



**The International Centre for
Evaluation and Development**

Your global evaluation and development partner

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

WHO WE ARE, WHAT WE DO, AND HOW WE DO IT?



ICED BACKGROUND

The International Center for Evaluation and Development (ICED) fills an important gap in the global evaluation architecture. It is the first Africa-based international think-tank that combines research and innovation with extensive practical experience in evaluation for development in the Africa.

With its operating headquarters in Kenya, and with West Africa Regional office in Accra, Ghana, and a range of emerging international alliances and

partnerships, ICED is poised to use and enhance the value of evaluation to contribute to development outcomes and impacts that address the opportunities of today and the future. It focuses specifically on the Global South, with Africa as a significant priority.

ICED uses research as well as critical and evaluative thinking and methods to assess and understand the merit, worth and value of what is being done and achieved; how and why it is working and impacting (or not) over time; and for whom, from whose perspective, at what cost and under what circumstances.

ICED is an international and independent Monitoring and Evaluation think-tank, based in and focused on Africa and led by Africans. It specialises in innovation and research in Monitoring and Evaluation for development that is firmly rooted in leadership in thought and practice. It is managed and

governed by highly experienced, well-connected, and passionate development and Monitoring and Evaluation experts who work in complementary areas. As professionals, we have strong international profiles and solid reputations built on integrity and a focus on excellence. We are knowledgeable about current trends and issues in evaluation, research and development. This enables us to operate effectively at the nexus between evaluation, knowledge translation and development.

We have worldwide networks of competent and technically advanced colleagues, and can involve some of the best people around the world in an effort to advance frontiers, and to reconceptualise and reshape approaches in order to take Monitoring and Evaluation and development into new realms of effectiveness. We draw on the strengths and insights of many highly credible professionals to take the field and practice of Monitoring and Evaluation for development beyond the use of conventional methods and tools.

We are committed to the highest professional and ethical standards with only one purpose in mind: to

support development in Africa in a manner that is consistent with our guiding principles. This commitment has to be shared by our sponsors, partners, associates and other stakeholders.

ICED BELIEVES IN EVALUATION FOR DEVELOPMENT.

Development is essentially about improving the wellbeing of individuals, societies and ecosystems around the world. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, signed in 2015 by 193 member states of the United Nations, confirms that development needs to be attended to by all countries. The UN also designated the year 2015 as the Year of Evaluation, reflecting the explosive growth over the previous decade of the evaluation profession around the world. Evaluation in all its forms is increasingly being recognized as having great potential to improve the way in which development is conceptualized and done. The time of thinking that blueprint or rigid models of development can work is over. Flexible governance and management approaches, informed by useful and timely evaluative evidence, are now essential.

ICED is based in Africa and has it as a

major focus for action in the first few years of its existence. The continent has been developing fast in many places; it has huge untapped potential and still most of the poorest countries and people in the world. But it is vibrant, with abundant natural resources as well as people who are resilient and innovative, and who do much with little when they get the chance and the exposure. Africa's development models

have often not served it well and tended to weaken its potential and its power. It needs new thinking and opportunities to experiment within its own evolving contexts and cultures, drawing on fresh ways of doing and knowing from around the world. Evaluation can be invaluable in supporting such processes.

The founders of ICED have their roots in practical experience gained in many very different parts of the world yet are fully aware of all the theories and practices that have shaped evaluation as profession. The need for ICED was identified by its founders based on their extensive experience in the field of development-related evaluation. Intensive dialogue with numerous leading figures in this field and in aligned disciplines also clarified the

need for the organisation.

ICED has been shaped by six key issues that offer the rationale for its establishment:

- 1) Development practitioners are increasingly aware of the critical role that effective research, monitoring, and evaluation must play in informing and shaping development policies, strategies and initiatives around the world. The past decade has witnessed an impressive increase in the number of governments and professional associations engaging in consequential research and evaluation activities. It has also seen an impressive movement and the need for evidence to action through rigorous research and evaluation initiatives. The time is right from bringing more diverse intellectual resources to bear in ways that will ensure the evaluation profession meets expectations and fulfils its value proposition for development.

- 2) There is a dearth of think tanks and centres of excellence in the Global South that focus exclusively on monitoring and evaluation and that are able to bring significant resources and expertise to bear on nurturing leadership and innovation in evaluation for development.



