Strengthening evaluative thinking and evidence-based reporting in Voluntary National Reviews and local reviews

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Agenda 2030 expectations for VNRs:

✓ rigorous and based on evidence,
✓ informed by country-led evaluations and
✓ data which is high-quality, accessible, timely, reliable and disaggregated

• VNRs are not an end in themselves-taking stock of implementation

• In order to take stock, evidence is critical: to know what is working, what is not working, for who, where, under what circumstances, what needs to be done to accelerate implementation

• If SDGs and Agenda 2063 are to contribute to development- learning from implementation lessons is crucial- evidence is key for successful targets, plans and reporting
What is evidence then?

- Is not opinion
- Assertion backed by information - it has to meet certain criteria
- Independent, verifiable, objective
Evaluations as a key source of evidence

- Seeks to understand if outcomes are being achieved, worthiness of achievements and how to improve
- Is different from monitoring that tracks whether you are achieving what you planned
- Serves the purposes of learning, accountability, decision making, knowledge, governance
- SDGs/Agenda 2063 evaluations - not business as usual:
  - Complementarities
  - Systems approach
  - Sustainability
  - Gender equality and equity are central
  - Underlying cause of inequality
  - Giving voice and inclusion
The 6th EVALSDGs/IIED briefing paper: analyzed 22 VNRs submitted in 2016:

- Very little awareness of what evaluation is and its potential contribution to SDGs
- Only 2 countries reported use of qualitative data
- 16 of 22 countries established a governance system for M&E at a government level.

In 2018, similar analysis of 42 VNRs submitted in 2017 was done extending on the 2016 analysis:

- Showed improvements but still far from what could potentially be done

Clear-AA analyzed 2019 VNRs from AA- use of monitoring data but not evaluation even when it is available. Monitoring is necessary but not sufficient
Types of Evaluations and indicative time and costs

- **Diagnostic review**
  - 8-18 months
  - $100-200,000

- **Process evaluation**
  - 8-18 months
  - $100-200,000

- **Outcome evaluation**
  - 8-18 months
  - $100-250,000

- **Impact evaluation**
  - 3-5 years or 1 year if theory based
  - $500,000 if surveys
2020 VNRs- What is potentially possible

- Rapid evaluations- 2 to 3 months- the need for appropriate expertise
- Evaluative workshop- 1 month-evaluative thinking, participatory
- Reviews-reflection process-progress and changes needed
- Creating an evaluation/research repository-use existing evaluation/research e.g. Uganda, Benin, South Africa
  - African Evaluation Database
    http://clearafred.wits.ac.za
  - 3ie impact evaluation repository
    https://www.3ieimpact.org/evidence-hub/impact-evaluation-repository
  - Libraries
  - Write to relevant sources
Evidence (Gap) Maps

Presentations of availability of evidence for specific policy area e.g Uganda

Evidence maps or systematic reviews are available on the Campbell collaboration https://www.campbellcollaboration.org/better-evidence.html
What is your experience and what lessons can you share on embedding evaluation evidence in countries planning processes, policies and VNR reporting?
THANK YOU!

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