

REPORT ON A SCOPING VISIT TO GHANA

13-15 June 2017

Twende Mbele

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TWENDE MBELE

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CIA Factbook (2017): “Ghana”, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-> 25

Glossary

APRs	Annual progress reports
DPCUs	District Planning Coordination Units
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
MDAs	Ministries, departments and agencies
MMDAs	Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MTDPFs	Medium Term Development Policy Frameworks
NDPC	National Development Commission
PPMEDs	Policy, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Divisions (of ministries)
RCCs	Regional coordinating councils
RPCUs	Regional Planning Coordination Units

Executive Summary

A Twende Mbele delegation, comprised of the Chair of the Management Committee, Director for CLEAR-AA, and the South African Project Coordinator: Dr Ian Goldman, Dr Laila-Ruth Smith and Ms Rendani Manugu, respectively, undertook a scoping visit to Ghana. The purpose of the visit was to determine how best Twende could partner with Ghana on M&E, based on their M&E capacity. Over two days, the delegation met with key M&E drivers in the public sector to gauge the level of priority given to M&E in Ghana. The delegation met with National Development Planning Commission, Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Ministry of Health, Minister of Monitoring and Evaluation (a newly established ministry), Parliamentary Select Committee for Poverty Reduction, and the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration.

Two issues pose a great challenge to the strengthening of the M&E system in Ghana. The first is the absence of a national evaluation policy. The second is the lack of capacity around M&E. The absence of a policy on M&E significantly impacts the quality of the M&E system, as a national evaluation policy provides guidance on all matters pertaining to M&E. The changes in governments and realignment of priorities is to blame for its absence. The lack of capacity is a pressing issue as it has a direct impact on the day to day work of M&E duties. Because there are no university courses or degrees on M&E, the assessment of skills required of M&E officials is unknown. Although there are strong links between national, regional and district levels of government, there is a disconnect in the data collection systems. There are no established M&E competencies, limited capacity in evaluations as most evaluations are conducted through donor funded projects, delays in the monitoring systems and data collection tools are in short supply. With the withdrawal of donors from Ghana, due to Ghana being deemed a lower middle income country, the lack of capacity on evaluations is going to become of great concern, as most evaluations are conducted through donors. This is where Twende Mbele would like to partner with Ghana. In the strengthening of capacity around evaluations.

Ghana has, however, taken it upon itself to strengthen its M&E capacity through the establishment of two new ministries: The Ministry of Planning, and the Ministry of Monitoring and Evaluation. The establishment of these ministries will assist in the tightening of regulation (establishment of national evaluation policy) and development of capacity around M&E. The Ministry of M&E is already assembling its staff and planning for training courses for September this year.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Twende Mbele has started with 3 core partners who all have well developed national evaluation systems. It is now moving to a new phase where it starts to collaborate with other African countries. There are two categories of potential countries:

- a) those who **have an evaluation system**, which they are using to improve government performance and accountability
- b) those who are already **using M&E** and are keen to deepen their M&E work, and the extent to which it influences national government performance

The Twende Management Committee met with a number of African countries in March 2017 and it was decided to hold some initial scoping visits to three countries – Ghana, Kenya, and Niger where some degree of collaboration would clearly be appropriate, to suggest the level and type of collaboration.

All activities conducted in Twende have to involve at least two countries. Therefore, the collaboration is likely to be:

1. participation in existing activities of Twende Mbele (eg Ghana sharing their experience of a similar system to MPAT)
2. new activities, where TM partners, or the country in question have valuable expertise to share (for example sharing experience on national evaluation policies)
3. new activities where new countries potentially have interests or capacity development needs in common which Twende Mbele can assist with

It should be clear from the outset that Twende Mbele is not a funder, and so will not fund existing country activities. It can fund collaborative activities, capacity development etc., which is of value to a number of countries and will be catalytic to taking forward meaningful M&E systems in participating countries.

1.2 Purpose, approach and process of the scoping mission

The purpose of the scoping visit is for:

- Twende Mbele to have a good idea of the overall scale and approach to M&E in Ghana, challenges, strengths, and areas where collaboration with Twende Mbele would be valuable.
- Ghana has an understanding of Twende Mbele, a realistic picture of how they can benefit (not lots of money), what they can contribute
- And an agenda for possible collaboration has been identified

A two-day meeting was organised for the Twende Mbele delegation to meet the main stakeholders in government and Parliament. The visit was organised by the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA) and the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC).

2 Background to the country

2.1 GDP and key economic drivers

The 2016 National GDP stood at \$42.76 billion with an estimated average household distribution (per capita) of \$4,400. Ghana is Africa's second largest distributor of gold and cocoa; these products play a great role in the economy of the country. The three key economic drivers are agriculture (19.5%, industry (24%) and services (56.4%). 5.2% (2013 est.). Ghana saw a 3.3% economic growth in 2016 (CIA Factbook, 2017).

2.2 Structure of government

Government has two main levels of administration, national and district. There are 10 regions with Regional Coordinating Councils (RCCs) as the regional coordination structures. They are administrative levels of government and not governments in their own right. However, there are Regional Ministers and Deputy Ministers. Regional Planning Coordinating Units are made up of the regional heads of government departments such as health, education etc., headed by the Regional Coordinating Director. A regional economic planning officer provides the secretariat. They provide guidance to districts in development of their M&E Plans, and collate district data and pass on to NDPC and other stakeholders. They review and collate district APRs to produce the regional APR, and facilitate evaluation of the DMTPDs and make recommendations for policy review (NDPC, 2013 p69).

