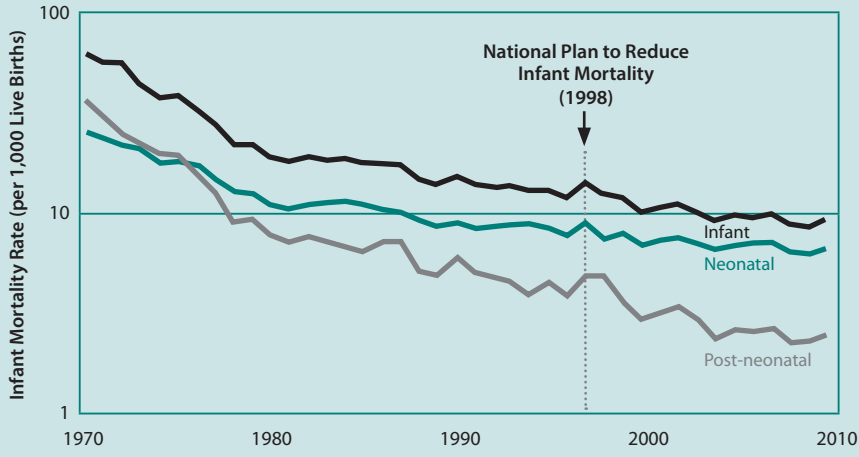
Since the implementation of the interventions outlined in the action plan at the end of the 1990s, a downward trend can be seen in both components of infant mortality (see

FIGURE 2. TRENDS IN INFANT MORTALITY RATE, COSTA RICA, 1970–2010



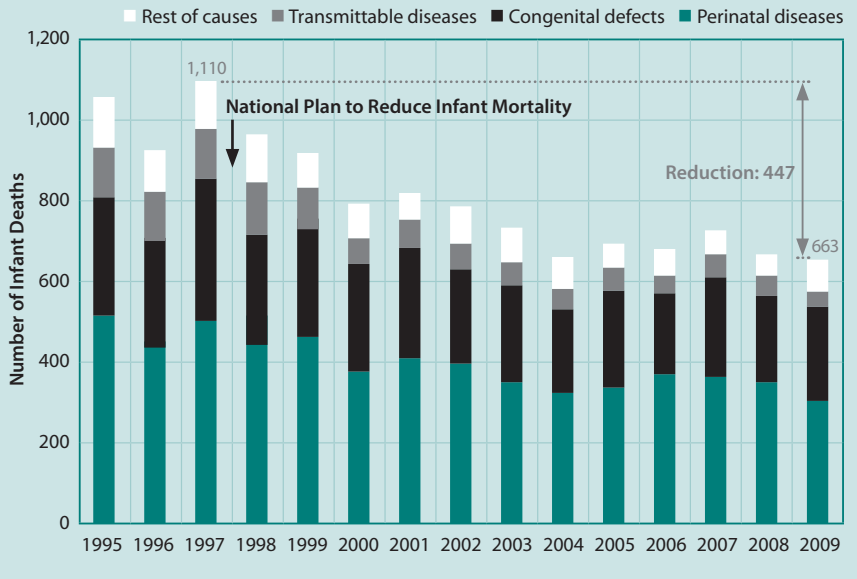
Source: National Institute of Statistics and Census, Central American Population Center

FIGURE 3. INFANT MORTALITY RATE BY AGE AT DEATH, COSTA RICA, 1970–2010



Source: National Institute of Statistics and Census, Central American Population Center

FIGURE 4. NUMBER OF INFANT DEATHS BY CATEGORY OF CAUSE, COSTA RICA, 1995–2009



ICD code categories: *Transmittable diseases:* ICD10: A00-B99, G00-G09, J00-J206, J10-J18, J20-J22; *Congenital defects:* ICD10: Q00-099; *Perinatal diseases:* ICD10: P00-96

Source: National Institute of Statistics and Census, Central American Population Center

Figure 3). During the period from 1997 to 2004, neonatal mortality decreased from 9.1 to 6.7; in 2004, the neonatal mortality rate decreased by 50 percent from 5 to 2.5.

To analyse the trends in reducing infant mortality, three categories of death were established using data from death certificates. The categories were established considering interventions that, in accordance with evidence of their effectiveness, could have prevented the deaths. Causes of death were grouped into three broad categories, according to codes from the Tenth International Classification of Diseases: perinatal diseases, congenital defects and transmissible diseases.

Between 1997 and 2009, the absolute number of infant deaths declined from 1,160 in 1997 to 663 in 2009; a decrease of 43 percent. Deaths in all three categories analysed declined during these years (see Figure 4).

If the 1995 to 1997 pre-intervention period is used as reference and compared to subsequent three-year time periods through 2009 (see Table 1), perinatal diseases show the greatest decrease (a 1.56 reduction in the mortality rate), followed by the transmissible diseases (a .89 reduction) and congenital defects (a .75 reduction).

The analysis of factors associated with the decline in infant mortality has been investigated using various methodologies. During the 1970s, studies utilized multiple regression techniques to evaluate the decline in infant mortality. The analysis indicated that economic development, reduced fertility and the extent of primary care services drove the decline.

More recently, quasi-experimental design methodologies applied to evaluate the impact of the health sector reform, using the 1985 to 2001 period as reference, indicate that the

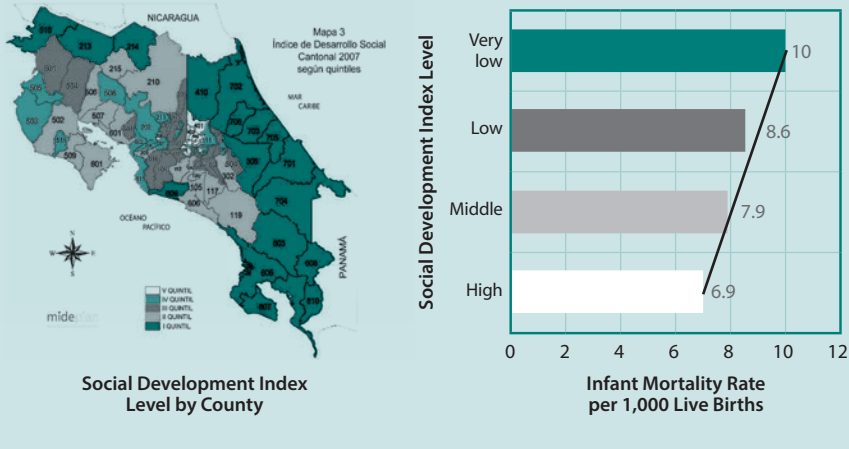
TABLE 1: INFANT MORTALITY RATES PER 1,000 LIVE BIRTHS BY CATEGORY OF CAUSES, COSTA RICA, 1995–2009

