

Terms of Reference: Consultant to undertake diagnostic on the supply and demand of evaluators in South Africa

1. Background

Twende Mbele (TM) is a partnership programme between Benin, Uganda and South Africa, using a peer-learning approach to build stronger national evaluation systems to improve governance and accountability to citizens. The programme is in an effective start-up phase, with five output areas:

1. Increased demand within partner countries and governments
2. Increased sharing in Africa around use of M&E for improved governance
3. Increased learning in Africa around use of M&E for improved governance
4. Specific M&E tools developed collaboratively
5. Effective and collaborative programme management, governance and operations.

As more and more evaluations are being commissioned and undertaken in a number of African countries, it is clear that the current supply of good evaluators is constrained, with relatively small group of professional suppliers taking up most of the larger evaluation studies. As more governments demand more evaluative evidence, the number and quality of human resources required to meet this will grow. At the current level of demand, problems with the size of the pool of available evaluators, the quality of their deliverables and their ability to respond to government terms of reference (ToRs), consolidates an already skewed evaluation market.

There is, therefore, a need to expand the existing pool of evaluators, and to ensure that the representivity of evaluators in a given country system approximates that of the local population, as well as enabling emerging evaluators to enter the market with fewer restrictions. Each of the three countries covered here will benefit from further understanding of the incentives and barriers that foster a more competitive demand and supply in the evaluation market.

Within the framework provided by Twende Mbele, country-specific trends as well as cross-country comparisons are possible, with strong references to African and regional issues also possible. In political-economic terms, besides gender relations that are being foregrounded in DFID criteria, there is a growing recognition of the importance of broader poverty and social inequality as major determinants of current assessments of the economic winners and losers in the global social order. These critical considerations need to be factored into the thematic assessment of evaluator demand and supply, specifically issues of transformation, obstacles to evaluation market entry, and even more challenging, notions of citizen-based monitoring (in poorer communities) and empowerment.

A World Bank study of South Africa's suppliers of evaluation revealed some structural issues that prohibit a deeper access to the evaluation market via government evaluations. Some examples include, lack of access to government data, salary differences that mean independent consultants find it hard to compete with universities, and unclear ToRs from government.

The general approach to be considered should involve a country-specific M&E system as foundation to provide the necessary system and country context. System and country context provides the basis for study support and eventual ownership of study output.

2. Purpose of the Assignment

The Diagnostic of Evaluators falls under Output 3, to *Increase Learning in Africa on strengthening national evaluation systems*. The diagnostic of supply and demand of evaluators seeks to provide a **country-specific demand-and-supply profile¹ of evaluators in each of the three partner countries in the Twende Mbele project: Benin, Uganda and South Africa**. The study will answer questions around the capacity and supply of evaluators on the continent, and what is required to strengthen this capacity and supply?

On the **supply side**, current capacity will be identified through: (i) size of current country supply of evaluation consultants (including government, academic, donors, business and civil society), (ii) skill levels, abilities and specialisations, (iii) shape of the current pools of skills (age, gender, race and ethnicity, geography, language, organisation or individual, etc.), (iv) pricing (relative cost) of skills and value-for-money considerations, (v) access to evaluators (ability and/or reach of national systems to procure required skills), (vi) other capacity considerations². On the **demand side**, considerations to include (i) national government system requirements for eligibility to provide evaluation services, and other market entry determinants, (ii) value of current country demand (including government, academic, donors, business and civil society), (iii) specific professional skills required from evaluators, (iv) efficiency of country information systems on evaluator availability (supply), and opportunities (demand), (v) opportunities/possibilities for transformation and country-specific empowerment (to be defined with the Steering Committee) and, (vi) sustainability of the market.

The outcomes of this diagnostic will be used to design activities to improve the supply and quality of evaluations (and evaluators) in three countries. These activities will be designed during the national and regional workshops, and should be supported by country governments, the local VOPE, academia and other relevant organisations.

2.1 Research Questions

The main research question to be answered through this study is: What do we know of the capacity and supply of evaluators on the continent, and what is required to strengthen this capacity and supply?

