Anglophone African Dialogue Report
Exploring the Drivers of Evaluation Demand
December 2015
Executive Summary

As countries respond to the demands of rapidly changing development contexts, the need to find the right systems and tools to promote inclusive development increases. Across Africa there is pressure to harness emerging evaluative thinking and context-specific evaluation processes, to improve our responses to the complex transformations occurring within the continent.

The Centre for Learning on Evaluation and Results – Anglophone Africa (CLEAR-AA) enables practitioners to come together to develop their own skills for reflecting and learning from experience as an integral component of the capacity development model. The Anglophone African Dialogue was a platform for collaborative learning by focusing on country experiences institutionalising and improving evaluation capacity for national evaluation systems by looking at the different drivers of demand within the system. This one-day dialogue worked with participants to discover not just “what we are doing” but “what we are learning from what we are doing”, with an aim to strategise on collective ways of arriving at sustained change.

The Dialogue shared unique country experiences from Nigeria, South Africa, Zambia, and Kenya; exploring how the building blocks of National Evaluation Systems that were being developed by Uganda, South Africa and Zambia showed how demand can be driven through focused attention in key areas. Hearing from non-state actors provided greater insights into how to build cultures of evaluation across the demand spectrum.

Continued growth of monitoring and evaluation country systems has stimulated the demand for evaluation both within and outside national governments. Given the pressures for delivery from national development plans, country systems have begun to institutionalise M&E by establishing departments, policy frameworks and evaluation legislation. Building a more inclusive system through working with the legislature, civil society groups and sub-national governments was put forward as a priority for the near future.

To do this, we need more understanding on the constraints and levers of evaluation demand in different contexts. We need to learn what are the entry points for sustained behavior change and how to ensure national systems are country-led and owned. Building and sharing a body of knowledge on these points will be CLEAR-AA’s focus in 2016.

CLEAR-AA has committed to the following actions going forward:

1. To work with UNICEF to build a Community of Practice, leveraging the current successes of the UNICEF system
2. To work with Dialogue participants to turn the six sphere model into a diagnostic tool that would assess the entry points and maturity of the different national evaluation systems
3. This diagnostic tool will then be used to write-up selected country case-studies and shared among participants for the purposes of learning
4. CLEAR-AA will continue working on an African Evaluation Studies database with Stellenbosch University. After the development of the database, CLEAR-AA will host a number of ‘write-shops’ to analyse the database and consolidate learning products arising from it’s use.
# Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION ........................................................................................................... 4
AIMS OF THE WORKSHOP .......................................................................................... 5
DELEGATES .................................................................................................................. 5
WORKSHOP SESSIONS ............................................................................................... 5
SESSION 1: COUNTRY PRESENTATIONS ................................................................... 5
PRESENTERS ................................................................................................................ 5
SUMMARY OF KEY THEMES FROM THE DISCUSSION ................................................ 8
SESSION 2: GOOD PRACTICE IN BUILDING BLOCKS FOR EVALUATION SYSTEMS .... 9
SUMMARY OF KEY THEMES FROM THE DISCUSSION ................................................ 11
SESSION 3: GROWING A CULTURE OF EVALUATION ............................................... 12
SUMMARY OF KEY THEMES FROM THE DISCUSSION ................................................ 13
SESSION 4: SYNTHESIS WITH A FRAMEWORK ....................................................... 14
SESSION 5: PARTNERSHIPS ...................................................................................... 16
CONCLUSIONS AND WAY FORWARD ....................................................................... 17
APPENDIX ONE: REFERENCES AND SUGGESTED RESOURCES FROM PARTICIPANTS .. 21
APPENDIX TWO: FULL PARTICIPANT LIST ............................................................. 22
APPENDIX THREE: AGENDA .................................................................................... 24
APPENDIX FOUR: BUDGET FOR ANGLOPHONE AFRICAN DIALOGUE AND SAMEA ... 25
Introduction

Democracy and the demand for accountability are growing in tandem in much of Africa (Porter & Goldman 2013). All over Africa, various forms of institutions and instruments are emerging within and outside government to establish systems of evaluation that respond to these growing needs for learning, improvement and responsive governance. Given the breadth and scope of these developments, understanding the needs of governments, non-government actors and citizens for evaluation capacity development can be both challenging and exciting tasks.

In the rapidly changing global development context, countries and societies are responding in diverse ways to evaluation generally, and evaluation capacity development, specifically (see, for example; Porter & Feinstein 2014). This means that the circumstances and evaluation needs and capacities for Africa have not, and will not remain static. There is a need, therefore to harness emerging evaluative thinking and evaluation processes within Anglophone Africa and beyond, to improve our responses to the complex transformations occurring across Africa. A fundamental step in understanding evaluative thinking is a thorough description of country-specific challenges and changing contexts, a process that has been supported vigorously by CLEAR Anglophone Africa (CLEAR-AA). This forms a basis for enabling practitioners to come together to develop their own skills for learning and reflecting from experience as an integral component of the capacity development model. From these moments of sharing and reflection, governments and citizens are better able to build more responsive action to meet the demands accountability, using evaluation and evaluation capacity development at the country level.

