

THE ROLE AND PERSPECTIVES OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION IN UGANDA

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The Lecture is structured under the following areas:

- The current institutional context underpinning and driving supply and demand for M&E.
- The ongoing public sector reforms which have an impact on the supply and demand for M&E;
- The current implementation of M&E in the government and civil society;
- The use of M&E information for accountability and governance by the various stakeholders;
- The role of Makerere University in Monitoring and Evaluation capacity building; and
- Professionalization of evaluation

Analytical framework

The analytical framework focuses on four main areas of Monitoring and Evaluation:

- **Planning, Budgeting and Monitoring** - Relates to **internal control** by managers, policy and budget makers as well as by institutional and administrative bodies such as the Office of the Auditor General or the Inspectorate of the Government.
- **Accountability** - Relates to political and social accountability, that is ,**external control** by parliament, civil society and the media,

Continuation of analytical framework

- **Research and learning** – Relates to capitalization on experiences and research, in order to improve the knowledge and comprehension of the context and mechanisms that constrain and enable societal change and development.
- **Democratic Governance** – Relates to the management of societal affairs in accordance with the universal principles of democracy as a system of rule that maximizes popular consent and participation, the legitimacy and accountability of rules, and the responsiveness of the latter to the expressed interests and needs of the public.

Stakeholders

The parliament, CSOs, the Press, MDAs, Universities and/or policy makers use performance data in their daily activities. Performance data is used by **managers** in the public service and **policy makers** to facilitate planning, budgeting and monitoring functions to:

- Inform policy and decision-making in a timely manner,
- Formulate the budget and monitor expenditures, and
- Ensure that processes are efficient and operates according to the existing laws, regulations and procedures.

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- By **research centres and departments and training institutions** to improve local knowledge and understanding of the social mechanisms that link inputs, outputs and outcomes (Learning) and transfer this new and locally produced knowledge to practitioners.
- By **multilateral institutions** to enhance fiscal capability and also enforce commitment to accountability, transparency and a poverty focus in the implementation of the public budget.

Historical Context

- In the 1990s, the Government of Uganda (GoU) made progress in developing its M&E structures.
- Data was produced and used for assessing and informing public policy during the first Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP – the Uganda Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper), from 1997 to 2000.
- The need for data and statistics, as well as for monitoring and evaluation strategies, has since then developed.

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- The Poverty Monitoring Unit (PMU) was created within the MoFPED. PMU provided biannual poverty status reports, informed by data from household surveys, Participatory Poverty Assessments (PPA), and Management Information Systems (MIS) of line ministries.
- In 2000, the PMU, was renamed Poverty Monitoring and Analysis Unit (PMAU). The PMAU provided both qualitative and quantitative analyses on poverty in urban and rural areas and to question the changes in poverty patterns following the implementation of poverty reduction policies.

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- In 2000, government and donors developed a result-oriented framework which serve as a plan for government action and support for disbursement decisions.
- Also, government introduced a Result-Oriented Management (ROM) process to encourage sectors such as Transport and Infrastructures, Education, Water and Sanitation and Health to set up indicators and output targets in order to review and monitor their performance.

Public service reforms

- Public service reforms (PSR) have continued since the early 1990s. The first phase of the PSR, from 1991 to 1997, focused on downsizing, “rightsizing” and restructuring.
- Result-Oriented Management processes were introduced during the second phase, from 1997 to 2002, but without much impact until the third phase was launched, the Public Service Reform Programme of 2005-2010.

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- The Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) launched a National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy (NIMES) in direct line with the ROM process.
- The NIMES was a framework for Monitoring and Evaluation of the performance of poverty reduction policies created to harmonize the different data sources (e.g. line ministries) and coordinate the different M&E frameworks that had been established for the numerous conditional grants and donor projects.
- The framework gained more importance particularly for coordination and monitoring as the number of development agencies providing budget support increased.

From Poverty analysis to budget monitoring

- In recent years, there has been a shift towards budget and outcome monitoring. Two possible reasons can account for this shift:
- The outcomes featuring in the PRSC matrix were difficult to monitor and did not provide useful means to inform disbursement decisions, justifying the subsequent preference for output indicators linked to clearly defined actions, which permitted better monitoring and control.

- Concerns about financial accountability in public spending.
- The MoFPED introduced reforms such as output-based budgeting to enable MDAs as well as local governments to plan and budget according to clear procedures, and against the provision of clearly stated outputs.

Legal framework and institutions

- Several institutions in Uganda ensure the performance of the government and the quality of service delivery. Their functions and responsibilities are defined in the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda and in the subsequent acts:
 - Local Government Act of 1997,
 - Budget Act of 2001,
 - National Planning Authority Acts of 2002, and
 - Public Financial and Accountability Act of 2003, among others.

- The need for clarity in defining the role of each of these institutions is an issue that is regularly raised in evaluation reports and has been further emphasized in the National Development Plan (NDP) of 2010.
- The current efforts to roll out the National M&E Policy Framework for M&E are intended to resolve such challenges.

Main institutions for planning, budgeting and monitoring in Uganda.

- **The National Planning Authority (NPA):** the NPA was established in 2002 by the National Planning Authority Act. It is in charge of coordinating national and decentralized development planning, and is mandated to develop, coordinate, manage and evaluate the frameworks and strategies for national development planning.

- **The Office of the Prime Minister (OPM):** the OPM is responsible for monitoring Government performance and has to report on its performance to the Cabinet every six months and annually to the parliament.

- **The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED):** is responsible for resource mobilization, for the formulation of national budgets, for financial accountability (which falls under the responsibility of the *Office of the Accountant General*) and for the disbursement of resources for budget monitoring and reporting.