CATEGORIES OF CAUSES	INFANT MORTALITY TRIENNIAL RATES (PER 1,000 LIVE BIRTHS)					MORTALITY RATE RATIO	MORTALITY RATE DIFFERENCE
	1995-1997	1998-2000	2001-2003	2004-2006	2007-2009		
Perinatal diseases	6.22	5.63	5.29	4.84	4.67	1.3	-1.56
Congenital defects	3.81	3.35	3.40	3.05	3.06	1.2	-0.75
Transmittable diseases	1.58	1.31	0.89	0.70	0.69	2.3	-0.89
Rest of causes	1.49	1.25	1.12	1.00	0.86	1.7	-0.64

ICD code categories: *Transmittable diseases:* ICD10: A00-B99, G00-G09, J00-J206, J10-J18, J20-J22; *Congenital defects:* ICD10: Q00-099; *Perinatal diseases:* ICD10: P00-96

Source: National Institute of Statistics and Census, Central American Population Center

FIGURE 5. INFANT MORTALITY RATE STRATIFIED BY COUNTY SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT INDEX, COSTA RICA, 2009



Source: National Institute of Statistics; Census, Central American Population Center; and MIDEPLAN

adoption of sectoral reforms significantly reduced child mortality by 8 percent, which represents 120 lives saved in 2001.

The impact of fortifying foods with folic acid in order to reduce infant mortality associated with neural tube disorders was also analysed. Findings indicate that this intervention contributed to a 9 percent decline in the infant mortality rate from 1997 to 2009.

To identify differences in infant mortality within the country, all counties were stratified according to their ranking on the Social Development Index, a composite indicator developed by the Ministry of National Planning and Economic Policy that classifies the different areas of the country into four development categories: high, medium, low and very low.

Figure 5 shows the differences in infant mortality rates within these categories in 2009, where counties with high Social Development Indexes reach a rate of 7 per 1,000 live births, while the rate for counties with very low Social Development Indexes was 10 per 1,000 live births. This data indicates that there are gaps in the levels of infant mortality that depend on living conditions within communities. Lower Social Development Index levels are found in the Atlantic zone and along the country's northern border.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The challenges and the ability to maintain the downward trend of infant mortality in Costa Rica shows that despite resource constraints typical of a peripheral country, progress is possible if investments are made in the social factors that condition infant mortality. Therefore, the prevention of infant deaths must remain a priority and be considered as an essential component of public policies in the country.

Given the diversity and complexity of the conditions that determine the probability of death during the first year of life, it is necessary to have accurate and timely information to support the development of plans from an inter-sectoral perspective.

National action plans must incorporate effective mechanisms and tools for monitoring and evaluating interventions' results and impacts. The use of lessons learned about interventions' effectiveness is essential to effectively allocate resources and achieve goals.

It is necessary to ensure primary health care access and the use of measures that facilitate a comprehensive and timely response to the population needs, the appropriate risk classification, and proper case management. Therefore, national action plans must ensure access to timely and quality health services, prioritizing society's most vulnerable groups and systematically evaluating management and impacts.

The Costa Rican experience provides lessons learned not only about the implementation of action plans and strategies to reduce infant mortality and improve the health and welfare of the infant population, but also about the mechanisms used to monitor and evaluate the impact of the interventions.

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NIGER: THE PROCESS OF PROJECT ADVANCEMENT CONTROL OF THE GERMAN AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

CONTRIBUTION OF THE MONITORING AND EVALUATION MECHANISM IN THE CONDUCT AND USE OF RESULTS OF THE EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAMME ON FIGHTING POVERTY IN NIGER

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PROJECT ADVANCEMENT CONTROL: THE CONCEPT OF MID-TERM EVALUATION OR SELF-EVALUATION

The objectives of Project Advancement Control

Implementing Project Advancement Control (PAC) is essential for monitoring and preparing projects and programmes for their next phases. The results of PAC are used jointly with initiatives' partners for later development of actions by providing information for steering the portfolio of activities and refining the German Agency for International Cooperation's (GIZ) regional and sectorial concepts. PAC also functions to promote learning by experience—including both successes and failures.

Key PAC design elements further enhance GIZ and partners' learning:

- **Assessment and conclusions:** Drawing relevant conclusions for subsequent implementation phases requires accurate measurement and assessment of results and an understanding of the reasons behind results' achievements (or non-achievements). The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development—Development Co-operation Directorate (OECD-DAC) offers five criteria to enable comparing development actions to other domestic and international initiatives (relevance, efficiency, impact, effectiveness and sustainability).

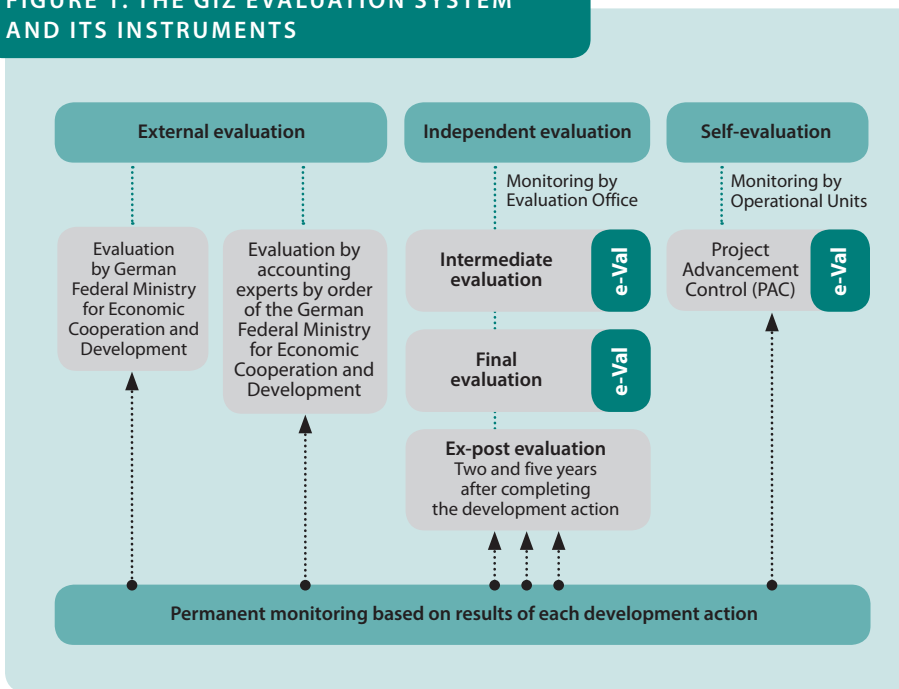
- **Trust and openness:** Learning from mistakes is only possible in a climate of trust where everyone can speak freely about their mistakes without risking criticism or sanctions; it is essential to properly separate discussions on the methods and contents of professional evaluations.
- **Knowledge Management:** PAC results must be disseminated beyond the development action considered. In addition to classifying and disseminating project progress, it is important that lessons learned are made available for exchanges among colleagues and relevant interested parties. PAC is an essential tool for refining GIZ outcomes.

