https://dspace.org/

CLEAR-AA 2023 Annual Report

CLEAR-AA

2024-11-01
CLEAR-AA
https://hdl.handle.net/10539/42913

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

clear
Centers for Learning on Evaluation and Results
ANGLOPHONE AFRICA



ANNUAL REPORT

2023



Contents

4 Foreword by the Dean

6 Director's Note

8 Key Moments

10 2023 Highlights

11 Programmatic Work

11 **Strengthening National (Monitoring and) Evaluation Systems**
12 **2023 Achievements**
13 **Plans for 2024**
14 **Capacity Strengthening**
15 **2023 Achievements**
16 **Plans for 2024**
18 **Research, Learning and Knowledge Sharing**
19 **2023 Achievements**
21 **Knowledge Sharing Events**
23 **Plans for 2024**

24 Impact Through Partnership

26 List of Publications

27 Financials

Foreword by the Dean

Prof. Jason Cohen ww
Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management
University of the Witwatersrand

CLEAR-AA continues to play an important role in the Monitoring and Evaluation field on the African continent, where its efforts at building and strengthening national monitoring and evaluation systems are widely recognised.



The importance of evidence-informed decision-making has become increasingly important in a world where volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity have made it untenable to rely on anecdotal knowledge, uniformed opinions or un-tested information to guide both the public and private sector in strategic decisions. Monitoring and Evaluation systems, as tools to enable accountability, manage performance and results, provide evidence of the achievement of wider impacts, and provide critical information for future planning, have been recognised as critical components of good governance and effective public sector management.

CLEAR-AA continues to play an important role in the Monitoring and Evaluation field on the African continent, where its efforts at building and strengthening national monitoring and evaluation systems are widely recognised in the sector. Multi-lateral and bi-lateral institutions, donors and foundations such as UNICEF, the World Food Programme and Ford Foundation have partnered with the Centre in building the systems and capacities that enable governments to monitor and evaluate their development efforts, and in particular in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals. Much of the Centre's energies are spent on building the policies and systems of government planning, monitoring and evaluation, as well as building capacities for producing evidence for policy and decision-making. Some of this work in 2023 involved the collaborative development of policies, strategies, and plans with countries including the Kingdom of Eswatini, the United Republic of Tanzania, and the United Republic of Uganda, the Kingdom of Lesotho and the Republic of Namibia. A significant part of CLEAR-AA's work is capacity development, and for example, in 2023 CLEAR-AA co-hosted a workshop in collaboration with the German Institute for Development Evaluation (DEval) to introduce a cohort of mostly government M&E practitioners to various Evaluation criteria (including the globally recognised OECD/DAC criteria). The Centre also designed and delivered a 5-week learning programme to M&E practitioners in UN country offices in collaboration with the United Nations Network of Evaluation in Sub Saharan Africa (UNNESSA), all towards strengthening local country-wide national evaluation systems.

In implementing country system strengthening programmes, the principal value proposition of the CLEAR-AA Centre lies in their ability to facilitate and manage processes that foster

The principal value proposition of the CLEAR-AA Centre lies in their ability to facilitate and manage processes that foster incremental system and behaviour changes in line with their commitment to a country-led and country-focused approach.

incremental system and behaviour changes in line with their commitment to a country-led and country-focused approach. Together with its primary engagement partner, the Global Evaluation Initiative (GEI) who oversees the CLEAR-AA Grant through a Multi-Donor Trust Fund, the focus on strengthening systems of evidence production and use for local evidence-informed decision-making (rather than upward accountability to donors and other funders), has taken centre-stage. This means that the vast majority of policy development and agenda-setting processes are conducted through processes of co-creation, together with the leadership of government Ministries, Departments and Agencies who are at the forefront of establishing their national M&E systems. CLEAR-AA's stance on this has been recognised internationally, where the Centre was invited to present their position on the need for a stronger commitment to the Paris Agenda on Aid Effectiveness and country-owned, country-led evaluations in development cooperation at the OECD/DAC 30th EvalNet Meeting in Paris in November 2023. Their contribution to the body of knowledge on a decolonised and equity-focused approach to evaluation in the Global South has also solidified their voice in the sector on the subject, with the publication of the first of three volumes in a book series on Equitable Evaluation: *Voices from the Global South, Evaluation: African Perspectives,* funded by the Ford Foundation.

CLEAR-AA's research, learning and knowledge sharing work is fundamentally concerned with generating knowledge which enables the centre to identify effective strategies for implementing evidence-based interventions, to learn from its work, and to enable a purposeful examination of key debates and issues in the evaluation field to ensure that we remain on the cutting-edge of development monitoring and evaluation discourses and practices locally and globally. It has worked tirelessly to ensure that it continues to learn from – and contribute to - practice. In total, 12 peer-reviewed publications were delivered in 2023, which were further bolstered by knowledge sharing and learning events such as GLOCAL Evaluation Week, where the Centre hosted over 30 online knowledge sharing events in the region.

CLEAR-AA's vision for 2024 is for a deeper engagement in four core countries (Uganda, Tanzania, Malawi and Lesotho) as part of a Country Programme approach, where the focus will be on consolidating its package of interventions in these countries, and telling their impact stories, and stories of change. However, with the rising demand across the continent for capacity development support, including technical and advisory services, CLEAR-AA will continue to work with countries such as Zimbabwe and Nigeria in building robust national evaluation systems.

The magnitude of the mission of the CLEAR-AA Centre means that it cannot do this on its own. Partnerships and collaborative effort serve as the foundation to their approach. One example of this is the Centre's long-term partnership with UNICEF East and Southern Regional Office (ESARO) aimed at strengthening countries's national evaluation systems. CLEAR-AA and the World Food Programme (WFP) have also partnered in establishing an Emerging Evaluator (EE) programme, to equip EEs with M&E skills to improve their employability through workplace exposure and actual work experience of undertaking real evaluations and strengthening of M&E systems or evaluation systems. These and many more impactful partnerships ensure that CLEAR-AA's work extends beyond the limits of the resources at their own disposal, and allows for the scaling up of efforts far beyond their reach as an individual organisation. We therefore extend our thanks to all of the partners who have contributed to CLEAR-AA's successes, and trust that many more such partnerships will see the work of CLEAR-AA extend to more countries in the region and continue to have an impact on strengthening countries' ability to achieve the global development goals.

