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STUDY ON THE DEMAND FOR AND SUPPLY OF EVALUATION IN RWANDA

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STUDY ON THE DEMAND AND SUPPLY OF EVALUATION IN RWANDA[1]

[1] For further information on this study please contact CLEAR.AnglophoneAfrica@wits.ac.za. The content of this study is the responsibility of the team alone, and should not be ascribed to the University of the Witwatersrand, DFID, or any other organisation or individuals.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research explores (i) the conditions under which demand is generated for evidence; and (ii) the areas in which supply can be strengthened in relation to evaluation in Rwanda. The research shows that there are currently active, latent and potential demands for evaluation. The latent and potential demands are nested within the requests for evidence from principals and government agents in Rwanda (for example, supporting a research symposium with Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL)). This demand is not conditioned by development partners, but is driven from the government based on their development objectives. Supply could in the short-term be strengthened through work with the Institute for Policy Analysis and Research (IPAR) and the National University.

The research suggests that there is a stronger demand for evidence than for evaluation in Rwanda. Evaluation activities in country are seen as a tool to support accountability to management or politicians or sometimes to investigate poor performance. Evaluation supply is very limited in the country. International consultants usually lead evidence gathering or evaluation exercises. If evaluation is to become a useful tool to assist development, efforts to develop capacity need to support learning that enables programme managers to understand how public investments could be improved. The supply of expertise to undertake evaluations in Rwanda is generally limited and or disengaged from country-led demand, with some islands of legitimate, good practice. There are examples of evidence being applied to inform strategy and, on occasion, policy.

There are a number of interconnected entry points for improving evaluation capacities in Rwanda with the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy 2 as a potential nodal point. The existence of functional sector working groups is a resource that can be used to enhance the governance of evaluations in this regard. Rwanda's central government is sovereign in its decision-making processes and although the state utilises a large array of international technical assistance to supply evaluation expertise, demand is endogenous and evidence does feed into decision-making. This means that even with the withdrawal of funding, the Government will find ways to identify other supply opportunities (as it did with J-PAL). In undertaking evaluation capacity development (ECD), the challenge will be to ensure genuine transfer of skills and in strengthening the University Sector, as this is a more sustainable option.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ADB	African Development Bank
CLEAR-AA	Regional Centre for Learning on Evaluation and Results for Anglophone Africa
CPAF	Common Performance Assessment Framework
DIFD	UK Department for International Development
DPCG	Development Partners' Coordination Group
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ECD	Evaluation capacity development
EDPRS 2	Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy 2
EICV	Household Living Conditions Survey
FY	Financial Year
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoR	Government of Rwanda
HMIS	Health Management Information System
INASP	International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications
IOCE	International Organisation for Cooperation in Evaluation
IPAR	Institute of Policy Analysis and Research
IRDP	Institute of Research and Dialogue for Peace
JBSR	Joint Budget Sector Reviews
J-PAL	Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab
JSBR	Joint Sector Budget Reviews
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MINALOC	Ministry of Local Government
MINECOFIN	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
MINEDU	Ministry of Education
MP	Member of Parliament
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
NISR	National Institute of Statistics Rwanda
NSC	National Steering Committee
NUR	National University of Rwanda
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OSSREA	Organisation for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa
PEFA	Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability
PETS	Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys
PPIMA	Public Policy Information Monitoring and Advocacy
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
RLDSF	Rwanda Local Development Support Fund
Rwf	Rwandan Francs
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
VOPE	Voluntary Organisation of Professional Evaluators
VUP	Vision 2020 Umurenge Programme
WB	World Bank

1. INTRODUCTION

1. In Africa there is growing evidence of emerging country-led demands for evaluation (Porter and Goldman 2013) which this is consistent with the emphasis in the Paris Declaration on the use of country owned systems. This report maps the principals (demand), government agents (commissioners) and evaluation agents (supply) involved in evaluation practice in Rwanda. The purpose of this study is to provide national stakeholders with the relevant information to better structure their assistance to government. The main audience are those interested in evaluation capacity development (ECD) in Rwanda. The Regional Centre for Learning on Evaluation and Results for Anglophone Africa (CLEAR-AA)[2] conducted this study for the UK Department for International Development (DFID) as one of a set of five country cases.[3] Fieldwork for this study took place from 11 to 19 May 2013.

2. A secondary audience for this study are those interested in the development of evaluation systems. The analysis in this report presents a range of opportunities for capacity development in relation to government agents (central and line departments), the evaluation agents (consultants, think tanks and universities), and principals (development partners, parliament, the executive and civil society). In undertaking the mapping of the evaluation context in Rwanda, the study identifies latent, potential and actual demand; the conditions under which demand is generated; and potential sources of supply, within an explicit sensitivity to the political economy of the country.

3. This study refers to evaluation as covering both evaluation and evaluative research and therefore uses the terms interchangeably. The primary objectives of the study are to explore:
    1) The conditions under which demand is generated for evaluation evidence; and
    2) The areas in which evaluation supply can be strengthened to meet and foster this demand.

   The guiding questions that interface with these objectives are:
   (i) On the demand side:
      a) What has been the actual demand for evaluation from principals?
      b) Where is there latent and potential demand for evaluation?
      c) How is evaluation demanded in the current organisational arrangements?
   (ii) On the supply side:
      a) What is the range and capacity of entities supplying evaluation services?
      b) How relevant are the managers and producers of evaluation to the actual demand for evaluation?
   (i) On matching evaluation supply and demand:
      c) Where can evaluation supply (actual, latent and potential) be strengthened so that it meets and fosters demand?

[2] CLEAR-AA is based at the Graduate School of Public and Development Management at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg. CLEAR-AA aims to enhance development anchored in learning, evaluation and results.

[3] Beyond Rwanda, the other case countries are Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi and Zambia.

4. This study finds that there is an active endogenous demand for evidence in Rwanda and that while supply is limited there are local organisations that have demonstrate good evaluation practice. This means that although development partners largely support evaluation exercises, the Government also supports evidence gathering exercises. The research suggests however, that there is a stronger demand for evidence, especially quantitative, than for evaluation. International rather than local resources pay for evaluation studies. Evaluation activities are perceived as a tool to support accountability to management or politicians. By extension this implies that the groundwork for evaluations that are likely to be critical of policy and strategy needs to be carefully laid. ECD efforts need to support learning from different sites of implementation in a way that enables managers to be constructively held accountable.
5. The supply of evaluative expertise to undertake evaluations in Rwanda is very limited, but has some islands of legitimate and good practice. The university sector's capacity is generally limited and disconnected from demand. Within these constraints, there are examples of supply being successful at informing strategy and on occasion policy. When supply is strengthened, evaluators will require not only technical skills, but political sensitivity to the context.
6. This report is structured as a product that stands alone from the overall research synthesis and four other country cases. The findings are presented in the following manner: First, the Rwandan development context is described in relation to evaluation; second, the state of the current evaluation demand and supply is mapped; third, illustrations of how the development context interacts with evaluation supply and demand are detailed; and finally, pathways to improve the national evaluation context are suggested.

1.1 Methodology[4]

7. This study was carried out through a combination of a desk review of existing evaluation products and direct semi-structured interviews with a selection of informants from across critical stakeholder groupings. The rest of this section presents the methodology of the study, and provides an overview of the stakeholder groups engaged in the study. The study methodology encompassed the following overlapping stages: i) establishing study commitment and support from key stakeholders; ii) collating and analysing primary and secondary data (including available academic and popular literature); iii) conducting a series of interviews with actors; and iv) producing a draft paper. Each of these stages is discussed in more detail below.
8. ***Establishing support from key stakeholders:*** Given the nature of the study, an important initial step was to identify relevant national stakeholders who would be engaged with during prior to, during and after the collection of data. Whilst the study was conducted independently, it is helpful that there is some level of active buy-in from key stakeholders in to support the use of the study. In Rwanda, letters were sent to the

[4] Those interested in a more detailed background, definitions of terms and the full methodological approach should read the Inception Report (22 April 2013).

Government via DFID to ask for permission to conduct the study, while the country researcher made contact with a range of stakeholders.

9. ***Collating and analysing secondary data and information:*** The collation and analysis of secondary data covered policy, academic and grey literature relating to the political context and the demand and supply side of evaluation. Included in this was data on the size and scope of evaluation initiatives within government and the supply that emanates from outside government. Following the country research phase, further primary and secondary documentation was explored to substantiate the claims of the interviewees.
10. ***Interviews with key informants:*** A series of interviews were arranged with key in-country stakeholders. The design of these interviews drew upon the literature review. Issues of potential and latent demand and the ability of supply to invoke demand were explored through the interview process. Data collection took place through semi-structured interviews that allowed people to narrate their story – with some probing taking place based upon the guiding questions. The data from interviews was analysed during the fieldwork with emerging conclusions refined through synthesis. Table 1 provides the details of stakeholders interviewed in Rwanda.
11. ***Production of a draft and final country report:*** Following the completion of a first draft of this study, the reference group reviewed the study report internally and externally. In addition, this case was reviewed by the DFID country office and the Government of Rwanda. During these processes adjustments were made to the report to aid the clarity and accuracy of the core findings.

Table 1: Interview Respondents

Government Agents	Evaluation Community	Principals (representative)
Ministry of Health	Institute of Policy Analysis and Research – Rwanda (IPAR)	Parliament - Public Accounts Committee
National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda	Council for Higher Education (Universities)	Civil Society -, the and the Civil Society Umbrella Organisation
Ministry of Local Government (MINALOC)	Rwandan Consultants engaged in M&E	Development Partners (DFID and SIDA)
Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN)	Transparency International	The Presidency and Prime Minsters office
	Evaluation association	The United Nations Development, Programme Rwanda

Source: Author

2. DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

12. Paul Collier, a former Director of Research at the World Bank, identified that Rwanda had pulled off the "hat-trick" of rapid growth, sharp poverty reduction and reduced inequality (Post 2012). This is impressive given the fact that Rwanda continues to be politically, economically and socially affected by decisions made during a European colonial rule that separated the population and constructed ethnic categories. By the time of independence in 1962, a sizable portion of Rwanda's population was being forced into exile into neighbouring countries on the basis of ethnicity. Over the next

thirty years, the country was in a state of ethnic divide and conflict that led to the 1994 genocide. The genocide resulted in an unprecedented loss of human lives and ruptured the social fabric of the country.

13. Rwanda's economy recovered quickly following the genocide. The post-war government developed new responses to the structural economic issues that characterised Rwanda pre-1994. The lack of harnessed natural resources, poorly developed human resources, a high population density, subsistence agricultural practices, environmental degradation and difficulties in economic management have been targets of new policy directions. With the backing of substantial external resources, the new government successfully delivered on a number of its commitments. The economy rapidly rebounded, growing by an average of 7.0% between 1994 and 1997, and 8.9% in 1998, fuelled by large inflows of external resources for relief and reconstruction, and supported by the stabilisation of the economy. As a result, within six years real gross domestic product (GDP) had surpassed pre-genocide levels. By 2011 the economy was 140% larger than its 1993 levels (W. Bank 2013).

14. Although overall life expectancy has only grown by a total of six years from pre-genocide levels, this does represent an impressive reconstitution of the health system. Especially as life expectancy is comparable in Kenya and Uganda. Poverty has reduced in each round of the national surveys. The total number of people below the national poverty line fell from 56.90% in 2006 to 44.90% in 2010 (NISR). This fall in poverty is confirmed by international sources. Poverty as measured by the percentage of people living below $2 a day was at 82.4% of the population in 2011, down from 87.4% in 2006 and 89% (W. Bank 2013) in 1998. People in extreme poverty ($1.25 per day) have reduced to 63.2% in 2011 down from 72.1% in 2006 and 74.6% in 2000.

