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2017 Annual Report

CLEAR-AA

2017

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2017 Annual Report

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

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Centers for Learning on Evaluation and Results
ANGLOPHONE AFRICA

Contents

Foreword by the Chairperson of the Board 2

Director's Report 3

The Year at a Glance

Change and CLEAR-AA's Progress Towards It 6

CLEAR-AA's Contribution to Knowledge 17

The Institution and People behind the change 22

Financial Sustainability and Growth 25

Key Lessons from ECD work 26

Foreword by the Chairperson of the Board



Professor Imraan Valodia

It gives me great pleasure to introduce CLEAR-AA's annual report. CLEAR-AA has taken a significant step forward within the university in 2017 by being recognised by the senate as an independent centre within the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management. This achievement is recognition of the value CLEAR-AA continues to offer to the academic citizenship of the university.

Over the year under review, CLEAR-AA has made contributions to the research output of the university, publishing nine peer-reviewed articles in recognised international journals, demonstrating growing thought leadership in the practice and scholarship of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) in the region. Seven of these publications were in the African Evaluation Journal's special issue on methods. Support for this issue helped to enhance recognition of the journal as an influential vehicle to share African evaluation practice and deepen African scholarship in this field, one of CLEAR-AA's key objectives. CLEAR-AA staff also published two additional peer-reviewed articles in the Higher Education, Skills and Work-Based Learning and Development Journal, which have contributed to the broader discourses on evaluation in Africa.

We further acknowledge and celebrate CLEAR-AA's achievement in successfully launching the first comprehensive African Winter M&E programme, hosting senior officials from eleven countries in the region. CLEAR-AA has also made a greater contribution towards African scholarship through the completion of the AfrED database, an online repository for publically-available evaluation reports and articles written between 2005 and 2015 across 12 countries in Anglophone Africa. Using this resource, CLEAR-AA staff, working with collaborators from the University of Cape Town and UNICEF, drafted a peer-reviewed book drawing on key themes confronting the evaluation landscape in Africa to be published in FY19. This is yet again an important step forward in being able to present new research in a broad landscape in order to tease out the regional characteristics that enable and constrain M&E in Anglophone Africa.

In order to further raise CLEAR-AA's visibility within the university, the centre will focus on enhancing its research and teaching outputs so that the next generation of Wits graduates can benefit from the integration of evaluative thinking and innovative M&E methods across the various disciplines that the university offers.

The question for the management of the university has therefore been centred around how the centre can be reconfigured to better enhance the integration of CLEAR-AA more deeply into the university. We are motivated to find a more appropriate structure to define CLEAR-AA's role and contribution in the academic productivity of the university. We continue to ask questions such as: How can the university better feed its talent pool into the regional work of CLEAR-AA? and How can CLEAR-AA's learning from its programming filter into the curricula across various faculties within the university?

My vision is for CLEAR-AA to become a national research foundation centre of excellence in M&E. To achieve this, we are committed to support and grow the research output of the centre, as well as creating opportunities for practitioners and other M&E experts in the region to drive this emerging discipline forward. Should we arrive at this status, it will trigger and attract long-term research funding that will give CLEAR-AA greater financial sustainability and allow Wits to make M&E a national priority area, while CLEAR-AA will become the 'go to' place in the field of M&E, both for the country and the region.

The journey ahead for CLEAR-AA is indeed exciting, and I look forward to continuing to play a leadership role in helping to steer CLEAR-AA's academic contributions into the university and drawing across Wits to better support the realisation of CLEAR-AA's objectives.

Professor Imraan Valodia

Chairperson of the CLEAR-AA Advisory Board &
Dean: Commerce Law and Management Faculty

(1) *Prof Helder Marques, chair of the panel and Dean of the Faculty of Science; Caroline Digby, Adjunct Professor and Director of the Centre for Sustainability in Mining and Industry; Ebrahim Momoniat, Professor and Deputy Director of the DST-NRF (Department of Science and Technology – National Research Foundation) Centre of Excellence in Mathematical and Statistical Sciences; and Stephen Yeo, an external member of the panel.*

Director's Report



Director Laila Smith

The year 2017 was rewarding in many respects as the work of CLEAR-AA grew in leaps and bounds. It was an important year in which we reflected on ways of conceptualising our approaches to evaluation capacity development (ECD) (through an ECD model) in the region.

Before delving into some of the successes and learnings of the past year, it is pertinent to explain the ways in which CLEAR-AA enhances the demand and supply of evaluations at a national level. As a starting point, CLEAR-AA's effort to deepen demand for evaluation evidence is through strengthening accountability and transparency within the state. This involves building the skills of commissioners of evaluations within the executive to better understand the relevant evaluation methods to be employed and how they can effectively manage an evaluation process. Added to this is the deepening of evaluation functions by spreading them across tiers of government in order to better entrench a government-wide culture of learning from evaluation processes and findings. Our approach to widening demand for evaluations entails programmes that strengthen the legislature and civil society to play key roles in demanding use of evaluation evidence by the executive. Parliamentarians, in their representative role, play a similar role to civil society in representing the public in addressing accountability.

First is Twende Mbele, which has since 2016 been CLEAR-AA's learning partner on the champions of NESs. Second, CLEAR-AA was nominated onto the executive committee of the African Parliamentary Network for Development Evaluation (APNODE) in July 2017 and greatly benefits through its engagement with parliamentary champions operating at country level. Third, Mrs. Candice Morkel, the driver of CLEAR-AA's work in strengthening evaluation practice, was nominated to AfrEA's Board of Directors in 2017. One could not wish for greater synergies in the network partners we have selected to help strengthen by being part of their governance frameworks.

In terms of milestones in disseminating our work within the ECD community, at the AfrEA conference held in April 2017, we presented nine papers and participated in or co-hosted several sessions, the parliamentary stream, 'Made in Africa,' and impact investing. At the same conference, we launched our special issue of the African Evaluation Journal and the African Evaluation Database (AfrED). The Southern African M&E Association (SAMEA) conference held in October 2017 was another important platform where we facilitated a panel on evaluation use and presented six papers. We also hosted the CLEAR Global Forum in the same month. During this forum, we organised a university seminar on the value of evidence in post-truth politics and, together with Twende Mbele, delivered a collaborative workshop on the experiences of first- and second-generation NESs allowing for a conversation among evaluation champions from South Africa, Benin, Uganda, Ghana and Kenya. I would like to thank the staff at CLEAR-AA for their immense passion in pushing so hard to realise the aspirations of CLEAR's vision. I would like to also thank our host, Wits University, for embracing us as a centre, which is a significant milestone towards achieving institutional sustainability. Our Regional Advisory Board has provided excellent input and guidance in supporting continuous improvement for CLEAR-AA's expansion into the region. Finally, I would like to thank our partners and clients, who have given us the opportunity to break new ground in the dynamic terrain of ECD. The multidonor trust fund of the CLEAR Initiative has been the bedrock that has allowed CLEAR-AA the time to conceptualise, test and refine offerings we feel can best meet the identified ECD gaps in the region. Twende Mbele as a development partner as well as a collaborating delivery partner has been particularly valuable in supporting CLEAR-AA's expansion into the region through and with strong champions of NESs.

Our approach to widening demand for evaluations entails programmes that strengthen the legislature and civil society to play key roles in demanding use of evaluation evidence by the executive. Parliamentarians, in their representative role, play a similar role to civil society in representing the public in addressing accountability. Although the spaces for civil society organisations to participate in the construction of national evaluation systems (NESs) generally tend to be limited, they can still participate in ways that ensure inclusivity and fairness in the widening of NESs. Together with Voluntary Organisations for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs) and academics, civil society can begin to play a critical role in promoting the value and purpose of evaluations among citizens especially with regard to demanding accountability from their elected representatives.

On the supply-side, CLEAR-AA enhances the supply of evaluation practitioners through provision of short-term training programmes and academic offerings in M&E. We aim to improve the quality of instruction through incorporating appropriate methods in curriculum development in order to build the requisite skills that match demand. CLEAR-AA has been collaborating with selected higher education institutions to strengthen postgraduate degree programmes in M&E. The focus on postgraduate degree programmes in M&E inculcates systems-thinking and contributes to evaluation systems building on the foundations of teaching or training of M&E. As will be indicated in the report, CLEAR-AA has been instrumental in conducting training for M&E professionals across the continent.

In the past year, CLEAR-AA's growing recognition as a strategic player in the field has been demonstrated by its nomination to serve on the boards of three of its key regional network partners.

Dr Laila Smith, Director

(1) *Prof Helder Marques, chair of the panel and Dean of the Faculty of Science; Caroline Digby, Adjunct Professor and Director of the Centre for Sustainability in Mining and Industry; Ebrahim Momoniat, Professor and Deputy Director of the DST-NRF (Department of Science and Technology – National Research Foundation) Centre of Excellence in Mathematical and Statistical Sciences; and Stephen Yeo, an external member of the panel.*

The Year at a Glance

January 2017

CLEAR-AA conceptualizes its key initiatives for Twende Mbele.

February 2017

The development of the regional Compass begins, with a baseline concluded by October, serving as a progress index for National Evaluation Systems in Africa. CLEAR LEAP review takes place, which leads to bilateral support from SIDA for 2018.

March 2017

CLEAR-AA is awarded a contract to develop an organisational Research Agenda for TETA.
CLEAR-AA collaborates with DPME on diagnostic study on levels of capacity amongst central agencies in SA to support Metropolitan evaluation capacity.

