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PROJECT AND CONTENT TEAM

Project Manager: Cara Waller, Twende Mbele

Editor: Parfait Kasongo, Twende Mbele

Composition and Design: Roy Wasonga, CreativeBox

IMPACT

SUMMARY



The Twende Mbele programme is a partnership of national governments who are seeking to use M&E to strengthen results for citizens through a country-owned, peer learning approach. To this end, Twende Mbele facilitates projects and activities geared towards the improvement of M&E Systems, policies, tools, and procedures based on shared experiences and understanding of local needs. After five years of implementation of various projects in our partner countries, Twende Mbele is starting to better understand what is working, our strengths, weaknesses, and how best to respond to changing country contexts and needs.

The peer learning and sharing approach of Twende Mbele has been successful in trialing innovative ideas and approaches. Parliamentary support has been successful at regional level, with individual parliaments learning from each other's best practices. Countries continue to improve the gender responsiveness of their M&E systems with the support of various state and non-state actors. The work around integrating rapid evaluations has seen a number of policy changes, and growing demand for more timely evidence.

In the next phase, Twende will continue to work on the capacity, culture and systems level in governments to achieve its ultimate goals of affecting the quality of service delivery and accountability. We continue to embed changes in both individual and institutional capacities; adapt interventions that promote a culture of learning and evidence use; and system changes that stick. Further, our activities hope to deepen the application of learning gained from Twende's capacity building activities and contribute to building emerging champions and innovative problem solving activities.

It's also a change to thank all our partners and contributors and to showcase some of the people working tirelessly to better utilise evidence for improving the lives of citizens.



BACKGROUND

ON TWENDE MBELE

The Twende Mbele programme strives to support African governments in their endeavours to improve their performance, as well as accountability and transparency towards their citizens, by strengthening their monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems and practices.

The name is derived from the kiSwahili phrase which means “moving forward together”, and as a collaborative programme, this name echoes the very heart of project. The programme currently involves six core country partners (Benin, Ghana, South Africa, Uganda, Kenya and Niger), with two evaluation capacity development partners (CLEAR Anglophone Africa and the Independent Development Evaluation). The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation along with each partner country support the programme financially.

Twende Mbele supports the measurement of progress towards implementing the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through activities designed to support the National Development Plans. It also focuses on strengthening the analytical capability of officials and others (e.g. parliamentarians and civil society) to: collect and use evidence to inform decision making, and to evaluate government efforts to deliver development outcomes.

Key activities of the programme include:

- Creating demand within governments for generating and using evidence from M&E activities.
- Sharing M&E experiences.
- Learning and capacity development for M&E technical skills.
- Collaborative development of M&E tools.



OUR TIMELINE

In March of 2012, Benin, Uganda and South Africa met for the very first time at a workshop and collaborated around evaluations. An informal peer learning partnership was established, later known as Twende Mbele.

2012

In 2015 DfID showed interest in supporting regional work and in June 2016 they started funding the programme.

2015

30 June 2016 Twende is launched at the AfrEA Conference

2016

Hewlett started funding in September 2017.

2017

In September 2018 Ghana became a core country partner after a round of votes.

2018

In July 2019 the Nigerian approves that countries National Evaluation Policy. November 2019 the Hewlett Foundation announced further funding for the programme.

2019

Niger and Kenya become core Twende partner countries.

2020

Twende Mbele re-developed and adopted a new programme Theory of Change, born from past experiences and changing contexts.

2021



TWENDE

PRINCIPLES



The project is owned and driven by African governments



The activities should build on and not duplicate related regional initiatives;



Countries participating should have a serious commitment to doing monitoring and evaluation



Knowledge generated is owned by all parties and potentially available to the wider community;



At least two countries must be involved in each collaboration, so that the activities leverage on the added value from collaboration across countries;



Partners must practice what they preach and document and reflect on learnings from the project;



We can learn from each other and develop common approaches, but then these need to be adapted for each country's specific context;



Partners must be accountable to each other to ensure the programme is managed in a transparent and professional way.



M&E should be used to improve learning, performance and accountability, not for its own sake;



Funding and the project plan should be flexible enough to respond to emerging opportunities.



Partners commit to doing things differently as a result of the learnings from the project;



**THE NAME IS DERIVED
FROM THE KISWAHILI
PHRASE WHICH MEANS
“MOVING FORWARD
TOGETHER”**



COUNTRY-LED GOVERNANCE



The Twende Mbele Secretariat is the primary link between all partners, the management committee and the University of Witwatersrand. The secretariate is hosted by the Wits University in South Africa.

There are **two management committees: a Strategic and a Technical**. It consists of two representatives from each core country partner, as well as representatives from CLEAR-AA and Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV). The Strategic Management Committee sets the strategic direction for the programme, and is responsible for implementing a significant number of deliverables. It is chaired by one of the core partner country representative on a rotating basis.