Building on the momentum of the Regional Francophone Dialogue in Benin, CLEAR-AA wished to continue collaborative learning by focusing on country experiences in

1 Earlier in 2015 the CLEAR-AA Centre collaborated with the CLEAR Francophone Centre to run a Francophone/Anglophone dialogue in Benin on evaluation of public policies. Conversations focused on the strengths and weaknesses of national evaluation systems, the major challenges faced, priority actions for the next 12 months, and the type of the support needed. Some of the key challenges for national evaluation systems and capacity development included;

- Building the demand for evaluation within government and specifically the executive,
- Fostering further political will and enthusiasm for funding and using evaluation within and about public policy areas,
- Ensuring harmonization of donor and partner efforts and processes of evaluation,
- Strengthening communication and advocacy strategies for sharing knowledge and learning on evaluation within and between countries,
- Continuing to work with public, private and non-government actors in fomenting broad reaching national evaluation plans based on common principles and values.
institutionalising and improving evaluation capacity for national evaluation systems by looking at the different drivers of demand within the system. This one-day dialogue worked with participants to discover not just “what we are doing” but “what we are learning from what we are doing”, with an aim to strategise on collective ways of arriving at sustained change.

**Aims of the workshop**

1. To dialogue with evaluation leaders from across Africa and to hear from key players that aren’t always included in discussions of evaluation.
2. To reflect and learn from one another on upcoming trends, African-rooted tools, thinking and practice, and to find ways to help one another overcome common challenges.
3. To network and provide a platform for new and strengthened partnerships across countries.

**Delegates**

Twenty-six participants attended, representing 11 national governments, from both Anglophone and Francophone countries – as outlined in the Appendix 2. Three national Voluntary Organisations for Professional Evaluators (VOPEs) were represented and CLEAR-AA’s partner organisations, GIMPA and KSG, were also in attendance. Other non-state organisations represented were the African Development Bank, UNICEF and the African Peer Review Mechanism of the African Union. Mr Ian Hopwood, facilitator of the Francophone Dialogue in Benin, was also present.

The day was hosted by CLEAR-AA and facilitated by Dr Sulley Gariba and Mr Kieron Crawley. It was held at the Wits Club, University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.

**Workshop Sessions**

Two fundamental questions were posed to workshop participants at the beginning:

“**What is unique about what you do nationally that can contribute to an evolving body of knowledge? What is uniquely African about our work that we can upload to the world?**”

**Session 1: Country Presentations**

Presenters were asked to outline the country-specific context that shapes how government is meeting demands for accountability, using evaluation at the country level.

They were invited to reflect on the following questions;

1. In which areas of the national evaluation system has your country made most progress?
2. Which areas have generated the biggest challenges?
3. What learning are you able to derive from your reflections?

**Presenters**

1. **Honorable Mr Lechesa Tsenoli, Deputy Speaker of Parliament of South Africa.**

Mr Tsenoli outlined the three drivers of demand for using evaluation in parliament, which are, a) reporting on global commitments; b) the political party’s manifesto looking at progress toward meeting that; and c) engaging citizens with government processes. The South African
parliament is in the early stages of adopting evaluation methods and frameworks. There is not yet consensus among key parliamentary players on the value of evaluation, nor are evaluation reports always considered credible; much depends on the quality of the preceding research and evaluations. However, a key point raised was that increased use of evaluation findings would lead to increased credibility of evaluation and vice-versa. Further constraints limiting the use of evaluation in parliament are the attitudes and systems of the Party that view evaluation as exposing failure rather than reflecting on points of learning. Human resources are an integral part of sustaining the system and new political incumbents need to be encouraged by political counterparts to ensure administrative stability during political transitions. It is imperative that induction programmes deal with the importance of M&E for oversight purposes and be conducted for new political incumbents very soon after they assume office. Hon. Tsenoli also advocated for patience while capacity development takes place; increased understanding and ability to conceptualise, use and find evaluation evidence takes time.

2. Dr Zachari Lawal, Director Monitoring and Evaluation Department, Nigerian Government

Dr Lawal began by reflecting on a key learning from Nigeria; having a unifying point of coordination – Vision 2020 – was integral to harmonising evaluation frameworks across government and ensuring that the whole of government is working toward a common agenda. This led to the establishment of a monitoring and evaluation office, under the President, as part of the National Planning Committee. This has allowed the government to focus their planning, delivery and monitoring of success, especially with the introduction of KPIs for all departments. However, like South Africa, there is limited capacity of government actors to appreciate and support formal monitoring and evaluation, as the terms are often misunderstood and confused with auditing and seen as a mechanism of policing officials. This resistance is hampering the up-scaling of the system. To facilitate broad buy-in, Nigeria has tried linking the M&E system to the budgeting process while also making the design of KPIs as participatory as possible. Evaluation as a learning process is emphasized, rather than a punitive process, in this hopes this will promote buy-in to a larger system that explicitly requires evaluation. The need to have political champions in both the executive and legislature who can continue the advocacy work and influence funding processes to support the M&E framework is also part of their key learnings. Turn-over in political and executive leadership, especially as far as the champions for the evaluation cause goes, has been recognised as a potential risk factor in the building of evaluation systems. In this respect the opportunities sometimes associated with new political leadership needs to be recognised and embraced by those who are attempting to build national evaluation systems. Civil society voices are being strengthened by the addition of a new umbrella VOPE in Nigeria that will hopefully be able to improve the credibility of evaluation and support other CSOs working in this space.

3. Dr Obuya Bagaka, Senior Principal Lecturer, Kenya School of Government

Mr Bagaka presented on behalf of Mr Samson Machuka from the Monitoring and Evaluation Department of the Kenyan Government. He spoke about Kenya’s evaluation approach based on assessing how departments and counties are performing against the values of the constitution. For Kenya, having M&E in the constitution (and other legislated acts) as a key
part of the planning cycle has resulted in counties implementing M&E frameworks. At times, however, this is not always useful as frameworks focused on compliance rather than learning for improvement.

