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Monitoring and Evaluation Systems in Five African Countries

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DIAGNOSTIC REPORT

Current status of the National Evaluation System in Kenya

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Acronyms

AFIDEP	African Institute for Development Policy
AfREA	African Evaluation Association
APNODE	African Parliamentary Network on Development Evaluation
APR	Annual Progress Report
CIDP	County Integrated Development Plan
CIMES	County Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System
CLEAR-AA	Centre for Learning on Evaluation and Results Anglophone Africa
CPST	Centre for Parliamentary Studies and Training
CSO	Civil society organisation
E-CIMES	Electronic County Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System
E-NIMES	Electronic National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System
E-ProMIS	Electronic Project Monitoring Information System
ERSWEC	Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation
ESK	Evaluation Society of Kenya
GWM&ES	Government-wide monitoring and evaluation system
HEI	Higher education institution
IMF	International Monetary Fund
KIPM	Kenya Institute of Project Management
KIPPRA	Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MED	Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate
MP	Member of Parliament
MTP	Medium-Term Plan
NDP	National Development Plan
NES	National Evaluation System
NIMES	National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System
NSC	National Steering Committee

PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RRI	Rapid Results Initiative
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
TAG	Technical Advisory Group
TOC	Technical Oversight Committee
TWG	Technical Working Group
UNEG	UN Evaluation Group
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VOPE	Volunteer organisation for professional evaluation

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Early attempts at a government-wide monitoring and evaluation system (GWMES) in Kenya are associated with the interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) introduced by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank in 2000. Prior to this, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) was conducted in an ad hoc and uncoordinated manner, with no system in place. After the general election of 2002, the Kenyan government transformed the PRSP, aligning it to its Economic Manifesto to become the Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation (ERSWEC). Chapter seven of this document recommended the government to undertake M&E of policies, programmes, and projects (see table 1 below), and the National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System (NIMES) was therefore created to play this role. Subsequently, the Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate (MED) was established within the National Treasury to coordinate M&E in the public sector (Machuka, 2012).

The promulgation of the revised Constitution of Kenya in 2010 ushered in a new governance structure called "developmental devolved government", which is comprised of two levels of government: the national government; and 47 county governments that are "distinct but inter-dependent and conduct their mutual relations through consultation and cooperation". These mechanisms necessitated the development of M&E systems for county governments (GoK, 2016; CIMES, 2016). In addition, the revised constitution provides for the separation of powers at two levels. Firstly, through devolution, which provides for the separation between the national government and the county governments in an effort to bring power and public services closer to the people. The second level consists of the separation of powers between the legislature, executive and the judiciary arms of national government.

After the 2017 elections, the President came up with the "Big Four Development Agenda" towards Kenya being a middle-income economy. This agenda is largely informed by the broader developmental blueprint, Vision 2030, and the legacy projects, or priority areas, which the President has committed to during his term, notably manufacturing, universal health care, affordable housing, and food security. Additionally, the country's drive towards measuring the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is evidence of it being results-driven.

Table 1: Evolution of the M&E system in Kenya

PERIOD	MAJOR DRIVER	SCOPE OF M&E
1980-2000	Various projects and programmes e.g. District Focus for Rural Development (1983)	• Ad hoc M&E
2000-2002	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper	• Initial attempt at GWM&ES associated with IMF/World Bank (although the programme did not take off)

2003-2008	Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation	• The first major home-grown milestone in GWM&ES • Establishment of the NIMES • Creation of lead agency: MED in the Ministry of Planning and National Development
2008-2010	Kenya Vision 2030	• Assignment of tracking Vision 2030 to the NIMES and MED
2010-Present	Kenya's New Constitution	• Constitutional demand for capable and accountable public institutions • Kenya's national M&E draft policy is awaiting approval by the cabinet

Source: Machuka, 2012

1.2 Purpose

Against this background, this diagnostic study sought to unpack the current status of a national evaluation system (NES) in Kenya, using the Centre for Learning on Evaluation and Results Anglophone Africa (CLEAR-AA) 10 Functions of a National Evaluation System as a conceptual framework, in order to determine the most appropriate interventions for strengthening national evaluations in the country.

