AFRICAN THOUGHT LEADERS FORUM ON EVALUATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

EXPANDING THOUGHT LEADERSHIP IN AFRICA

14th to 17th November 2012
THE BELLAGIO CENTRE
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This Bellagio Forum was held to encourage fresh thinking in support of the Made in Africa Approach to Evaluation program being established by AfrEA. It arose from a realization that the ongoing emphasis on “building” or “strengthening” evaluation capacities on the continent without encouraging the active promotion of “new thinking” about evaluation theory and practice will eventually impoverish the profession and practice in Africa. This lack - or low profile - of thought leadership in evaluation in Africa has to be addressed: to date, evaluation innovations from Africa have been rare or largely invisible in shaping national, regional or global evaluation thinking and practices.¹

Considering development contexts, frameworks and trends, and their implications for the evaluation profession provides a starting point for such thought leadership. There is a symbiotic relationship between development and evaluation². Influential evaluation findings lead to new development approaches. As development strategies evolve, so do evaluation approaches. The African evaluation profession therefore occasionally needs to take stock of how the development context is influencing – or should influence – the direction of their theory and practice.

Some groundwork was done in preparation for, and at this forum. Participants discussed the development-evaluation interface and its implications for evaluation in Africa over the next decade, engaging with

- the unfolding context for development and evaluation
- the core belief in the value of ‘Africa rooted evaluation for development’
- first steps towards a framework for Africa rooted evaluation,
- the notion of ‘Africa driven evaluation for development’; and
- potential strategies for action, change and influence.

(The goals and comprehensive rationale for the conference are articulated in the conference proposal).

As noted above, development and development evaluation are inextricably linked. Creativity and entrepreneurship are demanded from both. It is the premise of the participants in this meeting that desirable African futures can be supported through the appropriate use of evaluation cognizant of these principles and values. A better understanding is needed of these issues in development evaluation, as well as new perspectives that acknowledge inherited legacies, confront the present and work with future aspirations. In this manner Africans can make an essential and significant contribution to global knowledge on evaluation for development.

The unfolding context for evaluation in Africa

Africa’s great diversity - in geography, demography, ethnicity, culture, development trajectories and many others - prevent sweeping generalizations. Yet there are common macro trends that shape the development context and consequently have the potential to shape the evolution of evaluation on the continent. Recent studies as well as key events and contributions such as the various presentations at the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness held in Busan in the Republic of Korea as well as subsequent meetings informed parts of this analysis, which will be sharpened and published in the near future.

The following describe some of the most significant aspects, and their implications for evaluation and thus priorities requiring attention from the African evaluation community. They point to areas in need of improved evaluation theory, frameworks and models, or practices. In

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¹ Thought leadership is a current buzzword used here for lack of a better term. We define it as someone who engages deeply with specified issues – which can be theory and/or practice - who is proven to understand them in depth, who interprets them for others, who uses this deep understanding to innovate, and who is able and keen to share novel, often radical thinking and new directions that inspire others. These latter characteristics distinguish a thought leader from the conventional notion of an ‘expert’. A thought leader tends to set directions in theory and/or practice, and is usually sought after as strategist, mentor or advisor.

² Of course this does not imply that nothing has been done. The statement reinforces that very little of note has been systematically captured in the public domain, as confirmed by Alkin and Carden, 2012.

³ When reference is made to “evaluation” it implies the field of work, and the profession. This includes monitoring which is an aspect of the broad field of evaluation, but it is not the same as evaluation practice. Where it is important to distinguish between the two, M&E or the specific terms are used.
other words, these are areas where African thought leadership in evaluation and the mastery of related evaluation practices are needed.

**Living in a highly complex, networked world**

We live in a highly interconnected, increasingly complex world. Global policies and strategies, designed around global priorities demanding increasingly urgent action – climate change, food and water security, financial crises, poverty, human security, individual privacy, cyber security, migration, pandemics, and more – impact on regions and countries. Long, sometimes nearly untraceable value chains controlled by massive global companies, financial flows such as foreign direct investment, aid and remittances reveal both the vulnerability of global, regional and national systems and the interdependence of countries and societies. Policy coherence is an increasingly complex yet important matter; policy frameworks and interventions, the partnerships that make them work, and the results, whether negative or positive are highly intertwined. National and regional development policies and strategies have to be developed, and are influenced by global priorities and pressures, while multiple diverse actors and partnerships are engaged in making them work (or frequently in this highly competitive world, in preventing them from working). Technologically, the explosion in mobile telephone use and the significantly enhanced broadband connectivity of many countries are increasing Africans’ connections to one another and to the rest of the world.

This situation indicates that for development to be successful, policy regimes and strategy implementation cannot be designed and managed in isolation from global to (sub)national levels. This means - among others - that in order to play any significant role in development, the evaluation profession in Africa has to produce thought leaders in, and become adept at

- understanding and resolving the macro-micro disconnect⁴, and
- focusing on relationships, and evaluating collaborative efforts such as convenings, networks, coalitions, partnerships and platforms.

**Geopolitics, the competition for resources, power and influence**

The increasing complexity within which development has to take place is starkly displayed by the ongoing shifts in power, influence and resources - from West to East and from North to South. In this multipolar world, global institutions and policies are under pressure from an increasingly confident and assertive South. New alliances are formed, new ideologies explored, new frameworks and models pursued, new priorities established and new geopolitical struggles exposed. Soft power and cyber power are overtaking conventional notions of hard power, with the ubiquitous media increasingly victims of spin, and truth and facts frequently disposed of in order to suit ideology and argument. Defense, diplomacy and development (the ’3Ds’⁵) are becoming intertwined. Unpredictable, sometimes unseen or little understood forces and events bring instability and uncertainty on the one hand while on the other, new opportunities arise.

In all this, Africa is now a centre of attention, and will continue to be so over the next decade. It has many strategic resources that are imperative for the energy, military, electronics and other major global industries. It has abundant fertile land, yet diminishing water resources. It has a growing consumer base. The middle class is larger, better informed and more demanding. Governance systems and political leaders in an increasing number of African countries are under pressure to be accountable and to employ effective strategies for stability, security, economic growth and the use of resources for national benefit. Models of governance beyond Western-dominated discourses are being tested, with benevolent (semi-) autocratic rule becoming increasingly visible. With educated and exposed Africans’ growing pride, confidence and understanding come increasing efforts to explore the fusion

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⁴ The disconnect between ‘evaluated as successful’ development interventions at sub-national level and development progress at national level – a phenomenon that can be found up to the global level.

⁵ Reference IDS article Keizer and Engel.
between local experiences and knowledge systems and other systems of ‘knowing’ in order to replace or enhance current dominant discourses.

Thus the recent convulsions in international relationships and systems indicate that development interventions will increasingly have to consider new and unconventional ideas and approaches amidst the tensions brought about by an ongoing struggle for both soft and hard power. At the same time leaders at all levels – and in both the North and South – are being confronted by increasing demands for stability and prosperity, and also for accountability for performance and ‘value for money’ spent on aid or development.

For the African evaluation community this highlights the need for more intense engagement with – and better tools to do so - i.a. the following:

I. the (i) international and local politics and pressures that shape aid contributions to development, and (ii) the politics of evaluation within an aid-driven environment

II. the beliefs and value systems underlying aid and development interventions (or key concepts such as leadership, ‘community’, ‘empowerment’, good governance, institution building), and their evaluation

III. the role of power relations and power asymmetries in development and in evaluation frameworks and interventions

IV. mutual accountability in aid programs – in other words, accountability for donors and development financiers as much as for other stakeholders

V. the unexpected and often negative consequences or results following from (often well-intentioned) interventions

VI. development frameworks, models, discourses and practices originating in Latin America, Asia and Africa, and the lenses through which they can be evaluated

VII. thought leadership with respect to evaluation frameworks, models, discourses and practices originating in Africa - thus rooted in African understandings while drawing from elsewhere, and led and managed from within Africa.

Demographics, democratization and economic development

Africa has a growing number of success cases related to policy reform for economic growth and good governance. The latter refers to policies and institutions - irrespective of ideology and form – that are striving to, and/or largely succeeding in tackling pressing economic, political and social (and to some extent environmental) challenges on a path towards national prosperity and citizen wellbeing.

Coupled to increasing competition among world powers for resource exploitation contracts and trade partnerships, foreign direct investment and key infrastructure developments are some of the factors that have enabled Africa to achieve a consistent growth rate of more than 5% over the past decade. The ever-increasing consumer base – an estimated 128 million new households may enter the middle class over the next decade – enhances this potential. The middle class is usually better informed, educated and connected, enhancing opportunities for entrepreneurship and innovation. They are also more aware in the political sphere, with increasing expectations of governance institutions based on effective and transparent operation, and accountability for national wellbeing.

On the other hand, as economic and human development indicators show, Africa still faces massive challenges in this regard. The ecological and ethnic diversity within countries continue to pose major challenges. Ignorance and inappropriate politicking raise the spectre of unrealistic demands and expectations among civil society. Protests and too-rapid transitions to democracy can initiate or exacerbate instability and shape economic and social disaster. The benefits of growth are easily captured by economic or political elites, giving rise to massive inequalities between for example men and women, rural and urban societies, and ethnic or religious groups. In spite of decreasing fertility rates and increasing economic growth rates, the African population is expected to double by 2050, posing new challenges.

With the largest working age population in the world, Africa is thus ripe with potential but only if education and appropriate, sustainable job creation can keep pace. This appears increasingly unlikely unless Africa’s strengths are mobilized in a highly effective manner, for example through secondary and tertiary beneficiation and the judicious cultivation of new trade opportunities, entrepreneurship and innovation.

As evaluation shifts from being donor driven to being driven from within Africa, it is important to ensure the expertise required to evaluate...
efforts to address some of the most serious challenges faced by the continent. Africa’s economic and societal progress and of its ecosystems remains under threat from the pressures noted above, while the sustainability of development efforts and the resilience of its people and their systems are encouraging but certainly not assured. Evaluators have to be clear – and refrain from being naïve – about those broader contexts, norms and values that frame development efforts. They should also be clear about the norms and values that they hold in their evaluation work. They need to question more frequently not only whether an intervention reaches its goals, but the goals themselves - given the context in which they have been identified.

This means that evaluators in their practice need to

i. consider during evaluations the diversity of the stakeholders as well as contexts, thus ensuring that development is not seen as being only about average effects on a population

ii. be cognizant of the macro, evolving political and economic contexts within which interventions – and their evaluations - are planned and executed,

iii. be explicit about the norms and values that drive particular interventions, and their evaluations, and

iv. ensure that the approaches and methodologies exist to evaluate (within) the complexity of such situations, and of efforts to find “big solutions” to regional challenges.

Vulnerability and resilience

Societies are increasingly vulnerable in an interdependent, connected and competitive world. Changes in one country, whether political, economic, financial, social, in health status or in the environment, can affect regions, or the whole world. Shocks, both natural and man-made, appear to be more frequent or more significant, with climate change increasingly at the forefront. Value systems are shaken by exposure to foreign cultures, and groups judged ‘inferior’ by others tend to lose their confidence and self-esteem when they acknowledge that classification. As inequality grows across parts of the world, and differences are exploited along ethnic and religious lines, fragmentation and conflicts increase. Many fragile nations remain in a state of extreme poverty, disempowerment or perpetual conflict, while unbridled corruption across the world, at macro and micro levels, further weakens institutions.

Countering vulnerability, and enhancing the resilience of individuals, communities, societal systems and nations are increasingly part of the development narrative. This requires that the African evaluation community become more expert in

i. cultivating a culture of evaluative thinking, and of evaluation-driven action in society

ii. better understanding the concepts of ‘sustainability’ and ‘resilience’, and how to evaluate for it

iii. engaging with the unintended consequences of development efforts

iv. avoiding the mindless and/or context-divorced application of critical notions such “democracy”, “human rights” and “equity”, and

v. evaluating critical aspects related to vulnerability and its mitigation, such as the role of power in development and in evaluation; of ‘empowerment’ efforts given on-going vulnerabilities; the effects of macro issues such as climate change, increasing instability as a result of joblessness, multi-faceted, multi-directional corruption; and the development of governance and institutional systems.

New sources and instruments for aid and development finance

The financial crisis has resulting in shifts in development finance that are likely to be felt only over the next decade. The most visible international source of development funding has been the development aid (now called ‘international development cooperation’) provided by the group of OECD countries. While the aid streams will continue, in part due to the important contribution of aid to ‘soft power’, they are likely to become increasingly marginalized by other actors, financing sources and types of financing instruments.

New actors include the BRICS and Gulf States which, as the recent engagements Accra and Busan showed, have diverse and non-conventional approaches to development cooperation and finance. Coupled to the fact that the power over poor countries of the global
institutional regime of past decades is decreasing, these new modalities, if continued, are bound to have a significant influence over how development using international financing is done. No less important is the growing, still somewhat invisible influence of the private sector, and of models that speak more to private sector approaches than to conventional aid regimes, such as impact investing and social bonds.

The global evaluation community – those who see themselves as practicing evaluators, who attend conferences and engage with the body of knowledge around evaluation theory and practice – is largely unaware of these shifts, and losing ground to consulting companies with closer ties to the private sector. This has the potential either to improve or devalue evaluation practice significantly in these arenas. It depends on how the global and African communities of evaluators respond. In practice, evaluators and evaluation thought leaders in Africa have to

i. study and engage with these new actors and instruments – also in line with a stronger focus on the role of the private sector and South-South collaboration in development - in order to better understand their definitions, approaches and impacts

ii. create and/or master relevant development and evaluation frameworks, models and methodologies

iii. ensure a focus on potential unintended (negative) consequences and results during and following experimentation with new financing modalities and funding instruments

iv. understand how to evaluate partnerships, coalitions and platforms in this type of dispensation.

The search for evidence, impact and influence

Pressure on national resources, coupled to the ongoing power shifts across the world, has increased the urgency with which authorities seek both influence and effective solutions for pressing aid and development challenges. In a world increasingly driven by soundbytes and short attention spans, quick results or ‘impact’ and reductionist approaches are frequently valued, especially in the aid environment, at the expense of more realistic development trajectories for solutions to complex challenges that can sustain in the long run. A technocrat driven focus on ‘influence’ through ‘evidence-based policy making’ raises endless debates about the merit of methods and how decision-makers can best be influenced, mostly without sufficiently questioning the basic premises and values underpinning these notions.

