

Comparative Analysis of Monitoring and Evaluation Systems for Zambia's Health and Agriculture Sectors

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ABSTRACT: *Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) has increasingly become the buzz word in the implementation of poverty reduction strategies. Because of the anticipated benefits which are associated to it, M&E has fundamentally become a global phenomenon whereby national and international stakeholders in the development arena have continuously sought for enhanced public governance based on results. The aim of the paper was to investigate the sector monitoring and evaluation systems in the context of poverty reduction strategies focusing on a comparative case study of Zambia's Health and Agriculture sectors. A diagnostic assessment and analysis was employed to undertake the investigative study using existing literature. Consequently, results have shown that out of the six assessment criteria, the agriculture sector M&E performs better than the health M&E on four components—policy, organization, capacity and the use of M&E information. The only criterion where the health sector M&E is more developed than that of agriculture is 'methodology' while the two sectors scored same for the 'participation of actors outside of government' criterion. Nevertheless, there is need for accelerated development and strengthening of sector M&E systems for health and agriculture. Although the agriculture sector compares well against the health sector M&E, there are more gaps that require attention if both sectors were to enjoy the benefits that go with a successfully implemented mechanism. For both sectors, there is need for instance, to step up efforts of ensuring that the roles of the Zambia Statistics Agency, parliament, Civil Society and the Ministry of Finance and National Planning are well defined and enforced. The weaknesses that exist regarding the rationalization and coordination of donor M&E and sector M&E undermine capacity to have strong supply and demand sides.*

KEYWORDS -Monitoring; evaluation; agriculture; health; whole-of-government M&E system; sector M&E system; results-based management; diagnostic checklist; LEADS scoring; Zambia

I. INTRODUCTION

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) has increasingly become the buzz word in the implementation of poverty reduction strategies. Because of the anticipated benefits which are associated to it, M&E has fundamentally become a global phenomenon whereby national and international stakeholders in the development arena have continuously sought for enhanced public governance based on results. With this growth in demand for successful M&E, most prominent development stakeholders such as the donor community and local actors including parliaments, the private sector as well as the broader civil society use M&E information to hold governments accountable [91]. M&E has increasingly become part of the necessary requirements for the implementation of development interventions and enhancement of management of public resources. As comprehensively expressed by [105]:

"Throughout the world, governments are attempting to address demands and pressures for improving the lives of their citizens. Internal and external pressures and demands on governments and development organisations are

causing them to seek new ways to improve public management. Improvements may include greater accountability and transparency and enhanced effectiveness of interventions. Results-based monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is a management tool to help track progress and demonstrate the impact of development projects, programs, and policies”.

Therefore, many governments of developing countries have in the last decade or so introduced, pursued and implemented policy reforms and programs aimed at strengthening the function of M&E. Put differently, M&E according to [92] helps with the identification of what works and what does not work in government projects, programmes as well as policies.

In Zambia, the recent evolution of M&E in government can be generally traced around the beginning of the New Millennium in the year 2000, and particularly towards the end of the 20th Century in 1999. During this period, the World Bank working alongside the International Monetary Fund (IMF) had launched the Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRS) as an alternative or reaction to the controversial Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) of the 1990s that saw most poor countries plunge into unsustainable external debt [118]. Zambia developed her Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (I-PRSP 2000-2002) in 2000 and progressively, the first full PRSP (2002-2004) was launched and implemented together with other existing reforms in 2002. Still under the guidance of the World Bank and IMF, Zambia successfully implemented the first PRSP and qualified for external debt relief as prescribed for a country that reached the Heavily Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) Initiative completion point1 in 2004 [78].

In addition, some further reforms were made and in 2006, Zambia reverted to ‘National Development Planning (NDP)’. Nonetheless, Zambia’s return to National Development Plans (NDPs) came after a fairly successful implementation of two Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) which were instruments of poverty reduction prepared under the guidance of the World Bank and the IMF. Thus, NDPs continue to be used as strategies of tackling poverty and are designed to help realize the country’s Vision 2030 [79]. The Fifth National Development Plan (FNDP2006-2010), Sixth National Development Plan (2011-2015) and the Revised Sixth National Development Plan (R-SNDP 2013-2016) were developed and implemented. Currently, Zambia is implementing the Seventh National Development Plan (7NDP 2017-2021). Both the R-SNDP and 7NDP have Volume IIs which are separate Implementation Plans (IPs) articulating M&E parameters for measuring progress.

M&E has been the core component in all the PRSPs and indeed the NDPs. To that extent, all these development strategies and plans have always carried separately elaborated chapters on M&E, outlining the details of how the government was going to holistically tackle the issue of PRS monitoring and evaluation. In this context, M&E is significant not only to the Zambian government, but also to the citizens and other stakeholders. That explains why governments globally are embarking on building M&E systems to enable them measure the quality, quantity and targeting of the various public development interventions implemented. M&E is understood to be an effective instrument towards determination of the extent to which outputs were achieving expected outcomes and impacts [92].

II. BACKGROUND: SECTOR M&E IN THE CONTEXT OF POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGIES

According to [70], the strength of Whole-of-Government M&E Systems (WoGM&ES) is dependent on the functionality of individual sector M&E systems. Therefore, to ensure that M&E information is used for internal sector management functions and meets the information needs of stakeholders outside of government, commitment of funds and other resources to strengthening sector M&E systems becomes inevitable. Such investment is thus, better focused on building the sector capacities in terms of human M&E skills and infrastructure. The significance of sector M&E therefore denotes the need for countries, especially the developing ones to prioritize building and strengthening sectoral M&E arrangements in order to be able to track evidence of progress in all public interventions contributing to poverty reduction agendas.

To implement the Zambian National Development Plans (NDPs), sector plans and strategies have been developed and like in the NDPs, M&E arrangements have been elaborated. The M&E systems of the sectors play a fundamental role in information gathering and work as input into the national M&E system that ultimately reflects government’s performance. Moreover, more stakeholders including citizens, donors, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and others are usually keen to know where and how the public resources are being utilized with regards to the poverty reduction strategies.

The implementation of the various reforms in Zambia has particularly led to the development and articulation of sector plans in both the health and agriculture sectors. These sector strategy plans have been developed to cover corresponding periods as those of the NDPs. This is to make it easy to implement the PRSs

through sectoral plans. For instance, the Ministry of Health (MOH) developed and is now implementing the National Health Strategic Plan (NHSP) covering the period 2011 to 2015 which corresponds with the SNDP's life span. Similarly, the one earlier was implemented between 2006 and 2010 also corresponding with the FNDP for the period 2006 to 2010 [77]. In the same line, the agriculture sector is currently implementing a strategy plan for the period 2013 to 2015. This plan delayed to be implemented due to several organizational changes that were undertaken between 2010 and 2012. However, the one (strategy plan) before was successfully implemented between 2006 and 2010 in correspondence with the FNDP [96].

Essentially, sector plans contain details of resources, activities, programs, and policies of what a given line ministry hopes to achieve during a defined period and exclusive summaries of these strategies are constituted and presented in the various chapters of the NDPs. Thus, both the health and agriculture sectors have elaborated M&E arrangements that derive their principles from a Results Based Management. Sector specific information with regards to operations and resource planning, utilization and management is also captured and stored by the sector M&E systems.

The aim of this dissertation is to conduct a research on the M&E arrangements for Zambia's health and agriculture sector M&E systems using a comparative case study. To be able to achieve this objective and contextualize the sectoral M&E, the paper provides an overview of government-wide M&E arrangements in Zambia. Similarly, to allow for comparisons especially those regarding the functionality and operationalization, the strengths and weaknesses of the two sectors, a critical assessment or diagnosis of the M&E systems of the two sectors will be conducted. To the extent that the strengths or weaknesses of the national M&E depend on sector M&E, this thesis explores and provides analyses in an effort to find out the factors that determine the statuses of sector M&E systems. One of the central goals of this dissertation is to identify and establish areas of improvement towards making poverty reduction interventions effective through sound sector and national M&E systems in Zambia.

The choice to compare the M&E systems for the health and agriculture sectors was done out of curiosity considering the differences between them. In the NDPs, health is categorized under the 'social services and human development' section while agriculture falls under the 'growth' category. It is mentioned in the NDPs that the National-level M&E system provides overall coordination and oversight of all sector M&E arrangements and offering backstopping exercises to help strengthen and harmonize sector mechanisms. Further, in the context of the changing aid modalities as elaborated under the Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness, the increasing emphasis on bettering M&E systems becomes an inspiration to this study.

Conducting a thorough diagnosis of any M&E system in an effort to understand the overarching problems and thereby devise means to strengthen such a system could be one important requirement and first step. In fact, a readiness assessment must be viewed as foundational to the success of M&E systems [91]. Hence, in assessing the M&E arrangements of the health and agriculture sectors, this paper adopted and adapted the diagnostic checklist elaborated by Holvoet and Inberg (2011) and used in their diagnosis of Niger's health sector M&E system. This checklist consists of six components that are deemed crucial in determining the status of any given national M&E system and these elements include the following: (i) policy; (ii) indicators, data collection and methodologies; (iii) organisation; (iv) capacity-building; (v) participation of nongovernment actors, and (vi) utility of M&E information.

Notwithstanding the above, it is also prudent to mention that many other scholars and development practitioners have made attempts to elaborate checklists and have raised several issues which they consider to be important when assessing M&E systems. However, most of these checklists focus mainly on technical and methodological issues and much less on organizational, institutional, systemic and political aspects and are largely elaborated specifically for national level M&E and not specific to sectoral systems. Consequently, it is imperative to consider the process of building and sustaining M&E systems as being more politically motivated than technical [91].

Nevertheless, those articulations could be helpful towards the understanding and appreciation of issues raised within M&E mechanisms. Examples of some elaborated checklists in the literature include the evaluation capacity building diagnostic guide and action framework [25], the readiness assessment [91], the diagnostic instrument articulated by [70] and the checklist used by [72] in their diagnosis of PRSPs. Essentially, there is no one single agreed upon checklist regarded as ideal for assessing all matters sounding M&E systems.

However, the [86] checklist has been chosen and used for this paper because it is comprehensive and ultimately covers the overarching institutional, systemic and political issues concerning sector M&E systems.