Director's Note

Dr Candice Morkel

We aim to strengthen NESs that are responsive to the unique local contexts in the countries where we work.



The fulcrum around which CLEAR-AA's work revolves is strengthening and building National Monitoring and Evaluation systems (NES) in the region. Through this work, we aim to strengthen NESs that are responsive to the unique local contexts in the countries where we work, with local priorities for systems strengthening being placed at the core of our approach.

Strong partnerships lead to better results, and this year has been no different, where our close partnerships both with government and development partners working in collaboration and synchronising our efforts at transforming the local evidence landscape, culture and systems has yielded several successes. Our relationship with the central institutions of government that coordinate and provide oversight for a country's M&E system has been critical in this regard, demonstrating the importance of strong bureaucratic institutions at the centre of the state, who are able to guide and lead evidence-informed decision-making. In tandem, also, with Development Partners who have similar mandates and visions in working with governments to strengthen NES, our combined efforts reinforce our Theory of Change, where strengthening NES helps countries generate reliable evidence that is useful for decision-making towards improving policies and programmes, thereby improving service delivery and achieving national and global development goals.

CLEAR-AA's Core Country Programmes are implemented in Uganda, Lesotho, Malawi and Tanzania. In this report, you can read about our work with the United Republic of Tanzania on the co-creation of the Tanzanian National Evaluation Plan (NEP), which was informed by the perspectives and opinions of the different ministries on what interventions, in line with national commitments and interests, should form part of the national evaluation agenda. The Country Programme in the Republic of Uganda included the development of a National Evaluation Plan, to support the implementation and M&E of the National Development Plan (NDP) III of the country. Once again, co-creation was central to our approach, with the joint development of the NEP including the 20 programmes encapsulated in the NDP III.

Fundamental to strengthening National Evaluation Systems is the strengthening of individual and institutional capacities to plan, use, do and manage M&E. The M&E landscape in Africa is distinct and awareness-raising on power relations is key in ensuring that the strengthening of NES, does not reproduce patterns of inequity and coloniality. In April 2023 CLEAR-AA collaborated with the Mastercard Foundation in designing, developing, and delivering a 3-module course on Decolonising Evaluation. The course was a response to an identified gap in the foundation's Young Impact

Associates (YIA) programme which is aimed at empowering youth in various countries to access fulfilling and dignified jobs. The training was designed to introduce YIAs to the fundamentals of Monitoring and Evaluation as well as issues of decoloniality in the evaluation sector to support and facilitate participants to think critically about power and positionality when approaching evaluative work.

Collaborations with institutions who are similarly invested in evaluation capacity development (ECD) towards the strengthening of National Evaluation Systems is a key tenet of our work. Achievements such as our partnership with CLEAR Francophone Africa (FA) and Twende Mbele in facilitating a 3-day capacity building workshop hosted in South Africa for public officials from Benin, Ghana, Niger, South Africa, and Uganda deepens an Africa-wide, systemic perspective on strengthening NES across the continent, and fostering cross-country learning and engagement on learning from good practices in the different country contexts provides an important catalyst for this.

Furthermore, our development and facilitation of a 5-week Learning Programme for increasing the knowledge of M&E practitioners in the United Nations Network of Evaluation in Sub Saharan Africa (UNNESSA) is an important step in strengthening the 'supply-side' of evaluation in ensuring that practitioners have an appreciation for the value of M&E and how the generation of high-quality M&E evidence can influence decision-making processes.

Our work is informed by, and informs, what we are learning, and our Research and Learning Business Line leads us in ensuring that our knowledge production and sharing create learning loops that feed back into our practice as a Centre. One important example of the list of publications we report on in this Annual Report is the Equitable Evaluation book project funded by the Ford Foundation, which calls for reshaping and rethinking the role of evaluation in addressing inequality in the development arena. The first volume has been published and disseminated on an open-access platform, whilst the second volume has been accepted for publication, and is undergoing finalisation prior to publication. Several evaluation and development practitioners contributed to both volumes across institutions and CLEAR-AA partners from the African continent including Twende Mbele, University of the Witwatersrand, Stellenbosch University, University of Cape Town, the South African Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) and South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association (SAMEA).

Finally, CLEAR-AA would not be what it is today without the excellent partnership of the Global Evaluation Initiative (GEI). They support and enable us to execute our mandate to ensure better evidence systems, towards development impact in our region. We express our appreciation to the GEI and the IEG of the World Bank, as well as the Multi-Donor Trust-Fund, for their commitment to strengthening democracy and governance through strengthening Monitoring and Evaluation systems and capacities in countries, and for their trust in the CLEAR-AA Centre to lead the charge in our region. May we continue to collaborate as we push the boundaries of what is possible in strengthening National Evaluation Systems, and help build a better world and a better future for all.



Key Moments



January

Review of the **2023 Strategy and Implementation Plan.**

As part of its Core Country Programme, CLEAR-AA participates in the **Tanzania Monitoring and Evaluation Stakeholder** meeting in Dodoma, presenting its perspectives on government-wide monitoring and evaluation, including strategies, principles, and challenges experienced in other National Evaluation Systems across the African continent (including South Africa).

February

CLEAR-AA validates the Government of the Republic of Namibia's **National Monitoring and Evaluation Policy report**, in collaboration with the government of Namibia and UNICEF.

CLEAR-AA validates **Lesotho's Vision 2020 Evaluation Report** in collaboration with the Ministry of Economic Development and UNICEF Lesotho.

