



EvalPartners AfrEA-SQEP-CES

EvalMentors in Africa: Support program to strengthen institutional capacity to National Evaluation Associations in Africa

Final Narrative Report

VOPEs	Name of VOPE	Contact Person	Email address
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Project start date	December 1 st 2012
Project end date	Expected: July 2013 / Real : Finalised for 3 VOPEs, ongoing for 1 VOPE

The project was under the guidance of a management committee composed by Serge Eric Yakeu (AfrEA), Marie Gervais (SQEP) and Martha McGuire (CES). AfrEA Treasurer Issah Adam, was also involved in the financial component of the project.

It is good to note that Nermine Wally was originally the representative of AfrEA to the management committee during his tenure as President of AfrEA.

1. What were the key moments of EvalMentors?

- First discussions between Nermine Wally and Marie Gervais, March 2012;
- Approval of the project by EvalMentors Boards AfrEA and SQEP (March 2012) and CES (June 2012);
- Project Officially endorsed by EvalPartners as pilot project for the upcoming P2P program, July 18, 2012 (received funding : \$ 20,000) ;
- Signature AfrEA-UNICEF agreement, in September 2012;
- Call for proposals launched for African VOPEs via the website AfrEA, September 17, 2012;
- 12 proposals received, 15 November 2012;
 - 4 English VOPEs : Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Tanzania;
 - 8 French VOPEs: Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal;
- Selection process by Joint Committee AfrEA - SQEP - CES, November/December 2012;
 - Criteria: Quality of the proposal, realistic proposals given the funding and completion deadlines which determine the quality of human resources mobilized for the implementation of the proposal, relevance of results against objectives EvalMentors/EvalPartners, interest of the African community of evaluators, commitment to share lessons learned from the experience;
- Announcement of winners VOPEs (CaDEA, ESK, LEA, RNEB), December 19, 2012;
- Signature of AfrEA - VOPEs agreements, January-February 2012;
- Starting VOPEs projects, from February 2013;
- Receiving progress reports CaDEA, ESK, LEA, RNEB, April 2013;
- Receipt of final reports from ESK and RNEB in August 2013, CaDEA in September 2013;
- Major Difficulties in transferring funds to LEA, which delayed the project of this VOPE;
- Panel provided at the 2014 AfrEA Conference in Yaoundé, Cameroon under the strand "Strengthening VOPEs" (EvalMentors: What value for CaDEA, ESK, LEA, RNEB and the evaluation community in Africa?), March 2014.

2. What was the purpose of the project? What did the project achieve and how? (Brief description of the project, max 100 words)

EvalMentors aims to strengthen the institutional capacity of VOPEs in Africa, the achievement of their mission and the development of pro-commitment conditions. Thus, it aims to strengthen their capacity to play a strategic role in their country in terms of promoting a favorable evaluation based on equity and gender-sensitive environment to facilitate the development of an evaluation community in the country to influence the development and use of national evaluation systems.

EvalPartners awarded 20,000 USD to the implementation of this program. AfrEA is the manager of the funds and assured their transfer to VOPEs. A financial report will be sent shortly.

3. Did the project accomplish what was planned to achieve?

Yes, but partially.

- This report covers the overall results of the EvalMentors initiative.
- The report produced by the four selected VOPEs attached to this narrative report highlights the process and provide specific information for each VOPEs.

3.a Please comment on the degree of achievement:

- 4 monitoring reports were submitted as agreed (CaDEA, ESK, LEA, RNEB);
- 3 projects were completed (CaDEA, ESK, RNSEB) ;
 - The final reports were submitted;
 - The funds were used generally as expected;
 - Duration of projects was 6 to 8 months;
- 1 project got the funds transfer (LEA) recently in January 2014;
 - The implementation of the LEA project is ongoing;
 - As the financial manager, AfrEA however agreed that the LEA project will be realized with time;
 - Some activities have nevertheless been performed / initiated by LEA since they are part of its development plan (see progress report);
- LEA, RNEB became members of AfrEA (respecting a condition of the grant funds). CaDEA and ESK are already members AfrEA;
- The 4 VOPEs respect their commitment to share their experiences and learning lessons with the African evaluation community (2014 AfrEA Conference).

Some observations about the projects:

- Transfer of funds by late AfrEA, which delayed the starting time of LEA project;
- The organizational aspect of these projects vary greatly from one VOPE to another (role of the Office, volunteers off-Office, mobilization of a project manager, consultants);
- The use of a portion of the funds: 1) provide to the VOPE some logistic tools and Information Technologies (CaDEA, ESK, RNEB); 2) to fund human resources (consultants CaDEA, ESK, ESK Secretariat, RNEB) ; 3) to ensure the founding activity of VOPE (RNEB);
- Variation between the proposed budget and actual used, difficulty to anticipate on the actual cost of certain expenses (eg banking)
 - The financial implementation of the project, lower rates for CaDEA or higher for RNEB and ESK;
 - Bank balance found for CaDEA;
 - Excess expenses absorbed by membership dues for ESK or a partner to RNEB;
- Links with the strategic plan (CaDEA) or feeding a specific strategy VOPE (ESK training);
- Inadequate human resources, project volunteers with the program of work and adjustment resulting in a reorganization of work including volunteers out of the office (CaDEA);
- Explicit concern for sustainability of achievements for CaDEA and ESK (volunteering, financial resources for the operation and permanence).