III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Since the end of the 1990s and particularly at the beginning of 2000, Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) became an increasingly emphasized component to be part of the planning and implementation of countries' poverty reduction strategies. This observation has also been made by [57] when he argues that the development community the world over has come to appreciate the important role played by M&E in enhancing the performance of governments. Zambia was among the first countries to articulate and successfully implement her PRSP in 2002 and consequently reached the IMF/World Bank's HIPC Initiative completion point in 2004 and received forgiveness of her huge external debt.

Today, Zambia is implementing her Sixth National Development Plan (SNDP), a national poverty reduction strategy with an elaborated M&E arrangement for implementing, monitoring and evaluating this plan. To reaffirm the country's commitment to improved public resource management, Zambia is a signatory to the 2005 Paris Declaration (PD) and the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) of 2008 both of which advocate for strengthened M&E systems at country level.

According to the [108] Monitoring Survey on the implementation of the PD as measured under indicator 11 (Managing for Results), Zambia scored a 'D' for its results-oriented frameworks in 2005, improving to a 'C' in 2007 and maintained its 'C' score in 2011, and this led to a shortfall in reaching the 2010 target of B or A. Despite this failure to reach the PD set target, the trend suggests an evolution to the effect that Zambia had made significant strides over the years towards bettering the M&E at national level. The scores of 'C' for 2007 and 2011 could be translated as Zambia being in possession of improved frameworks of M&E across the public sector and by implication, this could mean that Zambia is short but on course in terms of satisfying the PD agreement of having monitorable results frameworks. In addition, the [50] in its Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF) Report also notes that Zambia's monitoring framework was insufficient. After monitoring and measuring the four CDF principles that include the long-term holistic vision; country-led partnership; country ownership; and results focus, although there were signs of advancement for all, the results focus principle showed the least progress made. This conclusion is crucial for Zambia's M&E reform agenda.

Further, particular problematic areas identified were around the quality of final reports with lots of analytical gaps and inconsistencies in information flows. Such challenges according to the [108], emanated from among others; weak data collection and analysis arrangements used at all levels, and more specifically functional, coordination and linkage gaps between the national level M&E and line ministry M&E systems. This dissertation attempts to study these challenges in details and establish relevant insights about the topic in order to inform both policymaking processes in Zambia and indeed add to the academic literature.

Moreover, the Zambian NDPs are implemented through various sectors of which each owns a separate M&E arrangement. Thus far, although the NDPs elaborate the overall M&E arrangements for the whole PRS country-wide programmes, each line ministry has a detailed explanation through sector strategies on how M&E issues were being institutionally implemented. Nevertheless, the Ministry of Finance (MOF) through the Department of Monitoring and Evaluation is responsible for the coordination of all line ministry M&E systems. In this way, it is crucial to have well functioning M&E arrangements at both the national and sector levels in order to yield expected benefits from such mechanisms. Sector M&E arrangements are mandated with the responsibility of keeping track of all implementation, monitoring and evaluation of line ministry specific strategy plans and ultimately the NDPs.

IV. METHODOLOGY

Methodology and data collection

This paper employed a desk-study research approach. A collection of key policy documents of the Republic of Zambia have been used. Particularly, the national documents and reports on poverty reduction [NDPs, annual progress reports (APRs), sector strategies, and management reports] have been collected and reviewed. Further, the research has also made use of literature from various international development organisations such as the World Bank, OECD/DAC, IMF and other multilateral and bilateral agencies on the subject. In addition, some scholarly journals, peer reviewed articles and research papers equally have been consulted to help with the discussion, analysis and drawing of conclusions and recommendations.

Case selection

There are a number of factors that led to the choice of this study topic and key among these include the authors' interest in the subject of M&E as well as the understanding that M&E is significant to the development process of developing countries, and particularly to Zambia. A lot of emphasis and calls for developing countries to build and sustain functional M&E systems as a way of improving performance have been increasing from among the international donor community, civil society, citizens and other local stakeholders.

According to [78], sectors are instrumental in the overall process of planning, implementation and most importantly in the monitoring and evaluation of the country's poverty reduction agenda. This means for all sectors to contribute positively to this mandate, their M&E systems need to be functioning properly. This study therefore is anchored on the conviction that sector M&E is crucial for strengthening national-level M&E and for ultimately achieving the various goals of the poverty reduction objectives and goals.

Since there are many reasons that may influence the building, strengthening and sustaining of a functional M&E system, the selection of the two sectors was done on the basis of their relative differences. Zambia's NDPscategorisesthe health under the 'social services and human development' sector while agriculture falls under the 'growth' sector. In addition, the funding structures of the two sectors also vary to a great extent. For instance, in addition to central government disbursements, the health sector enjoys a lot of donor support compared to the agriculture sector. In fact, there are more donors and development agencies active in the health sector in comparison with the agriculture sector. The agriculture sector mainly depends on central government disbursements for most of its programmes and activities. Therefore, the authors believe that these factors made the two sectors interesting to research on especially in an effort to find better ways of strengthening not only sector M&E but also the national-level M&E which is currently viewed as weak. Moreover, the agriculture sector also has a sufficiently developed private sector whose M&E arrangements could be interesting to know how they coordinate with government M&E systems.

V. ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

The assessments of the M&E systems for health and agriculture sectors were conducted using the diagnostic checklist elaborated by [86, 97-99] which is based on six criteria namely (i) policy, (ii) methodology, (iii) organization, (iv) capacity, (v) participation of actors outside government, and (vi) use of M&E information. Accordingly, the checklist was used as the analytical framework. See the Table 1 below the detailed checklist:

Table 1: Assessment Checklist for M&E System at Sector Level

	Topics	Question
1. Policy		
1	M&E plan	Is there a comprehensive M&E plan, indicating what to evaluate, why, how, for whom?
2	M versus E	Is the difference and the relationship between M and E clearly spelled out?
3	Autonomy & 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 & budgeting	Is there integration of M&E results in planning and budgeting?
2. Methodology		
6	Selection of indicators	Is it clear what to monitor and evaluate? Is there a list of indicators? Are sector indicators harmonised with the PRSP indicators?
7	Quality of indicators	Are indicators SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound)? Are baselines and targets attached?
8	Disaggregation	Are indicators disaggregated by sex, region, socio-economic status?
9	Selection criteria	Are the criteria for the selection of indicators clear? And who selects?
10	Priority setting	Is the need acknowledged to set priorities and limit the number of indicators to be monitored?
11	Causality chain	Are different levels of indicators (input-output-outcome-impact) explicitly linked (program theory)? (vertical logic)
12	Methodologies used	Is it clear how to monitor and evaluate? Are methodologies well identified and mutually integrated?
13	Data collection	Are sources of data collection clearly identified? Are indicators linked to sources of data collection? (horizontal logic)

3a. Organisation: structure		
14	Coordination and oversight	Is there an appropriate institutional structure for coordination, support, oversight, analyses of data and feedback at the sector level? With different stakeholders? What is its location?
15	Joint Sector Review	Does the JSR cover accountability and learning needs for both substance and systemic issues? What is the place/linkage of the JSR within the sector M&E system? Does the JSR promote the reform agenda of the Paris Declaration?
16	Sector Working groups	Are sector working groups active in monitoring? Is their composition stable? Are various stakeholders represented?
17	Ownership	Does the demand for (strengthening of the) M&E system come from the sector ministry, a central ministry (e.g. ministry of planning or finance) or from external actors (e.g. donors)? Is there a highly placed 'champion' within the sector ministry who advocates for the (strengthening of the) M&E system?
18	Incentives	Are incentives (at central and local level) used to stimulate data collection and data use?
3b. Organisation: linkages		
19	Linkage with Statistical office	Is there a linkage between sector M&E and the statistical office? Is the role of the statistical office in sector M&E clear?
20	'Horizontal' integration	Are there M&E units in different sub-sectors and semi-governmental institutions? Are these properly relayed to central sector M&E unit?
21	'Vertical' upward integration	Is the sector M&E unit properly relayed to the central M&E unit (PRS monitoring system)?
22	'Vertical' downward integration	Are there M&E units at decentralised levels and are these properly relayed to the sector M&E unit?
23	Link with projects	Is there any effort to relay with/ coordinate with donor M&E mechanism for projects and vertical funds in the sector?
4. Capacity		
24	Present capacity	What is the present capacity of the M&E unit at central sector level, sub-sector level and decentralised level (e.g. fte, skills, financial resources)?
25	Problem acknowledged	Are current weaknesses in the system identified?
26	Capacity building plan	Are there plans/activities for remediation? Do these include training, appropriate salaries, etc.?
5. Participation of actors outside government		
27	Parliament	Is the role of Parliament properly recognised, and is there alignment with Parliamentary control and oversight procedures? Does Parliament participate in Joint Sector Reviews and/ or sector working groups?
28	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? Does civil society participate in Joint Sector Reviews and/ or sector working groups?
29	Donors	Is the role of donors recognised? Are there clear procedures for participation of donors? Do donors participate in Joint Sector Reviews and/ or sector working groups?
6. Use of information from M&E		
30	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?
31	Effective use of M&E by donors	Are donors using the outputs of the sector M&E system for their information needs? Is the demand for M&E data from donors coordinated?
32	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?
33	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?
34	Effective use of M&E by outside government actors	Are results of M&E used as an instrument to hold government accountable?

(Source: Holvoet and Inberg, 2011)

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 (see Table 2). After data and information was collected using the six-component diagnostic checklist by [9, 103], the LEADS scoring scale was used for assessment. The results of the diagnosis are presented in the next section.