Arrangements for Monitoring & Evaluation

- The **NPA** ensures that institutions of Government contribute to M&E through the development of performance indicators coherent with the NDP.
- The NPA is also in charge of producing the Annual National Development Report which summarizes the progress towards the goals of the NDP. This report is presented to the parliament.

- The **Office of the Prime Minister** has a department for M&E (directorates of Policy Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation), whose function is to coordinate national evaluation activities. The National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy falls under this department.

- In 2008, the **Budget Monitoring and Accountability Unit (BMAU)** was established within the **Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development** to enhance monitoring efforts geared towards effective implementation of government programmes according to the Budget.

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- All MDAs and Local Governments have to report quarterly on their budget performances (outputs and expenditures) to the BMAU.
- Based on these reports, the BMAU undertakes field visits and audits to verify the veracity of the reported performances.

Performance-based contracting and management

- The Government has strengthened the ROM programme. The ROM approach rests on results framework for every MDA and LG.
- All sector Budget Framework Papers are now supposed to be “ROM-compliant”

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- In 2010, Performance Contracts (PCs) were introduced for the Permanent Secretaries of the MoLG and MoPS.
- The PCs should be signed every year between Permanent Secretaries of all the Ministries and the Head of the Public Service;

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- Between the Permanent Secretary of the MoLG and Town Clerks in Municipalities or Chief Administrative Officers in the Districts.
- Districts' performance is assessed according to three categories: "reward", "static", "penalty".
- Based on this assessment, financial rewards or sanctions are applied to the different LGs.

Accountability

- The role of the Auditor General's office is defined in the 1995 Constitution.
- Annually, the Auditor General submits to the Parliament a report of the accounts he/she has audited.
- The OAG also carries out one or two Value for Money (VFM) audits annually. This enables the Parliament to have a more accurate view on whether or not output targets are met.

- In Parliament, the Public Account Committee (PAC) audits reports from the Auditor General and other institutions and holds government accountable for its decisions.
- This committee is complemented by the Local Government Account in charge of holding Local Governments accountable.

Civil society, press freedom and transparency

- The Constitution and the Acts provide for civil society participation in decision making .
- Several NGOs foster local participation in a Community Based Monitoring and Evaluation System (CBMES) in more than 10 districts, based on a network of more than 6000 community monitors.

- The Constitution, reinforced by the Access to Information Act of 2005, provides a right to every citizen to access any information in the possession of the state.
- This creates public pressure, through the media, on government to deliver efficient and effective services.

Existing capacity for M&E

- There is an established monitoring practice in Uganda based on quarterly budget monitoring reports and annual sector reviews.
- There are a few MDAs which have conducted evaluations and can rely on their staff to do it.
- The OPM in 2008 **launched** an evaluation of the PEAP (1997-2007) but the most part of the evaluation was sub-contracted to external consultants.

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- Similarly, most of the evaluations conducted at the sector or national level have largely been donor funded or rely on external technical assistance.
- Though there is interest at the highest political level for evidence-based decision making and evaluation, the current evaluation capacity in Uganda is weak, and varies widely across ministries and departments in the government.

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- Evaluation practice in the government is constrained due to weak demand and incentive for use.
- More training and understanding by decision makers at central and local (district) levels might contribute to increased demand for evaluation.

Remaining Challenges

- The regular evaluation of public policies and programmes is also sparse, with the majority commissioned and managed by Development Partners, not Government.
- Existing coverage of public investments by evaluation is estimated at approximately ten per cent.
- Hence lessons whether investments are successful or not are not being learned, and hence policy making is not benefiting from evidence.

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- Government lacks clear expectations in respect of evaluations and their use, or meaningful incentives for undertaking them.
- In this respect, there is no systematic and well established requirement for evaluation as part of policy, management and accountability processes in the government of Uganda.

Government M&E policy framework

- At policy level, the government M&E policy framework paper has been discussed by cabinet.
- The M&E policy will make it compulsory that new policy initiatives or significant changes to existing policies are supported by evaluation and this will generate strong institutional M&E demand within government.

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- The policy will provide government MDAs with operational direction and conceptual clarity in terms of what is evaluation, why it is important, for which purposes, who does what, etc.

Monitoring and Evaluation capacity development initiatives

- There is a need for training and capacity building in M&E in Uganda and there are opportunities for local monitoring and evaluation capacity building at the universities and institutes.
- A few existing institutions has competences in training M&E practitioners.

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- At Makerere University, there a number of academic programs with courses and/or modules that link to evaluation such as program and project management, economics, econometrics, statistics, sociology, anthropology as well as research offered to both undergraduate and graduate students.
- These students could be offered a module in evaluation methods (quantitative and qualitative) as a strategy for increasing scope.

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- Partnerships and collaboration with the University in efforts to build capacity for M&E in Uganda are critical.
- The main challenge remains to transfer this knowledge to monitors and evaluators, so as to form a critical mass of "professional evaluators" for Uganda, which requires a well organised training curriculum as well as practice opportunities especially in evaluation.

Professionalizing M&E in Uganda

- At the international level, a number of Ugandan M&E professionals have benefited from the IPDET training program in Canada.
- Associations such as the International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation, the European Evaluation Association Society , and the International Development Evaluation Association (IDEAS) also provide opportunities for the strengthening of institutions, organizations and individuals' evaluation capacity.

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- At the regional level, the African Evaluation Association (AfrEA) is an association of M&E associations and networks in Africa.
- Both their website and conferences are used as a forum for capacity building and an opportunity for sharing knowledge and experiences on evaluation from which good practices and lessons can be identified and used to professionalize evaluation.

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- At the local level, the Ugandan Evaluation Association (UEA) has the potential to provide ongoing professional networking and evaluation capacity development.
- It can also be a forum where evaluation professionals meet and share information and good practices on evaluation in addition to organizing short courses on topics of interest to its members.

Thank you very much