Place of PAC in the GIZ evaluation system

The GIZ evaluation system consists of instruments of self- and independent evaluations. These instruments allow GIZ to assume two functions of evaluation: institutional learning and accountability. There are also external evaluations that are conducted and delivered by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development or other entities.

PAC is a self-evaluation tool. The self-evaluations are monitored by the organizational unit that is responsible for the development actions. The GIZ Office of Evaluation monitors independent evaluations, entrusting the evaluations' execution to institutes and external consulting

FIGURE 1. THE GIZ EVALUATION SYSTEM AND ITS INSTRUMENTS



offices. The three types of evaluations include intermediate, final and ex-post evaluations.

Using a computer-assisted evaluation tool by e-VAL is mandatory to prepare and focus a PAC. It allows systematic identification and makes available the subjective views of actors. Results orientation is at the forefront of PAC. This is why the evaluation consultant does not proceed to a detailed comparative status of forecasts-achievements at the level of activities and services. However, the consultant must analyse the extent to which development actions are focused on the five success factors (strategy, cooperation, steering structure, process and learning and innovation) of Capacity WORKS (a GIZ management model for sustainable development).

PAC use promotes institutional learning, third-party dialogue and PAC-results interpretation, which ensures comparability within the enterprise and with other national and international organizations. During each process, regular monitoring based on the results of the programme provides information to serve as a basis of information for the evaluation (see Figure 1).

The elements of the approach

The three major phases that define the approach implementing a PAC mission—preparation, implementation and completion—are detailed in Table 1.

THE PAC PROCESS IN THE NIGERIAN-GERMAN PROGRAMME TO FIGHT AGAINST POVERTY PROGRAMME

Preparation

Administrative arrangements: deciding to conduct the process

Analysis of opportunities for joint evaluation with other organizations

In line with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, joint evaluations of all kinds are performed. The Paris Declaration calls for (among other things and whenever possible), performing joint evaluations, harmonizing procedures and reducing field mission redundancies. It is convenient to decide on a case-by-case whether or not—and how—a PAC can be achieved jointly with one or more cooperation partners. If there is a formal mesh of services and objectives of development actions with other organizations (e.g. joint programme proposals, chains of results or common logical framework, and/or joint services), a collaborative approach is necessary.

In the Nigerian-German Programme to Fight against Poverty (LUCOP) process, development partners in Niger were informed of the evaluation. However, there was no agreement regarding co-financing. Nevertheless, the PAC process was conducted as a joint evaluation between various German development organizations intervening in the programme (in particular the ex-GIZ, ex-German Development Service and KfW Development Bank).

Informal solicitation of the advice of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and the partner for the development of the next phase

It was necessary to clarify with the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and partners if it was convenient to promote development actions and, if the

TABLE 1. IMPLEMENTATION PHASES OF PROJECT ADVANCEMENT CONTROL

PHASE	STAGE	PERIOD
Preparation	1. Analysis of opportunities of joint evaluations with other organizations	Approximately 12 months before the end of the phase
	2. Informal solicitation of the advice of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and the partner regarding the development of the next phase	12 months before the end of the phase
	3. Coordination with the stakeholders	9 to 12 months before the end of the phase
	4. e-VAL for the preparation of the PAC	Approximately 3 to 12 months before the end of the phase
	5. Development of the terms of reference for the consultants responsible for the PAC	Approximately 8 months before the end of the phase
	6. Selection and commitment under contract of the consultant	Approximately 8 months before the end of the phase
	7. Compilation of documents, data and information relevant to the monitoring	Approximately 8 months before the end of the phase
	8. Organization on site	Approximately 6 to 7 months before the end of the phase
Implementation	9. Start-up meeting	Approximately 6 months before the end of phase
	10. Analyses on site	Approximately 6 months before the end of the phase
	11. PAC workshop	Approximately 6 months before the end of phase
	12. Aide memoires (proposed text informally circulated for discussion)	Approximately 6 months before the end of the phase
	13. Preparation of the PAC report and other documents	Approximately 5 months before the end of the phase
Completion	14. Preparation of an offer for the next phase	5 months before the end of the phase
	15. Use of the PAC results	Approximately 3 to 4 months before the end of the phase
	16. Communication of the lessons learned	Continuous

issue was not sufficiently clear after intergovernmental negotiations, whether to pursue government consultations or other types of proceedings.

Within the framework of the LUCOP programme, a decision was made during the intergovernmental negotiations of 2008 to reinforce the programme by subdividing it into two programmes in Niger. This phase of the process has not been implemented as a result of clarifications made during negotiations.

Stakeholder coordination

Several stages of consultation with key persons that must be associated with the preparation and realization of PAC are being conducted, in particular with:

- **Senior management of the Regional Cooperation Council:** In the key stages of the PAC process, the principle of dual control must be respected. Therefore, regardless of the global responsibility of the Regional Cooperation Council, the senior manager is in charge of the terms of reference approval, the selection of the consultant, the signing of the *aide memoire* at the end of the PAC, the approval of the evaluation report and the follow-up of recommendations' implementation.
- **The Research and Development Department:** The participation of the Research and Development Department is recommended, particularly for preparing and designing the PAC (e.g. for the formulation of the key issues of the PAC and the identification of appropriate consultants). Moreover, it is up to this department to ensure compliance with the methodological and technical standards of GIZ.
- **Partners:** The PAC process is conducted jointly with partners. The Regional Cooperation Council must ensure that partners are widely involved in the PAC, particularly with regard to the following activities:
  - Formulating the terms of reference for the consultants responsible for the PAC;
  - Selecting consultants;
  - Coordinating surveys with e-VAL and presenting its results;
  - Conducting the analysis and interviews necessary to achieve the PAC;
  - Participating in the PAC workshop;
  - Signing *aide memoires* at the end of the PAC;
  - Approving of the report on project advancement; and
  - Monitoring of the recommendations' implementation.

  During the PAC-LUCOP process the Ministry of Economy and Finance (through the Commission on Development) has been involved in the e-VAL survey, analyses and discussions, in the PAC workshop, and in report approval.
- **Target groups and intermediaries:** It is essential to consider the evaluations and concepts of the target groups. Whether or not the design of development activities is conducted close to the target group will influence the degree and mode of direct implication on these groups, and will effect decisions to utilize representatives of the target groups or intermediaries.

Completing the first e-VAL evaluation to prepare the PAC

The Regional Cooperation Council must ensure that an e-VAL survey is conducted before the PAC. The results of the e-VAL survey provide valuable information on the strengths and gaps of development activities as emphasized by survey respondents, on respondents' perceptions of stakeholder contributions, on similar or differing conceptions regarding the objectives that should be pursued and whether or not the evaluations are perceived as favourable. These results help identify the issues to be considered during the PAC, and contribute valuable elements for further processing of the issues.