Decentralised sector departments have offices at regional level, which provide guidance to decentralised departments at district level, including on how to implement their sector M&E plans, collating district data. Regional Coordinating Directors

District Assemblies are the local governments. Decentralised departments at district level collect data on sector-specific indicators and report to the DPCUs and heads of department at regional level. They also support the DPCUs to conduct evaluations and participatory M&E exercises. District Coordinating Directors are key responsible officers for the M&E system at district level. They facilitate the work of DPCUs and are supposed to ensure that DPCUs are adequately resourced.

2.3 Why M&E is of interest at this time

The interest in M&E has augmented in the country as demonstrated by the creation of an M&E Ministry in the Presidency. The new President came to power in January 2017 on a platform for change and his new M&E's primary mandate is to track the performance of the ten ministries responsible for driving 7 Presidential priority projects going forward. This function is predominantly to monitor the performance of the ministries in fulfilling these presidential priorities. The evaluation function within this Ministry has not yet been thought through but there is a space for influencing a broader systems building agenda.

The interest in evaluation beyond the Executive is a broader belief that auditing and monitoring are insufficient for program improvement. Parliament in particular is very keen to get better quality evaluative information on program performance to assist in its oversight role.

3 Overview of the PM&E system

3.1 Legal basis and evolution of the M&E system

This section is largely drawn from NDPC, 2013. The M&E system in Ghana is driven from the planning system, where the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) is the apex body responsible for planning and M&E. The NDPC was established based on the 1992 Constitution, a National

Development Planning Commission Act of 1994 (Act 479) and the National Development Planning Systems Act of 1994 (Act 480). Local government's role is established through different acts ranging from 1993 to 2003 which regulate the decentralised planning system, including district planning authorities at the district level, and regional coordinating councils (RCCs) at regional level. Act 480 provides the basis for planning and M&E guidelines at district and sector levels., district and sector progress reports, the National M&E Plan, Citizen Assessment Reports and National Annual Progress Reports.

NDPC has produced annual progress reports (APRs) since 2002 to review government performance. The team saw an example of the 2014 report. (NDPC, 2014). The system is based on four yearly Medium Term Development Policy Frameworks (MTDPFs), and there have been national M&E Plans linked to these.

The National M&E Manual was finally issued in 2013, having been in preparation since 2007. It provides a conceptual overview of M&E, as well as outlining the national M&E system. It includes a section on how to develop a M&E system.

Medium Term Development Plans are produced by all MMDAs and MDAs – namely District Medium-Term Development Plans and Sector Medium-term Development Plans. The national development plan emanates from the collation of these plans from districts and sectors, rather than as a top-down strategic planning process. (NDPC, 2013).

M&E processes begin after plan preparation, based on guidelines issued by NDPC to MDAs and MMDAs after they have prepared their development plans.

According to the Manual, nearly all MDAs and MMDAs now produce M&E Plans and APRs.

3.2 Roles of key players in the PM&E system

National

- The Office of the Prime Minister provides the vision for the country which is implemented by the sector ministries.
- National Development Planning Commission M&E Division is the main national champion for the planning and national M&E system.
- Sector ministries have Policy, Planning and M&E Divisions (PPMEDs) who are responsible for M&E in ministries (what capacity do they have). Sector ministries are often short of capacity. Lack of human resource and equipment to carry out their activities. In some cases, there is also a deficit in skilled human resources to carry out the tasks required.
- Ministry of Finance is responsible for allocating budget to sectors.
- Ministry of Public Service is responsible for recruitment and performance in the public service. The office of the Head of Services monitors performance of senior managers. FOAC (Functional and Organisational Assessment Tool) is a cross cutting monitoring system utilised by the Office of the Head of Local Government Services.
- Ghana Audit Service is mandated by the Constitution and the Audit Service Act of 2000 to monitor the use of all public funds and report to Parliament.

Regional – Regional Planning Coordination Units (RPCUs) monitor districts

District – District Planning Coordination Units

3.3 Availability of data

- Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) conducts population and housing censuses and other surveys as well as administrative records. It helps in the design of M&E methodologies, approaches and instruments for collecting data.
- Availability of data from ministries and quality –The NDPC conducts statistics assessments on all ministries. The purpose of the statistical assessment is to determine how ministries are generating data and to determine how data is used.
- What issues are there for planning and M&E? Data is often of low quality as timelines for data submission are not in line with those of the NDPC. The timelines are more in line with those of donors. There is also inadequate data management due to lack of internet connectivity/availability in some regions.

3.4 Existing coordination around PM&E

There are the following main structures around PM&E:

- Ministries of Planning and of M&E, focusing on the electoral mandate of government, and how these can be ensured
- Delivery Unit in the Presidency, which is now seen as redundant, and some staff will be absorbed into the above
- NDPC, supporting MTDPFs for MDA and MDDAs. These now have an integrated M&E component, with quarterly and annual reports.
- The MDAs and MDDAs who have policy, planning and M&E divisions

There was no mention of any coordination structures for M&E across government. However, the new Ministry for M&E will have oversight of their top priority targets linked to the electoral mandate.

3.5 The role of donors and NGOs in the M&E system

The donor community in Ghana has diminished since Ghana became a lower-middle income country. The main support base in Ghana in M&E comes from UNICEF, Global Affairs Canada, and the Danish and Dutch Embassies.

The key problem regarding donor engagement in the M&E space in Ghana is lack of coordination. There used to be an M&E sector working group but this hasn't met in two years. Donors are all tackling little pieces of the M&E system. For instance, there was a recent evaluation dissemination workshop revealing an evaluation led by the EU and World Bank on general budget support and unmarked funding to support their existing budget. Part of this discussion also revealed information on sector budget support on agriculture and education. Canada (Global Affairs) used what came out of this dissemination event to inform their ongoing programming in the agricultural sector and drawing lessons from this. The government was there to learn about what came out of it but clearly the donors work with governments to carry out evaluations on the performance of their own program or project funds and the government has little control or direction as to what the priorities are regarding what gets evaluated.

