

Perspectives on the Impact of Evaluation: Approaches to Assessing Development Effectiveness and Good Governance in Nigeria

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Abstract

In growing number service providers, funders, and the public are calling for clearer evidence that the resources the government expend actually produce benefits for people. Consumers of services and volunteers want to know that government programs they really make a difference to the community development. That is, they want better accountability for the use of resources. This at the moment is seriously non-existent in Nigeria. Although improved accountability has been a major force behind the move to outcome measurement, there is an even more important reason: To help programs improve services. Outcome measurement provides a learning loop that feeds information back into programs on how well they are doing. The feedback loop in measurement technique continuously provides performance indicators to optimize the effectiveness of the programs in real time. Outcome measurement techniques are often used to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of government programs. Subsequently, such interventions lead to improved accountability and good governance. It offers findings, they can use to adapt, improve, and become more effective in service delivery. It focuses on outcomes and gives program managers and staff a clear picture about the purpose of their efforts. That clarification along frequently leads to more focused and productive service delivery. An estimated 11,886 federal government projects were abandoned in the past 40 years across the country, that will cost an estimated N7.78 trillion to complete. These frightening figures are from the report of the Presidential Projects Assessment Committee (PAC) that was constituted in March 2011 by President Jonathan to verify cases of abandoned federal government projects in Nigeria. In a nutshell, to understand why projects in Nigeria are abandoned, it is a known fact that, that government is notorious for lack of continuity with policies due to the frequent changes in government. Whether it is long term development plans or contracts for critical infrastructure, the repeated practice in Nigeria is that once new officers are elected or appointed, policies or programs of the previous administrations are abandoned. This unfortunate trend of lack of continuity has resulted and has become the root cause of nepotism, corruption, and so officials re-ward such contracts to cronies and generous campaign donors at outrageous prices. Therefore, the objective of this paper is to help champion the reality of good governance today which calls for increased scrutiny and greater expectations for accountability and effectiveness of outcomes, outputs and necessary enablers. This leads to creating a positive culture of learning and improvement. To accomplish these noble objectives, all resources must be deployed to achieve their deserved results and impacts, which leads to better performance. Therefore, all available oversight resources will be used in making government in Nigeria accountable to the electorate to help bring meaningful and sustainable development to the grass roots of Nigeria. The logic evaluation model is a must program design to assist government monitor and implement their programs and projects in a systematic and transparent way. The question might be asked why we need to measure the outcome of these programs and projects. Assessing and tracing our uninspiring entrenched corrupt institutions and bureaucracies with a political history since independence in 1960 of mismanagement of resources in government, one will come to realize the enormity of our shaky political foundation. To date it has been 14 years of uninterrupted, nothing to show of the fledgling democratic governance since 1999.

Keywords: logic program evaluation model, accountability, programs, projects, government, electorates, dividend of democracy, improve, assessment

Introduction

Democracy is for the people, by the people, and of the people. Therefore, it's predicated on the people. By voting, the electorates confer their collective authority and power to elected officials to exercise in trust for them that mandate that they gave to the elected officials. According to Udo Jude, Nigeria's constitution recognizes that sovereignty rests with the people, and by extension, government must be accountable to the people. The fact that public service is an exercise of trust places a greater moral obligation on elected leaders to exercise the people's mandate with the highest sense of responsibility. Recent events in Nigeria have called into question the manner of democracy that is practiced. Are elected officials in any way accountable to the people they govern? If yes, what are the means available to the people to ensure an effective nexus of accountability? Are the people even remotely aware of the means and standards they should expect from their leaders in terms of accountability? The extent to which governance has been reduced in Nigeria is saddening. It is not just about the abysmal quality of leadership, but also about the cowardly docility of the ones being led. Government is so personalized that constructive criticism of the failings of government is erroneously defined as unpatriotic. It is the mentality of the leader as "king" that has undermined accountability and sustained impunity in our clime. Every issue around governance is seen from the myopic lens of self interest and crass mediocrity, - he is better than the others. Increasingly, we reduce the bar of accountability and promote a culture of apathy to best practices, said Udo.