Table 2: LEADS scoring method for the assessment of government M&E systems

No	Topics	Question	Scores				
			1	2	3	4	5
Key area/Component 1: Policy							
1	M&E plan	Is there a comprehensive M&E plan, indicating what to evaluate, why, how, for whom?	- No (sections of) M&E plan exist(s).	- Only sections of an M&E plan exist, only partly indicating what to evaluate, why, how, for whom.	- Different documents describing (parts of) an M&E plan exist, as a result of which it is clear what to evaluate, why, how and for whom. or - An M&E plan exists, but not comprehensive, only partly indicating what to evaluate, why, how, for whom (less than three of the four elements).	- There is a comprehensive M&E plan, but it does not completely indicate what to evaluate, why, how, for whom (three of the four elements).	- A comprehensive M&E plan exists, indicating what to evaluate, why, how, for whom.
2	M versus E	Is the difference and the relationship between M and E clearly spelled out?	- The difference and relationship between M and E are not spelled out. - 'M&E' is used for both M and E related activities.	- The difference and relationship between M and E are not spelled out. - The two terms are separately used for M and E related activities. or - The difference and/or relationship between M and E are spelled out. - 'M&E' is used for both M and E related activities.	- The difference between M and E is clearly spelled out, but the relationship is not. - The two terms are separately used for M and E related activities.	- The difference between M and E is clearly spelled out, the relationship among M and E is also described but not clearly. - The two terms are separately used for M and E related activities.	- The difference and the relationship between M and E are clearly spelled out. - The two terms are separately used for M and E related activities.
3	Autonomy &	Is the need	- The need	- The need	- The need	- The need	- The need

No	Topics	Question	Scores				
			1	2	3	4	5
	impartiality (accountability)	for autonomy and impartiality explicitly mentioned? Does the M&E plan allow for tough issues to be analysed? Is there an independent budget?	for autonomy and impartiality is not explicitly mentioned. - The M&E plan does not allow tough issues to be analysed. - There is no independent budget.	for autonomy and impartiality is mentioned, but not explicitly. - The M&E plan does not allow for tough issues to be analysed. - There is an independent budget. or - The need for autonomy and impartiality is mentioned, but not explicitly. - The M&E plan allows for tough issues to be analysed. - There is no independent budget.	for autonomy and impartiality is explicitly mentioned. - The M&E plan does not allow for tough issues to be analysed. - There is an independent budget. or - The need for autonomy and impartiality is explicitly mentioned. - The M&E plan allows for tough issues to be analysed. - There is no independent budget.	for autonomy and impartiality is explicitly mentioned. - The M&E plan allows for tough issues to be analysed. - There is an independent budget, but it is very limited (less than 1%).	for autonomy and impartiality is explicitly mentioned. - The M&E plan allows for tough issues to be analysed. - There is an independent budget.
4	Feedback	Is there an explicit and consistent approach to reporting, dissemination, integration?	- There is no explicit and consistent approach to reporting, dissemination, integration.	- References are made to reporting, dissemination and / or integration, but there is no explicit and consistent approach.	- There is an approach to reporting, dissemination, integration, but it is not explicit and consistent.	- There is an explicit approach to reporting, dissemination, integration, but it is not completely consistent.	- There is an explicit and consistent approach to reporting, dissemination, integration.
5	Alignment of M&E with planning & budgeting	Is there integration of M&E results in planning and budgeting?	- There is no integration of M&E results in planning and budgeting.	- There is an integration of M&E results in planning and budgeting, but it is limited and rather ad hoc.	- There is an integration of M&E results in planning and budgeting, but rather ad hoc.	- There is a more systematic integration of M&E results in planning and budgeting, but linkages between M&E, planning and	- M&E results are systematically integrated in planning and budgeting and institutionalised linkages exist among M&E,

No	Topics	Question	Scores				
			1	2	3	4	5
						budgeting are not yet institutionalised.	planning and budgeting.

Key area/ Component 2: Indicators, data collection and methodology							
6	Selection of indicators	Is it clear what to monitor and evaluate? Is there a list of indicators? Are sector indicators harmonised with the NDP indicators?	- No list of indicators is available.	- Different lists of indicators circulate. - Indicators are not harmonised with the PRSP indicators.	- A list of indicators is available, but changing regularly. - Indicators are not harmonised with the PRSP indicators.	- A list of indicators is available, but changing regularly. - Indicators are harmonised with the PRSP indicators. or - A list of indicators is available and does not change yearly. - Indicators are not harmonised with the PRSP indicators.	- A list of indicators is available and does not change yearly. - Indicators are harmonised with the PRSP indicators.
7	Quality of indicators	Are indicators SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound)? Are baselines and targets attached?	- Indicators are not SMART. - Baselines and targets are not attached (or only baselines or targets).	- (Most of the) indicators are not SMART. - Baselines or targets are attached. or - (Most of the) indicators are SMART. - Baselines or targets are not attached (to all indicators).	- (Most of the) indicators are SMART. - Baselines and targets are attached, but not to all indicators.	- Most of the indicators are SMART. - Baselines and targets are attached.	- All indicators are SMART - Baselines and targets are attached.
8	Disaggregation	Are indicators disaggregated by sex, region, socio-economic status?	- None of the indicators are disaggregated	- Some indicators are disaggregated by sex, region, socio-economic status, but	- Some indicators are disaggregated by sex, region, socio-economic status, also	- Indicators are disaggregated by sex, region, socio-economic status, but not (all of	- Indicators are disaggregated by sex, region, socio-economic status, also in annual

No	Topics	Question	Scores				
			1	2	3	4	5
				not in annual progress reports.	in annual progress reports.	them) in annual progress reports.	progress reports.
9	Selection criteria	Are the criteria for the selection of indicators clear? And who selects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selection criteria are not clear. - It is not clear who was involved in the selection process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The criteria for selection are not clear. - It is clear who is involved in the selection process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The criteria for selection are clear. - It is not clear who is involved in the selection process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The criteria for selection are clear. - It is clear who is involved in the selection process. - Not all relevant data collectors and users are involved in the selection process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - he criteria for selection are clear. - It is clear who is involved in the selection process. - Relevant data collectors and users are involved in the selection process.
10	Priority setting	Is the need acknowledged to set priorities and limit the number of indicators to be monitored?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The need to set priorities and limit the number of indicators to be monitored is not acknowledged. - The number of indicators is not limited. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The need to set priorities and limit the number of indicators to be monitored is acknowledged. - The number of indicators is not limited. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The need to set priorities and limit the number of indicators to be monitored is not acknowledged. - The number of indicators is limited. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The need to set priorities and limit the number of indicators to be monitored is partly acknowledged. - The number of indicators is limited. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The need to set priorities and limit the number of indicators to be monitored is acknowledged. - The number of indicators is limited.
11	Causality chain	Are different levels of indicators (input-output-outcome-impact) explicitly linked (program theory)? (vertical logic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Different levels of indicators are not specified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Different levels of indicators are specified, but these are not linked. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Different levels of indicators are specified and linked, but not explicitly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Different levels of indicators are explicitly linked, but not for all indicators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Different levels of (all) indicators are explicitly linked.

No	Topics	Question	Scores				
			1	2	3	4	5
12	Methodologies used	Is it clear how to monitor and evaluate? Are methodologies well identified and mutually integrated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Methodologies are not identified - Methodologies are not mutually integrated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some methodologies are identified. - Methodologies are not mutually integrated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Methodologies are well identified - Methodologies are not mutually integrated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Methodologies are well identified. - Methodologies are mutually integrated, but not satisfactorily. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Methodologies are well identified. - Methodologies are mutually integrated and integration is satisfactorily.
13	Data collection	Are sources of data collection clearly identified? Are indicators linked to sources of data collection? (horizontal logic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sources of data are clearly identified. - Indicators are not linked to sources of data collection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sources of data are clearly identified. - Some indicators are linked to sources of data collection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sources of data are clearly identified - Indicators are not linked to sources of data collection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sources of data are clearly identified. - Some indicators are linked to sources of data collection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sources of data are clearly identified. - All indicators are linked to sources of data collection.

Key area/ Component 3a: Organisation - structure

14	Coordination and oversight	Is there an appropriate institutional structure for coordination, support, oversight, analyses of data and feedback at the sector level? With different stakeholders? What is its location?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is no institutional structure for coordination, support, oversight, analyses of data and feedback at sector level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is an institutional structure for coordination, support, oversight, analyses of data and feedback at the sector level, but not yet appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is an appropriate institutional structure for coordination, support, oversight, analyses of data and feedback at the sector level. - Different important stakeholders have been left out - Its location is not high enough in the ministry's hierarchy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is an appropriate institutional structure for coordination, support, oversight, analyses of data and feedback at the sector level. - The most important stakeholders are involved - Its location is not high enough in the ministry's hierarchy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is an appropriate institutional structure for coordination, support, oversight, analyses of data and feedback at the sector level. - The most important stakeholders are involved. - Its location is high enough in the ministry's hierarchy.
15	Joint Sector Review	Does the JSR cover accountability and learning needs for both	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - JSRs are not taking place. - JSRs take place, but they do not 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - JSRs cover both accountability and learning needs for both 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - JSRs cover accountability and learning needs for both substance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - JSRs cover accountability and learning needs for both substance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - JSRs cover accountability and learning needs for both substance

No	Topics	Question	Scores				
			1	2	3	4	5
		substance and systemic issues? What is the place/linkage of the JSR within the sector M&E system? Does the JSR promote the reform agenda of the Paris Declaration ?	cover accountability and learning needs for both substance and systemic issues. - They are not linked with other M&E tools within the sector M&E system. - They do not promote the Paris Declaration M&E reform agenda.	substance and systemic issues. - JSRs are not linked with other M&E tools within the sector M&E system. - JSRs do not promote the Paris Declaration reform agenda. or JSRs do not cover accountability and learning needs for both substance and systemic issues. - JSRs are linked with other M&E tools within the sector M&E system and/or - JSRs promote the Paris Declaration M&E reform agenda.	and systemic issues, but focus primarily on substance. - JSRs are not yet well linked with other M&E tools within the sector M&E system. - JSRs promote the Paris Declaration M&E reform agenda.	and systemic issues, but focus primarily on substance. - JSRs are linked with other M&E tools within the sector M&E system. - JSRs promote the Paris Declaration M&E reform agenda.	and systemic issues. - JSRs are linked with other M&E tools within the sector M&E system. - JSRs promote the Paris Declaration M&E reform agenda
16	Sector Working groups	Are sector working groups active in monitoring? Is their composition stable? Are various stakeholders represented?	- There are no sector working groups. or There are sector working groups, but - They are not active in monitoring. - Their composition is unstable. - Various relevant	- Sector working groups are not very active in monitoring. - Their composition is stable. - Various stakeholders are represented.	- Sector working groups are active in monitoring. - Their composition is not stable. - Various stakeholders are represented. or - Sector working groups are active in monitoring.	- Sector working groups are active in monitoring. - Their composition is not stable, but people who left are quickly replaced. - Various stakeholders are represented.	- Sector working groups are active in monitoring. - Their composition is stable. - Various stakeholders are represented.