March

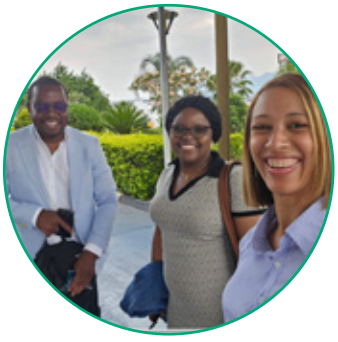
CLEAR-AA conducts a **writing clinic** to support young researchers with academic writing.

May

GLOCAL Evaluation week 2023 produces 304 events across the globe, hosted by 183 organisers, with over 20,000 event participants. The Anglophone Africa region organises over 30 events.

June

Zimbabwe scoping mission and consultations with **Zimbabwe Evaluation Association** (ZEA) and key stakeholders in the Zimbabwe national evaluation ecosystem, including UNICEF Zimbabwe, Oxfam and the Office of the Presidency.



July



CLEAR-AA Director forms part of the Core Facilitation Team in the globally recognised International **Program in Development Evaluation Training** (IPDET), in partnership with the GEI and the University of Bern.

August

CLEAR-AA facilitates a 5-week module learning programme on **National Evaluation Capacity Development** (NECD) with the United Nations Network of Evaluation in Sub Saharan Africa (UNNESSA).



September

CLEAR-AA, DEval (German Institute for Development Evaluation) and World Food Programme (WFP) host a side event on ECD for strengthening evaluation systems, at the **Africa Evidence Network** conference. The event sought to lay the foundation for a community of practice (CoP) within the evaluation and broader evidence ecosystem.

CLEAR-AA hosts a workshop in collaboration with DEval to conscientise participants on the genesis and evolution of the **OECD/DAC Evaluation** criteria and its application. The workshop also provided an opportunity to critique the dominance of the criteria, and local alternatives to these.

October



SAMEA announces CLEAR-AA's **Sinenhlanhla Tsekiso** (Programme manager) and **Khumo Pule** (M&E officer) as members of the SAMEA board.

November

The WFP Southern Africa Regional Bureau in Johannesburg (WFP RBJ) and CLEAR-AA completed the **Emerging Evaluators Year-1 Foundational Pilot Programme** and **Emerging Evaluators Year-2 Consolidation Programme**. This Programme saw the graduation of 6 Emerging Evaluators in November 2023. All 6 EEs are currently employed in government and non-government institutions.

December

CLEAR-AA conducts a **Social, Environmental, and Climate Assessment Procedures** (SECAP) training with partners IFAD, SUSTAIN and HELVETAS in Ethiopia.



2023 Highlights

149 People trained

12 Publications

7 Policies, strategies, or palans supported by/contributed to by grant

12 Technical outputs produced for partners and clients by CLEAR AA (e.g. plans, policy statements, briefing notes, manuals, and agendas or other operational documents)

1331 Individuals attending knowledge-sharing events



Programmatic Work

Strengthening National (Monitoring and) Evaluation Systems

Through this work, we aim to strengthen NES that are responsive to the country's unique context and priorities.

A strengthened NES of a country will also enhance accountability and transparency to citizens thereby fostering trust and ensuring that public resources are used efficiently and effectively.

The key approach to this work is through a close partnership with the central institutions of government that coordinate and provide oversight for a country's M&E system, and to also collaborate with other Development Partners who have similar mandates and visions in working with governments to strengthen NES.



CLEAR-AA's Country Programme Approach

In strengthening the NES of countries, the Centre has adopted a Country Programme approach. This is a deliberate approach aimed at bringing about system-wide impact i.e. in terms of state and non-state contributions to the NES, with a focus on the centrality of governments' role in leading and coordinating the NES, and the appropriate alignment of other evaluation systems (for example development partners and civil society) in building a strong, country-wide evidence base for policy and programmatic decision making. Our country programmes follow in principle conducting a Monitoring, Evaluation System's Analysis (MESA) to understand the state of M&E in the country, which leads to the development of a country's Capacity Strengthening Strategy and Plan. Partnerships and collaborative efforts serve as the foundation to our approach. Rooted in principles of inclusivity and partnership, we seek to empower local stakeholders by soliciting their perspectives and contributions from the beginning of the process. This is achieved through the use of co-creation consultative workshops in-country with the 'right mix' of stakeholders who have various mandates, roles and responsibilities in the M&E ecosystem.

2023 Achievements

In 2023, CLEAR-AA's Core Country Programmes were implemented in Malawi, Uganda, Lesotho and Tanzania

In 2023, together with government counterparts in the United Republic of Tanzania, the National Evaluation Plan was developed. Consultative co-creation workshops were used to garner perspectives and opinions from the different ministries as to what interventions of national commitments and interests require evaluation. This was followed by the co-creation of a National Evaluation Guideline/Manual to provide government institutions with standardised approaches to conducting evaluations, ensuring consistency and reliability across different evaluations of government interventions. Furthermore, CLEAR-AA participated in the national Monitoring and Evaluation Stakeholder meeting, focusing its inputs on government-wide monitoring and evaluation, strategies, principles, and challenges from South Africa and other countries. The Prime Ministers Office (PMO), Policy, Parliament and Coordination, through the Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Division (PMED) is leading this area of work, which is continuing in 2024.

The Country Programme in the Republic of Uganda focused on the development of a National Evaluation Plan, to support the implementation and M&E of the National Development Plan III of the country. For the first time in the history of M&E in Uganda, the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) through the Directorate of Monitoring Evaluation and Inspection (DMEI) in partnership with CLEAR-AA and the UNICEF country office held a co-creation workshop in July and October of 2023 to develop the National Evaluation Plan, constituting 20 programmes encapsulated in the NDP III of the country. The vision of the OPM / DMEI is to

ensure that there is an increase in the volume and quality of evidence generated through evaluation for purposes of improved programming, budgeting, decision and policy making, and ultimately improved development impact as per the National Development Plan.