The national evaluation strategy, the tools and the outcomes are all focused on a process of nation building such that governments are tasked with using evaluation to improve their progress toward national development. For example, the latest evaluation that was done used political values (from the constitution) to measure the extent to which the public service is representative of the ‘face of Kenya’, and in the process create baselines. As with other countries, there still exists misunderstandings of the purpose of evaluation, however Kenya provided some good examples of how evaluation findings are used to set clear roles and responsibilities of actors, determine the need for a rewards and sanction system, and also in setting the evaluation agenda by including findings in the President’s speech on Independence Day, which will influence upcoming budgets and show high level commitment to evaluation.

4. Mr John Njovu, Zambian Independent Consultant

Mr Njovu echoed the sentiments of previous speakers in discussing the limited capacity within the country to carry out and demand evaluations to the extent desired. Zambia has seen many workshops and discussions about M&E over the years, but Mr Njovu feels there is not the resultant funding available or commitment to building local capacity. Donors and technical experts who focus only on sectors of interest (eg. health and education) dominate the evaluation sphere in Zambia. While some short courses on M&E are available in Zambia, there are as yet, no formal M&E qualifications available at Zambian universities. The government ideology is moving toward embracing M&E by including M&E plans in the National Development Plan but as yet the systems and tools available aren’t fully developed. Considering the political nature of evaluation, the Zambian context provided a useful example of the difficulties building trust and cooperation in a partisan political system within a context of weak civil society and a strong foreign donor presence.

VOPEs, which are looked to for supporting NGOs to undertake evaluations, are themselves experiencing governance as well as resource challenges. The efforts of building NES should deliberately keep an eye open with respect to including voices from society, and avoid that the entire effort be captured by governments. It is critical to use evaluation to strengthen a system of checks and balances and adherence to the Rule of Law in the overall system of governance.
Figure 1: Mr Njovu, Zambia, Mr Gariba, Ghana & Mr Byagumisha, Uganda

Summary of Key Themes From the Discussion

Discussion highlighted the different stages of evolution of national evaluation systems of countries in the room. Reflecting on the presentations there was a sense that people knew what had to be done to enhance specific aspects of their national evaluation system, but that progress toward goals met many of the same barriers. For example, Nigeria spoke about the length of time required to roll out M&E frameworks into all levels of the public sector, despite the existence of a nation M&E Framework. Other countries also reported resistance within sub-national and lower level departments, which slows progress toward a comprehensive and coherent national system. To counter resistance in some individual areas, Nigeria is attempting to institutionalise M&E by establishing units in agencies that should handle M&E, while also getting M&E legislated for the long-term. Advocacy by champions has been central to this work, as they attempt to find the right incentives for engaging key players in operationalising the system and eventually moving toward conducting evaluations.

When Botswana released its first results-driven national development plan in 2008/09, M&E was not properly instituted because of a lack of institutional and individual capacity. So while there is high-level commitment to monitoring results, the national M&E system is still under development and not yet yielding information other than performance indicators. As it is currently, Botswana does not have a clear hierarchy of indicators from the National Vision and National Development Plan down to the lower level of programmes and projects; Performance reviews are still mostly subjective because of this. A lot of change management is being done within the public sector - starting with the political leadership - to ensure buy-in and a common understanding of M&E. Learning from one administration to the next needs to be a priority and should be considered in terms of personnel, budgeting, and accountability mechanisms – stability is needed to keep learning in the system. It was felt that the lack of consequences for not engaging or supporting M&E contributed to the lack of engagement in the fledging system.

In response to countries’ concerns of staff changes during administration changes, a suggestion was made to prepare a hand-over report for the incoming administration showing where the current department is at, what has been achieved, what worked and what didn’t, and what is being planned for the future. If done well, the new administration may find it helpful and choose to keep it, even if the people in the department leave. For true institutionalisation, public sector managers need to have the attitude that M&E is part of...
their basket of standard managerial responsibilities (e.g. financial and human resource management) rather than seeing it as a specialist function, performed by outsiders and/ or a specialist unit. Any specialist unit is only there to support managers and to ensure coherence throughout and usability by the organisation as a whole.

Being able to ensure the independence of evaluation within the national evaluation system was concern for Zambia – while technical capacity within the executive is important, ensuring high quality evaluation supply outside of government is necessary for objectivity in evaluation, and capacity building efforts need to bring in all actors, including non-state actors and civil society. At present this is a struggle given the dearth of higher education institutions offering graduate or post-graduate degree programs in M&E. Cote d’Ivoire explained they also have the same problem, resulting in people leaving the country to receive training and often not returning.

Reflecting on ways to gain greater buy-in and responsiveness to the national evaluation system (NES), Kenya has adapted the process for designing indicators after public sector managers complained of being left out. The evaluation planning process is now much more participatory including, hearing their voices in the planning of how the results will be used. Consulting managers has proven to be a good way to ensure the findings have impact and to fine-tune the messaging and packaging of findings. This takes time, patience and planning.

Session 2: Good Practice in Building Blocks for Evaluation Systems

Presenters were allocated specific parts of an evaluation system on which to present their country experience. These were: Zambia on data systems – successes building better data systems and quality evidence; Uganda on the building blocks of a national evaluation system and successes with institutionalising some of the demand drivers within the national evaluation system; and South Africa on leadership – devolving and involving champions.