No	Topics	Question	Scores				
			1	2	3	4	5
			stakeholders are not represented.		- Their composition is stable. - Various relevant stakeholders are not represented.		
17	Ownership	Does the demand for (strengthening of the) M&E system come from the sector ministry, a central ministry (e.g. ministry of planning or finance) or from external actors (e.g. donors)? Is there a highly placed 'champion' within the sector ministry who advocates for the (strengthening of the) M&E system?	- The demand for (strengthening of the) M&E system does not come from the sector ministry or a central ministry. - There is no highly placed 'champion' within the sector ministry who advocates for the (strengthening of the) M&E system.	- The demand for (strengthening of the) M&E system does not come from the sector ministry, but from a central ministry. - There is no highly placed 'champion' within the sector ministry who advocates for the (strengthening of the) M&E system.	- The demand for (strengthening of the) M&E system comes from the sector ministry. - There is no 'champion' within the sector ministry who advocates for the (strengthening of the) M&E system.	- The demand for (strengthening of the) M&E system comes from the sector ministry and the central ministry. - There is a 'champion' within the sector ministry who advocates for the (strengthening of the) M&E system, but not highly placed.	- The demand for (strengthening of the) M&E system comes from the sector ministry and the central ministry. - There is a highly placed 'champion' within the sector ministry who advocates for the (strengthening of the) M&E system.
18	Incentives	Are incentives (at central and local level) used to stimulate data collection and data use?	- No incentives are used (at central and local level) to stimulate data collection and data use.	- Incentives are used, but not at all levels and not yet effectively to really stimulate data collection and data use.	- Incentives are used (at central and local level), but not yet effectively to really stimulate data collection and data use.	- Incentives are effectively used to stimulate data collection and data use, but not at all levels.	- Incentives are effectively used (at central and local level) to stimulate data collection and data use.

Key area/ Component 3b: Organisation - linkages

19	Linkage with Statistical office	Is there a linkage between sector M&E	- A linkage between the sector M&E unit	- The role of the statistical office in	- There is a linkage between the sector	- A linkage between the sector M&E unit and the	- A linkage between the sector M&E unit
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No	Topics	Question	Scores				
			1	2	3	4	5
		and the statistical office? Is the role of the statistical office in sector M&E clear?	and the statistical office does not exist. - The role of the statistical office in sector M&E is not clear.	sector M&E is clear on paper. - In practice a linkage between the sector M&E unit and the statistical office does not exist (only ad hoc contacts).	M&E unit and the statistical office. - The role of the statistical office in sector M&E is not entirely clear.	statistical office exists, but could be stronger. - The role of the statistical office in sector M&E is clear.	and the statistical office exists. - The role of the statistical office in sector M&E is clear.
20	'Horizontal' integration	Are there M&E units in different sub-sectors and semi-governmental institutions? Are these properly relayed to central sector M&E unit?	- No linkages between M&E units of sub-sectors with the sector M&E unit	- M&E units in different sub-sectors and semi-governmental institutions are hardly linked with the sector M&E unit.	- M&E units in different sub-sectors and semi-governmental institutions are linked with the sector M&E unit, but not properly.	- M&E units in different sub-sectors and semi-governmental institutions are linked with the sector M&E unit, but this link could be stronger.	- M&E units in different sub-sectors and semi-governmental institutions are properly linked with the sector M&E unit.
21	'Vertical' upward integration	Is the sector M&E unit properly relayed to the central M&E unit (PRS monitoring system)?	- No linkages between the central M&E unit and sector M&E unit	- The sector M&E unit is hardly linked with the central M&E unit.	- The sector M&E unit is linked with the central M&E unit, but not properly.	- The sector M&E unit is linked with the central M&E unit, but this link could be stronger.	- The sector M&E unit is properly linked with the central M&E unit.
22	'Vertical' downward integration	Are there M&E units at decentralised levels and are these properly relayed to the sector M&E unit?	- No linkages between M&E units at decentralised levels and the sector M&E unit	- M&E units at decentralised levels are hardly linked with the sector M&E unit.	- M&E units at decentralised levels are linked with the sector M&E unit, but not properly.	- M&E units at decentralised levels are linked with the sector M&E unit, but this link could be stronger.	- M&E units at decentralised levels are properly linked with the sector M&E unit.
23	Link with projects' M&E	- Is there any effort to relay with/ coordinate with donor M&E mechanism for projects and vertical	- No efforts for coordination between development partner project M&E mechanisms and sector M&E unit.	- There is limited coordination between sector M&E unit and development partner M&E mechanisms for projects and vertical funds in the	- Coordination between sector M&E unit and development partner M&E mechanisms for projects and vertical funds in the	- Coordination between sector M&E unit and development partner M&E mechanism for projects and vertical funds in the sector exists and	- An institutionalised and properly functioning coordination exists between the sector M&E unit and development partner

No	Topics	Question	Scores				
			1	2	3	4	5
		funds in the sector?		sector exist.	sector exists, but it does not function properly.	functions but it is not yet institutionalised.	M&E mechanisms for sector projects and vertical funds.

Key area/ Component 4: Capacity

24	Present/actual capacity	What is the present capacity of the M&E unit at central sector level, sub-sector level and decentralised level (e.g. skills, financial resources)?	- There is no M&E capacity at central sector, sub-sector or decentralised level.	- There is some capacity (skills and financial resources) but not at all levels.	- There is capacity (skills and financial resources) at central sector, sub-sector and decentralised level, but not sufficiently. or - There is only sufficient capacity (skills and financial resources) at some levels.	- There is capacity (skills and financial resources) at central sector, sub-sector and decentralised level, but it could still be strengthened.	- There is sufficient capacity (skills and financial resources) at central sector, sub-sector and decentralised level.
25	Problem acknowledged	Are current weaknesses in the system identified?	- Current weaknesses in the system are not identified	- Only some current weaknesses in the system are identified, but not on the basis of a diagnosis.	- Current weaknesses in the system are identified, but not on the basis of a diagnosis.	- Most of the weaknesses in the system are well identified (on the basis of a diagnosis).	- All current weaknesses in the system are well identified (on the basis of a diagnosis).
26	Capacity building plan	Are there plans/activities for remediation? Do these include training, appropriate salaries, etc.?	- There are no plans/activities for remediation.	- There are some plans/activities for remediation, but these are not coordinated. - Plans/activities include e.g. training and appropriate salaries.	- There are coordinated plans/activities for remediation. - These do not include e.g. training and appropriate salaries.	- There are some plans/activities for remediation, but these are not well coordinated. - Plans/activities include e.g. training and appropriate salaries.	- There are coordinated plans/activities for remediation. - These include e.g. training and appropriate salaries.

Key area/ Component 5: Participation of actors outside government

27	Parliament	Is the role of Parliament	- The role of Parliament				
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No	Topics	Question	Scores				
			1	2	3	4	5
		properly recognised, and is there alignment with Parliamentary control and oversight procedures? Does Parliament participate in Joint Sector Reviews and/ or sector working groups?	is not recognised - There is no alignment with Parliamentary control and oversight procedures. - Parliament does not participate in JSRs or sector working groups.	is not recognised - There is no alignment with Parliamentary control and oversight procedures. - Parliament participates in JSRs or sector working groups. or - The role of Parliament is recognised - There is alignment with Parliamentary control and oversight procedures. - Parliament does not participate in JSRs or sector working groups.	is recognised. - There is no alignment with Parliamentary control and oversight procedures. - Parliament participates in JSRs and sector working groups. or - The role of Parliament is recognised. - There is alignment with Parliamentary control and oversight procedures. - Parliament participates in JSRs and sector working groups, but not actively.	is recognised. - There is some alignment with Parliamentary control and oversight procedures. - Parliament participates actively in JSRs and sector working groups.	is recognised. - There is alignment with Parliamentary control and oversight procedures. - Parliament participates actively in JSRs and sector working groups.
28	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? Does civil society participate in Joint Sector Reviews and/ or sector	- The role of civil society is not recognised. - There are no procedures for the participation of civil society. - Participation is not institutionally arranged. - Civil society does not participate in JSRs or sector working groups.	- The role of civil society is not recognised. - There are no clear procedures for the participation of civil society. - Participation is not institutionally arranged. - Civil society participates in JSRs and sector working groups. or	- The role of civil society is recognised. - There are procedures for the participation of civil society, but these are not clear. - Participation is not institutionally arranged. - Civil society participates in JSRs and sector working groups.	- The role of civil society is recognised. - There are clear procedures for the participation of civil society. - Participation is not institutionally arranged. - Civil society participates actively in JSRs and sector working groups.	- The role of civil society is recognised. - There are clear procedures for the participation of civil society. - Participation is institutionally arranged. - Civil society participates actively in JSRs and sector working groups.

No	Topics	Question	Scores				
			1	2	3	4	5
		working groups?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The role of civil society is recognised and/or. - There are clear procedures for the participation of civil society. - Participation is not institutionally arranged. - Civil society participates in JSRs and sector working groups, but not actively. 	or <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The role of civil society is recognised. - There are clear procedures for the participation of civil society. - Participation is institutionally arranged. - Civil society participates in JSRs and sector working groups, but not actively. 		
29	Development partners/Donors	Is the role of donors recognised? Are there clear procedures for participation of donors? Do donors participate in Joint Sector Reviews and/ or sector working groups?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The role of development partners is not recognised. - There are no clear procedures for their participation. - Development partners do not participate in JSRs and sector working groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The role of development partners is not recognised. - There are no clear procedures for their participation. - Development partners participate in JSRs and sector working groups. or <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The role of development partners is recognised. - There are no clear procedures for their participation. - Development partners participate in JSRs and sector working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The role of development partners is recognised. - There are no clear procedures for their participation. - Development partners participate in JSRs and sector working groups. or <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The role of development partners is recognised. - There are clear procedures for their participation. - Development partners participate in JSRs and sector working groups, but 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The role of development partners is recognised. - There are procedures for their participation, but these are not clear. - Development partners participate actively in JSRs and sector working groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The role of development partners is recognised. - There are clear procedures for their participation. - Development partners participate actively in JSRs and sector working groups.

No	Topics	Question	Scores				
			1	2	3	4	5
				groups, but not actively.	not actively.		

