

Towards Building a Functional Whole-of-Government Monitoring and Evaluation System for Zambia: The Demand Side

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Abstract Every monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system is comprised of two sides—the supply side and the demand side. This study focused on the demand side of Zambia’s whole-of-government M&E system (WoGM&ES). It investigated the gaps that characterised the public sector system for M&E and proposed a new model for improving the demand side. Primary and secondary sources were used to collect data for the study. Questionnaires and interview guides are the instruments employed to collect information. Essentially, Zambia’s WoGM&ES was found to be very weak on the demand side. The system lacked a unified arrangement for demanding and utilising M&E information. Government and non-government structures and institutions such as the presidency, parliament, line ministries, civil society, the academia and cooperating partners remained fragmented and uncoordinated in the manner they demanded for M&E information to feed into their internal development processes. The general public too had no clear means of engaging the public sector on development issues that affected them. In many cases, M&E reports were not in the reach of the public, making it difficult to engage. More so, political championship at the level of the Presidency and Cabinet ministers as well as at several technical levels across the public sector lacked in Zambia. To address the gaps, this paper is a proposed blueprint for consideration by the Government of Zambia. The model proposes that Government implements the following to build and sustain the demand side: transform the Presidency and top government positions (political and technical) into M&E champions; promote the use of M&E information by the Presidency; link M&E to planning, budgeting and policy processes; promote the use of M&E information by parliament, civil society, academia, media and donors. Decentralised structures of government as well as the general public will also need to be stimulated on the acquisition and use of M&E information. Equally, Government would need to incentivise the strategic users of M&E information across the country. Another similar study has been conducted on the supply side of Zambia’s WoGM&ES. Evidence on both sides will be useful for building and sustaining Zambia’s WoGM&ES going forward!

Keywords: *whole-of-government monitoring and evaluation system, monitoring, evaluation, monitoring and evaluation system, LEADS, diagnostic checklist, demand-side, supply-side, good governance, Zambia*

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1. Introduction

In Zambia, poverty has continued to undermine the lives of the majority citizens, both those in the rural and in urban areas. Statistics show that over sixty percent (60%) of Zambians live in abject poverty and of those, the majority dwell in rural as well as peri-urban areas. Others too dwell in urban slums. For that reason, good governance is desired in order to improve the socio-economic situation that was currently precarious. Most of the development indicators—social, political and economic were showing negative results. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) has increasingly become the cornerstone upon which good governance could be

attained by governments and other development agencies. It is for that reason local and international development organisations including governments the world over were building, strengthening and sustaining their M&E systems. An M&E system denotes an institutional or organisational set-up comprising management plans, processes, strategies, information systems, indicators, reporting lines, standards and accountability relationships, which allow development structures at national and provincial or regional levels such as departments, municipalities and other institutions to effectively perform their M&E functions [1,80,101].

Specifically, the Zambian Government, just like what was transpiring in other countries has in place a whole-of-government monitoring and evaluation system (WoGM&ES). The system was set up to enhance public sector monitoring and evaluation activities, thereby

contributing to the national poverty reduction agenda. [6] defines a WoGM&ES as a robust system that not only provides an integrated and all-encompassing framework of M&E practices, principles and standards to be used throughout government institutional structures, but also functions as an apex-level system for information and draws from the component systems in a framework meant to deliver essential M&E products tailored to satisfy information needs of users.

Further, several experts and practitioners in the field of M&E have articulated a number of key requirements for a successful WoGM&ES. These fundamentals have a holistic effect on functional country level M&E systems. Any national system for M&E that seeks to function to the satisfaction of its stakeholders requires two aspects to be fully functional [2,18,55,64,80,86]. The two aspects are; a) the capacity to supply M&E information, and b) the capacity to demand and use M&E information. The contention is that once these two aspects were fully developed, they would help to generate country-specific information and assist in identifying roles and responsibilities of stakeholders in pursuit of building and sustaining a stronger WoGM&ES. When these two sides of an M&E system are strengthened, opportunities, limitations, and options for building and strengthening a realistic system for M&E are identifiable and remedial actions are determined. For Zambia, all these aspects were found by this research study to be weak in various degrees. Although some aspects were reported to be working fairly well, compared with others, the holistic status of the WoGM&ES still required fixing and ownership by government institutions and citizens.

This paper focuses on the demand-side of Zambia's WoGM&ES. A separate study was done for the supply-side and the two research papers are recommended to be read together for a complete understanding of what the Zambian Government should consider in building and strengthening the public sector system for M&E. Thus, this research paper is a blueprint proposed model to enhance the WoGM&ES for Zambia. In addition, the insights herein can also be of use for other governments and other development agencies. Additionally, the model and study recommendations, when adopted and fully implemented will re-engineer the Zambian Government spirit of evidence-based poverty reduction agenda delivered using principles of sustainable development and inclusiveness.

2. Study Background

According to [10,14,29,46,55], a country monitoring and evaluation system should deliver timely and reliable data and analysis to feed into the policy process. At the same time, such a system must be able to create necessary demand for the M&E information which come in various products and forms. To accomplish this, it must include a range of functions that are specifically institutional in nature, including coordination among data producers to establish a common set of indicators and eliminate gaps and redundancies; the development of common standards, procedures, and platforms; a strengthening of monitoring capacity across the government administration; the organisation of information flows among stakeholders

inside and outside government; the compilation and analysis of data from various sources; data analysis and program/intervention evaluation; the generation of annual progress reports and other outputs; the provision of advice and support to policy makers; the dissemination of outputs across government and to the public; and the organization of the participation of civil society and parliament. Conceptually, these elements all form part of the national M&E system. However, it is important to recall that, at the outset, most of the actors involved will not recognise their activities as part of a national system. Whether they will participate vigorously in making the country M&E system operational depends largely on their interests and incentives. The rules, both formal and informal, that govern these incentives are therefore a key dimension of the country-level M&E system.

Building and sustaining the demand side of a country's WoGM&ES is not an easy undertaking. It requires a great deal of capacity and determination from those who pursue the task [47,55,70,85,104]. The complexity of developing and strengthening the demand side comes in view of having in place many stakeholders who are expected to invest resources in building M&E systems to serve nationwide information needs. In the process, several systems may be created that work in parallel and at times in conflict, leading to problems of duplication and redundancies in data collection, gaps or imbalances in M&E, lack of data compatibility, and poor information flows [31,32,33,52,55,66,67,80].

It is for the reasons above that aside from putting in place an effective institutional supply side, it is critical to build a robust demand side for an M&E system to operate successfully and comprehensively. In fact, [59,83,105] warns, "effective demand is crucial and depends on many factors outside the scope of the WoGM&ES and cannot easily be institutionalised". Certain fundamental elements constitute the demand side of an M&E system and are summarised below.

a) Analysis and evaluation

For an M&E system to have a robust and well-developed demand side, it is necessary to invest in the capacities to undertake quality analysis and evaluation of policies and programmes. If these practices are still in their infancy, an M&E system may introduce them in phases, for instance starting with the collection of quality data, followed by capacity building for analysis of data, and finally, the institutionalisation of the practice of utilising the data to evaluate policies and programmes [59,70,76,92,102].

b) Outputs and dissemination

There should be commitment to the compilation and analysis of appropriate outputs of M&E information in readiness for their dissemination and distribution to a wider audience within and outside government. The ultimate usefulness of any M&E system is really the ability for its information to be utilised by stakeholders [5,89,90,91]. According to [59] and [67], a good WoGM&ES will generate a range of outputs to meet the information needs of various audiences and will include a dissemination strategy that reaches all its intended users. For example, all development issues of relevance to local communities will be appropriately reported within suitable M&E outputs designed for the general public.

c) Linking WoG-M&E system to planning and budgeting processes

Creating a link between the WoGM&ES and the planning and budgeting processes is a powerful way of generating demand for M&E [8,82,96,99,112]. For this reason, [3,4,98,113] assert that when agencies bid for public resources, this is an opportunity to ask them to justify their policies and plans, based on evidence provided by M&E data. For instance, in linking the WoGM&ES to the budget, care needs to be taken to avoid undesired effects. M&E data will not always be satisfactory and used to set annual priorities for expenditure. Attributing the results to spending could be problematic, especially when multiple interventions could have influenced the results. For instance, if budget releases were unreliable, it could lead to difficulties in holding public sector implementers accountable for their performance. Consequently, simply because the responsible agency may have performed poorly at M&E, sanctions may be difficult to enforce since they might lead to cuts in funding for some interventions [6,12-15,58].

d) The role of parliament

Parliaments should be key users of M&E information from poverty reduction interventions [18-22,25,64,68]. However, in practical terms, parliaments have not been proactively involved in the activities of WoGM&ES [23,58,73,87]. Therefore, without a strong committee system, supported by experienced research staff, these parliaments are generally unable to engage effectively with the executive on policy issues [36,40,68,71]. As an example, public committee hearings on NDP implementation, based on annual progress reports (APRs) and other outputs, would help to raise the profile of a WoGM&ES. This process would be enhanced if the role of parliamentary committees was institutionalised in the WoGM&ES or if technical and financial support was provided to parliament. To assist in interpreting data, parliamentarians may draw on expertise in civil society and academia, thus helping to forge useful alliances and broaden the inputs into the policy process [24,26,57-62,65].

e) Organising civil society participation

CSOs can play various roles in a WoGM&ES as producers and users of M&E information. A WoGM&ES may therefore provide an opportunity to sustain participation of these actors over a longer period. The extent and nature of civil society participation in a WoGM&ES varies considerably. For instance, where civil society is already highly mobilised around development issues, popular participation in development policy tends to be well institutionalised and sometimes supported by legal mandates. On the other hand, where there is little tradition of civil society involvement in the policy process, building up interest and capacity in such involvement must be a longer-term goal [10,58,66,75,78,103].

3. Methodological Approach

In this research study, the main objective was to assess the functionality of Zambia's WoGM&ES by tracking what works, what does not, and why in respect of the supply side and demand side. This was done to produce feasible suggestions for policy and legislative improvement and for further learning. Data were collected from reviews of secondary as well as primary data sources. Ultimately, the study was aimed at proposing a model for Zambia to build and sustain a stronger WoGM&ES which was going to inspire a generational transformation of good governance practices through evidence-based development. Particularly, the proposed model has attempted to give salient suggestions on how to re-structure and strengthen the demand-side fundamentals for Zambia's WoGM&ES.

The presentation of study findings follows the six components of the adopted diagnostic checklist as articulated by [36]. The six criteria or components of the country level M&E checklist include the following: i) policy, ii) methodology, iii) organisation, iv) capacity, v) participation of actors outside government, and vi) use of information from M&E (see Table 1).

