



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA



3RD UGANDA EVALUATION WEEK, KAMPALA, UGANDA

10TH – 13TH MARCH 2015

CALL FOR PAPERS

Theme: Quality Evaluations for Accountable Service Delivery

1. Introduction

The Government of Uganda represented by the Office of the Prime Minister and the Uganda Parliamentary Forum on Evaluation in partnership with the Uganda Evaluation Association is organizing the Uganda Evaluation Week 2015 and herewith invites papers that will guide the deliberations of the week.

The Uganda Evaluation Week is an international platform where Policy makers, Government technocrats, Civil Society, Academia, Development Partners, Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) practitioners and the private sector meet to share evaluation experiences. The Evaluation week will be the third of its kind held annually and attracts participants from African Countries, Europe, the Americas and beyond.

The central theme for the 2015 Evaluation Week is **“Quality Evaluations for Accountable Service Delivery”**. The event is scheduled to take place from March 10th – 13th 2015 in Kampala, Uganda. A pre-conference training on Development Evaluation will be conducted for selected participants who will have applied for training from the 10th -11th March 2015, followed by a two-day conference from the 12th – 13th March 2015 for invited participants.

The DAC Quality Standards for Development Evaluation (2010) note that quality evaluations should provide credible and useful evidence to strengthen accountability for development results or contribute to learning processes, or both. Evaluations therefore play a vital role in development since they provide the much-required feedback on how well services are delivered. A central role for governments and civil society organizations is to deliver services that are responsive to the needs of its people. Civil society organizations with support of development partners have augmented government in the provision of services. While government has implemented numerous programs, projects and policies designed to deliver services to citizens, seldom have performance assessments taken centre stage. Interventions implemented by civil society organizations have however been subjected to independent evaluation of their performance. In both cases, evaluations have largely been driven by development/funding partners, hence the promotion of a culture of evaluations. However, most of the donor-led evaluations have tended to focus on accountability, not on learning for improvement. Evaluation practitioners have therefore found themselves

conducting accountability-oriented evaluations, which tend to be less demanding in terms of rigor and quality.

Quality evaluations are considered to be those with a high degree of influence. They can thus be relied upon to make decisions in regard to improvements to the design and implementation of responsive service delivery based on lessons learnt. On a positive note, over the last couple of years, evaluations have started to gain prominence in influencing decision making with regard to policies, projects and programs in government and civil society. The Evaluation Capacity Development (ECD) project implemented by the Office of the Prime Minister in partnership with Uganda Evaluation Association and with support of German Development Cooperation has implemented numerous activities targeting government, civil society actors, the academia and evaluation practitioners. Through a combination of awareness raising and training, the role evaluation plays in the development agenda is increasingly being appreciated. In working towards consolidating achievements in raising the profile and practice of evaluations in Uganda, the main conference theme points to the link between quality evaluations and accountable service delivery.

From the main theme, six sub-themes have been identified and these respond to gaps and challenges to evaluation in the country. The call for papers is designed to enlist papers from academics, researchers and students.

2. Evaluation Week Themes

The theme for the 2015 Uganda Evaluation Week is “Quality Evaluations for Accountable Service Delivery”. The following sub-themes will guide the deliberations during the event;

2.1 Building a culture of reviews and evaluation

Joyce Mayne (2008) defines an evaluative culture as that which deliberately seeks out information on performance in order to use that information to learn how to better manage and deliver its programs and services, and thereby improve its performance. Other terms used for such a culture include a culture of results, a culture of performance, an evaluation culture and a culture of inquiry. An organization or institution that values empirical evidence on the results outputs and outcomes it seeks to achieve can thus be said to have a culture of evaluation. In the context of Uganda, not many organizations and institutions conduct evaluations more as a ritual. This sub-theme is therefore expected to address issues relating to:

- Giving evaluation its platform
- Understanding the value of evaluation
- Making evaluation relevant
- Raising the platform for users of evaluation

2.2 Utilization of Evaluations

Often, commissioners of an evaluation consider the evaluation process to be complete, once a final evaluation report has been received. The evaluation process should pay attention to the use of the recommendations and conclusions for internal learning and thus facilitating change as necessary, and also sharing of findings with external stakeholders. Recommendations made to government and ministry leaders following the completion of monitoring and evaluation activities are not always followed up or acted upon, meaning that there are not always tangible improvements being made to services as a result of all the M&E activity being undertaken. This sub-theme is therefore expected to respond to:

- Knowledge management
- Influencing decision-making
- Sharing evaluation to stakeholders
- Utilization of findings and recommendations

