FRAMEWORK REPORT

Six Transformative African Rooted Evaluation Frameworks and Tools

By

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Abbreviations

AfrEA	African Evaluation Association
COLABEV	Community Language Based Evaluation Framework
EPIO	Engagement, Participation, Involvement, and Ownership Framework
IKS	Indigenous Knowledge System
PAIEC	Pan African Indigenous Evaluation Consortium
PEPST	People Environment, Place, Space and Time Framework

Executive Summary

Introduction

There is a call to strengthen African-led development by empowering the communities, practitioners, and policymakers to design, monitor, and evaluate projects in ways that promote community participation, ownership, and sustainability of projects. At the global level, the tools should centre African voices in evaluation theory and practice, challenging dominant Western worldviews and making Africa a contributor to global knowledge production. In response to the call, the Mastercard Foundation funded the Pan-African Indigenous Evaluation Consortium (PAIEC), a team consisting of five entities led by Bagele Chilisa of the University of Botswana to develop evaluation frameworks, tools, and guidelines that are rooted in African world views, philosophies, values and realities of the African communities. Five innovative and transformative evaluation frameworks were developed. What follows is a brief description of each framework.

CULTURAL EMPOWERMENT TOOL ("NGWANAKE")

This is a youth/community cultural empowerment tool that combines the use of technology and cultural knowledge and skills in the evaluation of interventions. Many development and evaluation projects in Africa continue to use methods of project design and evaluation that do not fit local cultures or ways of life. This leads to exclusion and marginalization of youths and local communities in evaluation practice resulting in the projects not being relevant or meeting their needs and aspirations.

The key insight of the framework is cultural empowerment, leveraging on the integration of culture and technology which makes evaluation more local, more meaningful, and easier to sustain. The framework offers a new way to do evaluation that combines African culture, youth energy, and technology through **Cultural Integration, Cultural Innovation and Autonomy (Jitegemee):**

- **Cultural Integration:** This stage helps youth and communities incorporate their culture into project planning and evaluation.
- **Cultural Innovation:** This incorporates the integrations of culture and technology which promote creativity in 'projects design and evaluation practice.
- **Autonomy (Jitegemee):** This stage focuses on independence and pride. Communities use their culture to share success stories—through songs, proverbs, or videos—and keep improving their work. It builds self- reliance and ownership of results.

This framework helps turn evaluations into tools for empowerment—not just for measurement. It shows that when people's culture and technology work together, the results are stronger and longer-lasting. When young people and communities integrate their own culture and technology in evaluation, they become active players in their own development. The Cultural empowerment framework promotes Intergenerational learning through innovation, inclusion and ownership.

How to promote the NGWANAKE Framework

1. **Include cultural empowerment part of all developmental programs**: Governments and NGOs should include the Ngwanake Framework in their project designs and evaluations.
2. **Train and support youth**: Give young people the skills and resources to lead evaluations using both culture and technology.
3. **Encourage community innovation**: Support projects that blend local traditions with new ideas.
4. **Protect Indigenous knowledge**: Ensure communities receive recognition and benefits when they share their cultural knowledge.
5. **Work together**: Build strong partnerships between communities, government, schools, and funders to spread this approach.

PEOPLE, ENVIRONMENT, PLACE, SPACE AND TIME CONTEXT RESPONSIVE FRAMEWORK

The PEPST Context Responsive framework is an African-rooted, people-centred and context-centred evaluation tool that promotes a holistic approach to contextualizing project planning and evaluation, moving evaluation towards systems thinking and building futures. Context is the interconnectedness and relationship of people with one another and with the environment. The value of collective responsibility and co-creation of knowledge through interactions with one another in a spiritual world is central to the meaning of context. The PEPST Framework recognises that effective evaluation must reflect the dynamic relationships between people, their environment, cultural spaces, and time. It also fosters multi-stakeholder collaboration at every stage—planning, implementation, and impact evaluation through adaptive learning cycles, community leadership, and equitable participation. It reorients evaluation toward relationships, change of mindsets, environmental justice, and collective well-being rather than compliance

It has five elements to guide the planning and evaluation process, namely, People, the Environment, Place, Space, and Time. The interconnectedness of these five elements— people, place, environment, space, and time underscores the importance of adopting a holistic context-responsive planning and evaluation practice.

People: Derived from the Ubuntu principle of relationality, it refers to the involvement, engagement and collective planning of the project by stakeholders—community leaders, youth, women, and local authorities with an emphasis on nurturing and building strong positive relationships and maintaining connections based on respect to foster inclusivity and mindset change. Used to make judgments on community participation and resultant expected outcomes.

Environment: Evaluations must consider government policies, socio-cultural practices, gender norms, and ecological connections and how they impact implementation, outcome and care for the environment. Indigenous practices and respect for cultural norms strengthen project outcomes.

Place and Space: Communities attribute spiritual and cultural value to specific lands, rivers, and forests, which must inform project design and evaluation. Sacred and communal spaces are key to ensuring projects are contextually and culturally appropriate.

Time: Time is cyclical, linking past, present, and future. Evaluation should capture ongoing adaptation, reflection, and co-creation of futures envisioned by communities rather than fixed project endpoints. Success is measured in relational and generational continuity, not only in outputs. Enables integration of indigenous and expert knowledge to inform policy and practice.

How to promote PEPST

- Embed PEPST in National Evaluation Policies and M&E Frameworks
- Align with AfrEA principles, Agenda 2063, and the SDGs to harmonise African evaluation standards
- Invest in capacity building for indigenous and context-responsive evaluation practitioners
- Enhance policy relevance and evaluation legitimacy
- Strengthen community ownership and learning

THE PAMOJA SAFARINI THEORY OF PRACTICE

The PSPT “Pamoja Safarini” is a Swahili phrase meaning “together on the journey, and that's exactly what this model is: a journey, not a destination. It's an indigenous Theory of Change that integrates African worldviews. The PSTP framework introduces six interconnected principles that guide programme design, implementation, and evaluation across the full project cycle as follows:

Sankofa: a reflexive process that advocates for consulting and borrowing from Africa's rich historical past to shape the current and foretell the future. It emphasises reflexivity and is cyclical. **Njiani:** shifts from linear practices and focuses on the journey, not just the results.

Holistic Outlook: Recognises well-being as spiritual, ecological, and relational. Outcomes include family cohesion, cultural vitality, and land stewardship.

Dhani: Encourages evaluators and policymakers to question external assumptions and centre local knowledge. Supports epistemic justice.

Maono: Fosters intergenerational visioning and ensures that programme goals reflect community aspirations and are rooted in ancestral legacies.

Visual Depiction: Advocates for culturally relevant visuals, including images and symbolic interactionism, etc.

How to Promote PSTP

1. **Institutionalise Culturally Responsive Evaluation Standards**: Adopt PSTP principles into national and regional M&E frameworks to ensure that monitoring and evaluation processes respect local knowledge systems and are grounded in community realities.
2. **Engage Traditional Leaders and Youth Early**: Include elders, spiritual leaders, and youth voices in programme initiation, design, and reflection sessions. This ensures community ownership and enhances sustainability.
3. **Redefine Success Beyond Economic Metrics**: Funders and implementers should allow for flexible indicators such as spiritual harmony, cultural revitalisation, and ecological balance, alongside income or employment targets.

4. **Invest in Participatory Communication Tools**: Support the development of participatory visual methods such as storyboards, oral histories, and community theatre. These methods improve understanding, reflection, and feedback.
5. **Support Indigenous Evaluators and Institutions:** Develop and finance African-led monitoring and evaluation institutions that can mentor local practitioners in culturally grounded methodologies and generate context-relevant evidence.

ENGAGEMENT PARTICIPATION INVOLVEMENT AND OWNERSHIP (EPIO)

Many evaluation frameworks imported from the Global North fail to capture the relational and communal essence of planning and managing projects that are meant for African societies.
The Engagement, Participation, Involvement and Ownership (EPIO) tool serves as a planning and management framework that ensures communities are meaningfully engaged at every stage of project design and implementation. It is an African-rooted, people-centred, Ubuntu-guided model for participatory evaluation. It encourages evaluators to view communities not as subjects of evaluation, but as co-owners and co-narrators of their development stories. EPIO has four dimensions. It promotes community collective ownership of projects, enabling community-driven decision-making and long-term project impact grounded in Ubuntu values. It brings a new approach to planning, managing, and evaluating projects that leads to people-centred solutions, engagement, participation, involvement, and ownership. Its application, which nurtures cultural roundedness and sustained process development, is key in enhancing project sustainability.
Situated within the Ubuntu philosophy and the Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS), EPIO is designed and developed for funders and policy makers to close this gap.

The EPIO framework offers a thinking lens and an operational guide, which introduces four interconnected pillars that guide programme design, implementation, and evaluation across the full project cycle:

- The value of pre-engagement with the community to understand its social, cultural and historical context.
- Creates inclusive spaces for dialogue and knowledge exchange amongst all stake holders.
- Demonstrates the need for the involvement of community support structures.
- Ownership of decisions and their implementation as critical marker of collective success.

THE COMMUNITY LANGUAGE-BASED EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

What is at stake?

The inadequate understanding and recognition of African values in the project cycle leads to low participation and commitment of beneficiaries, ultimately leading to low project success. The Community Language Based Evaluation Framework (CoLABEV) is a tool for conducting Made in Africa Evaluation in African communities using community language including proverbs, songs, idioms, storytelling, folktales, myths and taboos while observing African cultural values and practices. Development projects and evaluations that incorporate African values from community languages address power asymmetries among beneficiaries and enhance inclusiveness and

participation for greater ownership, impact and sustainability of interventions. It offers opportunity for inclusiveness of marginalized and vulnerable groups, more especially youth and women.

KEY INSIGHTS FROM THE COMMUNITY LANGUAGE BASED EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

- Evaluators can undertake project evaluation using evaluative wisdom from community languages at four stages: Phase I: Project Initiation and Design; Phase 2: Project Implementation; Phase 3: Project Evaluation (Data Collection and Analysis); and Phase 4: Project Evaluation Reporting and Communication.
- Application of the framework is through a step-by-step protocol with key evaluation questions for each of the four phases that solicit the community languages and the wisdom embedded in them.
- Community languages encourage culturally specific values on participation, commitment, unity and respect during the various stages of the project cycle.

What does the framework offer?

1. Gives convening space to the targeted beneficiaries, project designers and implementers and funders to discuss the applicable proverbs and other community languages in their community that can shape the project intended purpose, projected outcomes and indicators of success.
2. Ownership of projects is fostered in projects when evaluation is culturally sensitive
3. The framework improves relevance and impact of the project interventions through informing the design, implementation, monitoring and communication of evaluation findings.
4. The tool advocates for voice, participation, inclusiveness, unity, relations, respect, connectedness and wellness in interventions.
5. The solicitation of community languages and the wisdom embedded at each stage of the project cycle encourages more participation and relation building among young people and women.

How to Promote the Tool

1. National Governments, Development Partners, Evaluation Stakeholders and Funders should:
   - Promote and support awareness creation and institutionalization of the Community Language Evaluation Framework in policy, legal frameworks and financing.
   - Build capacity to use Community Language Evaluation Framework in training, education and evaluation systems.

TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION IN AFRICAN ROOTED EVALUATION FRAMEWORKS

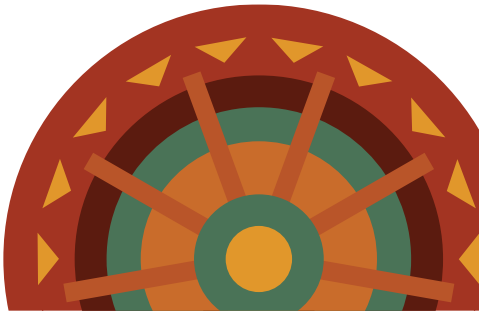
The integration of technology in African-rooted Evaluation can strengthen the recognition of indigenous systems, cultural expression, oral traditions, symbols, and collective meaning-making in African-rooted evaluation, by enhancing how such knowledge is gathered, preserved, interpreted and shared. This guideline outlines how digital tools can be integrated in a way that respects context, mitigates digital exclusion, and protects cultural integrity while improving the quality, credibility and reach of evaluation processes.

Key Concepts

1. **African rooted evidence:** Knowledge expressed through proverbs, storytelling, symbols, performance, drawings, community dialogue and lived experience.
2. **Context-Responsive Technology:** Technology selected based on connectivity realities, language needs, cultural appropriateness and user capability.
3. **Offline-First Design:** Prioritising tools that function without internet access, with later synchronisation.
4. **Multimodal Data:** Combining voice, video, photographs, text and symbolic representation as valid evidence forms.
5. **Ethical Digital Practice:** Informed consent, control over representation, safeguarding of cultural knowledge and mitigation of misuse or misinterpretation.
6. **Facilitated Sense-Making:** Technology supports, but does not replace, the relational and dialogical nature of African-rooted evaluation.

Steps to integrating technology across the project cycle

- **Stage 1: Planning and Design –** establish culturally grounded, technologically feasible evaluation design.
- **Stage 2: Community Entry and Relationship Building –** integrating tech tools to establish trust and cultural grounding of the process.
- **Stage 3: Data Collection –** collect culturally valid, multimodal data using relevant data collection platforms and social media.
- **Stage 4: Facilitation and Collective Meaning-Making –** enable culturally grounded dialogue and reflection using tech-generated prompts and facilitation tools.
- **Stage 5: Analysis and Synthesis –** transform raw cultural data into credible evaluative findings with AI transcription, translation and synthesis tools.
- **Stage 6: Communication and Knowledge –** share knowledge to communities and share findings ethically in creative and visual formats.



1. Introduction

There is a call to strengthen African-led development by empowering the communities, practitioners, and policymakers to design, monitor, and evaluate projects in ways that promote community participation, ownership, and sustainability of projects. At the global level, the evaluation tools should centre African voices in evaluation theory and practice, challenging dominant Western worldviews and making Africa a contributor to global knowledge production.

In response to the call, the Mastercard Foundation contracted the University of Botswana, led by Professor Bagele Chilisa, to develop evaluation frameworks, tools, and guidelines that are more relevant to Africa. The University of Botswana in partnership with the University of Ghana, Africa Nazarene University, African Evaluation Association (AfrEA), Tiyimele Consultants and Data Innovators formed the Pan African Indigenous Evaluation Consortium (PAIEC) to conduct the study.

The study started with a systematic review to identify trends, leading thinkers, implementers and funders in indigenous evaluation, indigenous knowledge systems and how African ways of perceiving reality, knowledge and values inform evaluation. In addition, a sense-maker narrative survey was conducted to establish how evaluation practitioners, implementers, and academics perceive African ways of knowing, reality, and values, and how they apply the perspectives in evaluation practice. Hundred and one stories were collected from 25 countries across Africa.

Findings from the systematic review and the sense maker narrative survey informed ideation of African-rooted evaluation frameworks. The ideas were further developed at a three-day co-creation, co-design workshop facilitated by GRID Impact, a thinking design entity. The workshop was attended by 48 participants, consisting of African think tanks, evaluation experts from across the globe, funders and commissioners, Government representatives, development partners, leading implementers of African rooted evaluation, graduate students, University academics and civil society. Five frameworks here presented were designed and reviewed for content validity by one of the leading scholars in research and evaluation. Following the review, the frameworks were revised and pilot-tested in Malawi, Zambia and Uganda for applicability to evaluation, usability and their value add.