Table 1. Diagnostic Checklist for M&E at National Level

No.	Topic	Question
I. Policy		
1	The evaluation plan	Is there a comprehensive evaluation plan, indicating what to evaluate, why, how, for whom?
2	M versus E	Is difference and relationship between M and E clearly spelled out?
3	Autonomy and impartiality (accountability)	Is the need for autonomy and impartiality explicitly mentioned? Does the M&E plan allow for tough issues to be analysed? Is there an independent budget?
4	Feedback	Is there an explicit and consistent approach to reporting, dissemination, integration?
5	Alignment planning and budgeting	Is there integration of M&E results in planning and budgeting?
II. Methodology		
6	Selection of indicators	Is it clear what to monitor and evaluate? Is there a list of indicators?
7	Selection criteria	Are the criteria for the selection of indicators clear? And who selects?
8	Priority setting	Is the need acknowledged to set priorities and limit the number of indicators to be monitored?
9	Causality chain	Are different levels of indicators (input-output-outcome-impact) explicitly linked (programme theory)? (vertical logic)
10	Methodologies used	Is it clear how to monitor and evaluate? Are methodologies well identified and mutually integrated?
11	Data collection	Are sources of data collection clearly identified? Are indicators linked to sources of data collection? (horizontal logic)

No.	Topic	Question
III. Organization		
12	Coordination & oversight	Is there an appropriate institutional structure for coordination, support, central oversight, and feedback? With different stakeholders?
13	Statistical Office	Are surveys, censuses etc. streamlined into M&E needs? Is the role of the statistical office in M&E clear?
14	Line Ministries	Are there M&E units in line ministries and semi-governmental institutions (parastatals), and are these properly relayed to central unit?
15	Decentralised levels	Are there M&E units at decentralised levels and are these properly relayed to central unit?
16	Link with projects	Is there any effort to relay with/coordinate with donor M&E mechanisms for projects?
IV. Capacity		
17	Problem acknowledged	Are current weaknesses in the system identified?
18	Capacity building plan	Are there plans for remediation? Do these include training, appropriate salaries, etc.
I. Participation of actors outside government		
19	Parliament	Is the role of Parliament properly recognised, and is there alignment with Parliamentary control and oversight procedures?
20	Civil Society	Is the role of civil society recognised? Are there clear procedures for the participation of civil society? Is the participation institutionally arranged or rather ad-hoc?
21	Donors	Is the role of donors recognised? Are there clear procedures for participation of donors?
VI. Use of information from M&E		
22	Effective use of M&E in APR	Is there a presentation of relevant M&E results? Are results compared to targets? Is there an analysis of discrepancies?
23	Internal usage of APR	Is the APR also used for internal purposes? Is it an instrument of national policy-making and/or policy influencing and advocacy?

Holvoet and Renard, 2005.

Each criterion has a set of questions that are necessary to understanding the M&E issues pertaining to it. The checklist has been prepared and articulated with a view to helping governments and other development stakeholders concerned with public sector-related M&E systems to examine the areas of weakness and strength and use such information to have targeted M&E reform agendas. The checklist was appropriate for use in this research study because the Zambian Government would benefit from the diagnostic results to strengthen the WoGM&ES.

Further, the five-point LEADS system of scoring was

used together with the checklist as a quantitative way of making the results analysis and discussion clearer. The LEADS scoring system has five-point categories: L (Little action: 1), E (Elements exist: 2), A (Action taken: 3), D (largely Developed: 4), and S (Sustainable: 5). The diagnostic checklist and the LEADS scoring system were used conjointly. Using the questions from the diagnostic checklist, data collection was done using semi-structured interviews through self-administered (survey) questionnaires, focus group discussions (FGDs) and key informants. Rigorous document review was also used (see Table 2).

Table 2. LEADS scoring method for assessing country level M&E systems

No.	Dimension	Question	Scores				
			1	2	3	4	5
Key area/ Component 6: Use of information from M&E							
1	M&E outputs	Is there a presentation of relevant M&E results? Are results compared to targets? Is there an analysis of discrepancies? Is the M&E output differentiated to different audiences?	There is no presentation of relevant M&E results. Results are not compared to targets. There is no analysis of discrepancies. The M&E output is not differentiated towards different audiences.	There is a presentation of relevant M&E results. Results are not compared to targets. There is no analysis of discrepancies. The M&E output is not differentiated towards different audiences.	There is a presentation of relevant M&E results. Results are compared to targets. There is limited analysis of discrepancies. The M&E output is not differentiated towards different audiences.	There is a presentation of relevant M&E results. Results are compared to targets. There is analysis of discrepancies, but analysis is still weak. The M&E output is differentiated towards different audiences. or There is a presentation of relevant M&E results. Results are compared to targets. There is in-depth analysis of discrepancies. The M&E output is not differentiated towards different audiences.	There is a presentation of relevant M&E results. Results are compared to targets. There is in-depth analysis of discrepancies. The M&E output is differentiated towards different audiences.

2	Effective use of M&E by development partners	Are donors using the outputs of sector M&E systems for their information needs? Is the demand for M&E data from donors coordinated?	Development partners are not using the outputs of the sector M&E system for their information needs. The demand for M&E data from development partners is not coordinated.	Development partners are using the outputs of the sector M&E system for their information needs, but rather in an ad hoc way. The demand for M&E data from development partners is not coordinated.	Development partners are systematically using the outputs of the sector M&E system for their information needs. The demand for M&E data from development partners is not coordinated.	Development partners are using the outputs of the sector M&E system for their information needs, but rather in an ad hoc way. The demand for M&E data from development partners is well coordinated. or Development partners are systematically using the outputs of the sector M&E system for their information needs. The demand for M&E data from development partners is coordinated, but coordination could be improved.	Development partners are systematically using the outputs of the sector M&E system for their information needs. The demand for M&E data from development partners is well coordinated.
3	Effective use of M&E at central level	Are results of M&E activities used for internal purposes? Is it an instrument of policy-making and/or policy-influencing and advocacy at central level?	Results of M&E activities are not used for internal purposes. It is not an instrument of policy-making and/or policy-influencing and advocacy at central level.	Results of M&E activities are used for internal purposes, but rather in an ad hoc way. It is an instrument of policy-making, hardly of policy-influencing and advocacy at central level.	Results of M&E activities are systematically used for internal purposes. It is an instrument of policy-making, hardly of policy-influencing and advocacy at central level. or Results of M&E activities are used for internal purposes, but rather ad hoc. It is an instrument of policy-making and policy-influencing and advocacy at central level.	Results of M&E activities are systematically used for internal purposes, but use could be more intense. It is an instrument of policy-making and/or policy-influencing and advocacy at central level.	Results of M&E activities are systematically used for internal purposes. It is an instrument of policy-making, policy-influencing and advocacy at central level.
4	Effective use of M&E at local level	Are results of M&E activities used for internal purposes? Is it an instrument of policy-making and/or policy-influencing and advocacy at local level?	Results of M&E activities are not used for internal purposes. It is not an instrument of policy-making and/or policy-influencing and advocacy at local level.	Results of M&E activities are used for internal purposes, but rather in an ad hoc way. It is an instrument of policy-making, hardly of policy-influencing and advocacy at local level.	Results of M&E activities are systematically used for internal purposes. It is an instrument of policy-making, hardly of policy-influencing and advocacy at local level. or Results of M&E activities are used for internal purposes, but rather in an ad hoc way. It is an instrument of policy-making and policy-influencing and advocacy at local level.	Results of M&E activities are systematically used for internal purposes, but use could be more intense. It is an instrument of policy-making and/or policy-influencing and advocacy at local level.	Results of M&E activities are used for internal purposes. It is an instrument of policy-making and/or policy-influencing and advocacy at local level.
5	Effective use of M&E by outside government actors	Are results of M&E used as an instrument to hold government accountable?	Results of M&E are not used as an instrument to hold government accountable.	Results of M&E are used as an instrument to hold government accountable, but only limitedly and only by a few outside government actors.	Results of M&E are used as an instrument to hold government accountable, but only by a few outside government actors.	Results of M&E are used as an instrument to hold government accountable by several outside government actors, but use could be more intense.	Results of M&E are intensively used as an instrument to hold government accountable by several outside government actors.

4. Summary Presentation of Research Findings

Country level monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems have two sides—supply and demand. For a system to function properly, both sides must be fully operational. On one hand, the supply side should be able to provide relevant information to meet the needs of various stakeholders. Through evidence-based decision and policy making processes, the supply side of an M&E system becomes essential source of information. On the other hand, the demand side is what incentivises the

supply side by seeking for information required in decision and policy making processes. In that regard, both sides are supposed to be well developed to enable an M&E system to be relevant to the development process of an organisation.

Table 3 presents the results of the assessment of Zambia's WoGM&ES to illustrate the status of the public sector M&E system. It gives a summary of the Zambian public sector M&E system as diagnosed in the study. Although the study used the qualitative approach, this quantitative scoring system was employed to provide substance analysis and arrive at areas of improvement for the system.

Table 3. Summary presentation of diagnostic results

No.	COMPONENT	TOPIC	SCORES
1	POLICY		2.2
		M&E plan	2
		M versus E	2
		Autonomy & impartiality (accountability)	2
		Feedback	3
		Alignment to planning & budgeting	2
2	METHODOLOGY		2.9
		Selection of indicators	2
		Quality of indicators	3
		Disaggregation	3
		Selection criteria	3
		Priority setting	2
		Causality chain	3
		Methodology used	3
		Data collection	4
3	ORGANISATION		1.9
	a) Structure		1.6
		Coordination & oversight	2
		Joint sector reviews	1
		Sector working groups	2
		Ownership	2
		Incentives	1
	b) Structure		2.2
		Linkage with statistical office	3
		'Horizontal' integration	2
		'Vertical' upward integration	2
		'Vertical' downward integration	1
		Link with projects	3
4	CAPACITY		2.0
		Present capacity	2
		Capacity building plan	2
		Problem acknowledged	2
5	PARTICIPATION OF ACTORS OUTSIDE GOVERNMENT		2.0
		Parliament	2
		Civil Society	2
		Donors	2
6	USE OF INFORMATION FROM M&E OUTPUTS		1.4
		Outputs	2
		Effective use of M&E by donors	1
		Effective use of M&E at central level	2
		Effective use of M&E at local level	1
		Effective use of M&E by actors outside of Government	1

Source: Diagnostic study score results compiled by author (2021).

The level of implementation status for the components of Zambia's WoGM&ES varies across the criteria as shown in Table 4. Although the results in Table 3 above show variances across the 34 sub-components/topics, it is interesting to observe how the overall picture varies from 'little action taken' to 'elements exist' and ultimately to 'action taken'. None of the dimensions scored 'largely developed' (4) or 'sustainable' (5).