In Lesotho, CLEAR-AA embarked on an evaluation of the Government of Lesotho's Vision 2020 to provide the information for formulating a coherent and responsive long-term development framework. This evaluation aimed to offer Government evidence to decide whether to adopt the current vision, update it, or develop a new vision document altogether. The intervention included the validation of the evaluation report with the identified stakeholders in Maseru, after which the final report was submitted to the Government of Lesotho. In other countries such as Namibia, through the support of UNICEF Country Office of Namibia, CLEAR-AA participated in the co-creation of a National Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Policy. The Policy aims to address prevalent public sector M&E challenges, including the underutilisation of M&E information to tackle implementation issues and enhance programme or policy performance. In 2023, a validation workshop was held with key stakeholders to gather feedback on the draft policy and develop an implementation plan. The National Planning Commission is leading this initiative and is currently processing the internal approvals of the policy.

Plans for 2024

In 2024, the Country Programme continues its work in its four Core Countries. The key initiatives for 2024 include the launch of the National Evaluation Guideline/Manual in Tanzania. In Uganda, the review of the National Public Sector Monitoring and Evaluation Policy is a key milestone, which includes the development of an Issues Note, followed by consultative workshops to understandstrengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for revising the Policy.

In Tanzania, there is a potential to establish a partnership with the German Institute for Development Evaluation (DEval) and the Government of Finland to support evaluations and ECD in the NES.



CLEAR-AA



Capacity Strengthening

Fundamental to strengthening National Evaluation Systems is the strengthening of individual and institutional capacities to plan, use, do and manage M&E. Capacity is one of the critical components of M&E systems, and it is therefore important to assess the existing strengths, emerging gaps and challenges so as to develop interventions for addressing them. CLEAR-AA's commitment is to contribute to strengthening National Evaluation Capacities at the three interlinked levels namely: individual, institutional and the enabling environment.

The training offerings vary from stand-alone offerings, to customisable offerings that are tailored according to country needs and requests. These offerings aim to increase the cohort of M&E professionals, particularly on the African continent. This response aligns with the organisation's overall ToC that access to high quality, contextually relevant training and technical support would increase knowledge and skills transfer over time that enable individuals to better perform their M&E responsibilities, which would ultimately contribute to better development outcomes.

2023 Achievements

Uganda Capacity Needs Assessment

Linked to the Core Country Programme in Uganda, an individual Capacity Needs Assessment was conducted, building on the work done in assessing the M&E landscape through the Monitoring and Evaluation Systems Analysis (MESA). The assessment aimed to identify the capacity development needs of individuals involved in M&E activities in the Ugandan ecosystem as well as generate lessons (including challenges) from current ECD initiatives. The capacity assessment report is directed towards the development of a Capacity Strengthening Strategy and Plan in addressing identified gaps at individual and institutional levels.

Conducting a Capacity Needs Assessment is integral to supporting an evidence-informed approach to national evaluation capacity-building efforts. To this end, the Capacity Needs Assessment explored the three layers of capacities at the individual, organisational and environmental level, which advances a systems-thinking approach. The findings and recommendations of this report will be invaluable for the National M&E Capacity Strengthening Strategy and Plan.

Mastercard Foundation – Decolonising Evaluation Course

In April 2023 the Centre collaborated with the Mastercard Foundation in designing, developing, and delivering a 3-module course on Decolonising Evaluation. The course was a response to an identified gap in the foundation's Young Impact Associates (YIA) programme which is aimed at empowering youth in various countries to access fulfilling and dignified jobs. The training was designed to introduce YIAs to the fundamentals of Monitoring and Evaluation as well as issues of decoloniality in the evaluation sector to support and facilitate YIAs to think critically about power and positionality when approaching evaluative work. The course was instrumental in increasing the knowledge and raising awareness of YIAs to issues of power in the field. The course also provided avenues for networking and collaboration with other YIAs in aiding further professional development.

The M&E landscape in Africa is distinct and awareness-raising on power relations is key in opening practitioners to power dynamics and the importance of reflecting on current practices and how these may reproduce patterns of inequity and coloniality. Increasing the knowledge of M&E practitioners is an important step in strengthening the 'supply-side' of evaluation in ensuring that practitioners have an appreciation for the value of M&E and how the generation of high-quality M&E evidence can influence decision-making processes. The first step in strengthening individual M&E capacity is building awareness on the value of M&E, then increasing practitioner knowledge and skills which may enable the application of acquired knowledge and skills in strengthening M&E systems.

Peer-Learning focused Capacity Building for Governments

CLEAR-AA and CLEAR Francophone Africa (FA) collaborated with Twende Mbele in facilitating a 3-day capacity building workshop hosted in South Africa for public officials from Benin, Ghana, Niger, South Africa, and Uganda. The officials were from national and sub-national levels. The 3-day workshop focused on results-based M&E and outlining linkages between M&E in the planning and budgeting process across the policy-lifecycle. The workshop was successful in fostering cross-country learning and engagement on learning from good practices in the different country contexts.

UNNESSA National Evaluation Capacity Development Learning Programme

The United Nations Network for Evaluation Systems Strengthening in Africa (UNNESSA) commissioned the centre to develop a National Evaluation Capacity Development 5-week Learning Programme, which launched in August 2023. The programme was aimed at strengthening national evaluation capacities and fostering peer-to-peer learning. The 5-module programme exposed participants to the various components of NECD and the feedback demonstrates that it was successful in increasing levels of knowledge and facilitating per-to-peer exchanges and sharing of experiences in addressing common challenges encountered in the respective country M&E ecosystems. In line with the purpose of the

learning programme, the strengthening of national evaluation systems provides an opportunity to strengthen capacities at three interlinked levels in institutionalising the generation and use of evaluation evidence: individual, organisational and systems. The programme provided an opportunity for participants to identify and reflect on practical steps in strengthening in-country capacity. Building an appreciation of M&E and strengthening participant knowledge are key milestones in facilitating the application and advocacy in championing evaluation generation and use in country ecosystems.