April 2017

CLEAR-AA begins collaboration with IFAD by bringing 5 M&E specialists to represent Anglophone Africa at the PRIME M&E gobal training of Trainers course in Mexico City.
CLEAR-AA helps launch the African Evaluation Journal special edition on Methods at AFREA.
Candice Morkel, head of the Strengthening Evaluation Practice programme is nominated onto the AFREA board.

May 2017

CLEAR-AA launches its second MOOC on RBM using the EdX platform.

June 2017

CLEAR-AA begins to assemble M&E authors in the region, to make chapter contributions into the AFRED Book (based on data from the African Evaluation database).
CLEAR-AA is commissioned to conduct an evaluation of the Socio Economic Rights Initiative (SERI).
The Oversight Tool to support Parliamentary Oversight is completed.

July 2017

CLEAR-AA provides a Results Based Management training for Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF) in Kenya.
CLEAR-AA hosts M&E training workshop for regional parliamentarians at the 3rd APNODE AGM in Khartoum, Sudan and is nominated onto the Executive Committee.

August 2017

CLEAR-GIMPA provides technical assistance to the Ghananian M&E Ministry in Developing an M&E Framework for its Public Sector Reform Programme.
CLEAR's first Development Evaluation Training Program in Africa (DETPA) is launched at Wits.

September 2017

The CLEAR-AA programme on Building the next cohort of Young Emerging Evaluators grows as CLEAR-AA receives a new group of 5 M&E Interns.CLEAR-GIMPA Accredits a new Post-graduate Diploma in M&E programme at GIMPA in Ghana.

October 2017

A write-shop is held with 10 authors from the region to resume write-up for the AFRED Book.
CLEAR-GIMPA launches the Harmattan course, based on the DETPA curricula for the Ghanaian M&E Ministry Staff. CLEAR hosts the CLEAR-Global Forum Wits.
CLEAR runs the Evidence Use along with the African Evidence Network at the SAMEA.

November 2017

CLEAR-AA makes two panel presentations at the American Evaluation Association Conference in Washington DC.
CLEAR-GIMPA launches the Harmattan M&E school at GIMPA in Ghana, based on the DETPA curriculum.
CLEAR-AA launches a Theory of Change for Development Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) on the EdX platform.
Workshops held in Benin and Uganda regarding civil society engagement in Government-wide M&E systems.

December 2017

CLEAR-AA hosts a training workshop for the East African parliamentary committee support on fundamentals of M&E for oversight support.

CHANGE AND CLEAR-AA'PROGRESS TOWARDS IT



CLEAR Global Forum, Johannesburg

Since its inception five years ago, CLEAR-AA has been serving an important need particularly for ECD on the continent. The year 2017 is no exception as we have accelerated our programmatic work aimed at increasing demand from government and civil society for practical and applied ECD. For instance, we have played a strategic role in training and nurturing evaluation practitioners, as well as experimenting with innovative evaluation methods by carrying out evaluations and providing technical assistance to clients. We have also played a critical role in working with parliamentarians towards the use of evidence in holding the executive accountable. In all our endeavours to see positive change in ECD, we are conscious of the limited availability of relevant services in many developing countries in the region.

This section of the report outlines our theory of change and how it influences our approach towards the change we want to see in Anglophone Africa. It also discusses the roles that each of our business lines contributes to realisation of the change we expect to see. But first we begin by laying out our diagnosis of the challenges in ECD in the region.

Challenges Facing Evaluation Capacity in Anglophone Africa

Over the years CLEAR-AA's interventions and programmatic work have been influenced by its analysis and framing of the ECD challenges, which can be categorised into three areas of focus, namely; (i) technical challenges; (ii) challenges in institutional arrangements to facilitate M&E, and (iii) culturally-driven challenges in demand, production and use of evaluation evidence.

Our diagnosis of the technical challenges shows that, among other factors there is an under-supply of evaluation capacity in Anglophone Africa. The pathways for universities to develop postgraduate programmes that can address both robust methods for carrying out evaluations, managing evaluations, use of evaluations and addressing capacity at systems levels is undeveloped. This is due to the fact that Anglophone Africa has very few postgraduate degrees that are concentrated on a longer and thicker curriculum, solely focused on M&E. Currently, M&E is embedded as an elective or topic in broader disciplines, such as demography, public health or governance.

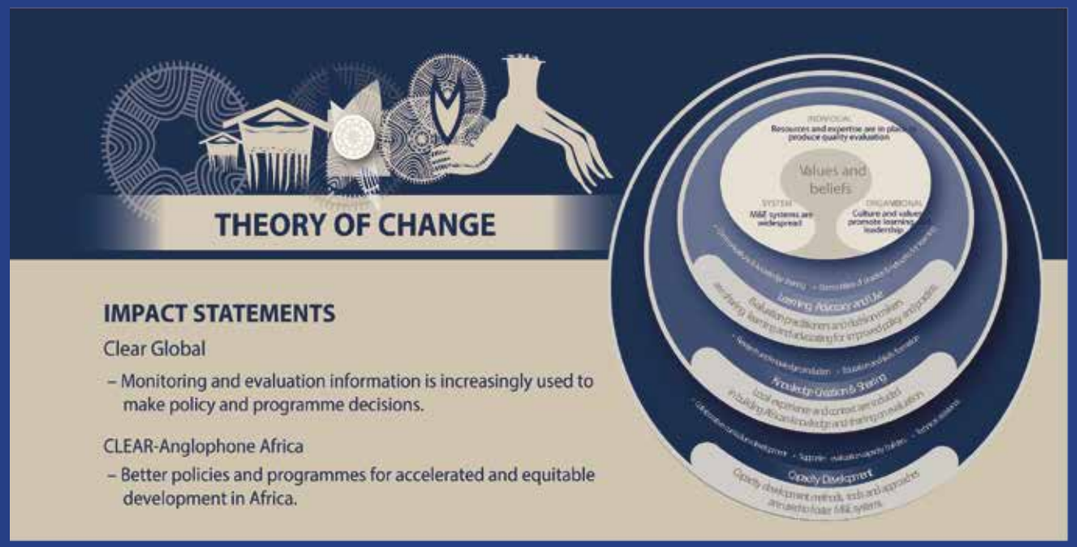
As a result of weaknesses in the NES ecosystems, institutional arrangements to facilitate M&E in a selected country become equally weakened. Even where NES systems are beginning to mature, such as in Uganda, Benin and South Africa, there are limited ecosystems that bring key stakeholders together to widen efforts to come to a common epistemological framework (Lazaro 2015) for why evaluations are important and the purpose they service within a given country. The absence or limited presence of regular conversations among key stakeholders, such as voluntary professional associations, higher-education institutions and civil society organisations have impacts on the checks and balances regarding the quality of what is produced in the evaluation arena. The consequence of this limited ecosystem in being able to define a common purpose and help set standards has led to an inability to address the varied quality of evaluations that are produced on the continent. Cases where evaluations have been of poor quality have resulted in limited use by those demanding evaluations.

One of the key cultural gaps in the evaluation space is upward accountability to improve government performance. Deepening evaluation is key to strengthening upward accountability and improving government performance. The oversight function of the executive, by the legislature, is hampered by the limited understanding parliamentarians have of M&E systems. This constraint in upward accountability is embedded in a broader structural reality where parliamentarian systems themselves are fairly fragile, given the declining democracy trends on the continent. The common difficulty encountered in both the executive and the legislature is a limited capacity within the civil service and political arena to commission evaluations, partially due to an inability to understand which methods are needed to address the investigation at hand. The result is the commissioning of evaluations that do not meet their terms of reference or stated needs, partly because these often remain unclear, with the outcome of limited use of these evaluations.

Our understandings of these technical, institutional and cultural challenges of ECD in the region have influenced our theory of change in several ways. The discussion below will outline CLEAR-AA's Theory of Change.

CLEAR-AA's Theory of Change: Responding to African ECD Challenges

'CLEAR-AA works to develop and promote the use of evaluation in evidence-based policy making, to accelerate equitable development and deepen democracy across Anglophone Africa'



Programme Rationale

Based on our analysis of the capacity challenges in the region, CLEAR-AA's Theory of Change is developed as a response to the region's ECD context while remaining conceptually linked to the Theory of Change of the CLEAR Global network. CLEAR-AA's intervention logic assumes that the problem of evidence-based policy-making in the region has technical, institutional and cultural components. CLEAR-AA should therefore intervene across all three areas in order to improve evaluation practice and use in decision-making, for strengthening efforts for sustainable change in the region.

Programme Logic

We continue to identify, improve and test effective ECD approaches in pursuit of the outcome of 'improved capacity'. We further endeavour to promote and facilitate sharing and application of contextually appropriate evaluation methods in pursuit of the outcome of 'increased knowledge creation & sharing'. We believe that through collaboration with key regional and national partners, these efforts will ultimately build an enabling culture for iterative learning among practitioners and decision-makers in the region. Such an approach among individuals, within organisations, and across systems can in turn promote evidence-centred decision-making in the region.

Consideration of Complexity

As illustrated in the Theory of Change above, these interventions act in confluence with one another and are neither linear nor sequential but are rather iterative and interlinked, based on the specific organisational contexts in which CLEAR-AA is engaged. The entry points for CLEAR-AA's intervention in ECD is through the delivery of products and services ranging from approaches, tools, skills development and research used to foster robust M&E systems. CLEAR-AA understands that both the supply and demand for M&E need strengthening and matching. Our Theory of Change aims to build its interventions at the technical, institutional and cultural change levels based on an understanding of the incentives that drives change at these levels in ECD is through the delivery of products and services ranging from approaches, tools, skills development and research used to foster robust M&E systems. CLEAR-AA understands that both the supply and demand for M&E need strengthening and matching. Our Theory of Change aims to build its interventions at the technical, institutional and cultural change levels based on an understanding of the incentives that drives change at these levels.