Table 4. Status of Zambia's Whole-of-Government Monitoring and Evaluation System

Dimension	Status of implementation on LEADS scoring system	
Policy	2	Elements exist
Methodology	3	Action taken
Organisation	2	Elements exist
Capacity	2	Elements exist
Participation of actors outside government	2	Elements exist
Use of information from M&E	1	Little action
Average status of implementation	2	Elements exist

Source: Scores from study findings compiled by author (2021)

[NOTE: For ease of scoring and comparability, the scores have been rounded up to the nearest whole number. For example, the 2.2 score for the policy dimension is 2.0, the methodology dimension becomes 3.0, and so on].

Overall, the diagnostic results indicate that the methodology component of Zambia's WoGM&ES is comparatively more developed with a score of 2.9 (rounded to 3) out of a possible total of 5, while the least developed component is the use of information from M&E outputs at 1.4 (rounded to 1). This demonstrates a weakness on the demand side of Zambia's WoGM&ES. The organisation dimension (structure and linkages combined) had a score of 1.9, which was closer to those for capacity and participation of actors outside government (both have a score of 2). The policy dimension scored 2.2. Although it was compiled holistically, the results reveal important dynamics. For the methodology component, five sub-topics scored 3 points (that is, quality of indicators, disaggregation, selection criteria, causality chain and methodologies), signifying that important M&E actions had been taken in this dimension across the WoGM&ES. The data collection sub-component scored the highest (4 points), meaning it was the most developed under the methodology dimension, while the selection of indicators and priority setting sub-components scored 2 points, meaning that only elements of M&E existed for those aspects of the methodology dimension.

The next relatively well developed component was policy (with 2.2 score), but a closer look at the intra sub-component dynamics gave notable aspects of analytical interest. For example, while the topic on feedback has a score of 3 points (action taken), the rest of the sub-components (M&E plan, M&E, autonomy and impartiality, and alignment with planning and budgeting) scored 2 points each. This may mean that although the policy component seems to be fairly or well developed at a 2.2-point score, Zambia's WoGM&ES fared poorly in its accountability function. This is also true of the sub-dimensions of alignment of M&E with planning and budgeting processes (a 2-point score).

All three actors, namely parliament, civil society and donors, had a 2-point score each for the component of participation of actors outside government (with overall score of 2 points). This signifies that only elements of M&E existed in these development actors and ultimately could mean that their participation and contribution to matters related to the WoGM&ES were weaker. The capacity dimension also had an overall 2-point score (that is, only M&E elements existed). It is worrisome to note that all three sub-components under this dimension (that is, present capacity, problems acknowledged and capacity building plan) possessed only elements of M&E and none was largely developed (4) or sustainable (5). The second lowest scoring component was the organisation dimension (combining structure and linkages) with an aggregated score of 1.9. Organisational linkages scored better, with an average 2-point score, than the organisational structure, with an average score of 1.6.

For the component of use of information from M&E outputs, the diagnostic results show that while M&E outputs may be available, their access and utilisation for management functions remain challenging across government structures and institutions outside government. Thus, the effective use of M&E outputs at local or decentralised levels scored a dismal 1 point (little M&E action was taken). Similarly, the effective use of M&E outputs by actors outside government scored 1 point, while the use of M&E at central level had a 2-point score. Again, these low scores suggest that currently the WoGM&ES did not inspire the demand for and utilisation of M&E information for decision- and policy-making processes by key stakeholders in the country.

In all, the presentation of these results opened up a number of discussion points. The positive aspects and the gaps would both stimulate opportunities to identify and strengthen aspects of Zambia's WoGM&ES. Taking time to consider these aspects in the assessment would generate critical action points such as this proposed model to strengthen the demand side. A separate study to build and strengthen the M&E supply side of Zambia's WoGM&ES has also been undertaken.

5. Demand Side Monitoring and Evaluation Proposed Model

For Zambia to build, strengthen and sustain its WoGM&ES, deliberate and consistent steps will be inevitable. Holistically, the transformational improvements and accompanying M&E reforms will be needed at two levels of the overall WoGM&ES, namely transforming the supply side, and transforming the demand side. Therefore, this study recommends a robust transformation of the demand side. However, building and sustaining a functional system for M&E on the demand side, just like on the supply side, has to be gradual and incremental because it is a complex task. It demands detailed knowledge across sectors, and of interactions among planning, budgeting, and implementation functions in the public sector. The matter is complicated even further whenever the machinery of government is decentralised, with powers and functions shared and spread across the three spheres of government—executive, legislature and

judiciary. It is precisely this kind of complex intergovernmental structure, with diffuse powers and functions, which requires strong M&E systems to promote coordination and prevent fragmentation as a country thrives to achieve good governance and poverty reduction.

Model synopsis

The rationale of this proposed model is premised on the need to put in place five (5) functionality dimensions meant to improve the M&E coordination function:

- a) Clarity on the common purpose of implementing a WoGM&ES
- b) The Zambian governance structure
- c) Independent evaluation structure
- d) Government-wide integrated ICT infrastructure and arrangements
- e) Decentralised and integrated national statistical system

a) Clarity on the common purpose of implementing a WoGM&ES

Why is the Zambian government motivated to build, strengthen and sustain a functional WoGM&ES? This question is important if the country's system for M&E is to be built on solid ground. Responses to the question will trigger all sorts of operational questions: What? How? When? Who? Zambia is among the poorest countries of the world and is plunged in the vicious cycle of deprivation and want. Efforts by government and citizens should be towards emancipating the country from this dire situation. Poverty levels are currently high and increasing at over 60%, as is unemployment, especially among the youth and women, and inequalities, yet the country still depends on the mono economy of copper.

In building and strengthening its WoGM&ES, Zambia, like any other country, will need to provide a commonly shared justification for embarking on such effort. The purpose must be widely appreciated and stakeholder buy-in built so that the implementation process is not a preserve of one agency, but of the entire government machinery. For instance, many factors led the South

African government to recognise the need for a government-wide monitoring and evaluation (GWM&E) system. Among other reasons, the government of South Africa faced an increasing emphasis on service delivery and the gathering of non-financial information, in pursuit of greater value for money spent [7,9,17,56,72,77,111]. This model contends that while the Zambian government may be certain about the purpose of implementing the WoGM&ES (even in a fragmented manner, as found in this study), the current weak position must be reconsidered. A thorough process of broad-based advocacy among key stakeholders on the need to build a robust evidence-based WoGM&ES becomes inevitable. Doing so will be useful in that investing in such a system will not only be expensive in terms of resources, but in building consensus among the citizens and institutions that are critical to owning and sustaining such a system in the long term. This model challenges the status quo of being comfortable in implementing the current WoGM&ES in a fragmented manner where key government structures such as line ministries, provinces and districts could not show common understanding of the WoGM&ES. Various and varying definitions of the system (WoGM&ES) were given with misinterpretation and even misunderstandings of what it is intended to achieve. For such reasons, when a clearly and commonly shared position on the common meaning, rationale, objectives and goal of a functional WoGM&ES are attained, Zambia will be on a sustainable path towards a successful system.

b) Zambian governance structure

It is crucial to appreciate the structure of the Zambian governance system. The development process is facilitated by the governance structure as enshrined in the national constitution. Thus, the WoGM&ES is proposed to be anchored on the Zambian Constitution, backed by all appropriate current laws and those to be enacted in future. The system should be well linked to all the three arms of government, namely executive, judiciary and legislature, as shown in Figure 1.

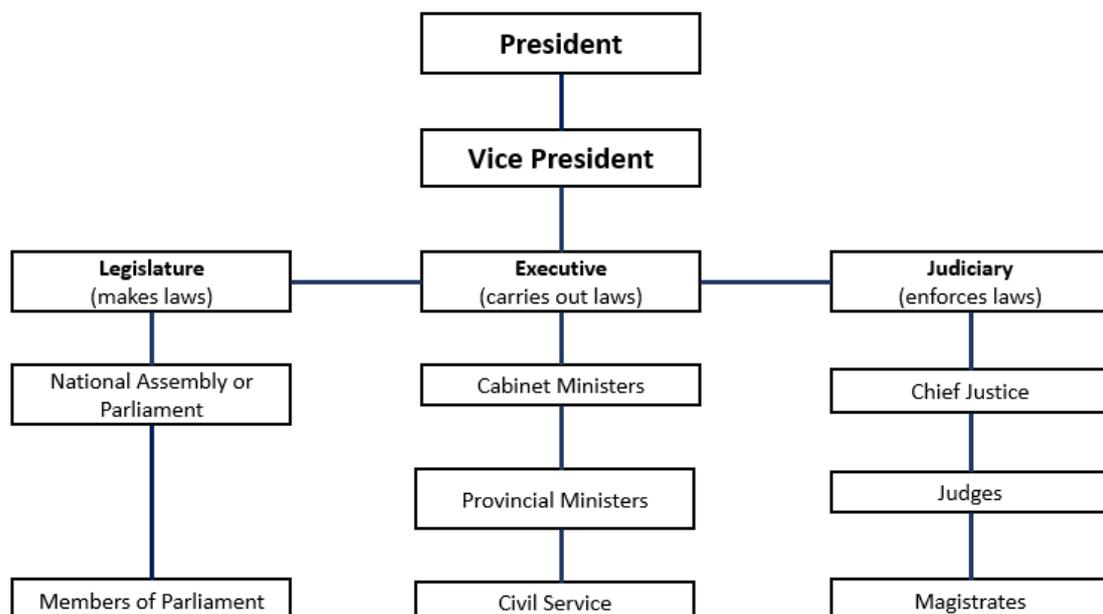


Figure 1. Three branches of the Zambian governance system (Source: Grade 7 Social Studies, Longman Zambia Educational Limited, 2017, p. 21)

Figure 1 shows the three branches of government, which work in complementarity in service of the Zambian population. Their core roles are as follows: The legislature makes the laws of the country and controls the executive. The executive runs the country according to its laws, and makes decisions for the country. It is also called the government. The judiciary makes sure that the laws of the country were obeyed through the courts.

c) *Independent evaluation structure*

This model recommends in the strongest possible way the creation of a separate, autonomous, neutral and independent institution mandated with the responsibility of conducting ‘strategic national evaluations’ in Zambia. Currently, the evaluation role is at its weakest or, worse still, ‘non-existent’. Yet, the evaluation function is the most critical part of any successful WoGM&ES [15,27,68,71,82,87,92]. For Zambia, it is not surprising that the situation of a weak evaluation culture is like this, because the reason for putting an M&E system in place was driven mostly by the World Bank and IMF during the implementation of the PRSP programme between 2000 and 2004. If the demand had been internally driven and owned, probably practices such as embedding a strong ‘evaluative culture’ within the current weak WoGM&ES would be addressed. Although this view seems to be far-fetched for Zambia, it remains the correct and feasible way to proceed—establishing an independent evaluation office.