Zimbabwe M&E Curriculum Scoping Mission

CLEAR-AA has collaborated with UNICEF Zimbabwe and key stakeholders in the Zimbabwe national evaluation ecosystem, including, Oxfam and the Office of the Presidency as well as Zimbabwe Evaluation Association (ZEA) to gain an understanding of the current M&E curriculum landscape. The collaboration is geared towards conducting a gap analysis of evaluation education and training offerings in Zimbabwe, intended to feed into the development of an ECD offering that addresses demand that is currently not offered by existing programmes or institutions in the country. CLEAR-AA participated in a scoping mission between 6 – 11 November 2023 in Harare, Mutare, Chinhoyi, Lupane, and Bindura. The mission aimed to assess the landscape of M&E training (programmes and courses) and identify opportunities for capacity development. The objectives of the scoping mission were (i) to understand the M&E courses offered by different entities (government and non-governmental institutions) (ii) to understand the gaps and opportunities concerning courses which are currently being offered, towards developing a new course reflective of the needs and competencies necessary for public sector employees to perform their day-to-day functions at national and provincial levels, and (iii) to strategically select an institution (government or non-government) to undertake to host the new offering(s).

Applying Evaluation Criteria Workshop

CLEAR-AA collaborated with the DEval in delivering a workshop on applying the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria at the Tanzania Evaluation week hosted between 12 – 15 September 2023 in Arusha, Tanzania. The workshop was aimed at conscientising participants on the genesis and evolution of the Evaluation criteria, their application, and also provided an opportunity to critique the dominance of those criteria, and offer (local) alternatives.

SECAP Training in Ethiopia

CLEAR-AA, together with CLEAR-FA have partnered with Helvetas in a programme on the integration of Social, Environmental and Climate Assessment Procedures (SECAP) in International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) projects. CLEAR-AA rolled out the first of four trainings in the Eastern and Southern Africa region between the 4th and 8th December in Bishoftu, Ethiopia. The ten-module training over 3 ½ days aims to raise awareness of the 9 SECAP standards to Project Management Units (PMUs) to minimise or mitigate social, environmental and climate risks.

Pan-African Evaluation Capacity Development CoP

CLEAR-AA, DEval - and World Food Programme hosted a side event on ECD for strengthening evaluation systems, at the Africa Evidence Network conference in September 2023. The event sought to lay the foundation for a community of practice (CoP) within the evaluation and broader evidence ecosystem. The event kicked-off with a workshop hosted by CLEAR-AA in collaboration with DEval to conscientise participants on the genesis and evolution of the OECD/DAC Evaluation criteria and its application. The workshop also provided an opportunity to critique the dominance of the criteria, and local alternatives to these.

This session was a space for sharing, reflection, exchange, and drawing learnings regarding National Evaluation Systems (NES). The session was attended by participants from Eswatini, Germany, Italy, Ivory Coast, Lesotho,Malawi, Panama, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe, and all actively involved in Evaluation Capacities Development.

Plans for 2024

The Centre aims to strengthen its curriculum development and training offerings in offering a broader range of training opportunities. These include more offerings in different sectors in strengthening individual and institutional M&E capacities. This would require forging strategic partnerships and furthering the centre's footprint within the ECD eco-system, towards increasing the typologies of the centre's capacity strengthening offerings towards a comprehensive approach to strengthening National Evaluation Systems.

The Centre aims to conduct a Tracer Study with a developmental agenda to learn from and improve on its training offerings and professional development opportunities. The tracer study will survey former participants of various trainings offered with a focus on knowledge acquired and applied, quality and relevance to participant work environments. Such work is seminal not only for our institutional learning but as a contribution to the existing body of knowledge within the ECD space in Africa.







The planning and roll-out of IFADs SUSTAIN Grant SECAP Training in Rwanda, Malawi and Nigeria is scheduled for 2024. From these trainings, a learning note will be developed from these various country experiences.



Research, Learning and Knowledge Sharing

CLEAR-AA's research, learning and knowledge sharing work is fundamentally concerned with generating knowledge which enables the centre to identify effective strategies for implementing evidence-based interventions, to learn from its work, and to enable a purposeful examination of key debates and issues in the evaluation field to ensure that we remain on the cutting-edge of development monitoring and evaluation discourses and practices locally and globally.

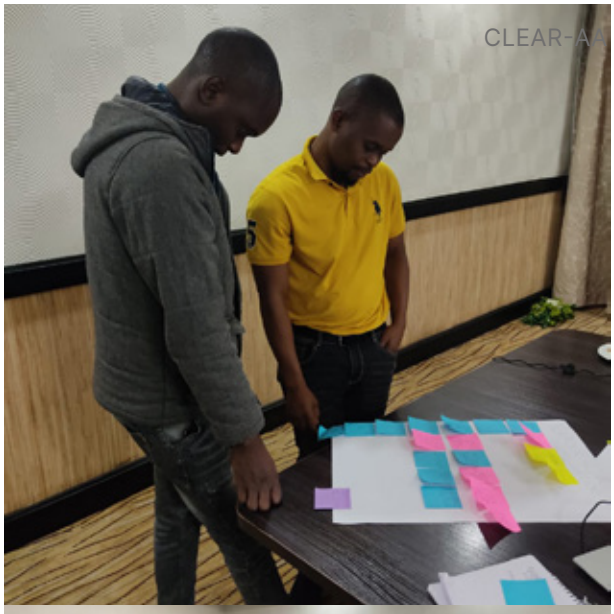
2023 Achievements

Malawi Covid-19 Urban Cash Transfer Intervention (CUCI)

Between May 2023 into May 2024 CLEAR-AA partnered with the World Bank's Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) and the Global Evaluation Initiative (GEI) in the country-led evaluation of the unintended consequences of the Malawi Covid-19 Urban Cash Transfer Intervention (CUCI) on intimate partner violence, labour market participation and financial inclusion. The evaluation was led by the M&E unit of the Department of Economic Planning and Development in Malawi, also leading on the quantitative component, with oversight provided by the GEI. The evaluation was funded by the World Bank and the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The main objective of this evaluation was to conduct a credible, quality, and useful evaluation of the CUCI in Malawi led by the Government of Malawi, whilst concurrently building evaluation capacities within the national M&E unit. The evaluation was successfully conducted and subsequently disseminated during a multi-stakeholder event held in the capital city of Lilongwe in Malawi joined by the Government of Malawi, World Bank Country Office, World Food Programme, Social Protection practitioners and civil society organisations. The main report is current being finalised and will be widely disseminated following steering committee and stakeholder approval.