1.3 10 Functions of a National Evaluation System

In addition to defining what an evaluation system is, CLEAR-AA developed a framework that defines the functions of an evaluation system which illustrate why evaluation systems are so important for countries or sectors. The *10 Functions of a National Evaluation System* is a holistic framework which was used in the diagnostic process to assess and identify areas of strengths or readiness and entry points for a NES in Kenya. While it is significant for common understanding, consensus, coherence, and effective coordination of support and capacity development (Mapitsa 2018), it is important to note that the framework is not an ideal type, but rather a tool that can be used to better grasp the complexity of evaluation systems. Understanding the different functions within a NES, and how they relate to each other, is crucial for both defining a range of sub-systems and providing a more nuanced analysis of the capacity of an evaluation system and the ways different stakeholders interact within it. CLEAR-AA defines these functions as:

1. ***Defining results and planning:*** Defining results for a programme is one of the most critical functions of an evaluation system. This is reflected in recent changes in terminology in the M&E sector, through which M&E functions are now articulated as planning, monitoring, evaluation, and learning. Evaluation systems, if empowered to play a role in governance, are key to defining programmatic results, bringing evidence to planning processes, and setting programmatic direction.

2. ***Performance monitoring*****:** Evaluations do more than just monitor performance; in fact, in Africa in particular, evaluation systems are often explicitly designed to assess whether a

programme has performed effectively or not, and why. Given the tremendous investment in political will, resourcing, and institutional strength, although focusing on assessing performance may constitute a disproportionate part of a NES and contribute relatively little in addition to monitoring systems, it does merit its own function.

3. ***Institutional arrangements:*** Taking a systems approach to a NES requires a focus on the linkages between the different components of the system, and while institutional arrangements may vary across evaluation systems, there is almost always a core custodian of these arrangements. This function requires dedicated attention and can include both normative and practiced roles of stakeholders, as well as policies, legislation, and standards.

4. ***Evidence production and research*****:** The process of undertaking an evaluation simultaneously uses and generates evidence; however, as with conducting research, evaluations face many boundaries, constraints, and contextual considerations. Nevertheless, evidence-production is a key function of a NES, and therefore these challenges require specific consideration. For the purposes of this diagnostic study, CLEAR-AA is particularly interested in the research and evidence-production associated with monitoring systems and evaluations and how these findings translate into decision-making.

5. ***Evaluation practice*****:** As an emergent profession with lively debate around the competencies necessary for evaluators, the systematisation of evaluation is essential for the evolution of evaluation practice, and a process of co-definition is currently underway among those institutionalising evaluation systems and those practicing evaluation in the region. This is evident in the emergence of collectively developed competency frameworks, quality assurance frameworks, and so forth.

6. ***Disseminating evaluation results*****:** Evaluation systems play an important role in disseminating evaluation results. The mechanisms and extent through which they do this varies, but dissemination, to users and a wide range of additional stakeholders, is one of the main factors that makes a NES effective.

7. ***Using evaluation findings*****:** A NES must not just disseminate evaluation results to be effective; it must also use these findings for, among others, planning systems and programme re-design, advocacy, accountability, and bolstering other evaluation functions.

8. ***Capacity-building*****:** Given both the variation in capacity around evaluation practice and the emergent systematisation of evaluation, capacity-building is an inherent component of evaluation systems. This includes building capacity for evaluation practice in general, as well as within each component of a NES to ensure it functions as a whole.

9. ***Shifting norms*****:** Through the systematising of evaluations and the use of their results, evaluation systems can be a powerful tool for shifting norms and practices around the way decision-makers engage with evaluation processes.

10. ***Shaping axiologies*:** Evaluation systems are designed around value systems in the way they define and measure results. Through a systemic practice of evaluation, particularly through the local ownership of evaluation systems in Africa, the process through which values are reinforced is changing.

1.4 Defining concepts

Monitoring and evaluation are concepts that seem inseparable; party because the use of M&E as a term has come to have its own meaning, but also because of the symbiotic relationship between the two. In this report, there are instances were monitoring and evaluation will appear as standalone and distinct activities, and others where the catch-all M&E term will be used. This is because while most countries talk of M&E, not evaluations, and have established M&E systems, CLEAR-AA aims to see more development institutions and governments undertake and use evaluations, and therefore indicators that specifically look at evaluation are required.

The UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) defines ***evaluation*** as an assessment, conducted as systematically and impartially as possible, of an activity, project, programme, strategy, policy, topic, theme, sector, operational area, or institutional performance. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) adds that evaluation uses social research methods and practices to measure what changes the programme, projects, and policies have contributed to, and to obtain a mature understanding of how it happened. This is differentiated from ***monitoring***, which is routine collection of programme/project implementation and performance data, mostly to track progress. Monitoring data provides regular feedback to implementers, programme/project sponsors, and other relevant stakeholders, but does not always answer the questions why and how.

While the precise definition of an ***M&E system*** varies between different organisations and guidelines, in this report, an M&E system will be used to refer to indicators, tools, and processes used to measure if an intervention (programme/policy/project) has been implemented according to the plan (monitoring) and is having the desired result (evaluation). ***M&E*** itself will refer to processes and systems generating programme/project performance information, and not systematic analysis/assessment of achievement of outcomes and impacts, which is what evaluations provide.

An ***evaluation system*** or ***NES*** will be used to refer to a system that exclusively defines the undertaking/commissioning and use of evaluations. This report uses a combination of the Furubo and Sandahl (2008) and Lazzaro definitions of evaluation systems, which state that an evaluation system exists when "evaluation is a regular part of the life cycle of public policies and programmes, it is conducted in a methodologically rigorous and systematic manner in which its results are used by political decision-makers and managers, and those results are also made available to the public." Lazzaro further points out that intertwined in such systems are values, practices, and institutions associated with a particular political and administrative system (Lazaro 2015:16). In other words, evaluation systems are not separate from the administrative systems that host them, whether in government, civil society organisations (CSOs), or international development agencies. This diagnostic study process therefore assessed not only the existence of technical components of a country's M&E system, but also the functioning of other public service management systems and evidence production

and use by non-state actors, such as development partners and volunteer organisations for professional evaluation (VOPEs).

Although this report focuses on country level M&E and evaluation systems, it is important to note that these can also be sectoral, such as a Health M&E system, Education M&E system, etc. These different systems are also not necessarily mutually exclusive; different systems can co-exist within a country/organisation, for example, the sector or ministry system can be a subset of a national system that is coordinated at the centre of government but might have parts that are not reflected in the national system. In this report, in cases where a ministry is reported to have a robust or well established system, explicit mention is made of a sector evaluation or M&E system. However, the diagnostic process did not attempt to map all systems and sub-systems in Kenya, as the focus was on its NES.

1.5 Approach

This diagnostic study consisted of the following seven steps:

Step 1: The starting point was to develop a ***background note*** based on a literature review of the socio-political and economic context of Kenya. The context included details of key political and/or developmental transitions that have shaped the country's development path, as outlined by its national development plans (NDPs), as well as the significant milestones achieved and challenges faced by the country.

Step 2: Next, a ***stakeholder mapping*** exercise was conducted to identify the diverse stakeholders who fill different functions within the Kenyan national evaluation ecosystem and plot their roles and relationships in order to define points of collaboration and competition, as well as niche areas. This exercise also pointed out some of the power dynamics and key points of influence within the Kenyan NES.

Step 3: Once the key organisations and individuals had been determined from the mapping exercise, ***interviews*** were carried out with them, either in person, telephonically, or online.

Step 4: Data gathered from the interviews was transcribed and analysed using various data analysis techniques (such as content, narrative, discourse analysis, and framework analysis) and used to draw up a ***draft diagnostic report***.

Step 5: The draft then went through a ***peer review*** process, which included cross-checking of factual information and critical review of findings in line with the diagnostic guidelines, after which it was revised accordingly.

Step 6: The revised report then underwent an ***external review*** by in-country supporters comprising of key experts and role-players who were in strong positions to critically review the document from a context-specific perspective.

Step 7: Finally, the report went through a process of stakeholder validation at a ***validation and ecosystem mapping workshop*** which included senior-level staff of government departments or ministries, experts in the field, and other key stakeholders, such as CSOs, VOPEs, and academics. Participants of the workshop gauged whether the overarching conclusions and recommendations adequately examined the functions of a NES and validated whether the recommendations were feasible for the prevailing national contexts.