Countries that are seen to be implementing successful WoGM&ES with strong ‘evaluation’ cultures embedded in them include Colombia, Mexico, Chile, South Africa, Indonesia, Canada and Australia [16,17,48,52,81,84,88,94]. These countries are reported to have built strong evaluative functions as a starting point when creating their systems for M&E and have invested time and resources to strike a balance between strengthening the supply and demand sides of their systems. Similarly, this model proposes that since Zambia’s WoGM&ES was still at its embryonic stage, it is important that the culture and practice of evaluation within the system are embraced. But as this effort is being embarked on, serious buy-in from the political leadership and the civil service must lead the transformational shift. As in these best practice countries, setting up a separate structure for undertaking strategic

national evaluations would be inevitable and an effort in the right direction. But the location of this structure must be given operational and resource independence to give it ‘teeth’ by producing evidence for improvement of service delivery in the public sector.

d) *Government-wide integrated information technology and communications infrastructure*

To have in place a functional WoGM&ES, this model proposes restructuring and strengthening the current information technology and communications (ICT) set up across the public sector. Accordingly, all the four operational levels of government will need to host ICT portals, which will be data and information gateways that feed into the national and provincial databases. ICT improvement will serve as a powerful enabler towards integrating systems and sub-systems, which will ultimately help create a holistic WoGM&ES. However, the findings in this study have shown that currently the evolution of ICT to support the WoGM&ES is at its weakest. Nevertheless, this model contends that if progress was to be made, government may have no alternative but to invest meaningfully in the ICT sector to support a robust M&E function in the country. The Smart Zambia Institute (SZI) initiative is a positive starting point. However, there is need for the institution to expand to all operational areas of government to support and host the WoGM&ES ICT component.

Figure 2 below shows the ICT infrastructural arrangements that need to be introduced and strengthened throughout the government structures. The proposal is to have two functional ICT aspects, a portal for official data entry, and a database for data and information storage. These are proposed to be placed at every operational level of the WoGM&ES (that is, presidency, national, line ministry, provincial and district level). Effectively therefore, these ICT infrastructures are proposed to be synchronised with the statistical functions at all levels. This entails that for all the statistical information collected by CSO across the country will need to sit on these ICT platforms or be functionally linked. Current statistical arrangements will need to be restructured to meet the proposed institutional and information system design, particularly in terms of ICT and other resource capacities, such as human, financial, material and skills.

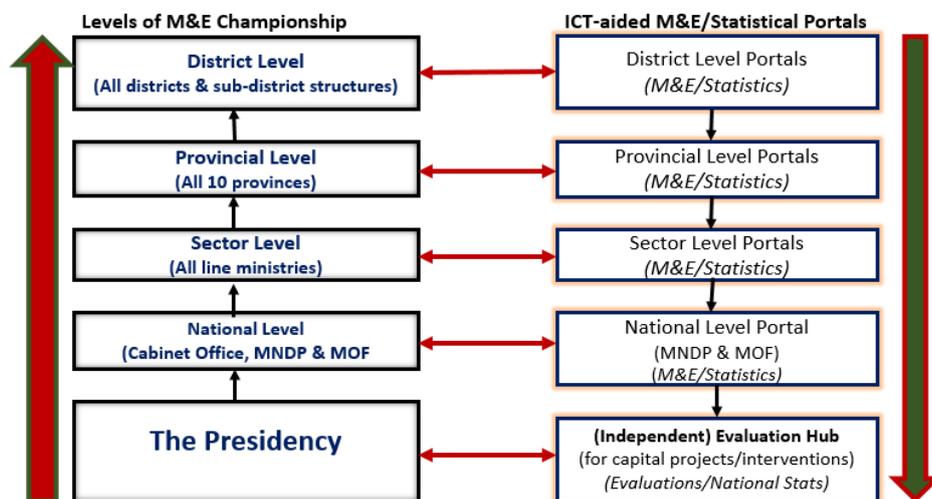


Figure 2. Government M&E and information communication technology portals

In [Figure 2](#) the linkage relationships that are portrayed between levels (shown by arrows) are important. In terms of the M&E championship, it is proposed that more effort in inculcating the culture and practice of results evolves from the presidency, to national level institutions, to line ministries, to provinces, and all the way to district and sub-district level. At the same time, ICT-aided M&E and statistical portals as well as databases will flow downwards from district level, feeding into provincial, line ministry, national and finally into the evaluation database. In addition, institutions at each level will be responsible for maintaining databases and utilising the information for their decision-making processes. Through this kind of interaction and operation, it is seen as a practical approach to building and sustaining a stronger supply- and demand- side and ultimately the WoGM&ES for the Zambian public sector.

e) *Decentralised and integrated National Statistical System*

Promising efforts to re-engineer the operations of the Central Statistical Office (CSO) have been reported. These efforts are proposed in the draft national strategy for the development of statistics (NSDS) 2014-2018 and the National Statistical System (NSS). However, it was gathered that the current linkages and functional

relationships between the WoGM&ES and the NSS are weak and fragmented. There are apparently no deliberate structural arrangements to strengthen the desired complementary roles and responsibilities of the WoGM&ES and NSS. Yet, a successful WoGM&ES needs to be anchored effectively on a stronger NSS. Data and information need to flow between these systems and used in informing developmental decisions and policy-making processes.

Thus, this model presupposes that not much progress will be made towards building and sustaining a WoGM&ES for Zambia's public sector without having a corresponding NSS in place. To that extent, just as the WoGM&ES is proposed to be strengthened by having functional elements in all structures of government at national, line ministry, provincial and districts level, so should the NSS. More so, focus should be not only on putting these M&E and statistical functions in place, but on their sustainable collaborations and integration. To have a responsive NSS, it should be enhanced in terms of possessing critical components such as data suppliers and users, other data producers and permanent training facilities for continued capacity building. Therefore, the model supports the components of the NSS as proposed in the NSDS (see [Figure 3](#)).

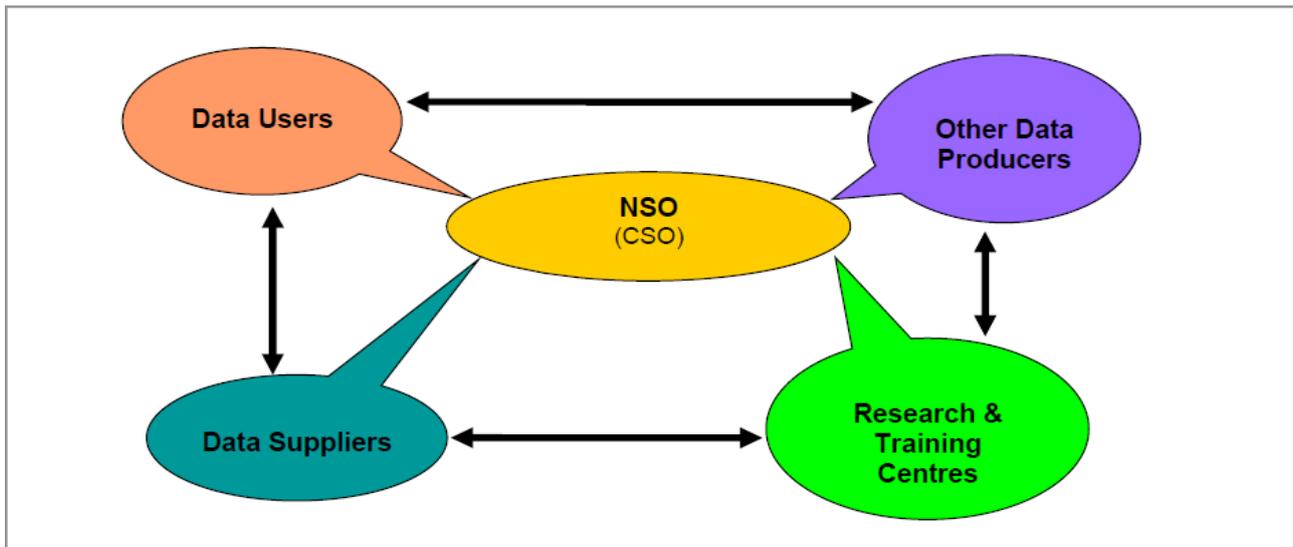


Figure 3. Components of the National Statistical System (Source: Central Statistical Office, National Strategy for the Development of Statistics, 2014, p. 2. Key: NSO: National Statistics Office; CSO: Central Statistical Office)

The model takes into account the current set up, in which the leadership and coordinating roles of M&E and statistics at national level are under the mandate of the MNDP. This arrangement needs to exist for better collaboration and to cement both roles (that is, M&E and statistics). The model also proposes strengthening the legislation at all levels to ensure that this relationship and functionalities of the WoGM&ES and the NSS are developed and sustained. This will entail having in place a common policy and law that spells out these intentions and functionalities. In the absence of a common legislation, efforts need to be made to harmonise existing ones, because it is only when roles and responsibilities are clearly understood from a policy level and through legal provisions that the implementation process would be feasible. This model considers that M&E and statistical functions need to be seriously defined and harmonised across all structures of government as conceptualised in [Figure 4](#).