SIX

THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT TWENDE MBELE



1 The Learn section of Twende's website houses more than 100 M&E system strengthening resources, including a series of practical guidelines

2 Played a key role in setting up a peer learning programme in the African parliamentary space

3 Run capacity building activities with over 15 African country governments

4 University of Cape Town Evidence-Based Policy Making & Implementation

5 Developed a pan-African competency framework (and curriculum) with partners in more than 11 countries

6 Only African government-led network on evaluation



THEORY

OF CHANGE



While many countries are undertaking monitoring activities, Twende works with countries that demonstrate a commitment for deeper learning and change, and more systemic effects on government performance and impact. Our experience has shown that high level commitment to is necessary (though not sufficient) for Twende activities to take root and be built upon. Much of this commitment is built through a peer learning approach, that creates a safe environment for trailing new ideas and encourages peer problem solving and ownership. Country partners are supported to collaboratively create tools and adapt them, to contribute to a body of knowledge on 'what works', and to continue growing leadership and champions such that policy makers are aware of the potential uses of M&E.

The theory of change assumes that the changes at the short- and medium-term will lead to improved government policies and programs and an integrated evaluation culture in government in the long-term. In turn, a cumulative effect in the wider system is that service delivery to citizens will be improved, as well as an evolution toward better governance and improved accountability. This impact, while out of Twende Mbele's control, would be seen once systems, practices and culture has spread deeply across the public service, including parliaments.



ACTIVITIES

Collaboration for learning & accountability

- Linking budgets to PME (Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation)
- Data project
- Rapid evaluation tools
- Gender responsive evaluation systems

Growing capacity on the supply side

- Training for technical managers
- EBMPI Course
- Promote learning & knowledge sharing

Convening research. strategy & coordination

- Networking with other countries
- Collaboration with CSOs
- Communication Strategies
- Learning agenda activities
- Guideline development

Growing leadership & champions

- Parliamentary peer learning program
- Participation in Learning Activities

IMPACTS

- Better governance with improved accountability
- Improved service delivery

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

- Better quality decision making
- Improved policies & programs
- Integrated evaluative culture/practice deeply in government

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES

- M&E influences government business & decision making
- Twende countries invest own resources for sustainability
- Countries meet their own peer learning needs

SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES

- Govt officials and system, and CSOs are more capacitated to do and use M&E
- M&E systems are more comprehensive, coordinated & sustained
- Policy makers have the skills and confidence to demand and use M&E

OUTPUTS

- Increased body of knowledge on 'what works/doesn't work' based on the Twende experience is widely disseminated
- Policy makers aware of potential uses of M&E
- There is peer learning & sharing among the Twende network
- M&E tools are collaboratively developed & adapted

ACTIVITIES



CSO

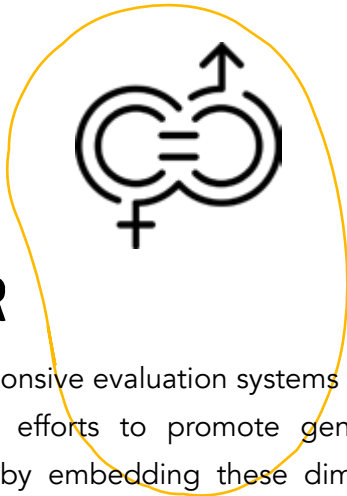
Building effective collaboration between Government and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to improve performance monitoring and evaluation systems, is a core piece of work for Twende. This project aims to ensure civil society is meaningfully engaged in evidence generation and use; from sub-national to national to global levels. Their skills and expertise have the potential to significantly contribute towards national development, through the collaboration with the state to achieve mutual goals.



ACHIEVEMENTS

In 2019 Twenty-one key stakeholders from the sanitation sector in Ghana assembled in Accra to explore the opportunities for the use of CSO generated evidence to increase the capacity of government to monitor the Sanitation sector through the strengthening and widening of performance indicators. This sectoral discussion and subsequent research fed into the piloting of a mechanism to foster greater state use of civil society-generated data. This mechanism tested in Ghana, has been used as a model for replication in Uganda's health sector and in the Béninois agricultural sector.





GENDER

Gender-responsive evaluation systems can augment government efforts to promote gender equality and equity by embedding these dimensions into its evaluation approaches, methods, processes and results. These efforts ultimately deepen gender consciousness in government policies, plans, budgets and programs. A gender responsive national monitoring and evaluation system refers to how different strategies, tools and policies can affect men and women differently and in so doing, improve their effectiveness.

Twende Mbele conducted a gender diagnostic of the National Monitoring and Evaluation system in Uganda, Benin, South Africa and Kenya. Mainly the diagnostics found the national M&E systems of all four countries to be gender-blind, there were pockets of excellence, especially where it relates to implementing national development priorities.