African evaluators therefore need to

i. refrain from being too reductionist in their own methodologies while also evaluating for too-simple solutions, at the same time ensuring that they can work with systems and complexity when helping to design “theories of change” based M&E systems

ii. be clear on what is “credible evidence”, and what it could mean in terms of ethics and impact if poorly produced evidence, or ideology-driven evidence is pushed for use by policymakers

iii. help shift the emphasis from an almost exclusive engagement with impact evaluation, towards (i) equally critical aspects such as evaluation for sustainable development and resilience, and (ii) strategies to empower, through evaluative practice, a variety of stakeholders participating in the development initiatives.

Innovation, technology, intellectual property and the knowledge society

Africa is a frontrunner in adapting technological innovations to their context, as demonstrated by the world leading M-Pesa mobile phone banking system in Kenya. There is a growing focus on the continent on innovation, entrepreneurship and the use of information and knowledge – both international and indigenous – for the solving of intractable challenges on the continent. The mobile technology explosion is one of the reasons for the movement towards “big data”, while cyber security and the protection of individual right to privacy as well as intellectual property rights are increasingly of concern. In a knowledge economy people feel overwhelmed with information, yet recognize the need for knowledge and for understanding how to deal with complexity and evidence-informed decision-making.

This means that African evaluators also have to

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6 Consisting of the IMF and international finance institutions – list and reference
i. focus more on efforts to synthesize knowledge produced through evaluations

ii. understand and use the large data sets and new techniques that can support evaluation data collection, yet also recognize and counter the ways in which these can be misleading and misused

iii. be in a better position to evaluate “innovation” – and to innovate in evaluation itself.

In summary

There are currently reams of documents emerging analyzing global and African contexts over the next decade. The analysis above has been cognizant of several and will keep evolving. Although there are many implications for the evaluation profession in Africa, several main aspects requiring attention emerge.

In essence, in addition to the

1. dire need for sufficient capacities and the application of evaluation standards in order to conduct good quality evaluations across the board

2. thought leadership in evaluation theory and practice, by many disciplines and sectors, and the application of the resulting synthesized new knowledge are urgently needed in order to position Africa as a continent from which innovative frameworks, models and practices in evaluation emerge that are suitable for the challenges faced by the continent

3. while in parallel, strategies are needed to enhance the influence and power of the profession and the work of its thought leaders in development.

Thought leadership in theory and practice is urgently needed in priorities that include

i. understanding the role of changing and complex contexts in evaluation, and using systems thinking for holistic solutions

ii. the role of norms and values in development and in evaluation

iii. the need for Africa rooted and Africa led evaluation

iv. policy coherence from national to global levels, to be analyzed in tandem with the micro-macro disconnect

v. mutual accountability in development financing programs and in development interventions

vi. evaluation beyond an obsession with “impact”, to include a stronger focus on “managing for impact” (which includes ongoing monitoring for impact, learning and adaptive management); concepts such as vulnerability, sustainability and resilience; and a nuanced interpretation of “value for money”

vii. engaging with sensitive issues such as macro political trends, the often mindless rhetoric around concepts such as democracy and human rights, and the ongoing obscuring of truth in ‘evidence’, and their role in the effectiveness of development strategies

viii. searching for unintended consequences and unexpected impacts

ix. synthesis that produces useful knowledge

x. evaluation in priority content areas, such as

• climate change, food and water security
• human security
• power and empowerment
• relationships, especially in partnerships, coalitions, networks, platforms
• creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship
• institutional systems for good governance, including the elimination of corruption
• impact investing, social bonds and other influences of the private sector.
EMERGING THEMES
AFRICA ROOTED EVALUATION FOR DEVELOPMENT: THE CORE CONCEPT

WHAT IS “AFRICA ROOTED EVALUATION”?

Evaluation theory and practice have largely evolved from Western worldviews, perspectives, values and experiences. Over the past decade, in several parts of the world such as among the New Zealand Maori, people from Hawai‘i, First Nations in the USA and Canada, and most recently in some parts of Asia, evaluators have started to explore new ways of thinking about, defining, framing and doing evaluation.

Although there is great diversity in Africa, there are many common threads that highlight the potential for departure from Western perspectives – notions of the individual versus the collective; the power distance in societal hierarchies; and understanding of causality and the control of outcomes.

“Indigenization” is a term used to describe “the blending of an imported discipline with the generation of new concepts and approaches from within a culture” (Adair et al, 2001). To date most efforts to “Africanize” evaluation have been modifications of Northern rooted and driven practices. If evaluation is truly “Africa-rooted”, conceptual frameworks will emanate from the religion, cultural traditions, norms, language, metaphors, knowledge systems, community stories, legends and folklore, social problems, social change, public policies, etc. of the culture, rather than from some universalistic or “developed world literature” (Adair et al, 1993, quoted by Chilisa and Malunga).

The concept of Africa rooted evaluation still needs careful definition. But initial efforts to do so thus refer to evaluation theory and practice that is grounded in African philosophical assumptions about the nature of reality, drawing from African perceptions of the nature of being (“I am because we are”), from African worldviews and belief systems and ways of knowing, and informed by Africans’ evolving values and aspirations.

The “Africanization of evaluation” from this perspective therefore refers to a process of placing African philosophy, worldviews, knowledge systems and values at the center of the evaluation process.

As pointed out by Chilisa and Malunga, three categories of African philosophy are evolving with distinct epistemological assumptions (Kaphagawani, 2000) from which Africa rooted evaluation can draw: (i) ethno-philosophy which emphasizes knowledge as the experiences of people encoded in their language, folklore, stories, everyday experiences, songs, culture and values, and the importance of teamwork, cooperation, collectiveness, community spirit, and consensus building; (ii) philosophic sagacity emphasizes the role of sages in the construction of knowledge; (iii) nationalistic-ideological philosophy that comprises concepts such as the African renaissance and Africanization.

A first tentative effort was made by Chilisa and Malunga to propose an Africa Rooted Evaluation Tree with (as a start) two branches: (i) a ‘decolonizing and indigenizing evaluation branch’ to recognize the adaptation of the accumulated Western theory and practice on evaluation to serve the needs of Africans; and (ii) a ‘relational evaluation branch’ that draws from the concept of ‘wellness’ as personified in African greetings and the southern African concept of “I am because we are”. The wellness reflected in the relationship between people extends also to non-living things, emphasizing that evaluation from an African perspective should include a holistic approach that links an intervention to the sustainability of the ecosystem and environment around it.

Evaluation in Africa will therefore focus on the contributions of development to the well-being of individuals, their relatives and others around, as well as of non-living things. There is an inter-dependence between the individual, the community and what surrounds them that have
to be accounted for in development and in evaluation.

This concept by Chilisa and Malunga proposes that if evaluation is to be “Africa rooted”, at the very least it should (i) analyze the extent to which it contributes towards the realization of the “ideal community”, with indicators that refer to the principles of “ubuntu” (i.e. the relational evaluation branch); and (ii) ensure that both Western and African priorities and indicators are recognized, and that both strive to put the African ideal community at the center (i.e. the decolonizing and indigenizing branch).

These first thoughts can be further explored as the idea of “Africa rooted evaluation” takes root among thought leaders in Africa.

The imperative for “Africa rooted evaluation”

The participants agreed that standard evaluation frameworks and ‘lenses’ frequently do not capture the complexities and realities of the African context, thus undermining the credibility, utility and use of the results. Unspoken taboos remain largely undetected under the standard evaluation radar, and continue to haunt evaluation practice. Existing models and practices thus tend to miss out on critical cultural, societal dimensions that ultimately become ‘killer’ barriers to the realization of the aspirations of a project, program or policy, and to the sustainability of development efforts and results.

An ‘Africa-sensitive’ evaluation lens on theory and practice will bring greater credibility, authority and profile to African evaluation and to development efforts. It will help enhance the use of evaluation, and help build appropriate, useful development knowledge. It will help promote ownership and a culture of responsibility, learning and accountability in development through evaluation.

Chilisa and Malunga note that Africa-rooted evaluation approaches have always existed through the work of African sages – the indigenous knowledge holders in the oral tradition - as well as through the work of African scholars who have written extensively on African philosophies. It is now time to make them more visible, identifying them in the everyday things that Africans do to judge and to produce evidence for their judgment. This will give them much-needed space in academic and practice discourse.

Africans have to play a greater role in the evolution of evaluation theory and practice on the continent. The encouragement and promotion of African thought leadership across disciplinary, sector and country boundaries.

The Forum also concluded African evaluation should be “Africa driven” or “Africa led” and not only “Africa rooted”.

Effective development has to deliver dignity, peace and prosperity for Africa and its people. Given the unparalleled development challenges facing the continent, African evaluation has to play a much stronger role through innovative and progressive actions that have integrity of purpose, perspective and process, as well as utility. Evaluation with its roots in Africa has to be explored and its potential developed side by side or integrated with Western designed and other types of approaches. In addition, all evaluation approaches need to mastered by African evaluators and, where possible, further developed through innovations in theory and practice as Africa-led contributions to global evaluation knowledge.

This means that for effective development, Africans have to play a greater role in the evolution of evaluation theory and practice on the continent. This will require dynamic and engaged African thought leadership across disciplinary, sector and country boundaries.

The encouragement and promotion of African thought leadership in evaluation theory and practice are therefore paramount at this stage of the development of evaluation on the continent.

Furthermore, if African evaluation is to play a much stronger role through innovative and progressive actions that have integrity of purpose, perspective and process, as well as utility, informed and empowered citizens will need to advocate for its effective use and hold leaders accountable for performance and responsiveness to citizens’ needs.

African civil society therefore has to take greater ownership of evaluation, just as it should take greater responsibility for managing national and local resources, and holding leaders to account. Evaluation is still limited to specialists working
in civil society and the public sector, yet Africa is a continent full of untapped potential, in particular among its women and young people. Evaluation has the potential to contribute significantly to their lives if it can serve to cultivate a culture of learning, innovation, strategic leadership and accountability.

African evaluation should therefore not be the sole responsibility of managers, evaluation specialists and scholars - but a way of life for its citizens. This will likely require new modes of collaboration between the public, private and ‘people’ sectors for a more inclusive and effective approach to evaluation. It demands mastery of important existing M&E approaches and methods, innovation in evaluation theory and practice, and a better positioning of evaluation as a credible, value adding profession.

In all of this the African Evaluation Association (AfRE), its affiliated national associations and the Africa CLEAR centers can play a key role, especially in mobilizing scholars, organizations and networks on the continent and beyond around goals and strategies that can achieve the above. As example, AfRE has developed a strategy with the following components, several of which are highly complementary to the intent and achievements of this Bellagio forum:

i. The development of Africa “rooted” evaluation education, research and internship program
ii. The launch of the African Evaluation Journal (AEJ)
iii. Helping to develop and strengthen national evaluation associations
iv. Mentoring in evaluation in collaboration with EvalMentors
v. Strengthening AfRE’s institutional capacities.
vi. Biannual conferences
vii. Policy advocacy and lobbying for evaluation
viii. Media and citizenship engagements.

AFRICA ROOTED and AFRICA LED EVALUATION FOR DEVELOPMENT – POTENTIAL STRATEGIES

The cause of evaluation in Africa rests on its contributions to genuine development strategies that reflect the needs of stakeholders and benefit from engagement with both development and evaluation discourses. New strategies have to be designed to facilitate a focus on Africa rooted and Africa led evaluation. This Bellagio Forum was only the first small step of many that are needed to move these ideas forward.

The following elements of a larger strategy were proposed at the Forum. The organizing partners will in a separate effort articulate in greater detail these and other proposals for action:

1. Developing capacities for innovation in African evaluation, while respecting the principles of capacity development as an endogenous process. Such strategies can be based, among others, on government goals for evaluation that go beyond responsiveness to challenges, to determining accountability for value for money, with key goals that include
   • governance and accountability to citizens and to those who provide support
   • the development of learning nations and groups for informed reflection, innovation and change
   • stimulation of African thought leadership in evaluation, in particular through analytically oriented institutions (research and evaluation centers; universities) to enhance their role as independent evaluation institutions, centers of expertise and think tanks on evaluation
   • knowledge development and contributions to global knowledge.

2. Expanding the pool of evaluation knowledge generated from within Africa could include the following specific actions:
   • Generate, compile and classify a transparent repository of knowledge on African evaluations
   • Map capacity building initiatives in evaluation in Africa
   • Move the compiled repositories and maps to the wider African public
   • Gauge demand from specialist universities, think tanks and evaluation
projects to partner in order to generate original knowledge, by drawing lessons learnt and best practices on the theory, perception and application of Africa-rooted evaluation

• Document and disseminate results in of strategies to improve the status of evaluation, and capacities on the continent
• Document and disseminate the approaches and results of research into evaluation theory and practices done on the continent.

3. Catalyzing a strong, movement towards 'thought leadership' that can enhance the evaluation profession in Africa, and support development policy and strategy:

   African evaluators and other stakeholders need to commit to advancing monitoring and evaluation theory and practice. More specifically, they need to engage better with

   • key frameworks, policies and strategies at national and regional levels;
   • international aid and other global policy and regimes that influence African development;
   • the diversity of new actors and development funding modalities;
   • the belief- and value-laden nature of both development and evaluation;
   • evaluation theory and practice rooted in Africa.

Civil society could play a leading role in canvassing ideas and fostering thought leadership in development evaluation by acting as a ‘broker of evaluative knowledge’ among different sectors. Such movements require not-for-profit actors that are credible, with a measure of independence. Dynamic, continuous dialogues could take place guided by evaluation thought leaders within a liberal thinking space in order to inform policies and enable institutionalized, sustainable, effective systems in government, including in evaluation.
NEXT STEPS AFTER THE BELLAGIO FORUM
In order to give life to the initiative, to ensure that this Bellagio meeting is not a “once-off” event, and prevent these first efforts to become mired in heavy time and resource intensive processes, the following relatively simple steps are under consideration:

1. **Stimulate interest and innovation:**
   Shape and develop the Forum inputs into a series of concise, useful products (including video) for different purposes and audiences – from civil society to academia to influential policy makers. The products need to create awareness and support, including through clearly articulating intent, and defining and stimulating debate and thinking on key concepts. It should support the “Made in Africa” strategy of the African Evaluation Association. Publishing a special edition of the African Evaluation Journal is only one of the possible academic venues that can be pursued in this context.

