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Using Evidence in Policy and Practice – Lessons from Africa

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EVALSDGs/UNICEF webinar

Using evaluations to inform policy and prac
in a government department: The case of t
Department of Basic Education in South Afr

7 May 2020



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Research project

- Research project on Using Evidence for Policy and Pra
- Perspective of policy makers (co-authors)
- African research team with researchers in each countr
- 8 cases from 6 countries/West Africa, linked with the Twende Mbele countries
- Explores use of different types of evidence (evaluation research, rapid synthesis, citizens engagement)
- And what supported evidence use to happen
- Book coming out in June 'Using Evidence for Policy an Practice – Lessons from Africa' https://www.routledge.com/Using-Evidence-in-Policy-Practice-Open-Access-Lessons-from-Africa/Goldman-Pabari/p/book/9780367440077

Chapters/cases

5 Using evaluations to inform policy and practice in a government department: The Case of the Department of Basic Education in S Africa

6 Use of evidence in a complex social programme: an evaluation of state's response to violence against women and children in South

7 The influence of local ownership and politics of the use of evalua policy making: The case of the public procurement evaluation in

8 Rapidly responding to policy queries with evidence: Learning fron Response Services in Uganda

9 The challenges and potential of evaluations to positively inform r working with producers in the Benin Agriculture Sector

10 Parliament and public participation in Kenya: The case of the Wil Conservation and Management Act 2013

11 The contribution of civil society generated evidence to the impro of sanitation services in Ghana

12 Using evidence for tobacco control in West Africa

Introduction to Analytical framework

Builds on :

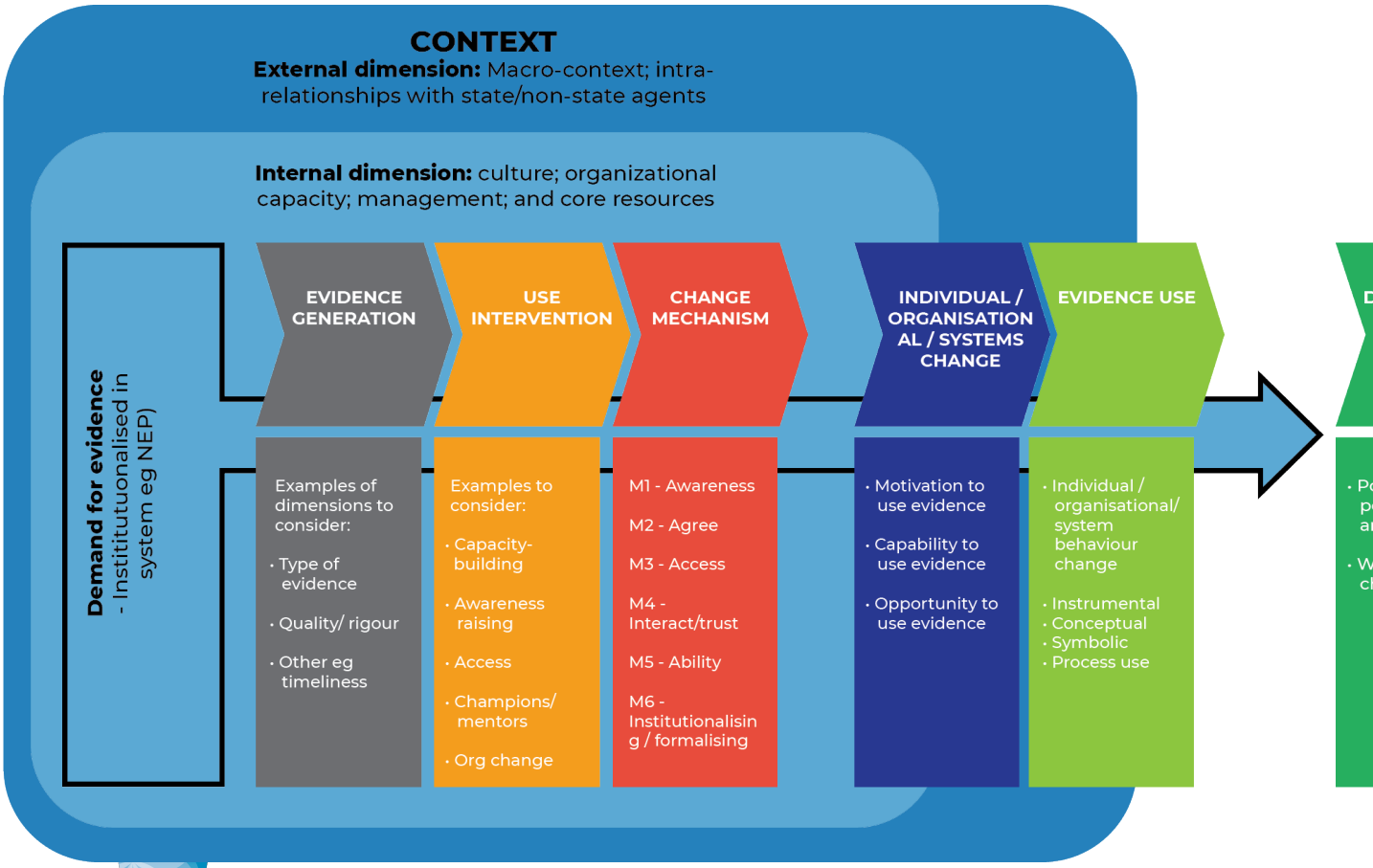
- Science of Using Science's framework (Langer, Gough, Tripney 201
- The Context Matters framework (Weyrauch, Echt and Suliman, 201

