



TWENDE MBELE

Terms of Reference for the Literature Review: Approaches to plan prioritisation and budgets alignment, also using M&E evidence

Application Deadline: 23rd July 2018

Location: South Africa

1. INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

National long-term and medium-term development plans have become common instruments for driving national development. In addition, public finance management or budget reform has been ongoing in an effort to sharpen government budgets as mechanisms to fund plan implementation.

However, in spite of these positive developments in planning and budgeting, common concerns remain (1) that plans are often unrealistic, underestimating financial and other resources required for implementation (2) plans are not adequately reflected in government budgets. In other words, often plans do not sufficiently face up to trade-offs or necessary choices and budgets are not responsive enough to plans, being driven in many cases by incremental, rather than strategic, decision-making. Fiscal pressures, brought on by economic fluctuations or fiscal imbalances, and the need to contain government spending, have regularly led to intensified efforts to focus operations and ensure responsiveness of budgets to key priorities.

“Prioritisation” and “alignment” have therefore become buzzwords in international planning and budgeting discourse in order to find ways to address the twin problems of overambitious, unfocused plans and dislocations between planning and budgeting processes. While the terminology is therefore common, there is less systematic work comparing progress and innovation in developing approaches, processes, methodologies and tools to effect prioritisation and alignment at a national or federal level. Comparative assessment of the efficiency and impact of various approaches seems lacking. In addition, while extensive resources have been allocated to build monitoring and evaluation systems and systems of performance and expenditure review, it is not always clear how these are or can be linked to the processes and tasks of prioritisation and alignment.

Improved prioritisation and alignment, also using the growing availability of monitoring and evaluation evidence must therefore form part of the urgent task in developing countries to ensure the continuous improvement of government decision-making and service delivery.

To support ongoing reform and effectiveness of governments, the Twende Mbele African Partnership Programme therefore wishes to commission an international literature review of approaches, processes and tools, to support effective plan prioritisation and budget alignment. The review should also focus on the utilisation of monitoring and evaluation systems and evidence to strengthen prioritisation and alignment. In addition, innovative and successful approaches and tools should be showcased.



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2. OBJECTIVE

The literature review on plan prioritisation and budget alignment, also using M&E evidence, should give a comparative overview of ongoing and innovative efforts in this area. Furthermore, it should provide insight to work being done in contexts similar to that of the Twende Mbele countries (Uganda, Benin, South Africa, Kenya, Ghana, Niger).

3. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

The following are expected outcomes from the literature review:

- A comprehensive literature review of approaches, processes and tools for plan prioritisation and budget alignment, including the use of monitoring and evaluation evidence (such as performance assessment) in these processes. A concrete example (case study) of a successful approach from the global South that can be used by Twende Mbele countries to improve practices and to ensure greater uptake of M&E evidence in prioritisation and alignment.
- A policy brief on using evidence to inform plan prioritisation and budget alignment.

4. TIME FRAME AND DELIVERABLES

The consultant can bill for a total of 20 days of work, from the period of 1st August to 15th September. A list of deliverable dates are in the below table:

Start assignment	1 st August
Draft outlines of each deliverable submitted	7 th August
First draft literature review	20 th August
First draft policy brief and case study	24 th August
Final drafts (addressing comments received)	15 th September

5. SCOPE AND LENGTH OF THE LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review should be between 6000 - 7000 words and needs to include an international review. The case study which looks at methods employed by one country/ department/ministry within a global south country and the policy brief should be less than five pages each.

6. 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. The consultant will be guided by a project steering committee.

7. EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS

- Professional degrees and post-graduate qualifications in governance, evaluation, economics or other relevant fields.



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- At least 8 years substantive experience and expertise in the areas of finance, governance and evaluation, and have a strong working knowledge of the evaluation landscape in Africa
- 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 and be sent to cara.waller@wits.ac.za by 23rd July 2018.

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted.