

## 21. KENYA

# CREDIBILITY OF EVALUATION: THE KENYAN CASE

**SAMSON MASESE MACHUKA**

Director, Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate  
Ministry of Devolution and Planning, the Presidency

**JENNIFER MUTUA**

M&E Specialist, Chair of Evaluation Society of Kenya  
and East African Region Board Member of  
the African Evaluation Association

### INTRODUCTION

Kenya is implementing 'Kenya Vision 2030', a long-term plan that seeks to create a cohesive, equitable and just society based on democratic principles. This aspiration is built on the framework of economic, social and political pillars. One of the strategies that the Government of Kenya uses to achieve this is through the promotion of good governance and accountability using the national M&E system coordinated by the Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate domiciled in the Ministry of Devolution and Planning.

This strategy is further supported by the Kenya Constitution 2010 that was promulgated on 27 August 2010. The Constitution provides for the devolution of governance to the county level, transparency, fair representation in parliament, separation of powers and an independent judiciary, among other important pillars that are to be informed by a well-functioning evaluation system.

The national M&E system was established in 2004 through a multi-stakeholder effort to track the implementation of policies, programmes and projects at all levels of governance. Development partners that helped establish the system include UN bodies, the United Kingdom's Department for International Development and the World Bank. Significantly, the government provides an annual budgetary allocation to support national M&E system operations. The system is operated under the strategic direction of a National Steering Committee that is chaired by the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Devolution and Planning, which

includes stakeholders from the government, development partners and civil society civil society organizations.

At its formation, the system aimed at encouraging the culture and practice for M&E and at promoting accountability in order to enhance public service delivery. The national M&E system is also expected to provide timely and reliable feedback to budgetary preparation processes through the preparation of M&E reports such as the Ministerial Monitoring and Evaluation Report, Ministerial Public Expenditure Review and the Annual Progress Report. Results from the national M&E system were to also provide evidence on the effectiveness of government programmes and projects by ensuring the active participation of entities such as civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations, academia and the private sector.

The national M&E system has five basic components that include:

1. Capacity development and policy coordination to manage evaluation and to make revisions to the implementation of the framework;
2. Development of qualitative and quantitative integrated data-acquisition and data-management frameworks to support research and evaluation of results;
3. Research and results analysis that interrogates key report findings as a basis of informing policy and budgetary issues;
4. Enhanced project M&E systems at the central and devolved levels that supports public values and results-based service delivery, and is supported by an electronic project management information system; and
5. Integrated dissemination and communication mechanisms for sharing evaluation results and findings with a feedback mechanism. It also supports sharing reports on the government's national and global commitments to a wide cross-section of stakeholders, and endeavours to strengthen partnership engagement with the government, non-governmental actors and development partners for the effective use of M&E information.

## MAIN CONTENT

National M&E system operations and implementation are guided by Technical Advisory Groups, teams of experts drawn from the government, non-governmental organizations and development partners. Notwithstanding this support, the national M&E system is challenged by weak capacities and M&E culture. In order to strengthen these capacities, the Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate renewed its efforts to involve non-state actors in refining its national M&E framework. Members were drawn from civil society organizations, UN agencies, the private sector and the Evaluation Society of Kenya.

The national M&E system operates at both the national and devolved levels. At the national level, the framework exists in all the 18 ministries that form the national government structure. At the devolved level, committees exist in all 47 counties. The county committees have the flexibility of devolving to lower-level structures that are closer to the communities.

The framework is expected to provide a transparent platform by which government and development partners can undertake shared appraisal of results.

With coordination from the Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate, second generation national M&E indicators have been consultatively developed, reviewed and revised. The capacities for using the indicators to track progress in order to provide evidence to decision makers still needs strengthening at the individual and institutional levels. The lack of capacities has led the Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate to conduct periodic M&E trainings for national and subnational staff. Similarly, the Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate closely collaborated with UN Women to develop gender-specific and gender-sensitive indicators for the second medium-term plan.