3) There is an urgent need to rise above the evaluation of individual development projects and programmes, and take on the “big picture” development issues that are often interconnected and come to the fore at national, regional and global scales. There is thus a strong need in the Africa for qualified and independent organisations that can conduct both strategic and innovative evaluations that are context- and culture-sensitive as well as highly relevant to major development challenges in Africa.

4) Countries in the Africa offer a rich diversity of perspectives and experiences that can be tapped by monitoring and evaluation professionals. Modern as well as age-old knowledge and wisdom in Africa need to be harnessed effectively to support the evolution of evaluation theory and practice worldwide.

5) It is widely recognised that the evaluation profession needs to bring to bear on its theory and practice expertise from other disciplines and perspectives from unconventional sources. To do this requires agility and strong professional networks, especially from different professions and disciplines in the currently under-

represented Africa, in order to lead and stay current in a fast-moving world.

6) The monitoring and evaluation profession is becoming a very fashionable field of work worldwide, and as such is attracting people who may lack sufficient skills and insights to do justice to the demands of the profession. Monitoring and Evaluation for development is a specialised profession that demands significant levels of evaluative thinking and ethics, appropriate work experience, and technical expertise far beyond the application of social research methods. Professionals need the ability to understand development challenges in Africa in depth, nuance and sensitivity to culture and context. They should be able to integrate facts and perspectives as well as quantitative and qualitative data and insights, consider the role of values across the evaluative process, apply systems and complexity thinking in designs and analyses, master the evaluative aspects of evaluation, and judge situations and efforts based on evidence, experience and intuition. For the sake of the profession and the contributions it can make to development, more should be done to nurture and draw into the

profession the right level and type of expertise.

ICED recognizes the importance of diversity and context. It respects and works with many cultures around the world, and is highly sensitive to the need to be culturally responsive and embrace the notion of cultural validity.

ICED does not duplicate the efforts of others. Instead, it aims to catalyze and inspire new action. It brings together teams of carefully selected associates from across disciplines, professions and sectors – within and beyond the evaluation profession - to collaborate on time-bound projects within larger ongoing programs. It highlights the work of others, not only its own, and targets influential initiatives in order for its work to ripple out across sectors and professions. Its cross-cutting themes ensure that it stays at, and supports the cutting edge of developments worldwide, while its guiding principles ensure that it stays true to its founding vision.

ICED VALUES

ICED has developed a unique niche and value proposition to ensure its effectiveness as a member of the global community of professional

Monitoring and Evaluation practitioners.

ICED highly values:

- professional excellence on the cutting edge of evaluation
- professional and personal integrity
- relationships and joint contributions
- all relevant voices, especially of those most vulnerable
- the diversity of values, cultures and contexts around the world.

ICED is:

- responsive, agile and catalytic
- independent from undue influence
- accountable to multiple stakeholders
- passionate and committed
- inspired by our vision of the world, and the role that evaluation can play.

ICED STRATEGY

1. We advance research and innovation in Monitoring and Evaluation by highlighting, triggering and catalysing thought and practice leadership in Africa by;
 - a. identifying, forecasting, tracking trends and critical issues in Monitoring and Evaluation for development
 - b. bring people together across disciplinary, cultural, sector,

ideological and other boundaries to trigger and catalyse innovation for Africa

c. conduct theory and field-based research, meta-analysis, meta-Monitoring and Evaluation and synthesis to fill knowledge gaps in Africa

d. ensure effective engagement with influential and important stakeholders.

2. We work with interested policy decision-makers, managers, Monitoring and Evaluation funders and commissioners to test Monitoring and Evaluation innovations in the field, including in cross-cultural contexts and paradigms

3. We provide advice and support to policy and decision makers, managers, Monitoring and Evaluation funders and commissioners, cognisant of context, culture and “big picture” gaps and needs from local to global level.

4. We oversee, advice and/or conduct strategic evaluations where independence, ethical conduct and a high level of technical and political skill are of primary importance

5. We strengthen Monitoring and

Evaluation professional capacity and practices by provide mentoring, education and exposure that - in collaboration with universities and other education and training initiatives - fill gaps in current efforts in Africa

OUR WORKS

ICED's work falls into four main areas:

- a. Evaluation, Research, and Innovation in sustainable development;
- b. M&E System Development and Adaptive Management for Public and Private institutions;
- c. Policy Engagement, Communication, and Convening for Development;
- d. Capacity Strengthening and Professional Development in M&E.