Given the situation we have, I decided to come up with this write up as my contribution to the crisis of accountability in Nigeria. Evaluation for years has been used as a tool for change, therefore, my hope is that this write up can contribute to change the mindset of our elected leaders to be accountable to the electorate. This write up will be a guide as it provides a basic foundation on how to make evaluations really matter especially in terms of accountability. According to Dabo, in a paper presented in January 2013, that another cardinal issue affecting the Nigerian polity, and one that needs to be imperatively tackled, is the lack of accountability. This is perhaps the greatest limiting factor in our positive development as a nation. Accountability is the only way we can ensure that actions and decisions taken by public officials are subject to oversight, so as to guarantee that government initiatives meet their stated objectives and respond to the needs of the community they are meant to be benefiting. In Nigeria, transparency and accountability are jinxed and execrable words, and to mention them is considered a taboo and absolute balderdash. The lack of accountability is what venality thrives on, and is the primary reason we find unprecedented levels of corruption in every one of our institutions. From the top tiers of government to the lower ranks, funds are squandered and siphoned, projects abandoned, inflated contracts awarded, and power abused. All these illegalities go undetected or unpunished, and even worse, considered customary. Many ministries propose hundreds of millions of 'on-going projects' in different areas of the country. A citizen's report on the progress of these so-called projects in his/her states could shed light on the effectiveness of their implementation.

Dabo also alludes to the fact that a system with very little transparency is an incentive for shady and fraudulent practices, and is a destined route to failure and further melancholy. Due to pitiable levels of accountability, we witness the 'disappearance' of billions of Naira right under our noses (as seen in Printing and Minting last year); we witness mind-blowing swindling and immeasurable looting (such as the police pension and fuel subsidy scams); the degeneration of public institutions and infrastructure (such as the dreadful police colleges, educational institutions and state and federal roads). The list is interminable. What is the way forward?. There are a few simple steps that could empower us and provide us with the resources to hold public officials and institutions accountable, and one is through evaluation. The following are examples of how evaluation has been used for good governance and accountability.

In a report, "Commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction: methodological issues in the evaluation of progress at the national and local levels", prepared for United Nations development policy and analysis division by Punyaratabandhu (2004), good governance as conceived by the World Bank, The United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and other donor agencies consists of two major dimensions: political and economic. The political dimension can be broken down into four key components: government legitimacy; government accountability; government competency; and the rule of law (human rights). The economic dimension also has four components: public sector management; organizational accountability; rule of law (contracts, property rights); and transparency (including freedom of information).

In May 2013, the Canadian government, through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) signed a \$10million over five year agreement/partnership that supports good governance in South Africa. The government of South Africa is committed to modernizing its public service to achieve greater effectiveness and efficiency. In its efforts to accelerate the transformation process, the Technical Assistance Unit within the Nationaal Treasury of the Government of South Africa was established in 2001. It provides technical assistance to government departments at all levels to support them in fulfilling their mandates. This initiative aims to build government capacity to deliver public services to the population, in particular for marginalized groups. It also seeks to strengthen government accountability, training, and technical support to government departments to help them develop their policies, management services to the population, and monitor their performance.