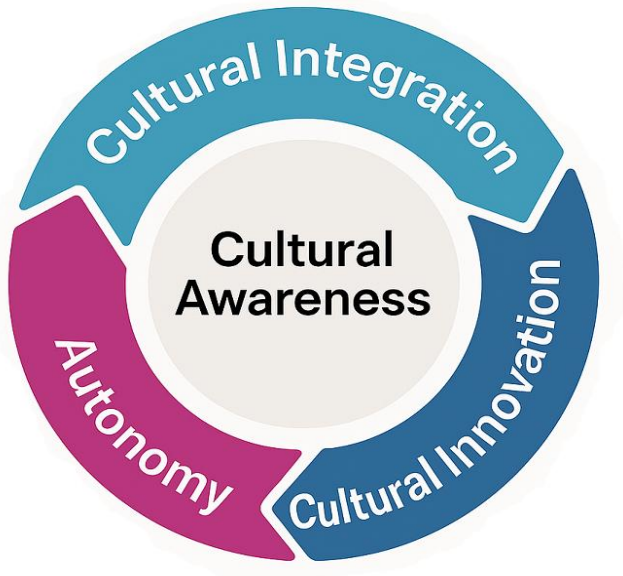
In this handbook, we present the five co-created frameworks namely: 1) Ngwanake Cultural Empowerment Framework; 2) People Environment, Place, Space and Time (PEPST) Framework; 3) Pamoja Safarini Theory of Practice Framework; 4) Engagement, Participation, Involvement and Ownership (EPIO) Framework; 5) Community Language Based Evaluation Framework (CoLABEV); and 6) Tech-integration in MAE Framework. In addition, the approach to integration of technology across these frameworks is also presented.

2. Cultural Empowerment Framework (Ngwanake)

Introduction

The philosophy of Ngwanake emanates from the systematic review findings that Stated that youths were not active on utilizing cultural evaluations approaches during their design thinking and implementation of projects, where we noted lack of cultural integration. The tool endeavours to encourage the youth to participate in evaluations with its uniqueness grounded on empowerment emphases, inculcating African culture in the context of interconnectedness; intracultural relationships; thus, fostering overall cultural empowerment on Evaluation practices. The original *Ngwanake*[i] empowerment framework developed during the co-creation workshops was suggested as a framework suitable for empowering youth to actively participate in the evaluation practice. The initial constructs of the framework were Sensitisation, Scaffolding, and Execution. After the pilot exercise, the framework constructs were modified to Cultural Integration, Cultural Innovation and Autonomy **(Figure 1)**.

Figure 1: Ngwanake Framework Constructs



Rationale

The rationale of the Ngwanake Cultural Empowerment Framework is to ensure that there is youth/community capacitation in combining the use of technology and cultural knowledge and skills in the evaluation of interventions.

Contribution to the Field

1. Emphasize the inclusion of cultural practise and the use of available technology to engage and encourage the youth and the community in evaluation.
2. Promotes long-term impact by integrating cultural practices and technology in evaluation.
3. Strengthens youth and community resilience and self-reliance through empowerment.

Application of the Ngwanake empowerment framework

Cultural Integration

This construct acknowledges that communities are aware of their culture, however, it empowers and sensitizes them to bring in their cultural knowledge, values and practices in the evaluation initiation and planning domain. In the Ngwanake empowerment framework, young people are empowered to integrate their cultural practices, knowledge and values with technology in the evaluation process.



Example, empowering the youth to think of an intervention that integrates their culture with the assistance of commonly available technology, like via a social media discussion forum (WhatsApp, Facebook and TikTok).

Cultural innovation

This construct empowers the youth to bring in their cultural practices in the co-designing, co-implementing and co-monitoring and evaluation of the intervention. The construct involves adaptation of culturally relevant interventions and the evaluation of those interventions by leveraging on technology that is commonly used in the community.



Example, the empowerment of the youth to apply cultural methods and tools with the assistance of commonly used available technology to co-implement and co-monitor the intervention.

Autonomy-Jitegemee



The youth is empowered to value their cultural practices and apply them in the maintenance and improvement of their intervention's desired outcomes and value addition. This is to foster the spirit of resourcefulness, autonomy and self-reliance in the youth that they and their communities will ultimately own and take pride in projects. The youth use technology in sustaining the interventions

Example, dissemination of the intervention successes using cultural proverbs or songs via social media to foster community ownership.

Assessment guidelines – How to use the tool

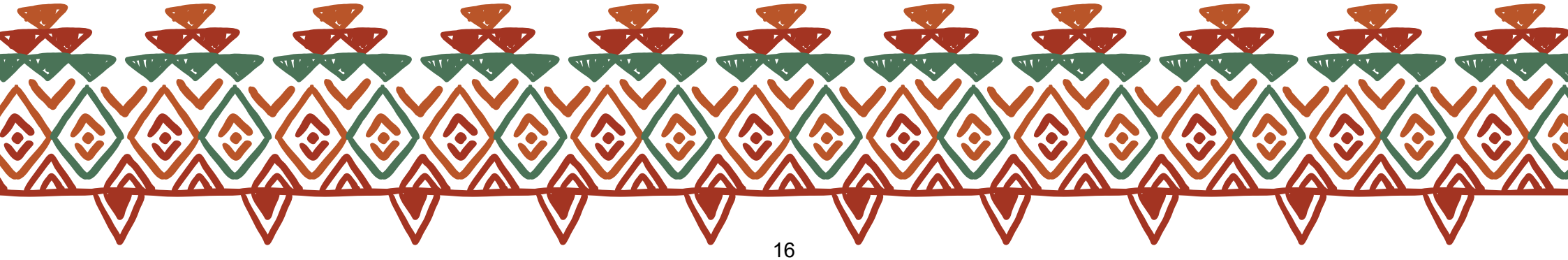
This tool can be used to guide a project from the design phase to evaluation phase along value chains for diverse interventions. It incorporates Afro-centric Intergeneration knowledge dynamics in the word of work.

Table 1: Operationalizing Ngwanake Cultural empowerment evaluation tool

Construct	Project/Evaluation Phase	Indicators	Example Questions
Cultural Integration	Inception, and Planning	Knowledge Attitude change Practice Behaviour	Who initiated the project? At what phases of the project was the Youth/ community involved on the problem targeted for intervention and What were the roles of the community members? How much of local knowledge inform the ways the interventions are conceptualised (you want to capture how voice asymmetries and power dynamics was addressed through cultural-values consideration and practice) Did the community help identify the resources needed for the project and were the resources chosen based on the community's input? Were there strategies to facilitate communication, engagement, and relationship building among stakeholders? Were there strategies to address the change of mindsets where stakeholders have different perspectives?
Cultural innovation	Design, Implementation, and Monitoring	Inputs, Local creativity on Features, features, novel initiatives and processes generated, during design strategies, utilization of locally available materials	Were the solutions created based on the community's cultural values or practices? How was cultural knowledge demonstrated in co creativity and value addition along value and supply chains? How did they gain the novel cultural knowledge and how is it documented? Did the team work well to match community needs and cultural practices with the project goals? Were the community's long-term goals and traditions included in the project?

Construct	Project/Evaluation Phase	Indicators	Example Questions
			How was the community's voice considered in the process? Did the project use Indigenous knowledge and skills effectively? Were local knowledge and assets valued and included in the project? Did the team create monitoring tools based on African traditions or community practices? How was cultural knowledge explored from the knowledge holders? Do the tools capture the community's holistic understanding of success, such as spiritual, social, and relational well-being, beyond just material outcomes? Were community members actively involved in the co-creation or adaptation of the Products innovated culturally? How were the perspectives of different groups (elders, youth, women, marginalized individuals) incorporated into innovation?
Jitegemee - Autonomy	Output and Outcomes, Value-add, Impact, and Sustainability	Products By-products, Tech application, targeted financial initiatives, Branding logos, Documented collaboration agreements	Is there demonstrable or visible evidence of the integration of local culture [values; language; traditions; material; etc] in the data collection and data analysis of the project? How has the project ensured the continuity of benefits after its completion? What strategies have been implemented to transfer ownership and responsibility to the community? How is the rich indigenous knowledge to inter- generations (; you will be testing Technology- social media, radio, etc)? What aspects of the outcome of the project demonstrates community ownership? What cultural aspects are incorporated in the marketing and branding of the project outcomes?

Construct	Project/Evaluation Phase	Indicators	Example Questions
			What cultural aspects were incorporated in the project branding, marketing and distribution of the final project output? Were tools like songs, storytelling, or observations used for monitoring? Were the evaluation tools based on African or local traditions? Did the community participate in using tools like songs, poems, or stories to evaluate the project? How well did the tools connect with the community's culture and practices? What indigenous tools were used to collect data?



Lessons Learnt using Ngwanake cultural Empowerment Framework

- The adoptability of Ngwanake cultural Empowerment Framework during projects design and implementation reveals Intergenerational strategies from exclusionary practices to inclusive, localized solutions ensuring no one is left behind; the tools enables projects implementers and Funders to the address power dynamics within the communities that affect participation and decision-making which includes Mechanisms that seek to ensure inclusion of marginalized groups, such as young mothers and people with disabilities (PWDs).
- The usability of Ngwanake Cultural Empowerment framework during the implementation can easily foster Societal Problem solving through local solutions for Global Impact; appreciation of Cultural innovate practices revolved along utilization of community science towards the Creation of ownership strategies on African indigenous knowledge in business, products thus leading to branding and patenting to comply with legal forces; thus, creating authentic homegrown products for global Markets.
- Utilization of Ngwanake Cultural framework as an evaluative tool would thrush out Labour Generative and job creation outcomes through cultural innovations across value chains.
- Unveils legitimate concerns around intellectual property rights. Communities may be hesitant to share their knowledge without clear assurances of recognition, protection, and equitable benefit-sharing. This caution is well-founded, as there have been instances of exploitation and misappropriation of indigenous knowledge by external entities.

Key Value-Add on usability of Ngwanake Cultural empowerment Framework compared to other frameworks

- Change of mind set; the tool is Youth -Centric with practical integration of technology depicted by appreciation of innovative cultural science in production, improving productivity, preservation and value addition of products.
- Identification of Cultural Bias and aspect of equity; the tool is community-centric with a high affinity to community science and integration of technology.
- The tool encompasses Intergenerational strategies from exclusionary practices to inclusive, localized solutions ensuring no one is left behind; address power dynamics and voice asymmetries within the communities that affect participation and decision-making.
- The tool empowers the youth and community towards labour generative strategies and job creation through cultural innovations.

3. People, Environment, Place, Space and Time Framework

Introduction

The use of Evaluation frameworks and tools that were developed from the global North without paying attention to the context, culture, values, historical experiences and African knowledge systems has led to evaluation findings that proclaim success while on the ground there is minimal success. The trend can be explained by the marginalisation and exclusion of world views, philosophies and paradigms from the global South in the production of evaluation planning and practice in preference for trial and tested frameworks and tools from the Global North. In addition, minimal participation of communities in designing their development projects is contributing to unsustainable development projects. The African Evaluation Association has called for the integration of African world views, philosophies and indigenous knowledge in evaluation theory and practice to make evaluation responsive to the context, culture, needs and priorities of the communities.

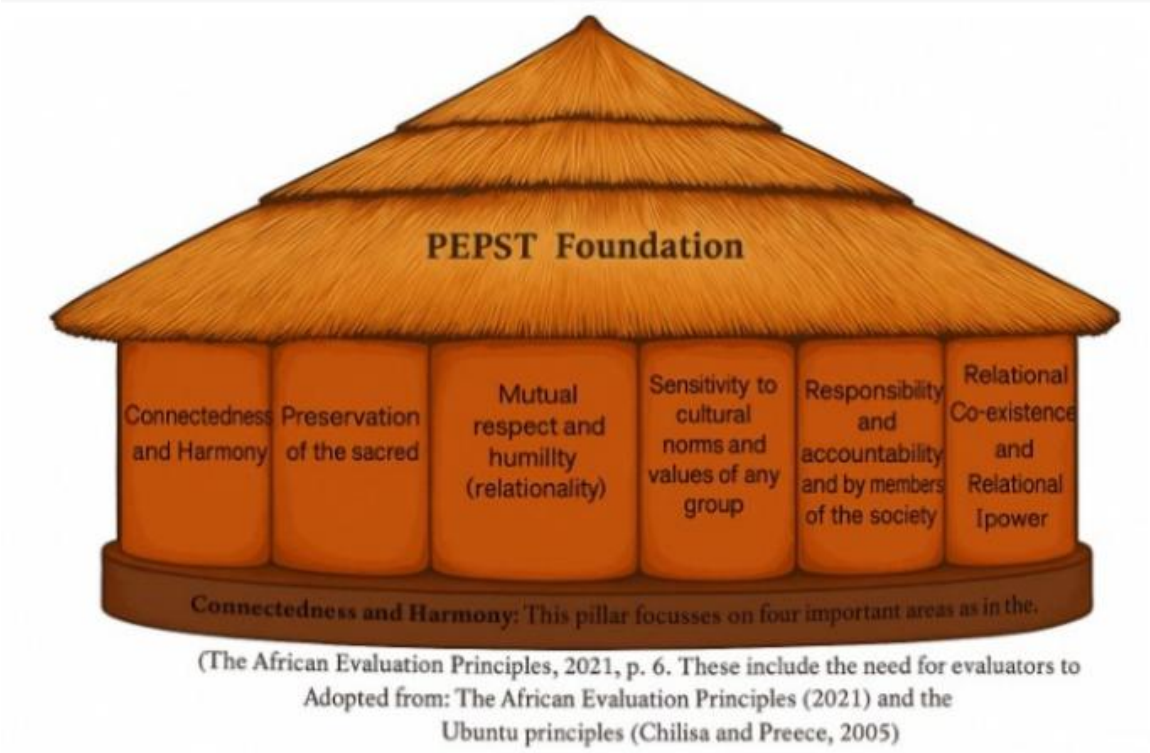
A number of African indigenous world views have been articulated for example, a postcolonial indigenous paradigm (Chilisa 2011), the Afrocentric Paradigm (Asante 1990), Afrikana Centred world view Caroll (2008). One common thread in these paradigms is the recognition of the central role played by the Ubuntu philosophy in informing theory and practice in research and evaluation. Ubuntu recognizes the peoples' connection with each other and with the environment, the importance of relationships and the interdependence and co-existence of people with nature in a spiritual world. This perspective is in line with systems thinking. The PEPST is a holistic view of how the people, environment, place space and time are all part of a system that explain how context matters in evaluation. The framework addresses the need for the recognition of relational co-existence and relational power, as well as the importance of a holistic approach to context and relationship building grounded in indigenous languages, histories, metaphors, philosophies, and the spiritual world throughout the planning and evaluation process. The framework enables evaluators to explore interconnections between communities' experiences with their environment, the sacred and practical aspect of evaluation process, and to recognize that knowledge is not an individual construction and cognitive achievement but rather a collective output constructed through interactions of people with each other and with their environment.

What is the PEPST Context Responsive Framework

The PEPST Context Responsive framework is an African-rooted, people centred and context-centred evaluation tool that promotes a holistic approach to contextualizing project planning and evaluation, moving evaluation towards systems thinking and building futures. Context is the interconnectedness and relationship of people with one another and with the environment. The value of collective responsibility and co-creation of knowledge through interactions with one another in a spiritual world is central to the meaning of context. Spirituality refers to the worldview that the living and the non-living, that is, the human beings and all nature, are related. The environment, that is, the stars, mountains, forests, rivers, etc, are alive; they can see, feel, and communicate not with words but with signs. Thus, farmers can read signs of the environment to predict rainfall. The people, therefore, must respect and nurture the environment. From this worldview, is derived the concept of environmental justice. and environmental responsibility.