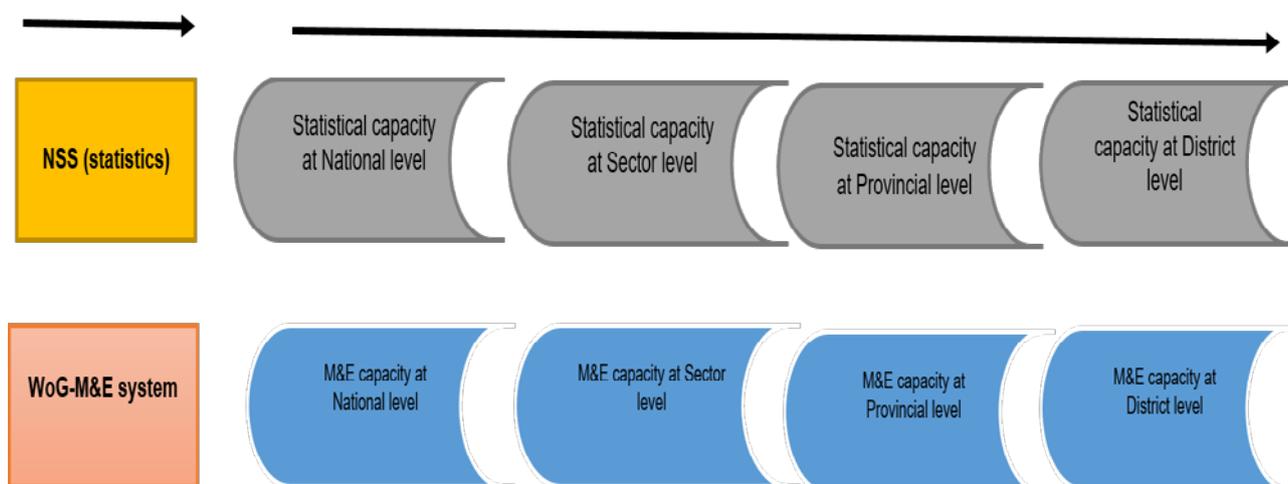


Figure 4. Harmonising statistical monitoring and evaluation across government structures

5. Strengthening the Demand Side

The utilisation of information from M&E is probably the most important element that every system for M&E should seek to attain and maintain. The demand side of an M&E system motivates investments and commitments that strengthen the supply side. “The demand side can be strengthened by promoting greater awareness of, and confidence in, the monitoring information and evaluation findings which the system produces—awareness among ministers, civil servants, and in civil society. Greater utilisation of M&E information will require that key ministers and their ministries—especially the presidency and all apex institutions play a leading and even forceful role in championing the usefulness of the M&E information produced by WoGM&ES” [55]. Once there is evidence and assurance that information from M&E processes will be used, the supply side should be incentivised and preoccupied in preparing and disseminating this information for the use by needy stakeholders. Therefore, similar to the supply side, the demand side involves a number of aspects. Below are the prescribed solutions for consideration on the demand side of Zambia’s WoGM&ES as proposed in this model.

a) Use of monitoring and evaluation information by the presidency

The continuous request for and use of M&E information by the presidency forms the basis for this model’s success. As a champion of the results-based management (RBM), the presidency would be expected to play a significant role in supporting a strengthened M&E through consuming information from M&E. If the presidency systematically asks for evidence from the implementation of NDPs, a culture of results would quickly spread across government and beyond. This demand for M&E information from the highest office would strengthen the WoGM&ES. Like in Colombia, the President uses M&E information to enhance political control of the executive arm of government as well as in his weekly town hall meetings in different municipalities around the country [29,53,55,95,100,114,115]. For Zambia, commitment to using M&E information by the presidency would necessitate a transformational agenda towards good governance resulting from evidence-based,

transparent and accountable development process. The findings of this study have shown that the Presidency did not have in place an institutionalised way of demanding for high quality performance results from MPSAs.

b) Linking monitoring and evaluation to planning, budgeting and policy processes

The diagnostic review showed that Zambia’s WoGM&ES provides regular information about inputs, activities and outputs. This information was provided by institutions at national, line ministry, provincial and district level through monthly, quarterly and annual reports. However, this research study found weak evidence for the full utilisation of M&E information to inform planning, budgeting and policy-making processes. [33,37,38,39,58,113] made a similar observation when they stated that “the challenge lies in generating demand for information in a country where information and analysis are rarely used in decision making”. The use of information to inform policy decisions at various levels of government was mixed. While several policies were being formulated and others reviewed across government, there was little evidence of utilising M&E information. The same result was true for the utilisation of M&E information in budgeting processes. For instance, MOF confirmed that it was difficult to obtain information about the ways in which MPSAs utilised fund allocations from the previous period. Similarly, although many line ministries and other spending agencies made their financial reports available, they were incomplete. Surprisingly, no structured sanctions had been implemented to take such institutions to task. This was attributed mainly to ‘political’ interference from higher offices (that is, according to study findings) and the general lack of structured demand for M&E information in government. However, for planning processes, the study findings showed scanty evidence of the use of M&E information and in a fragmented manner. M&E products such as APRs, NDP evaluation reports, and other institutional reports were reported of being used to inform the preparation of NDPs.

This model therefore proposes serious reconsideration of the manner in which processes of planning, budgeting and policy making were done vis-à-vis the use of M&E information. Most importantly, these processes are supposed to benefit from the mandatory utilisation of

M&E information. It is therefore submitted that whenever these processes are undertaken at any level, M&E information should be demanded and used to determine progress. This demand for M&E products by leaders and users at all levels will continuously pressurise the supply side to provide the much needed information for these processes. In the end, Zambia's WoGM&ES will thrive and become dependable source of evidence for development processes within government and outside.

Among others, to actualise the use of M&E, APRs presents an opportunity for MPSAs to undertake annual public expenditure reviews. Thus during the APR preparation process, budget expenditure data and information could be provided by MPSAs and in-depth analysis done. By so doing, all successive APRs would offer M&E information that was readily available for decision and policy makers. Thus, the current situation, as found in this study, that M&E information from APRs was rarely used to inform budgetary and policy making would be past experience and point of future learning. When those changes occur, MOF will be able to state how APR expenditure information was feeding into the subsequent budgeting processes. Regardless of whether the annual expenditure information was positive or negative, it would be justified. Furthermore, the APR as an M&E product will then provide expenditure information for use by key stakeholders to pressurise government to re-engineer the annual budget architecture.

c) Use of Monitoring and evaluation information by parliament

Parliament plays a significant role in the development process of Zambia through its oversight function and mandate to make laws that govern the country. Parliament deliberates and approves the estimates of expenditures (that is, national budgets) for government. It is therefore prudent to have a sound linkage between parliament and the WoGM&ES or better understood, parliament to form part of the WoGM&ES. The information generated from the national M&E system should feed into the decisions and development processes of the National Assembly. In the same manner, the works of parliament should be reported back into the country system for M&E so that evidence-based management is not the preserve only of the executive and the judiciary branches of government, but of all the three arms, including the legislature. To that extent, this model advocates for a practically oriented approach to involving parliament in strengthening Zambia's WoGM&ES. On the demand side, parliament will have clearly defined M&E roles and products that are useful to its operations and how it will in return give feedback to the WoGM&ES.

Nevertheless, the findings showed that the utilisation of M&E information by parliament was weak, ad hoc and in many ways non-existent. The lack of institutionalised M&E structures and products in parliament and across the WoGM&ES has led to these poor findings. Issues of M&E capacity, ranging from systemic, technical skills and financial resources, were found to be inhibiting, thus, causing low demand for M&E information by parliament. Equally, leadership that consistently promotes functional M&E at parliament was not in place. Therefore, many critical questions remain unanswered. For instance, in the absence of structured M&E information, what

evidence guides parliamentary proceedings and the business of various parliamentary committees? Budgetary considerations form a key role of parliament, but, devoid of evidence of high analytical value, how do members of parliament and government engage prudently? What information is available for every parliamentarian to equip him or her with evidence-based debates and representation of the masses?

In resolving these challenges and in ensuring that parliament becomes a practical stakeholder in the WoGM&ES, a number of actions have to be embarked on. An inclusive M&E culture that supports a 'results-focused development process' is required to be put in place. Undoubtedly, Zambia will need to complete the formulation and launch of the National Monitoring and Evaluation Policy (NM&EP). This policy must be comprehensive in its scope, definition and content so that all development stakeholders see themselves as active players in its successful implementation. In the same manner, an act of parliament is vital for a sustainable WoGM&ES for the Zambian public sector. Aside from the national level policy environment, parliament will need its own policy position for its M&E functions and practice. Drawing from the national M&E policy provisions and the supportive legislation, parliament will be expected to create M&E structures at apex level, and at all levels of its operations, including constitutional offices across the country. These decentralised functions will be harmonised and linked up with other structures of the WoGM&ES at all levels.

Further, for this to occur, strong leadership that fully supports a transformational M&E agenda will be needed in parliament to work as a 'champion' to continuously demand for a strengthened M&E function with parliament and across the country. Additionally, parliament will require investment in skills development pertaining to M&E. This will mean articulating a thorough capacity-building plan. This plan would best be a product of a diagnostic process, a needs assessment that would holistically benefit from what is currently working, not working and possibly why. To that extent, such an assessment should cover all aspects of a functional M&E system, for instance checking for current ICT support, skills, availability of budget for M&E, leadership, M&E information demand, institutional set up, and linkages with other MPSAs.

d) Use of monitoring and evaluation information by civil society

Civil society is a key stakeholder in the development process of Zambia. The interest of civil society organisations (CSOs) is to ensure that government efforts lead to poverty reduction for the majority poor citizens. Essentially, CSOs function as checks and balances on the services of government as providers of development services to the people. Most of their work is advocacy and championing good governance tenets of accountability and transparency. CSOs are believed to be fair representatives of the people and their partnerships with government are seen as important success factors. When CSOs are involved in key processes such as planning, budgeting and policy making, this is regarded as a desired state of participatory and inclusive development.

The role of civil society remains significant in the development process of Zambia. This was established in this study. CSOs were reported to have taken part in development processes of Zambia. In a number of processes, most prominently their involvement in the planning process and in poverty monitoring featured in the study findings. Recently, CSOs were part of the major stakeholders in the preparation of the 7NDP (2017-2021). In the recent past, they played an important role in the constitution-making process for the country. Their continued voice in democratic and electoral issues is another aspect in which CSOs have rendered useful input. In addition, CSOs were reported to be providing constructive input and feedback for the budget process. However, notable aspects needed to be improved if CSOs were to offer a meaningful contribution to development efforts. One such area is strengthening the role of M&E across government. CSOs have an operational presence at all these (government-wide) levels and their involvement in M&E issues would go a long way towards building, strengthening and sustaining the WoGM&ES for Zambia. For details on the use of M&E information by civil society.

On the demand side, CSOs are supposed to be key users of M&E information. Their feedback should be taken seriously in re-shaping M&E functionalities at any level. The involvement of CSOs would best start from the supply side where they participate in designing all M&E parameters such as systems development, indicator choices, methodologies, leadership, planning, funding, coordination, reporting and dissemination, and policy formulation. Once that has been done, the role of CSOs on the demand side would be streamlined and easy to implement. Currently, CSOs belong to major advisory bodies, which include the NDCC, PDCCs, DDCCs and WDCs. They also belong to a number of CAGs according to the pillars of the 7NDP. These are key platforms in which CSOs could make their M&E contributions. Currently, this role was acknowledged as being weak and fragmented and often left to a few civil society member organisations.