15. Growth has been driven by agricultural production, as well as by commercial services and manufacturing. In 1994, agriculture represented 50% of the country's GDP, services 29% and industry 21%. By 2011, this make-up had changed considerably with agriculture representing 36% of the country's GDP, services 47% and industry 17% (African Economic Outlook, 2013). Meanwhile, inflation that had reached 47% and 48% in 1994 and 1995, had by 1998 been brought down to single digits. The National Institute of Statistics Rwanda (NISR) notes that inflation was at 3.9% in December 2012 (National Institute of Statistics Rwanda 2013).

Table 2: Rwandan Budget 2006 - 2012

Resource categories	2006	2007	2008	MINI 2009	2009/ 2010	2010/ 2011	2011/ 2012
Total budget (in billions of Rwf)	396.3	528.0	674.0	392.1	899.1	984.0	1,116.8
Domestic revenue	230.2	242.7	324.8	199.3	447.2	552.2	576.1
Loan	32.9	36.5	41.6	17.2	68.6	62.9	96.1
Recurrent grant	71	160.7	199.5	120.2	252.9	252.1	260.3
Capital grant	62	88.1	108.1	55.4	130.4	116.8	184.3
Proportion of aid in national budget (%)	34	47	46	45	43	37	40

Source: Ministry of Finance, 2013

16. Table 2 shows that the Government of Rwanda's (GoR) budget has been steadily growing from Rwf 899.1 billion (approximately USD 1.4 billion) in the financial year (FY) 2009/2010 to Rwf 1,116.8 trillion (approximately USD 1.7 billion) for the FY 2011/2012. Development aid for the national budget is quite significant and averages about 40% of the budget in this period. Development partners therefore have a strong interest in government business, including the execution of the budget and economic management and evaluation. It is important to note that general budget support was suspended in 2012 due to Rwanda being accused of involvement in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) conflicts, although recently there have been some monies channelled through the Government (Guardian 2013).

17. Rwanda's country trends on the Mo Ibrahim index over the past ten years have been divergent. On the one hand, human development and economic opportunity have shown a positive trend, especially on health care. On the other hand, the categories of safety and rule of law, and participation and human rights have been declining. With these divergent trends, Rwanda has climbed two places on the index from 25 to 23 over the past ten years. The Rwanda Governance Board (RGB) disputes the human rights and safety findings, citing other sources of evidence to show improvements in safety, the rule of law and human rights (Rwanda Governance Board 2013).

2.1 Development strategy, planning and budgeting

18. Guided by the county's constitution and Vision 2020, the current overall strategic direction of Rwanda is framed in the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy 2 (EDPRS 2 2013). 50 per cent of the annual budget for 2013/2014 is allocated to EDPRS 2 (Rwanda 2013b), which focuses upon the following priorities: (i) economic transformation; (ii) rural development; (iii) productivity and youth employment; and (iv) accountable governance. The implementation of these priorities is based on a range of foundational and cross-cutting issues, such as, macroeconomic stability and food security.

19. Two issues outlined in EDPRS 2 have specific relevance for evaluation given their influence on the trajectory of results orientated public service reforms, these being, the strengthening effectiveness of public finance management and consolidating decentralisation. Decentralisation was an early priority of the post-genocide government. The decentralisation process has subsequently been at centre of public service reforms. Decentralisation has been undertaken with an aim to ensure political, economic, social, managerial, administrative and technical empowerment of local populations to fight poverty by participating in planning and management of their development process (Rwanda 2013a). Decentralisation of implementation does not extend to policy and strategy. Strategic direction and guidance for politicians and public servants comes from the political executive and the Ministries of Finance and Local Government. The Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) process and budget reporting became more important for local government with the introduction of the Fiscal Decentralisation Policy in 2002. The policy states that, as much as possible, line ministries should decentralise their activities and resources from central to local level.

20. The evolution of performance management in Rwanda has focused mainly on monitoring budget performance. There have been three main stages in this evolution. Phase I, the immediate post-conflict period (1994-1999), was characterised by

continuing violence and political instability and prioritised the delivery of basic services. Evaluation was limited and at best consisted in reporting activities. Phase II, the intermediate period (2000-2004), followed the appointment of Paul Kagame as President, and saw increased political stability in the country. The Government was able to start planning a longer-term development strategy for the country through the development of Vision 2020 and the preparation of the Poverty Reduction Strategic paper (PRSP). In this phase, a range of surveys and public finance reforms targeted at supporting decentralisation were introduced. Phase III is the development period (2005-2012). During this period, major steps have been taken to embed performance measures related to the budget. The NISR was conceived as the leading statistical agency and EDPRS 1 (2008 – 2012/13) was introduced. During this phase *Imihigo* performance contracts and citizen reporting tools have become increasingly embedded. The upcoming and approved EDPRS 2 (2012/13 – 2017/18) may represent a new phase with plans for increased evaluation practice.

21. Today budgeting and planning is undertaken within a programme budget framework. As part of the implementation of EDPRS 1, it was intended that there should be improved linkages to strategy, planning and budgeting through the MTEF, which aids more effective monitoring. All resources are prioritised via the MTEF which provides a framework to align plans (national, sector and district), with the national policy strategy. This structure provides an institutional framework that can be supportive of demand for evaluation as this budget process is designed to be fed by performance measurement and review processes, such as, annual leadership retreats. Box 1 explores the evolution of the process of aligning executive review, planning and budgeting processes. What is absent from this current process is for evaluations to explicitly feed into the budgeting process

22. Overall performance achieved under the EDPRS has been measured against regular programme indicators and household surveys. In health there has been some innovative work to integrate payment for results as an incentive scheme for health sector improvement (Basinga et al. 2011). There has been some attempt to replicate this in education but interviewees suggest that this has not been as successful and the practice has not spread across government.

23. In addition, Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys (PETS) have been carried out on the health and education sectors in Rwanda since late 1990s. The most recent PETS was launched in November 2012 related to the 9-year basic education programme (International 2012). Joint Sector Budget Reviews (JSBRs) were introduced as a method of discussing technical issues with sector experts (governmental and external). These budget reviews are held twice a year and feed into the national budget review. They provide space for dialogue on performance and policy with all relevant stakeholders by assessing progress and analysing key sector issues that inform the setting of national priorities in the next cycle (A. D. Bank 2011: 8; Infrastructure 2012). It was reported in interviews that planning and budgeting are becoming increasingly aligned and results orientated in the last year. Previously, it was reported by interviewees that the district development plans, sector development plans, budgets and *Imihigo* performance targets were largely disparate.

Box 1: Evolution of Planning and Budgeting
Technocratic Reflection for Improved Performance Measurement

The evolution of strategic plans and programme budgeting to its current form demonstrates the ability of key government ministries, such as the Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Local Government to learn lessons on systems implementation and to develop processes that respond to information. Over the past four years, the MTEF and programme budgeting system have been better aligned to planning and measurement.

The alignment of planning, budgeting and measurement processes has been a continuing process. Currently all budget resources are prioritised using the MTEF approach and this has allowed for national plans, sector strategic plans and district development plans to be aligned with the medium term outlook and the national development strategy. This process provides a structure for a line of sight between plans, budget and performance information.

The budgeting process follows a transparent regulated process where information feeds in at multiple points in the process. First, the MTEF is based on the medium-term macroeconomic framework produced by the Macro Department in the Ministry of Finance. This provides the central government expenditure total for the Budget Department. This information allows the Budget Department to allocate budget ceilings in line with EDPRS priorities to sectors and districts (generally done by looking at percentage shares of expenditure).

The first 'budget call circular' communicating sector ceilings is timetabled for September and the revised version in December. After receiving their ceilings, line ministries and districts create their budgets in line with EDPRS priorities. The national budget is then reported in the National Budget Framework Paper, which is sent to Cabinet and Parliament for discussion and adoption in April Further drafts are generated and the budget is passed by the end of June for the fiscal year July-June. There is some discussion with development partners, particularly on levels of disbursements, but this is mostly a government process. Additionally, the planning process has been reorganised so that the timeframe draws the Annual Leadership Retreat into the EDPRS 2 assessment and budget allocation decisions. This high-profile meeting is held in February each year. New fiscal year priorities arising from the meeting are incorporated into the budget for the following full year in July.

The budgeting framework provides for Joint Budget Sector Reviews (JBSR) in which are strategically placed in the timing of the budget cycle and EDPRS reporting. In March and April of each year, JBSRs are held for all sectors, looking back critically at performance over the past year and incorporating feedback from the leadership retreat and *Imihigo*. These budget reviews give stakeholders the opportunity to assess budget execution and open up a dialogue on challenging areas. Interviewees report that the *Imihigo* performance contracts have made a real difference to the results orientation of the state. Given this systematic framework, the budgeting process in Rwanda also provides an opportunity and an entry point for evaluation to influence budgeting decisions on an on-going basis.

24. Figure 1 is the standard representation of how planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) fit together in the Rwanda government under the national development (MINECOFIN 2011). What this shows is that the EDPRS informs the planning, budgeting and reporting across government during set periods with reviews and feedback. The processes of decentralisation and public finance management reforms lie at the heart of this operational framework. The current framework that sets the priorities for government planning, budgeting and monitoring and evaluation is the EDPRS 2. EDPRS 2 was developed through a reflective process. The Cabinet Paper on the Institutional Framework for Elaboration of EDPRS 2 stipulates that the process "will be