UNICEF is focused on upstream work by on building government capacity and knowledge generation. In terms of strengthening a National Evaluation System, UNICEF has worked with the NDPC on the national evaluation policy by supporting the development of a road map that could lead towards the finalization of the National Evaluation Policy. UNICEF also provides support to the Ghana Monitoring and evaluation Forum and supports the Ghana statistical services through their capacity assessments

of various MDA's. Furthermore, UNICEF supports the mixed multiple indicator survey, now in its 6th edition, which is implemented by the Ghana Statistical Office and serves as a baseline for the SDGs. UNICEF is also looking at M&E systems at the district assembly level and trying to see what systems are in place and how could these systems be strengthened in the three northern districts of the country. At a systems level, UNICEF also provides capacity building to GMEF and to support them to build capacities of some MDAs that are struggling with basic monitoring. The intent of this GMEF support is to raise awareness of M&E at the regional level, which is largely done through road shows across the country on particular thematic hooks as a means to try to find hooks that can interest various civil society players in getting involved in M&E.

In addition to this broader system level support, the UNICEF country office has done 54 evaluations and assessments in one year. Different sectoral divisions within UNICEF are working with different government departments on the findings of evaluations at a sectoral area. For instance, UNICEF supported the government to assess its capitation grant regarding school attendance, or UNICEF supported the social development ministry to assess the LEAP program relating to the social protection cash transfer program done at a national level. UNICEF has a view that there is an attitude for learning on what works and doesn't work at the National Ministry level but this contradicts the challenges reported on government officials holding back data at the monitoring level that reveals problem areas of departmental performance.

Global Affairs Canada's collaboration with the NDPC-comes under mutual accountability framework between the Ghanaian and Canadian governments that has been in place since 2015. In relation to monitoring this framework, the GAC has several policy indicators and technical indicators that track the areas of engagement which are focused on food and security, water and sanitation, sustainable economic development. Reproductive Rights and Women and the Girl Child have recently been added as cross-cutters to this agenda. The indicators used to monitor progress in these thematic area were already in place and being tracked.

Denmark has had a longstanding engagement with Ghana and wanted to evaluate its assistance between 1930 and 2006 through a jointly developed evaluation process. This was done in an effort to build Ghanaian ownership over the process. They are now wanting to undertake a second phase which goes from 2007 to date. The purpose of these evaluations is leaving a legacy of what has been achieved through past assistance as Denmark brings closure to its aid portfolio in Ghana and moves to commercial cooperation now that Ghana is a lower-middle income country.

Government now has an inter-agency committee that engineered the statistical capacity assessment. This committee can bring the donors on board to work towards a common goal. The advisory subcommittee on statistics which is a subcommittee of the NDPC commission wanted to know the capacity level for data and statistics in the country. The aim of this research was to fulfil the joint agenda for strengthening Monitoring, Evaluation and Statistics because it was seen by donors as dormant due to financial resource constraints. The data challenges in the country are very high as there is an unwillingness to release data because officials fear it will be used against them. As noted above, UNICEF has provided support to take this agenda forward given how important tackling this behaviour is to the emergence of an improved monitoring system and a learning culture around results.

The challenges noted above with donors pulling out of their traditional aid role, some of which entailed support to building Ghana's capacity in M&E, has implications for coordination. Whatever remaining support there is regarding donor involvement in M&E no longer has any coordination. Furthermore, the Ghanaian government is unable to play a coordinating role of donors to prevent them from taking their own approaches in their own preferred sectors to carrying out evaluations without a system through which to feed the results so that Government can use these findings to make their own decisions about policies and programs. This points again to the importance of a

National Evaluation Plan in order to enable government to use this plan to help coordinate both government departments and donors engaging in evaluations.

4 The use of monitoring

4.1 Monitoring at national level

The main organisation with a mandate on M&E is NDPC, which has 54 staff, 8 of which are focused on M&E and 14 on planning coordination. The acting director of M&E is Nana Opere-Djan who hosted the visit, and the team also met the Director of Planning Coordination, Dr Isitite F Mensa-Bensu NDPC is the custodian of the long term national development plan as well as the medium term development plans, currently the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (GSGDA) II, 2014-2017. The NDPC receives the Annual Progress Reports from all MDAs and MDDAs, and uses them to produce an overall APR for the country against the GSGDA II (NDPC, 2016). A comment made by the Minister of M&E was that they wanted real-time reporting. The 2015 Progress report is dated December 2016, indicating a significant lag in production, which will affect use.

There is a new Ministry of M&E, whose focus is on the priorities in the electoral manifesto, e.g. one factory per district, free secondary schooling. The unit is in the process of being established and could be one of the partners in Twende Mbele.

MDAs and MDDAs also produce APRs. The lead for M&E is in Policy, Planning and M&E Divisions (PPMED) and there is also a Statistic, Research and Information Division (SRID). The team visited two of the stronger ministries, Food and Agriculture and Health to understand how ministries play their M&E role. The PPMED of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture is divided into four outfits, Policy Planning and Budgeting Directorate (PPBD), Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate (MED), Projects Coordination Unit (PCU) and the Agribusiness Unit (ABU). The MED has 2 units; Monitoring Unit and the Evaluation and Studies Unit. The Directorate has 7 Technical Staff, with 4 at the Monitoring Unit and 3 at the Evaluation and Studies Unit.