Since 2004, the Government of Kenya has used the national M&E system to regularly produce Annual Progress Reports and Public Expenditure Reviews. These reports have been useful in providing information for designing service provision policies and during the budget-making process, by informing the quantum of allocations for each sector. Products of the national M&E system are also a reservoir of knowledge and learning, useful for refining policies supporting the achievement of Kenya Vision 2030 objectives.

Through a multi-stakeholder effort, particularly with support from the World Bank and the German Development Agency, Kenya undertook a public expenditure-tracking survey in the ministries of agriculture, health and education. Since 2004, the Ministry of Health has conducted five public expenditure-tracking surveys in the health sector.

The public expenditure-tracking surveys conducted by the Ministry of Health have been done on “delays and leakages of funds” and on the “trends and flow of funds and commodities.” Information derived from the public expenditure-tracking surveys has been essential for the analysis of Public Expenditure Reviews and for identifying leakages and inefficiencies in the system. Public expenditure-tracking survey analysis has been useful in providing information to strengthen the systems of funds transfers, which has increased transparency and accountability in decision-making.

The public expenditure-tracking surveys have also provided evidence on the differences in performance across facilities and influenced the improvement of many procedures, including the removal of several redundant stages of central-level approval and authorization processes prior to distributing notifications of Authority to Incur Expenditures, the issuing of cheques that accompany the Authority to Incur Expenditures, the introduction of the 10/20 policy on cost-sharing, changes in the KEMSA distribution system (pull/push system) and the direct transfer of funds to rural health facilities.

Another innovation in which the Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate is involved in is the coordination of the Kenya Community of Practice on Managing for Development Results initiative. This continent-wide initiative on managing for development results is being spearheaded by the African Development Bank. One of its key innovations is the involvement of civil society organizations and the private sector in a public sector-led initiative, with a special focus on regional integration.

The Evaluation Society of Kenya is able to connect with the African Evaluation Association and the International Organisation for Co-operation in Evaluation/United Nations Children's

Fund-led EvalPartners Global initiative. This peer-to-peer learning is based on regional and global synergies that strengthen country-led M&E efforts. It is expected that collaborations between the Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate and the Evaluation Society of Kenya will add value to the implementation of the national M&E system through peer learning and experience sharing.

Similarly, the Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate has been involved in a South-South learning initiative; the Directorate hosted delegations from Sudan, Somalia and the Republic of South Africa, which came to study the institutional arrangements and operational structures of the national M&E system. The delegation from the Republic of South Africa was also interested in learning about how parliament uses M&E information.

The Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate, in close collaboration with other stakeholders, finalized an M&E policy designed to guide the national M&E system's implementation. The draft policy addresses the issue of implementation and coordination with the aim of improving management for development results. A well-coordinated M&E system is expected to improve performance in the execution of public programmes and projects in the country.

This policy will also focus on both state and non-state actors engaged in development activities in the country. It emphasizes building strong linkages with all stakeholders, including Kenyan citizens, to improve reporting and feedback mechanisms in all development aspects. It is expected that a working M&E system will ensure efficiency in utilizing resources to effectively realize results and, hence, to accelerate development. It also espouses the importance of results-based management, transparency, accountability and efficiency as fundamental principles for managing all public programmes and projects in Kenya.

In line with what is espoused in the policy, and as one of the innovations to straighten M&E capacities, the Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate is collaborating with the Evaluation Society of Kenya in professionalizing M&E practices in the country. This close collaboration was evidenced when the Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate and the Evaluation Society of Kenya co-hosted the inaugural National M&E Week in November 2012. Collaborations with the Evaluation Society of Kenya are expected to continue, especially in capacity-building efforts.

## CONCLUSIONS

A recent national M&E system needs assessment and capacity analysis revealed that after more than eight years of operations, the country still lagged in uptake of M&E culture and practices. The report revealed the need to strengthen capacities for individuals and institutions, and recommended identifying high-level political champions to lend political weight for M&E uptake and increased funding to support devolved-level operations.

Plans are underway to address weaknesses in the supply and demand for evaluation by identifying and commissioning strategic programme evaluations to inform evidence-based decision-making. The Evaluation Society of Kenya, among other stakeholders, is expected to play a role in this by providing professional input into the processes.

## REFERENCES

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