2. **Engage a virtual thought leadership forum:** Establish a network / community of practice of African evaluation “thought leaders” (on theory and practice) who are prepared to advance work on key concepts related to Africa-rooted and Africa-led evaluation. This (ongoing) “Thought Leaders’ Forum” will meet once a year and collaborate on worthwhile “evaluation for development” related projects – also using new technologies and social media for this purpose. They should not only be evaluation specialists and should include influential African thinkers. This will be hard to achieve in the absence of clear incentives, but not impossible. A PopTech style approach to virtual or face to face gatherings could be one of the mechanisms for engagement.

3. **Map (and later on engage) key individuals, organizations, networks/coalitions and initiatives:** Key actors on the continent need to be identified and engaged who can be part of, or support (in principle) the Forum and who can both help develop and use its products - from the AU organs to academic and development practitioner networks, to evaluation associations. Important linkages to actors outside the continent can also be established. It will be necessary to purposefully include unconventional actors, e.g. for South-South engagement, private sector linked initiatives, and development effectiveness platforms. Connections with AfrEA’s “Made in Africa” initiative need to be nurtured, as well as with academic units of highly specialist evaluators.

4. **Ensure some form of (limited) coordination, with a repository:** This is needed to ensure vision and momentum for the forum but without getting bogged down in structures. It will have as part of its charge to help enhance – with others - the profile and influence of the work on important national, regional and global platforms.

5. **Provide examples of what such a forum can contribute:** Interested individuals and organizations can immediately be mobilized to engage in two useful activities: (i) Work with a foundation or donor on a few of their evaluations in order to see what it would have meant to have an “Africa rooted” and “Africa led” approach. (ii) Analyze key documents emanating from African decision-makers to determine their implications for evaluation and the evaluation profession.
Contemporary Development Challenges for Africa and their Implications for Evaluation

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Trigger papers have been commissioned with a view to encouraging a rich and effective debate at the forum. Representing a collation of the authors’ own wisdom while making use of evidence from recognised academic sources, we hope that they respond effectively to the questions at hand in our evolving development context. They are intended to be forward looking, providing a platform that moves us beyond the elementary steps in the development/evaluation debate and encourages innovation through exploring crucial issues at an advanced level.

Part One: What are the most important development challenges for Africa in the next decade?

This short paper intends only to distinguish the parameters of key debates currently circulating in the contemporary development environment, but does so in an effort to reflect the broad trends of thought and aspiration that characterise narratives about our future. These are offered for debate and disagreement, to open our discussions.

Framing conditions

This section of the paper commences with a discussion of five interlinked epochal developments that together constitute the framing conditions for development in Africa. Any broad strategies for development (and the evaluation of these) will, we argue, need to take these conditions into account as they compute the contexts of intervention, the resources at hand and the purposes to be served. Naturally, these framing conditions will have varying implications for different contexts.

The first framing condition is the role that Africa's resource wealth is anticipated to play into the future. The continent's growth rates have strengthened remarkably over the past decade, doubling its performance over that of the 1980s and 1990s. For example, Angola’s economy grew faster in the 2000s than any other economy in the world. Although the growth has been somewhat uneven, projections forecast that 128 million households could lift into middle-class consumer patterns in the next decade (McKinsey Global Institute, 2010; Swilling, 2012). The demand for Africa’s mineral resources grew significantly since around 2000, especially as a result of industrial expansion in China, India, Russia and other emerging economies, as well as escalating demand for strategic minerals from the West. It was the continued buoyancy of this demand that protected Africa’s growth rates from even steeper declines during the world economic meltdown (Swilling, 2012; UNECA, 2012). The demand for Africa’s mineral resources grew significantly since around 2000, especially as a result of industrial expansion in China, India, Russia and other emerging economies, as well as escalating demand for strategic minerals from the West. It was the continued buoyancy of this demand that protected Africa’s growth rates from even steeper declines during the world economic meltdown (Swilling, 2012; UNECA, 2012). Analysts suggest that the demand for Africa’s minerals will continue and indeed escalate, and that mineral commodities are in a ‘super cycle’ of sustained increased prices, with the promise of improved tax revenues for Governments who are able to take advantage of these price-levels (UNECA and AU, 2011). The concomitant implication, however, is the ability and determination of Governments to counter the pernicious dynamics that have often rendered a country’s mineral wealth a ‘curse’ rather than a blessing – including an over-dependence of an economy on these resources with a resultant...
lack of diversification, and a tendency for the yield from these resources to be captured by political and economic elites, rather than being invested in broader-based developmental goods.

The second framing condition (already implied above) is the shift in the global economic centre of gravity eastwards and southwards. While the United States remains the strongest economy globally, projections estimate China’s rise to this position in the foreseeable future. The financial meltdown of 2008, the deep indebtedness of the traditional centres of the world economy and the continuing Eurozone crisis have inhibited growth on the African continent, but at the same time exposed the relative strength of the Asian economies and a range of other emerging countries, some in Africa. Although Africa’s growth dipped from around 6% to 2.5% in 2009 (ADB, 2010), it’s recovery from these levels is already evident. The countries with the strongest GDPs tend to be the resource-exporting countries (but tend to have the least diversified economies), while the more diversified economies of Egypt, Tunisia, South Africa and Morocco are powerful engines of growth on the continent. Ghana, Kenya and Senegal are diversifying quickly and their investments in innovation are reflected in their growing trade within the continent (McKinsey Global Institute, 2010; Swilling, 2010). It is clear that food will be increasingly seen as valuable a strategic resource into the future as minerals and oil are. This is reflected not only in the recent global price escalations, but also in how some countries are buying up stretches of the best arable land in Africa in order to ensure bespoke supplies for their own populations. The implications of this shift in the global centre of economic gravity includes a changing set of primary customers for Africa’s resources, together with a changing set of conditionalities for the exchange of those resources. The terms of trade with China, for example, may be quite different from those with Scandinavia. Similarly, Africa needs to see its trading partners (not only in terms of commodities, but the full range of tradables) increasingly located in the South, and on the African continent. What opportunities does this open for trade regimes more beneficial to the development and diversification of the economies in Africa, and in the South more broadly? Finally, the current fragility of the economies of the US and the EU is already having an impact on how these countries see their development relations with the South, not least in the levels of development aid available for disbursement, but also in the purposes of aid. There are implications here for the character that these relationships acquire into the future. For example, the DfID White Paper of 2009 speaks of ‘our common prosperity’, ‘our common security’ and ‘our common climate’ (Maxwell, 2009). Are we encountering an era in which capital (or at least some players) comports itself differently in the future, with a greater eye to more equitable development and sustainability? These shifting power gradients have implications for how development projects should be conceived, and how they are evaluated. See for example the stance reflected in the African consensus position on development effectiveness taken at Busan in 2011 (AU and NEPAD, 2011).

The third framing condition is the wave of democratisation and citizen activism that is a feature of the recent history of the continent. An unprecedented number of countries on the continent are conducting increasingly meaningful multi-party elections, with growing levels of social inclusiveness (UNeca, 2009). The political sphere in Africa is widely contested and fluid, and although armed conflict and coercive strategies are still evident, electoral politics represent the predominant arena for contestation. Having said that, the phenomenon of the Arab Spring has vividly illustrated the growing levels of citizen activism that have arisen together with accelerating levels of urbanisation. The activism arises from increased expectations from the growing middle classes, or from those with a sharper view of the inequities of wealth distribution (OECD, 2012). A study by the African Development Bank has attributed this revolution in the Arab world, aside from a rejection of long-term political repression, to the twin demands for jobs and economic justice. The study traces the growth of unemployment among relatively well-educated youth, as well as a decline in real wages in what was a “functional distribution of income away from labour” (ADB, 2012: 11). The ubiquity of ICTs, together with social media and the internet, contribute to a restructuring of social order away from hierarchical structures and towards social laterality and concomitant demands for greater levels of accountability and governance transparency (Rifkin, 2011). Allied to this is the phenomenon of resource nationalism, voiced as both a popular demand and as a growing set of regulatory measures to better capture and redistribute the yield from the extractive industries (UNeca, 2012). The levels of militant activism currently underway in
(for example) Nigeria around the petroleum industry, or in South Africa around the platinum and gold mining industries, are indicators of a likely groundswell for a more equitable social contract in relation to natural resources. This discussion of citizen activism is not to come down on one side or the other in the debate on the role of authoritarian rule in achieving developmental ends in a developing society context (for example, Khan, 2005), but rather only to observe the organic rise of citizen activism in Africa as a factor at play in the arena.

The fourth framing condition is that it is no longer sufficient to be planning and providing for the state of affairs as they are now, but rather the imperative is to cater also for the eventualities of the future. A feature of the contemporary era is our realisation of how globalised the potential disruptions to our societies can be. There is now little doubt that climate change is a reality, is reflected not just in the dramatically shrinking ice-caps at the poles but in the climatic conditions that influence food crops, water supplies, settlements and the livelihoods of millions. Some analysts predict that Africa will be particularly severely affected, with consequences for human security in all respects. Agriculture provides a substantial proportion of the continent’s GDP, at both subsistence and commercial levels, and changing climatic conditions can radically alter yields, not only because of changing rainfall patterns, but also because of unprecedented crop diseases or insect infestations. Equally, the vitality of the globe’s various economies are profoundly implicated in one another, and disarray in one context inevitably bleeds into others. Both economic and political instabilities provoke human migrations, sometimes resulting in armed conflict, but almost always accompanied by destitution that has implications for the contexts of transit and arrival. The mobility of populations (whether affluent or otherwise) has also brought with it the mobility of pandemics of disease, and we’ve seen the swiftness with which newly mutated organisms can wreak havoc in societies. We have learned also that while some eventualities of the future can be predicted, others cannot. A vital capacity for societies is alertness for the unforeseen, and well-trained rapid response capabilities. This has implications for the kind of training that is provided in Government circles, as well as in civil society. This disposition, together with robust social institutions, contribute to the levels of resilience that we have available to deal with the eventualities of the future.

The fifth framing condition is the salience of technologies and innovation in enabling African economies to diversify and expand in sustainable and inclusive directions. Swilling (2012) reviews and synthesizes a range of contemporary studies that consider the cyclical nature of the global economy and the role that technology plays in these cycles. He finds a common perspective in a number of different quarters that points to an imminent future where the driving force behind technological innovation will be responses to the rising prices of resources and the threats of resource depletion. These innovation imperatives will be to decouple economic activity from its current levels of dependence on natural resources and non-renewable sources of energy, in particular by generating technologies of radically greater efficiency. If the evidence of climate change remains unconvincing to some policy-makers, the hard economics of the commodities markets will drive the investments in alternative technologies. Already the fields of biotechnology, information technology, alternative energies, nanotechnology and biomimicry promise a significant shift in relationship between growth and resource consumption. However, the projection is that the bulk of technological innovation (and the value to be derived from this) will be situated in the developed world, and small pockets of advanced developing countries. There is little enthusiasm about Africa’s capacity to contribute to the new wave of leading edge technical innovation. Yet, the imperative for innovation (economic and social) lies at the heart of Africa’s developmental future, since the current distributive order and pattern of livelihoods is clearly not sustainable. Although resources count for only about a quarter of Africa’s GDP, they represent some 80% of Africa’s exports, tying the continent into a particular relationship with the global economy. The imperative is not to transition from a resource-based to a low-technology economy, but rather to inject a dynamic of innovation into every level of activity, from selected niche-advantage technology fields at the most sophisticated end, to transformative adaptations that boost livelihoods in rural smallholdings. Kenya’s success in innovating cell-phone banking, and rolling it out to reach all corners of the country, stands as just one fine example of Africa’s capacity to leapfrog successive generations of
technology and produce a world-leading innovation that has made a difference in the lives of millions. What would it take to deepen and intensify Africa’s capacity for innovation and technological mastery, in all fields of endeavour and levels of economic sophistication?

Developmental Imperatives

What developmental vision for the continent arises from the various commentaries that have informed this overview? Any brief summary of such a vision must necessarily generalise, and thus overlook the dramatically diverse contexts distributed across the continent, for which very different pathways may be available. The vision is initially an economy-driven one, seeing that as the fundamental means by which livelihoods and human fulfilment can be changed for the better. But the economic vision carries entailments for the capabilities of Governments, for social contracts within societies, for regulatory regimes across continental regions, and for the value systems that animate societies and individuals.

The vision for the medium-term future of the continent (the next decade or two) is one where a strengthening consensus across Africa is for collective efforts to direct the continent’s resources towards more sustainable ends, including economic activities that have a planning time horizon beyond the affordances of the mineral and natural resources that currently sustain the growth of many countries, and including the factors that make for the longer-term fulfilment of societies, like education and health systems. Whether the resources are minerals, tobacco or grain, the rents derived from these must be directed more effectively towards the diversification of the continent’s economies (including downstream beneficiation), towards industries that are more inclusive of the broader population, towards increased intra-continental trade, and towards high quality social services. What models are already available on the continent, and globally, for how this can be done?

This has implications for the significant strengthening of the capacity of states to negotiate fair deals with the extractive industries (or agribusiness) and their clients, and to distribute the yields into long-term provision, whether these be in the form of infrastructure or social institutions like education and health. The adoption of the Africa Mining Vision (AMV) in 2009 by the African Union Heads of State and Government constituted a significant step in this direction, and reflects earlier intentions (for example in the Lagos Plan of Action, and NEPAD’s mining chapter) to link the minerals industries with other sectors of the economy. What regulatory frameworks, and industrial strategies, either at country levels or regionally, would assist in extracting and retaining better levels of value from resources?

The proliferation and growth of other dimensions of African economies – whether these are downstream value-adding activities to existing industries, or entirely diversified activities like manufacturing, service industries or cultural industries – will rely on the increasing capacity of the state to (at the very least) deliver services and provide the enabling conditions for diverse industry to flourish. Some would argue that a distinctively African model of the developmental state is required, a model that is resonant with the contemporary conditionalities of the continent and the globe (Routley, 2012). Are there current examples that might provide insights for an indigenous model of the developmental state for the 21st Century? Botswana and Rwanda are examples that often provoke debate.

Regional agreements and co-operation need to extend beyond economic issues and embrace the social dynamics of Africa in the production of a social justice charter for the continent, or some means by which civil protection is more effectively assured to vulnerable constituencies. This charter would need to indicate the rights, responsibilities and freedoms of the peoples of Africa, including perspectives on gender issues and religious freedoms. The diversity of our societies has been deepened by the mobility (voluntary and forced) of populations, as well as by the intergenerational diversity of perspective that have deepened as a consequence of our changing social structures. Issues of identity can quickly deteriorate into pretexts for conflict (rather than celebrations of strength in diversity), especially in resource-stressed environments or societies of deep inequities. The charter would need especially to consider the tides of human migration that are a factor of both the fragility of some of Africa’s states and the entrepreneurialism of its peoples. Can the AU provide a platform on which the contested views of social identity and human rights can be discussed and adjudicated?