There are 10 Regional M&E officers and 10 Assistant M&E officers at the regional level, who work closely with the MED. 5 Agricultural Projects are currently running in the Ministry, each has an M&E officer. In total there are 216 Districts in the country, with one Management Information System Officer in each district. They carry out the reporting and M&E at that level. The SRID has about 40 staff.

There are sector side programmes in agriculture (Medium Term Ag Sector Investment Programme, METASIP) and also in Health. The Ministry of Food and Agriculture indicated that they do quarterly and mid-year reporting on progress of the sector using templates for national/regional/reporting. They indicated the purpose was for accountability/resource allocation/ learning, based on a set of indicators drawn from the AU's Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP), national level indicators from NDPC, and indicators for the agricultural sector. These reports are not just for the department but the sector, and the Ministry has an important data collection role. They use excel data collection templates – district sends to region, and then to MOFA. This reduces time and includes averages etc. In terms of use of the information they ask districts to indicate where there are change in variables. The reports are also discussed at a Joint Sector Review where they meet stakeholders and share the performance of the sector, and is co-chaired by MOFA and donors. Donors still provide technical support but not so much finance. The SRID supervises the crop estimates. Most elements are implemented through projects.

In the case of the Ministry of Health, there is a common management arrangement across the sector wide programme (SWAP). There is a Health Sector Working Group led by MOH, but including development partners, NGOs (Coalition of NGOs in Health), private sector and other MDAs. There is

a M&E Framework with sector wide indicators. It has 5 pillars including Stakeholder collaboration and accountability; Data repository – not been able to achieve yet; Timely and reliable data; Timely analysis and use of information; Feedback – so if not consistent data, or quality of data. There are 4 Programmes and 16 sub-programmes, with output reports quarterly. There is an IME (Information M&E) working group to look at information management in the sector, what data should be collected.

They do not do formal evaluations but undertake 6 monthly reviews where they bring all agencies together. The annual review starts from lowest level, budget management centres, district, region. There are technical reviews internal to agencies – plus interagency reviews, with an annual summit. Based on this they sign an aide memoire on corrective measures needed. There is a challenge however that these reviews are out of cycle with the national planning and budget processes.

4.2 Monitoring at regional/district/local level

The regions' role is not strong and they play a coordinating and post box role, including monitoring the performance and implementation of development plans of all districts in the region. MMDAs produce quarterly and annual progress reports using a prescribed format which are sent to the regional Planning Coordination Units (RPCUs)¹ and then to NDPC. Districts have district planning and coordination units (DPCUs), often with a couple of staff. They report through regions to the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD). The results from core district indicators are reported in the national APR.

Sector departments still report to the national ministry, as well as to the district assemblies, and DPCUs. MOH indicated that facility reports are sent on paper to districts where the data is captured electronically, and submitted directly so does not need further elaboration and indeed cannot be altered to avoid malpractice. MOFA is using Excel templates at district level which are aggregated at regional level and passed to national. Hence there is an aggregation model of data from district level aggregated at regional level and then passed on to national. MOH reported that they occasionally send teams out to cross-check data at district level matches. Health also has a District Health Management Information System (DHMIS) and Education also has an educational MIS.

MLGRD also has a system for monitoring management performance of district assemblies, called FOAT (Functional and Organisational Assessment Tool). This seems similar to South Africa's LGMIM system, and opportunities have already been set in motion to share this experience, with someone from the FOAT system participating.

Note the National M&E Manual includes a section on participatory M&E (where is this used?)

4.3 Monitoring by Parliament

Monitoring and Evaluation in Parliament is at its infancy stage. Parliamentarians are fairly limited in their ability to carry out effective monitoring due to the paucity of useful data to draw on. An interview with the Parliamentary Committee of the Poverty Reduction Strategy, set up in 2002, expressed frustration that they often do not have the scientific evidence or research to make decisions. This is the only committee whose work cuts across all of the sectors-cuts across 15 ministries that appear before them twice a year-before they present their budgets to

¹ The M&E Manual has detail on the structures of the RPCUs and DPCUs.

the ministry of finance. The committee will look at whether the budget for the poor is commensurate with a sector plan. Then rely on the annual progress reports of the NPC to monitor these sector targets.

The government assurance committee ensures that the pledges that the government enters into are followed through, i.e.: If government says it will do x then the committee will ensure this will be done. While this committee holds a lot of authority in accountability, the most visible committee is the public accounts one as its hearings are live on television in which the public actively engages to interrogate ministers.

The monitoring information the committee relies on is the annual progress report produced by the NDPC, which is complemented with site visits to see for themselves how budgets are being used. The ability to do site visits in 216 districts is greatly constrained by lack of budget and as such sites closest to Accra and to parliament, is where most site visits occur. The committee also relies on what is reported in the media as to what is happening to a pro-poor program. The committee also draws on its researchers on these programs and get a third party to do assessments that could enrich what they do. They draw on these multiple sources of information to better interrogate what is submitted to them.

These sources of information form the basis of interrogating the monitoring data on which targets are set at a sectoral level and if there is a shortfall on these targets, the portfolio committee seeks an answer from the Minister in question.

The ability to assess effectiveness is limited due to the paucity of evaluations which would permit greater periodic analysis of poverty reduction through various sectoral lenses. When evaluations are conducted by the executive, largely funded and driven by donors, it is not a given they will share this with parliament, particularly if there is negative information related to evaluation findings. The reluctance to share such evaluations with parliament is getting these findings into the opposition party can be seen as damaging to the party in power. If there is negative information, then opposition parties will use it. As a result, the executive hides negative reports,

With regard to the capacity to carry out evaluations, there was an acknowledgement that there are major gaps across the country in this regard. Despite the growth of M&E units in most government agencies, these are not structured to provide evidence for parliament's oversight role. In 2014, the NDPC attempted to build capacity for a number of parliamentarians and targeted 275 parliamentarians in M&E moving through committee by committee. They only ended up training 59 parliamentarians due to limited resources.