Challenges of Governance and Accountability

According to McNeil, Mary, Malena, & Carmen. (2010), this is a challenging time for Africa. The combined effects of the global economic crisis, the need for equitable allocation of natural resource assets, and the ever-changing balance of influence and power between the developed and developing worlds require African countries to re-evaluate their governance structures. "Social accountability," as defined in this book, is an approach to enhancing government accountability and transparency. It refers to the wide range of citizen actions to hold the state to account, as well as actions on the part of government, media, and other actors that promote or facilitate these efforts. Social accountability strategies and tools help empower ordinary citizens to exercise their inherent rights and to hold governments accountable for the use of public funds and how they exercise authority. Global experience has shown that such initiatives can be catalytic, and that they increasingly play critical role in securing and sustaining governance reforms that strengthen transparency and accountability. The case studies presented in this book represent a cross-section of African countries, drawing on initiatives, launched and implemented both by civil society groups and by local and national governments in countries with different political contexts and cultures. Over the past decade, a wide range of social accountability practices, such as participatory budgeting, independent budget analysis, participatory monitoring of public expenditures, and citizen evaluation of public services – have been developed and tested in countries such as Brazil, India, the Philippines, and South Africa. In less developed Sub-Saharan African countries, civil society and government actors are also actively creating and experimenting with social accountability approaches (and tools), but these experiences, their outcomes, and lessons have received less attention and been less documented, studied, and shared. This volume aims to help fill this gap by describing and analyzing a selection of social accountability initiatives from seven Sub-Saharan countries: Benin, Ghana, Malawi, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe.

Based on the given reasons above, I felt there was a need as a private citizen of Nigeria to also find a way of contributing to good governance in Nigeria using evaluation. Evaluation utilizes many of the same methodologies (qualitative and quantitative), used in traditional social research, evaluation takes place within a political and organizational context, it requires group processing skills (planning, decision making, and goal setting), management ability, political dexterity, sensitivity to multiple stakeholders and other skills that social research in general does not depend on. In addition, evaluation is a progressive and systematic, ongoing process of assessing the worth or potential value of programs/projects in order to guide in the decision-making of the program's future sustenance. Given the above definitions, evaluation is, and will continue to be, an important component of sustainable growth.

In agreement with one of the main objectives of this paper, Keith Machkay, in his book, *How to Build M&E Systems to Support Better Government*, said: Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) are at the center of sound governance arrangements. They are necessary for the achievement of evidence based policy making, budget decisions, management, and accountability. There is no "best" model of what a government M&E system should look like. Much depends on which of the several potential uses of M&E information constitute the main reasons for building such a system. It is helpful to start with a diagnosis of what M&E functions already exist and their strengths and weaknesses, in terms of demand (the actual use of M&E information) and supply (the technical quality of monitoring information and evaluation reports). Diagnoses can also help raise awareness and agreement on the priority for M&E A next step is developing an action plan, avenues that will lead to the desired destination for an M&E system. This should involve key stakeholders in central and sectoral ministries, donors, universities, and so on. Key elements of an action plan include influential champions, creation of strong incentives both to conduct M&E and to use the information, training in M&E and in using M&E information, structural arrangements to ensure M&E objectivity and quality, and a long –term commitment to institutionalizing M&E.

There are many lessons from countries that have built successful government M&E systems – and there are many mistakes to avoid. Another mistake, according to Keith is believing that M&E has inherent value; M&E information is valuable only if it is intensively utilized. The bottom-line yardstick of success is the extent to which the M&E information is being used to improve government performance.

According to Trochim (2002), the generic goal of most evaluations is the systematic acquisition and assessment of information to provide useful feedback about some object (program, policy, technology, person, need, activity, and so on) to a variety of audiences, including sponsor, donors, client-groups, administrators, staff, and other relevant constituencies with the attendant goal of influencing decision –making or policy formulation.

Since its creation in 1973, the World Bank’s Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) formerly known as the Operations Evaluation Department has supported the efforts of government in developing countries to strengthen their monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems and capacities. Over this period, IEG has accumulated considerable experience in this topic in a wide range of countries and public sector environments. We shall consider examples from other developing countries as to how to build M&E systems to support better government.