Some impacts of EvalMentors (reported by VOPEs):

- Pulse to strengthen the institutional capacity of CaDEA;
- Capital contribution to the establishment of RNEB;

- Positive impact marked on the functionality of the VOPE (CaDEA, ESK, RNEB), visibility including via media (CaDEA, RNEB) and its ability to build partnerships for the implementation of activities (CaDEA, RNEB);
- Positive impact on mobilizing members (CaDEA, RNEB);
- Positive impact on the ability to communicate with members and with the wider community in the country and development partners (CaDEA, ESK, RNEB);
- Positive impact on the specification of training needs for ESK members.

4. Was the project implemented as planned? If there were changes in the planned activities, why?

Generally, the project was implemented as planned with two exceptions.

Component "mentoring"

- The component " mentoring " was not effective despite reminders made to develop this aspect :
 - Eg. "you must specify your needs of mentoring, that is to say, the components of the project for which you would appreciate receiving support from peers of AfrEA, SQEP or CES, according to the needs expressed".

Component "transversal"

- Initially three proposals were retained and each received \$ 5,000 for the realization of their capacity building activities.
- Similarly, a cross-sectional analysis of all proposals received was intended to identify common needs which would be targeted. Whichever was reached, one or strategies would then have been implemented in collaboration with VOPEs concerned. The results of this work have subsequently shared with all VOPEs.
- This component has not been done for two reasons: 1) to allow an additional VOPE (4th) to realize its capacity building project and; 2) lack of action to perform cross-sectional analysis of proposals received.

5. What are the main lessons learned from the experience of this project that you would like to share with other VOPEs?

EvalMentors Management

- Unequal distribution of management project effort with three partners (AfrEA, SQEP and CES) with the impact of a leadership role primarily from SQEP in both program management and accountability as well as monitoring with VOPEs;
- A capacity of regional VOPE (AfrEA) that should have been strengthened initially:
 - What would have facilitated his subsequent leadership with its national VOPEs and the EvalMentors management;
 - This would ease the transition experienced regarding the file for AfrEA (Nermine Wally and Serge Eric Yakeu);
 - Learning: What the capacity of regional VOPE be better achieved from the start (the process of program management including financial aspects, communication with his office and VOPEs).

EvalMentors program

- The concept of mentoring has been proposed but not imposed as a condition of the project.
 - Despite their initial opening, the VOPEs evolved into projects gave their internal forces and have requested any form of mentoring and external support;
 - Learning: What the mentoring component is explicit from the outset, it is followed and supported to ensure their implementation;
- Monitoring of VOPEs deserve to be further supported by the Committee of EvalMentors management. This would have facilitated the resolution of constraints on the ground faster and ensure better compliance of schedules (reports);
 - Learning: Provide more explicit and sustained support to VOPEs in a form of " à la carte ".
- The linkage between national and AfrEA VOPEs for the financial aspect of the project is to improve in terms of reactivity. More regular monitoring would also have been desirable with the Management Committee.
 - Learning: Better mark the parameters of the financial program management and monitoring. Ensure the ability to follow AfrEA time on this aspect of the project.

6. Are there plans to continue or expand collaboration started under the project? If so, please describe.

AfrEA-SQEP-SCE

- Two other aspects of capacity building were originally provided with the partnership between EvalMentors partners AfrEA-SQEP-SCE or training aspects on evaluation and publication capacity. The pilot project with EvalMentors EvalPartners did not cover these aspects.
 - It is not envisaged in the short term these components are prosecuted under the same tripartite partnership.

- However, new opportunities exist at the international level, notably through the EvalPartners initiative which could lead to new collaborations between AfrEA, SQEP and SCE. It would be received also by the three partners.

VOPEs - CaDEA, ESK, LEA, RNEB

- The panel provided by AfrEA could help to target VOPEs recipients of EvalMentors as "mentors" for evaluation with similar needs to those supported associations. This could allow the recovery for collective purposes for Africa individual learning from these VOPEs.

7. Conclusion

EvalMentors clearly helped to strengthen the institutional capacity of these VOPEs (CaDEA, ESK, RNEB) and provided support to the achievement of their mission. These VOPEs greatly appreciated the financial contribution received and confirmed the added value for the establishment of favorable conditions for their realization. However, the issue of sustainability of the achievements remains a major challenge and will require significant mobilization of strategy from these VOPEs. In this perspective, it would be appropriate to evaluate the effects of EvalMentors on these VOPEs later (in 6 months).

The implementation of project supported by LEA made clear that the difficulties frequently encountered on the continent regarding the financial aspects of a project. The realization of the LEA project is ongoing and the transfer of funds by AfrEA was successful only in January 2014.

Despite its name in this sense, EvalMentors initiative failed to put forward the "mentor" of his initial project pane.

Joined Documents

- Final report CaDEA
- Final report ESK
- Progress report LEA
- Final report RNEB

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