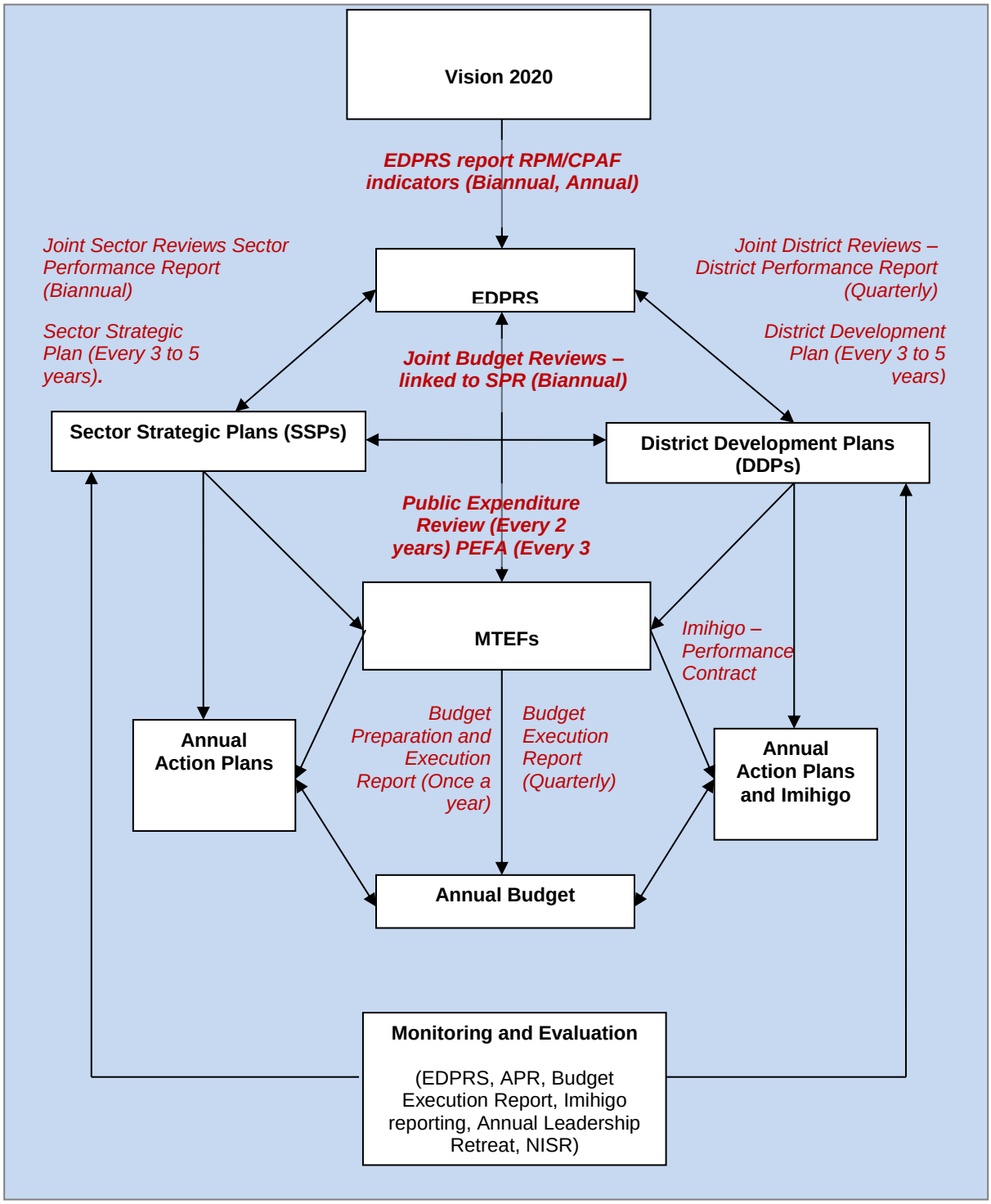
conducted through a highly participatory and consultative process involving the citizens, central and decentralised institutions, and all development partners" (Rwanda 2011: 5). Interviewees, who cited the use of the household survey and the Demographic Health Survey from 2010, confirm the consultative nature and use of evidence in the EDPRS 2 development process.

25. Prior to EDPRS 2, the limited use of evaluation can be observed within the conceptualisations of M&E within the PRSP and EDPRS 1. The M&E framework in the PRSP and EDPRS 1 focused mainly on the development of monitoring systems, which rely on surveys for outcome level measurement (See for example, Government of Rwanda GoR 2008: 105). The original PRSP envisaged that evaluations would be carried out through the review of performance information mixed with the implementation of citizens' report cards. Citizens' report cards were produced during the PRSP phase but these are largely descriptive in nature (Organisation for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa 2006). More recent citizen scorecards produced under the Public Policy Information Monitoring and Advocacy (PPIMA) project have been analytical, however (Sida 2013). Evaluation in EDPRS I was conceived mainly in terms of counterfactual impact evaluations. In the strategy it was envisaged that a large range of interventions would have significant baselines (Government of Rwanda GoR 2008: 111 - 13). There is only one example of such an evaluation in the area of performance financing for health (Basinga *et al*. 2011). The lack of structured evaluations was recognised in the *EDPRS 1 Lessons Learned* which noted that (MINECOFIN 2011: 20):

> *"Most reports refer to weak M&E systems, including a lack of or inappropriate indicators, including in the EDPRS. Few sectors have a fully operational M&E framework beyond the framework provided by the EDPRS at national level. Monitoring on an annual basis is not always possible and setting targets without an evidence base has led to frequent changes to indicators and targets. It was also observed that M&E frameworks are not always congruent.*
>
> *Additionally, many sectors would like to conduct more studies, evaluations and do research in order to be able to track progress, determine impact and adjust national programmes. The social sector would like to improve monitoring and impact assessment and conduct more research for evidence based learning purposes."*

26. Enhanced monitoring systems and externally funded evaluation are used in the Ministries of Education and Health and large development partner funded programmes. For example, the Ministry of Health publishes annual information from the Health Management Information System (HMIS) and has standardised forms for reporting. The Vision 2020 Umurenge Programme (VUP), meanwhile, has an established monitoring system, regular evaluations and has had a locally commissioned and implemented impact assessment. A recent evaluation on the VUP utilised a range of performance information from the monitoring system within an overall evaluation report (Devereux 2012). Yet, there is no evaluation approach to the National Plan. This issue is explicitly recognised in the EDPRS 2 which states "the EDPRS 1 Framework was largely focused on the monitoring function and particularly on the Common Performance Assessment Framework (CPAF)" (Government of Rwanda GoR 2013: 91).

Figure 1: Rwandan planning and budgeting framework



Source: MINECOFIN, 2011

27. EDPRS 2 presents a break from earlier plans. Evaluation in EDPRS 2 is quite ambitious given that the Government has limited experience and that there is relatively limited in-country supply. The EDPRS 2 suggests that evaluation is "designed to enhance the on-going policy making, planning and budgeting processes at the thematic, sector and district levels" (GoR 2013: 92). It is envisaged, therefore, that annual evaluation plans will be prepared by sectors for policies, programmes and projects, with large investments targeted for effectiveness evaluation. Thematic working groups and sector

working groups are to be the main commissioners and managers of evaluation. Evaluation plans are to draw upon monitoring reports. Formative evaluations will be part of the evaluation plan.

28. Capacity to conduct the wide-ranging evaluation function is to be developed through training specifically targeting the management of evaluations at both national and sub-national levels. The main users of evaluation, in EDPRS 2, are expected to be Parliament, Cabinet, the EDPRS 2 National Steering Committee (NSC), the Permanent Secretaries' Forum, the Development Partners' Coordination Group (DPCG) and Leadership Retreat. Use of evaluations is to be assisted by a database of sector-focused research that makes findings widely available to all other government institutions. Key information from monitoring reports is intended to be disseminated, using all types of media, including website and social media. It is unclear whether evaluation will also be disseminated in the same manner.

2.2 Political economy of Rwanda

29. The heart of the political economy of Rwanda is captured by the motto of the Republic of Rwanda – "Unity, Work, Patriotism". The concepts in this motto are embedded in laws, policy and strategy of the country. In practice, this means that these three concepts resonate throughout the structures and operations of the state and are important to consider in ECD efforts.

30. The politico-liberation establishment that stopped the genocide is at the core of policy setting in the state. This establishment is part of the main political party, the Rwanda Patriotic Front, that has control of the Presidency and Parliament. The constitution of Rwanda states that sovereignty is vested in the people, although in reality representation is often indirect. For example, the Senate is appointed by a variety of elected groups, including the President. Within the Chamber of Deputies, 53 out of 80 are elected via a proportional list system. A variety of provincial assemblies, the youth council, and the federation of the disabled elect the reaming deputies.

31. The Office of the President has wide-ranging powers and ability to influence the indirect appointments of the legislature and judiciary. The centralisation of power creates a strong culture of upward accountability (Reyntjens 2011). As the list for parliament is overseen by the party, members of the legislature account to the party leadership. The judiciary is proposed by the Senate and approved by the President of the Republic. As a result, policy decisions are undertaken mainly within the party, with the President having a strong grasp across the different arms of the state.

32. The politico-liberation establishment has sought to maintain political power by building and maintaining support through demonstrating an ability to provide development through more and better public goods (Akinyemi 2013). This option for maintaining power has been selected over and above using state resources to distribute rents or through widespread suppression. Policy in the country is developed with the view that economic and social development helps to overcome the ethnic divisions of the past (Booth and Golooba-Mutebi 2012). As a result, undermining policy is not just a challenge to policy, but to the overall developmental vision of the state and perhaps even to the Constitution (Akinyemi 2013). This means that corruption in the public service of Rwanda is seen as especially pernicious as it undermines the development efforts of the

Government. The absence of high-level political corruption permitted by the use of state sponsored companies gives the leadership considerable moral authority to enforce a zero tolerance policy (Booth and Golooba-Mutebi 2012).

33. Given the priority placed upon development, the overall policy direction defined in Vision 2020 and EDPRS 1 and 2 is real and implemented. These plans are implemented through a technocratic public service, whose discipline is ingrained through a variety of upward accountability mechanisms (Holvoet and Rombouts 2008). Although there has been decentralisation of responsibility for implementation, autonomy is bounded within prescribed policies and strategies outlined by the central government. For example, the *Imihigo* performance contracts with Mayors are based upon the overall national development plan, while the national leadership retreat reinforces the strategies of the President. It was reported by Development Partner respondents that researchers and public servants employed by the state work in fear that a mistake could lose them their jobs.

34. Within the policy priorities of Vision 2020, there are some issues that are of greater sensitivity than others. The interviews and the literature suggest that the following issues are sensitive in the Rwandan context: land reform, security, human rights, ethnicity and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Working in these areas requires a higher level of political tact if you are looking to influence the strategies of the government and policy is very difficult to influence (Booth and Golooba-Mutebi 2012; Gready 2010).

35. In the continuing wake of the genocide, the Government has been trying to instil a sense of nationhood, or unity, by positioning the current state and its practices as the successor to the pre-colonial kingdoms to support a patriotic outlook[5]. In doing this Government utilises traditional practices as a vehicle for state delivery mechanisms based on cultural terminology. For example, Gacaca refers to the community court system, *Imihigo* to performance contracts, Itorero to cultural education, and Ubudehe to the social safety net mechanism. This link with the past is extended into contemporary practices, such as Patriotism Day, which commemorates the start of the liberation war[6].

36. Consensus building is a strong theme in the Constitution. Consensus finds reality in the way the Parliament and Cabinet are convened (Articles 76, 82, 116 of the Constitution) and the way political parties relate to each other (Article 56). This means that processes that are seen as adversarial or critical to the point that consensus is disrupted, or that the authority of the Presidency is challenged, are difficult undertake. In spite of the sensitive space around challenging policy and strategy, the history and political context have given rise to a policy establishment that is open to evidence informing policy within spaces that are seen to assist in national development.

37. Given this political economy, evaluations need recognise that their results interact with a state structure that emphasises unity, work and patriotism as a developmental

[5] See for example, http://focus.rw/wp/2011/07/patriotism-in-ancient-rwanda/

[6] See for example, http://focus.rw/wp/2010/10/patriotism-is-loving-your-country-not-its-landscapes-students-are-told/

alternative to the threat of genocide. Evaluations that will be considered and utlised cannot be seen to be critical of the developmental strategy or construed as promoting the ideology of genocide.

> *"The genocide ideology is an aggregate of thoughts characterised by conduct, speeches, documents and other acts aiming at exterminating or inciting others to exterminate people basing (sic) on ethnic group, origin, nationality, region, colour, physical appearance, sex, language, religion or political opinion, committed in normal periods or during war…" (Article 2 of Law No 18/2009).*

38. The political economy presents both helpful and unhelpful aspects to the conduct of evaluation and ECD. Four issues can be considered as helpfully reinforcing evaluation. First, the policy and overall strategy documents can be seen as sources to inform the values of evaluations and provide entry points for interaction with government. Second, when evaluations present positive or negative information through a frame that reinforces the development vision, they are likely to be taken seriously. However, the presentation of evaluation also needs to be seen to support consensus because of the high premium placed upon development being achieved through the national values. Third, conducting high-quality technical evaluations that link the existing systems of performance monitoring, for example, within EDPRS 2, appeals to the technocratic nature of the public service. Fourth, evaluation that helps to shine a light on issues that are seen to undermine the developmental vision of the state, such as corruption, will be predisposed to a good reception.