It is pertinent, therefore, to ask, “Why do we evaluate programs and projects”? Given the realities of today, there are:

- Greater demand for competition
- Greater expectations for effectiveness
- Increasing scrutiny from the electorate
- Greater need for accountability
- Greater need for collaboration and team work
- Fewer funds

In November 2012, Nelson wrote, that the President of Trade Union Congress, deplores the situation of poor budget implementation, said the leaders of Nigeria are playing pranks with the nation’s development issues, adding that the fiscal calendar, unbridled thirst for public wealth by leaders, bureaucracy and fiscal indiscipline were the driving force behind the ugly trend. Since the return of civil rule in 2009, the country has not recorded 50 per cent capital budget implementation and this can tell you how anxious the leadership has been. Can they run their personal businesses like this? Money meant for projects are shared by hands and at the end, nothing or less were left for project implementation. Projects are left unattended or even abandoned. In 2012, 71 percent of the nation’s budget was recurrent expenditure, while 29 percent was capital expenditure. But the current expenditure was implemented to the letter. None of those in leadership positions complained of not being paid either salary or traveling allowance. The worst is that we are not sure of the unimplemented votes’ whereabouts. One might begin to wonder what people do in various government offices to earn their salaries, when projects that are left unimplemented from year to year. It is only the nation’s capital votes, are implemented fully. This is regrettable. The electorates are always worse off when situations like these exist, especially when projects that are meant to touch lives are not executed.

Therefore, the electorate has the right to ask any fundamental accountability questions such as:

- You have been allocated or given billions of Naira last year, what did your department, agency, state, local government does with the allocated billions of Naira the year before?
- We have supported your party, government and have been very loyal for the past 3 years, why should we continue this support?
- Given the scenario of abandoned projects, when are you doing to improve or terminate ineffective programs and projects?
- With your term of office almost coming to an end, what new programs need to be developed and what guarantee do we have about completing the projects that you started? What guarantee do we have that you will meet the needs of the people you are serving and as you promised them during the electioneering campaign?
- How can we trust you, given all that has happened in the last 8 years?

The Need and Importance of Evaluation in Good governance and Accountability

It is important to keep in mind that when we evaluate a project/program we examine,

- the full context of the program/project
- analyzing and studying its goals and objectives
- gathering information about the project's resources, inputs, activities, outcomes (short and long term) and finally, the impact
- comparing findings to some pre-set standards in order to determine how well or not the programs are doing
- making a value judgment about the project
- reporting findings to stakeholder.

It is also very important to document and report the impact the programs and projects are making. "Impact" is a clear and simple description of the value of a program to people and society. Generally, these are the long-term benefits to the client or society. The impact could involve:

- Increased knowledge
- Improved attitudes
- Improved services (water, health, education)
- Financial gain
- Production efficiencies
- Preservation of environmental resources
- Modified behavior
- Improved condition (living, sanitation, housing, roads etc.)

Another key question about evaluation is when does the evaluation begin? The starting point or timing of outcome measure may begin at:

- project/program design stage or conceptuality
- project/program start –up stage
- continuous monitoring (progress) or formative evaluation
- At the completion of the program/project or summative evaluation
- Feedback or sustainability monitoring.

Accordingly, the most basic distinction in evaluation types is between formative and summative evaluation. Formative evaluations strengthen or improve the object being evaluated. They help form it by examining the delivery of the program or technology, the quality of its implementation, and the assessment of the organizational context, personnel, procedures, inputs, and so on. Summative evaluations, in contrast, examine the effects, or outcomes of some object (program, policy, technology, person, need, activity, and so on). They describe what happens subsequent to delivery of the program or technology, assessing whether the object can be said to have caused the outcome, determining the overall impact of the causal factor beyond only the immediate target outcomes and estimating the relative costs associated with the object.

It is also important to explain the role of the evaluator, which in most cases are in two main categories; traditional (expert, scientist, researchers) and contemporary; (educator, government officials, facilitator, consultants, interpreters and mediators of change agents). The evaluators' credibility is also very crucial all through the outcome measurement process. There are two key components of this credibility: competence, which involves knowledge of the program, evaluation or outcome measurement expertise, data analysis and interpretation skills, report writing and presentation skills, and personal style, which involves communication skills, strong interpersonal skills, the ability to nurture and sustain trust and rapport, sensitivity in reporting, and respect for each other.

