

**INSTITUTIONALISATION OF EVALUATION IN
AFRICA:
LESSONS LEARNT & CHALLENGES**

**BY SAMUEL D BRAIMAH
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
AFRICAN EVALUATION
ASSOCIATION
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INTRODUCTION

- The subject of institutionalization of evaluation is the current and future direction that should be able to pull millions out of the poverty trap.
- In September 2005, 11 Latin American Countries met to discuss how to promote the idea. Manuel Fernando Castro, the then Head of Evaluation, National Planning Department of Colombia made a profound statement that I will like to quote: He said ***“Truly the stars and the planets have aligned in terms of the interest in this subject [institutionalizing M&E systems], both within countries and in the international community. This is an exceptional window of opportunity.”*** The presence of our Latin American friends here makes me feel that it is time for the stars and planets to align in Africa.

INTRODUCTION

In this presentation, I will like us to look at

- the influence of international instruments and declarations on the evolution of institutionalizing Evaluation in the developing world,
- the elements that should be in current and future efforts to institutionalize evaluation of public policy for better performance for disadvantaged populations and
- The challenges before us that we must overcome

THE EVOLUTION OF INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF EVALUATION OF PUBLIC POLICY

- Until recently, Evaluation has (debatably) been driven by the donor community
- The result is the use of different tools and methodologies by different donors to measure the outcomes and impact of interventions that they have funded
- The state usually worked to ensure being in line with the donors & if vulnerable populations were not on the radar of the donor, they got lost
- The launch of the MDGs introduced common goals and targets, as well as focus on vulnerable populations - state governments could focus and accomplish these goals.
- The advent of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness introduced a new paradigm – how effective is AID?

EVOLUTION OF EVALUATION OF PUBLIC POLICY

- The key elements of the PDAE include state ownership of development strategies, donor alignment with these strategies, harmonization of donor aid, focus on results and mutual accountability for results
- The commitment by developing countries to ensure state ownership of development strategies as well as focus on results and accountability called for a rigorous state led evaluation architecture particularly in Africa.
- State institutionalization of evaluation, although initiated by many countries before these two landmarks, has been strengthened to respond to this paradigm shift. A good example is in South Africa, Benin as other emerging systems.

EVOLUTION OF EVALUATION OF PUBLIC POLICY

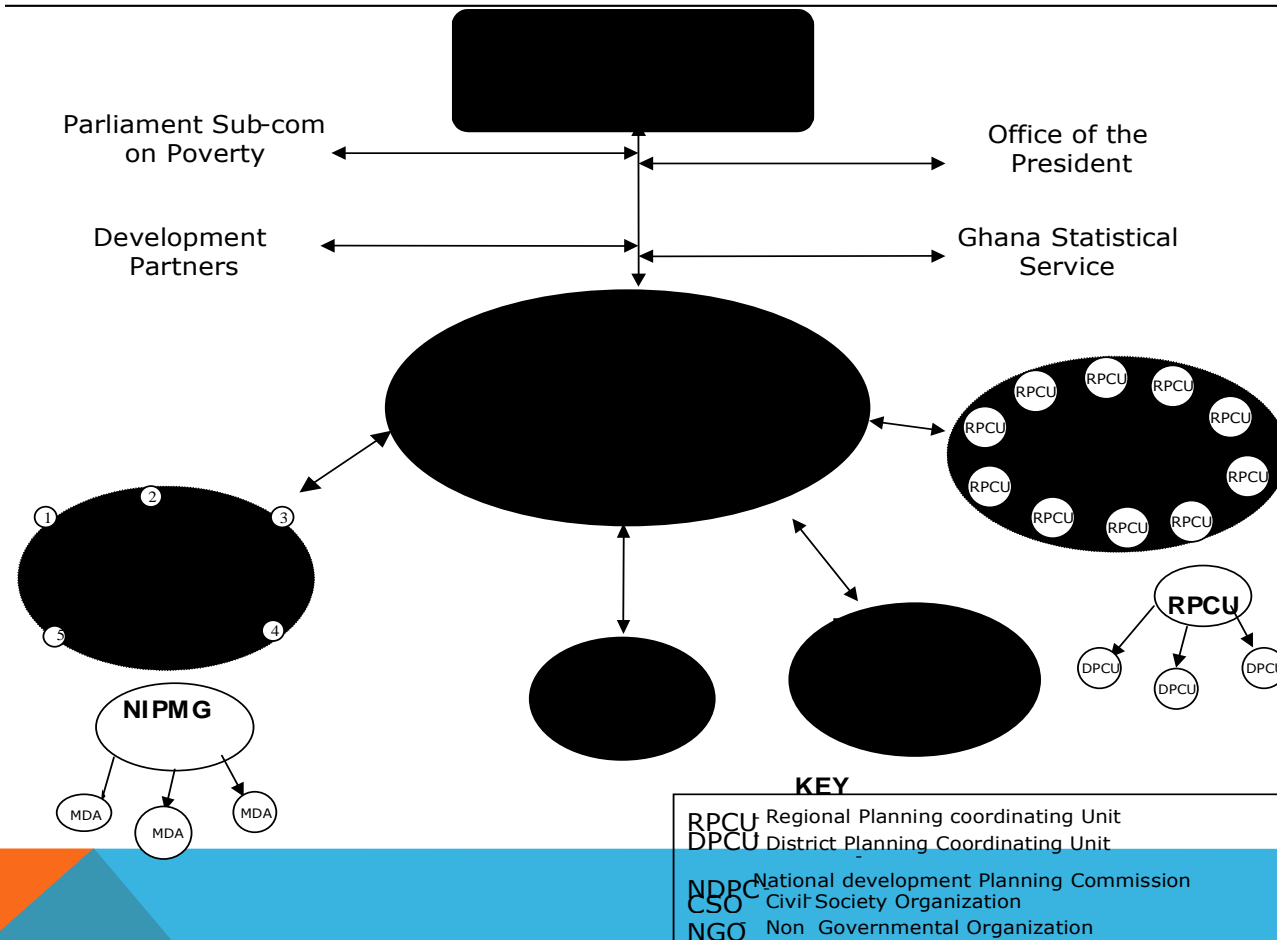
- **Several developing countries had already established structures for this responds**
 - NDPC in Ghana est. 1994
 - SINERGIA in Colombia est. 1994
 - Uganda 1997
 - Mali 1997
 - Senegal 2001
 - SSEGP in Peru 2004
 - And of recent South Africa DPME and Benin A Ministry