What does the framework do?

- to investigate and unpack the effectiveness of programmes and instruments aiming to support decision-makers' use of evidence.
- to present an inductive analytical tool to explore evidence-use interventions, not necessarily outlining what or how interventions *should* lead to positive impacts on decision-makers' use of evidenc
- to structure the generated research and tacit knowledge evidence-base in a consistent manner which allows us to identify patterns in the *overall* evidence-base *across* case studies;

  → allows for cross-learning and collaboration around synergies of different EIPP interventions and approaches.

Analytical framework/TOC



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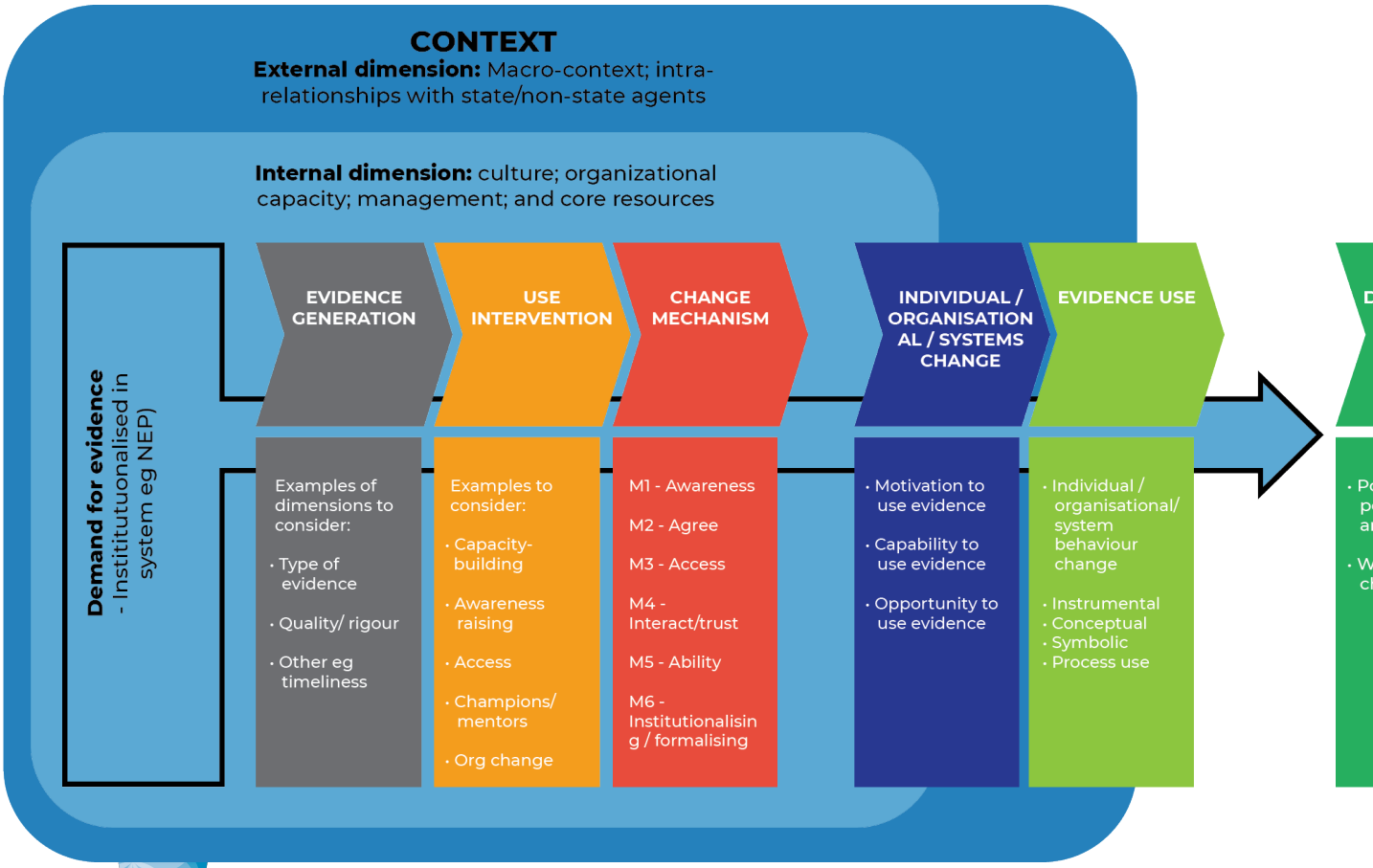

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The case – Department of Basic Education in South Africa

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DBE early adopter of evaluation

- Strategic choice to bring evidence for decisi support into managers' domain.