The continent must cultivate its disposition towards innovation, as an urgent and redemptive requirement for its capacity to fulfil
the imperatives outlined above. We take an inclusive view of the notion of innovation as “being the capacity to generate, acquire and apply knowledge to advance economic and social purposes” (Marcelle, 2011 in DST, 2012: 97). In other words, innovation includes the ability to adapt knowledge from other contexts and apply it in locally appropriate ways, as well as the ability to generate entirely novel technologies. Equally, innovation applies to how we adapt the functioning of public services, economic systems and social institutions to better suit contemporary and future purposes. While some innovation generates entirely new technologies, much of it is necessarily about hybridity, in that our solutions will almost always be how we incorporate the future to address the present, blends of the local and the imported, the known and the new. Innovation is something that is practiced in all settings, no matter how modest or sophisticated, and needs to be the means by which all corners of society can transform their futures for the better (DST, 2012). There is much evidence of innovation in even the most vulnerable of communities (rural and informal settlement dwellers would not survive without these capacities), but we don’t do enough to identify the essential creativity of the human spirit and disseminate it for use more broadly. Equally, Africa is fully capable of driving leading-edge technologies in powerful ways; we need the political determination to set the agenda, and drive it to fruition. Obviously there is much that can be done deliberately to foster innovation, whether through education and training, or through regulatory systems, but the role of inspirational leadership is vital, appealing as it must to the agency of citizens to take control of their lives and work against the structures that inhibit human fulfilment. This is an outward-looking and forward-looking vision of development that admits to no limitations to what can be achieved in Africa, by Africans.

Part Two: What are the implications for evaluation theory and practice, and for the profession?

Evaluation and development are in a symbiotic relationship. The one draws from, and evolves with the other. Ideally, well-performed evaluation should lead, or at least give some direction to development. It provides evidence, reasoning and insights that are integrative and rooted in practical realities. Yet such evidence-based (or evidence-informed) evaluation-inspired development is seldom achieved. Policy-making continues to be a highly political process, and across the world the use of evidence in such processes is not always well understood or is sharply contested.

In Africa in particular, evaluation is a young, although fast-growing, profession that still has to develop the credibility and visibility as an essential and critical support for understanding how development can best be done. In spite of the encouraging statements in the recent AU/NEPAD Busan preparation paper on the African Consensus and Position on Development Effectiveness, it is not yet owned and cultivated by African stakeholders as a useful, indeed fundamental, input into their work.

The vast majority of evaluators are engaged in the evaluation of aid programmes (now most often called development cooperation) or of philanthropy interventions. More recently the emphasis has shifted to “development effectiveness” in which aid is of varying importance depending on the extent of a country’s dependence on external support.

Thus if used, the work of African evaluators – or of evaluators working in Africa - can affect vast numbers of people, often the most vulnerable and marginalized. This means that it is a profession that requires a very high level of specialised expertise and integrity in order to “do no harm”.

Imperatives for the African Community of Evaluators

The framings and imperatives for development laid out above have significant implications for evaluators in Africa. The following is an attempt to capture some of the most important without claiming to be comprehensive. It is meant to stimulate discussion about the most critical issues facing the evaluation profession in Africa as it continues to grow for the benefit of the continent.

African evaluators need to engage with key frameworks, policies and strategies at national and regional levels. Evaluation in Africa is still primarily project driven because of the nature of (primarily) aid and philanthropy interventions. This leads to a “micro-macro disconnect” where successful projects do not necessarily translate into successful development. There are also a
host of pertinent national and regional policies and strategies that, if implemented, will shape development in Africa over the next decade. We, as African evaluators need to be able to (i) use these frameworks in our work, (ii) evaluate them, and (iii) use professional experience and evaluation evidence to challenge and enrich them (including, if appropriate, in the context of a uniquely African developmental state).

This means (among others) that African evaluators should understand better how to address the micro-macro disconnect. This includes understanding better how to evaluate for the scaling of development interventions, how to assess the merit, value and coherence of the strategic initiatives at these different levels, how to consider the effect of the power relations and asymmetries related to their design and implementation, and how to help design locally-owned M&E systems to support them.

To date, evaluators and evaluation associations have been largely absent from national and continent-wide discussions on critical development issues. We do not have sufficient credibility and profile to play a significant role in such critical processes, and have yet to use national efforts as well as the regional and global evaluation architecture to strengthen our position.

**African evaluators need to engage with international aid and other global policy and regimes that influence African development.** As noted throughout this document, African development is also strongly influenced by global policy regimes (trade, financial regulation, migration, security, etc.) and by global politics – both of which are often not in Africa’s best interests. Propaganda transmitted in the old and new media, and the fast movement of news and information where soundbites take the place of reasoned argument and evidence, have the potential to give credence to interested perspectives and distortions and overshadow more informed and accurate analyses. Their effects will grow as resource competition grows. African evaluators need to have the capacities to understand these dynamics and the profile that enables them to address them. This includes the ability to engage with global and regional forums that influence important policy regimes, to evaluate their effect on African development, and to ensure that both the (potential) positive and negative consequences of global policies and strategies and their implementation are well understood and communicated to African decision-makers.

**African evaluators need to engage with a diversity of new actors and development funding modalities.** Power and financial shifts in the world over the past decade have resulted in a very different development landscape. New, often non-Western models of development and of development financing have increased and are rapidly gaining traction. Aid percentages – both absolute and relative to other sources of funding - are going down while financial flows from philanthropy, the private sector and emerging economies are increasing. Foreign direct investment and instruments such as impact investing and social development bonds are increasingly important. The African evaluation community is under(prepared for these developments, and other actors such as auditors or major management consulting firms are increasingly active in the evaluation of these new efforts.

Two of the main challenges this poses to the evaluation community are a stronger focus on (i) the principle of “do no harm” and assessing unintended (negative) consequences; and (ii) making explicit the values that underpin development and evaluation approaches.

**African evaluators need to engage with the belief- and value-laden nature of both development and evaluation.** Citizen activism, the striving towards democratisation (in a manner that suits different development models), an increasing confidence in local solutions, and assertions of pride in local identity require African evaluators to examine and make explicit the beliefs, values and principles that underlie frameworks for development, as well as those that inform evaluation, and their implications.

This also highlights the importance of seeking indigenous approaches to, and models for, development and evaluation, while continuing to draw from the best international advances. Societies that value, for example, community-oriented, collective leadership and traditional

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7 Such as the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM); Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP); Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA); Consolidated Plan of Action for Science and Technology; Environment Action Plan (EAP); Minimum Integration Plan (MIP); African Action Plan: 2010-2015; African Mining Vision; AU Gender Policy; and more.

8 Refer to the extensive writings of Robert Picciotto on this topic.
benefits of positive development outcomes and community to strive to ensure that its capacities are as relevant, high quality and visible as they can be in support of the development of the continent. For these reasons the objectives and initiatives of the new “Made in Africa” initiative of the African Evaluation Association (AfEA) deserve praise and support.

In Summary: Some Key Priorities for the Evaluation Profession in Africa

The mastery of critical monitoring and evaluation approaches and methods: In the light of the above, evaluators in Africa need to master – and clearly display and communicate their mastery – of important concepts and methodologies not yet commonly found in capacity-strengthening efforts on the continent. These include, among others, challenging and sometimes controversial issues such as sophisticated work on systems-based monitoring and evaluation, theories of change and theory-based (impact) monitoring and evaluation for adaptive management (This rather than rigid, over-simplified logframes). Equally, we need to strengthen our attention to the politics and values underlying development, evaluation and of the use of evidence and in dealing with the micro-macro disconnect.; We need to build our capacity to use new technologies and to draw on large data sets in our evaluations. Crucially, we need increasingly to be able to marshal and synthesize the evidence from monitoring, from self-evaluation and from independent evaluation to achieve enhanced learning, accountability and knowledge generation.

In other words, our skill-set includes but is not limited to the monitoring and evaluation of (i) policies and strategies, and their alignment and coherence, from local to global levels; (ii) the scaling of pilot efforts; (iii) approaches to empowerment and institution strengthening; (iv) efforts at innovation for development; (v) development financing mechanisms for development, such as impact investing; and (vi) sustainability and resilience. Evaluators also need to be committed to, and astute in seeking and finding the truth behind rhetoric and propaganda.

Innovation in monitoring and evaluation theory and practice: Mastery of both basic and advanced aspects has to be complemented by research on, and innovation in, monitoring and evaluation on the continent. Little has been done in this regard, or otherwise has low visibility (Carden and Alkin, 2012).
Here, the development and evaluation architecture – including related and other professional associations, and organizations such as CLEAR and other academic centres - can play a critical role. Communities of practice that draw from a wide range of sectors and actors can promote and coordinate initiatives aimed at cultivating thought-leadership and innovation in both evaluation theory and practice. This is also where “Made in Africa” evaluation and indigenous frameworks for monitoring and evaluation can bring new perspectives to the international evaluation body of work, or can complement work on new ideas for the developmental state in Africa. But for sufficient profile in a world still dominated by knowledge generated in the West, whatever is done should be systematically documented and disseminated in many different formats for different purposes using tailor-made influencing strategies.

**Positioning the evaluation profession in Africa and globally:** The evaluation profession in Africa is vital for development. The immediately useful, integrative and strategic nature of evaluation should attract some of the best people from the continent. The community of evaluators should be strong, capable and well positioned for influence at all levels - community, national, regional, Africa-wide and globally. We should be able to communicate its utility as individuals and as a collective, and its contributions in an authoritative, evidence-based or evidence-informed manner. We should be able to hold our own on any local, national, regional or international platform, and elicit respect and authority.

This requires what is now called “thought leadership” in theory and practice, complemented by “practice leadership”. These are not elitist or exclusionary terms. Instead, they are integral to how the continent crafts its future on its own terms, to increasing levels of prosperity and social justice.

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Introduction

Africans fall within the category of people who have suffered slavery, colonisation and marginalisation, and, in fact, they are “still being colonised” and marginalised. This colonisation alienated people from their own culture – their ways of knowing – and held them captive to Western theory and practice. The theory and practice of evaluation today has its origin in the “development industry” and academia of the global North. This paper will discuss the rationale for African-rooted and African-driven evaluation practice and theory, two conceptual models of the African evaluation tree and the African ideal community before discussing how these can be actually applied in practice through presenting a case study. The paper will conclude with reflections on implications on actual theory and practice of evaluation in Africa and globally.

Why African rooted and African driven evaluation?

Today the world’s formerly colonised – a category that includes Africans and other indigenous populations in North America and Australasia – are exploring ways to decolonise, indigenise and imagine knowledge theory and practice in every academic discipline and practice that is informed by their world views. With regard to the debate on a “Made in Africa Evaluation”, there are arguments that the ground breaking books on indigenous research (Smith, 1999, 2012; Wilson, 2012; Chilisa, 2012) and others can inform Africa-driven evaluation theory and practice. This argument is made on the premises that evaluation encompasses the construction of knowledge and that the African World views and ways of knowing can form the basis for such knowledge construction. It is for this reason that it is argued that an African-driven evaluation theory and practice can draw from the evolving post-colonial indigenous paradigm to articulate epistemologies and values of an African-driven evaluation.

Another view is that one can define a made-in-Africa evaluation as one that is driven by African philosophical assumptions about the nature of reality, knowledge and values. The argument to deny the existence of African philosophy is now redundant. As elucidated by Sogolo (1993: xii), African philosophy “is part of our total package of liberation from the apron of Western intellectual colonisation.” It is an engagement of discourses that claim back lost identities and create spaces for significant selfhoods as well as writing back and talking back to the West in modes couched in the
histories, cultures, linguistic and life experiences of the Africans (Eze, 1997; Sogolo, 1993).

From this perspective, African philosophical assumptions about the nature of reality form the basis for a made-in-Africa evaluation – one that draws from the African perception of the nature of being. On the question of what is a person, the common answer is “I am because we are”, a phrase expressed by the Zulu of South Africa as Umuntu ngumuntu nagabantu, and by the Bakalanga of Botswana as Nthu nthu ne bathu. The people referred to are the living as well as the dead and the unborn (Louw, 2001). The dead are the ancestral spirits who form part of the African extended families and are connected to the people and talk to the people in their daily experiences. African perceptions of reality thus include a spiritual belief system.

The philosophical assumption of an African value system ties in well with the African perception of reality, which emphasises respect for others and oneself “nthu nthu ne bathu”. While ontological and axiological assumptions are general to African philosophy, four categories of African philosophy are evolving with distinct epistemological assumptions (Kaphagawani, 2000) that can inform the construction of knowledge in a made-in-Africa evaluation, namely: ethno-philosophy, philosophic sagacity and nationalistic-ideological philosophy. Ethno-philosophy emphasises knowledge as the experiences of people encoded in their language, folklore, stories, everyday experiences, songs, culture and values, and the importance of team work, cooperation collectiveness, community spirit, and consensus building. Philosophic sagacity emphasises the role of sages in the construction of knowledge. The nationalistic-ideological philosophy comprises concepts such as the African renaissance and Africanisation (Chilisa and Preece 2005). Africanisation and therefore “Africanisation of evaluation” from this perspective refers to a process of placing the African world values at the centre of the evaluation process.

We would like to proceed with caution and humility, and say that the struggle to Africanise academic disciplines – including the discipline of evaluation – is gaining momentum and that our efforts draw heavily from the experiences and practices of the African sages (indigenous knowledge holders) that are imprinted in the oral literature. We also draw from other African scholars who have written extensively on African philosophies, in order to make an African-driven evaluation approach visible. In other words, African-driven evaluation approaches have always existed and our efforts are to name them and make them more visible and conscious. We should not fall into the Western deficit of theorising about ourselves and claim that Africa-driven evaluation approaches do not exist. Our argument is that we are valourising and boldly naming African evaluation approaches that are evident in the everyday things Africans do to judge, and also to produce evidence for their judgment. The real problem is not that African-driven evaluation and development practice have failed, but rather they have not been given a chance and space in academic and practice discourses.