Relationship with the NDPC is good but parliament expects them to feed parliament with more evidence. This is limited due to funding constraints. As such, Parliament does not see the NDPC as providing evidence that is sufficiently critical of the government and think that a new mind-set is needed to enable the NDPC to play more of an independent think tank role.

4.4 Capacity to undertake useful monitoring

The team did not visit district level to get a feel of capacity on the ground, but the numbers suggest around one person per district and 4 per region on M&E/data for MOFA. There is therefore some challenge in capacity, especially as these cover the whole sector not just a department. The two ministries visited gave a convincing picture of their work and it would appear that at least in these ministries there are strong people, and fairly well established systems. This is likely to be weaker systems in many other ministries.

4.5 Role of civil society in government monitoring system

GMEF brings together professionals and people interested in M&E. Through financing from UNICEF, it organizes forums 3 to 4 times a year. These used to only be hosted in Accra but have now been carried out in 6 of Ghana's 10 regions, where there is a half-day session on particular themes with experts brought in for an open discussion. Out of these fora, GMEF is trying to build a community of practice in taking M&E forward in Ghana. It is using social media to start discussions around tools for M&E. GMEF also hosts an annual conference where there is one day focused on capacity building.

The GMEF perspective is that in Ghana, there is no culture of seeing data as critical in terms of being precise in how data is collected, stored and used. Even though health and education have a lot of data, the question is how rigorous or reliable. The CSOs tendency is to focus on being good at collecting data but the problem is scope as CSOS have a much smaller scope on areas they work on.

When their project or program monitoring assessments are brought to a national level, it is challenged by government because it contradicts national data. The real challenge is the inconsistencies between the quality of data collected for national monitoring systems versus the data that might have been gathered in small localities, which might be more rigorous. GMEF is pushing for the Ghana Statistical service to be more rigorous in how it gathers data so that it can be compared with the higher quality of micro-data that is collected by civil society in various localities.

The challenge with CSO monitoring are issues of standardization. CSOs have all kinds of information but it doesn't compare with national data. The GMEF is going to start addressing standardization of data collection, storage and usage through ongoing meetings with the National statistical services.

A second challenge for CSO monitoring is access to national data. They often go to government offices and they say it is not available or it is sitting on the website, which is not functioning. Often the way in which data is formatted is not relevant to the users. GMEF recently did an opinion poll on what to use in the public with the CSO sector and what the issues there are with the data provided.

4.5 The incentives for ensuring that monitoring is acted upon

MOH reported that there is an openness to taking results seriously, and that the methodology is key for them to be able to defend the results. They send the results of the reviews to an annual summit, where an aide memoire is produced on actions needed, and they do track implementation these recommendations. The MOH system would appear to be reasonably fast as there is submission directly to national, which implies that there could be a rapid response. MOFA indicated that where there are crises this is passed on to national and acted upon, e.g. the recent armyworm infestation, but were not convincing that much action happens as a result of the reporting.

The SWAP process may put pressure on acting on M&E results.

5 Experience of evaluation in country

5.1 How is evaluation understood and approach used, and scale to date

Evaluations are being done in Ghana, usually funded and it would seem managed by donors. This is linked also to project funding which seems to be dominant, and the project lifecycle includes mid-term and final evaluations. MOFA indicated that a minimum of 3 evaluations were done per year, although MOH did not refer to evaluations, funded through the JSR process, mostly through donors directly although some are indirectly through government. These are outsourced, mostly to Ghanaian consultants.

The only guidance at present is in the National M&E Manual of 2013, which does have some background on evaluation. There is no national evaluation policy at present although the development of one has been planned by NDPC, but has been delayed by the change in government which has resulted in a limbo at the NDPC, due to the Commission being in limbo and needing to be re-appointed. The Director General is also likely to leave. There is a need for a recommitment to a NEP, which as a minimum could assist with coordinating donor approaches to evaluation and ensuring that these evaluations are available, which does not appear to be the case at present. A helpful first step would be to do an inventory of evaluations.

5.2 The capacity in government to manage or undertake evaluations

There is very limited capacity to undertake evaluations within government as this is not a skills set that is yet pervasive within the civil service. There are no formal M&E post graduate degrees yet up and running so the opportunities for meeting a growing demand for M&E are thin beyond executive short courses of which several universities provide this, including GIMPA.

Skills sets required are unknown because there has never been proper assessment of the skills required. Government departments have focused on building the capacity of the staff they have. At a national level, staff are recruited to fulfil M&E posts but that have no M&E background. Biggest weakness of the public service is that by the time you see capacity built, this staff is moved elsewhere within government.

The role of the NDPC is by law to ensure evaluation is done well. The people within the NDPC who have the capacity to actually do evaluations are focused on managing evaluations, hence the paucity of skills in this area within the NDPC and more broadly across government, except in a few ministries such as in Health or Food and Agriculture.

The GMEF and UNICEF have supported the NDPC to do evaluation capacity assessments of all ministries, the metropolitan and municipal assemblies. This report will be ready at the end of June and provide timely information regarding government capacity to manage the statistical data and monitoring dimensions that feed into evaluations.

5.3 The capacity in civil society/academia/private sector to undertake evaluations

Civil society, hereby referred to as the Ghanaian Monitoring and Evaluation Society (GMEF) is very active in the M&E space and consists of professional evaluators who have capacity. Nevertheless, this VOPE faces significant demand for training from civil society and private sector members that the VOPE itself cannot meet because of its own limited capacity to provide this kind of training.

