

Webinar on
"M&E Bill (2076) – Understanding, Opportunities and Challenges"

Community of Evaluators-Nepal (CoE-Nepal)

Wednesday, 20 May 2020, 3:30 PM – 5:00 PM

Community of Evaluators-Nepal (CoE-Nepal) conducted its first webinar on "**M&E Bill (2076) - Understanding, Opportunities and Challenges**" on Wednesday, 20 May 2020 with an aim to identify strengths, weaknesses and areas of improvement of the M&E Bill (2076) that has been presented to Federal Parliament of Nepal.

There were total of 20 participants (CoE-Nepal's members) participated in the webinar. Dr. Ram Chandra Khanal presented the presentation on the theme of the webinar. The webinar was moderated by Prabin Chitrakar and welcome note was presented by Thakur Prasad Bhatta.

Dr. Ram Chandra Khanal

The main objective of the presentation Dr. Khanal presented was to create a general understanding among participants of the webinar and generate some input for future influence/advocacy (if/when necessary).

Some of the contents of the presentations are as follows:

Context

- The government tabled the Monitoring and Evaluation Bill-2020 at the National Assembly for consideration (March, 2020).
- The bill aims to make development activities transparent and results-based by systematising monitoring and evaluation of existing policies and plans.
- Evaluations are complex endeavors that involve many variations, dimensions, and activities.
- Policies /acts are for positive changes but the tendency for well-intended policies may have unintended negative side-effects.
- This will be discussed and debated in the parliaments (both in upper and lower houses) and it also requires public discussion for improvement.

Positive aspects

- Bill after a long discussion within Nepal
- Provide a basis for effective Development management
- May set a positive role / model among other countries
- Captured various important issues including the current and possible role of provincial governments, district council and local governments
- Role of NPC and other organizations
- Role of head of institutional head (responsible for M & E) through third party
- Possible involvement of beneficiaries in the M & E process
- Promoting public audit, social audit, public hearing

- Use of electronic medium with the access from PMO and NPC
- Time line of reporting,
- Both stick and carrots

Some issues

- To what extent this has to be detailed??
- Goal: objectives of evaluation – moving from result based & accountability to learning capturing complexity
- Participation: participation of stakeholders from the beginning of the design and execution, non-state actors (I/NGOs, bi/multi-lateral including private sector
- Decentralization: Effective role (as per the constitutions) of sub-national governments,
- Management:
- Standards (utility, feasibility, propriety and accuracy)/ quality assurance – may need to provide further elaboration
- Ethics: CoC for the supply side, then what about demand side?
- Role: role of NPC
- Resources require for M & E: (issues in all but more in local level)
- Process and methods: what approach, how?
- Capacity: not much on this issue

Dr. Ramesh Tuladhar

In the preamble of the M&E Bill (2076), it is focused on result oriented however it is missed thereafter, and mentioned public responsibility, and transparency in different clusters. Therefore, it is not clear if the preamble to be followed or there need to be mentioned clearly in every clauses regarding issues of result oriented, public responsibility, and transparency.

The Bill does not mention anything about the capacity building. The enhancement of M&E capacity of all the senior members of government agencies, departments and projects are very necessary. Until and unless there are clear efforts on capacity building, the Bill will not be practically effective. The M&E capacity should be enhance to province and local level as well.

The bill is addressed in a traditional way and does not speak specifically in different levels, however, it says that every small projects should be evaluated, which seems not to be possible.

All these issues should be strongly suggested.

Yama Nath Giri

In the constitution of Nepal there are two bodies on Monitoring & Evaluation, (i) District Assembly, and (ii) Parliamentarian Committee. The Bill does not speak anything about the parliamentarian committee.

Gunjan Khanal

In the current situation where there are no M&E policies and regulations are available in regards to social science researches, the M&E Bill (2076) will play a positive role. It would be very good if there is something related to Code of Conduct (CoC) is included in the Bill.

If the bill is adopted, the Bill only will not be sufficient as a legal document, and if it is implemented in the federal level, there should be policies, regulations, by-laws and working procedures should be developed following to the bill.

In the context where there has been two and half years of establishment of local governments in Nepal, it is necessary to conduct a mid-term evaluation of all 753 municipalities (local governments).