ACHIEVEMENTS

The diagnostics have led to the revision of national evaluation plans (NEPs) in Uganda, Benin & SA, as well as a new Gender Responsive Evaluation Guideline adapted in six countries, and training for public sector officials and CSOs on how to conduct gender responsive evaluations.

Benin, changes to the NEP have resulted in the following action to account for gender in evaluation processes:

- Development and dissemination of a methodological guide for gender-sensitive evaluation;
- Systematization of the gender dimension in evaluation demands;
- Definition of a framework for using evaluation results to take into account gender issue in the development process;
- Involvement of national structures in charge of gender at all stages of evaluation processes, both at national and sectoral level.
- Strengthened partnerships with ministry of family who are now putting budget to evaluation.



ACTIVITIES



MPAT

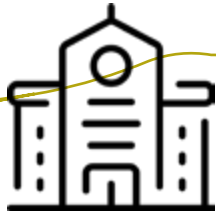
Benin and Uganda embarked on a journey to adapt a Management Performance Assessment Tool (MPAT) - a tool already implemented in South Africa and for tracking and improving management of performance. The MPAT is built on the idea that the quality management (how to plan, how to direct staff and finances, how to govern and report on performance) has a considerable impact on the quality of public services.



ACHIEVEMENTS

The MPAT has undergone adaptation in both Benin and Uganda. In Benin, the tool was piloted in four local government municipalities and four national departments. The tool was well received, and a plan of action based on the findings has been developed for the pilot departments /municipalities. Adapating the tool in Uganda meant harmonising it with two other government performance assessment tools - the final version of which has been pre-tested and piloted. Each country continues to roll out the tool to meet their evolving needs.





PARLIAMENTS

This project is aimed at strengthening systems of oversight in parliaments. Twende Mbele's work with CLEAR-AA and the African Parliamentarians' Network on Development Evaluation (APNODE) in strengthening the capacity of parliaments and parliamentarians is premised on the understanding that parliamentarians can serve as strategic allies in advancing the use of evidence to deepen good governance through their legislative, oversight and representative roles.

By evidence use in this context we mean using relevant, credible information to back legislative decision-making and oversight. Recognising that evidence use is one of a number of important factors which influence policy decision-making, our understanding aligns with the description of evidence informed policy making (EIPM) as:

"... that which has considered a broad range of research evidence, evidence from citizens and other stakeholders, and evidence from practice and policy implementation as part of a process that considers other factors such as political realities and current public debates" (Newman, Fisher & Shaxson, 2012 cited in INASP, 2016:24)"



ACHIEVEMENTS

Tracer study in 2020 affirmed that the focus on evidence use more broadly – rather than solely M&E – allowed participants to gain an integrated understanding of evidence use including (but not limited to) the role of M&E. And, the peer learning approach and the related collaboration with peers from other institutions led to sustained, supportive engagements – advisory and mentoring in nature – between programme participants following the official Regional Peer Learning Programme. The peer learning approach facilitated cross-learning between different parliaments and capacity-building organisations. Profiling good practices for evidence use in the various parliaments and capacity-building organisations provided a valuable basis for participants and their organisations to continue learning from each other and working together beyond the programme to strengthen evidence systems.



ACTIVITIES



M&E CULTURE

A performance M&E culture within an organisation can be seen when it promotes the systematic generation and use of information to assess policies and programmes, outcomes and impacts; the organisation feeds information back into decision-making and makes information widely for accountability purposes.

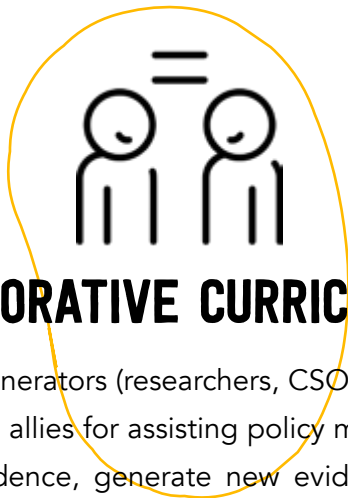
However, there is a fear that the emerging culture of M&E in Africa is following the track of older established public sector organisations of the West without regard to the socio-political and economic environment in African democracies (Goldman et al 2020). To assess the whether governments in Africa are tracking their own course and emphasising performance and accountability, Twende implemented an M&E culture study in five countries.



ACHIEVEMENTS

The baseline study was conducted in SA, Uganda, Ghana, Benin and Kenya. Results indicate there is a significant demand for M&E evidence from ministers and senior managers, and a significant level of use, across all five countries. However, in around 30% of cases, findings are concealed and 40% of respondents see senior management as not championing honesty about performance. With the exception of Ghana, countries report limited respect for evidence-based decision-making, and 50% and upwards of managers fear admitting mistakes. This does not create an ideal environment for learning. All countries are considering what actions need to be taken as a result of these findings.