E-VAL implies organizing and implementing surveys with all groups of stakeholders, submitting an evaluation to the e-VAL server and interpreting the data. The evaluation is recorded in a summarised interpretation report that is made available to the consultant before the start of the PAC and must be annexed to the report on project progress. The monitoring and evaluation mechanism provides information on the implementation, which enables a better understanding of the programme by the e-VAL evaluators.

The e-VAL process at LUCOP identified four categories of interviewees: political and implementation partners, other participants, the target group and the GIZ group (largely composed of staff working within LUCOP programme). This process has helped to assess the quality of the current situation and evolution, success criteria, activities, services and results achieved, the qualification of the design of the LUCOP, the framework conditions, the special themes of the GIZ, the OECD-DAC criteria, the themes and principles of quality of the GIZ, and the crosscutting themes. Recommendations that were made at the end of the interpretation reports were sent to the selected consultants. The monitoring and evaluation mechanism also brings forward important questions raised by e-VAL.

Preparing the terms of reference

Questions for examination during the PAC are based on information provided by monitoring e-VAL survey results, preliminary individual interviews and discussions within the project or programme team. The questions to be addressed are outlined in the terms of reference for the consultants responsible for the PAC.

Preliminary terms of reference should be developed in conjunction with the project team, partners, other stakeholders and potential target groups or their representatives. Coordination with the research and development department is also recommended. The Regional Cooperation Council submits this first version of the terms of reference to its hierarchical superiors for advice and consultation.

This was done during the process undertaken within the LUCOP. The programme team met to identify key issues to which responses were expected from the PAC process. Those responsible for monitoring and evaluating the programme were at the centre of all discussions; their participation ensured that the terms of reference were consistent with the evaluations of results-based monitoring.

Selecting and contracting the consultant

For PAC, selecting and contracting a consultant involves at least one independent person (a local or international expert). For complex development actions, it may be useful to call

upon several consultants. For the LUCOP, four experts were contracted, including an expert provided by the national level of the Niger Ministry of Economy and Finance. A team leader was appointed to ensure the coordination of the self-evaluation.

Compilation of documents, data and relevant information

Because consultants are not responsible for collecting data or information, the Regional Cooperation Council and other partners should provide consultants with relevant information and data prior to field missions. Doing so considerably reduces consultants' on-site work and increases efficiency. Nevertheless, it is generally useful for consultants to verify and supplement the information available to them and form their own ideas.

Within the framework of the LUCOP process, digital and hard-copy documents were provided to the consultant at the start of activities. Much of the information collection was done under regular follow-up activities based on the results, which ensured the provision of information at the level of each of the programme results indicators.

Organization on site

The Regional Cooperation Council ensures that all organizational conditions and logistics required for the optimal conduct of the mission are met before the execution of the PAC. In addition to coordinating with relevant parties and compiling relevant documents, the Regional Cooperation Council ensures that the following activities have been completed:

- Preparation of a provisional programme for the PAC, with a schedule of individual interviews, proposed meetings with groups, and project team meetings;
- Provision of transport facilities and, if necessary, appropriate accommodations;
- Organization of PAC workshops, including providing instructors and results documentation; and
- Delineation of the stages of preparation and ex-post processing to be coordinated with other actors.

Implementation

Start-up meeting and onsite analysis

The consultants' team leader is responsible for ensuring that stakeholders concerned are informed of the outcome of their preliminary analysis of the project documents, of follow-up data based on the results and of the e-VAL data interpretation report. This can be done during stakeholder meetings that validate the mission programme.

During the implementation of the LUCOP process, some questions were dealt with more in-depth during team discussions. For a better triangulation of data, the consultants opted for a combination of different data sources (e.g. more in-depth interviews, meetings, document analysis, onsite visits, interviews with the beneficiaries and their representatives and data collection from state institutions). Further, within the of LUCOP process consultants organized several meetings with officials from the Monitoring-Evaluation Programme in order to evaluate the data of monitoring results and on programming questions. The mechanisms of monitoring and evaluation provided data and analysis of methods and approaches used to collect data.

PAC workshop

Within the framework of an evaluation workshop, all actors analysed results and drew up conclusions for future work and planning of subsequent phases (if pursued). The LUCOP evaluation team designed this step with flexibility. The workshop was supervised by the representative of the ministry supervising the programme and allowed discussion of the consultants' analyses of results. The Monitoring and Evaluation Unit was commissioned to prepare and act as secretariat of the PAC workshop.

Preparing the *aide memoire*, the PAC report and other documents

The main results of the PAC have been documented in the form of a brief *aide memoire* written in French (following a requirement to use the language of the country concerned). The document was signed by the Head of the PAC, the Director Resident of GIZ and representatives of the Ministry of Economy and Finance (the oversight body of LUCOP).

The *aide memoire* addressed the following points: the theme of the PAC; proceedings and actors; evaluation of the current phase; recommendations for the current phase; and lessons and inputs. The Monitoring and Evaluation Unit received a copy of the *aide memoire* for comments and verification of accuracy. It also ensured that the *aide memoire* was disseminated to the team and stakeholders.

The consultants developed an interim PAC report in accordance with the plan provided by GIZ and made it available to partners.

Completion

Validation, dissemination and use of the results of the evaluation

The process of finalizing the PAC at LUCOP began after receiving the draft report of the evaluation. Those responsible for the programme distributed it to all stakeholders for their input. The Monitoring-Evaluation unit was mandated to consolidate remarks and observations and provide them to the consultants. Following several exchanges, a final report was submitted to the LUCOP programme, which was responsible for its dissemination at all levels. Summaries in French, English and German were prepared in order to contribute to knowledge management within GIZ.

Use of the results of the PAC

In order to learn from the results of the PAC, it is essential that the Regional Cooperation Council creates the conditions required for a systematic use of the reports and results of the PAC, including:

- Transmitting the PAC report to the persons or bodies involved in the PAC, in particular to partners under the responsibility of the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit commissioned by the head of the programme;
- Filing the PAC report and its summary with the GIZ document management system;
- Ensuring that the GIZ Office, the regional division or competent sectorial office, the evaluation office and the heads of products concerned at the research and development department are informed that the documents are available in the document management system;

- Ensuring that Regional Cooperation Council comments on lessons learned documented in the PAC report;
- Facilitating negotiations between the Regional Cooperation Council and the hierarchical management for implementing PAC recommendations;
- Ensuring that the LUCOP Monitoring and Evaluation Unit introduces questions raised by the PAC in internal and external programme discussions; and
- Assessing whether the meta-evaluation of LUCOP processes were in accordance with the guiding principles of the African evaluation.

Communication of the lessons learned and inputs

Knowledge dissemination is done through the documentation of acquisitions, transmission, their use by information technology systems and direct communications between staff members. This can take place during exchanges at country-level meetings between GIZ staff, workshops with partners, networking with other development cooperation institutions and donors, or by exchanging lessons learned through integrated GIZ sectorial networks.