Formally, CSOs are supposed to be involved at the grassroots levels. There is a citizen monitoring program where Citizens fill in cards and then participate in the district monitoring process. Guidelines are sent out on how to involve CSOs at the local level so that this information comes back to the NDPC. Challenge of CSOs holding government accountable means that the relationship is not always good because of government defensiveness of the critique provided by civil society.

Only those who shout the loudest get heard and as a result, CSOs will focus on where they will get heard. The CSO/donor relationship is stronger than the CSO/government relationship. The method of inclusion is still better in Ghana than elsewhere.

The University of Ghana has two Masters Programmes in M&E which are in the process of being accredited. One is a Public Health M&E Masters and the second one is a general M&E Masters within the School of Business. GIMPA is in the process of accrediting a post-graduate degree in M&E through the help of CLEAR AA, which should commence in September. It is anticipated that within

two years, a Master's degree program in M&E will also be offered at GIMPA, building off of the post-graduate degree curriculum.

There are some regional level research institutions that can feed into evaluation work such as the Institute for Social Statistical and Economic Research (University of Ghana) and the Centre for Social Policy, UNICEF often draws on capacity from these two institutions to conduct their evaluations.

5.3 The incentives for ensuring that M&E is implemented and results followed up (Overlaps with 4.5)

As a donor that invests substantially in evaluations, their evaluation findings are put on their global systems and are tracked by headquarters to see to what degree country offices agree with the recommendation or not and whether implementation is happening. Most evaluations are commissioned by development partners to help them determine whether to continue funding a program or not. Hard to answer this question from the government side as they are not commissioning the evaluations.

6 Lessons emerging for PM&E in Ghana

6.1 What works well and less well and why

What works well	What works less well
Well established monitoring systems nationally and in sectors and strong links between district/regional/national levels	There is a disconnect between data collection systems and current plans and data needs. M&E systems weaker on agencies, e.g. in health sector.
Some monitoring systems involve direct data input at district level and so are immediately available (Health)	The monitoring systems have delays and many are not real-time, and so seen by Ministry of M&S as historic. Data collection tools can be in short supply
Some M&E and data capacity with units in all MDAs and MDDAs, with PPMED and SRID divisions	Units are small, and capacity limited, particularly in evaluation. Staff are usually not trained in M&E, except for 1 or 2 short courses
Well established national data champion, GSS	Challenge on data quality and less focused on administrative data and more on surveys
Evaluations are happening in Ghana with an established link to project/programme cycle, oversight from a range of stakeholders and there is funding available from donors for evaluations	Evaluations are donor driven with no overall policy framework to guide them, and the evaluations are not freely available, with no central repository
There are well established Ghanaian evaluation consultants	There are no established M&E competences. MOH indicated outputs not always good quality.
Short reviews are carried out internally.	Capacity on evaluation limited, for example to do good TORs.
There is capacity on M&E in the country and some M&E courses are planned to start in September	

- What are key risks that might undermine M&E systems

If the National Evaluation Plan is not drafted and endorsed soon, it will become difficult for government to take over the coordination of evaluations occurring in the country as donors themselves, the main financiers and commissioners of numerous evaluations, have retreated from playing this coordinating role. This is fundamental to beginning to construct a country-driven evaluation system.

6.2 What principles should underlie priority M&E activities with Twende Mbele

The activities for 2017-18 are already planned and so, while there is flexibility to adjust, care needs to be taken not to overload partners. The principles that underlie Twende Mbele (from the Programme Plan) are that:

- The project is owned and driven by African governments;
- Countries participating should have a serious commitment to doing monitoring and also evaluation;
- At least two countries must be involved in each collaboration, so that it is more than multiple countries and the activities leverage on the added value from collaboration across countries;
- We can learn from each other and develop common approaches, but then these need to be adapted for each country's specific context;
- M&E should be used to improve performance and accountability, not for its own sake;
- We commit to doing things differently as a result of the learnings from the project;
- The activities should build on and not duplicate related regional initiatives;
- Knowledge generated is owned by all parties and potentially available to the wider community;
- We must practice what we preach and document and reflect on learnings from the project;
- We must be accountable to each other and to the supporters – so the programme should be managed in a transparent and professional way;
- Funding and the project plan should be flexible enough to respond to emerging opportunities.

Specific principles are suggested in relation to new collaborating countries:

- Building on priorities of the new collaborating country, where these match the needs or capacity of other Twende partners, so that Ghana gets tangible benefits in the short term;
- Where relevant, including the new country in activities that are relevant to them, and where they have experience to offer

Practically this means planning for:

- Where possible, participation in existing activities of Twende Mbele (e.g. Ghana sharing their experience of a similar system to MPAT)
- Involvement in new Twende Mbele activities, where TM partners, or Ghana have valuable expertise to share (for example sharing experience on national evaluation policies)
- New activities where Ghana and other new countries potentially have interests or capacity development needs in common which Twende Mbele can assist with

6.3 What opportunities exist for interventions which are triggers for wider system change

The key change in the system is the introduction of the new ministries of planning and M&E in the Presidency. There is a strategic opportunity to assist the Ministry, help it to play a strong role drawing from others' experience. Both the roles of BEPPAAG in Benin and DPME in SA have similar elements to the new Ministry and there can be useful sharing between them. This means assisting to build a strategic champion in the Presidency.

There is experience in monitoring, but the outstanding desire, at least from NDPC, is to take forward the evaluation system, including the National Policy and linked system and capacity development components. The key question is around funding for evaluations, as donor funding reduces due to the lower middle income country status. It is not clear whether government has funding for evaluations, but it is likely over the next few years that donor funding can be coordinated and used in a more effective way, e.g. as Uganda does with its basket funding through the Government Evaluation Facility. Even simple tasks such as creating a repository of existing evaluations would be valuable, and supporting Ghana to develop its National Evaluation Policy. This would have to go beyond what seem like strong sectoral silos such as health or agriculture.