How CLEAR-AA Uses Its Business Lines to Foster Progress

Business Line 1: National Evaluation Systems (NES)

Description of NES:

This business line strengthens the technical, institutional and cultural capacity of NESs. When key stakeholders demonstrate a readiness to systematise M&E practice, NES works with them to create appropriate training opportunities, effective policies and systems and support champions to build systems for evidence use. Key stakeholders in NESs include the centre of government, national departments, VOPEs and civil society representatives.

Broad Activities:

This business line advocates for the development of national evaluation policies in the region and provides technical assistance linked to the policies and systems development. The business line conducts research linked to effective practice in implementing NESs. Several courses have been developed that target members of NESs at different levels, and the business line delivers these trainings as required.

Linkage to the Theory of Change:

This business line plays a conceptual leadership role within the organisation, to support all business lines to contribute not only to change within their primary constituency, but a broader NES as a whole. In addition, this business line works specifically with core government clients in the core countries of Zambia, Ghana, South Africa and Uganda, as well as others, to build and strengthen NESs and foster cultures of learning.

Selected Projects in 2017:

- A study of civil society engagement with government-wide evaluation systems.
- Training of trainers for results-based management.
- Training conducted in Kenya to the AATF.
- Technical assistance to the Gauteng Office of the Premier.
- Seminar on first- and second-generation NESs hosted at the CLEAR Global forum in Johannesburg in collaboration with Twende Mbele.



Twende Mbele Management Committee at the Twende/CLEAR AA forum on discussion on 1st and 2nd Generation National Evaluation Systems, Oct. 2017

Business Line 2: Strengthening Legislative Oversight

Description of SLO:

Legislatures are a central pillar of democracy and play a crucial role in sustaining equitable development in the region. In the evaluation space, the legislature plays a pivotal role in writing the legislation to enable better policies and processes in the use of evaluations in decision-making, let alone fulfilling its parliamentarian role in questioning how the executive delivers on recommendations emerging from evaluations. This business line seeks to improve the effectiveness of African parliaments to build evaluation systems, use evidence in oversight, strengthen legislation on evidence use and bring a culture of evidence-informed decision-making to citizens through representative democratic structures. We work with elected representatives, portfolio committee members, researchers and other support staff and strategic management units within national and provincial legislatures to priorities, select, interpret and make sound judgements using M&E data.

Broad Activities:

This business line supports systems of evidence use in parliaments by supporting the work of champions and networks for learning and sharing and by training parliamentarians and support staff on building M&E systems, including the use of evaluation in oversight. The business line also develops tools that support the evaluative function within parliaments and carries out research on the relationship between evaluation systems and democracy.

Linkage to the Theory of Change:

This business line plays an important advocacy role by working with political leadership in key countries to contribute to political change. It also looks at the legislative component of NESs, which is critical for systematising good practice. Finally, the business works with elected representatives and parliamentary institutions in key countries, as well as regional and global networks, to build on good practice for evaluation use.

Selected Projects in 2017:

- Training for parliaments and support staff in Benin, Ghana, Kenya Tanzania and Uganda raining of trainers for using evidence in oversight in Uganda and Ghana.
- Collaboration with APNODE to grow the network of parliamentarians and improve participation into ECD initiatives.
- Development of a Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) on the EdX platform on the Theory of Change.
- Oversight App Workshop with Twende Mbele



Oversight monitoring and evaluation training of parliamentarians in Uganda, April 2017

Business Line 3: Strengthening Evaluation Practice

Description of SEP:

This business line is aimed at growing a cohort of African evaluation educators, trainers, scholars and practitioners to meet evaluation demands through working with higher education institutions and other ECD partners. SEP advocates for the strengthening of evaluation capacity in the region and supports M&E academic training programmes in partnership with higher-education institutions and private institutions. In so doing, SEP develops and delivers on tailored and open enrolment programmes that speaks to building evaluation capacity in the region, while supporting collaborative efforts to strengthen the national evaluation capacity between the higher-education and training community, evaluators and the training sector.

Broad Activities

SEP advocates for the strengthening of evaluation capacity in the region, and supports M&E academic training programmes in partnership with Higher Education Institutions and private institutions.

Linkage to the Theory of Change:

This business line plays a vital role in building the capacity required to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of NESs. It fosters a culture of learning and continuous professional development within the evaluation ecosystem and supports other business lines by ensuring that adequate skills and resources are in place to meet the demand for evaluation practice in the region. The business line partners primarily with higher-education institutions, private and public institutions, as well as VOPEs, to strengthen nation evaluation capacities.

Selected Projects in 2017:

- The launch of the Development Evaluation Training Programme in Africa (DETPA) capacity building programme.
- Collaborative curriculum development project with Twende Mbele.
- The IFAD coordination in developing the first global certification programme for M&E.
- Building the architecture of an online database of African Evaluations for AfrED.





Development Evaluation Training Programme in Africa (DETPA) launch, Johanesburg

Business Line 4: Strategic Knowledge Management and Applied Research

Description of SKMAR:

This business line aspires to be a leader in innovative methods and approaches to evaluation in Africa. It is cross-cutting and serves all business lines within CLEAR-AA, as well as the knowledge community in the M&E sector in the region. In its work, SKMAR has both an internal and external focus. Internally, the business line is responsible for providing an internal organisational support that drives 1) quality assurance, 2) codification of the organisation's programmatic work, and 3) coordinates the centre's research agenda and production. The external focus of SKMAR involves 1) conducting evaluations as an entry point to promoting organisational learning and development, 2) provision of technical support to governments organisational research and/or evaluation systems to extract the lessons learnt and cultivate the culture of using evidence for decision-making, 3) documenting and sharing lessons learnt with evaluation practitioners and providers of evaluation capacity, and 4) contributing towards building the field of impact investing in Africa.

Broad Activities

The business line fulfils its ECD mandate through three main activities; 1) provision of evaluation services. We identify and respond to strategic evaluation calls which allow us to learn from and apply innovative and contextually responsive evaluation methods 2) Provision of Technical Assistance to both public and private institutions to improve data and information management and its use. These TA services may include review and improvement of research and knowledge management policies and systems, improvement of data collection tools, and facilitation of organisational planning. 3) Codification and research. This includes ensuring a functional knowledge management system for CLEAR-AA itself to maintain continuous production of new knowledge emerging from its experience in both ECD and evaluation practice.

Linkage to Theory of Change

SKMAR facilitates the use of evaluation in evidence-based policy-making or decision-making, through providing evaluation services and technical assistance to both private and public institutions. To demonstrate a linkage and contribution to the CLEAR-AA's Theory of Change, as a result of codifying its evaluation and TA experience, the business line has learnt that behavioural change can be influenced through a carefully managed evaluation process and thereby reducing over-emphasis on actual evaluation results that seldom receives the necessary attention from decision-makers. Knowledge captured (codified) from organisational experiences in both evaluation and ECD has been critical towards understanding influencing evidence use among decision-makers in the region.

Examples of Projects in 2017:

- Evaluation of Education Training & Development Practitioners – Sector Education Authority (ETDP-SETA)-funded programmes implemented between 2011 and 2016.
- Evaluation of the Limpopo Enterprise Development Programme.
- Evaluation of the Socio-Economic Rights Institute's work in promoting the implementation of socio-economic rights and informal settlements and inner-city housing (SERI).
- Annual update the Transport SETA Sector Skills Plan (SSP).
- Development of the Transport Education Training Authority's Research Agenda

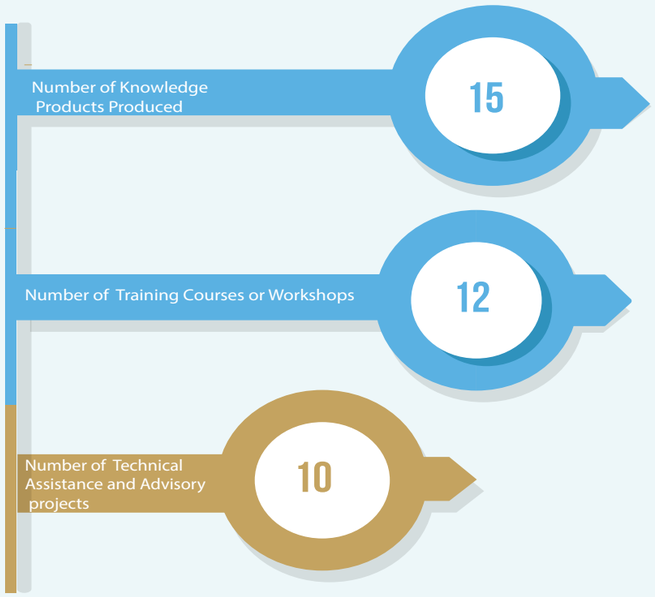


TETA Training, Johannesburg

Key Outputs Achieved for the Year

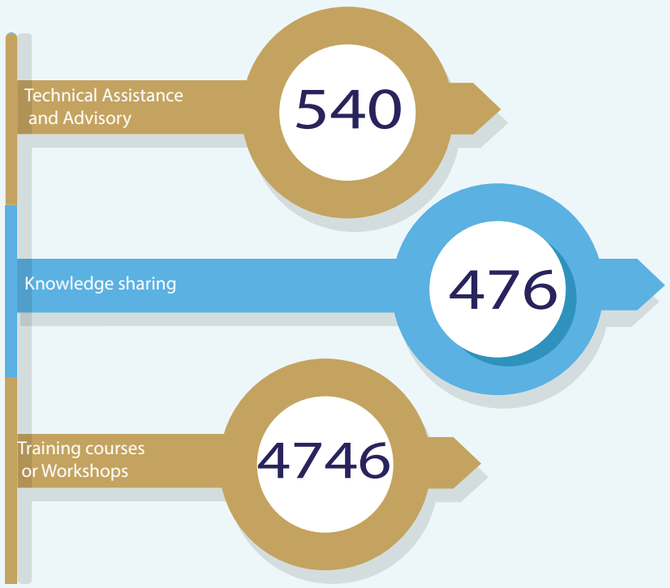
Activities/interventions Completed

The following shows the total number of successfully completed ECD interventions across the three types of programmes.