DBE Evaluations	Status
1. Early Childhood Development	2013 Improve
2. Grade R introduction (Impact)	2013 Improve
3 Funza Lushaka ←	2013 – 2015 Improve
4 National School Nutrition ←	2014 – 2015 Improve
5 CAPS	2015 Improve
6 Early Grade Reading (Impact)	2015 Improve
7 Scholar Transport	2019 Jus

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What were the programmes

- **Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme**:
  - Bursaries for student teachers to fill gaps in teachers, in subjects, and remote schools
- **National School Nutrition Programme:**
  - Feeding 9m+ learners at school, at least one m
  - Objective to improve concentration in school school attendance, so better learning

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Use of the Funza Lushaka evaluation

- Rethink **selection criteria** - DBE produced guidelines and criteria for selection of students based on geographic and subject area and stricter on selection of beneficiaries (instrumental use).
- Motivate for **funding to modernise the MIS** - obtained funding for online system, in use since October 2018
- Strengthen **placement** of graduating students - ITE directorate now reporti not on administration of placement but on where graduates placed on completion (instrumental use).
- **Theory of change workshop** brought together officials from higher educat institutions, the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS), civil socie groups, and provincial and national officials to gain a better understanding the bursary programme (conceptual/process use)
- Building **successful relationships**. In Oct 2018, DBE held an indaba to open dialogue on teacher professionalisation, teacher standards and school-bas initial teacher education models. Success of this event was attributed to th collaborative nature of the Funza Lushaka evaluation (process use)
- **Unintended use** - Parliament became more interested in understanding ho FLBP graduates are placed in specific targeted areas rather than the logisti administrative data concerning how placement was managed

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Use of NSNP evaluation

- Task teams set up with their *de facto* terms of reference the NSNP evaluation recommendations relevant to the theme of the Task
- NSNP guidelines should specify who the meals are intended f how leftover meals and stock should be dealt with, and moni implementation.
  - DBE committed to revising its guidelines on meals and developi stock control and plans to manage leftovers, because there are learners who prefer certain meals to others, so they waste food when they do not eat.
  - DBE evaluated quality of soya mince and developed a list of compliant manufacturers, which was then approved and circulated to PEDs. Considering alternatives to soya as a protein meals, in consultation with nutrition experts.
- Evaluation process deepened stakeholders' understanding of the NSNP activities, opportunities for better implementation, and utility (DPME 2017, p.19) (conceptual use).

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Use interventions from DBE systems

Intervention	Effect and change mechanism activated
Knowledge brokering role of Strategic Planning, Research and Coordination Chief Directorate	Unit 'marketed' itself to programme managers to see the va of improving implementation through evaluations a identifying possible topics. Undertook internal communication to inform management a minister of findings and recommendations Working with programme managers helped to build awaren of evaluations and findings, trust in credibility of findings, a ensure institutionalisation of responses to the evaluation
Unit having technically strong members	Allowed DBE to play a strong role in the technical side of the evaluation, and increased the credibility and legitimacy of it within DBE, and so trust in the findings
Presenting and showcasing evaluation findings in different forums	Evaluations presented at Council of Education ministe HeadCom of technical heads of education departments provinces with national government, various interprovinc subcommittees, e.g. on teacher development; curriculu planning and M&E. Helped to build *trust* in the evaluat results

Use interventions arising from elements o the national evaluation system

Elements of NES	Change triggered
Evaluation Steering Committee	Enabled co-development of all stages of the evaluation. This facilitated agreement, ownership and trust between DPME and DBE and conviction ir the usefulness of evaluation results
Developing TOC with stakeholders	Helped to build common understanding of how the programme worked, valuable in itself, and in the process interest by stakeholders in being part o the process
Validation workshop	Made stakeholders aware of the findings and recommendations w developed with them. Allowed stakeholders to reflect on recommendations, agree and own them, and trust the results
Simple report	Improved accessibility helped with advocacy and dissemination of findings
Improvement plan	Developed closely with FLBP and NSNP. Provided formal mechanism for agreeing how to take forward recommendations
Report public	Once approved by Cabinet reports public on DBE/DPME websites. Helped i stakeholders being aware of the results
Approval by Cabinet	Cabinet helped to get evaluation taken seriously and in generat momentum for follow-up actions.
Role of DPME	Provided technical assistance, guidance and logistical support for proces involved in evaluations, and a bridge to reporting to Cabinet