ICED's programs builds on important gaps and strengths in monitoring and evaluation in the Africa. The programs have taken shape through time-bound projects conducted in collaboration with individual associates and organizational partners

A. Evaluation Research and Innovation in Sustainable Development. Development is being framed by both the Sustainable Development Goals. This brings

remarkable new opportunities and new ideological, technical and political challenges to development and its evaluation.

B. Public and Private Institutions M&E System Development and Adaptive Management

C. Policy Engagement, Communication and Convening.

Information and knowledge remain the most important currency in today's economies. Research and synthesising of Evaluation knowledge for development in Africa can be more credible, relevant, useful and impactful.

D. Evaluation Capacity Strengthening and Profession.

The profession and practice of evaluation are still evolving. Experiences and innovations in the Global South, including those based on indigenous contexts, cultures and ways of knowing and doing, offer significant potential to enhance evaluation theory and practice.

HOW WE WORK

1. At the core of ICED's establishment is the belief that Africa now needs more targeted initiatives to encourage and advance thought and practice leadership in the Monitoring and Evaluation profession. ICED's

assumption is that if trends and priorities are well identified; existing expertise and innovations in Africa highlighted and developed hand in hand or integrated with those in the other countries; original thinkers and practitioners encouraged to span disciplinary, sector, geographic, demographic and ideological boundaries; influential, well-resourced and risk-taking actors are brought on board; known and new information and knowledge are integrated, synthesised and well communicated; and energies focused on solving key challenges and sharing solutions, advances in Monitoring and Evaluation will accelerate, with the potential to become catalytic and/or transformational for development in Africa, rather than remaining underrated, too slow and/or incremental.

2. ICED therefore seeks to play a strong role in Monitoring and Evaluation for development from this perspective. We will specifically nurture thought and practice leadership in order to provide a channel for new voices, insights and approaches that can bring new advances and enrich the field of Monitoring and Evaluation worldwide.

3. We identify and track trends and movements globally that affect both development and Monitoring and Evaluation theory and practice.

4. We draw from, and bridge differences wherever appropriate. We thus span boundaries - geographic, demographic, disciplinary, ideological, or simply between stakeholders – and mobilise untapped expertise and unconventional, maverick thinkers in order to advance innovation.

5. We look beyond the Monitoring and Evaluation of projects and programmes to the larger policies, strategies and systems that affect development impact in order to provide lessons, insights and new ways of thinking and doing. ICED wants to take evidence to action in global south development.

6. We link state-of-the-art Monitoring and Evaluation theory with real-world practice. All our initiatives have an innovative aspect, or provide opportunities to innovate.

7. We emphasise the creation of productive relationships between research and innovation in Monitoring and Evaluation and practical application. Thought leadership drives and enables

leadership in practice, and vice versa, and both inform a knowledge base useful for Monitoring and Evaluation and development work. We aim to test new ideas and methodologies in actual evaluations or in the design of M&E systems. In turn, experiences from the field inform new insights and ideas.

8. We therefore do not provide conventional Monitoring and Evaluation consulting services. Instead, we operate in tandem with adventurous agencies and organisations keen to experiment with new ideas and approaches that can advance Monitoring and Evaluation as well as development. We also use our expertise to oversee, advise and conduct independent and challenging strategic evaluations.

9. We do this with the recognition that Monitoring and Evaluation demands a high level of ethics - not in addition to, but as the bedrock for bringing technical and other types of expertise to bear.

10. Over time and in conjunction with others, ICED will develop mentoring and exposure opportunities that are context- and culture-sensitive, and that fill gaps in current training and education efforts in Africa. These

could include

- targeting high level executives and managers working in other arenas who are interested in learning more about evaluation
- enhancing evaluative thinking and the evaluative aspects of Monitoring and Evaluation among Monitoring and Evaluation professionals
- education in context and culture sensitive evaluation, including making curricula more responsive in this aspect
- cementing Monitoring and Evaluation as integral part of management and business education
- understanding Monitoring and Evaluation for journalists
- creating opportunities for research on Monitoring and Evaluation theory and practice by post-masters' and postdoctoral fellows.

11. ICED has an advantage in engaging and communicating in the development, research, monitoring and evaluation arena, as its understanding of influential knowledge translation strategies comes from many years of closely following and evaluating such initiatives.