The framework is grounded on: 1) Connectedness and Harmony, 2) Preservation of the sacred, 3) Mutual respect and humility (relationality,4) Sensitivity to cultural norms and values of any group, 5) Responsibility and accountability to and by members of the society and 6) Relational coexistence. The People, Environment, Place Space, and Time are a system of relationships that cannot be isolated from one another. The framework offers an integrated approach to evaluation that requires understanding how projects operate within a larger system of people who have a relationship with each other and the environment, and exist in a complex social, cultural, and political context. Figure 1 shows the PEPST foundation.

Figure 1: PEPST Foundation

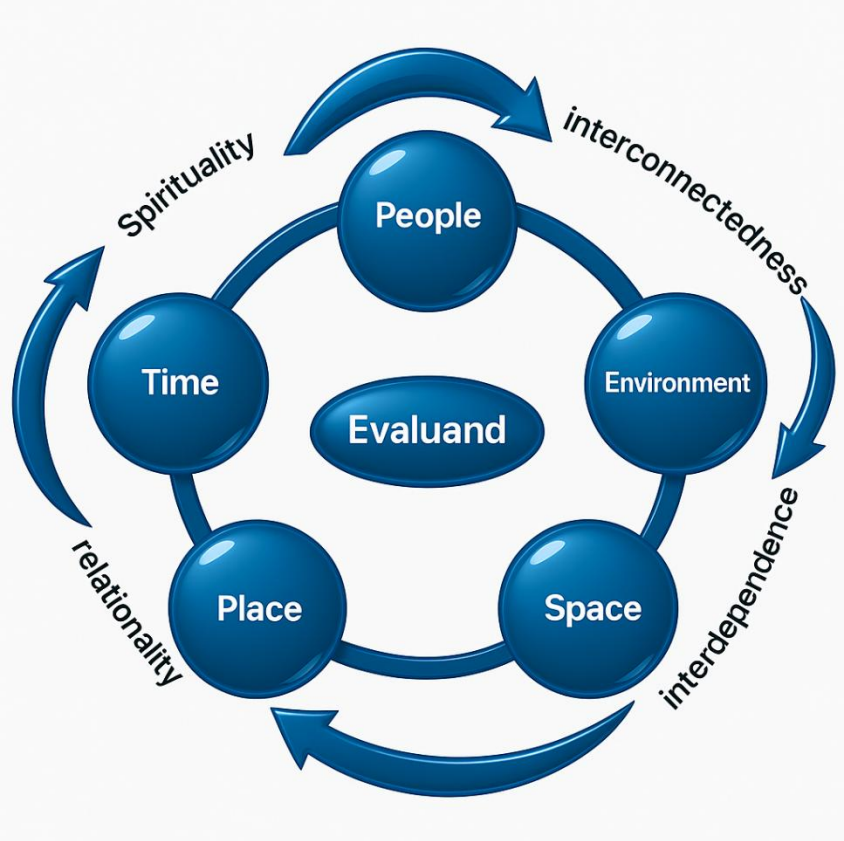


(The African Evaluation Principles, 2021, p. 6. These include the need for evaluators to
Adopted from: The African Evaluation Principles (2021) and the
Ubuntu principles (Chilisa and Preece, 2005)

In addition, the framework invites evaluators to value, revitalize and restore the history and culture of communities, and listen and learn how communities define success and measure it. Communities and evaluators document the uniqueness of indigenous research and evaluation tools and frameworks, indigenous local knowledge, and the importance of using them in evaluations they conduct. It allows the broadening of the literature base, to include the largely unwritten texts of the formerly colonized and historically disadvantaged people so that no knowledge is left behind that can contribute to the completeness of research and evaluation inquiry. The framework aids in framing evaluation intended goal and objectives, evaluation criteria, questions and processes that reflect the development contexts, priorities community needs including alignment with Agenda 2063 of the African Union which requires community participation and ownership of development projects to enable their sustainability. It prioritizes relationship building and respect for others that include the human and non-human. The five elements, **People, the Environment, Place, Space, and Time**, guide

the planning and evaluation process. The interconnectedness of these five elements— people, place, environment, space, and time underscores the importance of adopting a holistic context-first systems approach to planning and evaluation practice. Figure 2 illustrates the elements under the influence of an interconnectedness, interdependent, relational and spiritual world.

Figure 2: An Interconnected, Interdependent, Relational, and Spiritual Context



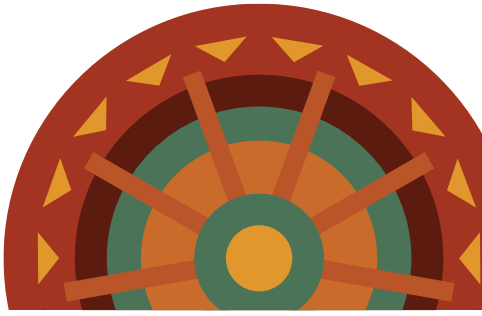
Contribution to the Field

The PEPST Context Responsive framework is a departure from evaluation practice that focuses on time-bound, predetermined objectives as the main measures of success. The framework alludes that success of the project depends to some extent on how the project implementers work with communities to 1) continuously adapt projects, 2) integrate local indigenous knowledge with expert science knowledge, 3) respond to specific places, and communities, thus responding to local environments and cultural practice and 4) adopts systems thinking where context is the interconnectedness of people, the environment, place space and time and how that impact on projects.

The tool makes the adaptation and integration of local indigenous knowledge in a project that is part of a larger system, an important contributor to the success of the project to measure. The tool shifts community participation from only extracting information from them to valorising and revitalizing indigenous local knowledge that contributes to project success and sustainability. The assumption is that the success of the project depends to some extent on how the project implementers work with communities to continuously adapt projects and integrate local indigenous knowledge within a larger system of social and cultural, political and environmental relationships.

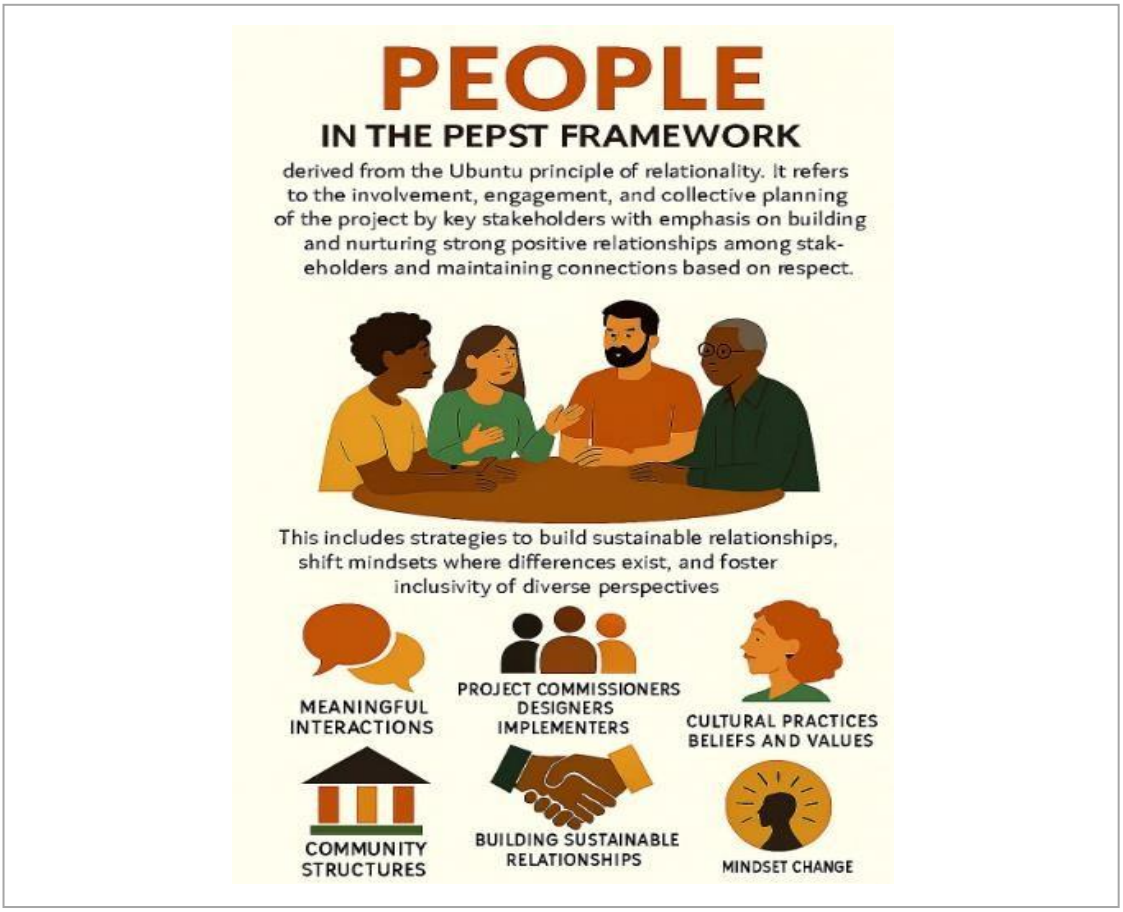
It is also assumed that, in order to bring about transformative change, evaluation should include measurement of 1) strategies for changing mindsets, 2) building relationships, 3) community adaptive and innovative strategies, 4) addressing power asymmetries, and 5) envisioning the future. This process is critical for people-centred solutions to societal challenges. The process contributes to shifting mindsets, strengthening relationships, incorporating community strength, resilience, and innovativeness, redressing power imbalances, and co-imagining the future. The process contributes towards a holistic judgement of how the project worked and how it can be improved, given the context within which it is implemented.

The PEPST tool creates space for evaluators to valorise African indigenous knowledge and to create pathways that promote the integration of knowledge systems. The tool if applied, has the ability to bring all stakeholders, such as the target population, community leaders, government officials, implementers, and funders, together to collaboratively co-create, conceptualize and define the intended purpose of an intervention or project within a context of **the interconnectedness of people with the environment, place, space and time**. This includes jointly co-creating the project theory of change and indicators of success. Using the PEPST framework ensures that projects are contextualised, transformative, relevant, and culturally responsive to the needs and aspirations of the target population and are part of a larger system. Revitalizing traditional knowledge, promoting cultural preservation and assessment for inclusive localized and sustainable solutions are measures of success counted in the PEPST context responsive evaluation. The framework can be applied to guide project initiation, design, implementation, monitoring and impact evaluation in the context of a larger system dominated by interconnectedness, interdependence relationality and the value of building relationships and building futures.



It does not replace existing tools but is complementary as it brings new dimensions based on the Ubuntu philosophy with its emphasis on interconnectedness, interdependence, relationship building, sustainability, respect for nature and long-term well-being of the communities and the environment.

Description of each Element



People

There is emphasis on the importance of interactions and conversations between project commissioners, designers, implementers, relevant community structures, and intended project beneficiaries. These initial conversations must recognize that people bring their unique cultural practices, beliefs, and values, which can significantly influence how they understand the problem to be addressed by the project, how it will be implemented, and what its success indicators should be. This part of the tool can be used to evaluate stakeholder participation. Participation measures include inclusive participation, strategies and activities to build sustainable relationships, change of mindsets where there are differences, and create inclusivity of diverse perspectives. When this construct is applied, evaluators can address the question: Who designed this project? Who implemented it? Who owns it? The following questions can guide project planning but can also be used to make judgements about community participation and the resultant expected outcomes.

Quantitative and qualitative methods can be co-created to address the questions.

1. Who are the stakeholders and what are their roles and responsibilities?
2. Are there are strategies to facilitate communication, engagement, and relationship building among stakeholders and how do these impact the success of the project?
3. Are there strategies to address the change of mindsets where stakeholders have different perspectives and how do this impact project success?
4. How has stakeholder participation influenced adaptation of the project?

Environment



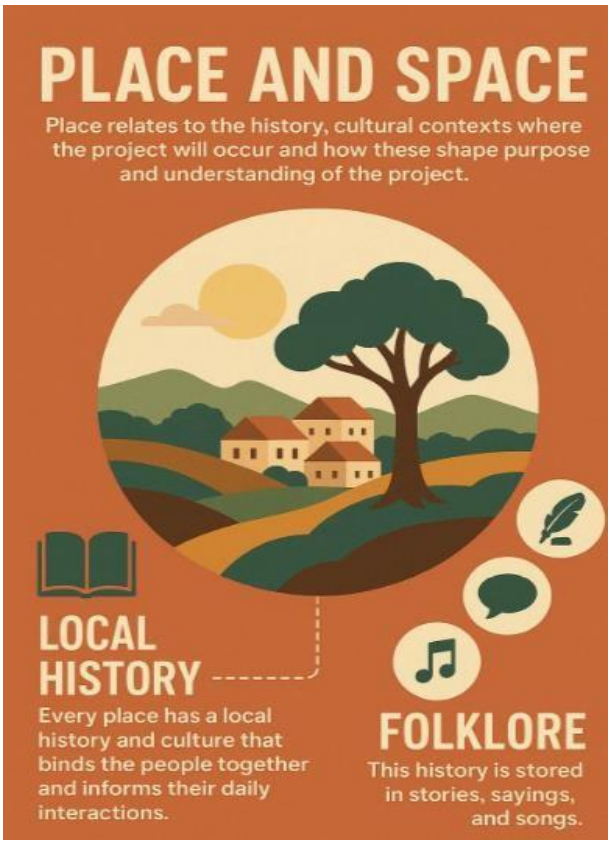
The second component namely, 'environment', relates to the enabling environment necessary for the success of the project. An enabling environment includes government policies, gender policies, the socio-cultural norms, and beliefs that can inform collective understanding of the problem to be addressed, environmental responsibility and the use of technology. Environmental responsibility requires an ethical obligation by project designers and project recipients to make conscious efforts to minimize harm to the environment by ensuring that project activities do not damage the environment. In line with the Ubuntu principle of respect for one another and for the environment, the projects and interventions should do no harm to the people and to the environment. The focus of the evaluation is on the resources and the implementation process, environmental impediments to project outcomes and impact and project activities that might hurt the environment. While this aspect of the framework can be used for project planning, for example, ensuring that the project resources are aligned with government policies, national development plans and government development priorities and social policies, it is highly recommended for judging the project inputs and the implementation process.

Quantitative and qualitative methods can be co-created to address the following:

1. Cultural practices that impacted on implementation, output and outcome.
2. Gender norms that impacted on implementation, output, and outcome.
3. Policies that affected implementation.
4. Activities that addressed mindsets for optimal project outcomes, continuity, and sustainability of project outcomes.
5. Activities that have the potential to damage the environment or community relations.
6. Overall implementation success and impact on project outcomes.

Place and Space

This aspect of the tool is a continuation of judgement on the planning and implementation process with emphasis on inclusivity and integration of local indigenous science with other knowledge systems for localized solutions, expansion, growth and forward looking. It makes judgement on adaptation of the project to local contexts and the resultant outcomes.



Place relates to the history and cultural contexts where the project will occur and how these shapes the purpose and understanding of the project. Every place has a local history and culture that binds the people together and informs their daily interactions. This history is stored in the folklores, the stories, sayings, and songs. Space relates to beliefs about the physical space of project activities that may have a positive or negative impact on the project. People have connections with their land and space, and there may be areas or spaces where it would be against community practice to locate a project.

Under Place and space, the evaluator moves away from the practice that programmes have to be implemented as planned to accommodate adaptation of the project to the context and community needs and community participation. The focus is on adaptation and improvement on design and implementation as the project progresses. It is about identifying areas where changes or improvements in project implementation and outcomes have occurred in response to the

project's location, the cultural practices of the people, and their needs and priorities. The main evaluation question is on the extent to which the project is compatible with the needs, priorities of the people, the synergy of the project with place and space and the adaptations in design and implementation that are a response to place, space and the future.

