Evaluation Matters is a quarterly magazine issued in both English and French, by Independent Development Evaluation, IDEV at the African Development Bank (AfDB). Editors welcome topical articles from writers’ original work and will be pleased to consider contributions for the themes below for Q3 and Q4 2018 and Q1 and Q2 2019.
Building Supply and Demand for Evaluation in Africa (Part 1)

Creating and embedding a culture of evaluation is more than having an evaluation unit. It involves buy-in and resources at all levels, from government ministries to parliaments down to the grassroots level. There must be a steady supply of high-quality evaluations, and demand for these evaluations in order to ensure their use.

Sometimes, evaluations provide difficult messages or dare us to think differently about our work. Being open to these messages is challenging for any professional. Nobody likes to have their hard work put under the microscope! But evaluation is not just another accountability tool - fundamentally, evaluation is about learning from experience and improving the performance of organizations, governments, etc. Evaluation helps achieve the end goal of improving people’s lives through transparency, accountability and legitimacy.

There must be people who convey the findings of an evaluation in the right way and with good will, telling truth to power. Through awareness-raising about the benefits of evaluation among development stakeholders, governments are being made more accountable and thus inclined to invest more in evaluation. How do we ensure that they have the necessary capacity to deliver high-quality, useful evaluations? And if the ball starts rolling faster, will the demand for evaluations outstrip the capacity to deliver? On the other hand, does the demand side have sufficient capacity of its own to request the right kinds of evaluations, and to use the evaluations produced?

*Article submissions have closed*  
Publication March 2018

Building Supply and Demand for Evaluation in Africa (Part 2)

In our initial call for contributions for Evaluation Matters Q1, we received overwhelming responses to the theme of “Building supply and demand for evaluation in Africa”, which warrant for two editions on the same theme. Certainly, evaluation plays a critical role in the effective implementation of good governance.
structures, promoting accountability, learning, development effectiveness, and sustained and rapid economic growth in Africa. Yet the supply of and demand for evaluation is still relatively low in most African countries. Furthermore, the lack of an evaluation culture hinders good governance based on evidence-informed decision-making.

In this second edition on “building supply and demand for evaluation” we will be looking at different models used in fostering and promoting M&E demand and supply such as South-South cooperation for learning. We will also hear various perspectives on building supply and demand at country and institutional levels.

Article submissions have closed
Publication: June 2018

AfDB Evaluation Week 2018 Special Edition
This edition will reflect on the AfDB Evaluation Week, due to be held in July 2018.
Publication: September 2018

Gender and Evaluation
The literature on gender-responsive evaluation recommends going beyond the usual practice of just capturing sex-disaggregated numbers of beneficiaries or presenting average figures of the effects of interventions on women in general. Some promising ideas are related to the need to undertake a sound contextual analysis in order to craft gender indicators, including also men and looking at the effects on different categories of women (intersectionality perspective). It is also advised to go beyond the usual
measures of economic empowerment, encompassing issues such as reproductive health, legal and family codes, and tackling issues of voice.

The edition seeks to answer questions such as what types of evaluation approaches and methods have shown promising results to meaningfully include gender in evaluation?; what type of information should evaluations raise in order to assess the different impacts of development interventions on women and men at all levels?; how could evaluation approaches support the change in mindsets required to attain wider societal impacts (transformative Gender Equality and Women Empowerment practices)? We ask you to share your experiences, observations and answers to some of these pressing questions on how to best integrate gender in evaluation.

Best Practices and Innovation in Evaluation

The international development agenda (Agenda 2030) has been definitively launched for a few years now. In order to maximize the chances of meeting the targets, all countries should put in place rigorous and effective monitoring and evaluation processes to track progress. Yet countries are at different levels of evaluation capabilities. To enable all countries, especially African countries, to achieve the goals of sustainable development, the sharing of good practices and innovations in evaluation is necessary.

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) sets international standards in several areas relevant to the sustainable development goals, and its evaluation methodologies tend to be established as standards and benchmarks for monitoring and evaluating progress. But are the recommended OECD methodologies equally applicable to all contexts? Are they adapted and realistic for interventions in developing countries? Are there alternatives to these OECD evaluation methodologies? Other effective approaches or methodologies that can be used by developing countries to monitor their progress on the SDGs? What are the best practices and innovative methodological approaches in the evaluation area?
African Indigenous Evaluation

It is acknowledged that the roots of most of the evaluation practices commonly used in developing contexts had been laid down by aid organizations from the North, but there are also “indigenous methodologies” (developed in the Global South and which evolved beyond the direct influence of the donor community) and “adapted evaluation methodologies” (developed in the Global North, but with explicit adaptation to different socio-cultural, political, economic, and ecological settings). The concerns are to what extent the current evaluation approaches developed in Western societal contexts and predominantly based on Western values, assumptions and practices, are appropriate in culturally and developmentally different contexts such as Africa.

This edition wants to take stock and build on the existing indigenous evaluation practice in Africa and elsewhere. Are there practices in Africa that provide sources of evaluative information or knowledge that could be integrated to the international evaluation practice? What are the differences between ‘African’ and ‘Western’ evaluative approaches and practices? What should be the content of an Africa-rooted approach to evaluation? And could an Africa-rooted evaluation system help fast-track the achievement of the continental development agenda?

Articles due: March 2019

Publications: June 2019

Quick guide for authors
- Send your submission to evaluationmatters@afdb.org
- Article length: 2500 – 3000 words
- Include a short bio (current position, previous experience, education – one paragraph)
- Send a separate high-resolution head-shot photo of the author(s)
- Include photos/images to illustrate your article.
- Include a summary statement (mini-abstract) at the beginning of your article
- Include summary of key messages (3-5 bullet points)
- Aim for a writing style that is suitable for an informed public with clear and precise language. Include full references (Harvard Style).
- Submit in Microsoft Word to facilitate editing
- Editors reserve the right to make the necessary changes to the article for publication