ICED' FUNDING

ICED is set up as an independent non-profit entity, with a business model

that is based on multiple sources of income and in-kind contributions. We are committed to transparency and independence and we commission and conduct our activities in line with the highest ethical and technical standards, independent of any undue influence. ICED independence provides opportunity to develop, manage and/or implement strategic evaluations, as outlined in the notion of independent democratic evaluation, and our business model shapes our performance, relevance, identity and sustainability.

ICED is proud to accept funding and we depends on grants, impact investing, and on other forms of non-financial support from multiple institutions involved in scholarly work and thought leadership in the theory and practice of Monitoring and Evaluation for development. We partner with those focussed on our priority areas, work that is complemented by contracts to develop and test innovations in the field, synthesise knowledge for development, inform policy and strategy, and advise organisations accordingly.

ICED supports core and general operating cost, direct project cost, and specific research in Monitoring

and Evaluation from a diverse pool of grants and contracts. We do not accept funding that seeks to impose limits or restrictions on ICED's independence in research, findings, conclusions or other products.

The main Business model for ICED areas follows

1. Core and general Operations:

ICED aims to provide, inspire, and support thought and practice leadership in Monitoring and Evaluation in Africa and we seek to cultivate leadership in Africa in conceptualising and practicing Monitoring and Evaluation that can translate into innovations and advances in both theory and practice in support of development. It is rooted in practical realities and experiences across cultures and contexts.

As first Evaluation Think Tank based in Africa and led by Africans that focuses explicitly on research and innovation in Monitoring and Evaluation for development, ICED seeks core support to create or improve the organizational settings and to build and develop its internal capacity to be able to deliver the objectives and impacts on Monitoring and Evaluation for development. The focus of ICED core funding is organizational

development. Core funding will support ICED to create or improve the organizational settings of its development, its deliverables, and its impact on the policy and development program environment

ICED core funds will be institutional support grants to develop its team competency and style of working. Core and institutional support grants will enable ICED to go through the process of establishing and improving its capacity in its priority areas of work. It will cover leadership, management and personal cost needed to design and test its model of advancing research and innovation in Monitoring and Evaluation by highlighting, triggering and catalysing thought and practice leadership in Africa.

2. Direct Project and Research in Evaluation: ICED undertakes research in Monitoring and Evaluation for development activities that contribute to better informed development policy and programs and enhanced development policy and programs effectiveness with the aim to improve the dignity and wellbeing of individual, society and ecosystems. To achieve this goal ICED seeks project and research in Monitoring and Evaluation funding to undertake initiatives that support

and promote such activities.

ICED works with development agencies, institutions, and partners on specific projects and research activities that contribute to innovation and strategy in Monitoring and Evaluation for development in Africa. ICED links project and research cost to available donors and sponsors and demonstrates to donors that their funding is being used for its intended purposes. These funding include both direct cost and indirect cost elements that cover the full cost of a research project. ICED ensures the technical qualities that make it competitive in the global south and it demonstrates and shows an understanding of its costs and control of and accountability of its use of donor funding. ICED seeks to partner with donor agencies to design specific projects and research agendas with specific deliverables that will achieve mutual impact and performance in terms of objectives of the specific project.

PARTNERSHIP

ICED works on short and long-term projects and research activities and seeks to commit dedicated resources to initiatives

COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVES WITH PARTNERS AND AFFILIATES:

ICED continuously seeks and works with partners and affiliates to promote Monitoring and Evaluation in development theory and practices. The extensive experience, profiles, and connections of its founders will enable ICED to draw expertise from a network of mutually beneficial partnerships, alliances and associates mobilised from within and outside the Monitoring and Evaluation arena, and all carefully selected for their innovative thinking, deep insights, and mastery of relevant fields. ICED will do joint and collaborative project and research design, development, and implementation strategies with its partners and affiliates in the areas of research in evaluation, advocacy, and communication, public engagements and consultations.

ICED strategies call for collaboration and, in its effort, to use advance research and innovation in Monitoring and Evaluation to highlight, trigger and catalyse thought and practice leadership in Africa, the role of partners and affiliates in the area of Monitoring and Evaluation and other professions is very crucial



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The International Centre for Evaluation and Development
P.O. Box SK 878, Premier Towers, Sakumono Broadway, Tema
PO Box 1838, Sarit Centre 00606, Nairobi, Kenya | Tel: +254 714 411 671
9524 Jeanne CT, Laurel, MD 20723, USA | Tel: +1 301 648 3417
www.iced-eval.org