39. In contrast, undertaking evaluation may be a challenge for three reasons. First, public servants may see evaluation as a mechanism for highlighting mistakes and therefore may perceive evaluation as a threat. Second, as evaluation often entails the reconciling of multiple values bases, the values used may not accord with those contained in Rwanda's Constitution. For example, the values of a stakeholder and the way they present information may be more confrontational and less consensual, meaning that unless the findings of an evaluation will fit within the legislation and policy outlook of the country they are unlikely to be used. Finally, that evaluation shines a light on both successes and challenges and encourages debate may undermine the discipline of upward accountability. In a culture, where there is fear of being accused of underperformance (and possible disciplinary action) the results of poor evaluations maybe covered up or debate limited.

3. MAPPING OF EVALUATION IN RWANDA

40. This section presents the mapping of evaluation within Rwanda for both supply and demand. In doing this the following agents who may demand or supply evaluation are discussed: first, principals; second government agents; and third, evaluation agents.

3.1 Principals

41. The analysis of principals includes development partners, parliament, the executive and civil society. This group of stakeholders is placed together because they represent an array of the most important political actors who use and demand evaluation but are distinct from government and the evaluation community.

The Political Executive: The Presidency, Prime Minister's Office and Ministers

42. Informants from government, civil society and research report that there is an active demand for using evidence and monitoring information to inform strategy and policy within the executive if it supports the development agenda. However, if evidence is presented that is critical of a policy decision, especially on sensitive issues, then the discussion may be shut down or firmly rebuffed. This was reported to have happened in the education sector when an evaluation sought to establish the effects on school performance as a result of universal access for 9 to 12 years of basic education and in the agriculture sector in relation to land reform. Informants suggest that critical information needs to be constructed and conveyed in a manner that seeks to augment policy decisions that have already been taken. In effect, there is an active demand for evidence to inform strategic level decisions that support existing policy. As one respondent notes "as long as it is appropriately put and as long as the evidence is strong it will be accepted". Actors need to know when policy decisions are taken and to be able to enter the evidence chain in a legitimate and credible manner. The examples below demonstrate some of the current evidence demand mechanisms within the executive.

43. There are two main overarching mechanisms employed by the executive in Rwanda that link performance information to accountability, the Annual Leadership Retreats and the *Imihigo* performance contracting system. *Imihigo* is a system that puts in place performance contracts between the President and Mayors. *Imihigo* is a Rwandan cultural practice where an individual sets personal targets for achievement within a specific period of time following certain principles and having determination to overcome the possible challenges. This system has been implemented since 2006 (Scher 2010: 1). The *Imihigo* system demonstrates that there is high-level demand for the use of data to improve development. *Imihigo* is discussed further in Box 2.

44. The Annual Leadership Retreats began in 2005. The retreats review the previous year's performance and define priorities for the subsequent year's implementation. The leadership retreat in 2013 was used to discuss strategies to assist with the delivery of the EDPRS 2 (Kimenyi 2013). Currently, high-level information from surveys and monitoring data feed into this retreat, rather than detailed evaluations of areas of interest. Reports are given by departments to augment the monitoring data on efforts to achieve Presidential targets. It was reported in interviews that failure to achieve implementation targets could lead to being dismissed from the public service. Given the fear of being chastised in front of peers by the President or even dismissed there is a strong incentive to report achievements. Although it is not clear the extent to which people talk-up results, a level of discomfort was expressed in an interview around the incentives created by this culture, leading to some scepticism around the data. In sum, the Annual Leadership Retreats in Rwanda are a forum where demand for evidence is expressed and where consequences are in place for underachievement.

45. In addition to such high profile reporting requirements, quarterly progress reports against indicators are received by the Prime Minister's Office from line ministries and districts. A minimum of three reports from each Ministry, and the potential for five or more, if special emergency reports are included, is received each quarter. This can average around 100 reports each quarter. Respondents suggest that there is a lack of feedback from the Prime Minister back towards the districts and line ministries given the large amount of data in the reports. Further, evidence from the implementation of other

country M&E systems has shown that a large number of reports can create a culture of compliance rather than reflective practice (Engela and Ajam 2010).

Box 1: *Imihigo*
Good for use and identification, too political for commissioning evaluation

Imihigo has historically been a mechanism of performance contracting between mayors and the President. Mayors are rated for their performance in achieving key development objectives related to the National Development Plan, with the rankings being released in the national press. There is a financial reward of Rwf 5 million and prestige associated with being the winning district (*Times* 2012). Accountability to the contracts takes place through biannual progress reports (Versailles 2013). In addition, *Imihigo* also has a variety of public input and feedback mechanisms, such as, accountability days, which involve some input from the public (Vianney 2011).

Poorly performing Mayors can expect public reprimanding if targets are not being met. The *Imihigo* system is perceived to have contributed to a high turnover in Mayors (75%) during initial implementation (Scher 2010). Performance contracts are verified through what are called evaluation processes, though these are more like audits that check accuracy and then rank the districts against each other. These processes do not answer evaluative questions about the performance of mayors; rather they focus on what has been achieved (For example, MINALOC 2011). Previously the *Imihigo* contracts did not directly articulate to the planning and budgeting processes. However, in an interview it was reported that these gaps had been recognised and that in 2013 there an articulation between *Imihigo* contracts, plans and budgets.

Imihigo contracts are a potential entry-point for improving the uptake and use of evaluations, as they are an example of active demand for monitoring and provide a useful platform to transform evaluation findings into action. However, given the political economy, using them to undertake evaluations may reinforce the perception that evaluations are done when there are problems, thereby reducing the likelihood that evaluation will become broadly accepted as a tool for learning. *Imihigo* contracts help to stimulate a competitive environment within local government, as they are signed between district mayors and the President and at the end of the year are presented again to the President in a ceremony called *Kurata Ibigwi*, which is an open day for mayors to account, show achievements, and hold dialogue over key issues with the public. The ceremony ends with rewards for good performance and innovative local authorities.

The development of *Imihigo* entailed a process of reflection and refinement, which has helped to integrate the measurement of local performance with planning and budgeting. When *Imihigo* contracts were first introduced in 2006, districts chose indicators which did not reflect key national priorities. In addition, Mayors took credit for the activities of NGOs. However, since *Imihigo* became a tool to account to the President, it has become widely perceived as a mechanism for producing adherence to goals and reporting deadlines. There has never been a problem with reporting compliance for *Imihigo*. An interviewee reported that initially there was a culture of reporting regardless of what you were reporting on.

As *Imihigo* attracted attention, it was realised that, for the central government to accelerate the implementation of key programmes for poverty reduction (the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the EDPRS) at district level, the *Imihigo* was the best choice for performance measurement at the district level. As a result, *Imihigo* indicators have become more comprehensive in capturing the EDPRS, the MDG Indicators and sector- and district-specific priorities. This has been achieved via the central government's active involvement in the districts' setting of targets and deliverables, and close monitoring of the implementation of programmes through the *Imihigo*. According to interviews, however, these first attempts

at capacity building were not entirely fruitful as guidelines and training courses were not effective enough in improving reporting standards.

In 2010, plans were implemented to ensure the *Imihigo* was aligned with the EDPRS. There followed a reshaping of the report template, through a weeklong forum for all districts and sectors to clarify inputs and outputs. There was also intensive on-the-job training from the Ministries of Finance and Local Government for staff in districts (for around one or two months at a time). This intervention has resulted in *Imihigo* contracts now including 12 indicators related to economic, social and governance sectors, which help to align the various frameworks. There is room for district-specific additional indicators which can be funded through district revenue collections, provided they receive the approval of the Ministry of Local Government and are in line with EDPRS priorities.

The *Imihigo* process and its development as a tool for performance measurement reinforce three key issues around the political economy of evaluation in Rwanda. First, that the Presidency is the preeminent institution in the Government. When the President is a champion in a scheme to generate accountability through performance measurement there is commitment to focus on and mature the system. Second, the Miniseries of Finance and Local Government are important central government institutions in implementing performance measurement systems. Third, it is important for all levels of government, whether public service or political, to credibly demonstrate that they are supporting development.

Given this history and positioning in the political economy, *Imihigo* could prove to be a valuable entry point for the use and identification of evaluations, rather than conducting evaluations. On the one hand, the strong accountability mechanisms may work as an incentive to 'game' programme evaluations to demonstrate the achievement of goals. On the other hand, the evaluations that were conducted of national programmes could be introduced in the review of performance contracts. In this way, the *Imihigo* contracts provide an entry point to contextualising evaluation results.

46. The Minister of Health was identified as an important current champion for evaluation within the executive during interviews. There are four examples of where the Minister is currently supporting evaluative practice. First, the Minister was reported to be encouraging staff to undertake further education and in doing so to research and publish the work of the department. For example, the Ministry has been involved in a range of scientific publications in both Malaria and TB[7]. This encouragement mirrors her own career progression as she is currently undertaking a PhD and is also a Lecturer at the Department of Global Health and Social Medicine in Harvard Medical School. Second, the Minister has overseen evaluative activities within the Department. For example, she is named as a co-author to an Impact Evaluation conducted on the performance-based financing scheme of the Ministry of Health (Basinga *et al.* 2011). Third, she has supported the development a partnership with the School of Public Health at the National University of Rwanda in developing a Centre of Excellence on Health Systems Strengthening with support from the Rockefeller foundation. Finally, it was reported that a general performance orientation is impressed upon the department through the implementation of the performance based financing programme in the department.

[7] See for example, http://moh.gov.rw/english/?page_id=2880, accessed 14 May 2013.

47. The general openness to evidence and monitoring information within the executive is not the same as an active demand for evaluation. Evidence can come from sources other than evaluation, such as, research and monitoring. In May 2013, a workshop with J-PAL, that was attended by four Ministers with participation from the Prime Minister's Office. Evidence from J-PAL was presented and potential work that they could undertake together was explored. This workshop highlights the openness to evidence within the Government (J-PAL 2013a). It was reported that this workshop came about as a result of a personal request by the President. This workshop reinforces also what appears to be a leaning towards quite technical quantitative processes for generating information among principals.

Civil Society

48. The focus in this study is on umbrella groups outside of government and the private sector who conduct identifiable evaluative activities that aim to influence policy. The main purposes of evaluative activity are development partner accountability and government advocacy. The first of these will not be discussed at length although it is important for development partners to evaluate their work with civil society. Currently in Rwanda civil society organisations work as conductors, managers and users of evaluation. It should be noted that the organisations interviewed preferred to use the term research to evaluation, as it was felt that evaluation, as with government organisations, was more like a policing action.

49. Undertaking advocacy to influence government decision-making is an important strategy for civil society. Although civil society organisations can and do undertake service delivery activities, these projects are venerable to funding cuts and changes in government strategy or policy. Conducting advocacy based upon research, evaluation or the voices of citizens provides a foundation for civil society to make claims on government and to enter into policy debates. Civil society organisations indicated that they have been able to engage in policy and strategy discussions with the Government based upon research that they have conducted. This is confirmed by the literature reviewed (Gready 2010).

50. One important approach that civil society have used to invoke demand for evaluation is by indicating how policy and strategy intent may have unintended consequences in implementation. As noted by one respondent "when things come from the grassroots it is considered genuine. Especially when it can be discussed through traditional practices." Evaluations that draw evidence in this manner seem to invoke demand because they are able to present perspectives for citizens that are not surfaced through government or development partner lead processes. One example of this is research on the *One Cow One Family Programme*, which also interacts with the *Ubudehe* system (a process which classifies people into different poverty categories for the purposes of prioritising government services). The research highlighted how membership of the scheme could mean that a family is categorised as not being poor, even though the family was unable to feed the cow. The result of this classification is that they are excluded from some free government services (Rwirahira 2013). The research helped to clarify the disjuncture between policy intent and implementation.

51. One popular mechanism to surface voices has been evaluative activities through citizen scorecards and citizen report cards. A citizens' scorecard was first piloted by the

Rwandan chapter of the Organisation for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa (OSSRESA) in 2004, with the full study being completed by 2006, although this was mainly a monitoring exercise. Transparency International in Rwanda has also used citizen scorecards for advocacy in relation to the identification of corruption. Currently, at a larger scale, the Public Policy Information, Monitoring and Advocacy (PPIMA) project is being led by Norwegian People's Aid with local partners with support from DFID and SIDA. This project is being implemented through local community partners and the National Rwanda Civil Society Platform. The evaluation of this project concluded that the:

> *"Community Score Card is proving to be successful in terms of community empowerment and engagement with local authorities … [R]eported and observed socio-economic developments in communities because of the response of government to the community score card process have included improved access to agricultural inputs, i.e. seeds and fertilisers, better service provision in health centres, improved availability of drinking water and the landless getting lands." (Sida 2012: 43)*

52. The success of civil society interacting with strategy and policy processes can be related to their ability to interact with the political economy of the country. Civil society has been able to respond to Government strategic priorities. For example, citizen-based monitoring identifies issues that affect local service delivery; evaluations support the investigation of corruption; and civil society research in both agriculture and gender. Achieving this influence is no easy matter. The interviewees stressed that a lot of work needs to go into working with government - "there is a lot of underground work that is done without making a lot of noise". Another respondent reported

> *"One of the things you have to pay attention to is the political process. You have to know where the policy is now. You need to start at the beginning then your inputs can have greater changes."*

These statements are reinforced by the research of Gready (Gready 2010: 643) who argues that civil society effectiveness in policy- making process in Rwanda hinges on three main issues: (i) strategies for engaging with a complex state; (ii) an ability to navigate the transition from policy making to policy implementation, in particular engaging with local politics and power relations at the implementation phase; and (iii) internal organisational dynamics and the external relationships forged by civil society in a difficult political culture

53. Within given spaces and by working with already legitimate civil society organisations, pathways can be opened so that supply invokes demand for evaluation. An interesting pathway that appears to have potential is to understand the implications of policy and strategy from the perspectives of citizens especially when it reveals implementation issues.

The Legislature

54. The Legislature in Rwanda is an institution that is legally formed as an oversight body. It is currently building capacity to meet its mandates. Prior to 2003, the Transitional National Assembly was a body appointed by the President. Under the new Constitution, a bicameral body has been formed comprising a Chamber of Deputies and a Senate. The Chamber of Deputies is composed of 80 members with 53 elected, 24 women (two from each Province and the City of Kigali), 2 from the National Youth Council and one from

the Federation of the Associations of the Disabled. The majority of the Chamber of Deputies is elected on a proportional list system. The Chamber of Deputies, along with the executive has the power to propose laws. The Senate, meanwhile, is indirectly elected and has an oversight function in relation to laws and the selection of public officials. Both houses are mandated to function in a manner that is based on consensus rather than confrontation.

55. There has until recently been a limited oversight role of the parliament. A recent DFID case report (2012: 4 - 5) noted "Rwanda's parliamentary budget per capita is half that of Uganda and over a third lower than Kenya's. It is 16.5 per cent lower than the African average (adjusted for purchasing power parity)." For Africa, the average parliamentary budget per capita is $3.71 million, while for Rwanda it is $3.1 million. As a percentage of the state budget, the budget of the Rwandan Parliament is very slightly above the African average, but slightly below the average for least developed countries - 0.77%, 0.89% and 0.82% respectively (Global Parliamentary Report, Inter-Parliamentary Union and UNDP, 2012, p.p. 98-100).

56. This lack of resources has three main consequences. First, there is an overall shortage of human capacity. For example, there is no specialist staff attached to standing committees to equip them with the necessary technical expertise to perform effectively. There is one member of parliamentary staff per parliamentarian, below the African average of 1.62 staff per parliamentarian, while for Rwanda's lower house (the Chamber of Deputies), the ratio of staff to MPs is less than one (0.77). As reported by DFID (2012: 6) the Fiduciary Risk Assessment of Parliament concluded that the Budget Committee had "insufficient technical support to discharge its role effectively". Second, the standing committees have very limited resources to undertake field visits or detailed research on particular aspects of policy and implementation. Finally, there has been a high level of Member of Parliament (MP) turnover, for example, 65% of MPs were replaced following 2008 parliamentary elections. If the trend is continued following the September 2013 elections, the training and induction workload for Parliamentary staff will increase. In the Upper House, Senators serve one non-renewable term of eight years and at the end of 2012, all 26 Senators were replaced.

57. However, there are some recent parliamentary reforms that open up pathways for evaluation. The Parliamentary Accounts Committee was created in April 2011 and is currently headed by parliament's longest serving member. By November 2011, the committee is reported to have summoned 193 officials to explain issues that were highlighted in the Auditor Generals 2009/10 reports (Times 2011a). During committee hearings, they have a prosecutor present who may follow-up on misconduct charges. In interviews, it was reported that there are "No Closed Doors" to this committee. This approach has led to 294 prosecutions. The Committee utilises the Auditor General's reports during their processes. Prosecutors, however, have been reported to be overzealous with information presented to this committee so that on occasion innocent people are accused[8].

[8] See for example, http://focus.rw/wp/2012/09/rwandas-parliament-to-have-no-excuse-for-future-mistakes/.

58. The Committee also considered the Value for Money and Performance Audits in the agricultural and health sectors carried out by the Office of the Auditor General with international assistance. These reports are good quality and highlight important evaluative information. The use of these reports cannot be commented on in this study as the analysis of these reports by the accounts committee was still in process. The committee received support from DFID's parliamentary accountability programme, which is seen to complement DFID's work with the Auditor General by providing an oversight outlet to the reports. The evaluative work of the Parliamentary Accounts Committee aligns with priorities of the political economy as it acts as a further watchdog on corruption issues. Interviewees suggest that the Parliamentary Accounts Committee is open to using evaluative information beyond audit reports, though conceding that extensions of oversight would need to be carefully managed within the political context. The use of evaluations by the portfolio committee, for example, could reinforce the perception that evaluation is principally a tool for censure.

59. The work of the portfolio committee is further augmented by capacity development support to the Budget Committee by DFID. In interviews it was reported that there has been a slow shift from parliament working with line item input budgets to programme budgets. This consequently means that oversight of the budget is still focused on input information rather than results.

Development Partners

60. Development Partners, bilateral and multilateral aid instituions, have generated a great deal of the demand for evaluation information at central, sector and district levels; assisted in the management of evaluations; and supported the development of supply. Development projects in Rwanda, especially the public sector, require a number of evaluations ranging from project commencement and mid-term reviews to project evaluations. Although Development Partners have historically provided around 40 per cent of the overall national budget, the sovereignty exerted at the level of policy has regulated the undertaking of evaluative work. Interviewees suggest, however, that Development Partners are able on occasions to influence policy if the decision-making mechanisms are country-led. The strength of state-led decision-making structures is echoed in external reports (Booth and Golooba-Mutebi 2012). In addition to more formal ECD, there are a range of mechanisms, such as sector working groups, where matters related to evaluation are discussed. Although there have been some difficulties between the Government and Development Agencies since a number of partners withdrew budget support, it was reported that sector working groups are still in existence and provide potential areas for interaction around evaluation.

61. A short review of some of some of the current development partner support in Table 3 reveals a wide-range of projects that are assisting with the development of systems that can support evaluation (note this list is indicative and does not include all support, which will mean conducting evaluation).

Table 3: Development Partner Support Recorded May 2013

Development Partner	Support to Evaluation Capacity Development both Direct and Indirect
DFID	Indirect Parliamentary Accountability Programme GBP 3.25 million) Public Financial Management Reform (GBP 4.5million) Tertiary Scholarships (GBP 3 million) **Direct** Strengthening Public Audit (GBP 4.5 million) National Institute of Statistics Rwanda (GBP5.5 million) Public Policy Information Monitoring and Advocacy (GBP 1.7 million) Public Sector Reform Specialist Technical Advisor (GBP490, 137)
UNDP	**Indirect** Inclusive Participation in Governance (USD 3.2 Million – Belgium and UNDP) **Direct** Evidence-based Policy Research and Advocacy (USD 1 million) National Institute of Statistics Rwanda
World Bank	**Direct** Statistics for Results (USD 10 million)
African Development Bank	**Indirect** Carnegie Mellon University Rwanda (USD 13 million)
European Union	**Indirect** Governance: Programmes supporting economic management (Euro7.5 million)
GIZ	**Indirect** Supporting decentralisation as a contribution to good governance
SIDA	**Indirect** Research Capacity at the National University of Rwanda (SEK125million) **Direct** Public Policy Information Monitoring and Advocacy (SEK49million) Institute of Research and Dialogue for Peace
USAID	**Direct** District Health Survey Rwanda Land

Source: DFID Operational Plan 2011-2015[9]; UNDP Rwanda[10]; World Bank Rwanda[11]; AfDB Approvals[12]; European Community Country Strategy Paper[13]; GIZ Rwanda[14]; SIDA Rwanda[15]; USAID[16]

[9] https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/67358/rwanda-2011.pdf, accessed 30 September 2013.
[10] http://www.rw.undp.org/content/rwanda/en/home/operations/projects/overview.html, accessed 30 September 2013.
[11] http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/rwanda/projects/all, accessed 30 September 2013.
[12] http://www.afdb.org/en/news-and-events/article/afdb-approves-usd-124-million-for-centers-of-excellence-in-mali-uganda-and-rwanda-8459/, accessed 30 September 2013.
[13] http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/repository/scanned_rw_csp10_en.pdf, accessed 30 September 2013.
[14] http://www.giz.de/themen/en/36803.htm, accessed 30 September 2013.
[15] http://www.sida.se/English/Countries-and-regions/Africa/Rwanda/Our-work-in-Rwanda/, accessed 30

62. Within the research, three scenarios emerge around how government may respond to development partner led efforts: allow, embrace, dismiss. Evaluative activities are allowed if they do not conflict with any politically sensitive elements, if they support the political goals of the Government or do not require large-scale surveys without political support. For example, randomised control trials (RCT) have been completed or are on-going in relation to performance financing in health (Basinga *et al*. 2011) and in Agricultural Production (J-PAL 2013b). These evaluations were carried out with funding from Development Partners and led by investigators external to the country, but operate in safe political spaces where the executive has an interest in evidence to improve implementation strategies. An evaluative activity may well be embraced if it is likely to reinforce a success or gives useful descriptive information about progress. For example, the regular household surveys (which are funded by Development Partners) are an information source that is embraced in high-level leadership retreats. Finally, if a development partner finances evaluative activity in a sensitive area, then the process may face issues. For example, it was reported that a development partner project that had inappropriately introduced critiques of land issues had found it difficult to gain the necessary approvals to conduct research.

63. Established areas of engagement are reported to be the best ways to engage in ECD for Development Partners. For example, the Common Performance Assessment Framework (CPAF) has previously been used to help secure external budgetary financing and provides a link between impact monitoring (poverty indicators) and inputs (budget support funding). This could offer a potential entry point for identifying and discussing the possibility of evaluation activities.