Key area/ Component 6: Use of information from M&E

30	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 towards different audiences?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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.
31	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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development partners are not using the outputs of the sector M&E system for their information needs. - The 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development partners are using the outputs of the sector M&E system for their information needs, but rather in an ad hoc way. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development partners are systematically using the outputs of the sector M&E system for their information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development partners are using the outputs of the sector M&E system for their information needs, but rather in an ad hoc way. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development partners are systematically using the outputs of the sector M&E system for their information

No	Topics	Question	Scores				
			1	2	3	4	5
.		coordinated ?	demand for M&E data from development partners is not coordinated .	- The demand for M&E data from development partners is not coordinated .	needs. - The demand for M&E data from development partners is not coordinated .	- 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.	needs. - The demand for M&E data from development partners is well coordinated .
32	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	- 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.

No	Topics	Question	Scores				
			1	2	3	4	5
					ad hoc - It is an instrument of policy-making and policy-influencing and advocacy at central level.		
33	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.
34	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	- 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	- Results of M&E are intensively used as an instrument to hold government accountable by several outside government actors.

No	Topics	Question	Scores				
			1	2	3	4	5
				government actors.		be more intense.	

Source: Holvoet, Inberg and Sekirime, 2013

VI. DIAGNOSTIC RESULTS FOR HEALTH AND AGRICULTURE M&E

This Section has three parts. It first presents a summative overview of the diagnostic results for the health and agriculture sectors. Based on the assessment findings, the second and third parts analyses some issues arising which are discussed under the broad scopes of the ‘supply side’ and ‘demand side’ of M&E systems of both sectors. The assessment results have shown that the agriculture sector M&E system is better performing compared to that of the health sector. Thus, the analysis is focused on highlighting some of the underlying reasons as to why the M&E system of the agriculture sector is comparatively successful. Recommendations for better sector M&E development and strengthening will be drawn from the discussions.

Table 3 below is the quantitative presentation of a summary of results from the diagnosis of the M&E Systems of the health and agriculture sectors in Zambia. The Table only provides aggregated score results for both sectors.

Table 3: Quality Assessment Scores for Zambia’s Health and Agriculture M&E Systems

CRITERIA	HEALTH SECTOR	AGRICULTURE SECTOR
	SCORE	SCORE
1. Policy	2.2	2.8
2. Methodology	2.6	2.4
3. Organization: structure	2.2	2.4
3. Organization: linkages	2	2.6
4. Capacity	1.7	2.3
5. Participation of Actors outside Government	1.7	1.7
6. Use of M&E outputs	1.6	2

Source: M&E Assessment Results compiled by the author

From the table, it is shown that out of the six (6) criteria used for the assessment exercise, the agriculture sector compares better on four (4) criteria (policy, organisation, capacity and the use of M&E outputs). A further result of interest perhaps is that only on one criterion (methodology) the health sector M&E system is scoring comparatively better than that of the agriculture sector. For the criterion on ‘participation of actors outside of government’, the two sectors have the same score (1.7).

Nevertheless, it can be noted from the results that despite this general trend of the agriculture sector M&E being comparatively better developed, there are further specific dynamics within the scores between the two sectors and doing a further analysis of the underlying reasons behind can be useful. The section that follows tries to provide a critical focus and analysis on most of the observations and issues that could help to explain the diagnostic results presented above and especially why the agriculture sector M&E is reportedly to be relatively better performing than the health sector M&E. Therefore, the next section deals with two broad but important questions: i). Why is the ‘supply side’ of the agriculture sector M&E system more developed than that of the health sector? ii). Why is the ‘demand side’ of the agriculture sector M&E system better than that of the health sector? The reasons that put the agriculture sector M&E ahead of the health sector M&E will be brought out and ways of improving both systems will equally be explored.

According to [70, 101], a PRS M&E system can be viewed as an equation with two sides; on one end is the ‘supply side’ while on the other is the ‘demand side’. Therefore, in order for countries and/or sectors to build and strengthen their M&E systems and improve performance towards poverty reduction, it is crucial to invest and ensure that both the supply and demand sides of the M&E equation are effective. The supply-side generally refers to the range of systemic and institutional aspects such as data collection, sequencing, leadership,

coordination, regulation and oversight. As for the demand-side, it is concerned with the use of M&E information by different actors that include governmental agencies, parliaments, NGOs, CSOs, research institutions, universities, the donor community and the general population. How these entities interact to stimulate demand for information could be very useful in strengthening the supply and demand sides of an M&E system [70, 89].

Nevertheless, it must be understood that the capacity of a sector M&E system to supply and create demand for credible and quality information can be a complex undertaking. According to [117, 94-95], governments need to be very clear on what exactly is meant by 'capacity' whenever they plan to strengthen M&E to improve their performance. The reality is that capacity-building in general and M&E in particular goes beyond that common understanding of providing staff with a series of trainings in M&E. Instead, successful M&E capacity-building interventions with potential to induce the supply and demand sides are those that cover institutional, organizational, information and technology as well as human capacities. Moreover, this is the focus of the next section, to try as much as possible to highlight the strengths that make the agriculture sector M&E comparatively more capable than the health sector M&E.

M&E Supply Side – Capacity to Supply Useful Information

Why does the agriculture sector M&E exhibit more ability to supply information than the health sector? Indeed, the M&E diagnostic results are prompting for a thorough investigation into this question. [59, 73] reveals that M&E is not a completely new phenomenon in the management of public resources in Zambia. Individual projects and programmes, largely those supported by donors had for a long time been implementing isolated and usually different forms of M&E. From as early as the 1970s, Zambia experienced such fragmented M&E arrangements in sectors like agriculture, education, health and water and sanitation but at the beginning of the year 2000, efforts to unify M&E at national level through the PRSP approach began. M&E fragmentations can lead to many performance problems that include duplication and redundancies in data collection, gaps or imbalances in monitoring, lack of data compatibility and poor information flows among others [70, 102, 107].

Hence, organizing a functional supply side of a PRS M&E system can be both complex and complicated largely because of the existing and potentially fragmented M&E arrangements. Consequently, countries that have sought to build and strengthen M&E systems have done so through rationalization and coordination. According to [70], rationalization and coordination are engaging undertakings where all M&E activities that are not central to the implementation of the PRS are removed, consolidated and coordinated.

What follows are some supply side elements which are considered to be critical to the success of a sector M&E. Through the different aspects discussed below, the paper attempts to make it easy to bring out the fundamental reasons that explain the success of the agriculture sector M&E as portrayed by the diagnostic results. Effort is also made to show why the health sector M&E needs more improvements in order to develop the ability to supply information needed by most of its stakeholders.

1) Coordination and Oversight

There is need to continue keeping in mind that sector M&E is not only a complex undertaking but also multidisciplinary and to be successful in building and sustaining systems of M&E, the need for an intensive investment in skills and infrastructure becomes inevitable. Thus, dealing with and engaging both the internal and external stakeholders to sector M&E require a unique but appropriate combination of knowledge and capacity [112].

For sector M&E systems to be able to function successfully, the role of coordination and oversight is significant. Bringing together divergent stakeholder interests and differences like in the case of Zambia's decentralized set up pose some challenges to having well-functioning M&E systems [80, 112]. Thus, coordination and oversight may require to be implemented in such a way that a wide stakeholder consultation (including CSOs, NGOs, private firms, donors, etc) is incorporated where various M&E issues could be discussed and agreed upon. As [70] have contended that the role of coordination demand for the rationalization of existing M&E activities in order to resolve all the needs and concerns of the actors involved. Failure to have consensus on the fundamentals around oversight and coordination may motivate stakeholders to maintain their autonomy and protect their separate and parallel M&E activities. Essentially, coordination and oversight issues are supply side and are undertaken by the sector M&E implementation structures.

The results of the diagnosis have shown that the coordination and oversight roles are better for the agriculture sector M&E (score of 3) compared to those under the health sector (score of 2). Overall, although the agriculture sector M&E still needs improvement, there are currently appropriate institutional and structural arrangements for coordination, support, oversight, analysis of data and for feedback. For instance, there is

acknowledgement in the Strategic Plans that the MAL HQ through the Department of Policy and Planning (DPP), all sector M&E functions are being coordinated, supported, overseen, analyzed and feedback provided [96]. Considering the National Decentralization Policy for Zambia, the location of the coordination and oversight for M&E function seems to be appropriate although there may be practical challenges in the implementation. Although the health sector M&E is equally overseen and coordinated by the MOH HQ under the Planning Department, there are challenges which come as a result of many actors such as donors, NGOs and other private stakeholders involved. Mainly, there are coordination and rationalization problems among these stakeholders in the health sector upon which the agriculture sector has an advantage with less active actors involved in the sector (agriculture).

Further, the comparative advantage of the agriculture sector M&E results from the fact that the DPP has a good linkage with all major stakeholders in the sector. It is simpler through the DPP to coordinate M&E information across M&E structures for all stakeholders at national, provincial and district levels (vertical downward accountability). In addition, being a growth sector, agriculture has an expanded private sector with many active stakeholders whose M&E arrangements are to some good extent fairly coordinated with those of the agriculture sector M&E system. For example, the private sector through the agreed arrangements is obliged to formerly report all its activities to the agriculture sector while a lot of forums also exist where both the public and private sectors meet to harmonize and improve sector performance [106, 96]. For the health sector, coordination is not obvious since the central sector M&E has to work with various structures within and outside of government such as CHAZ (churches affiliated institutions), NGOs and the private sector.

2) 5.2.2. Sector Capacity for Analysis

Part of the requirement to strengthen the supply side of sector M&E systems is to have functional structures and capacities that are responsible for analyzing M&E data in order to make them relevant and useful for a range of stakeholders. In fact, "it is only by analyzing the results and using them to evaluate policies and programs that one may realize the benefit of monitoring systems" [70]. In the case of Zambia, some institutional arrangements have been put in place to carry out the function of analyzing sector M&E data.

- Sectoral Departments of Planning

The M&E function in both sectors of health and agriculture is mandated to the respective Departments of Planning. These departments located under their respective ministry HQs host the main M&E units with the responsibility of overseeing and coordinating all issues related to sector M&E. It is important to acknowledge here that the location of these departments is very strategic especially in the context of the National Decentralization Policy as well as the PRS. The ministry HQs are appropriate locations for sector M&E functions since all major processes such as planning, budgeting and policy making are undertaken from there [80, 113, 73].

