

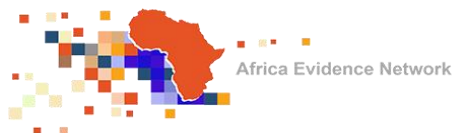
Evidence-informed decision-making landscape for Uganda

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This map is part of a series of maps on the evidence-informed decision-making (EIDM) landscapes in different countries in Africa. The series comprises 25 maps and is available from the Africa Evidence Network. This is map 1 in the series. Maps were produced as part of the bursary conditions for attendance at Evidence 2016 (<http://evidenceconference.org.za/>). Bursaries were provided as part of the UJ-BCURE programme, funded by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID).

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Strengthening Evidence-Informed Decision-Making in Africa

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Evidence-Informed Decision-Making Landscape for Uganda

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Section 1

This is a presentation of an overview of the Evidence-Informed Decision-Making (EIDM) Landscape for Uganda. Uganda commonly referred to as ‘the Pearl of Africa’ is located in East Africa.

The main role-players in the EIDM landscape in Uganda are:

- The **commissioners** of researches/evaluations such as the government departments and agencies, projects, the civil society organisations and the private for profit organisations.
- The **producers (researchers/evaluators)** who are usually consultancy firms, academic research institutions as well as freelance individual consultants.
- The **users** of the researches/evaluation who comprise of the commissioners of evaluations; the funding agencies, the policy makers, particularly parliamentarians; students, the media as well as the general public.

The Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) is mandated to coordinate all monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities in Uganda at national level. The Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) is mandated to develop and maintain an integrated, coherent and reliable National Statistical System (NSS). UBOS takes lead in producing and disseminating statistical information, and coordinating, monitoring and supervising the NSS.

The Uganda Evaluation Association (UEA) is the lead professional association bringing together commissioners and users of evaluations. UEA has developed evaluation standards and a strategic plan towards improving the quality of evaluations in Uganda.

Limited knowledge in data use and limited appreciation of the importance of evidence based decision-making is a key gap in Uganda at all levels; implementation, local government and national level. Once the senior leadership at any level does not appreciate the importance of data, and how they can use that data as an institution; then limited attention is paid to data quality assurance as well as data analysis and use. Collecting and analysing information has for long been seen as a ‘donor requirement’ and is often done as an obligation. However with improved M&E skills, the appreciation of data is steadily improving though not yet at the desired level.

Most of the evaluations are not regulated and hence the quality is not guaranteed. Although evaluators are supposed to ensure that they obtain approvals from the Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) and the National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST); there are a number of evaluators that do not go through these approval processes and can get away with it unpunished.

The coordination of country level evaluations is weak; there is no comprehensive repository of all evaluations in the country hence possible duplication of efforts.

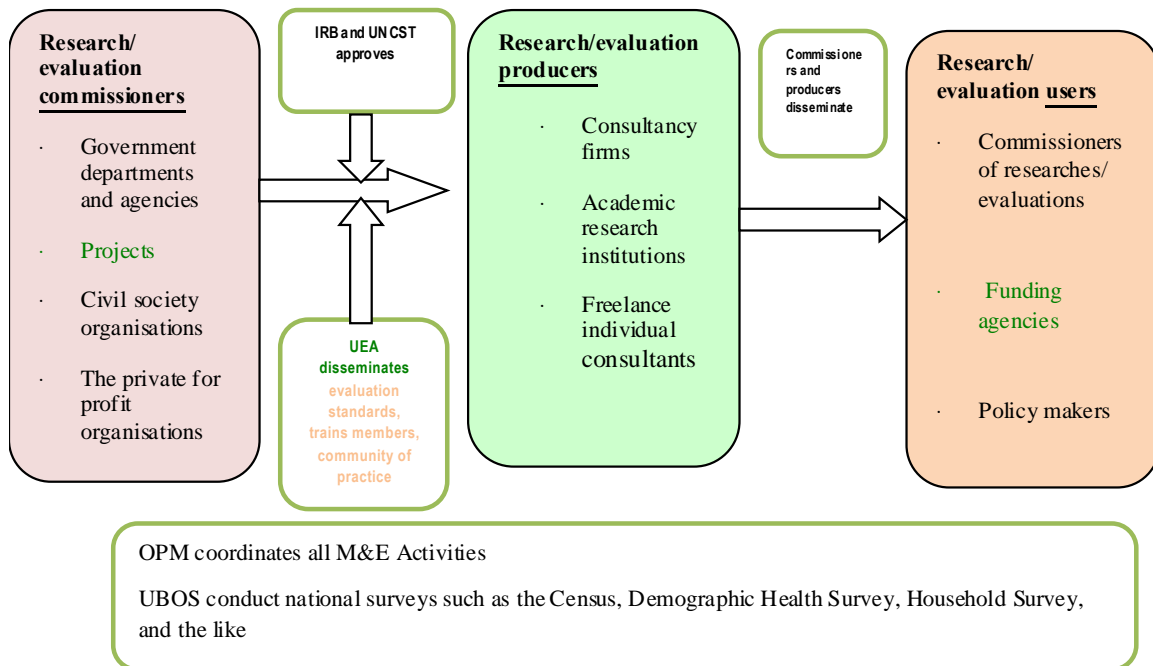
The research producers in Uganda are usually skilled, highly educated professionals; whereas the users are usually less technical in areas of research, M&E and data use; though they may be technical in other subjects while others are not. The commissioners often do not know the right

evaluation questions they want answered; hence findings may not be very useful for improving programs.

Section 2

Uganda Research/Evaluation Landscape

Uganda Research/Evaluation Landscape



N.B. The green text font represents institutions that implement capacity building interventions; while the orange text font represents the network institution.

Section 3

Conclusions

The Uganda EIDM therefore requires more investment in strengthening the evidence-based data use capacity for decision makers at implementation, local government, central government as well as parliamentarians for improved EIDM. Thereafter EIDM champions can be identified for increased influence on peers.

Supporting improved regulation and quality assurance of researches/evaluations would enhance the quality of evaluations as well as the confidence of users in the findings.

Improved coordination of country level evaluations and establishing a one-stop comprehensive repository for evaluations in the country would minimise duplication of efforts and hence lead to increased efficiency which will most likely increase access and utilisation of information.

Bearing in mind that most information users may not necessarily be highly technical in M&E; repackaging of evaluation findings into ‘bite-size pieces’ and in simpler language without technical jargons will most likely foster increased apprehension and use.

The Uganda EIDM map hence re-emphasizes the appropriateness of the three themes of the Evidence 2016 conference: engage, understand and impact. There is need to engage decision-makers through capacity strengthening, advocacy and dialogue so as to enable them to understand better the value addition of EIDM. Once there is increased EIDM, programs will realise greater impact because they are informed by evidence.

The role of UEA in bringing together commissioners and users of evaluations as well as developing evaluation standards is a good practice that can be scaled up to other countries. This can be further strengthened by working closely with formal government structures mandated to coordinate M&E activities such as OPM in Uganda.

Metaphor - commissioner - producer - user puzzle