3.2 Government Agents

64. Government agents include central and line departments and other implementing agencies. This group of government agents interface with principals around the commissioning, conducting and managing of evaluations. Government agents translate political demands for evidence into the commissioning of studies and the incorporation of evidence into policy and strategy processes. Government agents are politically well placed for conducting evaluation and have financial and human resources they can access through development partners. Government are users of the evaluation and can on occasions conduct evaluations.

65. There are currently 76 M&E positions active and filled across government ministries, departments and agencies that cost around USD 813 thousand per year (see Table 4 and 5, which show the allocation of M&E human resources in government). The largest sectors for M&E professionals are health (9), economic (7) (including Ministry of Finance) and education (7). The various boards and ministries have the vast majority of the M&E staff (51 in total). Analysis of the allocation of this spending shows that USD 702 thousand is spent on 69 lower level positions (officer and professional) who earn between USD 7 thousand and USD 12 per year. Overall, there are only seven

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September 2013.

[16] http://www.usaid.gov/rwanda, accessed 30 September 2013.

management positions in M&E, five Directors and two above this level that are currently filled. Given that the management of evaluation is a highly technical skill and that international organisations pay more than the Government although the total budget for M&E positions is impressive, actual capacity looks to be quite thinly spread across government. Even the health sector's nine staff are split between the Rwanda Bio Medical Centre (6) and the Ministry of Health (3). In addition to these 76 staff there are 16 M&E officials that are placed in the main key EDPRS and planning agencies across government through the Ministry of Finance. These are also funded under a UNDP programme. The total funding for this is USD 223 thousand.

Table 4: M&E Human Resources by Sector

Sector	Positions
Health	9
Economic	7
Education	7
Justice	5
Local Government	5
Natural Resources	5
Oversight	5
Agriculture	4
Rwanda Agriculture Board	4
Defence	3
Executive	3
Regulatory	3
Research	3
Youth	3
Gender	2
Housing	2
Infrastructure	2
Disaster Management	1
Foreign Affairs	1
Governance	1
Sport	1
Grand Total	**76**

Source MINECOFIN, 2013[17]

[17] Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning Minecofin, 'M&E Positions in Government', (2013). This information was kindly communicated in excel form by the government for the purposes of this study.

Table 5: M&E Resources by Organisational Designation

Category	No. M&E Positions
Board	26
Ministry	25
Public agency	12
Commission	5
Judiciary	3
High institution	1
Public agencies	1
Research institution	1
Secretariat	1
Vocational training	1
Grand Total	76

Source: MINECOFIN, 2013

66. Box 3 shows that the executive will respond to problems with evaluative information and put in place policies and strategies. In implementation, the Ministries of Finance and Local Government will utilise technical assistance and draw upon existing sources of evidence in the design of the programme. In addition where Development Partners fund evaluations, some of the findings will be fed back into programme development (see for example, the Technical Audit of the VUP and the social security strategy of the Ministry of Local government). In this way, development partner commissioned evaluation can be useful at a strategic level. Yet, the evaluations conducted do not rigorously demonstrate the most effective component of the VUP package or their inter-relationship; therefore an evidence base for redesigning or reprioritising expenditure for the VUP does not exist. Finally, the evaluations undertaken only employ local evaluation expertise in a limited fashion, confirming a bias towards the use of external expertise.

Box 2: Vision 2020 *Umurenge* Programme (VUP)
Evidence demand and use building towards robust impact measurement

The implementation and subsequent evaluations of the Vision 2020 Umurenge Programme (VUP) - an Integrated Social Development Programme – demonstrates active demand for evaluation in an important policy implementation process. However, the case raises challenges around the development of local capacity in undertaking a government-sponsored evaluation to understand impact measurement.

The VUP originated during the *Akagera* Leadership retreat of February 2007 (*Akagera* IV), which showed little progress in poverty reduction and increasing inequality based upon the analysis of data from the Second Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey (EICV II 2006) (Government of Rwanda GoR 2007: 6). At this retreat is was found that "at the rate of poverty reduction observed between 2001/02 (corresponding to the EICV I) and 2005/06 (corresponding to the EICV II) the country would only achieve the Vision 2020 poverty target of 30% in 2030". The VUP was one of the responses to accelerate poverty reduction. The VUP, a central flagship programme of the EDPRS 1 (2008 – 2012), has three main components: direct support through loans, public works, and extension of financial services

(savings schemes). These three components have remained fairly stable since the inception of its design in 2007[18].

Progress of the VUP is tracked through a number of instruments. A baseline study was conducted in 2008, while the programme has an established monitoring system. Meanwhile panel data, which was initially collected in EICV3 and is planned to be followed-up in EICV4, may help in the measurement of impact. In the development of the programme, a variety of international expertise and their accompanying evidence bases have been brought to bear. For example, Oxford Policy Management supported the design and implementation of the Financial Services Component (Opm 2011), while the World Bank supported $2 million of technical assistance and capacity building in the programme (W. Bank 2010). Evaluators completed a variety of evaluation reports during implementation with the support of Development Partners. This study identified five such evaluations (Berglund 2012; Devereux 2012; Government of Rwanda GoR 2011; NISR 2009), with an impact assessment led and produced by a Rwandan evaluation firm (IMANZI 2012). Based on the data utilised in the 3rd Annual Review of DFID Support to the Vision 2020 Umurenge Programme (VUP), a reasonable project monitoring systems appears to be in place that can produce reliable data.

The VUP demonstrates that it is possible to commission a quantitative evaluation to judge impact, within the confines of existing policy. Currently a plan is in place to use EICV4 to support impact measurement of the VUP. In order to build towards impact measurement, agreement was reached the National Institute of Statistics who regulate studies, to include variables related to the VUP. This approach provides an entry point to develop further evaluation capacity through the appropriate sector working group and in relation to the next wave of survey data.

Central Ministries and Agencies in Evaluation

67. The Ministries of Finance and Economic Planning (from herein called the Ministry of Finance) and of Local Government are central to the evolving evaluation system. Both of these ministries play important roles in the implementation of EDPRS 2 and also formative roles in the overall planning and budgeting systems of the state. The Ministry of Finance is a powerful central node in budgeting and by extension it has a strong potential role in evaluation. The Ministry sits on all sector-working groups, manages the budget and assists with planning processes. The budget system is well defined and implemented. There are strict requirements in the budget process: budget execution report deadlines, budget reviews, budget ceilings and allocations. Non-compliance to these processes may lead to fines and serious disciplinary action. Line ministries gather data from districts, but when problems arise they rely on the Ministry of Finance for support to improve data processes. For example, issues have arisen around inadequate reporting related on district development plans. Line ministries do not have the power to insist on changes and have requested assistance from the Ministry of Finance and also the Ministry of Local Government to instigate reforms in the standards of reporting from districts.

68. The central of the role of Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Local Government is reinforced in the decentralisation process. The decentralisation process aims to transfer

[18] For example, compare GoR, 2007 to Devereux, 2012.

part of the responsibility to districts for budgeting and implementation. Yet, the Ministry of Finance has retained its leadership role and continues to identify information gaps. This has led the Ministry of Finance (in the Planning and Budget sections particularly) to be a focal point in building capacities at sector and sub-national levels through the production of guidelines and provision of training. In this way, the two ministries are critical in any national evaluation effort.

69. For the EDPRS 2, the Ministry of Finance will lead on the mid-term and final assessments. It is envisaged that the mid-term assessment will be an internal exercise, while the final assessment will be conducted by external evaluators. In addition, given its role in the Sector Working groups, the Ministry of Finance has a potentially important role across all evaluations. The Ministry acknowledged in interviews that monitoring and routine surveys are insufficient to provide decision-making information for the development programmes currently in operation. Given the advent of EDPRS 2, there is an opportunity for more diagnostic forms of evaluation (ex-ante) to help the implementation of policies and support the development of monitoring systems.

70. However, the Ministry of Finance and the unit responsible, the Policy Evaluation and Research Unit, needs to develop its capacity in order to fulfil its mandate outlined in EDPRS 2. First, a particularly important area of capacity development is managing evaluation processes in partnership with line ministries. As one respondent stated "never commission an evaluation without involving the sector ministry." A final challenge is the difficulty of procuring evaluations within the Government system. For example, across stakeholders interviewed, it was stated that Development Partners did procurement for evaluations because the processes were so strict in Rwanda that it was difficult to procure the best services on a reasonable timescale.

71. The Ministry of Local Government (formed in 2005) serves as the lead coordination agency on decentralisation, good governance (through a departmental programme and the Rwanda Governance Board), community development, local finance, and social protection. Through these programmes and its various agencies, it has oversight of a number of important evaluative activities. For example the Ministry of Local Government is the lead agency on the Joint Governance Assessment Report and oversees the VUP. As a result of these roles, the Ministry helps to coordinate some of the most important interventions on development issues and poverty reduction. Finally, within the EDPRS 2, it is envisaged that the Ministry of Local Government will lead on the quality assurance and evaluation of *Imihigo* as well as supporting the coordination of evaluation activities at the district level. Like the Ministry of Finance, local government has limited experience in managing evaluation activities, but was reported to be a potential Champion for evaluation.

National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda

72. The National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR) was formed in 2005 through a merger of the former Department of Statistics in the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning and the National Bureau of Census. In this relatively short period of time, a range of important surveys have been implemented that have enabled successful poverty monitoring at outcome and impact levels. As the primary data producer of national statistics, the NISR produces mandatory statistics such as: The Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Consumer Price Index (CPI), Producers Price Index (PPI), External Trade

figures, Population Statistics and other special purpose statistics from surveys such as the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), Household Living Conditions Survey (Enquete Integrale sur les Condition de vie des ménages or EICV in French), the Census and others. The NISR also conducts specific joint surveys such as the Agriculture Survey and Service Provision Assessment Survey. A range of data and reports related to these surveys are available on the Institutes website.[19] As detailed in Table 3 earlier there are a range of donors that support the Institute in order to produce these surveys.

73. One of the main survey's used for reporting is the Household Living Conditions Survey, or EICV. The data collection and publication for the EICV I took from 1999-2002, EICV II from 2005-2006 and EICV III from 2008-2012 the final report was published in 2001; Census data collection was undertaken from 2001-2002 and in 2012. The EICV is acknowledged to be of good quality internationally. Analysis of the EICV has led to a range of important publications that outline progress in some key areas related to Vision 2020 and the EDPRS. These surveys are important for the technical and political leadership of Rwanda. As President Kagame (2007) stated at the Africa Symposium on Statistical Development: "In Rwanda we are determined to engender a statistics culture that must place us on an effective path of evidence-based policy making." This commitment can be noted in the development of policy programmes. For example, the results from EICV I revealed lower than expected poverty reduction and a rise in inequality. This led to the creation of the pro-poor poverty reduction policy of VUP as a central flagship of the EDPRS 1 (2008 – 2012). Further, it is acknowledged that the surveys are amongst the primary sources of information for the reviews of EDPRS and also the annual leadership retreats, although it should be noted that the statistical reports are mainly descriptive in nature rather than evaluative.

74. The Institute of Statistics is important for evaluation not only as a provider of descriptive analysis, but it also oversees and approves the implementation of all large-scale surveys. Survey 'visas' are required for any survey activity covering at least one province. The granting of the visa is based on the necessity of the data collection and quality of the methodologies to be used. For researchers not from Rwanda, this visa is required to sign-off their activity in terms of the national research policy. This will be discussed further in reference to the supply side. Interviewees questioned the extent to which analytical skills are present within the Institute. One claimed that although there were survey management skills, most of the analysis was undertaken offshore. For example, Oxford Policy Management is acknowledged to have given technical assistance to the production of the report in both the Gender and Education EICV reports.

3.3 Evaluation Agents

75. Evaluation Agents consist of consultants, think tanks and universities. Voluntary Organisations of Professional Evaluators (VOPE) are also included in this group. This group is mainly concerned with conducting evaluations commissioned by government, and sometimes by principals. The range and capacity of entities supplying evaluation

[19] For example, http://statistics.gov.rw/publications/gender-statistics-reports-district-2013-kigali-city, accessed 30 September 2013.

services in Rwanda is limited. This mapping highlights three think tanks, while the National University of Rwanda has potential, with the support of development partner assistance, to improve. At the time of this study there was no active VOPE.

Box 3: Ministry of Health
An incubator for evaluation capacity development

The Health sector in Rwanda has implemented and supported a range of evaluations and ECD activities in Rwanda. Some of the current activities provide an example on what can be undertaken to support evaluation supply. In the context of high-level championship, there is evidence of the department engaging increasing numbers of local evaluators, undertaking more technical forms of evaluation and sponsoring University units to undertake specific research. All of these advances show potential pathways for improved evaluation practice to be carried out.

Currently the German Institute for Development Evaluation, at the request of the Ministry, is carrying out an evaluation of 30 years of German Rwanda Cooperation in the Health Sector (Focus 2012). This evaluation is being carried out by a team of evaluators from Rwanda. An impact evaluation was completed with the assistance with the World Bank on the performance payments to Primary Health care providers. Paulin Basinga of the School of Public Health at the University of Rwanda has first authored the subsequent publications on this study (Basinga *et al*. 2011; Bucagu, Kagubare, Basinga, Ngabo, Timmons and Lee. 2012). This further indicates a commitment to develop the capacity of local researchers in the health sector. The Minister of Health has supported the development of the Centre of Excellence in Health System Strengthening at the School of Public Health in the University of Rwanda. Finally, the Health Sector is investing in developing its M&E capacity, for example, it has the largest number of M&E staff in the Government.

As well as capacity development, the health sector conducts policy relevant research. For example, the Malaria division in the Ministry of Health has led or co-authored on a number of studies as evidence in seven peer-reviewed articles listed in 2011 and 2012. The M&E programme of the Rwanda Biomedical Centre, meanwhile, carries out supervision visits, clinical mentorship and sensitisation campaigns in health facilities on TB, Malaria, and HIV and AIDS.

The reasons for strength of the health sector appear to be multi-faceted. Health, in general, has a predisposition to the use of evidence given the training of health sector professionals. The championship of the Minister also appears to be a driving factor. Going forward there appears to be a range of initiatives related to ECD that could both be built upon and learnt from in the health sector.

Voluntary Organisations of Professional Evaluators

76. This study was not able to identify any regular public forums where those involved in evaluation meet and are able to exchange ideas in Rwanda. Neither of the VOPEs in Rwanda listed on the International Organisation for Cooperation in Evaluation (IOCE) website seems to be active at this point[20]. Although VOPEs are included as evaluation agents, where successful, they span evaluation agents, government agents and

[20] These being the Rwanda Monitoring and Evaluation Network and the Rwanda Evaluation Society, http://www.ioce.net/en/interactivemap/map.html, accessed 30 September 2013

principals. Two specific challenges undermine the ability to maintain an organisation that brings together those working on evaluation. First, there is a brain-drain of evaluators and second, there appears to be a preference for evaluators from outside the country from commissioners within government.

77. Currently all the people named as contacts for the Rwandan VOPEs on the IOCE work outside of the country, either in international organisations or as consultants on evaluation projects. The reason for this is that when someone shows some competence in M&E. they are able to get work with an international organisation or they are able to become international consultants (though they may maintain a base in Rwanda). In addition, it was reported that there was no appetite from government for supporting the formation of an association or network within the country. This means that there is no core group who are able to commit time to organising themselves and keeping momentum towards the formation of voluntary organisation.

78. Another potential impediment to the formation of a VOPE is related to a reported Government preference for external evaluators. According to one respondent they were hired on a project by one of their former students in Uganda, rather than being hired for the job directly. The source of the preference for outside evaluators appears to be doubt about the quality of evaluation expertise within Rwanda. Government officials stated that they consider international (northern) evaluators to produce more credible evaluations. This means that in-country consultants mainly get their evaluation work from civil society and Development Partners. This means that evaluation professionals are not given an opportunity to connect to the demands of government, given the authority of government in policy and strategy processes, which in turn impacts on their ability to build the legitimacy of the profession. Even if a network of evaluators is able to sustain itself through its links to civil society, unless government is supportive, evaluation consultants are not likely to be considered legitimate. Feeding into this issue appears to be a preference for quantitative technical evaluations, for which there is limited or no supply in Rwanda.

79. Without a VOPE there is no space, formal or informal, where the market for evaluation can mature through the development of deeper relationships between principals and different agents. In interviews with consultants they expressed a need for an association to be formed and for an accreditation process; however, it was not clear where the leadership, expertise or logistical support for this venture would come from.

Think Tanks

80. A limited number of think tanks exist in Rwanda. In order for these think tanks to be policy relevant they need to be seen as legitimate within by government. Three think tank organisations are highlighted as being able to relate to government in a way that promotes the use of evaluative evidence. There are two locally-based policy think tank organisations in Rwanda, namely the Institute for Research and Dialogue for Peace (IRDP) and Institute of Policy Analysis and Research (IPAR). Both of these were are considered credible and legitimate organisations able to present analytical findings on sensitive issues. IPAR, for example, has had some success at influencing technical aspects of the Government programme on how the measure water contamination. A third organisation, Transparency International, is not strictly speaking a think tank, but is included because of the uptake of their work by government.

81. IRDP was founded on 1 November 2001 and started its existence by undertaking a research process on major challenges facing sustainable peace in post-genocide Rwanda. IRDP is currently conducting research on barriers to the consolidation of peace in Rwanda namely, citizen participation, social cohesion and poverty reduction. IRDP report that they are engaging politicians at different levels in order to encourage ownership of findings. Within a recent report, IRDP commented on issues such as a culture of self-censorship, a control reflex, and challenges in communication between voters and elected representatives (IRDP 2011). Each of these issues could be considered highly sensitive within the political economy. Yet IRDP is reported to have good relations with government, for example, the Minister of Local Government, James Musoni "hailed IRDP for the initiative that promotes the country's development" (Times 2011b). A 2011 evaluation of IRDP (Meijer and Bangwanubusa 2011: V) concluded that the:

> *"Programme continues to be of great strategic relevance for the prospects of peace building in Rwanda. It has succeeded in bringing into the open a number of highly sensitive and controversial issues, yet of crucial importance for the future of peace in the country; in the process, it has engaged a broad range of people in growing numbers, from youth in schools and universities and ordinary "people on the hills" to local authorities and the main decision-makers at national level."*

82. During interviews it was noted that although IRDP's reports are not necessarily of the highest international quality, they appear to sufficiently resonate with Rwandan policy makers. One of their strengths appears to be their ability to strategically place themselves within the dialogue being undertaken by policy makers.

83. IPAR was founded in 2008 with an aim of enhancing evidence-based policy. It has published reports on a wide range of topics as demonstrated in Table 6. Originally, IPAR received a mix of core funding from the Government of Rwanda and donor funding. IPAR is entering its third strategic plan and with core funding from government removed it is starting to undertake more consultancy contracts. In the third strategic plan, the Institute's focus will be on agriculture, rural development and settlement, social welfare and social provision, socio-economic development and transformation, and social order and citizen engagement. IPAR launched the Economic Policy Research Network in Rwanda in 2008. However, in its recent Strategic plan, it reported that it was difficult to develop the network past due to a lack of funding and qualified staff.

84. The work of IPAR was cited as being of generally good quality and often actionable in interviews with Development Partners and government. IPAR also identified a number of areas of policy influence, such as in the water and sanitation sector. IPAR has been able to be accepted within government circles, because the Government funding ensured a degree of ownership, and because IPAR have been careful to be constructive in critiques of government action. This means that they are still considered an important partner of government and have been requested to assist in the development of research capacity in the Prime Minister's and President's Offices. However, challenges were noted with the development of IPAR's work. For example, it was reported to be difficult to develop local research capacity due to gaps in higher education. Also, where there are promising local researchers, due to the necessity to take on consultancy contracts, there is limited space to bring on young Rwandan researchers to develop their

capacity. In consultancy contracts, the clients are more demanding about the reports produced, so it is important to get them right.

Table 6: IPAR Reports

Themes	Reports
Economic	Raising Productivity And Reducing The Risks Of Household Enterprises In Rwanda (2012) Rwanda Case Study On Economic Transformation (2012) The Impact Of Tax Incentive "Rwanda Case Study" Report (2011)
Youth	Disaffected And Delinquent Male Youth In Rwanda: Understanding Pathways To Delinquency And The Role (2011) School Funding And Equity In Rwanda: Final Report (2012)
Aid Effectiveness	Aid Effectiveness In Rwanda (2012) Against The Odds: Achieving The MDGs In Rwanda (2012)
Agriculture and Food	Agriculture Situational Analysis (2009)
Customer Service	Customer Care (2009) Customer Service Delivery (2009) Developing The National Customer Service Strategy Development With A Smile (2010)

Source: IPAR, 2013

85. Transparency International, although a civil society organisation, in some ways acts like an evaluation agent. Transparency International in Rwanda produces a range of analysis linked to corruption and financial probity issues and have also generated community scorecards. The main annual reports include an analysis of the Auditor General's reports and a Bribery Index. The current Citizen Report Card contains a descriptive report on issues around the delivery of services. In discussions around the work of Transparency International on corruption issues, it was reported that they are able to invoke interest in their reports by being able to represent perspectives from the grassroots, in a manner that does not seek to place individual blame, but rather questions systemic issues. This approach resonates with the Rwanda Civil Society Platform. The approach appears to have had some success and means that they are able to have Ministers supporting the launch of their projects[21].

Universities

86. Government and Higher Education representatives recognised that there is often a disconnect between the evidence agenda of the state and the research being supplied from the University sector. This disconnect appears to be the result of capacity issues to address government demands for technically demanding quantitative information, incentives and a cognitive distance between the two.

87. There are currently eight public and twelve private Universities in Rwanda (Gateway 2013). The National University of Rwanda is the largest provider of higher education in the country and a potential source of evaluative research. The National University is the only university that enrols PhDs and has higher teaching standards than other public and

[21] See for example, http://www.newtimes.co.rw/news/index.php?i=15347&a=66573, accessed 30 September 2013

private Universities (INASP 2011). The National University will be an important component in the new University of Rwanda, which is to be formed by merging the public higher learning institutions (KARINGANIRE 2012). Available information shows that the University is making progress in establishing its research agenda. The University's English language masters programmes opened 2005. Since then, it reports that 593 Masters students and 2 PhD candidates have graduated from the University (NUR 2012). Research funding at the University has more than doubled from Rwf 192 million between 2003 and 2006 (USD 330 thousand in 2006) to Rwf 415 million between 2007 and 2010 (USD 713 thousand in 2010).

88. The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) has been one of the main partners in this expansion of research. In addition, research output in the University has also increased from 8 published articles in peer-reviewed journals between 2003 and 2006 to 42 between 2007 and 2010 (NUR 2013a). Across the University sector as a whole there were 77 peer-reviewed articles in 2009, rising from 40 in 2006 (INASP 2011). The University has published an internationally accredited journal since 2009, which has four volumes per year, each dedicated to different thematic strands (AJOL 2013b). There is one other internationally accredited journal in Rwanda published by the Kigali Health Institute, which is now in its second year of operation (AJOL 2013a). In addition to the resources of the National University, Carnegie Mellon is opening a campus to focus on the ICT sector and offering Masters degrees (CMU 2013).