6.4 What role may Twende realistically play in supporting such initiatives

Experience in sharing could be valued in understanding how certain countries arrived at certain levels and what the journey was along the way. This is central to Twende's peer to peer approach. The capacity assessment currently being done and the challenges it identifies could be useful in having Twende members provide advice on how to address this. As means of strengthening monitoring systems, there was also a strong desire for support in strengthening the Management of Information Systems and this could become an area of peer to peer learning, such as is currently being one with MPAT.

6.5 What activities does it seem appropriate to collaborate on

6.5.1 Participation in existing activities of Twende Mbele

1. **MPAT** – Ghana's experience with FOAT at local government level is similar to the LGMIM and MPAT systems in South Africa. There is an opportunity to share Ghana's experience to benefit Uganda and Benin, and in the process expose Ghana to new developments which may benefit them. Practical actions could be:
2. **Parliament** – Involvement of the Government Assurance Committee, Poverty Reduction Strategy Committee, or Budget Committee in the work with parliaments, including training. Also important to look at role of strengthening M&E capacity of the parliamentary researchers and content advisors to provide institutional continuity in parliament. AfDB is interested in the work with Budget Committees. **Laila to check with Caitlin re the parliamentary work.**

6.5.2 New activities, where TM partners, or the country in question have valuable expertise to share (for example sharing experience on national evaluation policies)

3. **Data quality** – build on assessment which is completing in Ghana at end of June on statistical and data capacity. Can also draw on a big review that has been done by the UN's Joint Inspection Unit
4. **NEP development and National M&E Strategy** – assisting Ghana to develop a NEP, and possibly a national M&E strategy
5. **Delivery unit experience/Phakisa** – in October bring DM to meet OME people in DPME around this experience.
6. **DG training** - bring 2 Ghanaians to DG course in Uganda
7. **Training** – a number of areas have been identified, e.g. departmental focus points for the new M&E Ministry, and the possibility of sending some Ghanaians on the CLEAR Winter School.

6.5.3 New activities where new countries potentially have interests or capacity development needs in common which Twende Mbele can assist with

8. **Moving from monitoring to problem solving**, implementation science. This could be a new area of work for next year. Ian to check with partners to see interest and if so we could start work on new concept notes, e.g. Wed am of SAMEA week. The relevant lead in DPME has already expressed interest.

7 Decisions and way forward

7.1 Key decisions needed by Twende or by country

Twende Mbele and Ghana need to confirm that they would like to proceed on the basis of the type of activities proposed below. Ghana will also need to confirm that this set of activities correctly reflects areas of interest for them, and identify the top priorities

7.2 Possible roadmap for taking forward activities with Twende Mbele

7.2.1 Participation in existing activities of Twende Mbele

1. **MPAT** – Ghana’s experience with FOAT at local government level is similar to the LGMIM and MPAT systems in South Africa. There is an opportunity to share Ghana’s experience to benefit Uganda and Benin, and in the process expose Ghana to new developments which may benefit them. Practical actions could be:
 - 1.1 Someone from FOAT is going to a Benin MPAT workshop in June – other countries need to get a feel of FOAT there. **The FOAT participant should produce a report afterwards to their supervisor about the learnings for Ghana and what Ghana can offer**
 - 1.2 **Charles does debrief when the FOAT person returns from Benin**
 - 1.3 Possibility of a presentation or round table at SAMEA – FOAT and MPAT – propose a round table. **Ian to raise with Henk and see if that would be of interest to organise** (abstracts needed by end June)
 - 1.4 Based on this if it seems appropriate, a visit to Ghana by Benin/Uganda/SA to see how FOAT works
 - 1.5 This work can generate ideas on what Twende Mbele can do on local government next financial year,
2. **Parliament** – Involvement of the Government Assurance Committee, Poverty Reduction Strategy Committee, or Budget Committee in the work with parliaments, including training. Helping to build the institutional link with the new M&E Ministry. AfDB is interested in the work with Budget Committees. **Laila to check with Caitlin re the parliamentary work.**

7.2.2 New activities, where TM partners, or the country in question have valuable expertise to share (for example sharing experience on national evaluation policies)

3. **Data quality** – build on assessment which is completing in Ghana at end of June on statistical and data capacity. Can also draw on a big review that has been done by the UN’s Joint Inspection Unit
 - 3.1 Share report from Ghana
 - 3.2 Develop concept note by October – perhaps pay for 3-4 people to come together to draft one. Before then each country thinks through what they would want to do
 - 3.3 Dashboard – share experience on developing dashboards
4. **NEP development and National M&E Strategy** – assisting Ghana to develop a NEP, and possibly a national M&E strategy
 - 4.1 Workshop on 12-14 July on evaluation of SA’s national evaluation system – invite Special Advisor in M&E Ministry + Dr Mensah of NDPC
 - 4.2 Pre-SAMEA session in October to discuss technical aspects of process and content of national evaluation policies – invite Nana Opare-Djan of NDPC + the new Deputy