In terms of the current M&E capacity, the assessment results have indicated that the agriculture sector M&E system is better (2.3 score) than the health sector M&E (1.7 score). Essentially, it means that there are more elements of stronger M&E capacity in the agriculture sector as compared to the health sector M&E. On a practical aspect, it entails that in comparison with the agriculture sector, the health sector M&E system fails to generate, manage and use system outputs to inform management decisions and policy making processes at various sector levels and beyond. The diagnostic exercise has revealed that despite both sectors facing limitations in skilled human resources, the situation was worse under the health sector. Similarly, other challenges include the dilapidated sector infrastructure (computers, databases and data management software programs) and the lack of budget independence. The poor work conditions of service in the M&E units as well as the non-availability of champions to help improve things are yet other impediments. Poor work conditions for the demanding work of M&E can lead to massive brain-drain if not addressed properly [74]. And to make matters worse, the problems above have not been identified using systematic diagnostic exercises which could be useful to map out all the needy areas and provide basis for proper remedial strategies.

The problems above are complex and might require a range of actions to resolve. Plans to build the M&E capacity of the MAL staff at all levels are mentioned while they remain vague for the health sector. For instance, some capacity building plans for the agriculture sector include attracting skilled staff in its M&E units from within and outside of the ministry through upgrading salaries in the sector. There are also plans to stock M&E units with computers and data management software programs to help in data capturing, transmission and

storage [96, 114]. The biggest challenge however is that these activity plans are highly uncoordinated, usually with no proper linkages between what is contained in the strategic plans and the MTEF priorities. As [86] observed that although the importance of improving staff skills is usually recognized, there is no explicit M&E capacity building plan in place for most countries. Moreover, a good capacity plan for M&E may be necessary for enhanced substance and systemic aspects of results-based-management mechanisms.

To improve the capacity challenges in the two sectors, there is need to invest in skills to enable staff at central sector, provincial and district levels to cope up with all data challenges that come in form of collection, analysis, reporting, storage and dissemination. The first crucial step according to [115, 81] is for the sector to undertake a thorough diagnosis of current status of M&E skills and use this information to plan a strategy of capacity-building at all levels. Thus, [67] notes that the best governments could do is to train civil servants in a range of M&E tools, techniques and processes that include poverty monitoring, logical framework, performance monitoring and make them appreciate the general concept of results-based management. Additional skills in undertaking evaluations are also needed, such as programme and impact evaluation, policy and cost-benefit analyses [123, 68]. This will require a budget and willingness from management to undertake these steps so that the M&E system achieves some grip in performing a credible task.

In addition, donors have been interested in strengthening M&E systems for sectors in Zambia. With the commitments to the principles of alignment, harmonization and managing for results as stipulated in the PD and the AAA, donor support to improve sector M&E has been positive to some extent. However, due to some problems highlighted above, the credibility of sector systems leave much to be desired and most donors become hesitant to fully align and harmonize their systems. Instead, they end up implementing their own parallel M&E exercises, a practice which has further weakened the M&E systems of sectors such as those of the health and agriculture in Zambia [108]. Nevertheless, donor support challenges are severe in the health sector where Development Partners (DPs) are more in number than those in the agriculture sector.

For the sake of strengthening M&E, there will be need to invest heavily in capacity building for the Departments of Planning. Government however, will be expected to lead the process while donors may only be asked to support selected elements of M&E capacity building. Otherwise, without clarifying the roles of DPs and that of government, the chicken and egg problems will take lead where it remains unclear who should strengthen sector M&E systems. Only when the sector M&E systems are seen to be stronger shall it be probably meaningful for the donors to completely harmonize and align to country monitoring systems [75, 100]. And the [78] also acknowledged the problem of inadequacies of M&E skills and that the challenge was even worse as one goes down from national level through the provinces to the districts. At the community level, the M&E capacities are almost non-existent.

- Ministry of Finance – Department of Monitoring and Evaluation

Strong linkages between sector M&E and central or national level M&E are considered an important requirement for functional country-level M&E arrangements. National-level leadership and commitment is vital for the whole-of-government M&E system success. As [1, 90, 122] observed that, “the absence of local leadership of, and commitment to, governance (especially M&E) reforms has been perhaps the single most important constraint to efforts to build sound governance in Sub-Saharan Africa”. The assessment results have however shown that this aspect is not well developed for both M&E systems of the health and agriculture sectors. A score of two (2) has been given to both sectors, implying that only elements of vertical upward linkages exist. For both sector systems, there is hardly any coordination and meaningful linkages between sector M&E unit with the central M&E system, in this case the M&E Department located at MOF.

On paper, the vertical upward linkages are sufficiently acknowledged and indeed institutionally, the central M&E system is supposed to play the role of oversight and coordination for the government-wide M&E arrangements (see M&E institutional and operational frameworks for Zambia above). Both the NDPs and Sector Strategic Plans for health and agriculture have elaborated the structural linkages that needed to exist between the central and sector M&E. But practically, this is not the case. APRs have revealed that rarely is there coordination between the two levels. The linkages are rather inadequate. For the moment, only reports related to APR compilation are demanded by the central M&E. In fact, it is not clear whether the central M&E provides any backstopping to the health and agriculture sector M&E systems. For example, not even trainings on harmonizing M&E practices among line ministries are mentioned in documents reviewed. Furthermore, although the 2007 APR recommended the need for enhanced role of the MOF in strengthening health sector

M&E systems, no practical suggestions are made on how to explicitly do this. Such an interface was expected to improve M&E systems in all MPSAs [17].

It is also surprising to observe that the agriculture sector which depends on the MOF funding for most of its programmes equally has poor linkages with the central M&E system. Not so many donors are involved in the agriculture sector as compared to the health sector. It can only be assumed therefore that the slightly improved M&E system for agriculture can most likely be attributed to internal motivation within the MAL to develop a strong M&E. The sector portrays elements of possessing an internal M&E ‘champion’ although there is no explicit mention of an individual behind these positive efforts. In that case, it may be understood that the agriculture sector M&E unit is acting as a ‘self-motivated champion’. Institutionalized M&E champions can go a long way in building and sustaining M&E systems [112, 65-66].

3) *M&E Outputs and Dissemination*

[117] explains that for there to be sound accountability in government operations, a guarantee for transparency need to be in place. However, such an arrangement can only work when linkages and communication of M&E outputs across sectors and other stakeholders are well coordinated and functional. Linkages such as those between central government (MOF) and sectors, including other sub-national levels would be crucial. Also the collaboration and integration of CSOs and donor M&E aspects would too be useful to the strengthening of sector M&E systems.

Nevertheless, [70, 122] reveal that it is hard to prove how PRS M&E information was being integrated into policy and decision making processes of most developing countries. A lot of impediments like weak demand for M&E information, poor coordination and data discrepancies among others have crippled the promotion of results-based decision making. Thus, dissemination of M&E outputs to relevant stakeholders and getting their feedback can go a long way in improving the ‘supply side’ of sector M&E systems and contribute to poverty reduction.

Therefore, feedback and learning needs are a significant ingredient which good M&E systems seek to provide in addition to the accountability needs. Like it is the case for most other criteria, the assessment results indicate that the agriculture sector M&E system has an improved feedback mechanism (3 score) compared to that of the health sector M&E (2 score). The agriculture sector M&E has a relatively more developed approach to reporting, dissemination and integration of information although it might not be as explicit and consistent as desired. As for the health sector M&E, only elements of good reporting, dissemination and information integration exist.

The M&E Plans of both sectors under this study recognize the importance of reporting, dissemination and feedback mechanisms and efforts to improve these are already in place according to sector strategies and the SNDP. Unfortunately, there is no explicit consistence towards implementation as revealed in most APRs. Nevertheless, the agriculture sector has an extra advantage which is the National Agriculture Information Services (NAIS), an initiative which uses both radio and TV programmes to report and disseminate relevant information to farmers across the country. The limitation though is on the clarity of feedback integration. It is not well explained in the sector policies how the M&E information was for instance integrated into decision making and policy influence especially at decentralized levels. As far as possible however, there is a good attempt towards explaining the type of reports and dissemination strategies for different stakeholders placed at various locations in the structure of the sector. Such formal structures and arrangements (NAIS) can ultimately be a motivation to produce M&E information of high quality and credibility [30, 4-5]. Equally, the health sector runs radio and TV programmes but the information disseminated has more to do with health awareness as opposed to giving feedback on health programmes in line with the strategic plans and NDP targets. Similarly, the annual health bulletins only report on selected indicators without giving any analysis to explain the relationship between the programmes implemented and the indicator results [104, 6].

Thus, given the current underdevelopment of the health and agriculture sector M&E systems, it could be significant that concerted efforts between government and donors are enhanced. When the government, donors and key stakeholders begin to view M&E as a shared responsibility, it may be easy to invest in capacity building and harmonizing stakeholder information needs [82, 69]. Hence, investment in information quality, reporting and dissemination dimensions can go a long way in creating strengthened supply sides of sector M&E systems. For example, media campaigns as well as the use of vernacular versions of key M&E result outputs may help to open up demand and use of M&E information at all levels within and outside of the sectors [88, 10].

4) *Role of the Central Statistical Office in Sector M&E*

On the supply side, another important matter arising from the assessment results concerns the role of the Central Statistical Office in the strengthening of sector M&E systems. The results indicate that the Statistics Office is better linked with the agriculture sector M&E system (score of 3) than that of the health sector (score of 2). Overall, the number of surveys that the Central Statistics Office conducts jointly with the agriculture M&E unit are more and regular (Crop Forecasting and Post-Harvest surveys which are annual exercises) compared to the health sector (mainly the DHS, which come after 5 years). The frequency of interaction might therefore provide some insights on why the agriculture sector is relatively better linked to the Statistics Office than health. Indeed, through these surveys which are annual exercises, the agriculture sector M&E remains in constant collaboration with the Central Statistics Office. During the surveys, the Statistics Office conducts a range of capacity building trainings around data collection, methodology as well as in interpretation and use of survey data [11, 96, 12]. For the health sector, the only surveys are the DHSs which come every five years.