Quantitative and qualitative methods can be co-created to address the following:

1. History of the place that informs the choice of projects.
2. Information on the place and space that can facilitate or hinder the implementation, success, and outcome of the project.
3. Community resources and assets that the projects leverage on.
4. How the project leverages on community indigenous science, resources and assets to inform project design and implementation.
5. Project responsiveness to community context and needs.
6. Community indicators of success.
7. Community strategies for sustainability of outcome.

Time

Time means looking back at the past, engaging in the present, and looking forward to the future. The success of projects activities is measured against observed time patterns. Time focuses on understanding the rituals, beliefs, and symbolism associated with time and project activities, and thinking about how the past has informed the present and a vision for the future. The time of the year, month, and day can inform routine activities, ultimately project outcomes and impact are assessed by comparing the past with the present and envisioning the future. In alignment with relationality and connections, success is measured at individual, family and community levels.



The evaluator co-creates with the multiple stakeholders' tools to address the following:

1. Compare what was at the start with what is. Here, evaluators may assess progress using project goals and objectives according to the project design.
2. Responsiveness to the changing environment: Measure changes, improvements, adaptations that were made during implementation, the strategies, and outcomes. Specific places, communities and cultural practices may have required adaptation of the project. Local indigenous science may have been integrated in the design for innovative implementation and project outcomes. The assumption is that the project implemented may not necessarily be the same as the program as planned.
3. Individual and family success stories using community methods.
4. Measure systems-level impact, for example, community agency, collaborative partnership, local participation and ownership, social cohesion, and strengthening of local capacity.
5. Dreams for the future.

This last aspect is ideal for summative evaluation. It can be used for midterm reviews or project end of the circle. It combines implementation measures under environment and Place and Space and make judgment on how they impacted outcomes. It makes a judgment on value added to the community by judging success at the individual, family, and community levels and prospects for the future. The table below is a step-by-step assessment tool.



Table 1: Step-by-step PEPST assessment tool

	Purpose	Stages of Application	Measurement Indicators	Data Collection Method
		PEOPLE		
1	Emphasis under People is to ensure that the project builds and nurtures positive relationships and maintain connections based on respect for between ALL stakeholders. Purpose is for ALL stakeholders to fully co-create and come up with strategies for interactions and hold initial conversations between and intended project planning and evaluation with emphasis on beneficiaries.	***Initiation*** This is a very critical stage for a sustainable community project. To promote collective planning and evaluation that involve all stakeholders, ensure there are continuous engagements between all stakeholders (community members, direct project beneficiaries, other relevant community structures, project commissioners, designers, implementer.	1. Level at which communities as important project beneficiaries, were involved at the initiation. 2. Engagement of all stakeholders and how participation of all stakeholders is inclusive. 3. Assess whether project activities will: a) build sustainable relationships, b) change of mindsets where there are differences, c) Whether activities embrace diverse perspectives for all stakeholders.	Data collection through quantitative and or qualitative methods/ These must be co-created with by All stakeholders.
		Implementation Ensure that ALL stakeholders, Community leaders, other community structures are involved during the implementation of the projects These will lead to multi-directional borrowing and lending of knowledge	1. Assess whether project implementation participation strategies and activities will a) build sustainable relationships, b) have changed the mindsets where of ALL stakeholders where there were any differences and, c) whether the project implementation pparticipation strategies and activities created any inclusive of diverse perspectives.	Data collection through quantitative and or qualitative methods/ These must be co-created with by All stakeholders.

	Purpose	Stages of Application	Measurement Indicators	Data Collection Method
		between project recipients and community leaders and knowledge holders leading strong partnership, relationship building and success of the project.	2. Assess whether All stakeholder community structures were involved in the implementation of the project. 3. Assess how holding regular conversations between important role players contributed to the success of the projects.	
		Impact	Assesses whether: 1. Stakeholders that were involved in the project and what were their roles and responsibilities how did they promote relationship building and how did these add values in the success of the project? 2. Are there alternative strategies that could have facilitated better communication, engagement, and relationship building among stakeholders and how do these impact the success of the project. 3. Assess whether they are any strategies to address the change of mindsets where stakeholders have different perspectives and how do this impact project success. 4. Assess how have community participation influenced success adaptation of the project.	Data collection through quantitative and or qualitative methods/ These must be co-created with by All stakeholders.

	Purpose	Stages of Application	Measurement Indicators	Data Collection Method
			ENVIROMENT	
2	The focus is on the resources and implementation process that focus on environmental impediments that promote project outcomes and impact and project activities that might hurt the environment in the future. Therefore, the purpose here is for project stakeholder to collectively engage and co-create strategies that lead to the success of the project. These must co-create strategies that address the influence the government policies, gender policies, historical issues, cultural practices, use of technology, norms, and beliefs that can inform collective understanding of the problem to be addressed. Focus must be on how stakeholders can map out how relationship with the ecosystem that can impact on project success	***Initiation*** Stakeholders must collectively engage to understand cultural practices, gender norms, government policies may affect the implementation, output and outcome of projects and activities that address mindsets for optimal project outcomes, continuity, and sustainability.	1. Asses which environmental impediments may affect the success of the project and strategies address such at the initiation stage. 2. Assess how co-created stakeholder strategies that lead to the success of the project	Data collection through quantitative and or qualitative methods/ These must be co-created with by All stakeholders.

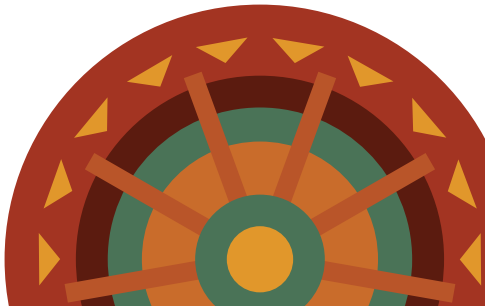
	Purpose	Stages of Application	Measurement Indicators	Data Collection Method
		Implementation	Assess how the integration of local indigenous knowledge with expert knowledge from the project implementers, cultural sensitivity, and respect for community values, may lead to the success of the implementation process	
		Impact	Measure the following indicators. 1. Cultural practices that may have impacted on implementation, output and outcome. 2. Gender norms that impacted on implementation, output, and outcome 3. Policies that affected implementation activities that addressed mindsets for optimal project outcomes, continuity, and sustainability of project outcomes. 4. Activities that may have led potential to damage the environment or community relations in the future. 5. Overall implementation success and impact on project outcomes.	



	Purpose	Stages of Application	Measurement Indicators	Data Collection Method
			PLACE/SPACE	
3	Under Place/Space stakeholders must work together to consider cultural beliefs about place and space and how these can inform location, type and choice of project and the implementation process. It is important for stakeholder to consider community resources and assets that the projects can leverage on and the general project oppressiveness to community needs. Consider traditional spaces for dialogue that can create safe places for communities to share their perspectives, using their preferred modes of communication that include songs, proverbs, riddles,	**Initiation**	1. Assess the History of the place that will inform the choice of projects. 2. Collect information on the place and space that can facilitate or hinder the implementation, success, and outcome of the project.	Data collection through quantitative and or qualitative methods/ These must be co-created with by All stakeholders.

	Purpose	Stages of Application	Measurement Indicators	Data Collection Method
	storytelling, and rituals.			
		Implementation	1. Assess for community resources and assets that the projects leverage on. 2. How the project leverages on community indigenous science, resources and assets to inform project design and implementation.	
		Impact	Assess whether the Project responds to the community context and needs. Whether Community indicators of success were realized Community strategies for sustainability of outcome were accomplished.	
		TIME		
4	For **Time** it is important for ALL stakeholder to understand the rituals, beliefs, and symbolism associated with time and project activities, and thinking about how the past has informed the present and a vision for the future.	**Initiation** At project initiation stakeholders must consider the time of the year, month, and day can inform routine activities, ultimately project outcomes and impact. Assessed by comparing the past with the present and envisioning the future. In alignment with rationality and connections project outcome is measured at individual, family community and environment levels.	Measure whether to community rituals, beliefs, and symbolism associated with time and project activities were considered and agreed upon between ALL stakeholders at the initiation of the project.	Data collection through quantitative and or qualitative methods/ These must be co-created with by All stakeholders.

	Purpose	Stages of Application	Measurement Indicators	Data Collection Method
		Implementation	Assess what was at the start of the project with what is by assessing progress using project goals and objectives according to the project design. Measure changes, improvements, adaptations that were made during implementation, the strategies, and outcomes. Specific places, communities and cultural practices may have required adaptation of the project. Assess whether. Local indigenous science has been integrated in the design for innovative implementation and project outcomes.	
		Impact	Measure systems-level impact, for example, community agency, collaborative partnership, local participation and ownership, social cohesion, and strengthening of local capacity.	



Conclusion

PEPST offers a systems thinking approach to evaluation derived from African indigenous perspectives on relational co-existence, the importance of building relationships with people and with nature, and the belief that knowledge is a product of relationships and is co-created through dynamic interactions. The elements People, Environment, Place, Space, and Time denote a set of relationships that define context. Thus, PEPST is a context-responsive evaluation that offers practical steps to holistically contextualize the evaluation of projects from initiation throughout design, implementation, and impact evaluation.



PEPST informs a transformative project cycle that begins with co-creation of project objectives, implementation strategies and impact evaluation methodologies. The framework places value on strategies to build relationships, changing mindsets, mobilizing community resources, building community trust and local ownership of the project.

The implementation stage is a problem-solving endeavour where the implementation strategies, project objectives are adapted to respond to the realities on the ground for continuous adaptation of the plans and strategies. Responding to the flow of time, the stakeholders meet to capture and forecast the future, leading to additional adaptation of the project that speaks to project sustainability. Impact evaluation eventually looks at how the project was adapted, the implementation process, the vision for the future, project outcomes and success as defined by the communities (see figure below).

4. Pamoja Safarini Theory of Change Framework

Introduction

Post the pilot phase, the PSTP tool was adapted to incorporate the rich experiences solicited from the consulted communities. The pilot phase revealed that the Umoja principle is an extension of the Ubuntu philosophy; thus, it has been excluded from the revised version. These next sections present their rationale, contribution to the field of evaluation, and application to the project cycle.

Rationale for the tool

Through a rigorous systematic review[1], the Pan African Indigenous Evaluation Consortium (PAIEC) established that the prevailing discourse and practice surrounding Theory of Change (ToC) in the Global South remains deeply rooted in Western (Euro-American) theories, epistemologies, and methodologies (PAIEC, 2024). Consequently, it has faced growing critique for being misaligned with the realities, values, and knowledge systems of African contexts, where indigenous and decolonising approaches are increasingly recognised as more appropriate and transformative.

Contribution to the field

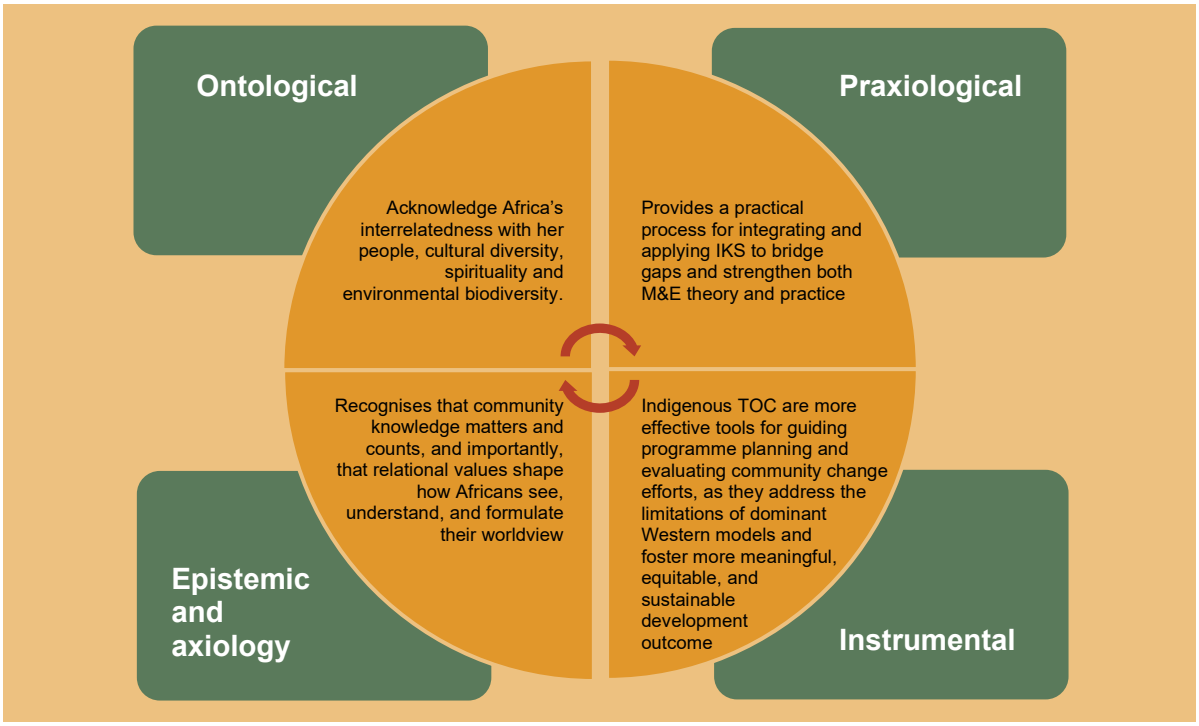
1. Reframes or redefines the definition of success by challenging conventional Western evaluation frameworks, positioning social harmony, moral responsibility, and collective progress as legitimate, measurable outcomes.
2. Embeds flexibility and adaptation that advances the evaluation practice by making it responsive, iterative, and attuned to complex realities rather than fixed log frames.
3. Advocates for culturally resonant communication in M&E as a methodological innovation, blending indigenous aesthetics with a contemporary participatory media approach.
4. Challenges the role of external expertise, which in turn disrupts the power imbalance in evaluation, fostering mutual respect and intellectual agency.
5. Institutionalises the Indigenous Knowledge Systems by integrating them into operational decision-making, programme design, and resilience strategies.
6. Strengthens sustainability by fostering co-creation, engaging traditional leaders early, and supporting interventions that communities can maintain without external dependence.
7. Advances intergenerational and aspirational thinking by encouraging youth participation, linking current activities to long-term goals, and embedding hope into monitoring practices.
8. Ensures that every stage of the project cycle is culturally relevant, participatory, and adaptable to community-defined priorities, transforming evaluation into a socially embedded, transformative practice.