Total Individual Participation by Activity

The following provides details about the number of individuals who benefitted from each of the CLEAR-AA interventions.

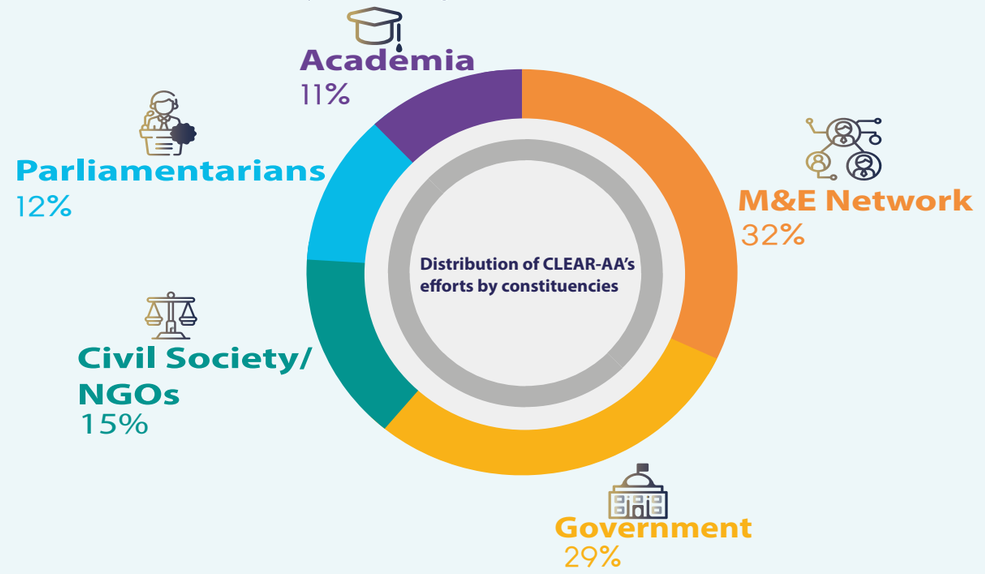


Total Participants 5753
Total % of Males 59%
Total % of Females 41%

Over 70% of the individuals who benefitted from our Training workshops were through the Massive Open Online Course (MOOC)

Distribution of CLEAR-AA's efforts by constituencies

CLEAR-AA consists of various types of stakeholders. The following is a breakdown of activities in 2017 by stakeholder targeted.



Stakeholder Rating of Quality and Usefulness of Training

The following is a result of post training evaluations by all participants. The aggregated score represents a rating out of a Likert scale of 5 (1 extremely low, and 5 extremely high).

4,3
Quality of Training Courses/Workshops

4,28
Usefulness of Training Courses

Contribution to Emerging Evaluator Programme: M&E Professional Development

CLEAR-AA is committed to development and professionalising of emerging evaluators. The following results show performance of our organisational emerging evaluator programme over the year under review.



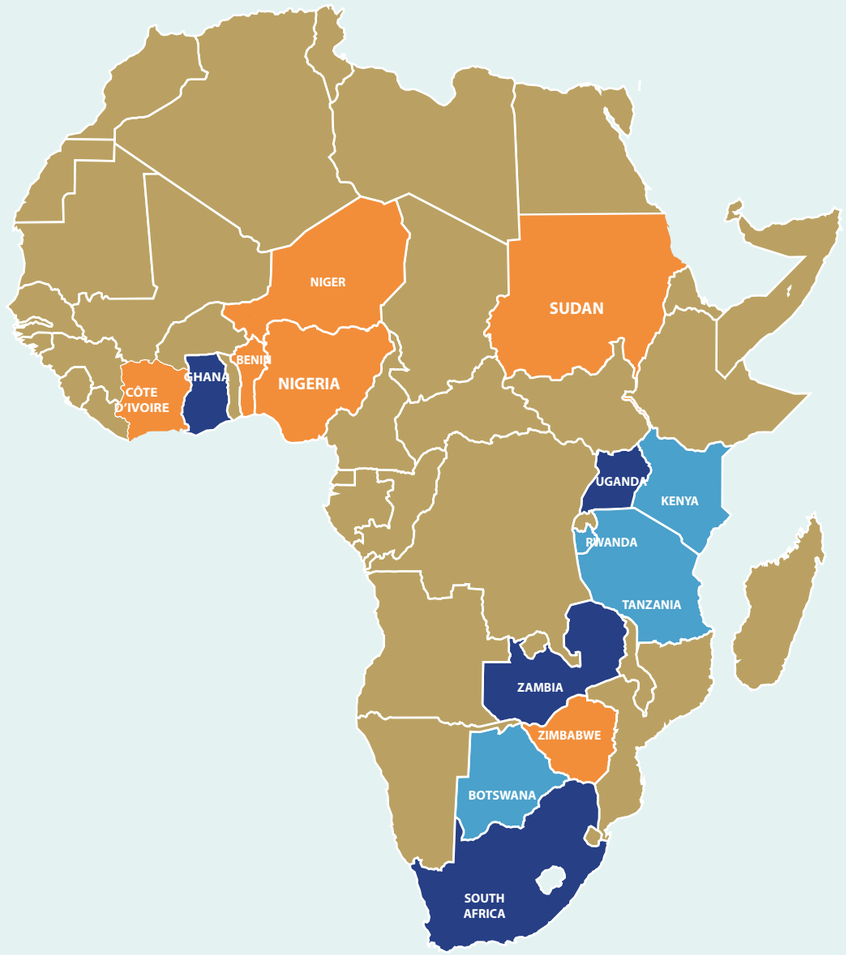
3
Number promoted into senior post

1
Number found a senior post in the market

3
Number remained in the internship

Core Countries and Footprint

Below is a demonstration of the Centre's footprint. As a regional Centre, CLEAR-AA has 8 countries of strategic interest within Anglophone Africa. Of these eight countries, four have benefitted from a full suite of ECD interventions from CLEAR-AA, these include Technical Assistance to strengthen the respective NESs, plus other ECD services such as training and facilitation of peer-learning. CLEAR-AA has begun some scoping exercises and planning for engagement in other strategic countries. In countries outside the strategic list of 8, CLEAR-AA has participated in knowledge exchange and sharing in order to maintain pace with the Global M&E discourse.



Strategic Countries

Received full ECD Package

Strategic Country

Knowledge Sharing

Knowledge Sharing and Peer-Learning

Key Outcomes – Behavioural Change

During this financial year, we reflected on the outcomes that we are beginning to see as a result of the work that we have been carrying out with our partners and clients. Below we discuss three of the outcome stories and lessons that we learnt.

TETA - Technical Assistance with potential to impact change at systems level

'…There is a need to recognise that some outcomes go beyond "boundary partners", especially in the case of TETA, where TETA's behavioural change influences changes at systems level …' Khotso Tsotsotso, M&E Technical Specialist and a four-year consultant to the Transport Education and Training Authority



TETA - Technical Assistance Training, Johannesburg

Introduction and Background

Transport Education Training Authority (TETA) is one of the sector education and training authorities (SETAs) in South Africa. TETA is the SETA led by the TETA Board consisting of business, trade unions and government. Their strategic objectives include maximising the impact of employment and skills development interventions and employer behaviour in job creation, economic growth and the internationally competitive skills base in the transport sector, working with sector stakeholders to develop the best labour-market solutions that leverage greater investment in upskilling people in the transport sector. TETA also provides needed labour-market intelligence that assists sector stakeholders to make appropriate choices in the deployment of their resources.

ECD Challenge:

One of the major challenges faced by TETA is that its knowledge management capacity, processes, procedures and systems impede its ability to effectively acquire knowledge, learn and plan responses to the skills needs of the transport sector, as the sector is highly dynamic and fast-changing in nature. CLEAR-AA conducted an organisational diagnostic study in 2015 to assess gaps in both staff capacity and capacity of tools and processes to acquire and manage research (evidence) necessary for planning and decision-making. The study revealed challenges with regard to implementation and management of research within the organisation. Thus, CLEAR-AA made several recommendations for improvement of knowledge management.

These included:

- Formalisation of the research policy
- Construction of an annually updated research agenda
- Appointment of an independent research chair to manage acquisition and quality assurance of research, guided by the research policy

In responding to the capacity and systems challenges of the client, CLEAR-AA applied several interventions. We developed an appropriate research strategy with the guidelines and policy, to manage organisational research production. On the basis of the research strategy and policy, we assisted the Transport SETA through planning, constructing and embedding an appropriate research agenda, which will be updated annually. This set of interventions was to ensure that both systems and procedures to manage production and use of evidence from research are both effective and functional for the mandate of the Transport SETA.

Observed Organisational Behaviour Changes

Based on the recommendations made by CLEAR-AA, TETA has implemented several changes within their organisation. The first of this was the appointment of a research chair to play a vital role in improving the research and research capacity of the research unit at TETA, enabling transparent and effective management research for the organisation. Second, TETA commissioned CLEAR-AA to develop a research agenda for them. This is aimed at ensuring that research activities undertaken by TETA are immediately directed at providing solutions to operational challenges in the sector.