Additional questions are:

1. What is the size of the evaluation market (demand from donors, government, private sector) in each of three countries – and in response, how big is the supply (pool of skills available)?
2. How do we better match the supply to demand (especially if we are trying to increase demand)? This is the end point of the diagnostic.
3. To what extent has the current approach to building an evaluation market constrained/enabled that market in each country?³
4. What are the current patterns of evaluation implementation using external service providers versus the use of officials/public servants in government?

¹ Country-specific refers to unique evaluation system and country context, necessary to make sense of the proposed Diagnostic's findings and recommendations. Profile refers to the current patterns of both demand and supply.

² To be informed by the study Steering Committee: must include questions around, where external consultants draw most of their work projects from; access to further opportunities in government/donors etc; and other barriers to accessing markets

³ And example of this is how the DPME panel of evaluators has acted as a constraint to further market entry for evaluators because it only opens every three years.

The report of this diagnostic is meant to provide the basis for planning specific TM programme interventions and activities under Output 3, and to inform and enrich other planned activities. The Diagnostic of Evaluators can be considered for planning and execution as a flexible longitudinal study, with possibilities of repetition every 5 years.

3. Proposed Methodology

A mixed-methods approach will be used in a cross-sectional, cross-country design. This will include the following steps:

- i. literature and other official document review,
- ii. interviews with selected key respondents (individuals and institutional representatives, including government departments and donors). In the case of government officials, telephonic interviews will be used.
- iii. a few focus groups with selected stakeholders/role-players (eg. government role players, NGOs, VOPEs, business etc)
- iv. an online survey targeting VOPEs or national institutions that will enable access to any existing pools of evaluators (including membership organisations, supplier databases, etc.) across all three countries.

A fairly tight and balanced approach to the organised utilisation of consultant time is required. The South African consultant will be required to play a coordination role across countries, and thus manage the design and implementation of data collection tools within the three countries.

4. Expected Deliverables

The total length of the Diagnostic is expected to be between 6 -7 months start September 2017 and concluding in April 2018, however a maximum of 25 person days will be available in the budget.

The main deliverables will be:

- (a) Inception report: including a detailed methodology and literature/document review of available and relevant studies on evaluator supply in South Africa
- (b) A Root-Cause Analysis (description of the current approach to building the evaluation market in South Africa)
- (c) Facilitation of a country-specific workshop involving critical stakeholders to validate findings and create an action plan for Phase 2 activities
- (d) A Diagnostic Report on South Africa with clear findings, conclusions and recommendations, which speaks to Output 3.
- (e) Facilitation of a regional workshop involving critical stakeholders on the state of demand and supply in each region.
- (f) A synthesis report with findings and recommendations from all three countries and the regional workshop.

Table 1: Outline of deliverables and timeline

Deliverable	Delivery Date	% payment
Inception report	7 th October	20%
Root-cause Analysis	21 st October	10%
South Africa Workshop	Early December	20%

Diagnostic Report	Mid-Feb 2018	30%
Regional workshop	Late March 2018	10%
Synthesis Report	Late April 2018	10%

5. Management Arrangements

The Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation in Presidency is leading on this piece of work, however, the diagnostic will be co-managed with the Twende Mbele Programme Manager. Consultants will be required in each of the three countries to conduct the research. Consultants will be guided by a project steering committee, with the lead consultant being in South Africa.

Twende Mbele Country Coordinators will assist with fieldwork and workshop logistics.

Other requirements:

A TM steering committee will manage and guide the consultants for the Diagnostic. Specific areas of work will be define the indicators, work with the consultant to refine the methodology, and prescribe the consultant team roles (eg, is there a lead consultant in South Africa and three separate consultants in each country etc).

6. Experience and Qualifications

- Professional degrees and post-graduate qualifications in governance, evaluation, economics or other relevant fields.
- At least 10 years substantive experience and expertise in the areas of governance and evaluation, and have a strong working knowledge of South Africa's evaluation landscape
- Strong strategic and analytical skills
- Demonstrated capacity to establish and maintain excellent relationships with key partners, especially in distance-working relationships
- Strong interpersonal communication and presentation skills.

All proposals should include consultant's CV, a detailed proposal and an example of previous, similar work.

Please email proposals to the Twende Programme Manager at cara.waller@wits.ac.za by Monday 18th September.

Only shortlisted applicants will be contacted.