Limitations

It is important to note that the data presented is not exhaustive and does not necessarily represent the entire system in Kenya. It is hoped that these preliminary findings do, however, encourage further discussions to better understand the NES and the ecosystem around this throughout the country.

2 Overview of M&E in Kenya

2.1 Institutional arrangements

Although an M&E policy was developed in 2012, it is still awaiting approval from the cabinet, despite being approved by the treasury for budgetary purposes. The policy is expected to be approved by cabinet this year, however, the MED has identified the need to sensitise the new ministers in the new cabinet, Members of Parliament (MPs), and CSOs on the policy prior to its approval. Once approved, the policy should strengthen efficiency in the utilisation of resources and timely realisation of results, thereby enhancing development in the country.

Institutional reporting structures that ensure the implementation of the NIMES as well as the provision of technical oversight of the process are already in place, and include the National Steering Committee (NSC), Technical Oversight Committee (TOC), and Technical Advisory Groups (TAGs). These structures also demonstrate attempts at inclusivity in the NES of non-government/state actors at both national and county levels. The NSC's core role is to ensure the provision of resources, management, and best practice for M&E across government, civil society, private sector, and development partners. The TOC, on the other hand, supports approval of work plans and progress towards the implementation of the NIMES and includes senior officials from MED, selected line ministries, and chairs and secretaries of TAGs. TAGs further provide useful strategic guidance, such as in capacity development and policy coordination, as well as expertise in M&E projects. While ministries have M&E units responsible for producing reports and sharing with MED as and the TAGs, the counties are more independent in their reporting. This, however, presents a challenge in tracking programme implementation at that level. Moreover, limitations have been noted with respect to managing the implementation of the County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP), with counties remaining behind in maintaining standards of reporting, thus relying on sector assistance. There have therefore been attempts to link the County Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System (CIMES) with the NIMES for a more cohesive approach, which the policy hopes to enforce.

Kenya's Vision 2030, which was introduced in 2008, is the overarching framework that informs the overall planning at both national and county level and informs the implementation of the NIMES and CIMES. Implementation of the Vision itself is tracked according to the country's Medium-Term Plans (MTPs), while the CIDP outlines the county development goals, which in turn feeds into the Annual

Progress Reports (APRs) used to inform the MTPs. In addition, the constitution requires county governments to plan and budget for the delivery of goods and services under their mandate. Planning at the county level is informed by the CIDPs, County Sectoral Plans, County Performance Management Plans, County Spatial Plans, and the cities and urban area plans. However, as the planning is decentralised, it presents challenges in the coordination and harmonisation of plans from national to county level. For instance, there is a noted disconnect between priority setting and planning processes within government which threatens the successful implementation of the MTPs (CIMES, 2016). Moreover, despite the draft M&E policy advocating for the participation of civil society in M&E activities, there has been limited engagement of CSOs in the country to date. In fact, many are not even aware of the existence of the draft policy, which demonstrates a lack of consultation with them in its formulation.

2.2 Roles and responsibilities

National planning in Kenya is now coordinated under the National Treasury and Planning Ministry, but prior to the 2017 elections was part of the Ministry of Devolution and Planning. The core role of the ministry is to strengthen the linkages between planning, budgeting, and policy formulation, while its Central Planning Unit specifically coordinates the ministry's economic planning efforts.

The MED coordinates all government's M&E activities primarily through its coordination of the NIMES and ensuring the production of timely and relevant information from APRs on the MTP of Vision 2030 and Annual Public Expenditure Review. Although the visibility and influence of the directorate may currently be limited by it not being an independent entity/ministry, progress is being made in addressing this, and it is anticipated that the finalisation and approval of the draft M&E policy will see the directorate becoming an independent entity.