The result of this intervention led to the appointment of a research chair and the commissioning of the research agenda, thus demonstrating an elevated responsibility of the research function within the organisation, as well as a greater understanding of the significance of research for both the transport sector and the organisation itself. Further testimony of this was the appointment of a research practitioner after the position had been vacant for several years. Remarkably, these improvements in the maturity of the knowledge management system at TETA were noticed by its principals. After TETA had stated it as part of its plans and eventually implementing the research agenda, the Department of Higher Education (DHET) made it mandatory for all other 22 SETAs to submit respective research agendas as part of the annual update of the sector skills plans.

Key Lesson

Through this experience with TETA, CLEAR-AA has demonstrated that capacity development at institutional level can have outcomes that go beyond the immediate client's behavioural change. That change can also influence changes at systems level (that is, the broader SETA system through DHET).

DETPA- An Africa approach to evaluation

'...recently I was promoted from Principal Economist to Deputy Chief Economist, which I can also attribute to the Development Evaluation Training in Africa Advanced Track certificate.....' Aloyce Ratemo, Deputy Chief Economist/Deputy Statistician, The National Treasury and Ministry of Planning: M&E Department, Kenya



DETPA Class of 2018 during a site visit to the South African Union Buildings

DETPA is an open enrolment course offered annually by CLEAR-AA. In 2017, it attracted 55 delegates from Botswana, Ethiopia, Ghana, Uganda, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa and Zimbabwe, Benin and Niger Republic.

Many of the delegates are responsible for building their NESs, or are in positions of influence in terms of policy, planning and evaluation. One of the most significant cohorts of participants included the group of participants from the African Union Learning Academy (AULA), who are beginning to explore evaluation capacity building opportunities that will meet the demand for ensuring that the organisation and its partners are able to monitor and evaluate Africa's progress in respect of the AU Agenda 2063.

ECD Challenges

DETPA responds to the demand for high-quality evaluation capacity building opportunities in Africa, with a specific focus on African-rooted paradigms and contextual relevance. It also prioritises establishing a strong community of practice built around learning, networking and sharing, which contribute to enhancing evaluation practice on the continent. Although the participants' job responsibilities differ, a common denominator is the fact that they are at mid- and high-level hierarchal structures within their working environment. They are mainly responsible to implement programmes within their organisations; hence, the use of M&E applies to their day to day activities. A small minority of the participants were from the private sector as consultants, while others were full-time M&E students. DETPA, therefore, is one of a number of capacity development interventions that CLEAR-AA is embarking on in order to build a cohort of African evaluators and related practitioners to strengthen evaluation practice on the continent. Training forms part of the broader CLEAR-AA ECD model, which involves a close working relationship with institutions and includes diagnoses, evaluation capacity needs assessment, technical assistance, research and learning.

Based on the feedback collected from participants (either through observation, discussions or surveys), there is some evidence that the programme contributes to organisational self-reflection on their ECD needs and contributes to an awareness of the need for continuous professional development. For example, the Gauteng City Regional Academy (GCRA), a body responsible for the capacity building needs of public officials within the Gauteng provincial government had expressed interest in ensuring that its employees attend the DETPA in future years. Furthermore, a senior official at the Gauteng Department of Education expressed an interest in CLEAR-AA developing a tailored M&E course specifically for the department.

Key Lesson

One of SEP's objectives is to contribute toward building the capacity of M&E practitioners and scholars in order to strengthen evaluation practice across the African continent. The roll-out of the DETPA programme is a feasible platform to attain the objectives. Furthermore, this kind of training can serve as a powerful form of advocacy for institutional reform towards improved M&E systems, especially when training is received by a 'critical mass' of senior staff. DETPA has provided an opportunity and means for honest introspection among participants, encouraging them to self-assess their respective institutional capacity on the basis of what they learn during the course.

CLEAR-AA's contribution to knowledge



In 2017, CLEAR-AA staff took time to contribute to research on various aspects of M&E on the continent. This section will highlight the various outputs and the themes they covered.

The Research Agenda

'We believe that a strong grounding in the local context, and a learning-through-practice approach, will drive indigenisation and innovation in the field of evaluation'

CLEAR-AA's research agenda exploded in 2017, with DHET accrediting the African Evaluation Journal, and CLEAR-AA launching a special edition on ECD. Since then, we have established a consistent ability to deliver publications on the basis of our programmatic work, with the potential to grow our research agenda to answer both questions key to our programmatic effectiveness, but also fundamental research gaps in M&E theory.

The objectives of the Centre's research strategy are to:
Provide a foundation of research to inform our organisation's Theory of Change, most importantly around M&E demand, M&E supply and the contribution of M&E systems to developmental outcomes.
Develop partnerships in both research and policy-making spheres to allow us to expand our research capacity to the level accommodated by our programmatic work.
Integrate research into our programmatic and policy support work in a way that increases synergy between the theoretical demands of the field, and the programmatic work of CLEAR-AA.
Develop a research incentive system to fill gaps in the university system and help staff manage trade-offs of research and work load.

Aligned to our Theory of Change, the research agenda responds to the following areas of enquiry:

Supply: In the area of evaluation supply, our research spoke to two bodies of literature. The first looked at evaluation capacity building approaches, and their effectiveness. This was directly drawing lessons out of our training and looking at improving models of training and curriculum development. The second area dealt with the professionalisation of evaluation.

Demand: In the area of evaluation demand, we examined literature on the drivers of evidence use, which looks at governance, the nature of the state and the legislative sector. In addition, drawing on the conceptual thinking for some of Twende's work, some of which was managed or researched by CLEAR-AA staff or research associates, CLEAR-AA published in areas of management and public administration, looking at performance culture, management performance assessment tools as well as the gender responsiveness of NESs.

Methods: On methods, key areas of enquiry were around indigenisation of evaluation approaches, as well as transformation of the evaluation sector. Additionally, the role of networks, and the effectiveness of various ECD approaches was a key theme that emerged.

Codification: Finally, research around codification was at the origin of CLEAR-AA's ECD model. This came through projects where we worked on supply and demand across the evaluation process within one organisation. This allowed CLEAR-AA to balance how to integrate M&E into the thematic areas of our programmatic work, including local governance, transport, enterprise development, etc. This cluster of our research output has helped evolve the structure of CLEAR-AA's research strategy.

List of 2017 Publications

Bless, B.D., Tsotsotso, K. and Gebremichael, E.K. 2017. Evaluation capacity assessment of the transport sector in South Africa: An innovative approach. *African Evaluation Journal*, 5(1), pp.8-pages.

Crawley, K.D., 2017. The six-sphere framework: A practical tool for assessing monitoring and evaluation systems. *African Evaluation Journal*, 5(1), pp.0-0.

Goldman I, Byamugisha A, Gounou A, Smith L, Ntakumba S, Lubanga T, Sossou D, and Rot-Munstermann, K. 2017. The emergence of Government evaluation systems in Africa: the case of Benin, Uganda and South Africa. *African Evaluation Journal*, (6)1.

Hesborn, W, Onyango R, Kisio E, Njatha, M, Onyango,N.O. 2017. Strengthening capacity for monitoring and evaluation through short course training in Kenya. *African Evaluation Journal*, 5(1).

Mapitsa, C.B. and Korth, M.T., 2017. Designing diagnostics in complexity: Measuring technical and contextual aspects in monitoring and evaluation systems. *African Evaluation Journal*, 5(1), pp.0-0.

Morkel, C. and Ramasobama, M., 2017. Measuring the effect of evaluation capacity building initiatives in Africa: a review. *African Evaluation Journal*, 5(1), pp.0-0.

Ndolvu, L. Smith, L. Narsoo, S. 2017. Searching for the right methodology to unpack urban complexity: A Case Study of the City of Johannesburg, South Africa. *African Evaluation Journal* 5(1), pp. 0-0.

Tirivanhu P. and Jansen van Rensburg, M. 2017. "An Assessment of the Gender Responsiveness of National Monitoring and Evaluation System in South Africa". *Development Southern Africa Journal*, (35) 2.

Tirivanhu P., Olaleye, W. and Bester, A. 2017.Advancing Evidence-Based Practice Implementation for improved Public Sector Performance: Lessons from the implementation of the Management Performance Assessment Tool (MPAT) in South Africa. *Journal of Public Administration,* (52) 4.