Evaluators asked many different kinds of questions and used a variety of methods to address them, such as case studies, and I have also been personally involved in initiating and conducting workshops/seminars on the need for accountability and good governance for chief executives of government agencies in Nigeria since 2000. These are considered within the framework of formative and summative evaluation.

Formulating and conceptualizing methods that might be used include brainstorming, focus groups, stakeholder need assessment, surveys, etc., which have also been validated in the book, *Demanding Good Governance: Lessons from Social Accountability Initiatives in Africa* by McNeil, Mary Malena and Carmen. In order to develop a useful set of performance measures, a partnership should be formed between program staff, key stakeholders, and people with external expertise in evaluation and organizational management as advocated by the partnership between CIDA and South Africa which supports good governance.

Process indicators provide information about the operations and activities within the daily management of a program. They provide valuable information about what activities are occurring at each level of a program's operation, and may signal areas where changes or improvements are needed.

Specific activities included individual and small group interviews, telephone surveys, large group meetings, extensive document review and examination of data sources is supported by the work of Matthew, Pamela, and Abraham in, "Getting to Outcomes, which won the American Evaluation Association's Outstanding Publication Award for 2008. Based on the information from these activities, one can develop a model of program activities and a list of potential measures with appropriate benchmarks. Variables which provide data on elements over which program managers have limited control or no control, but which appear as important factors in managing the program.

Public participants, and client satisfaction indicators are included to highlight the importance of feedback from clients receiving services and key stakeholder groups as a basis for continuous improvement in the quality of program/projects. The dividends of democracy are evident when the electorate can clearly identify and feel the impact of the resources of the government, actually producing tangible benefits for the people. That is to say, they demand better accountability for the use of resources and a feed-back mechanism for sustainable development.

According to Merilee (2004), among the multitude of governance reforms that "must be done" to encourage development and reduce poverty, there is little guidance about what's essential and what's not, what should come first and what should follow, what can be achieved in the short term and what can only be achieved over the longer term, what is feasible and what is not. If more attention is given to sorting out these questions, "good enough governance" may become a more realistic goal for many countries faced with the goal good governance and accountability.

In a paper Gabriela Yarahua'n, "Use of Evaluation", presented at the 3rd International Conference on National Evaluation Capacities (NEC) in October 2013 in Sao Paul, Brazil, he said a key element to improve the quality of a democratic government is an adequate performance of its public sector's interventions. In this respect, a country's evaluation capacities play a significant role, as evaluation is central to inform debate on policy decisions, to improve program results and to enhance public accountability (Chelimsky 2009, NEC 2011). The Mexican government and its civil society have engaged in important efforts to consolidate and strengthen institutions for government evaluation, transparency, and accountability during the past decade. There are still, without doubt, important challenges, but also unquestionable progress. It is important then to point to fundamental characteristics in the development of the Mexican federal government social program evaluation system and describe why and how evaluation studies have affected programs' changes and decisions makers' perception on evaluation importance and use.

In another paper presented by Arianne Wessal, Clay Wescott and Mathew Treuth, Jr, "Use of Evaluation – Credibility", said that over the last two decades, the number of people living in extreme poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa rose from 290 million in 1990 to 414 in 2010. The failure to achieve poverty reduction goals at the regional level raises the questions of why some efforts fail, while similar efforts deliver quality results in other regions. To address these challenges, they said, many developing country governments are trying to understand why the policies put in place to reduce poverty and build prosperity are not leading to the results they want. One way forward has been called the "science of delivery". This concept is borrowed from the healthcare field, where the previous emphasis on understanding the causes and consequences of health issues is shifting to give more attention to organizing, managing and financing health promotion (Catford 2009). The following were the conclusions of their study; the examples of Oportunidades and the sector wide approach in Brazil demonstrate how monitoring and evaluation systems can improved through the use of independent evaluations and household surveys. The Social Observatory project in India stresses the importance of disseminating data through communities of practice so that it can utilized in other projects.