CONTEXT

External dimension: Macro-context; intra-relationships with state/non-state agents

Internal dimension: culture; organizational capacity; management; and core resources

Contextual fa which facilitate

- **Stability of leadership** – Minister in place since 2009 - political will to support independent evaluation
- **Crises** – 2012 textbook crisis provided the impulse for the dept to be prepared to consider changes
- **Champions** - Chief Directorate Strat Planning, Research and Coordination, which includes Research and Evaluations Directorate, ha been champions for evidence generation and use.
  - Played an important role in helping their peers who manage programmes t appreciate the value of lessons from evaluations.
  - They have access to strategic discussions in DBE and so can broker use
  - Provided a technically strong partner for DPME to work with on the evaluations, and have played the knowledge broker role in DBE to maximis the likelihood of use.
- **Presence of national evaluation system** as well as support from DPME provided many elements which encouraged use

Barriers to use

- Reluctance to implement parts of **improvement plans** where proposed activities have negative political implications, are inconsistent with the law, too expensive to implement, impracti lack management support or require policy amendment and therefore are not enforceable.
- **Hesitation** by some managers in undertaking evaluations, assoc with uncertainty of the value of evaluations, concerns about underperformance and repercussions.
- In other evaluations, **legitimacy** where the service provider appointed in the competitive bidding process was a renowned c of government programmes.

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Outcomes

- Knowledge broker role transferred.
- Joint communication capacity developed, using evidence a experiences
  - The NSNP leak stimulated interest in government evaluations in civ
- Stimulated interest in developing reporting tools and data s
- Stakeholder reporting strengthened in relation to accounta placement, enrolment, and monitoring.
  - External auditors understanding as changes. read the report!
- Evaluation benefits materialized and strengthened internal relationships. Helped communication to encourage eviden

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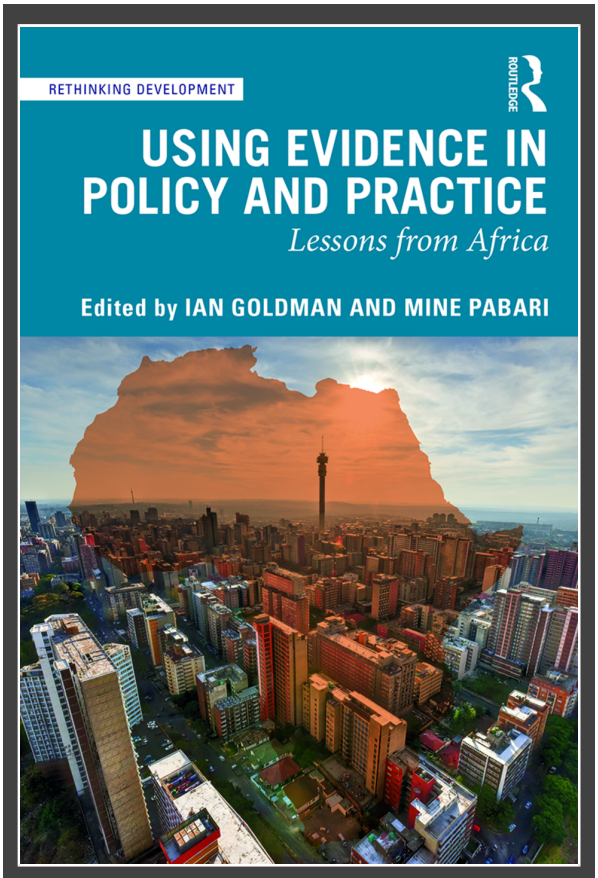
Conclusions

- The cases presented in this chapter are evaluations where the evi and recommendations from the evaluations were used.
- Knowledge broker role of the Chief Directorate was important in l the use of evaluations. Constant need to reinforce the utility of th evaluations was a stumbling block but was overcome by consisten communicating the benefits.
- Despite low levels of understanding about the need for evaluation programme managers and initial reservations about the evaluatio being public, both evaluations eventually strengthened programm managers in reviewing and strengthening policy implementation.
- Overall, this case provides a picture of how a government departm can undertake evaluations effectively, and the importance of an in knowledge broker to champion and support this.
- It also shows the usefulness of a national evaluation system provi key elements that encourage use.



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Forewords, *Ruhakana Rugunda, Prime Minister, Republic of Uganda and Paul Cairney, University of Stirling*; 1. Introduction to the Book; 2. An Introduction to Evidence-Informed Policy and Practice in Africa; 3. Using Evidence in Africa; 4. Mere Compliance or Learning; 5. Using Evaluations to Inform Policy and Practice in a Government Department; 6. Use of Evidence in a Complex Social

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Thank you

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