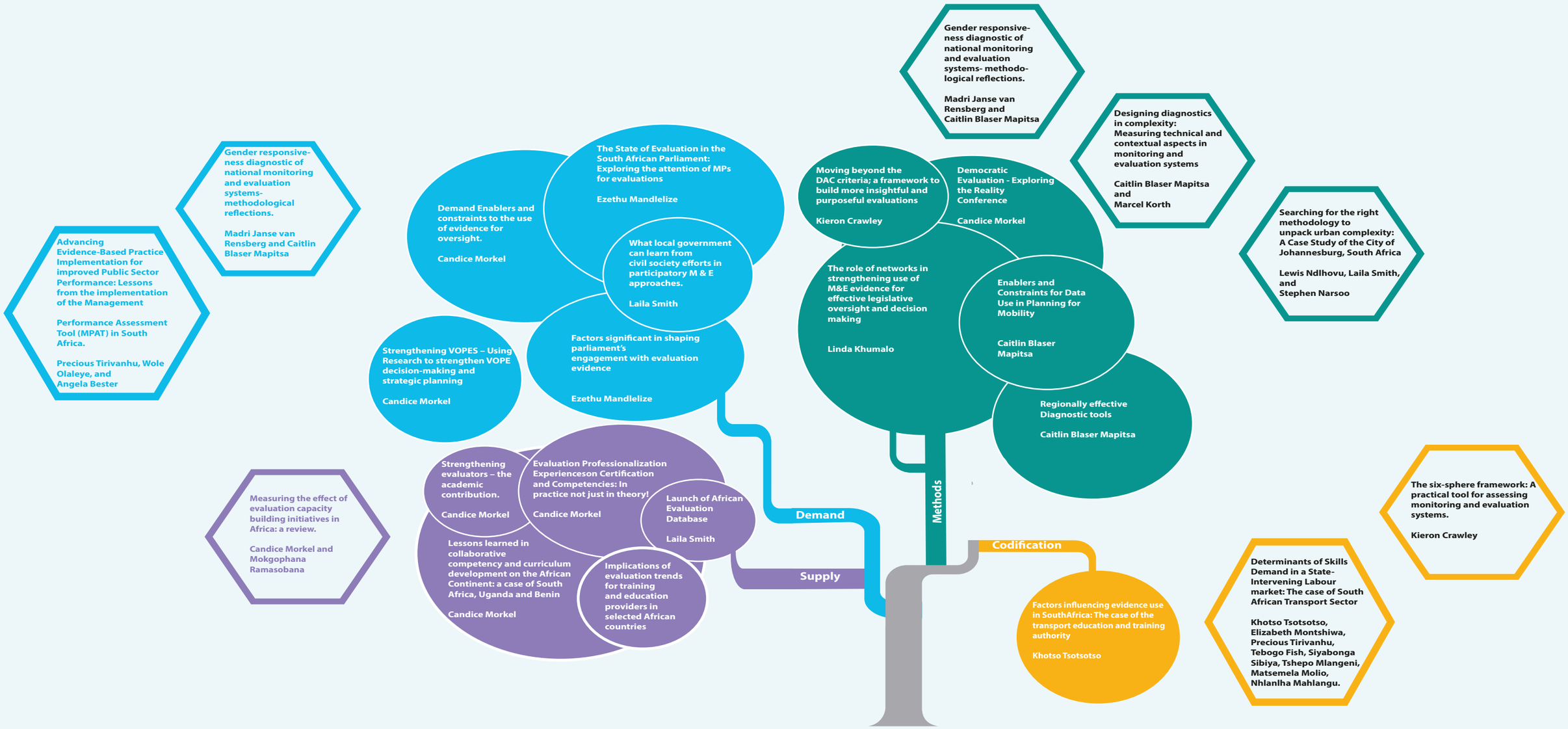
Tsotsotso K, Montshiwa E, Tirivanhu P, Fish T, Sibiya S, Mlangeni T, Molio M, Mahlangu N, 2017. " Determinants of Skills Demand in a State-Intervening Labour market: The case of South African Transport Sector", Higher Education, Skills and Work-Based Learning, (7) 4.

Van Rensburg, M.S.J. and Mapitsa, C.B., 2017. Gender responsiveness diagnostic of national monitoring and evaluation systems-methodological reflections. African Evaluation Journal, 5(1)
Wotela K,. 2017. A proposed monitoring and evaluation curriculum based on a model that institutionalises monitoring and evaluation. *African Evaluation Journal*, 5(1).

List of 2017 Conferences

Crawley, K. Moving beyond the DAC criteria; a framework to build more insightful and purposeful evaluations (October, 2017). Conference presentation, SAMEA, Johannesburg, SA.
Khumalo, L. (October,2017). The role of networks in strengthening use of M&E evidence for effective legislative oversight and decision making Conference presentation, SAMEA, Johannesburg, SA.
Lado S, Blaser-Mapitsa C, and Tirivanhu P. (August, 2018). Agenda 2030 in Motion: challenging the assumptions of what constitutes good evaluative progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). African review of Economics and Finance (AREF), Johannesburg, SA.
Mandlelezi, E. (October 2017). The State of Evaluation in the South African Parliament: Exploring the attention of MPs for evaluations. Conference Presentation, SAMEA, Johannesburg, SA.
Mandlelezi, E. (October, 2017). Factors significant in shaping parliament's engagement with evaluation evidence. Conference Presentation, SAMEA, Johannesburg, SA
Mapitsa, C. (March,2017). Regionally effective Diagnostic tools. Conference presentation, AFREA, Kampala, Uganda.
Mapitsa, C. (October, 2017) Enablers and Constraints for Data Use in Planning for Mobility. Conference presentation, SAMEA, Johannesburg, SA
Morkel, C. (March, 2017). Democratic Evaluation-Exploring the Reality Conference presentation, AFREA, Kampala, Uganda.
Morkel, C. (March, 2017). Enablers and constraints to the use of evidence for oversight. Conference Presentation, AFREA, Kampala, Uganda.
Morkel, C. (March, 2017). Strengthening VOPES –Using Research to strengthen VOPE decision-making and strategic planning. Conference Presentation, AFREA, Kampala, Uganda.
Morkel, C. (November 2017). Evaluation Professionalization Experiences on Certification and Competencies: In practice not just in theory. Conference Presentation, American Evaluation Association, Washington, USA.
Morkel, C. (November, 2017). Lessons learned in collaborative competency and curriculum development on the African Continent: a case of South Africa, Uganda and Benin. American Evaluation Association Conference Presentation, Washington, USA.
Morkel, C. (October, 2017). Implications of evaluation trends for training and education providers in selected African countries. SAMEA, Johannesburg, SA.
Morkel, C. (October, 2017). Strengthening evaluators – the academic contribution. Conference presentation, SAMEA, Johannesburg, SA.
Smith, L. (March, 2017). Launch of African Evaluation Database. Conference Presentation, AFREA, Kampala, Uganda.
Smith, L. (October 2017). Socio Economic Rights Institute. Conference presentation. SAMEA, Johannesburg, SA.
Smith, L. (October, 2017). Learning from civil society on how to reform local government approaches to service delivery. Conference Presentation, European Evaluation Society, Thesolonika, Greece.
Smith, L. (October, 2017). What local government can learn from civil society efforts in participatory M&E Approaches. Conference Presentation, SAMEA, Johannesburg, SA.
Smith, L., Lewis, N, (March, 2017). Searching for the right methodology to unpack urban complexity: A Case study of the City of Johannesburg, South Africa. AFREA Conference Presentation, Kampala, Uganda.
Tsotsotso, K. (October, 2017). Factors influencing evidence use in South Africa: The case of the transport education and training authority. Conference presentation, SAMEA, Johannesburg, SA.

Research Focus Tree



Journal Article

Conference

The Institution and People Behind the Change

Governance

CLEAR-AA's governance is structured at various levels. As CLEAR-AA is part of a broader network of six regional centres, the overall network is managed by the CLEAR Global secretariat, hosted and staffed by the Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) of the World Bank. A CLEAR Global Board is composed of CLEAR centre directors and financial supporters to the multi-donor trust fund, which include multilateral development banks (African Development Bank, Inter-American Development Bank), the Rockefeller Foundation and bilateral donors (Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom). The board provides strategic guidance and oversight to the work of the secretariat, which supports the centres.

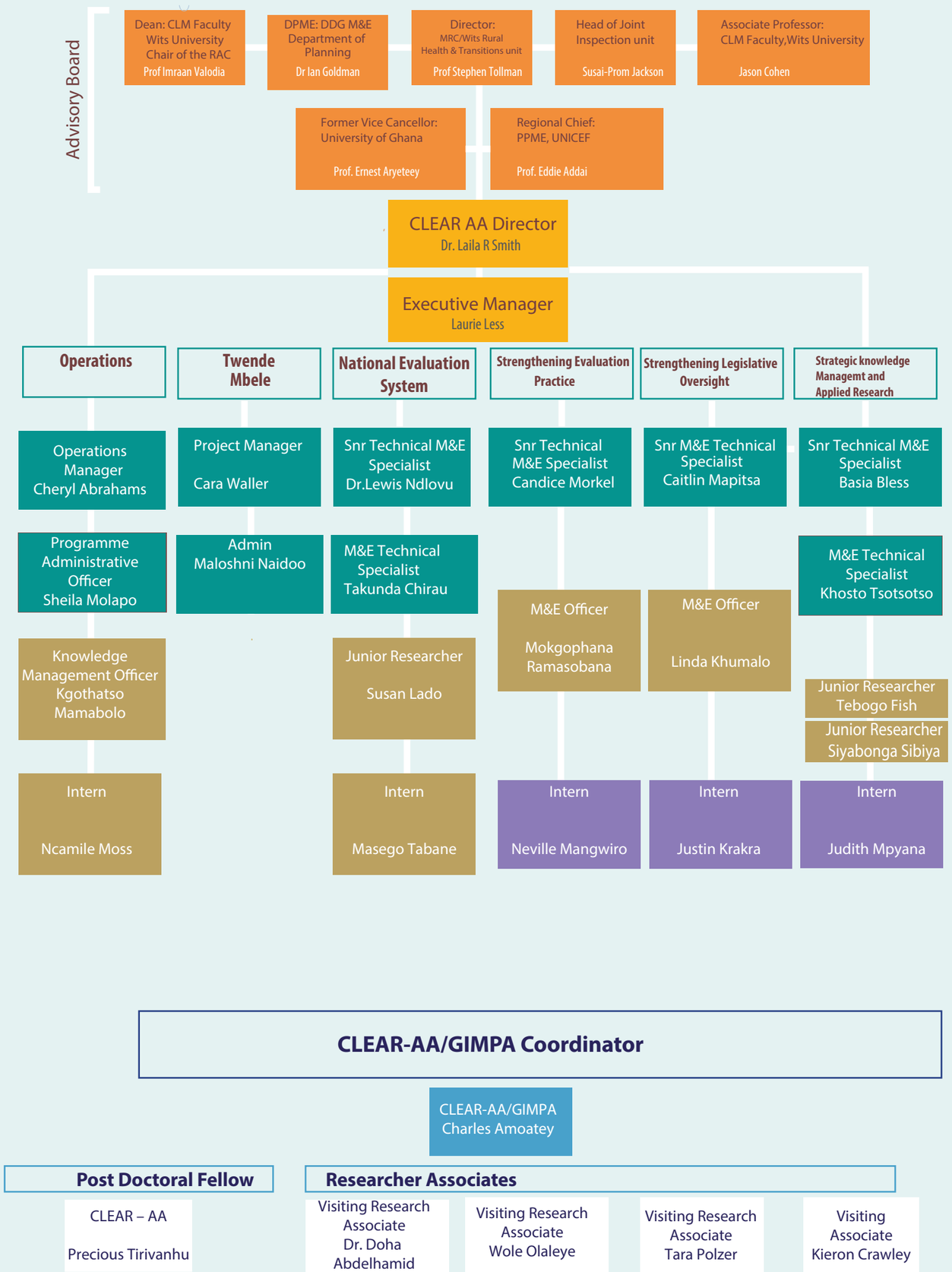
CLEAR-AA has its own regional advisory committee (RAC), which has been operational since May 2015. The RAC provides strategic advice on how to strengthen and expand CLEAR-AA programming beyond South Africa into the African region. The board members are Professor Imraan Valodia, Doctor Ian Goldman, Professor Stephen Tollman, Sukai-Prom Jackson, Doctor Albert Byamugisha, Doctor Jason Cohen and Professor Earnest Aryeteey. These board meetings are bi-annual.