While a number of efforts are being made to “Africanise” the theory and practice of evaluation today, we are still facing an uphill task in translating these efforts into widespread practice, especially on the continent, as the evaluation knowledge and practice gatekeepers are still mostly from the North. In terms of practice, the few efforts that are available are mostly mere modifications of Northern rooted and driven practices. Adair, et al. (2001) used the term indigenisation to describe ‘the blending of an imported discipline with the generation of new concepts and approaches from within a culture.” To that extent, there has been an Africanisation of evaluation as measured by cultural reference, which is defined as the extent to which the evaluation process emanates from the culture in which it is conducted. Cultural reference is measured by mention of “country, its customs, norms or behaviours not found in the West” (Adair 1993:152).

There is also culture-based justification and conceptual bases for evaluation as measured by the extent to which the conceptual framework for the evaluation emanates from the religion, cultural traditions, norms, language, metaphors, indigenous knowledge systems, community stories, legends and folklore, social problems, rapid social change, or public policies of the studies culture, as opposed to conceptual frameworks from some universalistic or “developed world literature” (Adair et al., 1993). An indigenised evaluation methodology is also used.

There are arguments that this indigenisation or Africanisation does not go deeply enough to qualify as African rooted and African driven.
Scholars who take this view argue that the challenge for practitioners and academics on the continent is not to identify and describe from practice, for such a practice does not exist. Instead it is to identify and describe according to who we are/were as Africans, how we understood development and how we monitored and evaluated it.

Africa rooted and African driven evaluation model - the African evaluation tree

Africanisation of evaluation requires placing African worldviews at the centre of the evaluation process. We propose an African-driven evaluation tree that has two branches: the decolonising and indigenous branch; and the relational evaluation branch and ideal community stem.

The decolonising and indigenising evaluation branch

For this branch, we invoke a Batswana proverb “dilo makwati di kwatalo la mogo ba bangwe” meaning “we learn from one another,”, and an African proverb, “knowledge is like a baobab tree, no one person can embrace it alone”. These proverbs serve to celebrate the adaptation of the accumulated Western theory and practice on evaluation to serve the needs of Africans. We live in a global village. No one can exist alone. The continuing adaptation of Western approaches to make evaluation serve the Africans is a commendable effort that deserves a visible branch in the African-driven tree.

An African decolonisation and indigenisation evaluation should have five key elements:
A critical analysis of the history of evaluation and evaluation outcomes of past related projects in a given context

A critique of past and related projects from the communities’ perspective

Development of community-owned standards for evaluation of project, and integration with project blueprint standards - integration of indigenous and imported evaluation standards.

A combination of community indigenous methods and adapted Western methods, in order to collect evidence of merit and worth

Dissemination of evaluation outcomes approaches that are inclusive of community indigenous dissemination approaches.

Relational evaluation

A relational evaluation approach is drawn from the everyday greeting practices of the majority of African communities and from the Southern African axiom nthu nthu ne banwe, meaning “I am because of we are.” In most African communities, evaluation of wellness of one another is an on-going process that marks a clear difference between Western and African. A typical greeting involves people asking each other about their wellness, the wellness of their children and those related to them, including non-living things. Among villagers, during the planting season, the greeting might extend to asking about crops and, during the harvest season, asking about the crop yield. Relational evaluation valorises evaluation approaches, even one that is evident in the everyday evaluation of wellness that comes out through the way people greet each other.

The African extends the relationship of people not only to human beings but also to non-living things. The Southern African metaphor on totems illustrates this connection of human beings to non-living things and reminds us that evaluation of projects from the African perspective should include a holistic approach that links the project to the sustainability of the environment. The Bakalanga of Botswana are connected to each through the sharing of totems. These totems are symbolically represented through non-living things, for example, a heart or living things, for example, animals such as elephants and lions. Men and women are addressed using their totems as a sign of respect for their identity. My totem is, for instance, a crocodile and that of my mother is a chibelo (a bird). I have an obligation to respect a crocodile and chibelo, never at anytime participating in killing anyone of these two living things (Chilisa 2005, Chilisa 2012). People sharing the same totem have values that they share that are celebrated through rituals. Evaluation of development programmes in Africa is about the contribution of projects to the quality and wellbeing of the people. But in addition, with the everyday practice of Africans, the wellbeing of relatives and those around, including things, is as important as one’s well being. Thus Africans will usually say they are “not that well” if a relative is not well. According to Carden and Alkin (2012), “there is much that can be done to strengthen the evaluation practice in LMIC through definition and articulation of work that is done informally.” We believe that the everyday things that demonstrate how people make value judgment are as important in building frameworks for evaluation practice as what evaluators do in the field.

A relational evaluation includes the following critical elements.

1. Critical analysis of the history of evaluation and evaluation outcomes of past related projects in a given context

2. Critique of past and related projects from the communities perspective

3. Description of community involvement in the development of project goals

4. Community development of holistic standards that incorporates environment elements that connect people with the project and integration with project standards as articulated by donors.

5. Presentation of the ubuntu, which emphasises the role of belongingness, togetherness, interdependence, relationships, collectiveness, love and harmony to build community relationships. For example, age
regiments in Botswana provided a way of grouping people and monitoring and evaluating their progression and quality of life. The regiments were given a group name and members became responsible for one another and for upholding the values communicated to them during the traditional intervention that introduced them to adult life.

6. Presentation of established, formalised community and stakeholders relationships.

7. Holistic construction of evaluation knowledge to produce evidence, through:
   a. Listening to metaphors on the environment that have a relationship to the project
   b. Valuing community knowledge and using it as a basis for further improvement and sustainability of projects.

8. Explanation of both community-set standards and stakeholders’ standards to evaluate worth and merit.

9. List and explanation of core values based on an I/we relationship
   a. Value validity
   b. Fairness
   c. Reflexivity based on an I/we relationship
   d. Community as knowers and community as evaluators
   e. Evaluators and funding agents establishing long lasting relationships with communities.

The Ideal African Community Development Evaluation Framework

The two branches of the African tree model – decolonisation and indigenisation, and relational – illustrate the deconstruction that current evaluation theory and practice need to go through before arriving at truly African-rooted and African-driven theory and practice. The complementary model of the ideal African community begins to describe what such a practice would look like. An African lives in and for the community. The individual cannot exist without the community and the community cannot exist without the individual. The conscious interdependence between the individual and the community is what characterizes that which is essentially African. This model is built on the concept of ubuntu (described earlier), which, in simple terms, means community, and the essence of being human. The ideal African community development/evaluation model can be described by five interrelated and complementary ubuntu principles.

- Sharing and collective ownership of opportunities, responsibilities and challenges – Ants united can carry a dead elephant to their cave; a rooster may belong to one household but when it crows, it crows for the whole community; a lit candle loses nothing by lighting another candle.

- The importance of people and relationships over things – It is better to be surrounded by people than by things.

- Participatory decision making and leadership – Taking action based on one person’s views is like provoking wasps in a nest; no matter how blunt, a machete should never be held by a mad person.

- Loyalty – The river that forgets its source will soon dry up.

- Reconciliation as the goal for conflict management and resolution – Those who live in peace work for it.

The five principles describe the ideal community and they result in concrete material, social and spiritual benefits. African societies used these as basis for their assessments of community/societal progress.
How would the two models – the African evaluation tree and the ideal community – look in practice? The case study below, though not consciously built on the explicit knowledge of these models, but rather intuitively, gives some idea.

**Utooni Development Organization (UDO), Machakos, Kenya - A pioneering case in African rooted and driven evaluation practice**

In 1978, when faced with perceived government, NGOs and donor neglect, Joshua Mutikusya and a few friends started an initiative aimed at addressing the critical shortage of water in the Utooni, Machakos area. Because they had no training in development studies or community mobilisation, they had no model to base their work on. Organically, the model that emerged was built on “mwethya” philosophy, a local version of ubuntu with elements of decolonisation, indigenisation and relational branches. There were no formal monitoring and evaluation systems but progress was measured according to what really mattered to the people, identified as:

1. How well did the people work together and how did each group or individual – men, women, youths, etc.– contributing to the initiative?

2. Was the initiative affecting relationships positively or negatively?

3. How well shared was the decision making and leadership in the initiative, and what were their effects on the people and the initiative?

4. How well was the initiative building on the sense of self-esteem, solidarity and loyalty to the community?

5. What conflicts were arising from within the community and with which outsiders, and how well were these handled in the interest of the progress of the initiative?

Though running contrary to most contemporary targets and numbers of Western-driven evaluation processes, a recent evaluation showed the accomplishments of the initiative.

- Constructed 1,500 sand dams at an equivalent cost of Kshs 1.7 billion with a total value of water in each sand dam estimated at Kshs 10 million. Each sand dam had an average of 1,000 beneficiaries.
- Dug a terrace to manage erosion was estimated at 1.5 million meters.
- Decreased the distance for getting water from 10 km to 1 km, each way.
- Decreased the time required for getting water from an average of 12 hours to 1 hour.
- Significantly increased the number of farmers planting trees, digging terraces, planting indigenous drought-resistant crops, practicing no till and zero grazing.
- Significantly increased the variety and yield of the food being produced.

The key evaluation practice, referred to as “lighting a fire”, was based on the African proverb “a people who cannot light their own fire are easy to defeat.” In practice, this meant regular meetings of all stakeholders to review and discuss the progress of the initiative, striving towards an ideal community, based on the five key indicators above, and inspired and driven by their definition of development – their definition of development is a good change characterised by children living better lives than their parents.

**Implications for Monitoring and Evaluation**

What implications could the models and the case presented above have on the current understanding and practice of evaluation? In order to be more relevant to Africa and indeed to the whole of humanity, its evaluation theory and practice must be built on the African evaluation tree and have its beginning and end in the idea of “the ideal community” which is the essence of being human. Evaluations must look beyond just numbers and things; they must be truly human. Recognising this, in evaluating development initiatives, there are two key questions to be asked.

- How well is this development initiative built on the African evaluation tree and how well does it contribute towards the realisation of the ‘ideal community’?
- The key indicators of the ideal
community are the five interrelated and complementary principles of *ubuntu*.

- In the dialogue between Northern - and African-rooted and -driven evaluation theory and practice, how do we ensure that both the measures of the measurer (Northern) priorities and indicators) and the measures of the measured (African priorities and indicators) recognise and put the African ideal community at the centre? Currently, most development indicators are mainly constructed in Western terms. While this has its legitimacy, it is also very important to listen to what is important to the measured as well as to the measurers, because it is the people who live in the hut who know that there are bedbugs there.

References


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Institutionalisation Of Evaluation In Africa: The Role Of The African Evaluation Association (AFREA)

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AfREa Regional Representative for West Africa
Jennifer Mutua, 
AfREa regional representative for East Africa
Nermine Wally, 
AfREa President

Trigger papers have been commissioned with a view to encouraging a rich and effective debate at the forum. Representing a collation of the authors’ own wisdom while making use of evidence from recognised academic sources, we hope that they respond effectively to the questions at hand in our evolving development context. They are intended to be forward looking, providing a platform that moves us beyond the elementary steps in the development/evaluation debate and encourages innovation through exploring crucial issues at an advanced level.

INTRODUCTION

The profound changes in global governance led to a multitude of forces, both internal and external to exert pressure over governments and organizations to become more accountable to their national and international partners. Recent sources of these changes, among others, are the Millennium Development Goals, the implementation of the Paris Declaration, and recently the increase demand from African citizens for tangible development results. It is in this context that African states have become aware of the need to introduce monitoring and evaluation function to measure the achievement of expected results in the implementation of public policy development.

Today, evaluation has become an integral part of any planning or programming in Africa, both in the preparation phase and the implementation.

BACKGROUND

The Civil Society, the World Bank, Bilateral Partners and UN Agencies may be said to have the longest history of institutionalization of Monitoring and Evaluation in Africa. Within governments generally, the monitoring function It emerges, then, from the African actors, both state and non-state, a trend where evaluation is increasingly placed at the heart of decision making for the organization and operation performance. The main concern appears to be the gradual development of evaluation practice in order to make it more systematic. While the first national development plans of the 1970s and the 1980s took into account, more or less monitoring and evaluation (M & E) dimensions, they were found prominently in the various structural adjustment programs (SAPs) that later evolved into the to the Poverty reduction strategies (PRS) with the design and implementation of improved and more consistent monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

(in comparison with Evaluation) is more developed through administrative data collection systems that track the implementation of national Economic Blue Prints/Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). However, limited attention is given to systematic data collection, storage, analysis and dissemination to inform evidence-based decision-making and development implementation. National Bureaus of Statistics conduct decennial censuses and ad hoc surveys (including Demographic and Health
Surveys (DHS). On these too, not enough attention is paid to data analysis, dissemination of reports of findings and further research into the findings and recommendations of the surveys. Also even though administrative data mostly originates in communities, through villages and districts, linkages between these levels and the nation levels including feedback to the grass root is weak.

Moreover, studies have shown that generally at national levels throughout the Continent, the Evaluation research function including its technical capacities is weak. Specifically, Evaluation in government reporting systems is under-utilized and its institutionalization is generally weak. This includes the awareness of its importance in development efficiency and effectiveness.

These may be attributed to weak national capacities including the practice and culture of Evaluation. For instance, an evaluation capacity assessment by AfrEA prepared in 2007, revised in 2009\(^\text{10}\), and recently the case studies on the state of evaluation prepared by CLEAR, underscored the gap in Monitoring and Evaluation education and research at African universities. People are not trained within the African context and indigenous knowledge. The few African universities offering training, they were in the form of generic modules in Evaluation as part of a degree program. The modules have not evolved to reflect the African context; as well as indigenous knowledge on data collection; analysis and dissemination which are crucial for the relevance and effectiveness of the training for the continent. As a result the trainees are qualifying without necessarily adopting the appropriate skills to undertake contextually relevant evaluation and be fully effective members of the African evaluation community. Hence, the current state of evaluation theory and practice is not influencing African development.

There is also a gap in many countries not having vibrant National Professional Evaluation Association. The current hypothetical status of National Associations in the continent being that: few exist and where there are mostly weak, dormant and none-existence.

**THE PROCESS OF EVALUATION IN AFRICA**

Technical and Financial Partners (TFP) made at one time to another, a valuable contribution to the promotion of evaluation in Africa on the one hand by requiring that M & E should be taken into account in the implementation of their support (projects and programs) and on the other hand by playing an important role in the emergence of an active civil society in evaluation both at the national level (national associations and networks) which also include the creation of AfrEA as a continental body.