1. Mr Crane Muleya, Monitoring and Evaluation Department, Ministry of Finance and National Planning, Government of Zambia

Evaluation system building in Zambia is done in the context of the National Vision 2030, with shorter, five-year term National Development Plans. Government is increasingly recognising the need for monitoring progress and learning from actions, and that political champions are key – such that the Vice-President is now responsible for the National Development Planning committee. The migration of the M&E function from the Department of Finance to the Ministry for Development Planning is imminent. Much progress has been made in developing data systems needed for financial information management and evaluating the effectiveness of budgetary execution. In building systems for better evidence and data in other areas of decision-making, Zambia is making investments in three key areas:

i) Institutional capacity, such as legal and planning frameworks that deal with the system as a whole, with a focus on the national statistics system.

ii) Human capacity to anchor the systems and harness the data for use.

iii) Creating a supporting contextual environment by strengthen existing organisations/structures that contribute data, and to harmonise efforts to get reliable, quality data.
However, in Zambia, the different sectoral data systems are not adequately integrated. Efforts are being made to integrate the statistics offices with other sources of data, especially administrative data, while still maintaining independence and autonomy of the institutions; however, the budget available is still not big enough to achieve all that needs to be done.

2. Mr Albert Byamugisha, Commissioner and Head of Department- Monitoring and Evaluation in the Uganda Office of the Prime Minister.

Uganda has worked hard in the last 10 years to strengthen scrutiny of public funds – in 2004 they introduced a national M&E strategy and have worked on creating a conducive environment for its implementation. In their experience, specifying clear roles and responsibilities was key to building buy-in and accountability. Before any new program or policy can be included in public investment, the system requires that they have an accompanying M&E plan, which must include baseline information, and provide for process and impact evaluations. Without such an M&E plan, proposals for any new initiatives cannot be considered or be passed. This has led to each department creating its own M&E unit, linked to the Office of the Prime Minister who plays a coordination role, ensuring minimal duplication of effort. The establishment of a multi-stakeholder national evaluation facility has led to the majority of evaluations being done by local Ugandan and African evaluators (as opposed to Western donor agencies), which has the added benefit of strengthening civil society’s ability to respond to government TORs and have a voice in the creation and use of evaluations.

Raising stakeholder awareness of the role of evaluations in decision-making has also been crucial. Since the limitations of monitoring implementation only were pointed out, ministries have shifted focus to a learning agenda and are increasingly looking to evaluation for decision-making. Uganda has started bringing on board researchers and oversight institutions, like parliament, in order to capacitate more parts of the system. Bringing the various stakeholders – including the media - together annually to discuss evaluation, means CSOs can support each other in learning what is working and what’s not; further dispersing the capacity support function and breeding increased independence. Citizen demand for evaluation has also been strengthened through public dialogues or ‘barazas’. These are designed to enhance accountability of government by allowing them an opportunity to show local communities their achievements and spending. Further to this, government agencies have improved the target setting of technical staff so they are able to plan according to the NDP and better measure what has been achieved.

3. Ian Goldman, Director General, Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, the Presidency, South Africa

The DPME is currently working with senior managers to value the cycle of evidence rather than viewing evaluation as a compliance mechanism. In order to move managers toward using rigorous, high quality evidence in decision-making, the DPME is working on both supply issues – increasing access to research evidence, relevant knowledge, credible and timely evidence – and demand from government. They have concentrated their role as evidence

“I would not say where do you find the money [for evaluation]? Rather, how can you afford not to.” Ian Goldman
brokers, bringing together the different users and producers of evidence while also building sustainable infrastructure to support the use of evidence.

When leaders own evaluation, it is used to make informed decisions about programs and policies that hopefully make a difference in peoples’ lives. Building ownership of evaluation requires a participatory approach where managers are included in proposing and selecting ideas for evaluation, required to co-finance them, as well as participating in the conduct of the project. In DPME’s experience, ownership is one of the key factors inspiring utilization – along with the ability to learn with it and from it, believing in the underlying principles of evaluation and also having follow-up with improvement plans. Recent work by the DPME showed that 54% of departments don’t see problems as an opportunity to learn, illustrating that more work is needed to continue reforming the current culture so that the public service can learn from mistakes. A combination of carrots (eg. Recognition, part-funding of evaluation), sticks (eg. evaluation results go to Cabinet, to Parliamentary Portfolio Committees and be made public) and sermons (eg. study tours, DPME Minister emphasising learning and punitive) are also used to incentivise demand and use of evaluation.

Summary of Key Themes From the Discussion

Use and Attitudes

Uganda is slowly changing public sector attitudes toward evaluation by involving more segments of the national system (ie. Provincial departments, civil society groups, the media) and finding champions at all levels. In South Africa, attitudes toward evaluation in government are changing as evidenced by provincial governments asking for guidance setting up their own M&E departments. Both countries acknowledge that this is a long processes and planning must be for the long-term. Each country must find the right incentives and keep working on multiple levers for change. For example, the South African NES started with evaluations at the national level because that was where there was demand, but with success, the demand is coming from a greater variety of stakeholders at the subnational level as well as from oversight role players, such as the legislature.

Other very practical examples for increasing use of evaluation were shared by Uganda. They develop two-page policy briefs that summarise evaluation findings, methods, recommendations, and these are presented to cabinet and the parliamentary forum, as well as to journalists. They also facilitate Evaluation Breakfast talks once a month, broadcast on national television, to raise awareness among the population with respect to what is working and what is not. These are attempts to increase the profile of evaluations by making the findings accessible, not just to government, but also to the public.