To ensure effective use of M&E information by CSOs, the WoGM&ES should produce outputs that are tailored to their information needs. Thus, CSOs would be required to participate in the articulation of those M&E products and dissemination mechanisms. The capacities of CSOs in terms of M&E technical skills, financial resources and generally the availability of appropriate systemic and human resources would need to be in place. In addition, coordination relationships between CSOs and all government structures would need to be prioritised. To achieve these, CSOs themselves would be expected to be proactive through innovating ways of engaging government, citizens, parliament, development partners and other stakeholders constructively, particularly on matters of improved good governance practices.

e) *Use of monitoring and evaluation information by donors*

While the role of donors in supporting M&E in Zambia was acknowledged and appreciated, the results of this study showed that much needs to be improved. Although donors provided technical support and funding for selected M&E activities, they had contributed to the weakened state of Zambia's WoGM&ES through

maintaining their own parallel M&E arrangements. This scenario was rationalised because the WoGM&ES was still in its infancy, and was not able to satisfy all stakeholders' information needs. It was also pointed out that donor support was not flexible enough to address urgent challenges such as financing M&E human capacity building plans for MPSAs. Much of their support went towards activities that were less impactful in empowering local practitioners. The financing from donors was reported to have usually been spent on procuring expensive external consultants, whose work had not been easy to sustain. The types of technical support that were given, such as those involving ICT strengthening, were redundant because of incompatibilities with local systems and practices.

Therefore, this model proposes a holistic reconsideration of the work of donors in supporting M&E functions in the country. After identifying a number of gaps in this diagnostic study, it is crucial for the work of donors to be tailored to support essential activities. Nevertheless, a strategic plan is needed that articulates M&E issues for the whole country, so that all donor support will draw their action points from this master plan. Since the involvement of donors in strengthening M&E is currently weak and fragmented across the WoGM&ES, government will need to spearhead the undertaking of a comprehensive stakeholder M&E work plan, which will act as an action sheet for stakeholder participation. In the work plan, which will be drawn from the national assessment (also stakeholder based and driven), donors will be expected to submit their feedback regarding collective support for a unified WoGM&ES for the country. The gaps that were identified in this research will be addressed practically using this structured, collective and participatory approach. Therefore, the relationship between government and donors will be expected to thrive, since the M&E plan will serve the information interests of both parties.

f) *Use of monitoring and evaluation by decentralised structures*

On the demand side, the continued quest for and use of M&E information by all stakeholders would go a long way towards building, strengthening and sustaining the WoGM&ES for Zambia. As the research findings showed, there were notable weaknesses in the manner in which M&E functions were being implemented as one moved from national-level institutions to decentralised ones at sector, provincial and district level. While line ministries were performing much better comparatively in terms of M&E activities, provinces and districts were the poorest. There were many gaps at decentralised level. These included lack of institutional structures for M&E, no M&E champions, absence of skilled staff in M&E, inadequate or in some cases no budget for M&E activities, and a generally weak culture of M&E. Others included weak statistical function, lack of systems for information management and fragmented coordination and collaboration mechanisms.

For decentralised structures to consistently use information from M&E and subsequently help strengthen the demand side, their capacities will need to be enhanced. The starting point should be to ensure that units or sections responsible for M&E are established at all

decentralised levels, and staff skilled in M&E are deployed to these structures. Another aspect of similar importance will be to articulate M&E plans, M&E work plans and M&E guidelines at all levels. All these efforts will need to draw from the National M&E Policy and the appropriate M&E legislation. It is hoped that while these efforts are being made, a wide range of M&E champions will emerge to strengthen the M&E function across government and promote a culture of results. However, from the initial stages, a cadre of M&E champions will be required who are advocates of RBM and practitioners of M&E in their institutions and spheres of influence. Once in place, this type of leadership will be crucial in defining the medium- and long-term transformational agenda for M&E, not only in decentralised structures, but across the WoGM&ES for Zambia's public sector. This will mean that, instead of the current set-up in which staff responsible for the planning function also undertake M&E activities, there should be separate and adequately funded and staffed structures tasked with the day-to-day M&E activities. By so doing, the demand for M&E products and their dissemination will characterise the M&E practices in all functional structures of government.

g) Incentivising the use of monitoring and evaluation information

Utilising information from M&E by stakeholders does not occur naturally. If it was so, then many countries, organisations and development agencies would have sustained systems for M&E. While the significance of using M&E information is seldom contended, practices have shown that agencies did not use information from M&E for various reasons. For some, M&E information is not available owing to lack of systems for M&E, while for others, information may be provided, but is not trustworthy. Further, some M&E information may have come in late for processes such as planning and budgeting. The results of this study have shown that the utilisation of M&E information was undermined at all levels. Among the reasons were the lack of a variety of and stakeholder appropriate M&E products, poor or limited dissemination strategies, lack of linkages of M&E products with strategic policy cycle moments, and lack of incentives to promote a culture of results through stakeholders demanding and using M&E information.

Incentives can be key ingredients in the enhancement of the demand side of an M&E system [11,32,34,35,41-44]. Thus, in an effort to build and sustain a stronger demand side of the WoGM&ES, significant investments of time and resources will be needed. A national M&E plan will be required that includes list of events or moments that use information from M&E. Spearheaded by government and supported by all stakeholders, the national M&E plan will need a costed work plan and show the M&E products, responsible institutions, the dissemination strategy, users, timelines, the events for M&E information, and other aspects. The incentive structure will then be developed in a participatory manner, and the responsibility of enforcement will be given to 'powerful' agencies, say, the MOF, MNDP or the presidency or a combination of them.

This model proposes that a strong incentive structure should be developed if the WoGM&ES is to make progress and contribute towards building and sustaining a

culture of results. Nevertheless, leadership at national level and at other decentralised levels, including buy-in from non-state actors, will be a requisite for the success of this effort. All MPSAs for instance will be required to know that funding will not be received for the next period in the absence of evidence of results from previous allocations. In the first instance, many agencies may face compliance challenges, but ultimately such a structure or arrangement will instil a sense of commitment to the provision and demand for quality M&E information. The WoGM&ES will make positive strides towards a system that is to the satisfaction of stakeholders and promotes overall good governance agenda for the country.

6. Conclusion

Putting in place a successful government-wide M&E system requires two critical sides to be fully developed—the supply side and the demand side. On one hand, the supply side is responsible for generating the M&E information, in its appropriate quality and quantity as demanded by various users. On the other hand, the demand side of an M&E system is expected to seek for M&E information contained in different data and information products and utilise them in decision-making and policies. This study focused on the demand side of Zambia's WoGM&ES, and particularly articulating the type of actions that needed to be considered by Government to build, strengthen and sustain a stronger system for the public sector. In that regard, the study represents a blueprint for the successful building and implementing a functional WoGM&ES that would satisfy the information needs of stakeholders. The stakeholders that form a critical group to create meaningful demand for M&E information has been duly identified—the presidency, parliament, civil society, cooperating partners/donors, ordinary citizens, etc.

To address the demand side of Zambia's WoGM&ES, the Government and its stakeholders are required to consider transforming the entire public sector to become results-oriented. Once the culture of results was inculcated in the public sector as well as outside, the demand for M&E information would take centre stage and the country will be making progress towards implementing its development interventions inspired by evidence. To build, strengthen and sustain a culture of results in the country will not be an easy undertaking. It will require commitment from all key stakeholders to transform both the supply and demand sides of the WoGM&ES. In that regard, Government is expected to implement the following to build and sustain the demand side: promote the use of M&E information by the presidency; link M&E to planning, budgeting and policy processes; promote the use of M&E information by parliament, civil society and donors. Decentralised structures of government as well as the general public will also need to be stimulated on the acquisition and use of M&E information. Equally, Government would need to incentivise the strategic users of M&E information across the country. Another similar study has been conducted on the supply side of Zambia's WoGM&ES.

7. Recommendations

A number of salient and categorised recommendations are made below:

Presidency Level

1. **Institutionalise M&E championship:** The responsibility of growing, nurturing and driving the culture of results should be rooted in the presidency. Unlike in the current scenario, where the appreciation of M&E is ad hoc and fragmented, the presidency is expected to vigorously pursue the mandate of M&E by leading the nation in creating a country that focused on results-based management (RBM). This should be pursued under the managing for development results (MfDRs) approach. The presidency would then be seen as giving the 'sermons' to incentivise the rest of the stakeholders in the country in supplying quality M&E information and creating demand for its utilisation. Sustained over successive political administrations, such championship at this level will go a long way towards attaining a stronger and successful WoGM&ES. Therefore, the presidency would need to be concerned with the functionality of M&E arrangements at national, line ministry, provincial and district level. Thus, practically, this transformation would mean that the president, cabinet, Cabinet Office, ministers and all the structures operating under the Office of the President (OP) would be expected to be proactive and aggressive advocates of RBM and M&E.
2. **Establish an evaluation structure:** There is need to introduce an evaluation culture through spearheading the conduct of strategic evaluations. The OP is expected to take the lead in the transformation towards a results-based and focused Zambia. At the level of the presidency, an evaluation structure has to be established to oversee strategic evaluations across government. Despite being under the president, the structure would be required to operate independent of any interference from this office. Instead, it would be expected to receive full support in terms of good will and resources to function properly. Adequate financial resources, skilled staff and appropriate infrastructure would be required to make this institution functionally relevant in providing the kind of information base the country needs. To ensure its viability and independence in its operations, its leader or management should be appointed by parliament or other professional body through a democratic process. The presidency should use the findings from these evaluations directly in its development engagements with all stakeholders. The results should also be made public in various formats, such as electronic and print. However, the challenge would be to make this institution political proof—meaning that changes in political leadership should not make this function vulnerable or threatened with abolition. For this reason, the legislation, through constitutional provision and the

institutionalisation of evaluation across government, would help sustain this important function.

3. **Create a feedback mechanism:** While a formalised and mandated structure to handle strategic national evaluations is extremely important, creating a mechanism that guarantees action on recommendations from these evaluations is of equal significance. To that extent, the WoGM&ES, particularly the evaluations structure, will be best positioned to clarify how all actions from evaluation reports will be finally implemented by institutions across government and beyond. The motivation of this feedback mechanism will be to improve public service provision and nation building. For instance, key evaluation findings, their remedial recommendations, responsible agency and timeliness of executing the improvements could be published, say, on institutional websites, reports and so on.

National apex institutional level

4. **Put in place leadership and ownership of M&E systems:** One of the gaps identified in this study concerns inadequate or lack of evidence of M&E leadership at national level. M&E champions and other capacities are required at national level, particularly in all apex institutions. Powerful ministers and other top leaders in these institutions will be expected to offer support towards the M&E function. Therefore, top government leadership will spur the spread and development of M&E systems at decentralised levels. At the same time, this effort will lead to the strengthening of the WoGM&ES supply and demand sides. Practically, this support will come through sequential demand and utilisation of M&E information by these institutions. For instance, particular M&E reports and other appropriate products on national budget performance and NDP implementation from all MPSAs will be demanded and utilised by apex institutions.
5. **Introduce stronger laws for M&E:** The supreme law of the land in Zambia is the national constitution. In addition, several accompanying pieces of legislation are aimed at helping to actualise the contents and aspirations articulated in the national constitution. The laws of Zambia aim to guide and protect citizens and the national endowments from undue loss or damages. There is need for a clearer 'stiffened' law in support of M&E and results orientation. Starting with a national M&E policy, which was reported to be currently in draft form, there is need for a constitutionally supportive M&E legislation. This law should be able to capacitate and compel all public institutions, including the presidency, national apex institutions and decentralised government structures, to adhere to RBM through the implementation of a stronger WoGM&ES. This law should include freedom of information, which will allow evidence to be reported on all development aspects of public interest. Once such a law has been enacted, those whose role is to supply

M&E information and those who use the information will be fully protected and work freely without fear of being victimised.