[1] PAEIC, 2024. Mapping Africa Rooted Evaluation Approaches, Methods and Tools. A systematic Review. University of Botswana

Application of the PSTP framework in the project cycle

The framework is foregrounded on the Ubuntu philosophy. A summary of the key lessons regarding the project cycle highlighted the importance of early engagement with cultural leaders, recognising non-material outcomes such as social cohesion and spiritual harmony, and creating spaces for collective visioning. The revised tool builds on these insights by strengthening participatory elements, allowing communities to define milestones, expanding intergenerational dialogue, enhancing culturally relevant visual communication, and embedding Indigenous knowledge at every stage of the project cycle. This ensures that evaluations remain context-sensitive and reflective of African voices, values, and visions of change. The guide's credibility can be summarised into four main categories: epistemic and axiological, ontological, praxiological, and instrumental, as depicted in **Figure 1.**

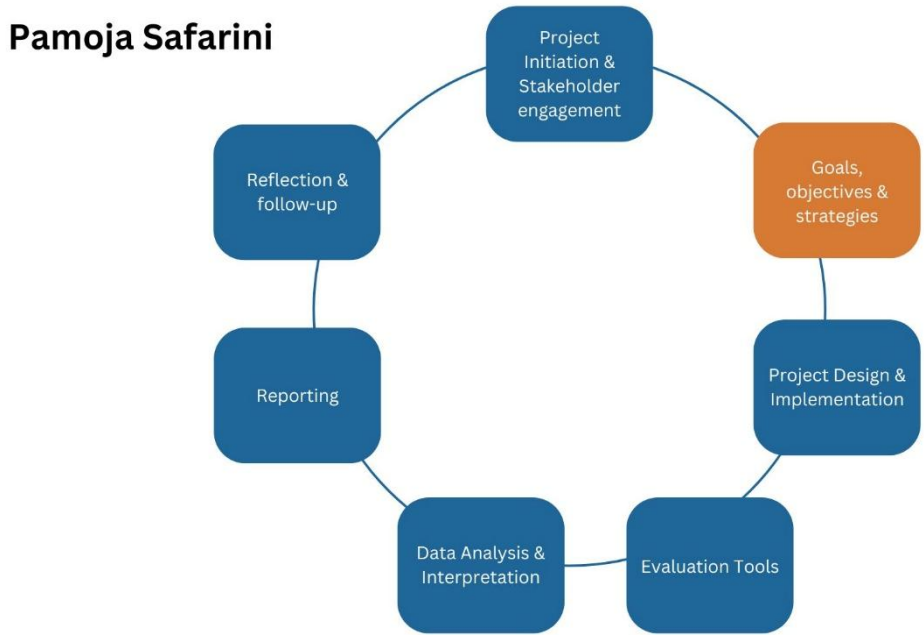
Figure 1: A summary of PSTP's contribution to the Ubuntu philosophy



Components of the Tool

An overview of the PSTP component's contribution to the project cycle, as illustrated in **Figure 2**, is outlined below.

Figure 2: Phases of the project cycle

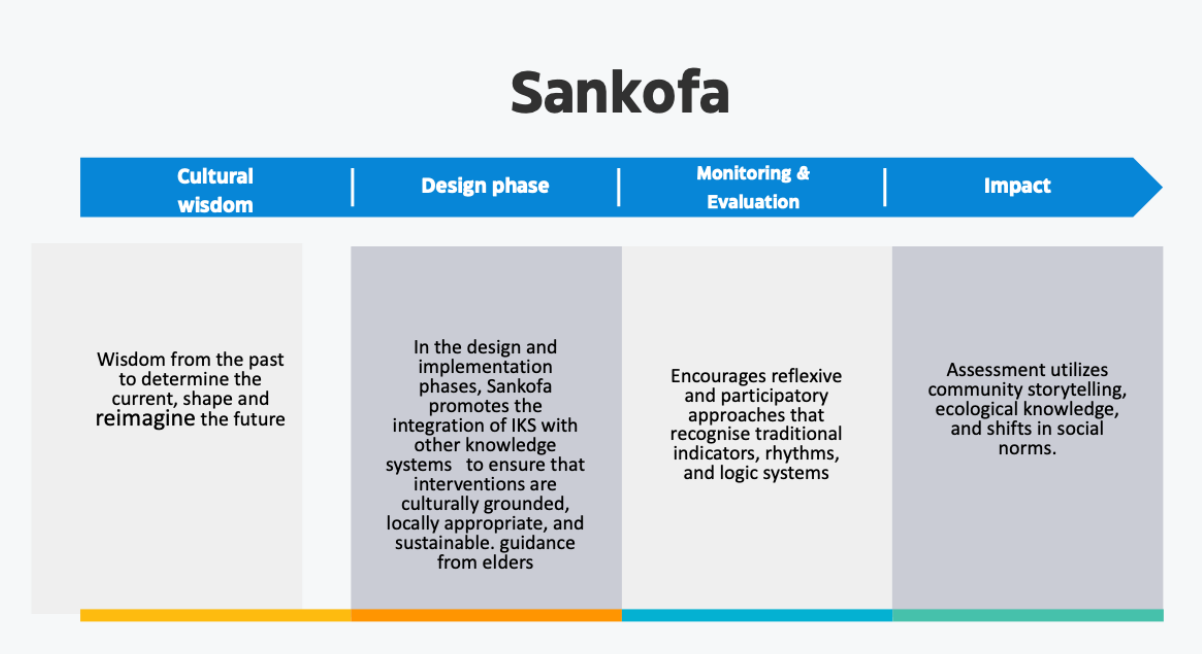


1. Sankofa (Reflexivity and Cyclical Learning)

Sankofa calls for drawing wisdom from the past to inform the present, shape the future, and reimagine it. Its elements include integrating historical lessons from previous community initiatives and respecting traditional mentorship practices, such as guidance from elders. Cultural ceremonies, rituals, and community narratives offer grounded ways to inform programme strategies. Reflexive practices, such as revisiting project goals based on lived experience, ensure that the project cycle remains adaptive, culturally appropriate, and rooted in community memory. The Sankofa principle emphasises retrieving ancestral knowledge and cultural memory to inform and strengthen present-day development efforts. Applied across the project cycle, it calls for community-rooted **initiation** processes that engage elders and traditional leaders to surface their lived histories and guide the project's relevance. In the **design and implementation phases**, Sankofa promotes the integration of IKS with other knowledge systems to ensure that interventions are culturally grounded, locally relevant, and sustainable.

During **monitoring and evaluation**, Sankofa encourages reflexive and participatory approaches that recognise traditional indicators, rhythms, and logic systems. Rather than relying solely on external metrics, impact is assessed through community storytelling, ecological knowledge, and shifts in social norms. This fosters co-ownership, adaptability, and enduring relevance. Ultimately, Sankofa reframes the project cycle as a circular process rooted in memory, responsive to context, and aligned with community-defined visions of progress.

Figure 3: Sankofa's contribution to the project cycle

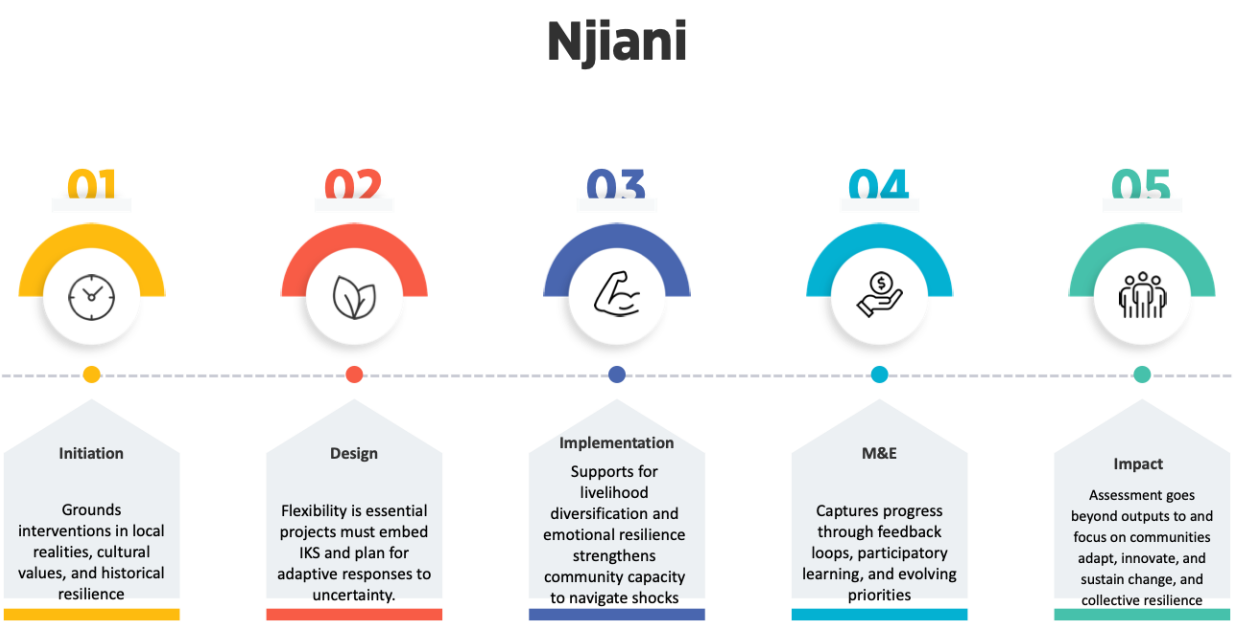


2. Njiani (Focus on the Process and Adaptation)

This principle focuses on the journey of change rather than fixed endpoints. Key variables include community-defined milestones that reflect collective priorities, ensuring that progress is measured in terms that are meaningful to the community. Responsiveness to emerging needs enables programmes to remain relevant and effective. Thus, feedback loops and iterative learning foster adaptability. The use of IKS informs localised assumptions and strategies, enhancing the legitimacy and utility of interventions over time.

Additionally, the consultative nature of the process for engaging with the community is far more valuable than the actual intervention. This calls for genuine and continual conversations, as opposed to tick-box exercises, where the programme recipients, community members, funders, traditional leaders, and implementing partners are enjoined to problem-solve and innovate as equal partners. It should be recognised that the journey is non-static and unpredictable; therefore, programmes, the principal advocates, suggest that cultural knowledge systems should be employed as an adaptive management and invention tool.

Figure 4: Njiani's contribution to the project cycle



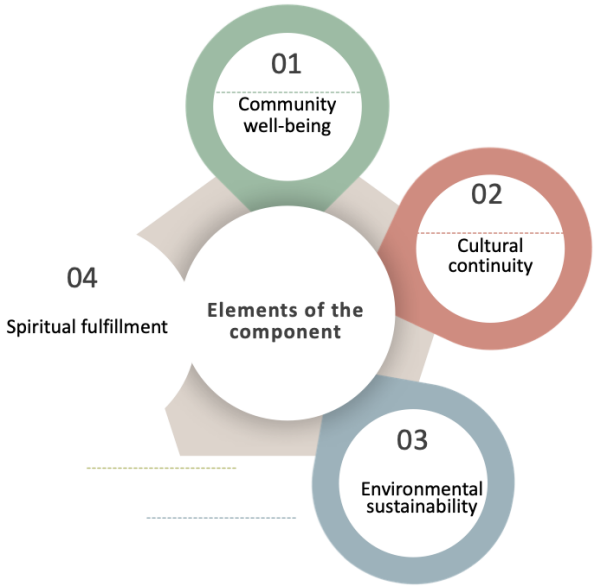
This principle reframes development as a dynamic journey guided by community-defined milestones rather than fixed endpoints. At **initiation**, it calls for grounding interventions in local realities, cultural values, and historical resilience. During **design**, flexibility is essential; projects must embed IKS and plan for adaptive responses to uncertainty.

In **implementation**, support for livelihood diversification and emotional resilience strengthens community capacity to navigate shocks. **Monitoring and reporting** should capture progress through feedback loops, participatory learning, and evolving priorities. Finally, **impact assessment** must go beyond outputs to evaluate how communities adapt, innovate, and sustain change, recognising both tangible results and deeper shifts in mindset, identity, and collective resilience.

Holistic

A holistic outlook integrates cultural, spiritual, economic, and social dimensions of well-being. Cultural norms influence perceptions of ownership and participation, while spiritual beliefs guide relationships within the community and with the land. This principle emphasises strengthening social bonds, such as family cohesion and community ties, as essential outcomes. It values emotional, physical, and mental well-being alongside traditional measures of impact, creating an inclusive framework that reflects African worldviews of interconnectedness.

Figure 5: Holistic principle contribution to the project cycle



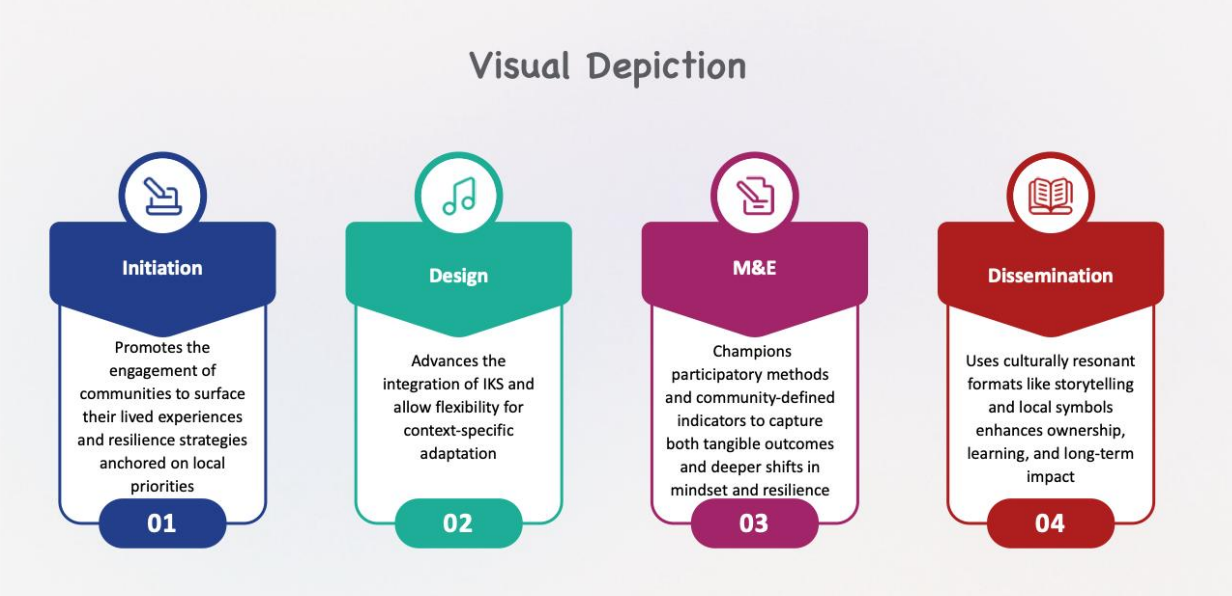
This holistic perspective redefines success not in monetary terms alone, but through the lens of community well-being, cultural continuity, environmental sustainability, and spiritual fulfilment. It reaffirms the understanding that among **African communities, spirituality, land, and livelihood** form a praxis **intrinsically linked to daily life**. For programme implementers, evaluators, and policymakers, this means **adopting frameworks and tools** that honour and reflect this complexity, allowing for more relevant, respectful, and sustainable interventions.

Visual Depiction

Visual Depiction draws on culturally meaningful imagery, symbols, and stories to convey programme intent and foster a shared understanding, including sharing the results among stakeholders. It emphasises the co-creation of visuals that resonate deeply with local communities, ensuring that messages are not only understood but also embraced. Visual storytelling, through storyboards, drawings, and community-generated illustrations, serves as both a documentation tool and a medium for collective reflection, making abstract programme goals tangible and grounded in local realities. This approach is well-suited in contexts with varying literacy levels, where visuals can bridge communication gaps and enhance participation.

The cultural forms of expression can be integrated into evaluation processes as tools for monitoring, learning, and dissemination. For example, combining oral traditions with modern platforms such as WhatsApp and TikTok can extend engagement while remaining true to African modes of expression. This reinforces the understanding that evaluation should be culturally situated, participatory, and dynamic, an interactive and enjoyable process rather than a rigid, extractive exercise. Participants can use smartphones and YouTube to disseminate information such as marketing organic products and services owned by community members.

Figure 6: Visual Depiction's value addition



The content highlights the need for a culturally grounded, adaptive approach throughout the project cycle. At **initiation**, engaging communities to surface lived experiences and resilience strategies anchored on local priorities. **Design** must integrate Indigenous Knowledge Systems and allow flexibility for context-specific adaptation. In **monitoring and evaluation**, participatory methods and community-defined indicators capture both tangible outcomes and deeper shifts in mindset and resilience. This reinforces the understanding that evaluation should be culturally situated, participatory, and dynamic, an interactive and enjoyable process rather than a rigid, extractive exercise. For **dissemination**, using culturally resonant formats, such as storytelling and local symbols, enhances ownership, learning, and long-term impact.