2.3 Performance monitoring

The draft M&E policy sets the tone for the performance monitoring of programmes across national government and the counties, laying out the requirements for reporting, which includes standards and reporting timelines. However, the MED's inability to keep track of the reporting quality from the counties and non-standardised ways of reporting is a challenge. Moreover, some counties do not capture their data on the Electronic County Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System (E-CIMES), making it difficult to keep track of programme implementation. Nevertheless, the creation of electronic systems of reporting through both the E-CIMES and Electronic National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System (E-NIMES) is a positive step forward. These systems are designed to facilitate real-time information sharing on project implementation and the performance of sectors, thereby contributing to the efficiency and transparency of reporting to ensure that what is being reported reflects what is happening on the ground. To ensure quality assurance of these reporting processes, the data goes through approval from M&E committees at the county and national level who verify the accuracy of the information which is uploaded. This system is also expected to contribute to public participation as well as government accountability through allowing government departments and the broader public to openly access programme information and provide comments. Public participation is further reinforced through legislative frameworks, such as the Constitution of Kenya and the Public Finance Management Act.

In addition to the E-NIMES and E-CIMES, the Rapid Results Initiative (RRI) is widely used in Kenya to track the implementation of programmes through smaller, achievable targets within a 100-day period. This helps to ensure there is consistency in the tracking and that tangible results can be seen within a short period. Although the RRI originated from a World Bank-funded project in 2003, it has since taken centre stage as line ministries and counties have been trained on its application. Interestingly, the private sector is actively involved in its rollout into the counties. However, the RRI's focus on output level results has been perceived as a shortfall, as it is seen as a system that "fast tracks" results. Even so, the RRI is still a valuable approach for monitoring programme performance and ensures constant tracking of programmes. In addition, information on the progress of projects that are monitored/tracked through the RRI are integrated into the NIMES and captured on E-NIMES. RRI work plans are inclusive of these reporting requirements, which enforces the monitoring of project performance as well as the extent to which project objectives have been met.

There are also project M&E systems at both the central and county levels which are supported by the Electronic Project Monitoring Information System (E-ProMIS), a database intended to keep track of all the projects in the country. The system allows for the capture of information on projects implemented by ministries, state corporations, and counties, and monitors the implementation of these projects, thereby encouraging efficiency, accountability and transparency.

While the NIMES and CIMES are meant to monitor the performance of programmes and projects at national and county level respectively, the NIMES continues to face challenges which have affected its ability to monitor programme performance adequately, including inadequate resources and capacities for performance tracking, weak M&E culture, weak linkages with other reform programmes, lack of timely and reliable data, and lack of local training institutions (Andersson et al, 2014). Furthermore, although there is a drive to demonstrate progress towards achieving results, it has been reported that initiatives aimed at monitoring performance are perceived as 'policing', and some counties therefore abstain from uploading progress for fear of exposing non-performance. Slow or non-reporting thus remains a significant challenge, but the MED is trying to shift monitoring from being seen as a policing tool towards the increasing willingness to learn both at national and county level through the inclusivity of incentive structures into the reporting system.

In terms of citizen-based monitoring initiatives, although public participation is a key highlight in the constitution of Kenya, translating these processes involving citizenry into practice has taken time. Attempts to address this have included encouraging public participation forums to contribute to county development guidelines as well as ongoing peer-peer learning to build championship models within the counties.

3 Country evaluation system

3.1 Level of formalisation

It is anticipated that once the draft M&E policy is approved, it will assist with institutionalising and regulating reporting. However, despite there being no formal arrangement to support the NES as yet, there is an improvement in the M&E culture as demonstrated by the desire within public sector for continuous learning and progress towards implementing national priorities, as well as the current

evaluation practice, albeit limited to external consultants, and the establishment of the CIMES and NIMES. Furthermore, the draft policy stipulates a minimum allocation of 1% of the development budget to evaluations (the exact figures are still to be confirmed), which is a positive step towards funding and conducting more evaluations.

3.2 Capacity of government to undertake evaluations

The MED is responsible for the commissioning of evaluations in Kenya, although most are still largely commissioned and funded by donors. To date, a lack of resources – both financial and human – has been cited as constraining the number of evaluations conducted, however, the 1% allocated from the development budget to evaluations, as mentioned above, could play a role in addressing these limitations. There also appears to be a reliance on international experts/consultants to inform the institutionalising of evaluative systems more broadly, as they are perceived as being more knowledgeable in M&E than local practitioners. This is exemplified by the involvement of other players in the drafting of the M&E policy, which primarily included internationally-sourced professionals from multilateral organisations. For example, while an interest has been expressed in working with local consulting firms to conduct evaluations, their lack of evaluation capacity was perceived as hindering this. As a result, most evaluations tend to be conducted by external consultants and there is little upskilling of local M&E practitioners. Consequently, there are a limited number of local M&E technical experts and the M&E officers who are scattered within ministries are mainly conducting monitoring (RRI), rather than undertaking evaluations of programmes, policies and projects.