Ford Foundation

The Equitable Evaluation project funded by the Ford Foundation is a clarion call for a reshaping and a rethinking of the role of evaluation in addressing inequality in the development arena. The project was initiated in December 2022 intending to increase the amount of literature and tools for equitable evaluation through the development of a peer-reviewed publication, equitable evaluation guide and curriculum as well as webinars. The curriculum was piloted at in September 2023 at the United Republic of Tanzania Monitoring, Evaluation and learning Week. Upon completion of the guide and curriculum development, and subsequent training of evaluators in equitable evaluation, the anticipated outcome is for evaluators to apply the gained skills and knowledge acquired. This will enable evaluators to utilise evaluation as a means to advance equity in their evaluation practice.





Overall, the various published outputs and engagements (webinars) under this project increase the awareness of inequality and equitable evaluation by evaluators, evaluation commissioners and decision-makers in the development space, with a focus on the global south. Two volumes were produced covering several thematic areas including gender and inclusion, social protection, climate change and environmental sustainability. The first volume has been published and disseminated on an open-access platform, whilst the second volume is undergoing finalisation prior to publication. Several evaluation and development practitioners contributed to both volumes across institutions and CLEAR-AA partners from the African continent including Twende Mbele, University of Witwatersrand, Stellenbosch University, University of Cape Town, the South African Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation and South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association.



WFP Evidence Syntheses and Summaries

CLEAR-AA collaborated with the World Food Programme (WFP) in producing evidence papers across three workstreams by means of conducting an evidence synthesis of purposively selected evaluation reports commissioned by WFP between the period 2018 – 2023. The project's goal was to facilitate learning from evaluation evidence in informing current and future school meals interventions by WFP. The evidence papers provided valuable insights on what worked, and what didn't work, in school-based programmes, providing reflection on key lessons, achievements, challenges, and opportunities in the Southern African region. The codifying of key trends in school meals programmes allows practitioners to have the necessary evidence on how to formulate such programmes to deliver on intended objectives in contributing to the achievement of goals set in the SDGs in reducing global poverty.

Internal learning and capacity development

As a centre that advocates for the use of evidence in decision-making; we also practice what we preach. The centre has held quarterly internal learning and reflection sessions. These are critical for development of new strategies, sharing what is working (or not), and course correction.

The centre also has a standing capacity development programme for its staff. The capacity development strategies ranges from writing clinics – which provides writing support to young researchers and supports them in developing different types of knowledge products - to supporting staff who are pursuing further studies through providing bursaries.

Knowledge Sharing Events

In line with our knowledge building and sharing imperative, in 2023 we participated and hosted a number of knowledge sharing events, to ensure that we contribute to learning and improving the practice of M&E both within CLEAR-AA as well as in the regions that we work. These are a few that demonstrate our commitment to learning and development.

gLOCAL Evaluation Week

gLOCAL Evaluation Week, brought to us by the Global Evaluation Initiative (GEI), is a unique knowledge-sharing event, connecting a global community of people across sectors and regions. From the 29th May to the 2nd June 2023, participants from all over the world joined events - in their neighbourhood or across the ocean - to learn from each other on a vast number of topics and themes. Over 30 events were organised in the Anglophone Africa region, across various themes. CLEAR-AA hosted three sessions: 'Evidence Use by African Parliaments: Reflections from Civil Society Organisations and Parliamentary staff members', 'Limited use of evaluative evidence in public policy, planning and Voluntary National Review (VNR) development' and 'Evaluation Practice Through the Eyes of Emerging Evaluators'.

GEI Working Group on Training and Professional Development: Lighting talks

The Global Evaluation Initiative's (GEI) Working Group on Training and Professional Development (WGTPD) serves as a platform for the sharing of knowledge, coordination, and collaborative initiatives specifically focused on monitoring and evaluation (M&E) training and professional development. On the 10th October 2022, CLEAR-AA participated in a lightning talk on experiences with country-led evaluation focusing particularly on the evaluation of unintended consequences of the COVID-19 Urban Cash Intervention in Malawi.

Tanzania MEL Week

The Office of the Prime Minister (PMO) of Tanzania in partnership with Tanzania Evaluation Association (TanEA) organised the 2nd Monitoring and Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Week Conference from 12th – 15th September, 2023 in Arusha, Tanzania. CLEAR-AA participated in facilitation of 'Equitable development through Evaluation' workshop, the purpose of which was to introduce evaluation community in Tanzania to equitable evaluation approaches, discuss the multiple connections between inequities, inequality and evaluation as well as the role of stakeholders in advancing equitable evaluation and development in Africa. The workshop was informed by lessons learnt and key arguments from the Equitable Evaluation in the Global South published by the Centre supported by the Ford Foundation. The workshop was intended for Development partners, VOPE members, Government officials, Evaluators and Emerging evaluators in Tanzania. CLEAR-AA further engaged in presentations and panel discussions on various topics, including gender-responsiveness, equity in evaluation, institutionalisation of M&E, M&E for project sustainability, as well as emerging evaluators on shaping the future of evaluations.