- Minister and they can stay for SAMEA. This would hopefully provide lots of ideas around Ghana's NEP and perhaps to revise the Roadmap as well as outline content
- 4.3 Write-shop after October - potential for Uganda/Benin or SA to participate in Ghana events, to provide ideas from their experience. Also potential for facilitation support e.g. for facilitating a write-shop to develop the policy.
 - 4.4 National M&E Strategy – the new Ministry talked of developing a new M&E Strategy. This should link to the NEP. An immediate action would be to ensure they are aware of M&E Manual. The Kenyans/Ugandans have developed national M&E strategies and there is the possibility of also using October to meet with Kenyans/Ugandans on this,
 5. **Delivery unit experience/Phakisa** – in October bring DM to meet OME people in DPME around this experience.
 6. **DG training** - bring 2 Ghanaians to DG course in Uganda
 7. **Training**
 - 7.1 **Training for departmental focal units** – think through what this could be and how it might link to one of the other activities or draw in resource people from other countries, e.g. on NEP.
 - 7.2 Winter school – Cara to confirm with Nana people to send on the Winter School.
- 7.2.3 New activities where new countries potentially have interests or capacity development needs in common which Twende Mbele can assist with**
8. **Moving from monitoring to problem solving**, implementation science. This could be a new area of work for next year. Ian to check with partners to see interest and if so we could start work on new concept notes, e.g. Wed am of SAMEA week. The relevant lead in DPME has already expressed interest.

Annexes

Annex 1: Programme

Tuesday 12 June (Laila Smith)

Day 1	Activity	Venue	Covers
09:00-12:00	WITS/GIMPA/CLEAR Partnership	GIMPA (Rector's Conference room)	1. Partnership between CLEAR/Wits and GIMPA
13:30-15:20	Support for ECD in Ghana	CIDA (Office)	1. Role of CIDA office in Ghana
15:30-17:00	Support for ECD in Ghana	UNICEF (Office)	1. Role of UNICEF in Ghana

Wednesday 13 June Ian Goldman, Laila Smith, Rendani Manugu

Day 2	Activity	Venue	Covers
09.00 – 12:00	Discussion on National M&E System	National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) Main Conference Room	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Role of the NDPC 2. Challenges encountered by the NDPC (lack of resources, limited authority to enforce recommendations, poor political backing) 3. Brief presentation on Twende Mbele 4. Desired areas of cooperation (capacity building and development)
13:30-15:30	M&E System of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA)	MOFA (Conference Room)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Role of the Department of Monitoring and Evaluation (DEM) in the MOFA 2. Challenges encountered (lack of resources, high staff turnover) 3. Brief presentation on Twende Mbele 4. Desired areas of cooperation (capacity building and development)
15:30-17:00	M&E System of the Ministry of Health (MOH)	MOH (Conference Room)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Brief introduction with the DG and formal welcome by the DG to Twende delegation 2. Presentation on the MOH 3. Brief presentation on Twende Mbele 4. Possible areas of cooperation (capacity of evaluators)

Day 3 Thursday 15 June Ian Goldman, Laila Smith, Rendani Manugu

Day 3	Activity	Venue	Covers
09:00-11:30	Meeting with Ministry of Monitoring and Evaluation	Flagstaff House (Parliament)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Brief history on the establishment of the Ministry 2. Brief presentation on Twende Mbele

			3. Desired areas of cooperation with Twende (capacity building and development, especially for new staff)
14:30-15:30	Meeting with Parliamentary Select Committee on Poverty Reduction	Parliament (Committee Room)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Role of the Committee 2. Brief Presentation on Twende Mbele 3. Challenges encountered by the committee (lack of resources)
15:30-17:00	Meeting with the GIMPA Rector	GIMPA (Rector's Office)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Official welcome of Twende team to Ghana by Rector 2. Purpose of Twende Mbele visit to Ghana 3. Steps moving forward – Charles to draft a short report to the Rector on the visit and list areas where GIMPA can support

Depart 22.20 on Thursday for Johannesburg

Annex 2: List of people met (Rendani)

Name	Job title	Organisation	Telephone	E-mail address
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	and Evolution			
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Mr William Sabi	Deputy Minister	Ministry of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (MPME)	Refer to Advisor	Refer to Advisor
Mr Osei Akoto	Minister	MPME	Refer to Advisor	Refer to Advisor
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Dr Kojo Appiah-Kubi	Chairman: Parliamentary Select Committee on Poverty Reduction Strategy	Parliament	Refer to Administrator	Refer to Administrator
Mr Habib Saad	Member: Parliamentary Select Committee on Poverty Reduction Strategy	Parliament	Refer to Administrator	Refer to Administrator
Dr Samiu Kwadwo Nuamah	Member: Parliamentary Select Committee on Poverty Reduction Strategy	Parliament	Refer to Administrator	Refer to Administrator
Mr Suleman Adamu Sanid	Member: Parliamentary Select Committee on Poverty Reduction Strategy	Parliament	Refer to Administrator	Refer to Administrator
Mr Benjamin Yeboah Sekyere	Member: Parliamentary Select Committee on Poverty Reduction Strategy	Parliament	Refer to Administrator	Refer to Administrator
Mr BT Baba	Ranking Member: Parliamentary Select Committee on Poverty Reduction Strategy	Parliament	Refer to Administrator	Refer to Administrator
Dr Bernice Adiku Heloo	Member: Parliamentary Select Committee on Poverty Reduction Strategy	Parliament	Refer to Administrator	Refer to Administrator
Mr Mohammed Abdul Aziz	Member: Parliamentary Select Committee on Poverty Reduction Strategy	Parliament	Refer to Administrator	Refer to Administrator
Mr Alexander Hottordze	Member: Parliamentary Select Committee on Poverty Reduction Strategy	Parliament	Refer to Administrator	Refer to Administrator

Annex 4: Selected documents consulted

- CIA Factbook (2017): “Ghana”, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gh.html>.
- CLEAR/DPME (2012): “African Monitoring and Evaluation Systems - Exploratory Case Studies”, September 2012, Johannesburg: CLEAR Anglophone Africa.
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