Nevertheless, there is indication under both sectors that the Statistical Office was not consistent in its surveys in terms of timeliness thus ended up delaying in providing information. The overarching challenge which the Central Statistical Office of Zambia faces is limited budget for its operations. Lack of funds could probably be the reason why it is also difficult for the Statistics Office to provide M&E backstopping exercises to sectors. In their country studies, [70] found that, “National Statistics Institutes tend to prioritize large survey and statistical operations for which donor funding is readily available, leaving little time for other functions”. Nonetheless, the Zambian government has no choice but to find a way to strengthen the statistics office and create operational linkages with sectors so that all public information could be certified for timeliness, credibility, relevance, accuracy, accessibility, interpretability, coherence, and methodological soundness [13, 112].

M&E Demand Side – Capacity to Create and Use Information

For sector M&E systems to be built, strengthened, sustained and used as tools of performance improvement in the context of Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRS), systems should possess the capacity to generate complete and relevant information. Of more importance in addition is the capacity of such systems to create a broad scope of demand for the outputs they produce. [70, 15-16] notes with emphasis that countries need to develop the demand side of their PRS M&E systems as far much as possible while organizing the supply side. It is the demand side of M&E systems that guarantees the quality of information which thereafter is used to attract the attention of various stakeholders who need it for poverty reduction in their programming, policy-making and daily decision-making.

This section strives to tackle the question ‘Why is the ‘demand side’ of the agriculture sector M&E system better than that of the health sector?’. To achieve this objective, a number of elements are considered here. A broad range of uses and users for M&E information can be distinguished as shown in Box 1 below. M&E information is demanded practically at all levels of government from national, provincial, district and community levels. Programmes and projects also require M&E information for their operations and decisions.

(a) *Box 1: The Many Uses and Users of Monitoring and Evaluation Information*

1. Performance reporting	
1.1 National performance report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A national performance report for parliament and citizens on national goals and priorities • Reporting on progress for Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers • Reporting on progress for the MDGs
1.2 Sector/ministry performance report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting on performance in ministries’ annual reports • Reporting on sector performance to parliamentary committees • Reporting on sector performance to thematic groups
1.3 Programme and project-level performance reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodic reporting on performance at the level of programmes and projects to allow relevant managers within a ministry to exercise accountability and governance • Progress updates to general public on key projects

Source: The United Nations, 2013

Indeed, the diagnostic results show that the agriculture sector M&E has more capacity to generate information and at the same time create demand for the use of it (score of 2.3). To the contrary, the assessment results also clearly show that the health sector is less capable of creating demand for the M&E information (score of 1.7). A number of factors in the diagnostic exercise indicate why the current M&E statuses for the health and agriculture sectors are at variance.

1) Linking M&E with the Budget Process

The M&E demand side can be strengthened by carefully linking M&E and the budget process. Since sectors rely on central government funding for most of their programme activities, the arrangement can be used as an opportunity to link M&E information to the budget process and this according to [18, 70] works as a hook for inducing demand for M&E outputs.

Further, for the linkages criteria, the overall average score for agriculture is 2.6 while health has 2 and specifically for the criteria on linking M&E to the processes of budgeting and planning, again the agriculture sector scores higher with 3 compared to health's score of 2. Essentially, the agriculture sector clearly elaborates on how information generated from the M&E system feeds into the budget and planning processes. According to the [96], M&E information is used to inform the preparation of the sector MTEF and other budgetary requirements. It is also mentioned that the MOF critically reviews the agriculture MTEF during the disbursements of sector funds to ensure that all activities conform to the priorities as identified in the SNDP [19, 96].

For the health sector, it is not clear on how M&E information is practically used in such mechanisms as the MTEF and SWAp. For that matter, there is need for sector managers and indeed all public officers

responsible to demand and avail relevant PRS M&E system outputs to inform MTEF processes. Moreover, creating a performance culture that seeks the use of evidence-based information for decision and policy making can be a potential tool for achieving poverty reduction outcomes [70, 85].

The fact that the agriculture sector largely depends on central government funding for most of its programmes, linking its M&E to the MTEF works as an incentive. The agriculture sector [96] mentions that without realistic funding of the MTEF projections by MOF, the agriculture sector has no alternative resources but to scale down on its proposed activities and consequently not meet all the set targets. With many donors active in the health sector and each carrying varying M&E needs, the linkages with the MTEF can be problematic and require a lot of coordination and rationalization efforts to succeed.

Further, there is need for the two sectors of health and agriculture to seriously consider other forms of incentives for M&E because focusing on linkages with the budgets only merely undermines success for more stakeholders to demand for the M&E outputs. [71, 20-22] for instance, talks of carrots, sticks and sermons¹ as a way to innovate and contextualize M&E incentives.

2) *Use of Sector M&E Information by Parliament*

Parliaments, as viewed by [117, 23, 46, 51-56] were supposed to be the primary consumers of M&E information because of their roles of representing, overseeing and approving budgets pertaining to public expenditures. For without full access to M&E information from all sectors, parliament becomes inevitably incapacitated to stop or minimize corruption and other forms of service delivery challenges facing the public service (Schacter, 2000). Surprisingly however, more focus seem to be given to strengthening parliament's capacity around budget approvals to the brutal negligence of the need to upgrade parliamentarians' analytical capacity to enable them engaging the executive in more tougher issues. In addition, [58, 24, 70] hold a view that the participation of parliaments in PRS M&E systems can potentially bring legitimacy, country ownership, and the voice of constituencies into the sector and national policy processes. Thus, sectoral M&E information could be greatly useful to engage and influence the executive arm of government on how best to utilize public resources [112, 26-29, 31].

Unfortunately, the diagnostic results indicate a score of one (1) for both the health and agriculture sectors regarding the participation of the Zambian Parliament in strengthening and using sector M&E information. This poor score entails that very little action has been taken to link parliament to the sector M&E systems. In both ministries, it means that the role of parliament is not recognized and there is no alignment with parliamentary control and oversight procedures. Actually, Parliament is not mentioned as a stakeholder in all sector documents (strategy plans, NDPs, and APRs) and no linkages exist. Apart from the ordinary parliamentary presentations made by the respective Ministers and the ad hoc consultations by the Parliamentary Committees, no institutionalized arrangements exist linking sector M&E and parliament.

In addition, this also means parliament does not participate in JARs and SAGs. It is not clear why such arrangements are like that and no attempts have been made by both sectors to explain the discrepancies. Since parliament plays the role of checks and balances for government performance, it might be understood that this silence is not surprising because M&E systems have the potential to reveal accountability, corrupt practices and many other tough issues [91, 3]. So, the linkages are either weakened or nonexistent. Therefore, this leaves the Zambian parliament only relying on selected reports (APRs and ministerial statements). Since parliament has both the health and agriculture sub-committees, one would expect parliament to be linked to the sector M&E but there is no mention of such arrangements. In this way, parliament's role to demand for sector M&E products remains passive and consequently fails to strengthen M&E systems themselves.

The non-involvement of parliament in sector M&E could in fact be a complex issue. In as much as there could be counter efforts by government bureaucrats to keep parliament away from knowing what wrong practices took place, other reasons could be that Zambian parliament itself has weak M&E capacity. This has potential to hinder demand for M&E information by parliament as [70] observed that low capacity of parliaments is among the key reasons why parliaments do not get involved in M&E in most Sub-Saharan African countries. Unless a functional parliamentary committee system exists, one with adequate analytical capacity as well as sufficient institutional resources, the Zambian parliament will continue to be of less usefulness to the strengthening of sector M&E systems and indeed the whole-of-government M&E.

¹Or what Mercer (2002) refers to as 'democratic consolidation' where CSOs may engage the state on issues around anti corruption, human rights abuses, ineffective legal systems and generally on poor governance.

3) *Use of Sector M&E Information by Donors*

Under the Paris Declaration (PD) and recommitted during the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA), it is expected of all Development Partners (DPs) to align and harmonize their systems of delivering aid to those of developing countries [108, 64]. Thus, donors are understood to be important partners in building and strengthening developing countries' M&E systems. In Zambia, the good will of donors is well acknowledged in this line [2, 83]. However, the results of the diagnosis have shown that both the agriculture and health sector M&E systems have limited participation of DPs in M&E exercises (with score of 2 for both). Although elements of donor involvement exist, their role is not explicitly recognized and there are no clear procedures elaborated for their participation. In both sectors, the DPs are members of the SAGs and JARs. Nonetheless, mention is made that the SAGs and JARs are not very active especially for the agriculture SAG [96, 60, 49].

Consequently, what seems to be clear is that DPs' role in strengthening sector M&E is rather mixed. The health sector is reported to have some aspects of success (with donors) and indeed, that could be attributed to the pressure from the DPs who usually want to get evidence of their support but this is a practice whose sustainability cannot be guaranteed. In fact, [116] observed that in most Sub-Saharan African countries, the syndrome of 'donors in the M&E driver's seat' has undermined success in M&E evolution and that the need to discourage such practices was urgent.

Further, the linkages between sector M&E and donor funded projects still need efforts in order to ensure that information flows are institutionally arranged and coordinated. In that regard, the 2009 Mid-Term Review revealed that discrepancies between sector M&E systems and those of donors created most of the challenges on information accessibility and use. Thus, there is need to use the good lessons from donor assistance channeled through General Budget Support and SWAPs which have been reported to be positive in Zambia [59].

Moreover, donors as evidenced in some studies (see: OECD/DAC Monitoring Surveys on the implementation of the [109-111]) do not easily harmonize and align to recipient country systems and monitoring frameworks. Donors point to the fact that M&E frameworks of developing countries are weak and inadequate. Even as observed by the [69], mostly parallel M&E systems have been perpetuated by donors and that such enclave practices have ended up weakening M&E capacities of the public sector. These challenges are more evident in Zambia's health sector which has plenty of donors who still run parallel M&E exercises. Therefore to reduce the confusion, it is imperative that a middle ground is negotiated between government and the concerned donors. Essentially, it is through unified frameworks that sector M&E may be strengthened.

4) *Use of Sector M&E by Civil Society*

With the coming of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), CSOs received a great deal of attention in the process of economic growth and poverty alleviation. For most developing countries such as Zambia, CSOs became key users of M&E information and since then, some of them have continued to engage governments on various issues concerning the management and utilization of public resources [87, 61]. Or what [93, 62] refers to as 'democratic consolidation' where CSOs may engage the state on issues around anti-corruption, human rights abuses, ineffective legal systems and generally on poor governance. Thus, CSOs are indeed significant actors with potential to strengthen the demand side of sector M&E systems through their use of system information to enhance their activities such as advocating for pro poor policies.