DPME National Evaluation Seminar

The Department of Planning Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) in South Africa hosted the National Evaluation Seminar themed "Evaluation rising to challenges of limited resources, inequality and climate crises" on the 21 to 22 November 2023. The seminar was a hybrid event -attended by 250 participants physically at the Birchwood Hotel O.R Tambo International Airport, and 430 online participants. CLEAR-AA presented insights on the current status of evaluation systems across the African continent, and well as a presentation on "Evaluation on a shoestring budget" demonstrating the impact of evaluations conducted within limited budgets.

SAMEA Round Robin

The South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association (SAMEA) hosted a Regional Round Robin hybrid event on the 20th September 2023. Each regional SAMEA center (Gauteng, Western Cape, Eastern Cape and Kwa Zulu Natal) lead on a specific theme that was live-streamed to participants in other participating centers. CLEAR-AA hosted the proceedings of the Gauteng region at the University of the Witwatersrand and participated in the panel discussion on *'Technological innovation for more agile and responsive M&E'.*

> “The ‘Work Immersion Emerging Evaluator (EE) Programme’ is indeed a manifestation of our commitment to that Manifesto (Youth in Evaluation Manifesto), and this customised work immersion programme that provided EEs with opportunities to develop technical evaluation skills, through exposure to real-life evaluation work as well as learning opportunities is testament to the fact that real opportunities, and authentic support, is needed if we are to attain the ideals of meaningful, diverse and effective youth engagement in our sector.” Dr Morkel







Director's Keynote Addresses as contributions to shaping the discourse of National Evaluation Systems

Host Institution: International Evaluation Academy
Topic: A conversation: Decolonising National Evaluation Systems.
Date: 1 November 2023

Host Institution: EvalNet
Topic: 30th EvalNet Meeting: Looking back, moving forward – EvalNet at 40. **Date:** 15-16 November 2023





Host Institution: EvalPartners
Topic: Evaluation and the transformational Imperative.
Date: 28 November 2023

Host Institution: WFP and CLEAR-AA
Topic: The Emerging Evaluator Programme graduation.
Date: 28 November 2023



Host Institution: The Banbury Center, New York
Topic: The role of the state in national evaluation systems, with a focus on Africa and the developmental state debate. **Date:** 10-13 October 2023



Host Institution: 3IE
Topic: 3IE Research Seminar lecture. **Date:** 31 August 2023

Plans for 2024

In 2024 CLEAR-AA will be developing a peer reviewed publication that is a follow-up publication focusing on tailoring or re-purposing the current evaluation methodologies to achieve equitable evaluation. In addition to peer reviewed publication, there are also plans to run diagnostic assessments to understand how issues of equity are included in the planning and reporting processes in Tanzania and Uganda.

Through the partnerships with WFP, the centre is running a study on Climate Change Anticipatory Actions. The main purpose of this study is to understand the needs, barriers, and risks faced by affected people in their diversity in the selected countries and provide recommendations on how WFP can design, implement, and monitor anticipatory actions that respond to those realities.

We are also planning to expand the African Evaluation Database through adding new content, finalising the evaluator database and improving its search function.

Impact Through Partnership

Our partnership with the Global Evaluation Initiative remains our most significant partnership in executing our mandate to ensure better evidence systems, towards development impact in our region. CLEAR-AA is funded, through the GEI and the IEG of the World Bank, by a Multi-Donor Trust-Fund, and we remain committed to a collaborative and partner-oriented approach to build back better, where no single institution is as strong as the collective.

The GEI umbrella partnership facilitates closer partnerships with other GEI Implementing and Associate Partners, including IPDET, DEval, 3IE, other CLEAR Centres, in particular CLEAR Francophone Africa as well as CLEAR Lusophone Africa and Brazil. Through these partnerships, we have been able to, for example, start engaging on country-led evaluations in our Country Programme, reviewing and revising the South African National Impact Evaluation Guideline, collaborate in training to support IFAD projects in complying with Social, Environmental and Climate Principles (SECAP), and supporting governments in strengthening National Evaluation Systems.

CLEAR-AA continues to partner with the voluntary evaluation sector, and the recognition of the Centre and its staff at significant levels of influence both at national and international level. In 2023, two CLEAR-AA staff members were elected to the Board of the South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association (SAMEA) (with two other staff members continuing to provide advisory support to the association as legacy board members).

UNICEF East and Southern Regional Office (ESARO) partnered with CLEAR-AA through the signing of an extension to the long-standing Programme Cooperation Agreement (PCA). The partnership was aimed at strengthening the different elements of country's National Evaluation Systems (NES). Through this partnership countries are supported to strengthening their NESs towards ultimately improve service delivery and achievement of development outcomes.

CLEAR-AA and World Food Programme (WFP) has a partnership which was established through a Long-Term Agreement (LTA). The work done under the LTA includes the evidence synthesis, and the Emerging Evaluator (EE) programme. The impact of the synthesis was to bring comprehensive insights by integrating evaluation and promote evidence-based decisions in policy and practice. The EE programme sought to equip EEs with M&E skills to improve their employability through workplace exposure and actual work experience of undertaking real evaluations and strengthening of M&E systems or evaluation systems.

Our partnership with the Ford Foundation has allowed us to explore equity-focused evaluation. The partnership facilitated the development of peer-reviewed publications, curricula and guides that promote equitable evaluation. In 2024, CLEAR AA intends to continue with this partnership and facilitate discussions on equitable evaluation.