89. There have been some successes in matching research with policy demands. One example is the research conducted on the effects of plastic bags on the environment[22]. This research led to a bill being introduced to prohibit the manufacture, import, use and sale of polythene bags in the country (Council 2011). There are also a number of researchers who are cited by government as being trusted and useful. However, in spite of these advances, the overall research base remains limited. For example, in the National University of Rwanda around 25 per cent of the teaching staff have PhDs, but they believe they need at least double this number to meet minimum standards (NUR 2013b). More broadly, there are about 62,500 students in higher education, and only around 377 lecturers with PhDs (INASP 2011). Both in the National University and in the sector resources are thinly spread. This is in a context where there is likely to be increased competition for PhD holders in a number of sectors given the Government's drive for a high-technology economy.

90. In a context where there is increasing demand for researchers, but limited supply, there is evidence that the incentive systems within Universities are becoming strained. It has been reported within the National University that there are issues with staff motivation and retention. A variety of measures have been put in place to attempt to address this including the expansion of consultancy opportunities (NUR 2013b). In interviews two issues with incentives were noted. First, some lecturers felt that they did not enjoy the same levels of remuneration as those at similar levels elsewhere in the public sector. Second, given the demand for University lecturers, they could make up for shortfalls in remuneration by teaching between institutions. Given this context, research which is not

[22] http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01448765.1991.9754573#.UbAhTvaZ4mk

as lucrative as teaching or consultancy, may become something that academics do not prioritise. As noted in interviews, consultancy while providing a source of income, does not provide the same capacity development opportunities as funded research due to tight deadlines and the expectations of clients. Consultancy also does not necessarily lead to published research. Finally, it should be noted that there appears to be limited capacity to respond to the technical quantitative analysis being demanded by government. In a review of the Rwanda Journal's Social Science Edition for 2010 – 2013 only one out of 19 articles appears to have moved beyond descriptive statistics or numerical counts to plot relationships (AJOL 2013b).

91. One point of entry for capacity development work is related to the conduct of work by external researchers in Rwanda (MINEDU 2010). International researchers need to work with a local researcher, for example. Additionally, the Government can turn down international requests to conduct research. This is more likely to happen around sensitive areas, such as, ethnicity and land. Yet, this is a useful policy instrument to support evaluation capacity development in work being conducted in Rwanda.

92. Finally, interviews with different stakeholders suggest that there is a distance between University research and Rwandan public officials' priorities. One public official commented "academia is seemingly in another world". From the side of higher education it was felt that government could make more of an effort to engage. One respondent noted that there was no annual research conference or event that brought together higher education and government to review the relevance of research. There might be some reticence for academics to engage government because there appears to be less experience at negotiating the political context. For example, when one academic criticised the Government in a report, the issue ended up in the press. In short, given the emphasis placed on independence in the training of academics, not all are going to be interested or able to conduct evaluative research.

4. PATHWAYS, OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

93. This report sought to understand: (i) the conditions under which demand is generated for evidence; and (ii) the areas in which supply can be strengthened to meet and foster this demand in relation to evaluation. This report has shown that there are currently active, latent and potential demands for evaluation in Rwanda. The latent and potential demands are nested within the demands for evidence from principals and government agents in Rwanda. This demand is not conditioned by development partners, but results endogenously from the government based upon their development objectives. Supply could in the short-term be strengthened through work with IPAR and the National University. However, the challenge is to orientate principals and government to the value of a range of evaluation practices for learning on the implementation on EDPRS 2, and to further develop social science capacity in the country. A range of pathways relating to these twin challenges is identified in response to the main research questions below.

4.1 Evaluation demand

94. There has been actual demand from principals for descriptive evidence and quantitative studies to feed into policy processes. There is a latent demand for a variety of forms of evaluations to be undertaken to improve performance in the executive and possibly in

the legislature. Civil society has demonstrated actual demand for evaluation through their implementation of citizen scorecards. The discussion below elaborates on these points.

95. Within Rwanda, the executive is a potential crucible for evaluation. The demand for evidence represents a latent demand for evaluation within the executive. In this context support to a limited number of key evaluations could provide a starting point for the further development of the profession. Although the strong accountability mechanisms that have been put in place may help to ensure evaluation happens, these may also generate discomfort with evaluation, as agents may not want to be seen to fail. This means that although existing political accounting mechanisms, such as *Imihigo,* may be important for reporting evaluations, they would not necessarily be best placed to commission evaluations. The tension between working with the accounting mechanisms of the state, while at the same time producing evaluations where people report on challenges is inherent in developing evaluation capacity in Rwanda. An important step in mediating this is to emphasise the important role of learning and improving implementation of the EDPRS 2 through evaluation.

96. Additionally, evaluation processes would need to be seen to work with the existing structures for the measurement of performance in the budget processes. An emphasis on learning entails, but is not limited to, identifying differences in implementation, the use of improvement plans and facilitated agreement on actions to be undertaken. Evaluations completed through sector working groups could be fed into the political accounting mechanisms through presentation of lessons to high profile meetings, such as, the leadership retreat or through *Imihigo* processes. Existing championship within the health sector may provide a node upon which important evaluations can be undertaken initially before expanding their reach to other government entities.

97. Civil society has the potential to act as a principal that supplies and demands evaluation. This approach could be particularly fruitful where an organisation has an existing track record of strategy and policy influence as they can then enter and work with policy processes with less resistance. As argued by Gready (2010: 642) “spaces for civil society engagement in policy processes are ad hoc and personalised, rather than based on institutional relationships between society and the state.” Civil society commissioned evaluations can be of particular value when they access and report upon local practices and how they interact with government implementation.

98. The legislature is a potential user of evaluation reports. The Public Accounts Committee, specifically, in the Chamber of Deputies, appears to be a source of latent demand for evaluation given their review of audits and their power to call for responses from government. However, working in this way may support the perception that evaluation is a tool for investigation. This is especially true for the Public Accounts Committee given its link to the prosecution of public servants.

99. As demonstrated in Table 3, there is a large range of current work being undertaken by Development Partners that is supportive of developing the Rwandan state’s capacity to work with evaluative information. Given the new EDPRS framework, Development Partners can help to commission evaluations and technically support the processes through the sector-working groups. Using the successes and challenges identified in the review of the Common Performance Assessment Framework (CPAF) may help to provide

an entry point. Development Partners are well placed to improve the governance of evaluations through the sector working groups. For example, one development partner reported how they were able to use the findings from a programme evaluation to raise issues around land reform. Again, as before, this sort of interaction needs to take place in areas where trust and relationships have been developed. In working in this way Development Partners and the Government would need to ensure that progressive responsibility would be transferred to the Government. Otherwise work in this area would be gap filling rather than capacity development.

100. Evaluation demands, particularly from the executive are filtered down to government agents to interpret and implement. Government agents are linking the *Imihigo* performance contracts to planning and budgeting mechanisms. Although evidence use is demanded and monitoring undertaken, there is a gap in organisational mechanisms to demand evaluation. Below are some pathways for evaluation demand to become part of the work of government agents.

101. Currently evaluation is demanded in an uncoordinated manner. The demand for evidence however is starting to be institutionalised through the Ministry of Finance. This has been demonstrated in relation to the process leading up to the development of EDPRS 2. The EDPRS 2 is a particularly strong entry point for evaluation as it has been endorsed and will be monitored at the highest level through existing accountability structures. Evaluation through the EDPRS 2 can help to change the allocation of resources based on evidence because the framework links back into the budgeting process and the broader public sector reforms that are led by the central ministries. The current EDPRS 2 provides an ambitious framework for evaluation that will need to be put into operation in a manner that is realistic within the capacity constraints and political economy of the country. Demands could be generated for more diagnostic forms of evaluations or efficacy impact evaluations as they provide evidence on what success could look like rather than critiquing existing implementation. A potential deal breaker for any evaluation would be if it was undertaken clumsily in an area where critical findings would reflect on a project of high prestige for the establishment. If quality is a concern, then the government could enquire international consortium's to demonstrate an ability to develop capacity through their work in-country.

102. Given the implementation of three rounds of household surveys and of demographic health surveys there is likely to be sufficient data to conduct some valuable desk-based evaluative analysis that the National Institute of Statistics could use as a basis for new work. Approaching evaluation demand in this way provides a low profile entry point. This would avoid any issues related to large-scale new data collection. Additionally, this approach would be supportive of the development of analytical capacity within the Institute. This approach could be particularly useful if a major development project, such as VUP. The limitation of this approach, even though it could provide interesting estimates of impact, is that it will not help to better understand issues in implementation unless it is supplemented by fieldwork. Support to this work could be provided through Sector Working Groups who could assist in the governance of evaluation and are able to oversee more complicated econometric work.

4.2 Evaluation supply

103. In Rwanda there are disconnects between evaluation supply and demand. Principals and government agents have shown little interest in working with Rwandan evaluators and social scientists from the National University, with some exceptions in the health sector. The evidence in this study has pointed to limitations in the capacities of entities that can conduct evaluation work. Yet, between the Think Tanks that are already producing evaluation work and with development partner support to the higher education sector there is potential for supply to be enhanced. The lack of a network, or even point of dissemination for research, that brings government agents together with the University sector is a limitation for the development of the evaluation profession as it means there is no place for developing exchanges and understanding.

104. The lack of sustained networking activity is a constraint on the further development of the evaluation profession in Rwanda. With no VOPE, there is no place for sharing practice and developing relationships between evaluation supply and demand. Support to sustained networking activity could help to develop trust between government, consultants and universities. The development of the VOPE would require someone who is politically acceptable to lead the initiative, as it would be necessary for the VOPE to work with government to help to articulate demands for evaluation. One activity that could be useful to help move the process is a conference on evaluative research being conducted in Rwanda led by nationals. This would provide an initial forum for discussion and in connecting supply and demand role-players.

105. The three Rwandan think tanks surveyed already appear to have established their spaces in the Rwandan policy environment. They can all provide evaluation services within their strategic spaces. However, a challenge is likely to be their ability to develop and sustain their home-grown capacity. Should a process be initiated through EDPRS 2 then this is a potential entry-point for the development of their evaluations capacities. This would mean that there needs to be recognition that the evaluations in the EDPRS 2 are not just consultancies, but also an evaluation capacity development opportunity.

106. The university sector in Rwanda is already receiving a range of support to develop their research capacity. However, a key issue appears to be their ability to identify and relate to demands emanating from government. To start to develop relationships there could be efforts to better disseminate in-country research to policy channels. Evaluation's that are likely to take place over a number of years and more orientated towards knowledge generation could be entry points to involve Universities and international expertise in a way that supports local ECD efforts. There also could be some further work to look at how research incentives could be better aligned to help Universities connect to policy.

107. There are a number of interconnected entry points for improving evaluation capacities in Rwanda, with EDPRS 2 as a potential nodal point. Rwanda's central government is sovereign in its decision-making processes and although the state utilises a large array of international technical assistance to supply evaluative expertise, demand is endogenous and evidence does feed into decision-making, as with the VUP. This means that even with the withdrawal of funding the Government will find ways to identify other supply opportunities (as it did with J-PAL). In undertaking ECD the challenge will be to ensure genuine transfer of skills and in strengthening the University Sector, as this is a more sustainable option.

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