

THE 1<sup>ST</sup>  
*Africa*



**MONITORING & EVALUATION INDABA**

**KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF THE INDABA**



**planning, monitoring  
& evaluation**

Department:  
Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



**SOUTH AFRICA**

## Indaba Summary

### Introduction

The 1<sup>st</sup> Africa Monitoring and Evaluation Indaba was held on 30 October – 1 November at the Birchwood Hotel in Boksburg to leverage on the partnership between the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) and the United Nations – South Africa (UN-SA) M&E Group. The aim was to promote knowledge exchange and learning from experience among African governments and key non-state stakeholders to engage about how evidence from M&E could be used effectively to contribute to economic growth and employment. The Indaba was guided by the Government of the Republic of South Africa and United Nations Strategic Framework (UNSCF). Other partners included Statistics South Africa (Stats SA); Government Technical Advisory Centre (GTaC); Centre for Learning on Evaluation Results – Anglophone Africa (CLEAR-AA); and Twende Mbele.

### Theme

The main theme of the Indaba was “Opportunities and challenges of using evidence from monitoring & evaluation (M&E) to accelerate economic development and employment in Africa”.

### Outcomes

The key outcomes of the Indaba were (i) enhanced learning and common understanding of how M&E can be used to address economic development, employment and inequality facing African countries; (ii) strengthened use of information (data, statistics) and evidence from M&E in policy, planning, program design or implementation and development impacts [e.g. Sustainable development Goals (SDGs), African Agenda 2063, Country Development Plans, etc]; (iii) improved understanding of the importance and benefits of championing M&E by political leadership; and (iv) creating a platform for building partnerships and networking for the use of evidence to enhance human development.

### Key note addresses

The key note addresses were given by Minister in the Presidency for PM&E Hon. Mr J. Radebe and Ms Anne Githuku-Shongwe who is the Representative of UN Women SA Multi-country Office. The Indaba was attended by representatives from the following African countries: Ghana, Egypt, Kenya, Lesotho, Senegal, Sudan, Zanzibar, Zambia and Zimbabwe, and a number of delegates from all spheres of SA government, civil society and private sector. Panel debates engaged with the theme based on work of both public and private sector

organizations. The Minister's inputs provided a clear case for use of M&E information for decision making.

### Sub-Themes

Intensive discussions in parallel sessions focused on expert presentations and practical experience of various countries. These sessions were organized into the following sub-themes: M&E Ecosystems; Harnessing the demographic dividend; Innovations in data; Use of evaluations; Gender, youth, children and vulnerable groups (leave no one behind); Fore-sighting and modelling for decision-making.

### Recommendations

#### 1. M&E Ecosystems

An Ecosystem is understood as "Everything that exists in a particular environment". In the case of an M&E Ecosystem, this includes government, Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluators (VOPES), multilateral institutions, independent evaluators, academia, civil society, parliamentarians and private sector...."

Encourage countries that do not use the M&E Ecosystem to do so, especially with regards to coordinating various stakeholders who make M&E system operate and make a difference in a country.

Use of the Indaba as a Forum where agreement is reached on common indicators for SDG reporting. While countries are at liberty to choose and customize indicators, the African Continent is expected to also report on these indicators. If different countries are choosing different indicators, Africa will thus face the challenge of comparing between different countries.

Advocate for more investment on M&E and data.

#### 2. Harnessing the demographic dividend

Analysis of disaggregated and detailed M&E data is necessary for effective and accurate policy planning and decision-making for nations in Africa. Countries have to further disaggregate the active working population by age; educational level; geography etc. to identify gaps.

The challenge raised during the Indaba was on how Africa could create pro-development demographic conditions through the four pillars of the demographic dividend, which are: (i) health and well-being; (ii) education

and skills development; (iii) employment and entrepreneurship; and (iv) rights, governance and empowerment data. Countries were thus encouraged to undertake research to generate data or use existing data, analyze it and make it accessible under these pillars. Given the magnitude of the pillars, the indaba agreed to address the pillars by prioritizing health, education, and economic inclusivity pillars of the demographic dividend. Countries were encouraged to facilitate coordination among those who generate, analyze and use data. The remaining pillars will be addressed during subsequent M&E Indabas once the three priority pillars are addressed.

Inclusivity of youth in discussions of the demographic dividend to ensure that 'they are not left behind'.

### 3. Innovations in Data

Statistics offices of African countries are encouraged to work together to set standards and harmonize concepts for the use of administrative data for policy formulation. Youth and private sector institutions should be included to ensure that no-one is left behind.

To be part of the data revolution – the 4<sup>th</sup> Industrial Revolution, new skills are needed. The capacity of countries have to be strengthened through working with partners to take on big data; administrative data; civic technology projects; making equipment available to increase access to administrative data; and by strengthening the capacity of users.

### 4. Use of Evaluations

Gender evaluations should not only be led by women, but rather include men.

Evaluation culture should be built through leadership and improved capacity development.

Government evaluation systems such as National Evaluation Frameworks should clarify the role of donors.

Importance of a multi-faced approach to incentives that emphasizes a culture of learning and improvement, rather than compliance.

All role players need to take up their role – e.g. Civil Society Organizations (CSO's) in voicing the needs of citizens; Parliamentarians in their oversight roles; Opposition parties in keeping track of government performance.

## 5. Gender, youth, children and vulnerable groups (leaving no one behind)

Concrete steps were recommended for incorporation into M&E policy frameworks and systems to ensure that no one is left behind, and enforce their implementation. These included:

- Engaging all relevant stakeholders in participatory research from the beginning (e.g. Civil Society Organizations – CSOs; private sector and direct beneficiaries).
- Government and stakeholders engage in continuous social dialogue as equal partners on the same development agendas with continuous feedback on progress and results.
- Need to appoint qualified practitioners who are responsive and cognizant to the context.
- Identify political champions who can follow resources and inclusive agenda.
- Design policies and frameworks that are customized for different audiences, beneficiaries and context.
- Institutionalize reporting mechanisms, and efficient budget allocations for M&E.

## 6. Fore-sighting and modelling for decision-making

The integrated national economic model should be in line with economic priorities.

Gather intelligence about the future and identify emerging strategic opportunities whilst challenging existing models and forecasts.

Countries should measure the cross-sectoral impact of policies to enhance their understanding of future risks, and should avail analyzed data for decision-making.

## 7. Way Forward

The Indaba provided a platform for dialogue and formulation that addressed the fundamental purpose of monitoring and evaluation systems to improve the quality of citizens – i.e. employment capabilities, opportunities, and conditions; raising standards of living; reducing poverty; and increasing the economic growth. These can be achieved through increasing accountability, efficiency and effectiveness, sustainability and impact.

Key Indaba resolutions

The establishment of a Governance Framework for collaboration by UN-SA (M&E Group) and DPME.

Deepening of key strategic areas of common interest.

Develop a program and implementation framework in the next 6 months that will address the Indaba recommendations; and detail at least three programs to be pursued by various countries under the umbrella of a single agreement. The program should also reflect the role of other key stakeholders.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> M&E Indaba should be held in the next 18 – 24 months.