When visiting GIZ headquarters, the Regional Cooperation Council should keep colleagues in the research and development department (e.g. coordinators of areas for priority action, product managers) and the regional department (e.g. geographical coordinators at headquarters) informed by holding meetings on lessons learned. The Regional Cooperation Council may also suggest using a symposium to make achievements accessible to a wider circle of participants.

TABLE 2. EXAMPLES OF RECOMMENDATIONS LUCOP TOOK INTO ACCOUNT

RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE PAC	DECISIONS TAKEN TO DATE
Transform the LUCOP into two programmes in order to better target the axes of support of German cooperation in Niger	Finalization of the programme scheduled for late 2011; preparation of two documents of projects on productive agriculture and support to decentralization.
Support decentralization and ensure the presence of the programme at the macro level in addition to the micro (municipal) level	Creation of the position of technical advisor on decentralization at the level of the headquarters of programme departments
For the communal infrastructure component, ensure the poor's access to basic socio-economic infrastructure	Lowering of the counterpart rate from 20 percent to 15 percent according to municipalities' financial capabilities
	Authorization to start work before payments are made

THE INPUT OF THE MONITORING AND EVALUATION IN THE USE OF THE EVALUATION OF LUCOP

Before conducting the PAC evaluation mission, the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit was commissioned to prepare data allowing it to input all indicators of the programme and to conduct a diachronic analysis of the programme's performance.

In addition, the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit is mandated to ensure the monitoring of recommendations of the PAC mission. The Unit schedules the meetings needed in order to make the necessary decisions regarding the evaluation's recommendations. The Monitoring and Evaluation Unit is also responsible for disseminating results to all stakeholders involved and presenting and explaining results to the monitoring and regional technical teams. The Monitoring and Evaluation unit presents the diachronics of the results from regular indicator monitoring, the results of the triangulation made by the evaluation, and then proposes guidance to either continue with the PAC or, for unsatisfactory results, to change the strategy for achieving results.

CONCLUSION

The role of a Monitoring and Evaluation Unit in conducting an evaluation and disseminating its results is not limited to producing information relevant to the evaluation. The units or individuals in charge of monitoring and evaluation functions ensure the:

- Consistency of the evaluation process;
- Analysis and the provision of vital information for the evaluation;
- Involvement of stakeholders and actions of development;
- Dissemination of the results of the evaluations to all stakeholders;
- Debate of the issues raised by the evaluation; and
- Conduct of the meta-evaluations to strengthen learning and innovation to improve subsequent processes.

The processes conducted by LUCOP gave good results due, among other factors, to the involvement and accountability of the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit.

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TANZANIA: THE IMPORTANCE OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION IN ACHIEVING NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES' TARGETS

BY EKINGO MAGEMBE

Poverty Monitoring Officer, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, Ministry of Finance

AND RAFAEL WAIDA

Deputy Director, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, Presidents' Office–Public Service Management

INTRODUCTION

The primary driver of poverty monitoring and evaluation in Tanzania is the Monitoring and Evaluation section in the Ministry of Finance. This section is one of two that form the Division of Poverty Eradication (the other section is Poverty Research and Analysis). This division was re-established as a full-fledged department in 2000 in order to monitor and evaluate all poverty alleviation strategies and initiatives in the country. Since then, it has produced reports for stimulating dialogue and informing policy-making processes.

While the words 'monitoring' and 'evaluation' are sometimes used interchangeably, the two functions are quite different. Monitoring is a continuous process that systematically collects data on specific indicators. Analysis of this data provides management, policy makers, legislators and citizens—the main stakeholders of development—with feedback on how the allocation of resources and priorities is related to the progress towards and achievement of policy and programme objectives. In contrast, evaluation is the systematic and objective assessment of the design, implementation and results of ongoing or completed projects, programmes or policies.

In recent years, demand for monitoring and evaluation activities in Tanzania has been increasing. This demand emerged after the inception of Tanzania Development Vision 2025, the 2000 poverty reduction strategy paper and the Joint Assistance Strategy for Tanzania.

EVOLUTION OF POVERTY MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Soon after attaining independence, Tanzania started implementing programmes and policies aimed at addressing three issues: poverty, ignorance and disease.

Monitoring and evaluation of poverty-related interventions were largely uncoordinated and *ad hoc* until the mid-1990s. There was also poor communication between data producers and users. However, a number of initiatives to establish an integrated poverty monitoring system emerged in the late 1990s, motivated by the ascendancy of the Tanzania Assistance Strategy, the Public Expenditure Review and the poverty reduction strategy paper. In addition, developing a list of Poverty and Welfare Monitoring Indicators created a strong ground for a more systematic approach to poverty monitoring.

RECENT EXPERIENCE IN POVERTY MONITORING AND EVALUATION

In 2001, the government developed a comprehensive Poverty Monitoring System. The system provided guidance for systematic data and information collection, research and analysis. Surveys, censuses and research were guided by a poverty reduction agenda through a set of consultatively developed indicators. The Poverty Monitoring System coordinated community-based organizations and research and academic institutions.

The 'Poverty and Human Development Report' is an innovative and coordinating instrument for research and analytical work from both academic and applied research and is a key output of the Poverty Monitoring System. Other outputs include household budget surveys, the Tanzania Demographic and Health Surveys, 'Views of the People' reports, annual reports and Millennium Development Goals reports.

The research findings provided considerable and instructive input to formulating the 'National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty'. Findings from the Household Budget Survey helped establish a poverty baseline for 2000–2001, and for the first time in a decade informed the government about changes in overall poverty levels and regional trends for many poverty indicators.

The 2005 poverty mapping down to the district level utilized findings from both the 2002 national Population and Housing Census and the Household Budget Survey. The district-level analysis addressed many poverty-related indicators, including basic needs and foods, primary school enrolment, infant and child health, literacy rates and water and sanitation. This analysis provided statistical evidence to policy makers on variations in development across Tanzania, and thus facilitated evidence-based development planning at national and local levels. The findings also significantly facilitated resource allocations using a formula-based system for local government authorities.

Analytical monitoring and evaluation work continues to raise and mainstream important facts and issues of concern. In the health sector, for example, findings from the 2004–2005 Tanzania Demographic and Health Survey show impressive improvements in mortality rates for infants (from 68 per 1,000 live births in 2004–2005 to 51 in 2009–2010) and children (from 112 per 1,000 live births in 2004–2005 to 81 in 2009–2010). The survey also demonstrated a significant improvement in access to reproductive health care, as measured by the proportion of births attended by skilled professionals. Although the number of attended births

increased from 36 percent in 1999 to 46 percent in 2004, it still falls short of the poverty reduction strategy paper target of 80 percent by 2010. These and other findings are playing an important role in policy formulation and decision-making processes and have catalysed progress in health services.

Monitoring activities have increasingly informed policy-making on important poverty-related issues, such as improving agricultural productivity and access to credit. Findings from the '2002–2003 Agricultural Sample Census Survey' revealed that only 3 percent of total smallholder area was under irrigation, and only 3 percent of smallholders had access to formal credit for agricultural purposes. In light of this evidence, various policy and programmatic interventions to improve the performance of the agricultural sector have been put in place. These include the expansion of irrigation schemes and provision of agricultural credit and inputs to smallholders.

Findings from studies, research and surveys, underpinned by credible monitoring and evaluation activities, have influenced policy formulation processes, including planning, budgeting and implementation systems. Findings from monitoring and evaluation activities have also significantly improved decision-making on national resource allocations, particularly related to the contributions of development partners in the General Budget Support since 2000. Currently, most development partners are channelling their support directly to the national budget; such confidence stems from improved monitoring and evaluation functions, which have enabled timely identification of gaps and implementation of correction measures.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION INITIATIVES IN OTHER GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS

In 2005, the Government of Tanzania realized that it needed to harmonize planning, monitoring and evaluation, and reporting for all government institutions. At the time, several reporting formats[22] and monitoring and evaluation systems were used by varying government institutions, which was found to be challenging and a waste of resources. For example, reporting requirements existed for the 'National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty', the 'Performance Assessment Framework Matrix' and the 'Ruling Party Election Manifesto'. The idea was to harmonize all such requirements into one format.

Such harmonization involved a review of government institutions' monitoring and evaluation systems in order to recognize and develop best practices. This exercise resulted in the 'Medium-Term Strategic Planning and Budgeting Manual', intended to provide guidance to regional and local government ministries, departments, agencies and authorities on how to prepare Strategic Plans and the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework, and on how to monitor and report on them. The manual also provides a set of instructions and processes on how to better implement directives found in the 'Medium-Term Plan and Budget Framework Guidelines for the Preparation of Medium-Term Plan and Budget Framework'. The strategic

22 Reporting is linked to monitoring and evaluation, given that once these functions are undertaken they need to be documented.

FIGURE 1. STRATEGIC PLANNING CYCLE

planning cycle is shown in Figure 1.

The 'Medium-Term Strategic Planning and Budgeting Manual' is a working document and a reference guide for the Tanzania Budget Guideline Committee when it reviews and produces the 'Guidelines' on an annual basis. The manual presents a full, detailed chapter on monitoring, evaluation and reporting that includes information on requirements by ministry, department and agency. The next stage, which the government has begun, is to finalize the manual and harmonize computerized monitoring and evaluation system to be used by all government institutions.

In addition to the initiatives that established poverty monitoring under the 'National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty' and monitoring system-related achievements, there have been several other endeavours that have strengthened government institutions' monitoring and evaluation systems. These initiatives included establishing monitoring and evaluation sections under the policy and planning divisions in all government institutions. This went hand-in-hand with a capacity-building effort of training the staff responsible for and in charge of monitoring and evaluation functions.

CHALLENGES AND THE WAY FORWARD

- Lack of staff capacity to undertake monitoring and evaluation functions is still a major challenge in almost all government institutions. The government needs to enhance its institutions' monitoring and evaluation capacity with qualified staff, support to monitoring and evaluation systems and working tools. The government also needs to fill gaps in institutions that have not yet filled monitoring and evaluation positions.

- Lack of an independent national evaluation institution to build the capacities of government staff or help the government employ evaluation as a learning process hampers efforts to strengthen monitoring and evaluation functions and uses. While evaluation in Tanzania is used to draw lessons for policies, programmes and projects, it is done by consultancy firms and research institutions. There is a critical need to establish a government institution to undertake evaluation functions.
- Finalizing the national monitoring and evaluation framework—an initiative that started over five years ago—is an important aspect that needs immediate action. Finalizing the framework will enhance monitoring and evaluation improvements across the Government of Tanzania.

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ANNEX 1: AGENDA

SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON NATIONAL EVALUATION CAPACITIES, 12–14 SEPTEMBER 2011, JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

DAY 1: MONDAY, 12 SEPTEMBER 2011		
8:00 - 9:00	**Registration**	
9:00 - 9:45	**Opening Session: Opening Remarks** MC: Ms. Azusa Kubota and Mr. Indran Naidoo Mr. Ben Mthembu, Chairperson, Public Service Commission of South Africa Mr. Agostinho Zacarias, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in South Africa Mr. Sean Phillips, Director General, Department of Performance monitoring and evaluation	
9:45- 10:00	**Recap of 2009 NEC conference** Mr. Juha Uitto, Deputy Director, Officer in Charge, UNDP Evaluation Office	
10:00 -10:45	**Conceptual Framework by the NEC Conference Advisory Group with inputs from UNDP Evaluation Office and Office of Public Service Commission: The Use of Evaluation** Chair: Ms. Ronette Engela Rapporteur: Mr. Roberto La Rovere Presention by Mr. Rachid Benmokhtar Benabdellah, President, Observatoire Nationale de Developmment Humain - member of the Advisory Group **Discussion**	
11:00 -13:00	**Plenary Session 1: Use of Evaluation for Public Policy and Programmes – challenges, factors and opportunities - country case studies I** Chair: Mr. Patrick Birungi Rapporteurs: Mr. Roberto La Rovere & Mr. Boureima Gado	
	India Ms. Sudha Pillai	'Role of Evaluation in 5-year planning in India'
	Sri Lanka Mr. Velayuthan Sivagnanasothy	'Role of evaluation in influencing the policy – a Sri Lankan perspective'
	South Africa Mr. Indran Naidoo	'The use question in South Africa: examples and lessons from the Public Service Commission of South Africa'
	Colombia Mr. Walter Mauricio Aguilar and Mr. Diego Dorado Hernandez (via video)	'Effective evaluations: processes to advocate for changes in public policy'

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="6">14:30
-15:45</td><td colspan="4">Panels in Parallel</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Panel 1: Systemic factors contributing to use of evaluation
Chair: Mr. Seydou Yayé
Rapporteur: Mr. Marco Segone</td><td colspan="2">Panel 2: Impact of audits and budgeting in evaluation
Chair: Ms. Thania de la Garza Navarrete
Rapporteur: Mr. Dieudonne Mouafo</td></tr>
<tr><td>Benin
Mr. Aristide Djidjoho</td><td>‘Use of evaluation and development in a national assessment: the case of Benin’</td><td>Brazil
Ms. Selma Maria Hayakawa C. Serpa</td><td>‘Promoting accountability and enhancing programs and policies through the instrumental use of the evaluations carried out by the Brazilian Court of Audit’</td></tr>
<tr><td>India
Mr. Prajapati Trivedi</td><td>‘Indian Experience with the Performance monitoring and evaluation System for Government Departments’</td><td rowspan="2">Morocco
Mr. Mohammed Chafiki (recording)</td><td rowspan="2">‘Gender responsive budgeting as a tool for public policy evaluation’</td></tr>
<tr><td>Guatemala
Mr. Henry Morales</td><td>‘Multi-stakeholder participatory evaluation systems in the field of public policy: a case study of Guatemala’</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Q&A Discussion</td><td colspan="2">Q&A Discussion</td></tr>
<tr><td>16:00
- 17:00</td><td colspan="4">Reporting Session & Wrap-up
Chair: Ms. Nadira El Guermai
Rapporteurs: All Day 1 Rapporteurs</td></tr>
<tr><td>17:00</td><td colspan="4">Meeting of Steering Group (for Chairs and Rapporteurs for Day 1)</td></tr>
<tr><td>17:30</td><td colspan="4">Kiosk Presentation - display of publications and evaluation materials by participants (running before and in parallel with Cocktail)</td></tr>
<tr><td>18:45</td><td colspan="4">Group Photo</td></tr>
<tr><td>19:00
- 21:00</td><td colspan="4">Cocktail hosted by the Office of the Public Service Commission
Remarks by the host: Mr. Mashwahle Diphofa, Director General, Office of the Public Service Commission</td></tr>
</table>