COLLABORATIVE CURRICULUM

Evidence generators (researchers, CSOs, evaluators) are essential allies for assisting policy makers access existing evidence, generate new evidence (as per policy priorities) and to be able to interpret and utilise it. However, there is often a large gap between those who create knowledge and those who need it for decision making. As part of Twende's larger body of work on building a stronger M&E culture and an ecosystem for evidence use in country governments, we developed a knowledge brokering course to link evidence generation to users. Knowledge brokering skills and activities will also be essential for the successful implementation of Evidence Agendas (eg. Benin) and Evaluation Plans (eg. Uganda).



ACHIEVEMENTS

Building on the collective research from the Using Evidence in Policy and Practice book (Goldman & Pabari 2020), we designed a two-day course for government M&E staff, selected CSO staff and planning officers. The course was piloted online, with 28 participants from three countries. The course has now been refined, translated into French, and will be run again as part of the working linking planning, budgeting, and M&E. This is first course of its kind (that we know of) that is specifically tailored to the contexts of African governments, and certain the only one in French.



ACTIVITIES



SUPPLY AND DEMAND

Research has shown that the current supply of good evaluators is constrained, with a relatively small group of professional suppliers taking most of the larger evaluation studies. As governments demand more evaluative evidence, the number and quality of human resources required to meet this will grow. At the current level of demand, problems with the size of the pool of available evaluators, the quality of their deliverables and their ability to respond to government terms of reference, consolidates an already skewed evaluation market. During 2017 and early 2018, Twende Mbele commissioned a series of diagnostic studies on the supply and demand of evaluators in Uganda, Benin and South Africa. The purpose of the diagnostic studies was to provide a demand and supply profile of evaluators in these three countries.



ACHIEVEMENTS

With continuous work to improve the demand for evaluation at the national and sectoral level (including working on sectoral evaluation plans), eg. Uganda introduced a evidence-based policy making breakfasts with the intentions of improving the evaluation culture within government, and an emphasis on fostering learning. Numerous local training and upskilling activities within governments to address demand-side shortcomings have been held in Uganda and Benin. South Africa has drafted a capacity building framework for the public service in regard to M&E. They have also updated procurement policies to remedy some transformation issues in the industry.





RAPID EVALUATIONS

Rapid evaluations address the need for more timely data, and recommendations for improvements. They help decision makers to understand and learn from what works, what doesn't, when and for whom to aid decision making in a shorter timeline. It is also an important tool for accountability, helping departments and entities to demonstrate uptake, and that work is of high quality and useful. Rapid evaluations can reduce the costs and time of evaluation projects, promote flexibility across relatively diverse exercises of evaluation enquiry, and utilise different approaches. Rapid evaluations are being used in our country partners' evaluation systems, and can be done internally by officials, and/or involve an external consultant as a 'facilitator'.



ACHIEVEMENTS

Twende Mbele has designed a toolkit on how to do rapid assessments, intended for use by officials commissioning evaluations, researchers and civil society. Six countries have designed and adapted a guideline for designing and planning a rapid evaluation for the public sector.

The rapid evaluation guideline for government has been adapted by Ghana and used as a framework to assess government flagship industrialization programme named 1 District 1 Factory. Benin also completed an evaluation of government resource allocation mechanism in the Agriculture sector using the rapid evaluation approach. South Africa and Uganda have also piloted the approach, based on training and adaptation of the guideline.



ACTIVITIES



EBMPI

Evidence-informed policy making and implementation and further contextualised to all Twende countries aims to use evidence in a more rational, rigorous and systematic manner, in order to ensure that policy processes are effective, make efficient use of limited public resources, have a demonstrable impact, and are carried out in a manner that promotes transparency. This drive towards the use of evidence in policy making and implementation is not without its challenges. After all, policy making occurs within an inherently political environment in which policymakers grapple with multiple social concerns and competing priorities.

Evidence-informed policy making draws on a broad range of evidence to inform the policy making and implementation processes. The Evidence Based Policy Making and Implementation Course is designed to assist strategic leaders and top managers in the public service to access, assess and use evidence to make well informed decisions about policies, programmes, projects and services and to improve government's impact on society. It is adapted from the University of Cape Town course; and was adapted to Uganda and Benin.



ACHIEVEMENTS

The course has been rolled out in all of the Twende Mbele partner countries. An average of 40 participants have taken part in these training workshops, they include senior managers, members of sector Ministries, high-level government officials. The course was revised in 2019 to further capacitate participants.





COMMS STRATEGY

The main purpose of this assignment was to provide communications support to Twende Mbele countries to help them build a foundation for effectively communicating on M&E at the national level, including to the media, on which they can further build and develop their national communication activities.