3.3 Approach to evaluations

While the importance of contextually-relevant evaluation approaches is recognised in the country, there are concerns with the 'Made in Africa' approach not being perceived as economically viable by evaluators. This is due to global methodologies still taking primacy and having more recognition within the evaluation community. It is evident that a shift towards more indigenised evaluation practice will take some time. Furthermore, although there are some initiatives promoting M&E practice in ministries, the focus is mainly on monitoring. Moreover, the absence of an adopted policy in institutionalising evaluations impedes on undertaking evaluations in a systematised manner across all the government ministries.

3.4 Use of evaluations

The oversight parliamentary caucus drives evidence use by MPs, as does the African Parliamentary Network on Development Evaluation (APNODE), which has been instrumental in shaping the agenda on evidence use through providing platforms for peer learning and sharing. However, the draft policy does not have a clear stated process of how evaluation findings will be used, and a disconnect between evidence that is produced by the ministries and the information that MPs need and can have access to has been noted as limiting uptake of evidence and use in informing policy. In addition, it is often not produced or communicated in time, and the quality and/or relevance is sometimes questionable. There is therefore a need for improved collaboration between ministries and portfolio committees to improve the production and uptake of evidence for policy-making.

3.5 Dissemination of evaluation results

The draft M&E policy emphasises dissemination of both monitoring and evaluation reports. However, it was reported that there are often delays in the preparation, submission, and dissemination of reports by line ministries and at county level. Furthermore, a challenge remains with the ability to package complex information in a non-complex manner which makes it understandable to a variety of audiences.

The establishment of the National and County Stakeholders' fora is a step forward in ensuring validation and dissemination of key evaluation reports, while the Evaluation Society of Kenya (ESK), in partnership with the African Evaluation Association (AfREA) and other VOPES, also facilitates dissemination of evaluation results through, for instance, webinars and conferences. In addition, the ESK collaborates with the MED in its dissemination efforts. Kenya Evaluation Week, which takes place annually, is another important platform for sharing and disseminating evaluation learnings and findings among a diverse range of stakeholders, from parliamentarians and government and county representatives, to evaluation practitioners and CSOs. In addition, the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) holds primary responsibility for the dissemination of evaluation results, and has a library that stores most of its publications. The public can access the institution in Nairobi during working hours, as well as some offices in the counties.

Inviting media to Evaluation Week has been identified as a possible strategy for advocating for M&E, as well as disseminating evidence, however, to date, engaging the media in reporting on developmental issues, such as M&E, has not been successful. This is partly because they do not see this as being directly relevant to their reporting interests, and partly because they do not always interpret findings correctly. There is therefore a need to build media capacity for M&E reporting. The MED has also begun exploring the use of social media in the dissemination of evaluation findings. The MED has also identified higher education institutions (HEIs) as a vehicle for evidence dissemination, particularly as a substantial amount of research is produced by universities.

4 Capacity-building for evaluations

4.1 Professionalisation of evaluation

The ESK has been in existence since 2008 and boasts 300 active, paying members and around 600 non-paying members comprised of individual and corporate evaluation practitioners from across the broad spectrum of stakeholders and sectors. ESK members form part of the local skills base for conducting evaluations in the country, although these opportunities remain very limited. The ESK works closely with the MED and they are currently jointly coordinating a national stakeholder's network on the promotion of the EvalPartners EvalSDGs Network's EvalVision (2016-2020). Special focus is towards more state and non-state actor participation around the NIMES and CIMES. A multi-stakeholder Technical Working Group (TWG) is leading the efforts. Under the EvalSDGs EvalVision, the ESK is currently advocating for and spearheading the process of the professionalisation of M&E, in collaboration with MED and universities. This includes mobilising for a standard curriculum in M&E. Moreover, the MED has been working closely with the Kenya School of Government to develop a M&E curriculum and short courses, as well as jointly supporting the professionalisation of M&E. It is

expected that this will also spur the momentum for a consultative process of determining the competencies necessary for professional evaluators.