List of Publications

- Amisi Matodzi, Parenzee P "(2023). Rethinking how gender inequality is framed in GBV prevention interventions: Learnings from a South African evaluation of interventions "In S. Masvaure & T. Chirau & T. Fish & C. Morkel (eds.), Equitable evaluation Voices from the Global South (pp. 133-151). Cape Town: AOSIS Publishing. 978-1-77995-301-8"
- Chirau Takunda, Said U "(2023). 'Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?' Un(masking) inequality by international institutions "In S. Masvaure & T. Chirau & T. Fish & C. Morkel (eds.), Equitable evaluation Voices from the Global South (pp. 69-88). Cape Town: AOSIS Publishing. 978-1-77995-301-8"
- Fish Tebogo, Mkhize Samukelisiwe, Masvaure Steven "(2023). Evaluation in service equity? A synthesis of the conceptualisation of inequality and evaluation approaches to address inequality "In S. Masvaure & T. Chirau & T. Fish & C. Morkel (eds.), Equitable evaluation Voices from the Global South (pp. 241-251). Cape Town: AOSIS Publishing. 978-1-77995-301-8"
- Fish Tebogo (2023).The role of evaluation practice in promoting the prioritisation of mental health equity on the public health agenda in Africa "In S. Masvaure & T. Chirau & T. Fish & C. Morkel (eds.), Equitable evaluation: Voices from the Global South(pp. 153-176). Cape Town : AOSIS Publishing. 978-1-77995-301-8"
- Goldman, I., de la Garza Navarrete, T., Kalugampitiya, A., de Erice Dominguez, A. M., Agbodjan, E. D., Chirau, T., & Dlakavu, A. (2023). 20. The emergence of evaluation systems in low-and middle-income countries. Handbook of Public Policy Evaluation, 3, 317. https://www.e-elgar.com/shop/gbp/handbook-of-public-policy-evaluation-9781800884885.html
- Masvaure, S, Chirau, TJ, Fish, T & Morkel, C (eds.) 2023, Equitable Evaluation: Voices from the Global South, Evaluation: African Perspectives Book Series, vol. 1, AOSIS Books, Cape Town. https://doi.org/10.4102/aosis.2023.BK45
- Masvaure Steven, Fish Tebogo, Mkhize Samukelisiwe, Chirau Takunda, Morkel Candice (2023). Inequality through the evaluation lens "In S. Masvaure & T. Chirau & T. Fish & C. Morkel (eds.), Equitable evaluation: Voices from the Global South (pp. 7-22). Cape Town: AOSIS Books. 978-1-77995-301-8"
- Masvaure Steven "(2023). Unlocking climate change adaptation injustice through using intersectional analysis as an evaluation approach "In S. Masvaure & T. Chirau & T. Fish & C. Morkel (eds.), Equitable evaluation Voices from the Global South (pp. 89-103). Cape Town: AOSIS Publishing. 978-1-77995-301-8"
- Mkhize Samukelisiwe "(2023). 'Whose agenda, is it?' Reframing equity and justice in the evaluation of climate-smart agriculture "In S. Masvaure & T. Chirau & T. Fish & C. Morkel (eds.), Equitable evaluation Voices from the Global South (pp. 105-132). Cape Town: AOSIS Publishing. 978-1-77995-301-8"
- Masvaure, S. (2023). Liberalising Health-Seeking Behaviour of the Johanne Marange Apostolic Sect in Manicaland, Zimbabwe. Journal of Health Management, 25(3), 465-471. 10.1177/09720634211065203
- Norins J, Jason D, Goldman Ian, Moshia-Mlebatsi K, Tsekiso Sinenhlanhla "(2023). Transformative Equity: Promoting systemic change through a new evaluation criterion "In S. Masvaure & T. Chirau & T. Fish & C. Morkel (eds.), Equitable evaluation Voices from the Global South (pp. 217-239). Cape Town : AOSIS Publishing. 978-1-77995-301-8"
- Semela Matshidiso, Mosienyane Tefo, Ali A, Blaser Mapitsa Caitlin. (2023). Introducing digitalisation to strengthen evaluation systems for democracy in African parliaments POLITIKON, 2023, 50 (1) pp. 61 - 75.10.1 080/02589346.2023.2172531

Financials

	2023	2022
	R	R
Revenue	**17,444,000.00**	**21,287,799.00**
Grant Income (WB)	10,600,492.00	9,882,410.00
Other Income	6,843,508.00	11,405,389.00
Operational Expenses	**4,738,658.00**	**4,028,644.00**
Academic Expenses	879.00	515.00
Audit Fees		73,943.00
Bursaries and Awards	194,505.00	16,264.00
Books journals and Electronic	- 92,967.00	34,606.00
Communication	109,767.00	152,044.00
Conference Attendance Fees	166,903.00	153,458.00
Consultancy Outsource	763,689.00	929,378.00
IT Expenditure	49,970.00	1,894.00
Marketing and Advertising	325,553.00	145,572.00
Printing and Stationery	19,270.00	23,544.00
Repairs and Maintanance	5,371.00	
Staff Training and Development	-	23,000.00
Sundry Expenditure	1,140,694.00	1,222,701.00
Transfers made	-	
Travelling and Accomodation	1,959,462.00	1,166,102.00
Vehicle Expense	98,111.00	27,304.00
Finance Costs	2,071.00	1,094.00
Capital expenditure	- 16,702.00	57,225.00
Salaries and Benefits	**11,492,678.00**	**14,513,796.00**
Academic Salaries	1,258,265.00	1,387,266.00
Support staff salaries	10,234,413.00	13,126,530.00
Total Expenses	**16,231,336.00**	**18,542,440.00**
Net Surplus/ (Deficit)	**7,076,148.67**	**4,547,867.00**
Deficit as at Dec 2023	1,212,664.00	2,745,359.00
Adjusted opening balance	5,863,484.67	1,802,508.00
Prior year surplus /(Deficit)	4,547,867.00	3,549,290.00
Less: Adjustments from 2023/2022		-

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 recognised 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



UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

clear
Centers for Learning on Evaluation and Results
ANGLOPHONE AFRICA

Centre for Learning on Evaluation and Results - Anglophone Africa
CLEAR-AA, Beaulieu House, Wits Business School
2 St David's Place, Parktown, Johannesburg

www.wits.ac.za/clear-aa