“Achieving our objectives through implementing the National level Communications Strategy, we will be able to foster the Directorate of Monitoring, Evaluation and Inspection (DMEI)’s work guiding policy formulation and implementation, improving service delivery, and appropriate resource allocation”

- Florence Mbabazi, Information Systems Officer,
Office of the Prime Minister Uganda (OPM)



ACHIEVEMENTS

Communication strategies were drafted for four partner countries, with implementation in Uganda and South Africa. Uganda went a step further to create a communication unit in the Directorate of Monitoring, Evaluation and Inspection in the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM).



TWENDE

STATS



Improving institutionalisation by adapting a management performance assessment tool in Uganda and Benin

6

Trained over 150 government officials from six African countries in designing and running rapid evaluations

5

Training 148 of MPs and now working Portfolio committees in six parliaments in East Africa to improve their oversight capacities, implemented with CLEAR AA

4

In partnership with CLEAR-AA, developing a set of common competencies and curriculum for post-graduate training with 23 universities

3

Trained more than 200 high level officials in five countries in Evidence Based Policy Making and Implementation

2

Supported 5 African students from various countries in their Masters and PHD programmes.

1





7

Publication of seven guidelines offering practical guidance to government officials

8

Review of NEPs, CSOs and gender inclusivity in the NES' of in Benin, Uganda

9

Improved collaboration for gender responsiveness with diagnostics of the NES in 4 countries

10

Development of an oversight tool for parliamentarians, currently being piloted in Zambia

11

Publishing findings on the development and contextual differences of MPAT adaptation

12

Working paper on use of evidence in CSOs in Uganda

13

Platform for learning and sharing NEP workshop in Johannesburg (19 government officials)



CHAMPIONS

OF IMPACT/CHANGE



1. VALUE OF PEER LEARNING NETWORKS (INCL APNODE) FOR CHAMPIONSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND INFLUENCE

**Josephine Watera, Head Monitoring and Evaluation Division,
Parliament of Uganda**



CLEAR-AA in partnership with Twende Mbele, the African Parliamentarians' Network on Development Evaluation (APNODE), the African Centre for Parliamentary Affairs (ACEPA), the African Institute for Development Policy (AFIDEP) and various parliaments which includes the parliament of Uganda, implemented a programme to facilitate peer learning in the parliamentary space.

In the parliamentary peer learning context, parliamentarians and parliamentary staff from different parliamentary contexts were provided with a facilitated platform to identify their learning needs, and to construct their own meaning and understanding by learning from each other. Essentially, these parliamentarians and parliamentary staff were involved in searching for, collecting, analysing, evaluating, integrating and applying information to solve problems and to make decisions. Thus, participants engage themselves intellectually, emotionally and socially in constructive conversation and learn by talking and questioning each other's views and reaching consensus or dissent.

The peer learning programme is a formalised form of learning that has helped parliamentarians and parliamentary staff to learn effectively. It encourages participants to take greater responsibility for their own learning. While it is not a substitute for training and other structured capacity development activities, it is an important addition to the repertoire of activities that can enhance the quality of capacity development and increased use of evidence in parliaments by making participants active learners by drawing on and sharing information based on their direct experience.





2. UGANDA'S M&E SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

Timothy Lubanga, Acting Commissioner of M&E, Office of the Prime Minister Uganda (OPM)

In Uganda, over the past two decades, considerable efforts have been made to establish a strong and robust basis for assessing public spending, and its effects on development. In achieving this, Public Sector M&E was considered as a means of Government measuring its development interventions. M&E was therefore enshrined in the National Development Plan and institutionalized in the governance systems and processes (National Development Plan, 2010/11- 2014/15). It continues in version ii (2015/16 – 2019/20) and version iii (2020/21 – 2024/25).

The Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) was given the constitutional mandate to oversee reforms and service delivery in all government Ministries, Departments and Agencies and established an M&E function to support this role (National M&E Policy, 2013). It was set up to design, commission, conduct and disseminate evaluations on public policies and major public investments, as directed by the Uganda government, and to oversee improvements in the quality and utility of evaluations conducted across the government at a decentralised level. OPM works closely with evaluation networks, national and international partners and evaluation expert institutions to promote the use of evidence in policy and programme formulation and in decision-making. A National Strategy for Monitoring and Evaluation of Government programmes (NIMES) was developed with the aim of enhancing M&E capacity as well as ensuring that sound evidence -based data and information are available to inform decision-making (The Republic of Uganda, National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy, 2006). The National Policy for Public Sector Monitoring and Evaluation was developed and approved in 2013 to

provide a clear framework for strengthening the coverage, timeliness of assessment of public interventions. The policy was meant to enhance the performance of Public Sector through strengthening coordination and cost-effective production and use of objective information in the implementation of national interventions. The policy enabled government, civil society organizations, development partners and corporations access credible evidence to inform policy and programmatic decisions, and hold the public sector accountable for its application of resources (National M&E Policy, 2013).