The example in Edo State demonstrates that taking context into account is key in improving delivery. For Nigeria, a highly centralized approach allowed for a greater level of project monitoring. By creating better monitoring and evaluation systems, making available user-friendly evidence, linking evidence from monitoring information and evaluation to feedback loops in learning, and enhancing the diffusion of information, researchers and evaluators can make greater contributions to advancing the science of delivery and ultimately lead to well-informed, evidence-based decision-making.

Therefore, since accountability and transparency is the order of the day, the main objective of this position paper is to aid the Federal, State, and Local government officials to understand the essence of accountability. This is best carried out by using the The Logic Model Measuring Program Mechanism, relevant to their various agencies and ministries. This is in line with the agendas of the various levels of government as promised to the electorate as indicated in many pronouncements by the President of Nigeria, and the bill that is being promulgated at the National Assembly, pertaining to accountability and good governance.

The clear and compelling answer to the question of “Why measure outcomes?” is to see if programs really make a sustainable difference in the lives of people. A Logic Model is a series of steps and a road map or a diagram that illustrates how an interventions will build on strengths and reduce needs towards the implementation of a strategy especially when a time frame is given. A logic model presents the rationale and assumptions behind the strategy. Logic models concisely present how a strategy is supposed to work. They allow the reader to understand how the activities of a program will achieve its vision or goals. They can also link outcomes back to theories and stakeholder needs/capacities. Logic models can be a series of if-then statements or a systems diagram that illustrates the processes that transform inputs to outcomes.

This provides findings, we can use to adapt and improve programs, making them more efficient and effective, thus resulting in sustainable development.

This dividend of democracy does not take years to occur. In fact, the impact often starts appearing early in the process of setting up an Outcome Measurement System. In the same vein, as we focus on outcome measurement, it gives us the much needed understanding on what the program is doing therefore, giving Program Managers and staffs a clear picture of the purpose of their efforts. That clarification alone frequently leads to more focused and productive service delivery.

For example, it frequently helps programs:

- Recruit and retain talented staff.
- Garner support for innovative efforts
- Retain increase funding
- Engage collaborators
- Strengthen existing services
- Identify staff training needs
- Develop and justify budgets
- Prepare long – range plans
- Increase internal efficiency
- Target effective services for expansion and focus board members and all stake- holders’ attention on all that is happening

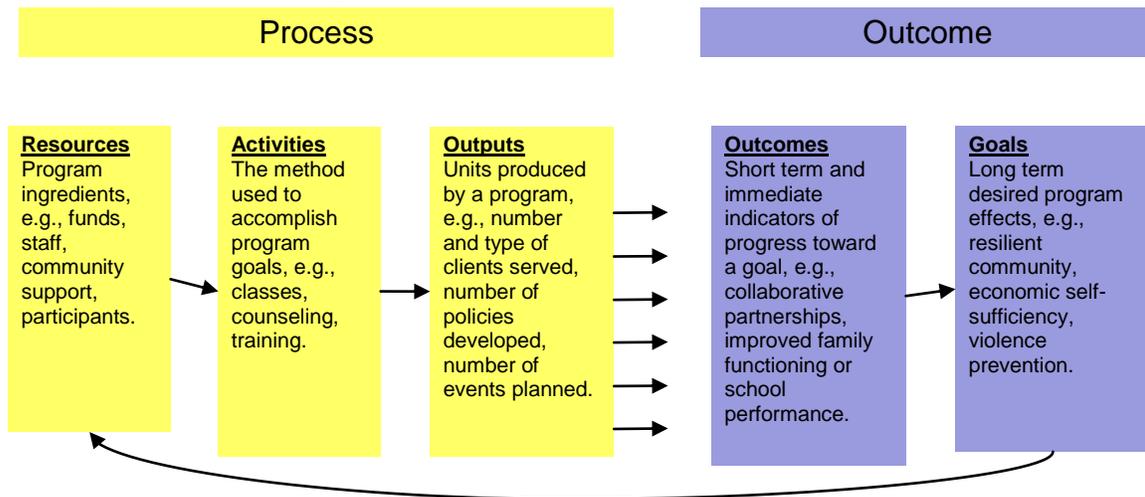
These and other benefits of the logic model are not just theoretical. Scores of human service providers across the world can attest to the difference it has made for their staff, their volunteers, their decision – makers, their financial situations, and their reputations, and most importantly, for the public they serve. The rewards have been impressive enough to lead governments and private investors to adopt the idea. As such, Nigeria is no different. The logic model mechanism will help in clarifying and being accountable for the services we provide to the electorates.