Dr. Govinda Basnet

When the monitoring of different activities implemented by municipalities and rural municipalities are done self, there can be gap in the shortcoming and weaknesses of the implementer, which can be hidden or unseen. Therefore, the result of the program might not be achieved. The M&E Bill should address these issues for effective management and for effective results of the programs implemented by the province, municipalities and rural municipalities. If the monitoring is also done in independent way, there can a right feedback which can be very helpful in management to achieve the intended result.

Monitoring and Evaluation should be addressed separately in the Bill instead of combining both in one term.

Yamun Yadav

The Bill is more focused on the ongoing monitoring and evaluation, and self-evaluation but does not much focused on third party evaluation, therefore, the bill does not address the objectivity of M&E. There should be separate specifications on self and third party evaluations to make it more useful.

The name of two committees mentioned in the Bill are not so clear, and it seems that the Bill is developed with the perspective of federal government. There should a committee established under the provincial level as well.

Participation of primary stakeholder, beneficiaries is not clearly covered. The reporting mechanism is focused only on upward accountability and does not mentioned about downward accountability.

Dr. Krishna Joshi

As the Bill has already been presented to the parliament, it is not sure if the comments and suggestion we provide will be accepted and incorporated.

The M&E Bill (2076) will be more powerful and effective M&E document in comparison to the available guidelines and other documents related to M&E in Nepal. This is a positive sign and can be one of the good achievements in the field of M&E in Nepal.

Dr. Gana Pati Ojha

The bill has been presented to the upper house of the federal parliament, and the review process by the parliamentarians is still pending. Therefore, there is a hope of incorporating comments and suggestions if that has been provided.

The Bill addresses M&E of public sector interventions only and does not address for those of other private sectors.

As this is a Bill, it will cover only in a general aspect and will not cover in detail. By-laws or guidelines which will follow the Bill, should cover in detail. In this context, two things that we need to look into the current Bill are, (i) to figure out if there is something missing which is really necessary, and (ii) if there is something that can have negative affect.

The topics related to M&E capacity building should have been included in the bill.

Dr. Hari Dhungana

While having the new law on M&E looks like a progress, it does not by itself represent an improvement in the way evaluations will be done well or used better. Evaluations can also be made part of the planning process or policy process -- and seen as a professional step of the planning or policy process.

At the moment we see two government bodies -- the NPC and SWC -- carrying out evaluation without any communication, cross learning or communication with each other. The proposed M&E Bill does not appear to acknowledge SWC's role. How should we understand SWC activities then? What is the value of its findings? Should there not be a coherence within the government institutions how they handle development evaluations?

A major weakness in the formulation of this M&E Bill is insufficient or no mention or appreciation of the level of effort or costs that will be needed for the implementation of the Act. For example, no body currently knows how many evaluations will be needed in a year after the implementation of this Act. How much human resource effort will have to be factored into this effort.

It needs to clarify -- under the framework of a democracy and a federal democracy at that -- who is the "principal" and "agent" in defining the accountability relationship in development relationship. The criteria being used draw on OECD/DAC -- while this is good, it is not so clear how it caters to informing the domestic audience to whom development planners or policy makers will have to be accountable.

It is more crucial that the code of conduct should emphasize integrity on the demand side (in the government institutions) who can then induce and promote integrity in the supply side (that is evaluators).

Thakur Prasad Bhatta

At the closure of the webinar, the chairperson of CoE-Nepal Thakur Prasad Bhatta presented a vote of thanks to the presenter, moderator and all the participants of the webinar.

List of Participants

S.N.	Name
1.	Baldevi Pokhrel
2.	Basan Shrestha
3.	Dilli Raj Joshi
4.	Gana Pati Ojha
5.	Geeta Bhatrai Bastakoti
6.	Govinda Basnet
7.	Gunjan Khanal
8.	Hari Dhungana
9.	Krishna Joshi
10.	Mahendra Laxmi Sharma

11.	Manorama Adhikari
12.	Prabin Chitrakar
13.	Ram Chandra Khanal
14.	Ramesh Tuladhar
15.	Sunaina Sharma Gyawali
16.	Sushila Chatterjee Nepali
17.	Thakur Prasad Bhatta
18.	Uttam Sharma
19.	Yamnath Giri
20.	Yamun Yadav