6. **Create synergies between government and training institutions:** Capacity-building, especially specialised skills in M&E was found to be a big challenge for Zambia's WoGM&ES. Professionals and practitioners of M&E still face practical difficulties with regard to provision of high quality analysis and complete M&E products that satisfy stakeholder information requirements at all levels. It is suggested that government will come up with stronger and institutionally sustainable synergies and collaborations with local training institutions to provide skills in evaluation analysis and process. In return, training and research institutions will be innovative by developing state-of-the-art programmes and courses meant to meet the growing M&E industry in the country. In that regard, a policy to guide this process may be developed to institutionalise M&E at all critical educational levels of the country's educational system. The private sector can too be challenged by policy to play a significant role of localising and building a results-oriented culture in Zambia.

Decentralised levels: line ministries, provinces & districts

7. **Undertake institutional level-specific M&E diagnoses:** Institutional M&E functions could be complex. When they involve stakeholders, these functions could be even more diverse and complicated. Since line ministries vary in many respects, it would be prudent to conduct diagnostic exercises for every sector to ascertain the current strengths and gaps before embarking on remedial actions. This would be the first step in an effort to build and sustain functional institution-wide M&E arrangements [11,47,87,93,97]. Some of the information regarding what works, what does not work, and why for the decentralised government structures have been highlighted in this study. As with the diagnosis of the WoGM&ES, line ministry, provincial and district-specific M&E assessments will need to focus on all the elements that help build and strengthen the supply sides and demand sides of those systems.
8. **Create information-sharing fora for inter-institutional M&E experiences:** This study has established that only limited M&E products were in place across the WoGM&ES. The prominent one is the annual progress report (APR), which is a compilation of progress reports from ministries, provinces and other spending agencies (MPSAs). New innovations are required and these could include exchange ministry-to-ministry, province-to-province and district-to-district programmes, an annual national M&E symposium, a web-based M&E platform to resolve related questions, etc. The Zambia Monitoring and Evaluation Association (ZaMEA) could be used as an M&E information platform for practitioners. As a community of practice (CoP) for Managing for Development

Results (MfDRs) in Zambia, ZaMEA presents an opportunity to support knowledge sharing and learning. Other fora on M&E include the African Evaluation Association (AFrEA), which is the African Continent Community of Practice (AfCoP) on the subject matter of MfDRs and RBM.

9. **Establish an incentive structure for the consumption of M&E information:** A lack of incentives to stimulate the supply and demand of M&E information across the WoGM&ES was common. All levels were reported not to have any form of incentive in place to promote the use of M&E information. Incentives are significant to a successful M&E system, particularly in encouraging the strengthening of the supply and demand sides. Therefore, it will be useful to identify stakeholder-appropriate incentives that will spur the use of M&E information by stakeholders at all levels across the WoGM&ES. The incentives will have to work at all levels. Regardless of whether they are carrots, sticks or sermons, they will need to be carefully enforced across the WoGM&ES in a non-selective and discriminatory manner. A range of incentives such as technical, political, financial management and skills training could be developed.
10. **Guarantee M&E backstopping support at all levels:** Currently, backstopping services with regard to M&E capacities across institutions was lacking. Yet, for continuity and institutionalisation of M&E across the WoGM&ES, support is required from national level institutions down to the decentralised structures. In that regard, the capacity of apex institutions will need to be enhanced to make them practically competent to offer M&E backstopping services across the WoGM&ES. Line ministries, provinces and districts will be expected to possess appropriate capacities to allow for vertical and horizontal backstopping support. In that regard, M&E support could be obtained from a higher-level structure or from within the same level or indeed from training institutions.
11. **Leadership and ownership for M&E systems at all levels:** At all decentralised levels, there is a need to introduce strong leadership that will promote institutional implementation and ownership of the M&E function. M&E works well when the top leadership of an institution demands and uses M&E information to inform its decision-making processes. At the same time, buy-in from institutional leadership can lead to further support towards having M&E resources and efforts to strengthen arrangements for M&E. In other words, there is need to put in place leaders and managers in all government decentralised institutions who are going to vigorously champion for the evolution and transformation of M&E within their institutions and overall across the WoGM&ES.

Statistical regime transformation

12. **Reform and transform the national statistical function:** The transformation of the WoGM&ES will be possible only when an equivalent

transformation takes place under the National Statistical System (NSS). Although the current CSO was supplying official statistics to the country, a number of gaps were identified, among them the lack of timely data to help the M&E function provide meaningful and critically analytical reports for decision and policy making. Collaboration between the WoGM&ES and the NSS at all levels was found to be weak, ad hoc and fragmented. Therefore, the government, working in collaboration with all its stakeholders, will be required to invest in the statistical function and ensure the WoGM&ES and NSS complement each other. Thus, their operational structures will need to work in synch, implying that the sections that implement M&E and statistics at all levels will need to be harmonised, well linked and coordinated. Legislation that links the statistical function and that of M&E will too need to be enforced. At best, one law should be articulated to support both M&E and statistics.

National-wide indicator system

13. Create a national and sub-national indicator system: There was notable effort to put performance indicators in place in the NDPs. The immediate past two NDPs and the current 7NDP have demonstrated an improvement in the manner in which indicators were identified. However, there is no defined indicator system in Zambia. Given the complex development work that government has to do, such a system would clarify which priority measurement indicators to track at national, line ministry, provincial, district and sub-district level. At the moment, there are no performance indicators at provincial and district level, which makes it impossible to measure progress and appreciate development impacts. It becomes a matter of guesswork as to what informs decision and policy making at those levels in the absence of evidence from an M&E system or a national statistical system.

Community of practice

14. Re-engineer the Zambia Monitoring and Evaluation Association: Zambia has in place a community of practice (CoP) for M&E in the Zambia Monitoring and Evaluation Association (ZaMEA). While it is in its infancy and its functionality is fairly good so far, the association must be made more robust and inclusive. Although it is a platform for practitioners of M&E and those interested in the field, it needs to be anchored on stronger national level leadership (that is, state and non-state). National, line ministry, provincial and district level M&E practitioners would need to take proactive roles and responsibilities in strengthening the M&E function in the country. At best, regional or provincial chapters could be established so that these become operational centres for ZaMEA. Innovative incentives could be designed to attract the interest of stakeholders. At the same time, academia and the media would be expected to

ensure that the evolution of M&E is spread and documented. In addition, ZaMEA needs strong links with parliament, civil society, research institutions and individual citizens, who could be regular users of M&E information. ZaMEA could also carry out strategic evaluations of public projects and programmes to demonstrate that quality information is useful for national development. In this case, ZaMEA could provide government and other stakeholders with expertise in conducting analytically strong evaluations.

Role of Parliament

15. Enhance the oversight role of parliament at all levels: The study findings have shown that only weak and fragmented linkages existed between parliament and other MPSAs in Zambia. Nevertheless, the National Assembly has a constitutional mandate to represent the citizens in issues of development and human rights. Parliament makes laws and approves government spending. These roles and responsibilities give parliament a unique development mandate. For that reason, its M&E role across the WoGM&ES will be crucial. Efforts through innovations and initiatives will need to be promoted so that functional linkages between parliament and all other levels of development are strengthened. In that regard, there will be a need to have M&E products in the form of reports and interactive programmes to give parliament an opportunity to appreciate development changes across the WoGM&ES regularly. Parliament will also be required to restructure itself to respond to this challenge function. Practically, this may compel redefining the roles and responsibilities of the parliamentary committees and creating new initiatives to support the M&E function within the National Assembly.

Civil society

16. Ensure collaboration and coordination mechanisms are functional: CSOs are an important stakeholder partner in the development process of Zambia. The work of CSOs has become more widespread as more organisations have come on board in recent years (Mulonda et al., 2018). Among others, CSOs are involved directly in implementing development interventions in such sectors as education, health, agriculture, water and sanitation, and community resilience through supporting entrepreneurship among citizens. Others are advocates of development in many areas. They lobby government and the donor community to act in needy communities so that people have access to decent lives. To that extent, it will be important that deliberate initiatives should be identified and implemented to strengthen the linkages between government and CSOs. In particular, M&E collaboration and coordination efforts between government and civil society will need to be strengthened. This may be achieved through undertaking a thorough needs assessment to identify practical coordination points. CSOs will need

reliable M&E information in their advocacy work and in implementing development interventions. Such collaboration will best be done at all levels. Joint M&E plans and actions will be desired to support a functional WoGM&ES. A review and strengthening of the advisory bodies, which include the NDCC, PDCCs, DDCCs and WDCs, will be a good starting point.

Donors

17. Develop a joint national M&E work plan to support the WoGM&ES: An M&E work plan is a detailed framework that is fully costed. As the study findings have shown, donors are involved in supporting the development of the WoGM&ES through provision of financial resources and technical services. However, owing to the lack of a common plan, which shows the areas of prioritised collaboration, the work of donors has not yielded the desired results (see Chapter 7). Thus, an elaborative joint government and donor M&E plan will be needed to work as a guide for current and future collaborations as far as M&E enhancement is concerned. Again, such efforts will need to be at all levels of government. Financing and technically supporting a common plan for M&E will entail strengthening the WoGM&ES.

18. Avoid implementing parallel donor M&E systems: It was found in this study that donors were in the habit of maintaining their own parallel M&E arrangements. This practice was reported as weakening the WoGM&ES, whereby, instead of collectively supporting the national system for M&E, donors spent money on creating ICT-based systems that catered only for their work related information needs. In the enhanced WoGM&ES, donors would be expected to work with government through a unified national M&E work plan.

Academia

19. Transform the education system to being results focused: Among the key gaps reported in the current WoGM&ES for Zambia are lack of analytical skills, inadequate in-depth M&E skills and generally the lack of champions for M&E in government. Even among non-state actors, the challenges were reportedly similar. There was also a lack of results-based media reporting, particularly media coverage that highlights government achievements against the National Development Plans (NDPs) vis-à-vis the attainment of Vision 2030 objectives. Therefore, academia has an opportunity to help resolve the gap by vigorously introducing programmes and courses with development results-based content. In that regard, the subject matter of monitoring and evaluation will require featuring prominently in academic programmes of all teaching institutions at all levels. Nonetheless, this will mean developing academic level-specific and tailored M&E and RBM programmes and courses to address the skill gaps in the country. To produce these, a thorough needs assessment or knowledge-based diagnosis should be

undertaken so that such curriculum reviews and developments may be informed appropriately [49,50,106].