The assessment results have shown that there is minimal participation of CSOs in both the health and agriculture sectors (both with score of 2). In the two sectors, it is not clearly explained how the CSOs are involved in strengthening M&E systems, yet this is an essential requirement for successful systems. One way to induce the participation of CSOs in poverty reduction programmes is through strengthened PRS M&E systems that produce relevant and useful information to civil society themselves [70]. For CSOs to be effective, they need to operate differently by initiating various platforms to gather public performance information and engage government on issues. Such initiatives as the 'Citizens Report Cards' that are used by citizens to express feedback on their satisfaction about the quality of public services provided to them can go a long way to help CSOs to engage government on pro poor policies and poverty reduction programmes [121, 63].

Sector Advisory Groups (SAGs) are the only platforms mentioned available for CSOs to participate. The health SAG is performing much better (score 3) compared to that of the agriculture SAG (score 2). There are regular meetings for the health SAG while the one for agriculture meets irregularly but for both, the contents of the meetings rarely tackle the core M&E challenges facing the sectors. Nevertheless, some CSO members

such as NGOs prefer not to take active roles in SAG meetings as well as Joint Annual Reviews (in the case of health) for fear of co-optation and control by government [70, 7].

Moreover, CSOs in Zambia still remain a great untapped potential to help government build and sustain functional M&E systems at all levels. Although generally hampered with fragmentations, CSOs can be a sound and organized way to provide constructive criticism for governance. But this opportunity seems to be always misunderstood; instead, both CSOs and government perceive each other as rivals and thus fail to consider themselves as having complementary roles [47, 8, 48]. This problem exists in both the health and agriculture sectors and more so at national level. That is why an effort to resolve the conflict may go a long way in having a civil society that contributed positively to government's performance and poverty reduction programmes. Further, if the politics of M&E between government and CSOs continue to be at variance, the critical role of CSOs to fight corruption by demanding for greater government transparency and accountability shall be disillusioned [14].

VII. CONCLUSION

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) has become the 'buzz' word in the development arenas of both the developed and developing countries. Proponents of M&E within the field of development have contended that well-functioning M&E systems can contribute highly to the provision of necessary information for use at all levels of the policy cycle. More specifically, M&E is acclaimed for improving policy and planning, enhances accountability as well as supports various management functions. Nevertheless, the advocates are also aware that M&E does not have an intrinsic value but rather the benefits have to be sought for in the context of how much M&E information is being used by decision-makers and in influencing policy. How well liked M&E with policy, planning, budgeting and management shall determine the usefulness of M&E.

The arrival of the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) initiative just before the New Millennium in 2000 spanned the emphasis on having stronger M&E systems at country level. In the PRSP Initiative, M&E was one of the key requirements. Countries were demanded to explicitly elaborate how the PRSPs were going to be implemented, monitored and evaluated in order to measure the successes and challenges that still needed to be reconsidered. Zambia, implemented her two PRSPs between 2000 and 2004 and after that success, the country was pardoned over US\$3 billion of her external debt from the World Bank and IMF through the Highly Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) Initiative [78]. After the PRSPs in 2004, Zambia has turned to the National Development Plans (NDPs) as a way to continue with national poverty reduction agenda. From 2006 to 2010, Zambia implemented the Fifth National Development Plan (FNDP) and is currently implementing the Sixth National Development Plan covering the period 2011 to 2015. Like in the PRSPs, M&E is a priority component in all the NDPs, thus, separate M&E chapters elaborating how implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the plans are in place.

This dissertation has discussed the topic 'Sector Monitoring and Evaluation Systems in the Context of Poverty Reduction Strategies: A Comparative Case Study of Zambia's Health and Agriculture Sectors'. The paper illustrated how poorly performing the whole-of-government M&E system for Zambia is by using the results of the 2011 OECD/DAC Monitoring Survey on the implementation of the Paris Declaration (PD). Findings for Indicator 11, the Managing for Results show how much Zambia's country level M&E was inadequate in providing credible information about poverty reduction. This became the basis and motivation to study the M&E systems of the health and agriculture sectors. To understand the current status of the M&E systems for the two sectors, it was significant to carry out separate assessments to carefully study the strengths and weaknesses of the sector systems. The results have shown that the agriculture sector M&E system is better performing compared to the health one. Despite the M&E system for agriculture comparing well, both sector M&E systems still require improvements.

What has clearly come out is that for Zambia to have a whole-of-government M&E system which is stronger and able to produce relevant information for concerned stakeholders and development processes, successful sector M&E is inevitable. Because government implements its poverty reduction strategies (the NDPs) through line ministries and government agencies, sector M&E arrangements become critical inputs into the national M&E system.

However, after conducting an M&E diagnosis for the health and agriculture sectors, it has become apparent that there are differences in the way sector M&E systems are developed. Typically, there are many factors that may influence the building and strengthening of sector M&E, for instance, the different linkages and relationships with CSOs, donors, parliament, private sector, national statistics institution and the national-level

M&E. Whether there are champions to lead the process of M&E reform in sectors is another factor that may determine and separate progress from failure. On the whole, the agriculture sector M&E system has better ability to supply relevant information for several of its stakeholders while the health sector has challenges to do so. Equally, the M&E system of the agriculture sector has a comparatively well-developed demand side, thereby able to stimulate different actors to ask for M&E outputs. The demand side of the health sector M&E is also less developed in comparison, meaning that most of the stakeholders in the sector were not using the information for their management decisions as well as influencing policy changes.

The paper has explored for instance, how major stakeholders such as parliament, CSOs, NGOs, Central Statistical Office, central M&E at national level and the developing partners were less involved in the health sector M&E and relatively better for the agriculture sector. With few donors, the agriculture sector demonstrated that M&E can be built and strengthened around common guidelines as described in the NDPs. Unlike in the health sector where donors are many and still encouraging parallel M&E exercises, the agriculture sector operates with less external interventions and this has led to a harmonized M&E at central sector, provincial, district and sub-district levels.

Finally, for the M&E systems of the health and agriculture sectors to be used as instruments of managing the implementation of sector strategies and contribute to the national poverty reduction agenda, it is crucial to focus on strengthening both the supply side and the demand side. But like it is currently done under the agriculture sector, there will be need to ensure that the demand side is organized quickly while the supply side is also being developed.

Recommendations for Policy Improvement

For the future, the following should be considered in order to improve M&E systems in Zambia:

- Sector level

Conduct thorough sector M&E diagnoses: For both sectors of health and agriculture, no M&E assessment has been done before to identify strengths and weaknesses so that this would be used as benchmark for improving sector M&E systems. In the absence of this assessment, it is impractical to know the underlying factors for success and failure [70, 40-41]. Thus, to conduct a thorough diagnosis to determine the current statuses of M&E systems is crucial first step to identify gaps and use the findings for dialogue to find better environments of conducting M&E with stakeholders [119]

Create forum for inter-line ministry M&E experience sharing: Since government is a broad entity with all line ministries expected to implement the NDPs, it would be wise for all sector M&E units to consider sharing experiences through common forums, preferably convened by the M&E Department at MOF as the national coordinator. This will greatly act as a source of knowledge and can help improve M&E practices and capacities at sector level and subsequently assist the national M&E to identify the areas for improvement [84].

Enhance the incentive structure for the use of M&E information: Lack of motivation to supply or demand for M&E information has been largely attributed to weak incentive arrangements in both sectors of health and agriculture. A range of possible incentives can be explored including technical, political, financial management and skills training [71].

Engage MOF to provide Sector M&E backstopping: The capacity of the Department of M&E at MOF need to be enhanced so that it is able to provide necessary support to sector M&E systems. Sectors also need to proactively seek the help of the national-level M&E system.

Initiate and strengthen Parliamentary linkages and oversight: The diagnostic results have shown that no formal links exist between the Zambian National Assembly and sector M&E systems of health and agriculture. This may call for explicit initiatives such as linking sector M&E units and the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) as well as other sector specific sub-committees of Parliament.

- National Level

Strengthen the 'evaluation' function in M&E: As observed by [120], trends show that M&E resources have continued to be devoted to the monitoring function with little attention to the evaluation function. Thus, [39] cautions that monitoring exercises need not to crowd-out genuine evaluation. In the case of the Zambian M&E system, the 'E' is given less priority while more attention is rendered to the 'M'. Thus, government should not leave these clarifications to chance, instead institutionalize them whenever possible [105].

Guarantee country leadership and ownership of M&E systems: The Zambian government should consider working towards decentralized ownership, control and sustainability of her whole-of-government M&E systems. It is not sustainable enough for the donor community to be the ones funding evaluations and strengthening M&E systems [120, 91]. This requires the presence of government ‘M&E champions’ in almost all sectors. At national level, the MOF, through its minister and the Department of M&E need to act as strong advocates of sound public resource management of which M&E is cardinal for success.

Strengthen legislation for M&E: Although there are provisions in the national constitution and other legal instruments to guide and protect PFM systems, Zambia needs a law that particularly promotes and elaborates stronger M&E practice in the public sector. The current ad hoc and generalized provisions lack explicit legal backing and the consequences of this gap are weaknesses in the overall implementation of the M&E function by government. When done, the strengthened M&E legislation will potentially resolve the weak role the Zambian parliament plays in enhancing sector and national M&E systems.

- Recommendations for Further Research

Further studies will be needed in the following areas:

Study the Politics of M&E in Zambia: M&E is mainly about technical and political issues although the political aspect is usually crowded out [91, 43-45]. There are a lot of grey areas which require more clarification in sector M&E and indeed national-level M&E. Major challenges include weak M&E coordination, autonomy and overall poor power relations between departments and line ministries. The M&E role of the Office of the Auditor General (OAG), Parliament, Central Statistical Office and CSOs need further elaboration [84, 32-38].

Investigate best M&E practices from other countries which Zambia may adopt and adapt: Growing literature and evidence about M&E implementation at national level has continued to increase globally. Both the developed and developing countries alike have stepped up efforts to devise various forms of M&E to improve management of public resources and achieve poverty reduction for their populations. The experiences of many developing countries in particular will be leveraging to the Zambian case. The Latin American success stories of Colombia and Chile as well as some African countries like Uganda, Tanzania and Ghana would make useful contributions towards enhancing Zambia’s M&E arrangements [76, 42].

VIII. REFERENCES

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