The support of the donor community (bilateral and multilateral) were made in various forms and varied. They concerned national actors, both state and non-state actors to enable them to:

- Appropriate tools for M & E,
- Contribute to the consolidation of achievements
- And participate in the process of institutionalization of the evaluation.

**TOWARD THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF EVALUATION IN AFRICA: THE ROLE OF AFREA**

The trend towards the institutionalization of evaluation has been seen as a formalization process based on lessons learned from practice, confirming the perception of Frederick VARONE and Steve Jacob, when they write that "the term institutionalization covers (a sociological point of view) a formal organization or a procedural rule which provides stakeholders with a framework to ensure predictability of their reciprocal behavior and, therefore, the result of the collective action. Institutionalization is therefore a "routinization" of the action - expected if not required - to assess and can be measured in terms of its actual practice in the politico-administrative and wider, networks of public action."\(^\text{11}\)

The evolution of evaluation in African states does not affect fundamentally the path described above. However, each country where the political powers maintain most of the process

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\(^{10}\) The updated Development Capacities in Evaluation in Africa, 2009, was conducted by Francois Corneille, Issaka Traire and Nene Konate.

Specifically these include the current evaluation capacity strengthening efforts. This initiative will serve as a launching pad to build comprehensive continental action plan which Evaluation Associations. The strategy involves a mandate focus. It is also in line with the organization core and culture) is one of AFREA’s strategic areas of strengthening of capacities (including practice and culture) is one of AFREA’s strategic areas of focus. It is also in line with the organization core mandate of promoting National Professional Evaluation Associations. The strategy involves a comprehensive continental action plan which will serve as a launching pad to build-up on current evaluation capacity strengthening efforts. Specifically these include the following:

- South Africa institutionalizing evaluation is carried out from the Presidency of the Republic. The SAMEA (member AfrEA) is a very active with the government;
- Benin Office of Public Policy Assessment (BPA) is attached to the Prime Minister who has completed and submitted for adoption a National Policy on Evaluation whose practice is extended to the House of Commons (Lower Chamber);
- The Ghana M & E proposition is now in place and its operates in partnership with the Ghana Independent Evaluators and Professional Network;
- Morocco, AME (Association Marocaine d’Evaluation) conducted a lobbying that led to the inclusion of evaluation in the Constitution.
- In the Niger ReNSE (Nigerien Network of Monitoring and Evaluation) has played a key role in promoting evaluation, often in collaboration with the Government whose ministry (Ministry of Planning and Ministry of Economy and Finance) has been in charge evaluation since the 1980s. A national policy evaluation (PNE) has been technically validated in 2010 and the “Law No. 2011-20 of August 8, 2011 determining the general organization of the state administration and determining its tasks” puts particular emphasis on the results-based management (RBM) and monitoring and evaluation.

THE ROLE OF AFREA

In view of the above, in order to contribute towards the increased and effective institutionalization of Evaluation in the Continent through a multi-stakeholder approach, the strengthening of capacities (including practice and culture) is one of AFREA’s strategic areas of focus. It is also in line with the organization core mandate of promoting National Professional Evaluation Associations. The strategy involves a comprehensive continental action plan which will serve as a launching pad to build-up on current evaluation capacity strengthening efforts. Specifically these include the following:

- Development of an Africa “rooted” evaluation education, research and internship program: In collaboration with African Universities, research & training institutes as well as think-tanks. This initiative will benefit a mass of African evaluation professionals and scholars including government officials and the civil society. The “Thought Leadership Forum” of Bellagio is part of the process of conceptualizing and providing a way forward to this.

The African Journal of Evaluation (AJE): This was conceptualized in 2007 during the Niamey conference and is part of AFREA’s comprehensive efforts geared towards an “Made in Africa approach to evaluation”. The Journal aims at: strengthening the evaluation capacity in the continent by providing a platform for the African community to document emerging evaluation theories and practices; providing an opportunity for cross-fertilization of ideas and methodologies across disciplines; providing a vehicle to develop African evaluation scholarly research, as well as field/action oriented research relevant to the continent’s development context, authorship as well as promoting a culture of peer-review.

Support the development and strengthening of National Evaluation Associations: This is AFREA’s core mandate and is aimed at supporting the application of effective M&E in national development agendas across the continent. Specifically, this aims at supporting the Associations to be able to provide professional M&E input (through their membership) into government-led national M&E system through a multi-stakeholder approach. It would e.g. involve input into national M&E policies and their implementation.

Supporting the participation of National Associations in sector specific evaluations and the dissemination of their findings including through the media is another way of institutionalizing Evaluation. Also the formation and participation of its members in national sectoral thematic working groups such as in Education, Environment, Agriculture and gender among others is expected to contribute towards the institutionalization of Evaluation in the continent.

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12 An Africa rooted approach will take into account the African context, and the indigenous knowledge on evaluation methods, data analysis and dissemination.
AFREA through other development stakeholder’s support is expected to play a critical role in strengthening of individual and institutional capacities for these Associations where they exist, reviving dormant ones and establishing new ones where they do not. Accordingly, AFREA’s regional representatives is to work toward accomplishing this. Currently the EvalPartners initiative by UNICEF/IOCE in partnership with AFREA is one such initiative aimed at strengthening capacities for national evaluation professional associations.

Further, AfREA assists national associations for effective institutionalization of evaluation with state institutions (government, parliament, Court of Auditors, Economic and Social Council etc) in various forms, and develops programs to support emerging national association formalization (EvalMentors program providing organizational strengthening to nascent professional associations)

**Mentoring in evaluation.** The initiative aims at providing opportunities for young and junior professionals to gain practical evaluation skills and experience in the continent. It aims at supporting development that is anchored in evidence, learning, and mutual accountability to bridge the gap between the supply and demand for evaluation in the continent. Current efforts on this by AFREA include an EvalMentors initiative, launched by AfREA in partnership with the Canadian Evaluation Society (CES) and the Quebec Society for Evaluation of Programs (SQEP) to provide support and mentoring to emerging African national evaluation association, as well as emerging publishers, and professionals through peer to peer support.

**Strengthening of AFREA’s institutional capacities.** Since 2009 formal and independent elections have been held by AFREA as part of the efforts aimed at strengthening its institutional capacities. A strategic plan to guide AFREA operations has been developed and a draft constitution is under consultative development. An institutional needs assessment and report was conducted to guide its institutional strengthening. As a follow-up on this, plans for an institutional capacity strengthening project are underway with funding support pledged by the Gates foundation

**Conferences:** Biannual conferences have been organized since 1999 as part of efforts of strengthening evaluation capacities in the continent through peer learning and experience sharing as well as networking. To date AfREA has organized 7 international conferences in Cape Town, Kenya, Niamey,

**Policy Advocacy and lobbying for Evaluation:** Evaluation champions at regional and global high policy level (governments, AU , the African peer review Mechanism, and the Aid Effectiveness network group, G7, Climate Change fora).

Additionally, through a multi-stakeholder approach support its national associations to organize round table discussions and policy dialogue with national government technocrats and other policy makers (parliament; cabinet Members of parliament) to champion Evaluation. This may also include the preparation and presentation of M&E positional papers on topical issues including the national budget and food security

**Media and citizenship engagements:** Through national associations seek collaborations with the media to create awareness on M&E among the citizenry including its role in development efficiency and effectiveness. In particular the use of social media in development engagement has become a necessary tool especially when engaging with the youth.

**CONCLUSION**

All these will build-up on existing efforts by other development partners aimed at Strengthening national Evaluation capacities in the Continent. It will also raise AFREA’s visibility and contribute towards efforts of creating national M&E culture across the continent, including its institutionalization.
ON-LINE COMMENTS FROM AFRICA
EVALUATORS RECEIVED IN PREPARATION FOR
THE FORUM

More African Evaluators’ Voices: The Context for Evaluation in Africa

“Is the problem of evaluation in Africa purely a capacity problem? Or there are other equally important factors that come into play?”

“We can say we have low capacities because our systems have not yet significantly embraced evaluation – institutionalization of evaluation in Africa is still a problem.”

“Appropriation of evaluation policy by our policy makers, the actions of national networks and associations, is insufficient.”

“What are the barriers to change in Africa? There are few if any formal or informal incentives to build public decisions on evidence.”

“Professional evaluators delivering quality reports are scarce in (Cameroon).”

“Able decision makers are still needed to draft evaluation terms of reference that are precise enough to generate useful and credible information.”

“I want to acknowledge the growing rush in evaluation practice as testified by the growing number of training programs available locally and their turn-out of students.”

“National evaluation associations... according to the latest EvalPartners survey, are by and large dormant or hijacked by a handful of individuals.”

“A few countries (in Africa) have set up evaluation systems within government structures – In many cases, they are technocrats within Ministry departments and their contribution to national policies has yet to be strongly felt.”

“Most M & E reports (in Kenya) are an accusing analysis of how money was spent on activities, outputs and what was left un-used; rather than the effects these projects have had on society.”

“Let’s not lie to ourselves: the first influence pushing for (an) evaluation profession was market based – donors asked for it and they asked for more national capacities to do it so we got into it.”

“I believe the level of practice and the types of use of evaluation (in Africa) are largely unknown. Studies that exist are commissioned by donors for countries that they have interest in, and reports are not shared… it’s time that we took the initiative to study the things that matter to us!”

“We should capitalize on what exists and find ways to better share our respective experiences and build ongoing relationships amongst our various evaluation organizations.”

“Although I do not have a broader view of the whole region, I agree with colleagues that the “evaluation practice” in Africa is still marginal, and largely driven by donor needs.”

“I believe that our evaluation practice in Africa is still dominated by project types of evaluations, which is the interest of project funders.”

“I believe that we can conclude that evaluators are not influential in Africa.”

“The continent is stretched out between long-established evaluation cultures with government-backed “places of safety”, to countries with failed states where whistleblowers get assassinated.”

“Evaluation is a house of many disciplines – there are multiple ‘halo effects’ at work.”

“The Paris Declaration highlighted the “micro/macro paradox”, where evaluations praise a project where there is no national impact. In those conditions, the profession will not win intellectual respect or moral authority.”

“If we are to have impact our diagnostic instruments cannot be superficial, our findings cannot be trivial, our recommendations cannot be l, irrelevant or weak.”

“Evaluators have more impact than we know, because informal networks matter a lot, and government officials are conscientious and seek out advice.”

“Development aid and evaluation in (South) Africa IS OLDER than the international aid movement. The officials involved are retired/ing now, so the knowledge can be saved before lost.”

“Are we recognized as a dignified profession who unfailingly see the truth and tell the truth to power? Not yet.”

“I would stress the importance of African Evaluators (and all “indigenous” evaluators in developing countries) seeing themselves as change agents in addition to being very skilled professionals.”

“Concerning African evaluators, I think they are more involved in international evaluations .... African evaluators need to be change agents... changing how development policy decisions are made.”

“Only a culture in which project managers are encouraged to identify a problem, gather multi-disciplinary evidence, think of innovative designs to address the key policy issues, design a pilot, and assess the effectiveness of alternative approaches will HELP POLICYMAKERS MAKE GOOD DECISIONS AND SAVE MONEY AT THE SAME TIME.”

“Evaluators are overbooked and constantly moving from one assignment to another, without taking the time to share their knowledge and transmit their expertise to younger or less experienced evaluators-to-be, which is the only way to develop in-country capacity.”

“If we envisage evaluation as a catalyst to the change process and not just a livelihood niche, then we need structures, tools and networks than can consolidate this change dimension.”

“Building evaluation capacity should (also be about) increasing awareness among citizens of its contribution to a full enjoyment of rights.”

“We need a change of mind from our national leaders so that they start viewing evaluations as a way to do things better, not always as an external look at their own kitchen!”

“Evaluation is somehow a tool of development and AfrEA should work in a way that (promotes) evaluation in Africa as having its own specificities.”

“The role of evaluation must be understood by all stakeholders in the development project but specifically by government.”

“We need to ensure that the evaluation of Africa is conducted by and with Africans. Aid money for Africa must be spent in and on Africa.”

“European evaluators underestimate agency effects especially the habit of intermediaries who commission evaluations of the delivery stage in Africa, not the design stage in Europe.”

“I can see two areas where a ‘Made in Africa’ approach can be the preferred choice for locals and for donors wanting to work in Africa: (i) by paying attention to the risk and reasons for project non-delivery; (ii) by evaluating project design as well as project delivery.”

“Projects designed in Europe for Africa don’t work. Having locals evaluate a project that is already underway using a dysfunctional theory of change is too late to make a difference.”

“Our great needs and scarce resources mean that we don’t have the luxury of expensive mistakes. Evaluators must be able to check the project before it begins. Maybe because the opportunity costs and risks of failure are lower in Europe, my impression is that ‘attention-to-real-problems’ and ‘checking-the-project-before-it-starts’ are gaps in the market that Africa can fill.”

“Our continental diversity is a great strength because it obliges western donors to take local factors into consideration, stopping the pathology of designing projects for Africa in Europe, then deploying home based evaluators who report with one eye open to the next contract, who lack cultural / linguistic / geographic nous takes enabling legislation.”

“Evaluators need to be protected by legislation in the event that they need to blow a whistle. This will increase our influence.”

“Yes, we need to have an edge. ‘Made in Africa’ must mean ‘better than anything else in our area of operation’.”

More African Evaluators’ Voices: Proposed Actions

“Seek not only North-South exchanges as we normally do, but also South-South ones.”

“A standard methodology could be adopted and evidence of “barriers to change” as well as “opportunities for change” collected across AfrEA member countries as a benchmark for action.”

“Evaluation should be made more accessible and understandable to the common citizen! African governments will (then) be forced to mandate evaluations when their people ask for better and more tangible results about how public money is spent!”

“I hope we understand that we have a role to play post-Busan and that we should take this process seriously.”

“Of course there is much to achieve, but we should not undermine the remarkable steps that are being taken.”

“We should find ways to foster demand at national levels, of course from governments, but also from the other public actors (local governments, municipalities, civil society, etc.). Our networks have a major role to play to raise awareness and interest.”

“I do not see evaluators in Africa involved in regional and global policy processes – we have to link with our
regional bodies such as AU, the regional commissions, even NEPAD.”

“I suggest AfrEA takes advantage of the case studies that IOCE is doing under the EvalPartner initiative. There should be lots of interesting references on the status of evaluation in Africa.”

“All over Africa there will be old faith-based self-help and aid organizations, who commissioned annual audits and reflections, so we have no reason to feel insecure or think that we are new kids on the block, that development and evaluation is a foreign and recent import. We need to get in touch with our historical institutions.”