Twende Mbele is giving both Uganda and South Africa linkages to other countries in the region to learn through peer exchange from strengths and weaknesses in each other’s national evaluation systems. Through this program countries are enabled to share innovations that can be tried and tested in the local settings, while also gaining greater credibility by being part of a network of African evaluation leaders.
Relationships and civil society

As a key driver of demand in a national evaluation system, there was a shared sentiment for the need to prioritise building citizen demand into the NES so that citizens have an avenue to demand accountability. Participants also agreed that ensuring inclusiveness and participation in the system is a requirement of parliaments and the work of evaluators.

To bolster this, in Uganda, as part of institutional mechanism arrangement two working groups have been formed, namely; the National Monitoring and Evaluation working group which include all government heads of M&E units, Executive Directors of civil society organizations, development partners’ representatives and academia. The second working group is called the Evaluation Sub-Committee and is comprised of: Key government institutions represented by Office of the Prime Minister-Chair, Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development, Uganda Bureau of Statistics, National Planning Authority, academia, civil society organization and development partners. All these groups meet quarterly. In addition, the M&E department office of the Prime minister coordinates the ‘barazas’ – platforms where local citizens meet government and public service providers to talk about how funding is used and to advocate for improvements.

Strengthening the local VOPE is included in the cross-sector capacity building support in Uganda. This has been done by helping increase membership, drafting standards to be used by local evaluators, contributing to the roster of evaluation consultants, supporting professional development opportunities and providing logistics for networking. The Ugandan government feels that having strong, independent evaluation professionals will improve the value and influence of evaluation, and in turn, development practice.

In another example of building relationships with civil society, South Africa described using citizen-based monitoring systems to provide insights into implementation and service delivery. Citizens are able to share their experiences and impressions of public services like police stations and health services as a way to directly impact service improvements. While citizen engagement is growing in the monitoring sector, the DPME is working on ways to grow engagement in evaluations.

Technical considerations and data systems

All countries noted that their data systems are weak and there are major gaps in the monitoring data being collected. Uganda, expressed how departments are not following certain standards and the systems need to be strengthened as part of a management responsibility.

Session 3: Growing a Culture of Evaluation

“Sulley will tell you a story about a chicken and a snake. If you put them both in a room, if you don’t protect the chicken, the snake will have eaten it. Evaluation is the chicken.” Emmanuel Gnahoui

Figure 2: Mr Dakoure, Burkina Faso
In this session, non-state actors were asked to comment on their observations on the growing culture of demand for evaluation, based on what they were hearing from the conversation throughout the day. The session was lead by representatives from the African Development Bank (AfDB) and UNICEF.

1. Ms Karen Rot-Munstermann, Division Manager, Knowledge Management, Outreach and Capacity Development Division, African Development Bank

The AfDB supports demand generation through disseminating knowledge from evaluations, promoting accountability to shareholders and wider stakeholders, and by drawing lessons to improve new projects and policies with a view to promoting development effectiveness. Part of this includes supporting communities of practice, like African Parliamentarians’ Network On Development Evaluation, while also helping countries strengthen their national evaluation systems by providing technical and logistical support through training, diagnostic support, and national framework development assistance. The two countries the AfDB has been actively involved in building capacity have been Tanzania and Ethiopia.

2. Mr Eddie Addai, Regional Chief Programme Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Office

Mr Addai proposed a variety of points on the culture of evaluation that generated much discussion.

I. What would success look like? This involves making evaluation a way of life in national development planning.

II. Definitions matter. Need to look after evaluation or monitoring will subsume it.

III. He identified a number of ‘fixes’,

   - Need to invest in the right people and build their capacity appropriately
   - Push funding for evaluation to around 2% of organisations’ annual budgets
   - Need more quality evaluations that are useable, credible and meaningful
   - Evaluations that are not used are useless. To fix this on the demand side there should be clear policy frameworks
   - Evaluation plans must accompany national development plans
   - Leadership from multiple avenues on the demand side is needed. And they should talk to each other.

IV. Evaluators cannot be islands. We need to invest in, and build coalitions with a partnership approach. Non-technical people need to act as champions and push the cause.

V. Reports need to be written more clearly, and be more user friendly.

VI. Reports and recommendations need to contain a response from management regarding the findings and follow-on activities.

VII. Evaluations are political. Evaluations need to engage with political analysis at the recommendation stage to compliment the work.

Summary of Key Themes From the Discussion

Knowledge production and communication

Making evaluation findings accessible and understood by multiple audiences, including beneficiaries, was posing a challenge to many participants. Ms Rot-Munstermann agreed that
making information comprehensible was paramount and demonstrated the usefulness of the Knowledge Management, Outreach and Capacity Development Division at the AfDB because evaluators are not always good at communicating technical evidence in a non-technical way, or at translating their messages to suit different audiences.

South Africa described an example of requiring all evaluation reports to be accompanied by a management response as a way to compliment evaluation findings and making them usable. Cabinet receives both the evaluation report and the management response and both are then posted on the DPME website. Additionally, improvement plans are devised from each evaluation report and the DPME assists in monitoring progress with implementing the improvement plans.

**Institutionalising for sustainability**

Many countries spoke of their efforts to institutionalise M&E by attempting to pass legislation related to M&E activities. In Benin, the government spearheads evaluation (specifically the Bureau of Evaluation), so legislation is considered a vital part of institutionalising the work of champions for the long term and ensuring that commitment to the NES is entrenched. Both Senegal and Burkina Faso have also passed legislation for either the systematic harmonisation of M&E in public policy, or the integration of M&E as part of the national development plan.