ELEMENTS OF CURRENT AND THE NEXT GENERATION OF INSTITUTIONALISATION OF EVALUATION

- Establishment by law, of an independent structure for evaluation. In most countries, this is the body responsible for managing the policy planning cycle. Ghana has the NDPC, ISSER and a unit in the office of the president called the Policy Evaluation and Oversight Unit. To ensure that the vulnerable are not isolated.
- Creation of ministries that focus on vulnerable populations – e.g., Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection in Ghana created in 2001 under a different name – Ministry of Women and Children.
- Ensuring the creation of evaluation departments in all sectors of government – equipping, staffing and training the staff as well as resource allocation to ensure functionality and policy instruments.
- Decentralising the function to all levels of Reg & Local government to enable vulnerable populations to contribute to evaluation of programmes affecting them.
- Grassroots & Vulnerable populations participation in evaluation is becoming a more efficient method of interrogating public policy

- Ensuring that evaluation is part of the national planning process and budget preparation to ensure the inclusion of measurable indicators of actions targeting vulnerable groups – evaluation must not be an after-thought.
- Ensuring that evaluation focuses on measurement of results and holding defined bodies accountable for the results. The inclusion of vulnerable populations in this measurement is important – to ensure that evaluators are not measuring progress that mean nothing to the vulnerable.
- Inclusive Institutional Framework – made up of research institutions including CSOs & NGOs, Development partners, Parliament, Private Sector, decentralised evaluation bodies etc. E.g., of Ghana in the next slide.

- Strengthening research and academic institutions to be independent and able to generate evaluation information – in Ghana we have ISSER. It is a good idea to link with research institutions with counterpart academia in other countries – in a S-S or S-N collaboration.
- Facilitating media engagement with the state institutions in charge of evaluation and with vulnerable groups – give vulnerable populations a voice – Private sector engagement.



CHALLENGES

- **Creating a balance between independence of institutions and their engagement with political manifestos.**
- **Absence of long term strategic objectives that will remain the same independent of the political party in power.**
- **How to translate evaluation results and reports to action of holding duty bearers accountable and responsible – Can an institution do this? E.g., CHRAJ in Ghana**
- **Difficulty in getting vulnerable populations to engage in the evaluation of interventions affecting their lives.**
- **Lack of functional and inclusive policy document that is periodically assessed in meeting desired objectives.**
- **Poor capacity of Evaluators beyond the technical to the political: Since we all agree the political environment is not only tough but significantly challenging to implementation of evaluation recommendations.**

THE WAY FORWARD

- Africa needs a similar forum as the LAC forum of 2005 to move this subject forward and particularly promote learning and adaptations of good practice.
- The discussions on institutionalizing evaluation of public policy for better performance for marginalised populations must be sustained and political analysis used to influence change.
- The capacity to change is intrinsic across countries. There is need to create a critical mass to push the agenda forward.
- The Present AfrEA regime is looking to intensify focus on Africa and African institutions to promote the agenda of Socially Inclusive Evaluation.