Maono (Aspirational and Intergenerational Thinking)

The Maono principle, drawn from the Swahili word *maono*, meaning "vision", emphasises forward-thinking, integrated livelihood planning, and community-driven innovation. It captures how participants envision sustainable futures by interlinking agricultural practices, economic resilience, social empowerment, and cultural authenticity, especially as voiced by youth and elders. Variables include intergenerational visioning that aligns programme outcomes with future aspirations. The process involves mapping desired changes across time and generations, ensuring that interventions promote agency, leadership, and continuity of purpose. By supporting young people's visions and connecting them with ancestral legacies, Maono ensures programmes are forward-looking, inclusive, and empowering.

The Maono principle, rooted in hope, aspiration, and collective dreaming, was among the most powerfully voiced across the pilot test. Its applicability lies in driving motivation and goal setting, both personally and communally. Intergenerational Dialogue is Key. The principle of Maono highlighted the power of intergenerational visioning. Young people and elders were able to work together, blending their knowledge and hopes for the future. This exchange nurtured continuity and sustainability in development efforts, reinforcing the importance of intergenerational knowledge transfer.

Figure 7: Maono's value addition



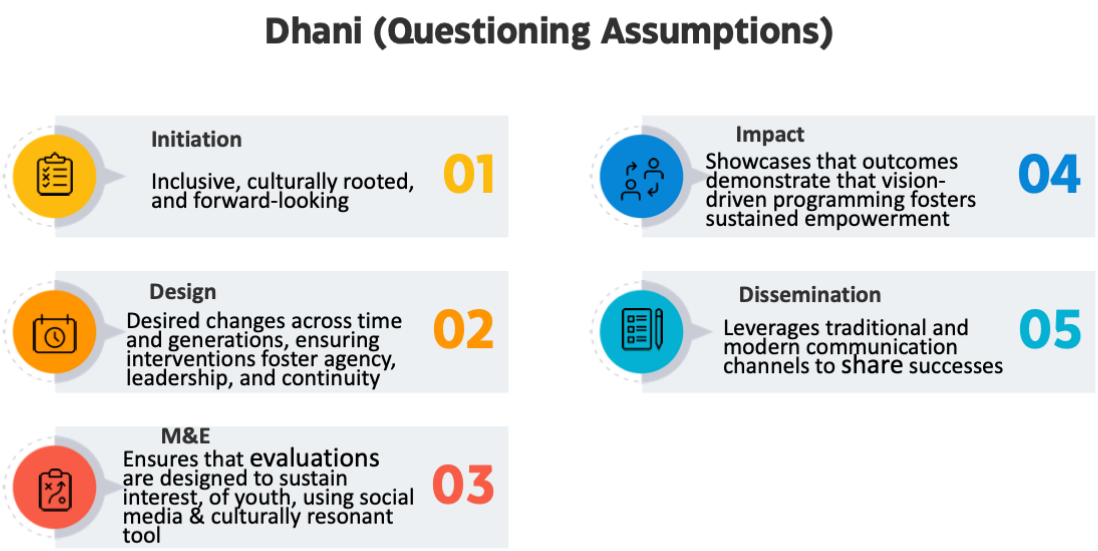
These insights carry important implications for programme **initiation and design**: interventions must be co-created with communities, ensuring that local power structures, belief systems, and knowledge forms are acknowledged and respected. For **monitoring and evaluation**, this underscores the need to integrate participatory and culturally responsive methods that capture community perspectives, shifts in social norms, and unintended consequences. **Evaluation** should not only assess outcomes but also track how cultural dynamics influence uptake and impact.

In terms of **dissemination**, learning products should be tailored to resonate with local realities, leveraging community storytelling, oral traditions, and visual tools to share insights and lessons in ways that foster dialogue, reflection, and broader acceptance. Overall, these examples reaffirm that participants are not passive recipients of interventions; they are active co-creators, experimenters, and evaluators, shaping the trajectory of change through lived experience and collective agency.

Dhani (Questioning Assumptions)

Dhani invites evaluators to examine and challenge underlying assumptions embedded in programme design. This includes questioning externally imposed ideas about needs, solutions, and success. Local beliefs and practices offer alternative lenses for interpreting programme logic. Variables here include community-led dialogues that critique design assumptions, compare them with lived realities, and reshape interventions accordingly. Reflexive learning enables mutual understanding and alignment between external actors and indigenous worldviews.

Figure 8: Dhani's contribution to the field



Rather than adopting fragmented or donor-driven interventions, Maono champions a holistic, self-sustaining ecosystem where farming, animal husbandry, aquaculture, value addition, and cultural identity are intentionally interwoven. The principle also recognises the strategic use of local knowledge, intergenerational learning, and communal structures in shaping development trajectories.

Therefore, grounding programmes in shared dreams and ancestral legacies, Dhani ensures the **initiation process** is inclusive, culturally rooted, and forward-looking. **Programme design** under Dhani aligns desired changes across time and generations, ensuring interventions foster agency, leadership, and continuity. It adds value to M&E by making it participatory, creative, and accessible, including ensuring that **evaluations** are designed to sustain interest, particularly among young people, by utilising social media and culturally resonant tools. Under Dhani, **impact** is multi-layered, addressing livelihoods, education, and cultural vitality simultaneously, and showcasing that outcomes demonstrate vision-driven programming fosters sustained empowerment. Lastly, it leverages traditional and modern communication channels to share successes through storytelling, songs, and dances, which make engagement joyful and relatable, while utilising digital platforms for **dissemination.**

Table 1: Application of the PSTP in the project cycle

PSTP Principle	Evaluator Focus	Simplified Guiding Questions	Practical Tools & Methods	Example Indicators
Sankofa (Reflexivity & Cyclical Learning)	Incorporate cultural memory, lived experience, and learning loops	How has the past shaped the intervention? What cultural knowledge informs decisions? How is learning used to adapt?	Story circles, timelines, memory maps, reflective journals, elders' sessions	Cultural insights documented; Programme adaptations informed by community learning
Njiani (Focus on the Process)	Tracking the journey of change, adaptation, and non-linear progress	How do participants describe progress? What turning points matter? How is feedback used?	Journey mapping, outcome harvesting, developmental evaluation logs, group reflections	Participant-defined milestones reached; Evidence of adaptive management
Holistic (Interconnected Wellbeing)	Evaluating spiritual, relational, ecological, cultural, and emotional dimensions	How does the programme support holistic wellbeing? What relational changes occurred?	Relational mapping, wellbeing wheels, guided reflections, ecological/cultural indicators	Improved family/community cohesion; Strengthened cultural or ecological connections
Visual Depiction (Cultural Expression)	Using metaphors, stories, visuals, and art as legitimate evidence	What symbols or stories express change? How do visuals support understanding?	Photovoice, murals, participatory video, storyboards, metaphors workshops	Story or metaphor-based evidence of change; Visual outputs co-created by communities
Dhani (Questioning Assumptions)	Surfacing and challenging dominant assumptions; validating local knowledge	Whose assumptions shaped the programme? How are local perspectives validated?	Assumption mapping, power analysis, community-led interpretation, problem tree analysis	Programme assumptions revised; Increased inclusion of Indigenous perspectives
Maono (Aspirational Thinking)	Capturing future dreams, long-term goals, and intergenerational visions	What long-term aspirations do people hold? How does the programme support these dreams?	Visioning circles, aspiration maps, scenario storytelling, intergenerational dialogues	Documented community aspirations; Programme alignment with long-term goals

5. Engagement, Participation, Involvement and Ownership Framework

Introduction

The Engagement, Participation, Involvement, and Ownership (EPIO) tool is designed to provide a unique, Afrocentric framework for managing and evaluating projects, deeply rooted in the African philosophy of Ubuntu, emphasizing interconnectedness, humanity, and collective well-being. It emphasizes social responsibility. Social responsibility entails fostering genuine collaboration, ensuring inclusivity, promoting shared accountability, and empowering communities to take ownership of their development while honouring their cultural values, knowledge systems, and collective aspirations.

Social responsibility in African evaluation goes beyond individual accountability to prioritize the collective good. It ensures that evaluations are not extractive or externally imposed but are co-created with communities, respecting their knowledge systems, beliefs, and aspirations. It prioritizes inclusivity by ensuring that marginalized voices, including women, youth, and Indigenous groups, are heard and valued. This fosters equitable participation and ensures no one is left behind in the evaluation process or project outcomes. Furthermore, EPIO framework sees sustainability as a moral imperative. Evaluators ensure that interventions leave a lasting, positive legacy, empowering communities to maintain and build upon the outcomes without creating dependency.

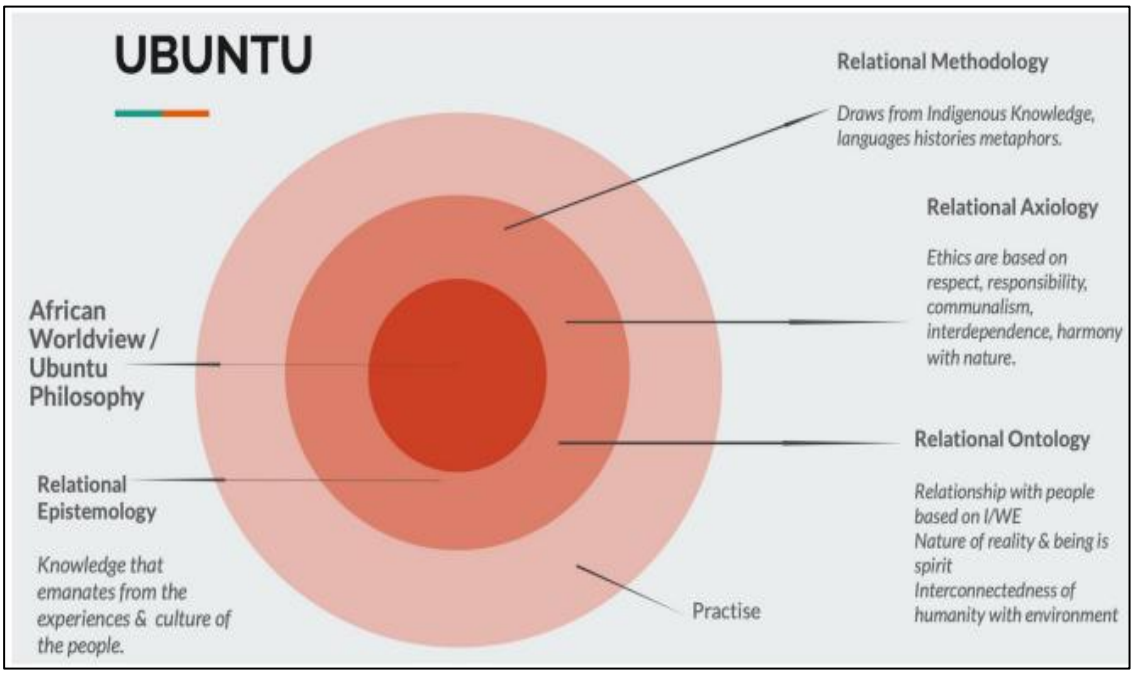
Contribution to the field

1. Encourages active participation of all stakeholders, ensuring projects align with community needs and values.
2. Builds trust and ownership by fostering inclusivity and collaboration
3. Promotes long-term impact by integrating indigenous knowledge, local resources, and cultural practices.
4. Strengthens community resilience and self-reliance through empowerment.
5. Reinforces the dignity and humanity of all participants, avoiding exploitative or top-down approaches

Application of the EPIO project management and evaluation framework/tool

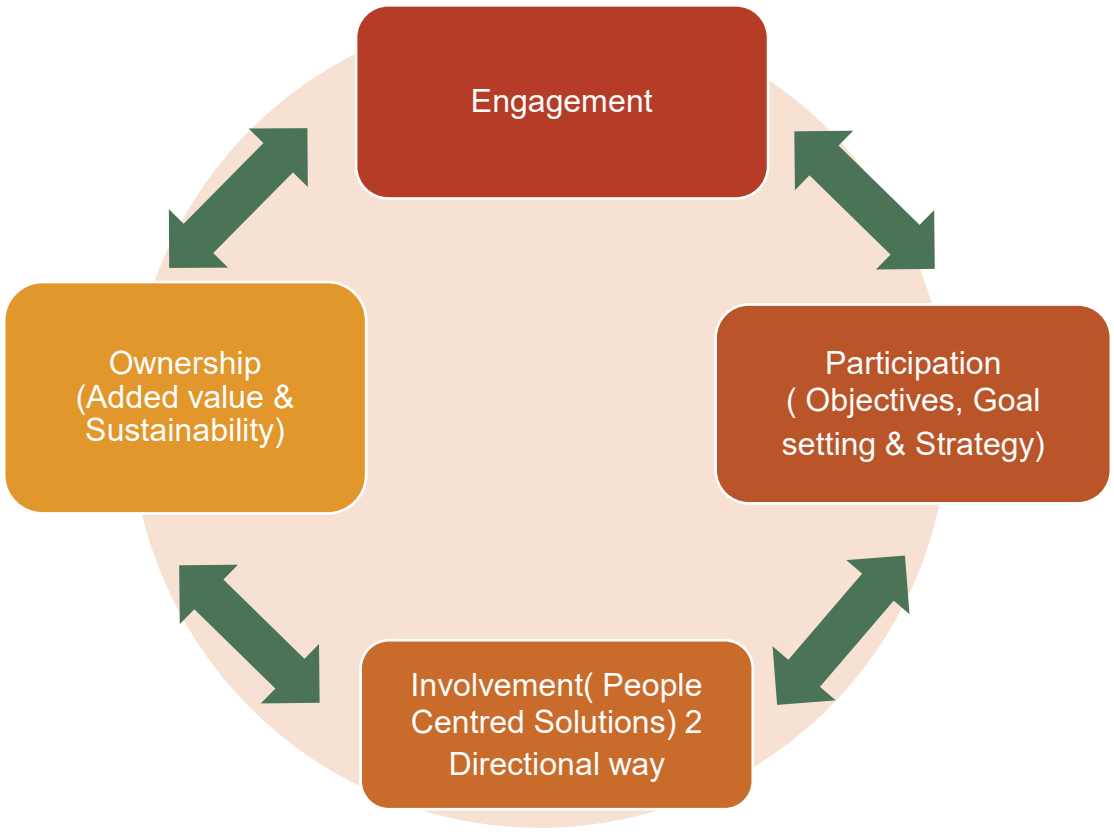
The EPIO Framework/tool emerges from an Ubuntu-centred understanding of development where transformation is relational, dialogical, and community-led. The framework/tool assumes that effective and sustainable development must be built on authentic community engagement, inclusive participation, active involvement, and a strong sense of ownership. The main contribution of this tool is that it integrates cultural relevance, social responsibility, and power sharing into each stage of the project, from initiation through implementation, monitoring, and impact evaluation. Furthermore, EPIO invites all stakeholders to engage in co-creating the goals and indicators of success, enabling the communities to lead transformative processes that reflect their lived experiences.

Figure 1: The Engagement, Participation, Involvement and Ownership Tool



At the centre is the Ubuntu philosophy. This shows that the framework is guided by African values, cultures, and worldviews. The evaluators should recognize, appreciate, and include African cultures, languages, and values. The second circle shows the African relational ontology, African relational epistemology, African relational axiology, and African relational methodologies. African relational ontology is based on multiple realities. There is a connectedness between human beings and the universe. In African culture, there are multiple ways of knowing, and knowledge is a community property. African values togetherness, plants, and other animals. African relational methodologies are integrative and transformative. The outer layer is practice that is guided by the two inner circles.

Figure 2: Phases for developing the EPIO project management and evaluation tool.