Building leadership, often in the form of champions, forms part of the relational part of capacity development and an enabling environment. Recognising the role of multiple champions in building a culture of evaluation, South Africa provided an example of dispersing champion leadership by convening a group of emergent leaders, taking them on a study tour, and then tasking them with designing the M&E policy. These people are now serious champions in government and act as custodians of the system by having formed the National Evaluation Technical Working Group.

Benin is also working toward decentralising responsibility for the national evaluation system to promote a wider spread of a culture of evaluation. They are in the process of putting together a network of actors in government, the public administration, civil society, parliamentarians, and funders who will help make evaluation a national priority. In moving toward institutionalization, they are experimenting with ‘evaluatory questioning and thinking’ in different ministries to break down the technical gatekeeping that often leave evaluations inaccessible to non-technical, but integral, stakeholders.

**Session 4: Synthesis with a framework**

“Gold is really in the bosom of the egg, but to find it, you have to go deeper”

This session aimed to synthesise and make sense of what had happened over the course of the day, as a way to draw out key learning from what was presented. This would in turn, guide CLEAR’s programming going forward. To achieve this, Mr Crawley took the group through a visualization session using an six sphere model for institutional assessment (Crawley, forthcoming)
This tool looks at the different aspects related to building an inclusive, sustainable national evaluation system. The key areas are:

- Logistical
- Technical
- Contextual
- Relational
- Political
- Values and beliefs

A major finding from this session was how some of the apparent logistical and technical challenges were, in fact, as a result of deeper, relational or value-based challenges.

Significant elements of the system that were often discussed included,

- The importance of political champions
- The critical nature of coalitions
- Politicians realizing that good development equals votes
- You don’t need a perfect system to start – just get something good enough and get going
- Interpretation of data and research are not value free
- Inclusivity is key to results
- M&E must be part of the wider policy planning cycle
- Ownership breeds better utilisation

This was complimented by additional notes from participants and placed in the appropriate level of the framework.

This exercise showed one of the reasons M&E sits in the technical sphere is that donors drive evaluations, but these are not always owned politically or ideologically by governments. Participants were enthusiastic to be bolder about the political nature of evaluation, about writing it into country systems, and then training donors about the dynamics of African systems. Evaluation teams should be multi-talented; they need to include people with
technical expertise, people who understand the context as well as people who understand the politics. Relationships are critical in this context, as collaboration will bring credibility.

The six sphere model elucidated the implicit values and principles about evaluation that are often not acknowledged but recognised across contexts. It helped participants see the interconnectedness of the different elements and identify entry points for building enabling environments. This led to greater understanding of the various forms of system ‘maturity’ and expounded benchmarks for longer term planning.

**Session 5: Partnerships**

At the end of the day participants were asked to come up with ideas for partnerships and strategies to cement them.

Most suggestions were around pieces of work that could be done together to set the agenda for longer-term engagement. CLEAR-AA’s role as a facilitator of engagement and partnership was reinforced on multiple occasions during the discussion.

South Africa strongly recommended deeper ties with the legislature, as an ongoing, priority partnership in each country. Many voices stressed that relationships need to be owned by each country – for example, CLEAR-AA can pull out the learning from case studies and share it, but implementation of partnerships needs to be led at the national level. Twende Mbele is a good example of where three countries have come together through CLEAR-AA to share and support each other, but where local implementation has its own flavour and is owned by each country.

Participants were supportive of continuing the collaboration between Francophone and Anglophone countries for evolving common cultures of evaluation across the continent, and to expand the network of available resources to learn from. A suggestion to share logistical plans, technical mappings, and advocacy toolkits was made – including perhaps, a series of working papers, and more online links and discussion opportunities.

A few participants reinforced the need to capitalise on existing partnerships, for example, Uganda has meaningfully connected with 3ie to boost their capacity to conduct both formative and impact evaluation. This appears to be a unique way to interact with 3ie who doesn’t usually engage in formative evaluations, but Uganda has managed to negotiate the relationship to capitalise on available resources to build the system where it is at. There are numerous regional initiatives operating that should be considered before setting up new ones, eg. EvalNet are looking at country partner evaluations.

Different types of partnerships can be cultivated depending on where countries or organisations are at. The purpose of each partnership needs to be considered and tailored to be relevant to each context. UNICEF would like to partner to make available a database of existing evaluators across the continent. As a way to reach out to more partners UNICEF would also like a bigger knowledge exchange platform and a community of practice, and to have Uganda share more their experience.

Participants identified the following gaps in existing partnerships,

- Systematic engagement with universities and professionalisation organisations.
Partnerships with organisations doing quality policy evaluation work
Consolidated work with AfrEA

Conclusions and Way Forward
The Dialogue was a great opportunity to share ideas and learnings on demand for evaluation, and despite limited attendance from parliamentary and civil society invitees, the conversations traversed and explored the three drivers of demand quite well. In some ways the Dialogue raised more questions than answers, however a number of trends, big ideas and innovative practices have been presented.

Trends
In general, we see the continued growth of monitoring and evaluation country systems, though the use of evidence in decision-making and policy planning across most countries is considered less than ideal. Part of the reason for this was explained as a lack of on-time and accessible, quality data and evaluation findings; a sense within government departments that evaluation is used punitively rather than as a learning mechanism; and the low (but growing) technical capacity of many departments to appreciate and support formal evaluation.

While most countries are developing more and more sophisticated monitoring systems, few countries appear to be spending significant resources on building the evaluation side of the M&E system. Many of the building blocks to a national evaluation system are being strengthened, such as statistics and finance departments, however, in some cases there simply are not the resources or the commitment to extend the system to evaluation.