The Logic Program Outcome Model

The Logic Program Outcome Model consists of the following: Input (Resources; money, staff, equipment and supplies), Activities (Services, training, education, transportation, water, etc), Output (Products; water distribution, classes taught, hours of services delivered, functional, utilities, etc), and finally Outcomes which will be translated as benefits for people in the form of improved living conditions and increased skills, attitudes and values.

Below is the program evaluation logic model, which is a road-map for the effective implementation of the outcome measuring evaluation.

Developing a Program Evaluation Logic Model



In any human endeavor, there are bound to be problems and benefits. How we handle and solve the problems will determine who we are and indicate where our priorities lay. Outcome Measurement is no different. Outcome Measurement offers much value to programs. However, it has its limitations and it is important that we recognize them. For example, expertise may be a problem. While some boards or parastatals may have staff members trained in evaluation and research, they may lack in-house expertise.

Another significant problem is cost, time, effort, and money. But I believe that with ingenuity and resilience, we can overcome the above problems. Finally, there is a lack of motivation, which in turn kills morale. From my personal experience, government workers are very hard-working as long as they are properly motivated and lead by examples which are clearly measurable.

The sky will be the limit for benefits, which will help justify the boards/organization's existence, by making them accountable and cost effective. It will also provide a communication tool to let people know what is being done and the difference that it is making; and finally it reaffirms that we are on the right track.

In conclusion, my hope and prayer is that, this paper will be able to contribute to the vision of sustainable development in Nigeria and Africa in general. The reality of governance today calls for increased scrutiny and greater expectations for accountability and effectiveness to help in implementing and sustaining the agenda, where ultimate outcome and impact is on improving the living conditions of the hard working people of Nigeria through the provision and sustenance of basic infrastructure. To accomplish these noble objectives, all

Resources must be deployed. Therefore, if the agendas of our various governments are anchored on the philosophy of bringing meaningful and sustainable development to the grass roots, the logic model must be utilized to assist government monitor and implement their agendas with the view of monitoring, evaluating, and sustaining programs and projects. Therefore, the question might be asked again as to why we need to monitor and evaluate the outcome of these programs and projects. The answer is simply because:

1. It allows government and its functionaries to evaluate programs and projects with a view to assessing the impact and benefits of the programs to citizens
2. It assists government to be accountable and improve service delivery to its citizens.

Some accountability questions pertaining to evaluation are:

- The government has got billions of Naira, what did they do with it?
- We, the people, gave you an overwhelming support, we need a reason to continue to support your government or why don't we start to look for an alternative?
- What is the present government doing that is different from others?
- What new programs or projects has the government implemented or what other programs/ projects do they have that will make any difference?

- What are the dividends of democracy that we hear so much about?

Therefore, to help us answer this important question and accomplish the objective of the accountability and sustained development, it is envisaged that the government will have the following tools to assist, plan, implement, monitor, evaluate, account, and sustain these programs/projects:

1. By having a road map that will assist in implementing and sustaining the agenda.
2. In assisting government ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) to be accountable and effective.
3. In enabling government to measure the impact and benefit of its projects in consonance with their agendas which are sustainable.