- Role of Parliament

2.3 Strengthening and institutionalizing evaluation capacity & practice

Strengthening and institutionalizing evaluations through capacity development contributes to improving transparency, and building a performance culture within governments to support better management and policymaking, and to strengthen accountability relationships. Civil society plays a catalytic role through the provision of assessments of government performance. The development of good-practice approaches facilitates the sharing of the growing body of experience with evaluations. This sub-theme shall require academics, researchers and students to address the following areas:

- Capacity building
- Methodological issues
- The Evaluation process
- Key challenges for evaluation practice in Uganda
- Participatory evaluation
- Gender and/or conflict sensitive evaluation

2.4 Evaluation Ethics, Standards and Systems

The DAC Quality Standards for Development Evaluation (2010) further point out that evaluations should be guided by relevant professional and ethical guidelines and codes of conduct for individual evaluators. Ethical concerns require evaluation to be undertaken with integrity and honesty. Commissioners, evaluation managers and evaluators should be mindful of the need to respect: human rights, cultures, customs, religious beliefs and practices, gender roles, ethnicity, ability, age, sexual orientation, language and other differences when designing and carrying out the evaluation. Standards on the other hand aim to improve quality and ultimately to reinforce the contribution of evaluation to improving development outcomes. The M&E network in Uganda is highly fragmented across government, with significant inefficiencies and overlapping M&E activities. These inconsistencies ultimately render any evaluation system ineffective. This sub-theme is therefore expected to address issues relating to:

- Ethics in Evaluation
- Evaluation Standards
- Quality assurance
- Evaluation Systems

2.5 Building Evaluation Partnerships and Communities of Practice

The nascent evaluation culture among Ugandans and many other African countries calls for institutionalization and capacity building for it to take root. This calls for sharing of skills and information among the practitioners within and without. Networking is one very clear strategy through which this can be achieved; professionals in the field need to link up with their counterparts in the country and outside to be able to learn from each other. Special emphasis should be put in sharing of standards and good practices. South to south cooperation among those in the developing world is critical, which calls for the formation of strong national and regional organizations in order to be able to build capacities for effective completion globally. This sub-theme focuses on:

- The International Agenda
- Regional and national partnerships
- Networking / expanding the Community of Practice

2.6 Political Economy of evaluation

Porter and Goldman (2013) agree that there is now evidence of emerging country-led demands for evaluations in Africa, consistent with the general emphasis of the Paris Declaration on the use of country

owned systems. In Uganda, civil society has played a key role in undertaking and demanding evaluations. The connection however between evaluations supply and demands remains limited. The state and civil society have an interest in evaluations, although for a long time evaluations undertaken by non-state actors were often treated with suspicion and hence recommendations not taken up. The establishment of the Government Evaluation Facility to fund evaluations of government programmes, policies and projects presents an opportunity and also demonstrates governments resolve to assess its own performance. This sub-theme is therefore expected to among others address the following topics that are deemed relevant to creating a better understanding around the political economy of evaluation:

- Politics of Evaluation
- Role of State and civil society
- Funding for Evaluations

Therefore we invite you to submit papers and/or proposals for presentations communicating to the overall theme or the indicated sub-themes.

Additionally, the organizing committee invites those interested to present as part of a panel discussion or lead or chair specific sessions to also express their interest.

The process for submission of abstracts is ongoing and final papers should be submitted to the Evaluation Week Task Force by 25 February 2015. The Abstract should be between 250-500 words (Maximum). Full Papers should be between 2000 – 5000 words (maximum), typed and double spaced. Abstracts and papers should be submitted as Word (.doc or .rtf) files by email to the address below. Multiple papers may be submitted, but should be registered separately.

<u>Important Dates</u>	<u>Date</u>
Abstract Submission:	31st January 2015
Notification of Acceptance:	15 th February 2015
Final Paper Submission:	25 th February 2015

Abstracts and final papers should be sent to Mr. Timothy Lubanga at tlubanga@hotmail.com and copied to Rossetti Nabbumba at rnabbumba@gmail.com and Marina Mayer Tasch at mayertasch@yahoo.de

For more information please consult Dr Albert Byamugisha (abyamugisha@gmail.com) or Timothy Lubanga (tlubanga@hotmail.com)

Important Links:

Concept Note:	www.opm.go.ug , www.ugandaevaluationassociation.org , https://ecduganda.wordpress.com/evaluation-week-2/
Conference News:	www.ugandaevaluationassociation.org , https://ecduganda.wordpress.com/evaluation-week-2/
Previous Conferences:	https://ecduganda.wordpress.com/evaluation-week-2/

References:

OECD DAC Quality Standards for Development Evaluation (OECD DAC, 1991).

Mayne, J. (2008), Building an Evaluative Culture for Effective Evaluation and Results Management. ILAC Working Paper 8, Rome, Institutional Learning and Change Initiative.

Porter, S and Goldman, I (2013), A Growing Demand for Monitoring and Evaluation in Africa', African Evaluation Journal.