“We need a framework for evaluation in Africa, one that guides donors when commissioning evaluations and protects and positions evaluators to tell truth to power with confidence and income security.”

“Hammer the ‘Made in Africa’ slogan, but also give it substance!”
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| 7    | Evaluation frames that capture unspoken community dimensions and evaluation blind spots | “Development practitioners are slowly and painfully realizing that standard evaluation frames/lenses are not adequately capturing the complexity and realities of the African context, and hence undermining the credibility of practice of evaluation. Existing evaluation frames often miss out critical cultural community dimensions / blind spots that ultimately become ‘killer’ barriers to the realisation of the aspirations of a project/program or policy. These cultural ‘blind spots’/unspoken taboos remain largely undetected under the standard evaluation ‘radar’ and many times emerge to haunt evaluators. We are therefore advocating for an Afro-sensitive evaluation framework, which will bring greater credibility, authority and profile to African evaluation and development efforts. This increased evaluation credibility will go a long way in increasing the use of evaluation findings, and knowledge building. Change in Africa will be a function of learning; hence learning and adapting will be a function of continuous and timely and credible feedback from program monitoring and evaluations.”

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<th>Rosa Muraguri-Mwofolo, Irene Karanja, Akilagpa Sawyer, Alaphia Wright, Alima Mahama, Josiah Cobbah</th>
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| 8    | Why Africa-rooted development evaluation? | “We need Africa rooted evaluation in order to achieve more effective theory and practice of evaluation in Africa. Such evaluation will be grounded in African peoples worldviews and ways of knowing. It is a fact that development evaluation has been mostly Western Driven without much consideration for local contexts and realities. What we are seeking is an evaluation paradigm that is informed by African aspirations. Without a doubt, development evaluation that is Africa centred will enhance the contribution of evaluation to African development.”

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<th>Chiku Malunga, Doha Abdelhamid, Josiah Cobbah</th>
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| 9    | Evaluation for innovative African futures | “Evaluation answers the so-called three right questions: Are we doing the Right things; Are we doing things right; and Are we acting on the right lessons learned? Universally, the ultimate goals of development are dignity, Peace and Prosperity for all. These goals are reached though actions with integrity of purpose, process and perspective. The African Future will be on in which the current (and future) challenges of: (i) de-humanisation and abuse of human rights, inequality etc.; (ii) poverty; and (iii) unresolved conflicts are increasingly reduced, for the African to enjoy dignity, peace and prosperity. Innovation grounded in African values, understanding and perspectives will facilitate the building of the desirable African Futures making appropriate use of evaluation cognizant of these values.”

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<th>Robin Moore, Alaphia Wright, Debbie Serwadda, Josiah Cobbah</th>
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| 10   | Where do we want to go? - Evaluation for Good Governance in Post-Revolutionary Contexts | - Citizens informed and empowered - Civil Society organization acting as pressure groups for DME - Governments accountable for enhanced performance and greater responsiveness to citizens’ needs

|     | Laila El Baradei, Nermine Wally, Doha Abdelhamid |

PAPER 2 - BRINGING ABOUT INFLUENTIAL EVALUATION FOR AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT: THE ROAD FORWARD

Contributors - Doha Abdelhamid, Laila El Baradei, Debbie Serwadda, Nermine Wally

STATEMENT: The cause of development evaluation rests on the development of genuine development strategies reflecting the needs of stakeholders who should own and be engaged in visioning and implementation of development and the respective DME evaluation discourse.

The contributors to this paper are aware of a number of considerations:

- This paper is highly dependent on the discourse evolving from earlier trigger papers, same for the contributions that are currently being generated by other position papers
- The immediacy of development adjoined to development evaluation is imperative

Literature messages drawn from Rob Moore’s and Zenda Ofir’s trigger paper:

- The mastery of critical M&E approaches and methods
- Innovation in monitoring and evaluation theory and practice
- Positioning the evaluation profession and globally

What strategies or activities for joint action could be considered?

Expand the pool of evaluation knowledge generated within Africa

1. Generate, compile and classify a transparent repository of knowledge on African evaluations
2. Mapping capacity building initiatives in DME within Africa
3. Moving the compiled repositories and maps to the wider African public
4. Gauging demand from specialist universities, think tanks and DME projects to partner for generating original knowledge drawing lessons learnt and best practices on the theory, perception and application of DME in Africa
5. Documenting and disseminating results in fora and building national and sub-national DME action research plans to improve the evaluation status
6. Documenting and disseminating intra-national, regional action research results
7. Documenting and disseminating continental action research results

Equitable stakeholders participation has to be secured in all phases of the above action plan.

Catalyze a strong, movement towards 'thought leadership' within the evaluation profession in Africa

The civil society should play a leading role in canvassing ideas and fostering thought leadership in development evaluation by acting as a broker of evaluative knowledge among the general public, government, evaluation practitioners, parliamentarians, the media/press, private sector, political parties and development partners.

Such movements require a non for profit actor, therefore the DME civil society stand as well-suited in this regard. A continuous policy dialogue should take place through a DME civil society leader to spearhead through planned series of fora within a liberal thinking space to improve the realized development results nationally, regionally, continentally and internationally.

This policy dialogue should ensure infiltration into national policies and the embedment of institutionalized, sustainable systems in governments that would realize development for the African people.

The output, henceforth, would be an Africa-owned overarching vision for development and development evaluation.
Extend the influence of this meeting and its envisaged outcomes

The current forum should be understood as the initial step to the development of a vision for Africa on development evaluation.

It has to be also recognized that development and development plans have to be appropriately designed to improve the conditions for sustainable development for African citizens overall beyond political promises and jargon.

Development rights awareness campaigns realized should attach a clear cut DME component.

A road show to expose the results of the current meeting and catalyse mixed, diverse national and regional groups should be planned for and taken up forward in the course of a year. After then, generating an all-encompassing publication (in book format) that would heavily synthesize and analyse the thoughts elicited through the road show into further developed actions together with parties responsible to taking up actions within a maximum of a 3-year period, after which a major African conference is to be held to report on achieved results, challenges and further opportunities.

A supervisory board is to be established at the beginning of the implementation period to monitor and guide the implementing responsible parties. Contribution and participation vision implementation will be voluntary, though backed by heavy media campaigning.

What next steps should be taken towards making this a reality?

• Defining interested parties (governments, formal and informal networks
• Defining their level of participation
• Meeting with them and agreeing on the time line and expected results in the 2 phases (vision formulation for Africa; then vision implementation for Africa).
• Disseminating results
• Actioning the vision
• Monitoring the action
PAPER 3 - DEVELOPING AN ETHICAL COZY TRIANGLE - AFRICAN EVALUATION FOR PRIVATE, PUBLIC, PEOPLE DRIVEN DEVELOPMENT

Contributors - Debbie Serwadda, Doha Abdelhamid and Chiku Malungu

What is African development? Prosperity, Human Dignity and Peace

Why is it important? (THE STATEMENT)

Current evaluation understanding and practice is still limited to specialists and consultants working largely in civil society and the public sector. Africa is a young continent full of untapped potential especially amongst young people and women. African Evaluation for Private, Public and People Driven Development therefore has the opportunity of contributing to developing young people and women through applicable knowledge and local revenue generation, informed by a culture of innovation, enterprise, strategic leadership and accountability.

Implications for evaluation theory and practice

Will it make a difference? YES

• Current formal evaluation practice has a limited conceptualization of the scope of sustainable development.
• Private, Public, and People Sector partnerships need to be strengthened
• It is imperative to develop a more inclusive evaluation practice that evaluates itself and that accommodates the already existing evaluation practices from all sectors (PPP)
• There is an urgent need to raise the social consciousness of the private sector (formal and informal) which reaches more people on the continent
• The undisputed role of entrepreneurial Mindsets and practice as an engine and driver for sustainable development.
• Evaluation as a means to an end promotes a culture of of ownership, responsibility, learning and accountability
• African evaluation is not the sole responsibility of specialists but a way of life of citizens

How can African Evaluation for Private, Public, and People Driven Development be made influential? Who should be involved in the process?

• It must utilize entrepreneurship and participation principles; indigenous knowledge, tools and people friendly methods.
• It must be documented using people friendly methodologies and shared (using all technologies including youth friendly ones) in a practical manner
• It must be popularized and even documented in African languages to be read by Africans themselves
• All stakeholders must be involved from the 3 sectors
• Mutually reinforcing roles across sectors must be clarified (enabler, implementers)
• It must be comply with highest national and global standards
Respecting the principles of capacity development as an endogenous process, the strategy should be developed drawing from the goals for evaluation established by government. These goals go beyond responsiveness to accountability for value for money.

National goals for evaluation include:

- Governance and accountability to citizens and to those who provide support (expand list – bilaterals, multilaterals, south-south, diaspora),
- Development of learning nations and groups for informed reflection, innovations and change,
- Development of existing analytic institutions (research and evaluation centres and universities) to enhance their role as independent evaluation institutions and think tanks to direct evaluation,
- Knowledge development and contribution to global knowledge.
## DELEGATE PROFILES

### PROF. DOHA ABDEL HAMID - Egypt

Prof. Doha Abdelhamid is an economist and policy evaluation expert with 27 years of experience in academia and consulting. She held positions as senior policy advisor to the former minister of finance, minister of planning and economic development, and finally in the Cabinet of ministers of Egypt. She has lectured in finance and policy evaluations at the American University in Cairo, Carlton University in Canada, Edinburgh Business School, the Arab Academy for Science and Technology, and the Cape Breton University. Doha has served as an IDEAS Executive Board Member for two terms and represented the MENA region in the Media Society for Consumer Protection and Development. She is co-founder of the MENA Regional Network for Development Evaluation and co-founder of the Egyptian Development Evaluation Society (EgyDeval). She is a Global Task Force Member in the Inwent-World Bank Institute for Training Effectiveness Metrics; and member of the regional knowledge management network of IDRC/MERO. Doha has been recently appointed as the MENA Representative to the Board of Trustees of the International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation (IOCE), and also as an International Advisor to the African Evaluation Association (AFREA).

### DR. ISAAC BEKALO - (Moderator) Ethiopia

Born in Ethiopia, Isaac has twenty-five years of practical experience in community and organizational development, management and leadership. As President of IIRR, Isaac takes a lead role in strategy formulation, organizational diagnoses and restructuring, strategic management, business plan development and monitoring and evaluation.

While pursuing his doctoral studies, Isaac worked as a part-time lecturer in the school of Public Health and as the Coordinator of Graduate Research Programs in the Philippines and joined IIRR in September 1989 as the Africa Regional Director. He was appointed its 6th President in January 2009 and built the Africa Regional Centre and establishing a presence in four East African countries.

Isaac has successfully co-created a participatory knowledge-management and documentation system known as the Writeshop that used by numerous international organizations. He has facilitated and co-authored several leading publications on the Writeshop process and has trained hundreds of senior and middle level managers and technical specialists in the same.

### PROF. BAGELE CHILISA - Botswana

Prof. Bagele Chilisa is a Professor at the University of Botswana where she teaches Research Methods and Evaluation. She has supervised more than 50 Masters and PhD dissertations and has served as external examiner for PhD thesis in the SADEC region. She is also author of a number of textbooks that are used by graduate students internationally. Professor Chilisa has received numerous grants to carry out impact evaluation and intervention research on HIV/AIDS, gender, education, sexuality interacting with scholars from Sub-Saharan Africa and the rest of the world. Her evaluation research on pregnancy policy was the part of a larger project initiated by the Ministries of Education with studies in Botswana, Mozambique, Kenya and Nigeria. Other studies (including HIV/AIDS, gender school experiences, and life skills education) have been carried out with scholars from the United Kingdom, Ghana, Botswana, USA (Pennsylvania, Stanford and Harvard) and have involved studies in Botswana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

### DR. JOSIAH COBBAH - Ghana

Dr. Josiah A. M. Cobbah is a Principal Lecturer in Governance, Leadership and Management and currently Head of Administration at the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA). With more than 30 years’ experience in education in both Ghana and the United States, Dr. Cobbah is an expert in governance, human rights, leadership, ethics and social responsibility and development management. He has been a consultant for various national and international agencies. Dr. Cobbah is a lawyer and holds a PhD in geography with a concentration in rural resources development and planning. He has published in a variety of areas.
PROF. LAILA EL BARADEI - Egypt

Prof. Laila El Baradei is associate dean for the School of Global Affairs and Public Policy (GAPP) and professor of public administration at the American University in Cairo. She is also a professor of public administration at the Faculty of Economics and Political Science, Cairo University.

El Baradei is a graduate of AUC with a BA degree in business administration with highest honors in 1983 and an MBA in 1988. She received her PhD in public administration from Cairo University in 1998.

Her research interests and publications cover the areas of development cooperation management, decentralization, organizational change, public administration reform, governance, child labour, downsizing, and accountability. El Baradei has co-authored Egypt’s Human Development Report 2010, 2008 and 2004; Egypt’s Millennium Development Goals Second Country Report 2004, and the World Bank’s Country Environmental Analysis for Egypt published in 2005. Over the years, she has has also provided consultancy services to the World Bank, USAID, UNDP; DANIDA, Center for Development Research in Bonn, the Economic Research Forum in Egypt, and Ford Foundation.

DR. SULLEY GARIBA - Ghana

Dr. Sulley Gariba, is an evaluation specialist and policy analyst with nearly 30 years of experience with strategic institutions in Africa and internationally. He has provided leadership to several community and rural development initiatives across Ghana, which earned him the Millennium Excellence Award for Rural Development in 2005. He was the Founding President of the International Development Evaluation Association (IDeAS), and former President of the African Evaluation Association (AfREA), was former lecturer at the University for Development Studies in Tamale, is currently the Executive Director of the Institute for Policy Alternatives, a policy think-tank in Ghana. Since 2009 has been serving as the Development Policy Advisor to the President of Ghana, focusing on the Savannah Accelerated Development Strategy for development equity in Ghana. He has been a leading member of the National Development Planning Commission. He has a Ph.D. and an M.A. in Political Science from Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada. His first degree was from University of Ghana.