Finally, my position paper is intended as a cautionary note among the numerous initiatives for measuring good governance and accountability, which hopefully is a means by which to achieve our desired goal of a prosperous nation called Nigeria. The paper proposes a range of approaches and to create a taxonomy of the various types and their characteristics. The use of the approaches will be further illustrated through practical cases and project examples.

In conclusion, despite the steady progress in evaluation, Nigeria has to overcome numerous challenges in its efforts to establish a functional national M&E system. These challenges that I have been able to identify and which are in line with the findings of Bruno Dery as presented at the 3rd international Conference on National Evaluation Capacities, include the following:

a. Weak Capacity

There are limited resources to build the necessary M&E skills within MDAs and to ensure that the M&E information is used to inform the budget and policy formulation

b. Weak Demand for and Utilization of M&E Results

The demand and utilization of M&E results in policy formulation and decision making are still very low at all levels in the country. A higher demand for M&E results by federal, state, and local authorities would have ensured that all interventions are monitored and the impacts of these programs for citizens effectively evaluated. A systematic and stronger demand for M&E results by the National assembly to play its oversight role over the Executive is needed. Civil and non governmental organizations also need to increase their demand for M&E results for advocacy and social accountability

c. Limited Resources and Budgetary Allocations for M&E

M&E has, to date received little priority in budget allocations and actual disbursements.

d. Lack of Incentives, Rewards and Sanctions

MDAs are not held accountable for the results they achieve or fail to achieve, to demonstrate value for money or to explain whether they have achieved what they said they would with the resources allocated. There are also no incentives at the individual level to reward hard working staff for carrying out M&E activities

e. Noncompliance with M&E Reporting Timelines and Frameworks

The different reporting cycles of MDAs impede the coordinating of M&E results across the three levels of government and impacts on the quality and timeliness of reporting.

f. Poor Data Quality, Data Gaps and Inconsistencies

Poor data management is a huge problem, therefore, there is hardly any meaningful strategy policy that can be articulated.

g. Inadequate Management Information Systems and Networks

The information system infrastructure is inadequate and in some cases, non-existent.

Conclusion

In conclusion, my hope is that this paper will act as a catalyst for Nigeria to recognize the value in monitoring and evaluation systems of national, state, and local government levels towards building an environment that values measurement, performance, accountability, and service delivery. There are numerous reports in Nigeria that reveal the culture and practice of M & E is still weak in many instances and there is the need to strengthen capacities of individuals and institutions.

The federal government is leading the way by creating and appointing of an adviser to the president on monitoring and evaluation, the congress is working on enacting laws that will enhance the mechanism by which evaluation systems in Nigeian can be formed and strengthened. The newly formed Nigerian Evaluation Association, among other key stakeholders, is expected to play a major role in this through providing professional input into the processes. An important challenge, then, is to assure that evaluation efforts are used, for different purposes, such as debating public policy, improving government programs and enhancing public accountability. Finally hope is not all lost the way forward is to:

1. Develop a national long-term policy on building institutional and individual M&E capacities to increase the needed manpower of skilled M&E specialists to augment the growth of the national M&E system.
2. Develop mechanism to increase the general awareness and recognition of the necessity and benefits of having a strong, national, state, and local M&E system with statutory requirements an integral part of good governance.
3. There is the need to institute rewards and sanctions for institutions and individuals that abide by or fall short in the use of time and resources to meet their M & E mandates.
4. Develop a long term strategy for a sustainable funding mechanism for M & E activities in Nigeria
5. Develop a long term mechanism to progressively increase the budgetary allocations to all major stakeholders to conduct evaluations, to collect credible data, and develop robust information management systems for storage, analysis, retrieval presentation, and proper use of M& E information for policy making and budget decisions. There should be a synergy of ICT networks between different levels of government to ensure the timely and quality reporting of information data.
6. Develop dialogue mechanisms that will ensure that all development partners are aware of and support the different levels of government M&E systems and avoid duplication of efforts.
7. Develop and institutionalization of evaluation at all levels of government.

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