The implementation of the National Policy for Public Sector Monitoring and Evaluation saw government introduce a series of reforms to enhance accountability and transparency of the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and Local Governments (LGs). Significant effort went into introducing planning, results-based budgets, monitoring systems and developing the institutional capacity to design ministry strategy and plans to implement M&E arrangements to monitor results and provide a basis for performance improvement as provided for in the National Development Plan (Annual Performance Assessment Report, 2013/2014).

The Office of the Prime Minister collates information from other departments and to produce bi-annual and annual sector performance reports. There is a system of annual Cabinet retreats to review the performance of the government. The retreats review reports and may issue recommendations to inform budgeting processes. In this way, there



... ENHANCE THE PERFORMANCE OF PUBLIC SECTOR...

are mechanisms to institutionalize monitoring to feed into executive decision-making processes. For Parliament, the Office of the Auditor General has an established evaluative practice as it carries value—for-money audits on a regular and systematic basis since 2005. There is an evaluation practice in Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) although the practice appears under-resourced, ad-hoc and driven primarily by donor requirements and support. This shows a high level demand for M&E evidence. However, monitoring dominates the M&E systems in all cases.

There is a two-year rolling evaluation agenda, mainly donor funded and overseen by an M&E technical working group. The Government Evaluation Facility (GEF) is run by a secretariat in the Office of the Prime Minister, which provides technical support for evaluations and the evaluation system. Evaluations are more focused on implementation and impact or summative forms of evaluations. The Department of M&E/UEA in Uganda is endeavoring to set standards across government for evaluation and attempting to invoke demand for evaluation by introducing a range of tools to increase commitment by Cabinet, the Prime Minister and Sector Departments. The specific tools being applied to support this include mechanisms such as Departments proposing evaluations, development of a national evaluation agenda or plan, and making the reports publicly available.





3. CSO WORK IN GHANA

Dede Bedu-Addo, Coordinator, Ghana Monitoring & Evaluation Forum

Regular update of data in any development setting essentially informs planning, implementation and monitoring at all levels. Inadequate data on sanitation and hygiene has, therefore, been a major inhabiting factor to the sanitation sub-sector's progression over the years. In Ghana, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) actors are required to seek the input of beneficiary communities as part of the needs assessment process. The National Development Planning Commission's guidelines (NDPC, 2014) make this a requirement in the planning process for all development agencies using a wide range of fora. These arrangements include Civil Society Organisations (CSOs).



Twende Mbele commissioned a baseline study to understand the evidence generation and use ecosystem of CSOs and government in Ghana. Together with Twende Mbele, a group of WASH sector CSOs held two workshops for actors in the sanitation sector, including government to strategise on ways to conduct data producers to users. There was also another discussion of the results of the baseline study with a wide group of stakeholders at the Annual Mole/Water Conference where a reflection on current government indicators was presented.

This project also investigated the principles for successful collaboration platforms which can be used as a guideline to navigate multi-actor relationships. Connections were fostered among key actors leading to accelerated learning on evidence use in the water sector and principles for successful relationships among multiple actors in the sector. This network also reinforced government-CSO relationships in the sector.

THIS PROJECT ALSO INVESTIGATED THE PRINCIPLES FOR **SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATION PLATFORMS WHICH CAN BE USED AS A GUIDELINE TO NAVIGATE MULTI-ACTOR RELATIONSHIPS.**



4. GENDER RESPONSIVE IN SOUTH AFRICA

**Kgagelo Moshia-Molebatsi, Director Of Research and Evaluation,
Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME)**

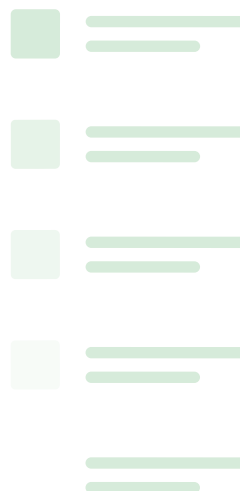


Twende Mbele has continued to collaborate with the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) in South Africa to improve the gender responsiveness of the national evaluation system (NES). The South African government has prioritised gender equality, women's empowerment and human rights as cross-cutting issues in all sector policy and programming interventions.

Building from the 2018 Gender Diagnostic of the national evaluation system (NES), the DPME commissioned and adopted a Gender Responsive Evaluation Guideline. The guideline was developed following a recommendation from the diagnostic, which found the NES to be gender blind. This Guideline is supported by various key stakeholders such as the Department of Women, Youth and People with Disabilities, Commission for Gender Equality, UN Women, and the Department of Public Service Administration.

The Guideline aims to support and guide evaluators and commissioners of evaluation in initiating, managing and/or using gender-responsive evaluations by providing direction, advice and tools for every step in the evaluation process: planning and budgeting for evaluations, commissioning evaluations, preparation, conducting, reporting, evaluation use and follow up and the institutionalisation of evaluations. As part of efforts to professionalise the evaluation function in government and public entities, this guideline further seeks to support mainstreaming of gender in government policies, planning, budgeting, legislation, programmes and knowledge management. The guideline has since been adapted in Uganda, Benin and Kenya.