The drive towards professionalising M&E as well availability of M&E courses and degrees at various institutions, even at postgraduate level, is positively shifting the recognition of M&E trained personnel in the country. Even so, although there are local trained personnel in M&E, there remains a need to move towards granting local evaluators opportunities to conduct evaluations and grow their skills.

4.2 Provision of training and other capacity-building initiatives

M&E capacity has been expressed as a major challenge given the shortage of M&E trained personnel and inadequate M&E structures, skills, and capacity to carry out effective M&E in the country. Capacity-building of M&E personnel at both national and county levels is, however, provided for in the draft M&E policy. The Centre for Parliamentary Studies and Training (CPST) and African Institute for Development Policy (AFIDEP) are significant institutions that continue to contribute towards the capacity-building of parliamentarians both at national and county level in accessing and using M&E evidence. CPST is an institution owned by parliament which was set up to facilitate training of MPs. It also provides knowledge/research products to MPs. Additionally, the evidence cafes that AFIDEP has with MPs, including technical staff from portfolio committees, are a useful initiative for peer learning around evidence use. The MED also currently provides training on, for instance, providing guidelines for setting up M&E systems, as well as provision of support to counties in developing their own M&E policies. The MED's partnership with CLEAR-AA and Twende Mbele, a partnership of countries that collaborate on developing and implementing M&E systems, facilitates training activities at Evaluation Weeks as well, which has been beneficial to building evaluative capacity. Nevertheless, M&E staff tend to be trained on the job and due to inadequate financial resources, training opportunities on M&E remain limited.

In terms of HEIs, seven Kenyan universities provide M&E qualifications, namely the Kenya Institute of Monitoring and Evaluation Studies, Kenyatta University, Kenya Institute of Professionals, African Nazarene University, Amref Africa, Strathmore University, and Kenya Institute of Project Management (KIPM). M&E is offered as part of degree modules of different qualifications as well. Some institutions also offer certificates and diplomas in M&E. It has been noted though that the curriculum offered in some HEIs does not prepare graduates adequately for evaluation practice.

4.3 Evidence production and research

The KNBS is the principal agency responsible for collecting, analysing, and disseminating statistical data in the country. Concerns have been noted, however, with regard to outdated demographics and other statistics being used to inform budget allocations and planning, even though KNBS received $50million from the World Bank in 2015 to strengthen its capacity to generate better and more accessible data. It appears that this reliance on old data is in fact a general problem, and not exclusive to the KNBS. To overcome the challenge of research taking too long to be produced and therefore having limited influence on policy and decision-making, there is a need to develop policy briefs and other short pieces of research as tools for disseminating evidence given that they are quick to produce compared to scientific research.

Notwithstanding these difficulties, it is evident that skills for evidence production do exist in the country, particularly within government research institutions, such as the Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA), CSOs, HEIs, and private consultancies. KIPPRA produces evidence on policy issues which is used to advise and support government with producing memorandums for parliament, as well as policy, research, and position papers on subject matters relevant to national priorities. AFIDEP, on the other hand, advocates for the availability of more resources to ensure increased production of knowledge from leaders as well as ensuring the accessibility of evidence. This involves training researchers on how to package information in a way that makes it accessible. Moreover, AFIDEP works with parliamentarians to capacitate and sensitise them on finding and synthesising evidence in ways that are useful. Once the E-NIMES is fully functional, it will also help government to generate real-time, accessible evidence on programmes implementation which can then be used for decision-making.

Of note, however, is that despite having local institutions producing evidence, there is a general view that external consultants produce more reliable evidence. This is likely to influence the perceived credibility of the evidence that is produced locally.

5 Conclusion

Overall, there appears to be a positive move towards an M&E culture in Kenya. The last decade has seen a marked increase in the demand for results in support of the national agenda, exemplified by the MED receiving more requests for provision of M&E support by line ministries. Citizens have also become more conscious over time about how resources are spent and the need for results. However, it is now crucial that the draft M&E policy is approved by cabinet so that M&E can truly be institutionalised.