Most countries are using their Vision documents or National Plans to facilitate and house an M&E strategy and national M&E department. Those countries with higher-level champions (eg. Prime Minister or deputy-President) seem to be finding this easier than those who lack a high level champion. A key finding from the workshop was that fostering a culture of evaluation is a long-term assignment, requiring multiple levers of change and a lot of advocacy. Building the capacity within, and the relationships between the executive and the legislature came out consistently as a common need to boost the system.

Constraints
Countries are at different stages of developing their own national evaluation systems, however, there are common constraints experienced by all countries that have led to a variety of innovative solutions. This Dialogue shared insights into country experiences, such that we now have a better understanding of the common constraints to building a NES. As more stories of success (and failure) come out, we hope to be able to share these.

We have attempted to add the more commonly cited constraints that countries are experiencing to the Framework Tool so as to identify some concrete and discrete improvement projects, as outlined in the table below.
### Table 1: Commonly cited constraints to institutionalising evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Logistical</th>
<th>Technical</th>
<th>Contextual</th>
<th>Relational</th>
<th>Political</th>
<th>Ideological</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Change in administration leads to staff turnover and lost human capital and consistence in organisational memory</td>
<td>Technical Capacity</td>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td>Public servants don’t have the credibility and courage to manage evaluations</td>
<td>Impatience from political leadership to deliver</td>
<td>Having values for M&amp;E in the constitution that provide the basis of the M&amp;E framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of funding for evaluation</td>
<td>Evaluation results not deemed credible</td>
<td>People don’t see problems as an opportunity to learn</td>
<td>Lack of trust between executive, legislature and civil society</td>
<td>Senior managers don’t value evidence-based decision-making and don’t use evaluation data</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-term, uncoordinated evaluation frameworks</td>
<td>Poor quality data and lack of autonomy of data systems</td>
<td>Key officials resist evaluation for fear of exposure of poor performance</td>
<td>Weak civil society – scared or co-opted by government</td>
<td>Lack of senior level leadership - ministers aren’t interested</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of technical capacity of govt. actors to appreciate and support formal evaluations</td>
<td>Not an accepted learning culture</td>
<td></td>
<td>Governments change staff as a political necessity</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Concept of evaluation is misunderstood</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Lack of a strong, independent VOPE (&amp; few opportunities for local development which means less local knowledge in and out of evaluations)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of capacity for policy evaluation</td>
<td>Structural</td>
<td>Lack of integration between departments and systems</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No capacity to enforce compliance with system</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of capacity to implement findings</td>
<td>Lack of integration between departments and systems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Systems</td>
<td>Systems don’t value (are not inclusive) of multiple actors</td>
<td>Donor-dominated system (ie, not country-led)</td>
<td>Need to follow the party line on policy regardless of evidence</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No Legislation mandating the establishment or use of M&amp;E</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Weak linkages between M&amp;E frameworks and budget allocation processes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reporting requirements too technical or too hard</td>
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</table>

### Enablers and Levers

Many examples of enablers or levers to building the NES came up throughout the day. While some of these were mapped to different levels in the six sphere model, it’s interesting to note the more unique examples that came up.

In the logistical field, there were a number of examples around resourcing evaluations and specific parts of the system eg. the statistics office. This area focused substantially on...
Reducing duplication and promoting integration as a way to streamline the system. South Africa gave a neat example of encouraging evaluations by entering into co-financing arrangements with departments to produce evaluations. This has the added advantage of helping them take ownership of the process.

The contextual and technical fields areas held the most number of levers. From study tours with high-level champions, to quality training for individuals; boosting the quality of evaluations made available was a key lever of creating use and thus demand for evaluation. Having an M&E strategy framework for national governments to focus direction and results on was seen as a key technical tool for building the NES.

Contextually, Kenya and Nigeria spoke of how making the design of processes – specifically KPIs and evaluation design – participatory was useful for gaining buy-in. Creating a culture of learning was considered a key step in improving contextual elements. To do this countries found having multiple, high-level champions were useful, as was different ways of institutionalising it, eg. passing M&E policies into law, having reward and sanction systems, and having values for evaluation embedded in the constitution.

Fomenting the relationships between the executive and the legislature was important for getting free flowing information for evidence-based decision-making. Building trust was critical, as was embedding a system for how they relate to each other. Uganda shared an example of how all new policies and programs are required to have M&E frameworks attached to them before being included in public investment.

At a political level, having a vision for the country (or a long-term development plan) was a good lever to encourage demand for tracking and learning from development policies and programs. Where there were accepted evaluation standards and budget support, there appeared to be more bi-partisan political will.

Three key ideas were prominent in the values and belief sphere. First, the importance of having country-led, context-specific evaluations and evaluation systems. Where countries owned the evaluation experience, there was more buy-in and more enthusiasm for trying new ideas from all actors. Secondly, and perhaps related to the first point, evaluation systems had the best buy-in when evaluation was seen as leadership tool for improvement and change. In a developing context like Africa, this point is salient for building communities of people who understand their role in producing a system that improves lives. Third, was the ideological need to strength citizen demand for evaluation and other mechanisms through public dialogue and inclusion in national systems. Without responding to strong citizen demands, governments suffer from a lack of perceived accountability and which participants felt would be detrimental for the country, and likely lead to citizen collective action.

What are we learning from what we’re doing?