Twende Mbele has further supported this work and has assisted in strengthening collaboration with various stakeholder such as other departments, academia and Development Agencies in South Africa to ensure a coordinated approach to achieving South African's gender equity goals.



“The role of evaluation is therefore critical in assisting government to understand the extent to which its policies and programmes are relevant and effective in terms achieving the desired gender equality, women’s empowerment and human rights outcomes.”

- Gender Responsive Evaluation Guideline,
DPME 2019



5. VALUE OF BUILDING GOVERNMENT M&E SYSTEMS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Adeline Sibanda, Former President of AfrEA, African Evaluation Association (AfrEA)



IMPORTANCE OF M&E IN AFRICA

The legal and institutional frameworks for the practices of M&E in most countries are weak but there is a growing number of countries that have established good M&E systems. The need to improve on development results accountability and learning requires that there is a deeper focus on strengthening country monitoring and evaluation systems. Increasingly, most governments have less budgets available for development. Therefore, M&E is even more relevant for Africa because of constrained budgets. M&E is another step towards democratisation and this signals to citizens that they can check what their governments are doing and whether they are doing what they promised to do. When a government has a strong M&E system, where decisions and planning are based on evidence, there is a higher probability that the outcomes yielded are greater than when M&E does not exist.

CHANGES IN THE EVALUATION LANDSCAPE

World-wide there is an urgency to provide relevant, quality evidence that can be used for policy and decision making and, in some cases, this has been triggered by the “post- truth debates”. In light of the recent attention on evidence to inform decisions and policies (especially in light of the complex challenges as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic), and ultimately political discourses, the need to ensure the use of quality evidence in informing decision-making becomes of utmost importance.

In the African region there has been a call to intensify the focus on Africa-led and Africa-rooted evaluation and a paradigm shift to include an indigenous culturally responsive paradigm and develop the scholarship around this. Twende has been successful in constructing a positive narrative but now needs to build the momentum by being relevant to calls for a paradigm shift on the continent.





HIGH-LEVEL

LESSONS LEARNED



1

HOW DOES TWENDE MBELE WORK TOWARDS IMPROVING GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY?

Twende's improvement in national evaluation systems building through peer learning has moved forward in the Six core countries through activities like MPAT, gender responsive evaluation, and developing a deeper understanding around procurement and linking with planning.

2

HAS THERE BEEN NOTABLE PROGRESS TOWARDS IMPROVING GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY?

Where there has been progress, it is because it has been focused and targeted and been given the dedicated time to evolve. These achievements need to continue to evolve to reach their intended outcomes, and to ensure that country partners can do the necessary ground work to get buy-in, adapt systems and tools and pilot thoroughly.

3

WE'VE SEEN CIVIL SOCIETIES MAKE USE OF EVIDENCE TO INFORM THEIR DECISION AND ACTIONS, HOW IS THE EVIDENCE UPTAKE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATIONS AND GOVERNMENT?

Evidence uptake is a slow process that needs constant, continuous and multi-prolonged approaches before the practice is fully adopted in the public sector. It takes time and a lot of effort to change the culture and perceptions to utilize evidence in decision making.



4

CAN RAPID EVALUATIONS COEXIST WITH REGULAR EVALUATIONS OR DOES ONE DO AWAY WITH THE OTHER?

Rapid evaluations are intended to be used for a variety of evaluations questions, where results are needed to feed into programmes and strategies quickly (and on a smaller budget). Both regular and rapid evaluations findings can feed into better government policies and decision making, but more traditional evaluation approaches will be needed for complex policies and programmes, or where there is a degree of political sensitivity and/or a need for a very rigorous understanding of impact.

5

FACTORS FOR IMPROVING DEMAND FOR EVALUATION?

The lack of an evaluation culture hinders good governance based on evidence-informed decision-making. But creating an evaluation culture requires that there must be buy-in from government ministries and agencies, to parliaments, to the grassroots level. There must be a steady supply of high quality evaluations, and the demand for these evaluations in order to ensure their use. When decision-makers want to use evidence to assist them in making choices, then there can be said to be a demand for M&E. National Evaluation Policies are another factor likely to prompt demand and use of evaluations in African countries. Building an evaluation culture enhances effectiveness, efficiency and accountability in the management of development policies and programmes.

6

HOW HAS TWENDE MBELE BEEN ABLE TO SUCCESSFULLY WITH ENGAGE WITH HIGH LEVEL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS?