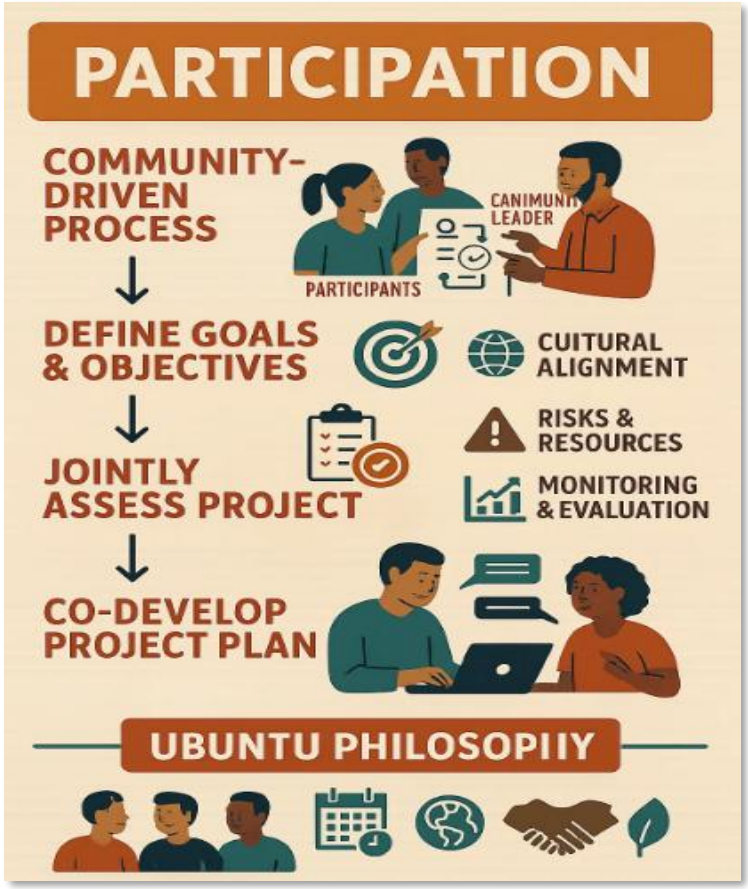


ENGAGEMENT



In the EPIO Evaluation framework/ tool, engagement refers to respectful, community-centred interaction that embraces the use of indigenous languages, proverbs, songs, and other cultural expressions to foster trust and mutual understanding. Engagement begins with pre-engagement, where evaluators prepare by learning about the community and setting the stage for respectful dialogue. This is followed by relationship building, which involves establishing rapport, observing community protocols, and recognizing the role of gatekeepers. A core principle is understanding the community's social, cultural, and historical context, guided by the Ubuntu philosophy that honours the community's customs, languages, and lived experiences. Engagement also requires that communities initiate or lead their projects, with any involvement by government, NGOs, or researchers being negotiated respectfully rather than imposed. Finally, informed consent, whether verbal or written, is essential, ensuring that community participation is voluntary and based on a clear understanding of the process.

PARTICIPATION



According to the EPIO Evaluation framework/tool, participation is conceptualized as a collaborative and community-driven process that ensures all stakeholders, particularly the community, are actively involved in the design, implementation, and evaluation of a project. Central to this approach is the principle that communities should define the goals and objectives of any intervention based on their priorities and contextual realities to ensure sustainable outcomes. Community members are responsible for nominating their representatives, who collaborate with external actors to establish a mutually accountable project team. This team jointly assesses the feasibility of the project and, if necessary, refines it to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes. Roles, responsibilities, and team membership are defined through collective

decision-making, with all partners reaching consensus on the indicators of success. Furthermore, the project must align strategically with the cultural practices, values, and aspirations of the community. Through this participatory process, stakeholders are engaged in the co-development of a comprehensive project plan, which includes the identification of risks, setting of implementation timelines, resource mobilization, and co-creation of monitoring and evaluation standards, grounded in Ubuntu philosophy. Dedicated teams for monitoring and evaluation are formed collaboratively, and the final project plan is shared transparently with the wider community, reinforcing accountability, cultural relevance, and shared ownership. Ubuntu-based participation assumes dignity, interdependence, and co-creation, not extraction or top-down planning.

INVOLVEMENT



In the EPIO Evaluation Tool, involvement refers to the active and sustained engagement of community members during the implementation phase of the project. It emphasizes the execution of a collaboratively developed project plan, where project recipients also serve as co-evaluators, ensuring that implementation remains responsive to community realities. A culturally grounded approach is prioritized through the use of indigenous languages, storytelling, participatory observation, and traditional assessment tools, which enable progress to be measured in ways that are aligned with the community's values. Involvement is characterized by a two-way, reciprocal learning process, where both the community and external stakeholders learn from one another.

Decisions and solutions must be inclusive of diverse community interests, with a particular focus on communal benefit over individual or institutional gain. Where adjustments are needed, they should emerge from community consensus-building forums, such as lekgotla or other traditional councils, reinforcing collective ownership and cultural relevance in project execution.

OWNERSHIP



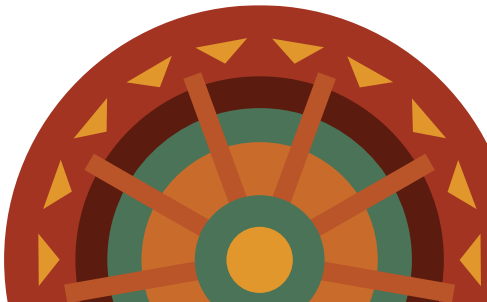
In the EPIO Evaluation framework/ tool, ownership represents the sustainability phase of a project, where long-term success is anchored in the community's continued leadership and involvement. Ownership is marked by community acceptance of the project outcomes, reflecting alignment with local values and priorities. It also involves sustained participation, where the community remains actively engaged beyond the initial phases of implementation. True ownership is realized when the community sees the project as their own, initiated, shaped, and led by them, rather than imposed by external stakeholders.

This phase emphasizes empowerment and capacity building, equipping community members with the skills, knowledge, and structures necessary to maintain, adapt, and scale the intervention over time. Additionally, ongoing engagement ensures that the project remains relevant, responsive, and rooted in Ubuntu principles. Ultimately, ownership ensures that the project's impact is not only preserved but also deepened through community-led stewardship, promoting resilience, autonomy, and cultural continuity.

Table 1: Application of the Ubuntu project management

PHASES	STEPS	HOW TO	THEMES
Engagement	1. Pre-engagement with the community	Identify the Local leadership structures. -introduce yourself to the community leadership in reverence to the Ubuntu spirituality (Go ipega). -Gather information from the community leaders concerning the historical context, customs, languages and world views, taboos, rituals, behaviours of the community. The leaders link the evaluator to the community.	Showing respect to the community Courtesy Humility Interconnectedness Hospitality
	2. Relationship building (building rapport with the community, exploring community protocol and gatekeeping)	Acknowledge every person. Engage every member in the evaluation equally (Considerations: age, gender, professions, socioeconomics) Respect each member by acknowledging everyone's opinions and viewpoints.	Respect for others. Communalism Have a sense of belonging. Tolerance
	3. Understand the evaluated community's social, cultural, and historical context. An Ubuntu approach respects local customs, languages, and worldviews, ensuring that the evaluation reflects the community's lived experiences.	Have a dialogue with leaders, gatekeepers, influencers, etc. on the community's lived experiences. This can be done through speaking to community members and attending community events, ceremonies rituals, etc. to gain a deeper context.	Respect for one another. Dignity Relatedness with the environment and people Respect for others. Mutuality
	4. The communities should initiate their programs/ or standing	Provide the platform/space for the communities to share their views. For example, through Kgotla meetings,	Collaboration

	projects, respectfully negotiated by the government/research institutions/ NGO.	expectations, projects that they desire to be carried out in their community. Facilitate the process of project teams engaging with communities. The evaluator will ensure the local leader is in alignment and facilitates introduction to the community. Ensure community feedback.	Courtesy Sharing, cooperation
	5. Informed consent from the community for participation (it can be verbal or written)	Establishes existing protocols in the community. Together with the community, adapt or design protocols. Ensure to consider people's values, culture, & realities.	Community engagement, respect for community values, and ethics
	6. Stakeholder Engagement	Convene conversation sessions with stakeholders involved regarding what has been established.	Partnership Collectiveness



PHASES	STEPS	HOW TO	THEMES
Planning phase	1. The community identifies and nominates their representatives that will partner with the project team.	Based on the context and nature of the project, support the community to identify, nominate & select the ideal people through a democratic process.	Collectiveness
		Establishment of one mutually accountable project team (Partners).	Solidarity
		The combined project team establishes the feasibility of the project and adjusts it to a mutually beneficial outcome if necessary.	Common good
	2. The communities should set the goals of the program based on their priorities and needs to promote sustainable benefits over time.	As the evaluation team: Identify, establish community priorities and needs. Establish sustainable benefits of the project.	Interdependence
		The Partners lay the ground rules for respect and understanding.	
		The team to identify co- leaders for the team for shared responsibility and accountability.	Social justice
		Emphasis holistic view of individual as part of the larger community (not based on performance matric)	For respect and understanding among individual
	3. Determination of the roles and functions of the combined project team members.	The team to create guidelines for the roles and responsibilities of the team members for the success of the project. - Be transparent in all the communication to build trust	

	4. Mutual agreement of all partners on the success of the planned project. 5. stakeholder engagement	- Create community connections by identifying and aligning core values Empowerment and confidence building through lifting one another) Create space for dialogue and communication for all stakeholders.	Humanness Sharing Wholeness Social interdependence Dialogical Morality Cooperation, Community participation Collaboration, Communal Interdependence Spiritual Compassion Trustworthiness Sharing, Collaboration, Active participation

PHASES	STEPS	HOW TO	THEMES
Design Phase	Risks and mitigation strategies	The partners will collaborate to identify things that may hinder project progress in a dignified manner. Partners will develop or adapt possible mitigation strategies that are cultural relevant.	Dignity Social justice Collaboration
	Strategic alignment of the project goals, aspirations and contextual cultural practices of the community	The combined team works together to align the community needs, aspirations, and contextual cultural practices with the project goals.	Shared responsibility Dignity Inclusivity
	Mutual Setting of estimated timelines for roll out of the project	Involve the community in identifying the resources needed. Involve the team in identifying the community/Indigenous knowledge, skills and local assets that can be used in the project Setting of estimated timelines.	Inclusivity Community engagement
	Co-creation of standards for evaluation	Co-create/design or adapt an African-rooted monitoring tools. Co-create/design or adapt an African-rooted or context-relevant evaluation tools e.g. songs, observations, folklore, poems, histories, storytelling, and others common in their communities. These should be participatory tools that are context-relevant based on the Ubuntu epistemologies.	Collaboration Ownership Relational epistemology
	Assembling the project monitoring team	Assembling an inclusive team that is representative of all the key partners.	Community engagement Inclusion Ownership
	Assembling the project evaluation team	Assembling an inclusive team that is representative of key partners.	Community engagement Ownership
	Mutual agreement on the success in the execution of the project plan		

PHASES	STEPS	HOW TO	
Implementation phase	1. Execution of the comprehensive project plan	Recognizing the context, culture, belief systems, and values knowers in the community, the project team identifies the best ways to execute the project. Ensure that everyone understands their roles, gets involved, and participates by taking ownership in the execution of the project. Provides regular feedback to all stakeholders after reaching a communal agreement The community and the evaluator all agree to changes. Together (the evaluation team) write the report.	Cooperation Ownership Communalism Consensus Cooperation Togetherness
PHASES	**STEPS**	**HOW TO**	
Monitoring phase	Assess and track project progress. 1. Compare the actual progress with the planned progress and propose adjustments where necessary.	The monitoring team to assess the progress of the project by using the monitoring tool. identifying the overarching problems or challenges that may be a contributing factor to the implementation of the project. Participatory monitoring of the implemented activities and resources to establish that the project does not harm asserts, spirituality, relationships, and values of the community, or is it enhancing or bringing benefits wanted by the community.	Communal participation Community participation benevolence

	2. Community engagement – in monitoring the whole community is engagement	engage the community itself in the identification of challenges that they feel bear on the community communal good taking priority over individual priorities	Humility Social interdependence consideration collectiveness
Impact Evaluation phase	1. Utilize the co-created standards to assess the project's successes and outcomes. 2. Analyse the data collected. 3. Disseminate the results to the community and the world. 4. Stakeholder engagement	Examining the human resource availability locate the best way in which the project may help the community. Take collective decision-making. Transparency and respect for the community with genuine reflection. Developing authentic research. Mutually beneficial outcomes for the community.	Respect for the community Sharing Mutuality Cooperation
PHASES	**STEPS**	**HOW TO**	
Sustainability Phase	Community ownership Community ownership Community empowerment/capacity building Stakeholder engagement	Social responsibility Address the more pressing social needs within their communities Enhance consent processes Promoting equity in public voices and empowerment of the communities represented. Embrace reciprocity & consensus	Social responsibility Empathizing collaboration Consensual Equity Reciprocity

THE EPIO MANAGEMENT AND EVALUATION TOOL

These questions help an evaluator assess whether the monitoring and evaluation tools are effective in tracking the project's progress and are deeply rooted in Ubuntu spirituality. Ubuntu spirituality is the main tenet that distinguishes indigenous approaches from Western approaches of collective well-being, cultural relevance, and shared responsibility. By aligning these tools with local values and practices, the evaluation process becomes a meaningful and empowering experience for the community. Therefore, the four pillars of the Ubuntu Evaluation tool, Community Engagement, Community Participation, Community Involvement, and Community Ownership, are critical in the EPIO Evaluation Tool.

Table 2: EPIO evaluation tool

	Ubuntu Evaluation questions/qualitative	Quantitative
Inception Phase ***Community Engagement***	Who initiated the project? At what phases of the project was the community involved? Who selected the community/core researchers for the project? What were the roles of the community members? Was the community involved in the identification of the problem targeted? for intervention What role does spirituality play in this project?	Which of the following groups initiated the project? 1 = Community members 2 = Government officials 3 = External organizations (NGOs) 4 = Private sector At what phases of the project was the community involved? Please indicate at which phases the community was involved (select all that apply): Planning phase Implementation phase Monitoring phase Evaluation phase Other (please specify)

		Who selected the community/core researchers for the project? 1 = Community members themselves 2 = Project leaders 3 = External consultants 4 = Government agencies What were the roles of the community members? Which of the following roles did community members play? (select all that apply): Decision-making Implementation of activities Monitoring and evaluation Providing local knowledge None Other (please specify) What role does spirituality play in this project? On a scale of 1-5, how significant is spirituality in the project's implementation? 1 = Not significant at all 2 = Slightly significant 3 = Moderately significant 4 = Very significant 5 = Extremely significant

Planning phase *Community Participation*	Were cultural leaders or elders consulted during the design of these tools to ensure they align with local customs and traditions?	Were cultural leaders or elders consulted during the design phase of the tools? 1 = Yes, extensively 2 = Yes, somewhat 3 = No, but their input was considered 4 = No, not consulted at all
	Ubuntu Evaluation questions/qualitative	**Quantitative**
Design phase *Community Participation*	Did the partners work together respectfully to find challenges in the project? Were all partners' views considered when identifying problems? How were sensitive cultural issues handled during discussions? Were the solutions created based on the community's cultural values? Did the strategies respect and reflect local cultural practices? Were the solutions suitable for the community's specific needs? Did the team work well to match community needs and cultural practices with the project goals? Were the community's long-term goals and traditions included in the project? How well were the cultural practices of the community integrated into the project's objectives? Did the community help identify the resources needed for the project? Were the resources chosen based on the community's input? How was the community's voice considered in the process? Did the project use Indigenous knowledge and skills effectively?	