We have two challenges for our work: first, how to prioritise which sectors we support; and second, how to structure and deliver this support. In order to prioritise, we need to answer the questions: What are the value propositions for different actors to incentivise and grow demand; and what are the appropriate entry-points to engage these actors? Moreover, what is needed to help systems move from pure monitoring to more policy evaluation?
Demand for CLEAR-AA to answer these questions and to support country efforts is growing. Given the different stages that countries are at, the type of support needed will differ from country to country. At this stage, CLEAR-AA is best suited to help counties foster demand by building the technical capacity of different actors eg, governments, VOPES, civil society organisations. By working with different sectors, and drivers of demand, CLEAR-AA can support system strengthening by working on standards, systems, tools and guidelines. CLEAR-AA will play a key role in capturing and sharing learning between countries about what works in different contexts to raise the status and quality of evaluation.

What is ‘African’ about what we do? Opportunities to African-ise our work exist and were fully supported – indeed, deemed necessary – by those in attendance. The nature of evaluation is changing and countries are keen to lead this transformation. But what does this look like? In Kenya we see this as a commitment to explicit values laid out in the constitution that seek to overcome historical impediments to harmony and lead to unique evaluation; in Benin we see how the government is able to legislate evaluation to institutionalise the work already being done in case of a change of government. Many countries are also working to build the capacity of the local evaluation associations as a way to strengthen the quality of independent evaluators who can contribute to improved credibility and thus demand for local evaluation. Learning what an enabling environment looks like and how best to build it will be an area of inquiry for CLEAR-AA and its partners going forward.

Future Activities for CLEAR-AA

CLEAR-AA has committed to the following actions as a result of the Dialogue:

1. To work with UNICEF to build a Community of Practice, leveraging the current successes of the UNICEF system
2. To work with Dialogue participants to turn the six sphere model into a diagnostic tool to assess entry points and maturity of the different national evaluation systems
3. This diagnostic tool will then be used to write-up selected country case-studies and shared among participants for the purposes of learning
4. CLEAR-AA will continue working on an African Evaluation Studies database with Stellenbosch University. After the development of the database, CLEAR-AA will host a number of ‘write-shops’ to analyse the database and consolidate learning products arising from its use.

Other suggestions from participants, but not committed to, included the development of more peer-to-peer mentorship within the group of participants and regional benchmarking projects.
Appendix One: References and Suggested Resources from Participants

- ‘The Art of Explanation’ by Lee LeFever
- ‘Admitting Failure’, Canadian Engineers Without Borders, [https://www.ewb.ca/ideas/admitting-failure-0](https://www.ewb.ca/ideas/admitting-failure-0)
- ‘Bringing Citizen Voices to the Table: A Guide for Public Managers’ by Carolyn J Lukensmeyer
## Appendix Two: Full Participant List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>Title and Affiliation</td>
<td>Email</td>
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## Appendix Three: Agenda

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Agenda Item</th>
<th>Responsible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>08:30 – 09:00</td>
<td>Welcome and Opening Remarks</td>
<td>Sulley Gariba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09:00 – 09:15</td>
<td>Setting the scene &amp; Introductions</td>
<td>Sulley Gariba</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 09:15 – 10:30| Presentations from countries on key themes                                 | Sulley Gariba 1. Nigeria, Mr Z. Lawal  
2. South Africa, Mr L. Tsenoli 
3. Kenya, Mr Obuya Bagaka 
4. Zambia, Mr J. Njovu |
| 10:30 – 10:45| Morning tea                                                                |                                      |
| 10:45 – 11:15| Report back and discussion                                                 | Sulley Gariba                        |
| 11:15 – 12:30| Panel presentations on Good Practice                                        | Kieron Crawley                       |
|              | a) Building better data systems                                             | 1. Zambia, Mr C. Muleya              |
|              | b) National system building blocks                                          | 2. Uganda, Mr A. Byamugisha          |
|              | c) Leadership: devolving and involving champions                            | 3. South Africa, Mr I. Goldman       |
| 12:30 – 1:15 | Lunch                                                                      |                                      |
| 1:15 – 2:00  | Panel discussion on Growing a Culture of Evaluation                        | R2K, Ms N. Tshabalala                |
|              | 2. UNICEF, Mr E. Addai                                                    | 3. AfDB, Ms K. Rot-Munstermann       |
| 2:00 – 2:45  | Discussion on panels and synthesis                                         | Kieron Crawley                       |
| 2:45 – 3:10  | Afternoon tea                                                              | Networking                           |
| 3:10 – 4:00  | Synthesis Framework                                                        | Kieron Crawley                       |
| 4:00 – 5:00  | Deepening Partnership with Anglophone Africa                               | Sulley Gariba & Kieron Crawley      |
| 5:00         | Finish and group photo                                                     |                                      |
| 5:00 – 7:30  | Drinks and nibbles                                                         |                                      |
| 7:30         | Return to hotel                                                            |                                      |
Appendix Four: Budget for Anglophone African Dialogue and SAMEA

To capitalise on the expense included in travelling, and as part of the learning experience for guests to the Anglophone African Dialogue, CLEAR-AA paid for 10 participants to stay on in Johannesburg and attend the South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association conference. Many of the participants presented their work as part of the Made in Africa stream, while Mr Amoatey and Mr Bagaka chaired majority of the sessions during the stream.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anglophone African Dialogue Budget: September 2015</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost Item</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flights</td>
<td>R71 317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation - Park Inn (B&amp;B)</td>
<td>R126 917</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conference Registration</td>
<td>R34 500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Venue (incl catering)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff time</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>R417 899</strong></td>
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