DAY 2: TUESDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER 2011				
9:00 -12:00 (10:00 break for 15 min)	**Plenary Session 2: Use of Evaluation for Public Policy and Programmes - challenges, factors and opportunities - country case studies II** Chair: Mr. Velayuthan Sivagnanasothy Rapporteur: Mr. Roberto La Rovere & Ms. Riitta Oksanen			
	China Mr. Yonghe Zheng	'The roles of users in enhancing utility of evaluation with special reference to the international evaluation on the funding and management performance of the national Natural Science Foundation of China"		
	Uganda Mr. Albert Byamugisha	'Giving national direction through evaluation: Uganda's evaluation of its Poverty Eradication Action Plan (1997-2007)'		
	Morocco Mr. Mohamed Benkassmi & Mr.Mohammed Mouime	'Observatoire National du Développement Humain information system - ONDH for the evaluation of human development public policy'		
	Mexico Ms. Hortensia Perez	'Key elements of evaluation as a decision-making tool: the specific performance evaluation experience in Mexico'		
	Brazil Ms. Junia Quiroga	'The evaluation system of the Ministry of Social Development and the Fight Against Hunger: strengths and weaknesses in the use of evaluation results in decision-making for social programs'		
13:30 - 15:00	**Panel 3: Monitoring and how it facilitates use of evaluation** Chair: Mr. Armando J. Vieira Filho Rapporteur: Ms. Ana Rosa Soares & Mr. Babacar Mbaye		**Panel 4: Establishing evaluation systems, taking use of evaluation into account** Chair: Ms. Katongo S.M Chifwepa Rapporteur: Ms. Soma de Silva	
	Dominican Republic Ms. Hernan Rodriguez Minier	'Dominican Republic experience in the design and implementation of a monitoring system as community methodology to measure progress and impacts of the Millennium Development Goals and National Development Strategy'	**Chile** Mr. Ryan Cooper	'Compass Commission, Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab'
			Costa Rica Ms. Ana Morice	'Assessing the impact of strategies to reduce child mortality: The experience of Costa Rica'
	Malawi Mr. Ronald Mangani	'The use of evaluation in managing for development results: evidence from Malawi'	**Malaysia** Ms. Shahrazat Haji Ahmad	'Use of evaluation: Malaysia experiences'
	Niger Mr. Seydou Yayé	'The process of Project Advancement Control of the International German Cooperation: the case of the PAC Programme to Combat Poverty in Niger (LUCOP)'	**Mauritania** Mr. Mohamed Fadel	'Using evaluation in decision-making for public policies and development programs: The case of Mauritania'

15:15 - 17:00 cont'd	**Tajikistan** Mr. Bahodir Eshboev	'Strategic development goals and priorities of the Republic of Tajikistan: national monitoring and evaluation system for their achievements'	**Mongolia** Mr. Darinchuluun Bazarvaani	'Evaluation of the MDG-based comprehensive National Development Strategy implementation and utilizing the evaluation results'
	Tanzania Mr. Ekingo Magembe	'The importance of monitoring and evaluation in achieving national development policies and programmes' targets'	**Kazakhstan** Mr. Farkhat Kassimov	'Government performance evaluation, the Kazakhstani case: experience, challenges, immediate outcomes and future prospects'
	Q&A Discussion		**Q&A Discussion**	
DAY 3: WEDNESDAY, 14 SEPTEMBER 2011				
9:00 - 12:30	**Plenary: Towards a longer-term initiative on national evaluation capacity: What is the way forward?** Discussion on implications for country cases and way forward Chair: Mr. Juan Manuel Cordero Rapporteurs: Ms. Hortensia Perez & Ms. Ana Rosa Soares Recap of emerging issues and lessons from Day 1 and 2 by Session Chairs and Rapporteurs			
12:30 - 13:00	**Closing Session: Closing Remarks** MCs: Ms. Azusa Kubota & Mr. Indran Naidoo Mr. Mashwahle Diphofa, Director General, Office of the Public Service Commission Mr. Ernest Fausther, Officer in Charge, UNDP Johannesburg Regional Service Center Mr. Juha Uitto, Deputy Director, Officer in Charge, UNDP Evaluation Office			

ANNEX 2: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

COUNTRY	NAME	TITLE	INSTITUTION
PARTICIPANTS			
Benin	Ambroise Codjo Agbota	Ingénieur Agronome - Expert en analyse de la pauvreté	Coordonnateur de l'Assistance Technique Locale en Appui à l'Observatoire du Changement Social / Ministère du Développement, de l'Analyse Economique et de la Prospective
	Aristide Djidjoho	Coordonnateur	Bureau d'Evaluation des Politiques Publiques, et Assistant du Ministre d'Etat
Brazil	Armando J. Vieira Filho	Secretary of Strategic Actions	Presidency of Brazil
	Marcia Joppert	Directora General	Agencia Brasileira de Avaliacao rede Brasileira de M&E
	Junia Quiroga	Evaluation Director	Ministry of Social Development and the Fight against Hunger
	Selma Maria Hayakawa C. Serpa	Head	Evaluation and Performance Audit Department, Brazilian Court of Audit
Chile	Ryan Cooper	Executive Director	J-Pal centre Latin American, Universidad Catolica
	Andres Hernando	Studies Division Chief	Ministry of Planning
China	Yonghe Zheng	Deputy Director General	Bureau of Planning, National Natural Science, Foundation of China
Colombia	Diego Dorado Hernandez (via video)	Director Evaluacion Sinergia	Departamento Nacional de Planeacion
	Walter Mauricio Aguilar (via video)	Public Policies Evaluation	Directorate of National Planning Department of Colombia

