

The Evaluation Landscape Analysis

The Somalia evaluation landscape analysis was commissioned to understand the evaluation sector, institutional, and individual factors that inform and shape the national evaluation capacity-building program at federal and regional level among the public sector, academia as well as civil society.

The evaluation landscape analysis is based on a desk review of relevant documents such as the National Integrated M&E framework for NDP-9, National Monitoring and Evaluation Policy, Data Protection Act 2023 and staff training reports. In addition, 28 key informant interviews and thematic focus group discussions with 22 participants from MDAs at FGS, FMS, Academia and CSOs/VOPEs conducted.

Findings

Evaluation key stakeholders

The key stakeholders that have a role to play in strengthening the evaluation ecosystem and implementation of development initiatives were identified and mapped under different categories. At the federal government level, key stakeholders mapped are; Ministry of Planning, Investment and Economic Development (MOPIED), Office of the Prime Minister, Office of the Parliamentary Review Committee and Somali National Bureau of Statistics (SNBS). In the UN and other International Development Partners category, key stakeholders are UNICEF, UNDP and Japan International Cooperation (JICA). Under the Civil Society Organizations, Private Sector, International and National NGOs category, key stakeholders are Norwegian Refugee Council and Save the Children. Under the Voluntary Organization for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs) category, key stakeholders are Somalia Evaluation Professionals Network(SEPNET) , Somalia Development Evaluation (SODMEA)/ Somali Public Agenda and under the academia category, key stakeholders are SIMAD and Banadir Universities. It's important to note that involvement of stakeholders in appropriate evaluation exercises furthers the objective of promoting participatory development.

Enabling environment

To shape a national evaluation capacity, there is a need for an enabling environment, this entails having policies, legal and institutional framework for evaluation, public participation and human rights, political support for evaluation in the country and Civil Society Organizations participation in the processes.

Analysis findings show that a number of frameworks and policies that can guide evaluations are in place, some of these are the National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (NIMEF) for the implementation of the National Development Plan (NDP-9), and a draft National Monitoring and Evaluation Policy that is pending cabinet approval and endorsement. Some of the MDAs reported to have project specific evaluation related frameworks. At the federal member state level, there were no evaluation related frameworks and policies, however they reported to use National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (NIMEF) for guidance. Based on these findings, there is a

need to put in place a harmonized structured rollout of all approved policies and frameworks to strengthen the evaluation ecosystem in the country.

In terms of the political support for evaluation in the country, findings show that, there is political will at the country leadership level to enhance evaluation. For example, MoPIED developed a Monitoring and Evaluation Policy that is a waiting cabinet endorsement.

Institutional capacities

A strengthened evaluation ecosystem needs to have good infrastructure, organizational structures (institutional capacities). This includes, human resource, IT equipment and data storage facilities, knowledge management, evaluation utilization, data availability for facilitating evaluations, physical infrastructure, dissemination and coordination mechanisms among key stakeholders. These parameters were assessed.

Findings show that MED, which is mandated to undertake evaluations at the national level, does not have enough staff with sufficient skills, experience to implement evaluations. Findings further show that the demand for evaluation is high, hence the need to strengthen the evaluation system of the country, as part of the National Development Plan. The driving force for strengthening the evaluation system is the government and donor agencies. MDAs at FGS and FMS have M&E units or sections which are characterized with understaffing, limited technical capacities and support to execute their roles and responsibilities.

Evaluation analysis findings further show that knowledge management is weak, characterized by a substandard IT system which is ineffective and there is a general lack of technological prototypes to collect, store and analyze data. In addition, there is no centralized data archiving and each ministry stores its data in soft and hard copies.

Also, findings further show that evaluation use and data availability for facilitating evaluation were inadequate. It was reported that sector managers, policy makers are the users of evaluation data to make decisions; however, most of the recommendations made by the in-evaluation reports are not incorporated and implemented for corrective action. Therefore, the need for a standardized framework for all the stakeholders to follow in ensuring that evaluation report findings and recommendations are acted on.

On physical infrastructure, office space for MED is inadequate to cater for the capacity of the staff and IT equipment was not sufficient for the department.

Findings also show that the dissemination mechanisms for evaluation reports are limited mainly through websites, direct sharing with relevant MDAs, workshops, social media platforms, consultative meetings with key stakeholders. There is a need for diversification to increase inclusiveness especially at grass root level stakeholders.

Findings further show that generally, there is very minimal cross-ministerial coordination and collaboration nor information sharing. However, there are platforms for collaboration which are mainly sector based platforms at different levels such as Federal line ministries, federal member states, and non-governmental organizations. In addition, there are partnerships in place with UN agencies like UNICEF, UNDP which are effective and actioned especially in support of institutional strengthening.

Evaluation of technical capacities

On the demand for evaluations, findings show that demand for evaluation is from different stakeholders mainly from the private sectors, humanitarian NGOs, and FGS ministries. In addition, there is demand from different personnel to enhance their skills in evaluation, especially staff from FLM, FMS, MDAs in order to perform their respective roles to the extent possible.

On the supply of evaluation perspective, there is limited in country expertise to conduct evaluations both from the academia and VOPEs/CSOs and there is also lack of a data repository in the country which creates duplication of evaluations by different actors.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the evaluation landscape analysis was successfully conducted within the designated time frame, effectively addressing all outlined objectives in the terms of reference. While progress has been made in the availability of evaluation data through the study phase, there was also huge data received from key documents.

Generally, there are capacity gaps of evaluation staff, resources for NMED in conducting independent evaluations, office infrastructure, equipment, and information management systems is another key challenge in the evaluation sector. Additionally, deficiencies are evident in data archiving and dissemination at government levels. It is noteworthy that most evaluations are donor-driven and project-centric.

In conclusion, despite some progress in putting in place some policies, frameworks such as the national integrated monitoring and evaluation frames (NIMEF) for the implementation of the National Development Plan (NDP-9), a draft national monitoring and evaluation policy and the Data Protection Act 2023 to provide an enabling environment, there are existing general gaps in capacity of the staff, limited funding, office spaces, IT equipment and data storage facilities.

Recommendations

1. **Expedited Approval of National M&E Policy:** Prioritize the approval and endorsement of the National Monitoring and Evaluation Policy to enable allocation of funds in the annual budget, facilitating its operationalization. This will empower the National M&E department in effectively evaluating government programs for result-based management of NDP-9.

2. **Capacity Building for M&E Staff:** Conduct a comprehensive capacity assessment of all M&E units across different MDAs and Federal member states. Subsequently, provide tailored capacity-building training to enhance the skills of monitoring and evaluation staff in carrying out their assigned duties.
3. **Resource Allocation for Evaluation Systems:** Allocate resources to strengthen evaluation systems within the Ministry of Planning, Investment, and Economic Development, as well as in other counterpart ministries. This will contribute to the establishment of functional and effective evaluation
4. **Coordination of Evaluation Activities:** Foster coordination between ministries at both federal and state levels for the effective rollout of evaluation activities and ensure that evaluation findings are used for program improvements and future planning.
6. **Capacity Strengthening in Academia:** Enhance the capacity of academia to offer specialized Monitoring and Evaluation courses. This will increase the pool of expert evaluation teams available in the country.
7. **Strengthen partnerships with the Academia:** There is a need for partnerships with other academia that offer M & E training to review how responsive the current training content is up to date and relevant to the public. In addition, also initiate partnerships with internationally recognized evaluation bodies such as the African Evaluation Association, East African Evaluation Network etc
8. **Strengthen the functionality of VOPES** : and enhance collaboration of Government Ministries with Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation (VOPES).