IRENE KARANJA - Kenya

Irene Karanja is a specialist in participatory research, community organizing and capacity building of the urban poor. In the last 10 years, Irene was been instrumental in establishing the Research and Advocacy unit of the Pamoja Trust and has transformed participatory data collection techniques into a major instrument that allows slum dwellers to assume leadership of settlements through savings, housing cooperatives and women’s groups. Irene’s major accomplishments include facilitating the federation of slum dwellers in Kenya (Muungano wa Wanavijiji) to undertake settlement planning, settlement up-grading and tenure regularisation of informal settlements across Kenya and leveraging government departments to use participatory urban planning processes as the first step to settlement upgrading.

As the founding Executive Director of Muungano Support Trust (MuST), she has works with Private and Public Institutions to resource urban poor projects in nine urban areas in Kenya. She recently served as an advisor to the Kenyan Government for the resettlement of 10,000 poor households in Kenya.

HAJIA ALIMA MAHAMA - Ghana

Hajia Alima Mahama is a prominent Ghanaian human rights lawyer and gender equality specialist. She, until recently, served as an advisor to the post conflict government of Liberia on gender and development policies under a UN and Government of Liberia Joint Programme on Attainment of MDG3. She previously was Ghana’s Minister of Women and Children’s Affairs, Deputy Minister of Local Government and Rural Development, Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry and Member of Parliament. Trained as a lawyer, and an early champion of women’s equality in northern Ghana, she has worked as an advisor on a wide range of donor-funded projects in Ghana and Liberia, including for DANIDA, CIDA, IFAD and others. A member of a wide range of professional and policy networks, Mahama earned a BA from the University of Ghana and her law degree from the Ghana Law School, as well as an MA in development studies from the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague. She was a Pearson Fellow of University of Ottawa, Canada and a Hubert Humphrey Fellow at Rutgers University, New Jersey, USA.
DR. CHIKU MALUNGA - Malawi

Chiku Malunga is a Civil Society Organization Development Writer and Practitioner specializing in Strategy and Leadership Development and works as a Consultant throughout Africa and beyond. A highly sought after Speaker especially on understanding non-profit organisations, leadership and strategy from an African perspective, his niche is in using African indigenous wisdom in enhancing modern organizational life. Chiku is the author of seven African indigenous wisdom based Leadership and Strategy books: Understanding Organisational Sustainability through African Proverbs, Understanding Organizational Leadership through Ubuntu, Making Strategic Plans Work: Insights from African Indigenous Wisdom; Oblivion or Utopia: The Prospects for Africa; Power and Influence: Self Development Lessons from African Proverbs and Folktales; and Cultivating Personal and Organizational Effectiveness: Spiritual Insights from African Proverbs. Chiku holds a doctorate degree in Development Studies from the University of South Africa and is Director of CADECO, an organisation that promotes African centred organisational and leadership improvement models.

PROF. ROBIN MOORE - South Africa

Professor Robin Moore is Deputy Vice Chancellor (Partnerships and Advancement) at the University of the Witwatersrand ("Wits") in Johannesburg. He joined Wits in 2006 as Director of Strategic Planning and, in 2007, he was appointed as Deputy Vice Chancellor (Advancement & Partnerships). His work includes responsibility for the advancement of the University’s strategic purposes in partnership with other institutions in society. Among other things, he assists in developing the relationships between Wits and partners in government, industry, civil society and other universities. He was recently project director for South Africa’s Ministerial Review Committee on the National System of Innovation, a study conducted in 2010 and 2011 and published in 2012.

He is a member of the Advisory Board of the journal Studies in Higher Education and sits on the Boards of the Gauteng City Region Observatory (GCRO) and the Southern African Liaison Office (SALO).

DR. ROSA MURAGURI-MWOLOLO - Kenya

Rosa has 30 years experience international development and is a champion for African Entrepreneurship. Instrumental in the development of policies to support SME development, she currently works for UN-HABITAT as part of the Advisory Group that ensures Results-Based Management (RBM) policy compliance. Rosa holds a PhD in Management Education, a Masters in Entrepreneurship, and a Bachelors degree in Sociology. Starting her career with Kenya’s Ministry of Gender, promoting gender sensitive policies for SMEs, Rosa moved on to become Senior Program Officer and Gender Advisor with CIDA and NORAD. She has consulted for numerous governments, NGOs and UN Agencies and has trained extensively in Results Based Management (RBM). Until recently, she was a CIAT trainer for the African Women Scientists in Agricultural Research and Development (AWARD) program. Rosa serves as a member of the Governing Council for Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) and is a member of the African Community of Practice (AICop) for Managing for Results and a founder member for the Kenya Community of Practice for Managing for Development Results. She is an adjunct faculty at the Strathmore University Business School.

DR. ZENDA OFIR - South Africa

South Africa born Dr Zenda Ofir has been a full-time evaluation specialist since leaving her position as Director of Research at the University of Pretoria in 2000. She is a former President of the African Evaluation Association (AfEVA), former Vice President of the International Organisation for Cooperation in Evaluation (IOCE), and former Board member of the American Evaluation Association, the first based outside the US. She has been a visiting professor at the University of Hiroshima and for several years presented the Aid Effectiveness module of the International Cooperation course at the United Nations University in Tokyo.

Zenda has participated in assignments for more than 40 clients in 30 countries across Africa and Asia, and regularly serves as expert advisor on evaluation. She is currently one of four Core Advisors to the Rockefeller Foundation’s Evaluation Office, member of the GAVI Evaluation Advisory Committee and Expert M&E Advisor to AWARD, a Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation funded program cultivating African women leaders in agricultural research. She has also served as Steering Committee member of the Network of Networks on Impact Evaluation (NONIE); as member of the CGIAR Science Council Standing Panel on Impact Assessment (SPIA); as Expert Panel member for review of the IFAD Evaluation Manual; as OECD DAC/UNEG peer panel member for review of the evaluation function of the World Food Program (WFP); and as Special Advisor on Knowledge Management to the IUCN Executive in Switzerland.
MR. STEPHEN PORTER - South Africa

Mr Stephen Porter is currently Acting Director of the Centre for Learning on Evaluation and Results (CLEAR Anglophone Africa) at the University of the Witwatersrand. Mr Porter has a 10 year career in developing and implementing Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) systems in Africa and is well versed in theories of change. Currently Mr Porter is working with the Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) in South Africa on a range of evaluation issues. Mr Porter has designed and supported the implementation of a range of community based M&E systems that balanced donor, government and organisational requirements. Stephen has developed good practice M&E systems for USAID and DFID funded initiatives at VSO and AMREF and conducted a provincial level evaluation of the institutional barriers to the outcomes based approach and is currently teaching courses at Wits. Mr Porter has also assisted an FAO division on the development of simple monitoring systems and has a range of peer-reviewed publications on institutional, collaborative, and rights-based M&E approaches. He holds a Masters degree in Public Policy and is currently working on his PhD.

DR. SUKAI PROM-JACKSON - The Gambia

Dr. Sukai Prom-Jackson has over 20 years of professional experience and leadership in the management and conduct of research and evaluation, policy formulation and strategic planning, and in the facilitation of learning as a university lecturer and trainer. She has spent 15 years with the World Bank in the fields of policy research, policy-based lending and investment operations. Her work experience includes governance, public sector administration and reform, education and human development, and human resource management. She has recently been appointed by the UN General Assembly to serve as an Inspector of the Joint Inspection Unit. Since 2005, Sukai has worked as Evaluation Adviser of the independent Evaluation Office (EO) of the UNDP. She is well-recognized in the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) and the international evaluation community and has represented the UNDP and the UNEG in various meetings to advance development evaluation. Dr. Prom-Jackson is a Gambian and a graduate of Howard University and Middlebury College in the USA.

PROF. AKILAGPA SAWYERR - Ghana

Professor Akilagpa Sawyerr is a member of the Council of State in Ghana and Vice-President (Arts) of the Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences. He was Secretary-General of the Association of African Universities (AAU) from 2003 to 2008, and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ghana from 1985 to 1992. Prior to that, he taught law at the Universities of Dar es Salaam, Papua New Guinea and Ghana, and held fellowships and visiting appointments at universities in Europe and the US. Professor Sawyerr studied law at the Universities of Durham, London and California (Berkeley), where he obtained the degree of Doctor of the Science of Jurisprudence (JSD), and is a member of the Bar in England, Ghana and Papua New Guinea. He serves on several national and international bodies, including the Governing Board of the Commonwealth of Learning, the Technical Committee and Advisory Council of the Ibrahim Index of African Governance, as well as the Committee on Freedom and Responsibility in the Conduct of Science (CFRS) of the International Council for Science (ICSU). Professor Sawyerr’s research interests cover globalization, higher education, human development, and international negotiations, areas in which he has published widely and acted as consultant to national and international bodies.

DEBBIE SERWADDA - Uganda

Debbie Serwadda is the founding chairperson of iCON Women & Young People’s Leadership Academy (iCON) - a “proudly Ugandan” social enterprise and civil society organization providing a unique integrated formal and non formal entrepreneurship and leadership education experience for women and young people who aspire to excel as productive and innovative local and global citizens. iCON has piloted an Entrepreneurship and Transformational Leadership Fellowship with more than 600 community based women in post-conflict Northern Uganda; 50 young men and 100 young women in post-secondary institutions in Northern Uganda; and 100 students in selected schools in Kampala. Recognized for her authentic leadership skills, Debbie is a core member of the African Gender and Development Evaluators Network (AGDEN). AGDEN is a Special Interest Group (SIG) under the umbrella of the African Evaluators Association (AFREA), and Africa wide network through which gender and rights evaluators seek to influence development through participatory evaluation practice on the continent and the world.
NERMINE WALLY - Egypt

Nermine Wally is currently President of the African Evaluation association (AfreA) and a socio economic researcher with experience in gender issues, poverty alleviation and participatory initiatives. Through fieldwork and direct contact, she developed deep knowledge of the social issues facing non-governmental organizations, youth, women and rural households in Egypt and the MENA region. In her latest job as Senior Governance Specialist in the ‘New Social Contract Centre’, a project launched by the Egyptian Cabinet to respond to Egypt developmental needs, she worked closely on the governance and anti-corruption agenda of Egypt. She also contributed to the development of the national M&E framework to assess Egypt Millennium Development Goals. Nermine has working experience in the Middle East, Africa and South East Asia, and serves in the board of the African Evaluation Association where she leads the team on Advocacy. She is currently based in Paris where she is pursuing graduate studies in Sciences Po Paris.

PROF. ALAPHIA WRIGHT - Sierra Leone

Alaphia Wright is the UNESCO representative to Angola, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, and Swaziland; and the Director of the UNESCO Office in Windhoek. Alaphia is a trained Evaluator and RBM consultant and has served on some 20 Board of Directors, Management Boards, Technical and Steering Committees; including the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG). He was co-chair of the ECD Task Force of UNEG, which developed an evaluation training programme for UN staff. A strong proponent of the ‘Systems Thinking Approach’ he has authored/co-authored 100+ publications including four books. Alaphia is the co-developer of the Dynamic Cone method for Open Pit Mine Design, and the developer of the Systems-ware model of the Logical Framework and the RBM Logical ScoreCard. From 1984 to 2003 he lectured Operations Research and Mine Planning at the Universities of Zambia and Zimbabwe. He also lectured Project Management and Evaluation, and supervised many MBAs, MSc and PhD research projects in engineering and management. He has been a visiting professor in Zambia and External Examiner in Germany, Ghana, South Africa and Zambia. He was Dean of Engineering, University of Zimbabwe from 1999 - 2003.

Kieron Crawley - (Forum Project Manager) - Ireland

Kieron is a Masters Graduate from the WITs School of Public and Development Management. He has helped to establish the CLEAR Africa centre, lecturing to a range of students in the areas of Monitoring and Evaluation, Results based Management and Project Planning. Kieron’s background as a Development Country Programme Director within the INGO sector has provided him with experience in developing and managing multi-sectoral poverty alleviation programmes in East and Southern Africa, the Caribbean and South Asia. His country experience spans Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, the Gambia, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, Haiti, Honduras, Peru, Nepal, and Bangladesh. Kieron’s work with CLEAR has included the facilitating of two global meetings on behalf of the World Bank CLEAR Global Secretariat in Paris and Accra. He is currently undertaking a PhD at the University of the Witwatersrand.
## AGENDA

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<td><strong>Session 1 (morning)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Session 3 (morning)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Session 5 (morning)</strong></td>
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<td>• Welcome and Introductions</td>
<td>Trigger Presentation and Discussions</td>
<td>Decision-focused Discussions</td>
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<td>• Framing the meeting</td>
<td>i. What is meant by ‘Africa rooted’ and ‘Africa driven’ theory and practice?</td>
<td>i. Based on the discussions before and at this meeting, what will be needed to</td>
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<td><strong>Trigger Presentation and Discussions</strong></td>
<td>ii. What are the implications for development, for evaluation theory and practice, and for the evaluation profession? What is likely to be ‘African’ about such work?</td>
<td>• continuously expand the pool of influential evaluation knowledge generated from within Africa, by Africans?</td>
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<td>i. What are the most important contemporary development challenges for Africa over the next ten years?</td>
<td>iii. What can be learned from related experiences elsewhere in the world?</td>
<td>• attract more of the most outstanding and influential people to the evaluation profession in Africa?</td>
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<td>ii. What are the implications for evaluation theory and practice, and for the profession?</td>
<td><strong>Session 4 (afternoon)</strong></td>
<td>• catalyze an influential, enduring movement of ‘thought leadership’ that provides active and respected contributions to evaluation and to development thinking, policies and practices in Africa?</td>
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<td>iii. How do these relate to global trends?</td>
<td>Collation of Perspectives – Breakout Groups</td>
<td><strong>Session 6 (afternoon)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Session 2 (afternoon)</strong></td>
<td>iv. How can an innovative body of work in this area be nurtured to (i) make it cutting edge and (ii) increase the likelihood that it will be used?</td>
<td>Planning the Way Forward</td>
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<td><strong>Trigger Presentation and Discussions</strong></td>
<td>v. What will be needed to give ‘Africa rooted’ and ‘Africa driven’ evaluation theory and practice greater credibility, respect and voice in development efforts, within and outside the continent?</td>
<td>ii. What strategies will help put ideas generated from this meeting in practice?</td>
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<td>iv. What is the status quo of evaluation in Africa, and what are the forces that have been shaping it?</td>
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<td>iii. What strategies will extend and enhance the influence of this meeting towards its desired outcomes?</td>
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<td>v. How does this situation relate to global trends?</td>
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<td>iv. What immediate steps will be needed to generate momentum?</td>
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<td>vi. How can evaluation in Africa be made to be more innovative and useful in advancing these development priorities?</td>
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