COUNTRY	NAME	TITLE	INSTITUTION
Costa Rica	Juan Manuel Cordero Gonzalez	Vice-Ministro	Vice-Ministro de Trabajo y Seguridad Social, Gobierno de Costa Rica
	Melania Nunez	Viceministra	Planificación Nacional y Polítca Económica * Contributed a paper but did not participate in person
	Ana Morice	Technical Director	Costa Rican Institute for Reasearch in Health and Nutrition
Dominican Republic	Marco Vinicio Espinal Martínez	Coordinador de Planificancion	Monitoring and evaluation, National Competitiveness Council
	Enrique Rodriguez Hernan Minier	Encargado de Seguimiento y Evaluación	Programa Conjunto para el Fortalecimiento de la Cadena de Valor del Banano Mediante el Crecimiento de Mercados Inclusivos, Consejo Nacional de Competitividad
Guatemala	Edwin Wilfredo Cabnal Hernández	Consultor GIS-SINIT	National Planning Secretariat
	Henry Morales	Coordinador	Movimiento Tzuk Kim Pop
India	Sudha Pillai	Member Secretary	Planning Commission
	Prajapati Trivedi	Secretary	Performance Management Division, Cabinet Secretariat
Kazakhstan	Musagulova Assel	Head of Public Service Division	Agency on Civil Service
	Farkhat Kassimov	Head of the Government Institutions Evaluation Department	Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Kazakhstan
	Zholdybekov Kuat	Senior Expert	Government Institutions' Evaluation Centre
Malawi	Emma Mabvumbe	Deputy Director	Budget Division, Ministry of Finance
	Ronald Mangani	Senior Lecturer	Department of Economics, Chancellor College, University of Malawi
	Macleod Muyepa	Deputy Director	Ministry of Finance and Development Planning
Malaysia	Shahrazat Binti Haji Ahmad	Deputy Director	Implementation Coordination Unit, Evaluation Office, Prime Minister's Office
Mauritania	Mohamed Fadel	Vice-Président	Association Mauritanienne de Suivi-Evaluation
	Cheikh Ould Abdallahi Ould Zeidane	Directeur des Stratégies et Politiques	Ministère des Affaires Economiques et du Développement
Mexico	Thania de la Garza Navarette	Directora General Adjunta de Evaluacion	Consejo Nacional de Evaluación de la Política de Desarrollo Social
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Mongolia	Darinchuluun Bazarvaani	Director of Monitoring and Evaluation Department	Cabinet Secretariat Government of Mongolia
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	Mohammed Chafiki (via video)	Head of the Direction of Studies and Forecasts	Ministry of Economy and Finance
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Niger	Boureima Gado	Président	Réseau Nigérien de Suivi et Evaluation
	Seydou Yayé	Directeur de l'Evaluation, Ministère du Plan	l'Amenagement du Territoire et Developpement Communautaire
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	Thierno Niane	Coordinator	Unité de Coordination et de Suivi de la Politique Economique
South Africa	Ray Basson	Board Member	South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association
	Ian Goldman	Deputy Director General project coordination	Performance Monitoring and Evaluation, the Presidency
	Paul Helepi	Commissioner	Public Service Commission of South Africa
	Singata Mafanya	Commissioner	Public Service Commission of South Africa
	Ben Mthembu	Chairperson	Public Service Commission of South Africa
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	Sean Phillips	Director General	Performance Monitoring and Evaluation, the Presidency
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	Velayuthan Sivagnanasothy	Secretary	Ministry of Traditional Industries and Small Enterprise Development

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South Africa	Ronette Engela	Deputy Director General: Data Systems	Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation, Republic of South Africa
* For a full list of the Advisory Group, see: <http://www.undp.org/evaluation/workshop/nec/2011/advisors.html>			
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AfrEA	Florence Etta	President	African Evaluation Association (AfrEA)
RMIT University	Patricia Rogers	Professor of Public Sector Evaluation	Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, University, Australia
UN-Habitat	Martin Barugahare	Chief	Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, Office of the Executive Director

COUNTRY	NAME	TITLE	INSTITUTION
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	Noqobo N. Gcwabe	Administrative Associate	Office of the Public Service Commission
	Ricardo Mahlakanya	Communications	Office of the Public Service Commission
	Mpho Ngoasheng	Administrative Associate	Office of the Public Service Commission
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	Azusa Kubota	Evaluation Specialist	UNDP Evaluation Office
	Roberto La Rovere	Evaluation Specialist	UNDP Evaluation Office
	Ana Rosa Soares	Evaluation Specialist	UNDP Evaluation Office

ANNEX 3: CONFERENCE ASSESSMENT

Questionnaires were collected from 50 respondents out of nearly 90 conference participants. The following are the findings:

SUBJECT MATTER

The results show a general **high appreciation** for the theme and conference structure. Seventy-two percent of respondents answered that they were "very satisfied" with the conference overall. The majority of participants indicated that all three conference objectives were "achieved" (see Question 1). The conference theme 'use of evaluation', was primarily found to be "very relevant" to national evaluation capacities (see Question 2). The majority also found the sub-themes of 'systemic factors contributing to use of evaluation and establishing evaluation systems' "very relevant." However, 'impact of audits and budgeting and monitoring' and 'how it facilitates use of evaluation' were both considered 50 percent "relevant." Some respondents found them altogether "irrelevant" or did not comment on them.

STRUCTURE:

The plenary presentation method was reported as the most valuable (34 percent) method of subject delivery. However, many (28 percent) valued the combination of methods. Regarding the panels that were held in parallel, respondents suggested providing videos of all presentations at the conference close so that participants could listen to all presentations. Although most reported that they were "somewhat satisfied" or higher with sessions lengths, they commented that there could have been more time for networking and breaks in between sessions to absorb all of the information. Most respondents found the kiosks facility to be "somewhat satisfying." Conference resources were viewed positively, with most participants rating them "very satisfactory."

QUESTION 1: WERE THE FOLLOWING CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES, AS DESCRIBED IN THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK, ACHIEVED?	EXCEEDED EXPECTATIONS	ACHIEVED OBJECTIVE	DID NOT ACHIEVE OBJECTIVE	N/A
Share experiences—challenges and opportunities in use of evaluation for public policies and programmes—from countries with different levels of development of national monitoring and evaluation systems, including those that may be considering creating one and have important experiences with other types of evaluation efforts	40%	60%	0%	0%
Identify lessons and constraints in implementing national monitoring and evaluation systems with a focus on use of evaluation	28%	72%	0%	0%
Identify supply and demand for technical assistance in strengthening institutional capacity for national use of evaluation under the umbrella of South-South and triangular cooperation	22%	54%	20%	4%

QUESTION 2: HOW RELEVANT DID YOU FIND THE CONFERENCE THEMES AND SUB-THEMES?	VERY RELEVANT	RELEVANT	SOMEWHAT RELEVANT	IRRELEVANT	N/A
The use of evaluation	72%	26%	2%		
Systemic factors contributing to the use of evaluation	64%	32%	4%		
Impact of audits and budgeting in evaluation	28%	50%	16%	2%	4%
Monitoring and how it facilitates the use of evaluation	38%	50%	10%		2%
Establishing evaluation systems, taking the use of evaluation into account	62%	34%	4%		

Participants at the Second International Conference on National Evaluation Capacities
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