20. Create strong competencies in undertaking development evaluations: The findings of this study have shown that the culture and practice of evaluation in Zambia remains poor, and in many cases non-existent. Not only did government undertake a limited number of evaluations, but the skills and expertise needed to carry out quality evaluations were lacking in and outside government. Private sector consulting firms and individuals will be needed to provide practical M&E services. Evaluation practice and competencies will go a long way towards supporting and sustaining the country's WoGM&ES and ultimately in creating a culture of results through people's access to and use of information from the evaluations.

Media

21. Reform media news towards results-based management: Mass media plays a significant and central role in nation building and development. In its effort to implement a transformational, robust and sustainable WoGM&ES, the government will be required to invest in promoting and supporting a media regime shift. Zambia will need media platforms and spaces that are innovative and preoccupied with consistently reporting on development results based on evidence from a reliable and credible WoGM&ES. The media is supposed to play its double role of contributing to the strengthening of the supply side and the demand side of the WoGM&ES. To that extent, the media will be expected to always search for evidence on development processes. That is why the freedom of information (FOI) legislation would be vital for Zambia in transforming and nurturing a culture of results. Therefore, the print, digital and electronic media would be expected to offer a wide range of evidence and remedial action to resolve the issues. Such media will not only help build a results-oriented population, but contribute to a strengthened Zambian economy through stronger democracy, economic development, human rights and generally in adhering to good governance tenets.

22. Develop and institutionalise M&E frameworks in all political party manifestos and constitutions: In Zambia, the executive arm of government is led by politicians who are sponsored by a political party of their choice and affiliation. These political organisations are legally registered entities required to operate within the confinements of the laws of Zambia according to the stipulations in the highest law of the land—the Constitution. A review of manifestos and constitutions for the major political parties in Zambia indicated that none of them had any explicit articulation of an M&E arrangement (e.g. constitutions & manifestos of the Patriotic Front (PF), United Party for National Development (UPND) & Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD)). Aside from listing many promises of deliverables to the people, there was lack of clarity

on an organised way of implementation and measurement of such promises if or when they assumed power. Priority development areas, impacts, outcomes and outputs expected, indicators as well as targets become essential elements of success to be clarified in party specific constitutions, manifestos and M&E plans. M&E methodologies also need to be explained for the people to make informed choices in an election. The absence of an M&E framework then undermines the party message and electorates would deem such promises as mere political rhetoric, propaganda and sheer vote-seeking. Adherence to good governance tenets equally gets compromised.

Therefore, since political parties shall come and go in terms of leading the country at a particular time, it is strongly contended that, far before a given party assumes government powers, its proposed M&E framework should be very clear. In Zambia for instance, political parties like the PF, MMD, UPND and all other parties would have clear and robust party-specific M&E frameworks and articulations on how they were going to pursue a culture of results once elected to power. That way, the proposed model in this study—of anchoring the country system for M&E on the presidency can be made feasible. As they propound their proposed system of governance to the general populace and other key stakeholders, specific M&E frameworks of individual political parties would be articulated in their campaign messages. Thus, even when a successful party shall find an established WoGM&ES for the public sector in place, it will be necessary for such a party to have a clear understanding and appreciation of its own M&E vision and set up. Only when such practices and institutionalisation of M&E in intra- and inter- party politics shall exist in Zambia will the culture of results based on evidence become the inspiration of good governance and practical poverty reduction. This action point will help strengthen both the supply and demand side of the country's WoGM&ES.

23. Ensure the main party campaign messages comprise M&E functionalities: Political elections are all about development promises. In the tripartite elections, Zambians vote for local government representatives, members of parliament and presidential candidates and all these offer different development messages. I contend here that, drawing from their specific party manifestos and particularly the M&E frameworks and plans, these candidates will need to demonstrate how development results will be pursued and attained for the citizens—in a measurable and realistic manner. Such quality, clarity and consistence in the campaign messages of a given political party will give an opportunity for people to easily identify themselves with which organisation best holds a practical strategy to deliver the desired development aspirations. Specifically, campaign messages should carry such important information as development priority areas, high level results of focus (that is, impacts and outcomes), outputs, indicators, targets and clear time frames. To some extent, details of roles and responsibilities should also be articulated. The

research findings revealed that a newly elected party in power spends much time trying to organise itself to determine which structural arrangement would best deliver campaign promises. This should be resolved way before assuming state power—through detailed M&E frameworks and plans. In that regard, offices of the president for specific political parties will need to drive this M&E agenda as they shall be the ones to foster a thriving culture of results once in leadership. For the incumbent party in power, there will be need to practically re-organise and shift according to the recommendations in the proposed model. Therefore, in the long run, the people of Zambia will attach importance towards demanding for a results-oriented governance system from their various leaders and providers of goods and services.

24. Transform political leaders into M&E Champions, focused and committed to a culture of results: For M&E to be well institutionalised and used as an instrument of good governance, political championship will be a necessary requirement for Zambia's WoGM&ES. While not every politician may qualify to be called a champion of M&E, there will be need for key political players to be transformed into practical results-based leaders who shall be at the helm of advancing and growing a culture of development results in the public service and beyond. Such leaders as presidential candidates and senior party officials for every political party/organisation will need to play the role of M&E champion. That way, Zambians will be given an opportunity to get results-based party manifestos and messages and engage in meaningful debate as to the direction the country was taking developmentally. This however, will call for a pragmatic intra- and inter- party transformation for political players to make themselves champions of- results- for- results to improve Zambians' living standards. All these efforts will need to be anchored on political party constitutions and manifestos inspired by a commitment to a culture of results based on knowledge and appropriate skills set.

Future research

25. Investigate the functional relationships of good governance institutions in Zambia: The role of M&E is to enhance good governance through the promotion of transparency and accountability by those tasked with the responsibility of utilising public resources. The WoGM&ES is expected to cut across all three arms of government (see Figure 8.1). Therefore, more research will be needed to understand which institutions in these arms of government need to be part of the WoGM&ES. For instance, studies will be required to determine the roles of various actors in strengthening the WoGM&ES. Institutions such as the Office of the Auditor General (OAG), Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), judiciary, and parliament will form a firm basis for creating and sustaining a stronger WoGM&ES.

26. Introduce and sustain a culture of streamlined planning and budgeting for results: While efforts have been made to simplify the planning and budgeting processes, especially through Public Finance Management (PFM) reforms and the launch of the 2014 National Planning and Budgeting Policy, more clarity is needed on ways to actualise these policy provisions. For instance, practical challenges were reported in linking, sequencing, articulating and developing the NLTV, NDPs, MTEFs, annual budgets, sector strategic plans, provincial and district plans. Studies focused on making the linkages between planning and budgeting processes would enhance the results-based culture in Zambia. To avoid rhetorically motivated planning, a transformative culture of streamlined planning and budgeting for results should be the driving force behind these studies. The aim should be to have a lean planning and budgeting system with properly linked planning and budgeting outputs expected at national, line ministry, provincial and district levels. All levels will be required to work around implementing a unified work plan towards realising a national goal, namely NLTV through NDPs.

27. Identify the technical and political aspects of M&E in Zambia: The WoGM&ES will need to be strengthened on the supply side and the demand side. However, doing so will require in-depth understanding of all critical operational and technical issues surrounding the system. Although technical issues may seem obvious to identify, political aspects may be complex to identify and resolve. As a bearer of good and bad news, M&E may not always go well with those tasked to design and implement M&E systems. Thus, more research studies will be required to understand currently unclear perspectives of M&E, so that ways are found to simplify the articulation and design of M&E arrangements. Issues of weak M&E coordination, autonomy and overall poor power relations among institutions, especially the M&E role of the OAG, parliament, CSO and civil society, need to be elaborated [107-110].

28. Develop and implement a robust exchange programme with best M&E practising countries and organisations: Putting in place a functional WoGM&ES is neither a one-off activity nor a short- or medium-term undertaking. It must be seen as a continuous and long-term endeavour of building, reviewing, strengthening and participatory process. As Zambia works to build its national system for M&E, there would be need to learn from other countries with success stories in implementing whole-of-government monitoring and evaluation systems through structured collaborations. Since such countries as South Africa, Uganda, Colombia, Chile, and Australia may have similar experiences to Zambia, learning from them would work well for Zambia.

29. Re-establish a financing architecture for the WoGM&ES: One of the outstanding reason

given for weak M&E implementation across the WoGM&ES for Zambia's public sector pertains to inadequacies and in many instances lack of finances. The current budget support approach seems to fall short of the desired investment in creating a thriving country system for M&E. Innovative financing options which will help government and its stakeholders to practically deal with the current financial resource challenge are needed. An in-depth study may bring out salient alternatives to the M&E financing architecture for Zambia. Such an M&E financial support strategy will for instance ascertain where resources to evaluate the NLTV, NDPs and strategic programmes and projects will be sourced from and give predictable estimates of expenditure. The alternatives will need to be robust enough to tackle resource challenges not only at national level, but institution-specific level as well. This suggestion comes in the light of research responses that acknowledged of sustained institutional failures to adequately plan for M&E activities.

30. Re-engineer the public sector planning architecture focused on development results: M&E function thrives on good and results-oriented planning. The findings of this research have revealed that plans across government structures (that is, at national, line ministry, provincial & district) are currently fragmented and in some cases missing. There were many line ministries with outdated strategic plans while others either were implementing draft plans or had no official plans. The situation was worse at provincial and district level where barely a few of them had up-to-date plans. For the few with such plans, there was a notable weak linkage with respective NDPs. It was difficult to map out clear linkages between the NDP and the other plans at decentralised levels. Even worse were the de-linkages that existed between implementation mechanisms as well as monitoring and evaluation frameworks. Thus, these gaps demand that all planning at all levels of government—national, line ministry, provincial, district and sub-district should be responsive to a results-based planning. It means that designing a country-level M&E measurement framework for NDPs is practically problematic. For instance, the lack of specific indicators and targets at provincial, district and among several line ministries exacerbates the challenge for effective and efficient M&E in the country. This gap also makes it difficult to place and provide data and information needs for regional, continental and global obligations. To fix this challenge, the planning architecture must be shifted to meet these basic tenets of results-based management through implementation of an effective WoGM&ES. Thus, future studies will have to consider appreciating the whole range of public policy and guidelines on planning, budgeting, implementation, oversight, legislation and geo-political aspects of national development.

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