In 2017, CLEAR-AA moved from being hosted by the Wits School of Governance to becoming a centre in its own right within the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management (CLM) at the University of the Witwatersrand. The CLM has created a Management Committee (Mancom) to govern the operational dimension of CLEAR-AA's work and consists of the representatives of two schools/Centres within the faculty (WSG and CALS) as well as the Faculty's Chief Financial Officer and the Dean. The CLM is chaired by Doctor Prudence Magejo from the School of Economic and Business Science (SEBS).



University of the Witwatersrand, the home of CLEAR-AA

Organogram



Partners

In delivering on its mandate, CLEAR-AA recognises that, to attain significant change in policy-making, we have to engage in collaboration arrangements with, and/or working through complementary partners and clients. In selecting its partners and clients, CLEAR-AA has identified stakeholders who fit the following three roles:

Partners who contribute financially to CLEAR AA's the change: These include donors (both within the continent and abroad) who believe in the vision of CLEAR-AA and continue to provide financial support to CLEAR-AA. These largely consist of a Multi-Donor Trust Fund contributors, and more recently, donors who have committed to fund specific programmes of the CLEAR-AA mandate.

Knowledge and Co-delivery partners. In order to reach wider clients and beneficiaries, and accelerate the rate of capacity development, it is the centre's strategy to use local in-country, or regional partner with both common values and the capacity to co-deliver various interventions. This category of partners consists of both co-delivery partners and partners who facilitate knowledge sharing and learning of CLEAR-AA's offerings.

Clients receiving CLEAR-AA interventions. The last category of stakeholders consists of clients who receive and benefit the various interventions of CLEAR-AA. These include government departments (ministries) and institutions, and also private sector institutions who play an influential role in governance and social development in the region.

Partners assisting in the delivering CLEAR-AA's interventions - co-delivery and knowledge sharing platforms

AFREA
APNODE
(Center for Learning and Teaching Development) (CLTD)
DPME
SAMEA
UNICEF ZAMBIA
Wits University
CLEAR-GIMPA

Partners who contribute financially to CLEAR AA's the change

clear Centers for Learning on Evaluation and Results

Sida
SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AGENCY

TWENDE MBELE

Clients receiving CLEAR-AA's interventions - Agents of change

City of Johannesburg
SERI
TETA
ETDP-SETA

CLEAR-AA is part of the CLEAR Global Network

clear Centers for Learning on Evaluation and Results

Financial Stability and Growth

University of Witwatersrand
Centre For Learning on Evaluation and Results Anglophone Africa
Annual Financial Statements
For the year ended 31 December 2017

Statement of Comprehensive Income

	2017	2016
Income	**17 963 134**	**20 633 227**
Grant Income Multi Donor Trust Fund (MTDF) / World Bank	14 368 555	14 263 878
Other Income	3 594 580	6 369 349
Operational expenses	**6 218 563**	**8 061 020**
Audit expense	68 012	-
Catering Costs	328 306	307 973
Conference fees (Int and Local)	194 711	512 460
Consultant fees	1 798 986	2 436 608
Cost Recovery Expense	1 514 862	448 112
Course Expenses	366 588	-
Marketing and Promotions	137 527	143 401
Travel and Accommodation	1 379 957	2 116 343
Other Expenses	429 613	2 096 123
Salaries and Benefits	**9 596 484**	**6 882 535**
Academic Salaries	6 882 946	5 171 778
Support Salaries	2 713 538	1 710 757
Total expenses	**15 815 047**	**14 943 555**
Net Surplus/ (Deficit)	**6 787 164**	**4 639 077**
Current year surplus	2 148 088	5 689 672
Prior year surplus /(Deficit)	4 639 077	-1 050 595

Note:

The Centre's Financial Statements have been prepared on the cash basis of accounting, which is a comprehensive basis of accounting other than generally accepted accounting principles, under the cash basis of accounting, revenue is recognized when paid rather than when earned, and expenses and purchases of assets are recognised when paid rather than when the obligation is incurred. Accordingly, the accompanying financial statements are not intended to present the financial position and statement of activities in confromity with GAAP.

Strenghtening Evaluation Practice

Our Lessons from Evaluation Capacity Building: Provision of Short Courses

One of the ECD services offered by CLEAR-AA is the design and implementation of training programmes to support ECD for individuals as well as organisations. Although open-enrolment courses are appropriate for individuals seeking professional development services, organisations and institutions (both state and non-state) generally require a tailored approach to curriculum development and instructional design. We design customised evaluation capacity building courses for institutions based on a comprehensive assessment and analysis of the needs of the institution. From our assessments we have found that:

1. The capacity development needs of organisations are complex and require a combination of training, technical assistance, research and learning.
2. The training programmes also act as knowledge-building and skills development opportunities, as well as a chance for self-assessment and reflection that reveal the need for comprehensive capacity building interventions by organisation themselves.
3. The need for training often underlies a systemic challenge in evidence production and use, rather than (only) a skills development deficit.
4. The training programmes also highlight the gaps in organisations in M&E evidence production and use and assist to unearth the specific areas (individual, institutional or enabling environment) where capacity needs to be built.
5. A sizeable number of individuals and organisations are also increasingly interested in more robust, academic qualifications in M&E and, in some cases, executive short courses act as an initial entry-point to academic programmes.

A customised training programme on M&E planning and management for a local municipality in South Africa led to the identification of systemic challenges in the configuration of the M&E system within the institution and challenges in the enabling environment. Similarly, the ongoing problem of a training and skills gap in evaluation in a national government ministry in Anglophone Africa revealed, through a diagnostic analysis and assessment as well as entry-level training programme, the need for a more systemic approach to developing the capacity to establish and implement a sustainable, effective national M&E system.

One key development in CLEAR-AA is the location of open-enrolment and short course training programmes within a broader ECD model. The ECD model focuses on addressing evaluation system capacity needs comprehensively and from a systems-perspective. Short course training programmes are therefore viewed as an entry point or mid-career supplement, but not as a primary vehicle for capacity development. The evolution of the partnership model in the SEP Business Line, which now focuses much more decidedly on higher-education institutions, also attests to the growing demand for formalising evaluation capacity building efforts and the desire to link short courses to academic programmes, as well as developing a more structured professional development pathway in M&E for individuals. The move to incorporate credit-bearing courses into the suite of executive short course offerings is an adjunct to this.

National Evaluation Systems

Key Lessons from Building National and Subnational Evaluation Systems

From 2014 to 2016, CLEAR-AA AA and the Group Strategy Planning, Communications and Research (GSPCR unit) within the City of Johannesburg (CoJ) were in discussion about developing a medium to long-term capacity development intervention to support organisational change by establishing a city-wide evaluation system. Inclusive in this was repairing what was deemed at the time, a broken monitoring system. The aim was to develop a medium-term capacity building intervention to develop evaluative thinking within the strategic management layer of the City and in doing so build the foundations of moving towards outcome monitoring while a system to manage evaluations and develop the capacity to use the learning from this to improve programme performance was being put in place.

In 2016, CLEAR-AA began the first phase of this intervention by carrying out a situational analysis of the City's M&E practice. This diagnostic research was used to tailor the curriculum for a two-week training course. The training was delivered in three separate intervals to the top management layer of the City in late 2016.

This experience aligned with DPME's own interests in wanting to become more responsive to rising levels of demand across Metro's for ECD. A collaboration was struck between DPME and CLEAR-AA in 2017 to carry out a diagnostic to identify what existing legislated capacity development functions were in place at central government levels, inclusive of HSRC, Cities Support Programme, SALGA, Cities Network, LGSETA and COGTA. The intent was to then test out a rapid diagnostic tool across four metropolitan areas in order to begin building internal capacity to carry out internal programme/project assessments within realistic time frames as opposed to the average two-year interval for conducting an independent evaluation. The research was carried out and presented at stakeholder workshops with representation from the national agencies mentioned above as well as from the M&E units of three metropolitan areas (Tshwane, eThekwini, and Ekurhuleni). The findings from this revealed that there was indeed limited capacity within these various bodies to provide ECD. DPME had to grapple with the reality that several stakeholders suggested that DPME take up this mandate, despite having limited legitimacy to do so.