Partnerships are an essential model to sharing and learning and Twende Mbele has learnt that having a deeper understanding the context in which these partnerships operate is critical to capitalising on learning opportunities to strengthen realistic learning. For example, working with high-level government officials requires a large amount of flexibility, but also a focus on the 'practical learning' to ensure that reflection and new skills are applicable to their day-to-day technical and policy challenges. Twende does this through a very collaborative and country-driven approach.



INTERVIEW

WITH FLORENCE MBABAZI



Information Systems Officer, Office of the Prime Minister Uganda (OPM)

WHY DID THE DIRECTORATE OF MONITORING, EVALUATION AND INSPECTION (DMEI) UNDERTAKE TO CREATE A COUNTRY LEVEL M&E COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY?

To fully meet the objectives of the DMEI a strategic communication function needed to be formulated. Therefore the DMEI realised the need to deliberately form a team of specialists to be charged with reporting and disseminating monitoring, evaluation and inspection results.

WHAT WAS THE RESULT OF THIS PROJECT IN UGANDA?

Firstly a team affectionately known as the Evaluation Communication Team (ECT) established and tasked with communicating the DMEI results. Secondly the development of a communications strategy to discern different stakeholder needs and devise strategies for engaging them.

WHAT DOES THE COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY OUTLINE?

Our communications strategy outlines the:

- objectives of communication (broadly for the Directorate and for each campaign),
- target audience and key messages,
- channels of communication for effective delivery of the intended messages by each given audience,
- modes of communication,
- personnel responsible for implementing the communications strategy.

WHAT DOES THE DMEI COMMUNICATIONS MEAN FOR OTHER GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES, DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES AND THE PUBLIC?

The DMEI works with other government Ministries, Departments and Agencies and the public to;

1. Increase awareness of the evaluation process, the results and the actions being taken,
2. Gain support for government changes resulting from the evaluation
4. Facilitate stakeholder input into the evaluation process.



INTERVIEW

WITH AISHA JORE ALI



DPhil Candidate at Blavatnik School of Government, University of Oxford

WHAT DIFFERENT FORMS OF CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FOR PARLIAMENTS ARE THERE?

There is training, mentoring, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and peer-learning, which is the approach we take to capacity develop African parliaments.

WHAT IS A PEER-LEARNING IN THE PARLIAMENTARY SPACE?

It is a method or approach where parliamentarians and parliamentary staff from different parts of Africa come together and share their experiences on what works and what doesn't work, so as to develop their capacities.

WHY DO YOU FIND THE PEER LEARNING APPROACH TO BE EFFECTIVE IN CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN PARLIAMENTS?

Firstly, it is effective because of the nature of parliaments, you need to be in the parliamentary space in order for you to understand how it works, and peer-learning works because these are parliamentary peers learning from one another.

Secondly in our approach we have both members of parliament and parliamentary staff, we expose them to each other's work and this goes a long way in creating a better understanding of the complexities that exists in the work of parliaments. It opens up a lot of avenues on how to work better.

PARLIAMENTS

The peer learning approach and the related collaboration with peers from other institutions led to sustained, supportive engagements – advisory and mentoring in nature – between programme participants following the official Regional Peer Learning Programme. The peer learning approach facilitated cross-learning



between different parliaments and capacity-building organisations. Profiling good practices for evidence use in the various parliaments and capacity-building organisations provided a valuable basis for participants and their organisations to continue learning from each other and working together beyond the programme to strengthen evidence systems. The tracer study revealed some significant effects of the capacity strengthening initiatives at the individual and institutional levels.

KEY INDIVIDUAL LEVEL	KEY INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL EFFECTS EFFECTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Became more analytical and results-oriented • Strengthened ability to interrogate results beyond the output levels to the outcome levels • Increased confidence to engage in debates and decision-making • Improved contribution to the work of committees and parliamentary practices in general 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of guidelines for evidence use in parliaments • Instituting strategic plans at the broader parliamentary institutional level and at specific parliamentary department levels • Improved departmental reporting • Enhanced input into the establishment of a national m&e directorate

QUOTE FROM PARTICIPANTS



"Evidence Use in Parliament project is like iron sharpening iron"

- Josephine Watera

"Evidence Use in Parliament project will help us up our game in African parliaments"

- Issifu Lampo

"This training is useful to members of parliament in increasing appreciation for evidence in the policy making process"

- Humphrey Ringera

"Common challenges are resolved by common solutions or solutions developed within the group"

- Mamphago Modiba





TWENDE MBELE

www.twendembele.org

TWENDE MBELE is a multi-country peer-learning partnership centred on country government priorities for building national evaluation systems in an effort to improve government performance and accountability to citizens.

Telephone: +27 (0) 11 717 3453 | **Email:** info@twendembele.org

University of the Witwatersrand
2 St David's Place, Parktown, Johannesburg
Telephone: +27 11 717 3157; Fax: +27 86 765 5860



[@TwendeMnE](https://twitter.com/TwendeMnE)



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