In relation to the CoJ work, while there was strong leadership in the unit commissioning this work, the structures were not in place to support the vision to move towards developing evaluative thinking across the senior leadership of the city. At the time of the study, local government elections occurred, the ANC lost its historical hold on the city and the two opposition parties formed a coalition and came to power. This led to a leadership turnover and demise in the political will to pursue the vision originally shared between CLEAR-AA and the CoJ.

This experience is not unrelated to the challenges experienced in the DPME collaboration in trying to get a methodology for rapid evaluation assessments piloted at the metropolitan level. There were serious obstacles in getting the cooperation of metro officials in the study and pilot partially due to the sense that DPME had no mandate to carry out the setting of norms and standards at the local government level. Local authorities in South Africa are subject to different legislation than national and provincial line departments and as such have different responsibilities in how they are meant to carry out their M&E function.

The learning from the ECD work carried out in Johannesburg is about how the culture of an organisation can shape incentive structures that influence how information gets generated and what it is used for in relation to information for reporting and monitoring. At the time of the study, the CoJ was mired in a culture of malicious compliance with little learning emerging from the enormous amount of staff time spent on upward reporting to national governments. Compliance-driven reporting impedes using this same information for learning purposes in order to improve institutional performance. A cultural shift from using data for compliance monitoring to using data to create knowledge to spur evaluative thinking is needed. This is necessary to creating a culture where lessons can be learnt from mistakes in order to improve. Creating the organisational culture for this requires a combination of leadership and systematic embeddedness of evaluation processes that has been challenging for metros in South Africa to put in place. This has been partially due the institutional influences from national in shaping what gets emphasised in reporting.

Strengthening Legislative Oversight

Lessons from Parliamentary ECD

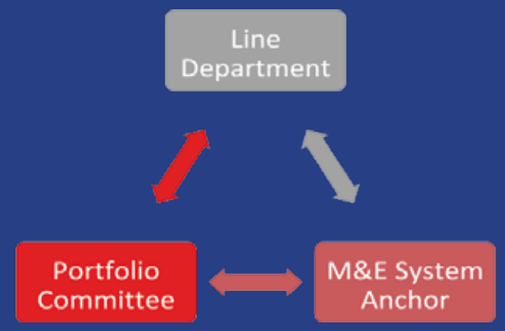
During the year, the work we did for capacity development among parliamentarians – in collaboration with Twende Mbele – included; two training of trainers, in Ghana and Uganda, as well as training for MPs in Ghana, Uganda, Benin and Tanzania. These activities were carried out in partnership with APNODE in each country, and with participation from other champions, such as members of the ECOWAS parliament. In addition, there was a session at the APNODE AGM.

From this work, we learnt the following:

The subregional or regional level is the most appropriate level of engagement for CLEAR-AA. This is for a range of reasons, but mostly because there are already entrenched role players carrying out parliamentary capacity development activities at a national level, and CLEAR-AA is not well placed to enter into this space, because there are already established agendas that shape the knowledge production around each parliament. At the regional or subregional level, there is the potential for learning and sharing to add value, as there are relatively few initiatives happening. Yet, the structures and processes are common enough that there is the possibility of going beyond knowledge exchange and engaging in technical collaboration.

Individual training is important, but not sufficient without broader capacity development scaffolding While CLEAR-AA's delivery of training of trainers and MPs was generally well received and the door is open to roll out more training, this is not a viable stand-alone approach for two reasons. The first is that the start-up costs of delivering a short training course to a new parliament is prohibitively high. This is true even when APNODE members and local coordinators are providing entry points and championing the process, just due to the nature of parliamentary work. However, while individual awareness and skills can be important to facilitate the use of evidence, there are more important institutional and cultural drivers of this. For individual training to be effective, these institutional factors need to be addressed at the same time.

From a content perspective, it became clear that for parliaments both to use M&E evidence effectively, and also for them to play a role in strengthening national M&E systems, a triad of role players need to be considered together. This is illustrated below.



Planning and Budgeting Systems

At the moment, parliaments are struggling to integrate M&E with their current role in the budgeting, planning and oversight cycle. Standing committees on public accounts play a key role in ensuring this integration and are somewhat common across several East African countries. They also play a key role in citizen engagement and transparency. This system is key for making sure that evaluation evidence goes beyond technical tinkering with programmes and is taken on board in national planning and priority setting.

Content of Portfolio Committees

The real content engagement with evaluations from NESs happens most effectively in the relevant portfolio committee. How ever, line departments leading the evaluation, anchors within the M&E system and portfolio committee support staff do not always work together effectively to make sure evidence from the M&E system is responding to oversight needs, and alternatively, that oversight is happening effectively. Capacity development is needed in one specific sector, to see which components of the system can be strengthened.

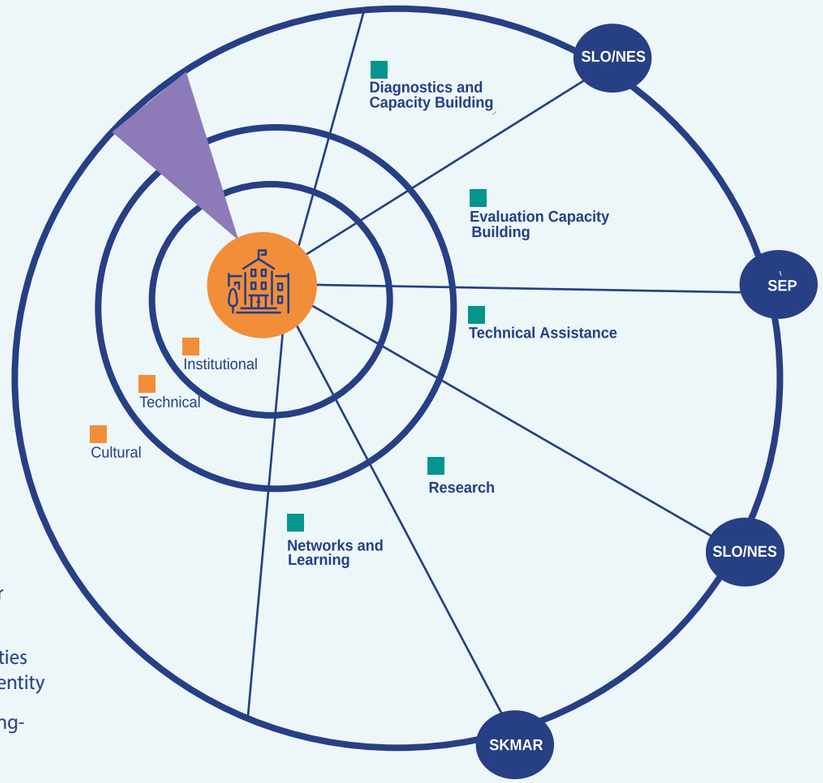
Norms, Standards, Frameworks and Legislation

Finally, a message that came through in terms of parliaments engagement with national M&E systems is that this happens most effectively when it is supported by relevant institutional mechanisms. CLEAR-AA's parliamentary work has underscored this through a shift in focus from M&E for oversight to also addressing how legislation can support evidence use. Multilateral institutions lead the way in terms of norms, standards and frameworks, which is why ECOWAS has been taken as a good example for looking at how the parliament and bureaucracy can interface most effectively around evidence use.

Champions

In the first phase of individual training of parliamentarians across various countries, parliamentary training relied heavily on engagement by champions, and we found this to be a valuable approach to maintain. Parliamentary experience is essential and messages are then shared widely, and there is the potential for institutional change to be driven by MPs with a culture of support. This has forced CLEAR-AA to reposition its approach to move beyond individual training and focus on the portfolio committee level, where there is more scope to bring champions into CLEAR-AA's work with parliamentarians.

The ECD Model: Result of Our Experiences



The CLEAR-AA ECD model was developed as a result of a number of deliberations within the organisation around codifying the approach to ECD. The approach had been implicitly tested with a number of stakeholders over a period of about three to five years, but never documented. The following brief description is a highlight of key elements of the ECD model, which are a result of the lessons shared above:

Systematic Approach to Intervention: As CLEAR-AA's work has evolved, we increasingly emphasise the systemic nature of M&E. This means that a single initiative is unlikely to strengthen all components of a system and that an integrated approach that has multiple entry points and engages with several components of the system is more likely to be effective. The ECD model reflects how we see the activities necessary to contribute to technical, institutional and cultural change within the countries and organisations in which we work.

Integration vs. Silo Activities: Experience has shown that institutions may call on CLEAR-AA to provide a specific service in line with their own priorities, interests and availability of resources. Through one activity, such as training, additional needs are often uncovered. Training can uncover a need for strengthening systems through technical assistance, or for greater diagnostic work to develop relevant curriculum items. This integration of approaches allows us to collaboratively design a tailor-made learning-by-doing approach that lets us both ensure the effectiveness of our interventions by collaborative application and also lets us contribute to knowledge on how change happens. The ECD model allows us to draw on specific activities but also to keep in mind a wider range of interventions that could expand beyond strengthening one specific component of an M&E system, to strengthening the system as a whole.

Blending Theory and Practice: Central to this approach is an integration of learning across all activities. One of the areas of leadership CLEAR-AA has demonstrated is ensuring our interventions are solidly grounded in effective theory drawing from the critical academic disciplines that inform M&E systems in an African context. At the same time, we are contributing to building bodies of knowledge on the basis of our experience in building capacity, understanding the nature of institutions in the region and being part of driving the systems of change.



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