	Were local knowledge and assets valued and included in the project? Did the team create monitoring tools based on African traditions or community practices? Were tools like songs, storytelling, or observations used for monitoring? Did the monitoring tools fit with Ubuntu principles? Were the evaluation tools based on African or local traditions? Did the community participate in using tools like songs, poems, or stories to evaluate the project? How well did the tools connect with the community's culture and practices?	
	Ubuntu Evaluation questions/qualitative	**Quantitative**
Implementation phase *Community Involvement and Participation*	What indigenous tools were used to collect data? How was cultural knowledge explored from the knowledge holders? Do the tools capture the community's holistic understanding of success, such as spiritual, social, and relational well-being, beyond just material outcomes? How do the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) tools reflect the community's cultural values, norms, and practices?	Which of the following indigenous tools were used to collect data? (Select all that apply): 1 = Oral storytelling 2 = Focus group discussions with elders 3 = Local symbols or art forms (e.g., carvings, drawings) 4 = Traditional ceremonies or rituals 5 = Songs or chants 6 = Other (please specify) Which methods were used to elicit cultural knowledge from community knowers? (Select all that apply): 1 = Direct interviews with elders or cultural leaders 2 = Group discussions or community gatherings 3 = Observation of traditional practices 4 = Participation in cultural rituals or activities

		5 = Use of Indigenous communication tools (e.g., proverbs, oral history) 6 = Other (please specify) To what extent do the tools capture the community's holistic understanding of success, including spiritual, social, and relational well-being, beyond material outcomes? 1 = Not at all 2 = To a small extent 3 = To a moderate extent 4 = To a great extent 5 = Completely
	Ubuntu Evaluation questions/qualitative	**Quantitative**
Monitoring Phase *Community Involvement*	Were community members actively involved in the co-creation or adaptation of the M&E tools?	On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = not involved at all, 5 = highly involved), how would you rate the level of involvement of community members in the co-creation or adaptation of the M&E tools? How many community members participated in the co-creation or adaptation process?
	How were the perspectives of different groups (elders, youth, women, marginalized individuals) incorporated into the design of the tools?	On a scale of 1 to 5, how well do you think the perspectives of elders were incorporated into the design of the M&E tools? On a scale of 1 to 5, how well do you think the perspectives of youth were incorporated into the design of the M&E tools? On a scale of 1 to 5, how well do you think the perspectives of women were incorporated into the design of the M&E tools? How many representatives from each group (elders, youth, women, marginalized individuals) were involved in the design of the tools?

Impact Evaluation Phase *Community ownership*	How do the tools ensure that data is collected in a way that fosters respect, dignity, and reciprocity among participants?	On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = not at all, 5 = to a great extent), to what extent do you feel the data collection tools foster respect for participants? On a scale of 1 to 5, how well do you think the data collection process upholds the dignity of participants? On a scale of 1 to 5, how effectively does the data collection process promote reciprocity between participants and researchers What percentage of participants reported feeling respected during the data collection process? (0% to 100%) How many participants mentioned that the data collection process upheld their dignity and fostered a sense of reciprocity
	Ubuntu Evaluation questions/qualitative	**Quantitative**
	What were the benefits of the project to the community and the community researchers?	On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = no benefit, 5 = highly beneficial), how would you rate the overall benefit of the project to the community? On a scale of 1 to 5, how beneficial was your involvement in the project to your personal or professional development?
Sustainability Phase *Community Ownership*	How has the project ensured the continuity of benefits after its completion? What strategies have been implemented to transfer ownership and responsibility to the community? What challenges are foreseen in maintaining the project outcomes over time	On a scale of 1 to 5, how confident are you that the project's outcomes will be sustained for at least 5 years after the project ends?

	How have local resources (human, financial, or material) been integrated into the sustainability plan? How have community members' skills or capacities improved to manage the project independently?	

Conclusion

The Engagement, Participation, Involvement, and Ownership (EPIO) of the community are critical determinants of a project's sustainability and overall success. When communities are actively engaged, meaningfully involved, and empowered to assume ownership, projects are more likely to be culturally relevant, socially accepted, and sustained beyond external support. Conversely, the absence or weakening of these EPIO pillars diminishes community commitment, reduces accountability, and ultimately undermines the long-term impact and continuity of development interventions.

6. Community Language Based Evaluation Framework

Introduction

The inadequate understanding and recognition of African values in the project cycle leads to low participation and commitment of beneficiaries, ultimately leading to low project success. The **Community Language Based Evaluation Framework (COLABEV)** is a community empowerment tool for conducting evaluation in African communities using community language including proverbs, songs, idioms, storytelling, folktales, myths and taboos.

The value add of the COLABEV is that it gives convening space to the targeted beneficiaries, project designers and implementers and funders to discuss the applicable community languages in their community that can shape the project intended purpose, projected outcomes and indicators of success. In so doing, the COLABEV improves the relevance and impact of the project interventions through informing the design, implementation, monitoring and communication of evaluation findings.

Rationale for the framework

The rigorous systematic review[2] conducted by the Pan African Indigenous Evaluation Consortium (PAIEC) highlighted the Euro centric approach to evaluation in Africa that promotes Western values and methodologies. These approaches are not aligned with the values and realities of the African people, making decolonizing and indigenizing evaluation an imperative for making projects to be sustainable and impactful in Africa.

Development projects and evaluations that incorporate African values from community languages address power asymmetries among beneficiaries and enhance inclusiveness and participation for greater ownership, impact and sustainability of interventions. The COLABEV offers opportunity for raising voices of the marginalized in society, bringing out their needs and aspirations.

Community languages are part of the Indigenous Knowledge System (IKS) that embodies traditional knowledge acquired by local people through the accumulation of generation wise experiences. Indigenous knowledge is understood as local knowledge, native, traditional unique practices to a given culture or society, which is usually transmitted from one generation to generation by word of mouth such as oral folk-stories and proverbs.

The indigenous pedagogies of the various African oral literatures include fairy tales, legends, tall tales, jokes, proverbs and riddles, among others. However, proverbs stand from the rest of the crowd because they offer a wider lens and hence are adapted as an illustration for the COLABEV. Proverbs have unique characteristics that position them as evaluators of society. Proverbs outside cultural spaces or specific encounters in a given can be easily misread or viewed as less significant. Cultural context and interaction matter when interoperating Proverbs.

[2] Chilisa, et al. (2024). Mapping African Rooted Evaluation Approaches methods and Tools: A Systematic Review. University of Botswana

Proverbs are complex, poetic, and condensed. The listener and Proverb presenter must have some knowledge of the context, history, and culture in which the Proverb originates. "An example in the Hausa language might be girman kai, rawanin tsiya, which translates as "big head, indigent turban" and conveys in just four words the idea that an inflated self-image and boastful behaviour lead to beggarly status in the community". The use of proverbs in evaluations can operate as an illustration of expression, assessment, measurement of performance of a particular project.

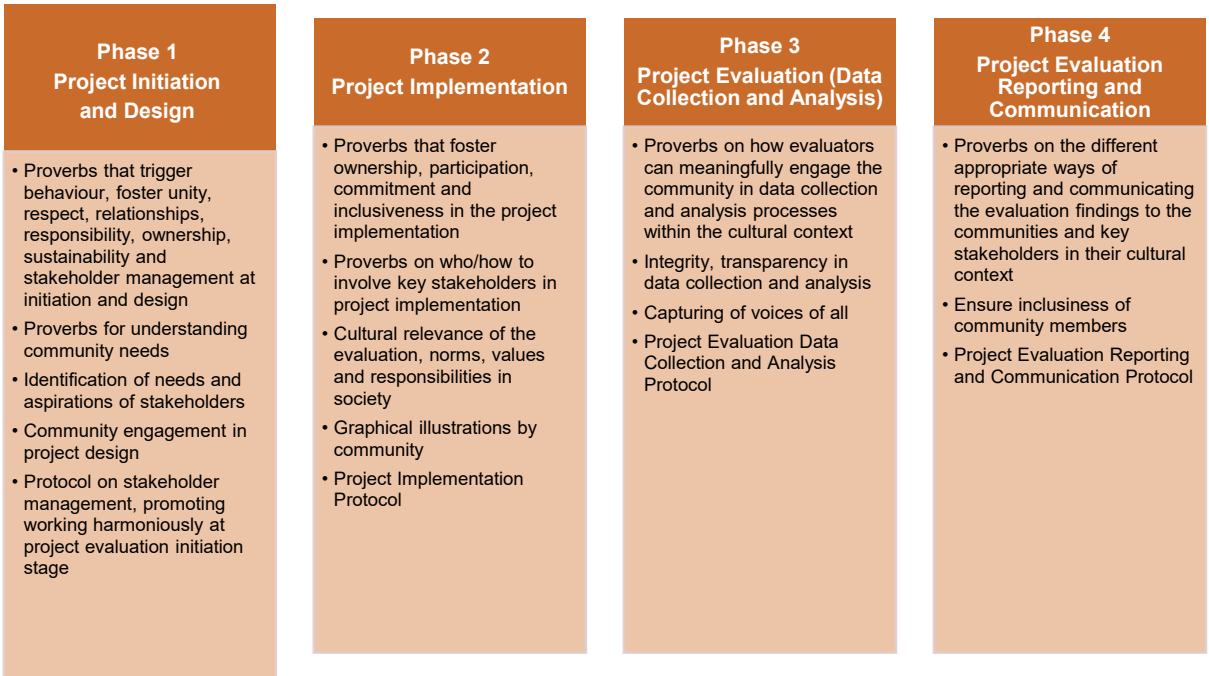
Proverb based evaluation is therefore important due to the following inherent values:

a) Proverbs have evaluative insights; they play an important role in relationship building, communicating governance, understanding the wellness of a community and identifying community needs and what is important
b) Proverbs connect us as Africans and foster connectedness, relationships
c) They communicate and symbolize the cultures, values and norms of a community
d) Proverbs bring out the voices of the people, especially the unheard and marginalized
e) They bring to the fore community knowledge that is already in existence
f) Proverbs are a medium of passing wisdom from one generation to another
g) They help to deal with elitism in evaluation since all community members understand and can associate with the proverbs
h) Ownership of projects is fostered in projects when evaluation is culturally sensitive

Community Language Based Evaluation Framework

The COLABEV is a four-stage framework that enables evaluators to undertake evaluation from the initiation, design, data collection and reporting and communication phases, using community languages. The four phases of the framework that cover the entire evaluation life cycle are presented below in **Figure 1**, using proverbs as an illustration of how community languages can be applied.

Figure 1: Community Language Based Evaluation Framework



How to Apply the Community Based Evaluation Framework

The first step is for evaluation stakeholder to gain acceptance from the community to engage. The second step is to organise the key stakeholders to engage along the project cycle. The third step is to apply the COLABEV by inquiring about community languages and their insights for project initiation, design, implementation and evaluation.

The framework is operationalized through a COLABEV Protocol that addresses the four phases of the project cycle. **Table 1** presents the key evaluation questions in each of the four phases, seeking for wisdom in the proverbs to inform the project cycle.



Table 1: COLABEV Protocol

Evaluation Stage	Evaluation questions
1. Project Initiation and Design	Evaluators seek wisdom of proverbs: • Understanding the community from their perspective • Engage with gate keepers and community leaders • Entry into community • Understand the key stakeholders, their roles and responsibilities • Understand the culture, norms and values of the community • Introduce the evaluation and its benefits • Ownership: invite people to own the project • What kind of proverbs emphasize ownership, responsible participation, respect • Identify proverbs that speak about success factors and project sustainability • Roles and responsibilities • Who are the voiceless
2. Project Implementation	Identify proverbs that speak about: • Roles and responsibilities of community members • Proverbs that enhance participant engagement, commitment, respect, ownership and inclusiveness in project implementation • Proverbs that identify community values that will foster project sustainability, how they should be addressed during implementation
3. Project Evaluation Data Collection and Analysis	Proverbs that speak to: • Values, norms, principles and ethics of interaction in data collection • Preferred methods and tools of data collection and analysis • Credible data sources • Competence of people collecting data • Integrity in collection of information • Avoiding biases • Fair and inclusive data collection and analysis • Proverbs on quality of community engagement tools and approaches • Projects that tell us about tools, methods for reaching the voiceless, marginalised
4. Project Evaluation Reporting and Communication	Wisdom of proverbs on: • Most culturally appropriate reporting, communication and feedback strategies • Most relevant methods of information dissemination • Platforms and means of appropriate communication • Identification of the right audiences • Appropriate communication tools • Fairness and integrity in reporting and dissemination

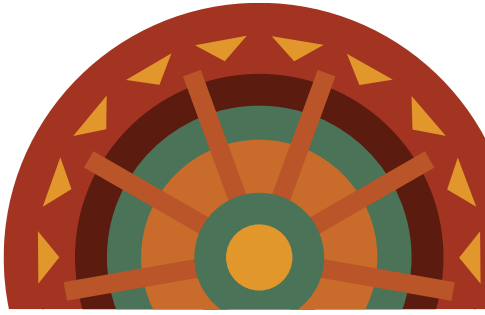
5. Project Initiation and Design	Evaluators seek wisdom of proverbs: • Understanding the community from their perspective • Engage with gate keepers and community leaders • Entry into community • Understand the key stakeholders, their roles and responsibilities • Understand the culture, norms and values of the community • Introduce the evaluation and its benefits • Ownership: invite people to own the project • What kind of proverbs emphasize ownership, responsible participation, respect • Identify proverbs that speak about success factors and project sustainability • Roles and responsibilities • Who are the voiceless
6. Project Implementation	Identify proverbs that speak about: • Roles and responsibilities of community members • Proverbs that enhance participant engagement, commitment, respect, ownership and inclusiveness in project implementation • Proverbs that identify community values that will foster project sustainability, how they should be addressed during implementation
7. Project Implementation	Identify proverbs that speak about: • Roles and responsibilities of community members • Proverbs that enhance participant engagement, commitment, respect, ownership and inclusiveness in project implementation • Proverbs that identify community values that will foster project sustainability, how they should be addressed during implementation
8. Project Evaluation Data Collection and Analysis	Proverbs that speak to: • Values, norms, principles and ethics of interaction in data collection • Preferred methods and tools of data collection and analysis • Credible data sources • Competence of people collecting data • Integrity in collection of information • Avoiding biases • Fair and inclusive data collection and analysis • Proverbs on quality of community engagement tools and approaches • Projects that tell us about tools, methods for reaching the voiceless, marginalised
9. Project Evaluation Reporting and Communication	Wisdom of proverbs on: • Most culturally appropriate reporting, communication and feedback strategies • Most relevant methods of information dissemination • Platforms and means of appropriate communication • Identification of the right audiences • Appropriate communication tools • Fairness and integrity in reporting and dissemination

Sample Application of the COLABEV Protocol Toolkit

Table 2 provides a sample application of proverb wisdom in the COLABEV protocol. The same approach can be used for any other community language in the COLABEV.

Table 2: Application of the COLABEV using proverbs

Project phase	Strategy	Main Evaluation Questions
Project Design and Initiation *(Including Data Collection and Analysis and communication stages)*	Evaluators engage project **initiators and design participants** to find out if the wisdom from proverbs were used in the design and initiation of the project; and data collection and analysis approaches	1) Who were the key players in project initiation and design? 2) Did you use the wisdom of proverbs, myths, or folktales that foster ownership, unity, respect, relationships when initiating or designing this project as well as designing data collection and analysis tools? If you used them, which proverbs did you use and which values did you incorporate in this project based on the wisdom from these proverbs? If not used, why? 3) If you did not use local wisdom, we would like to role play designing and initiating this project and data collection using local wisdom from proverbs, myths, folktales that foster these values. 4) If we want this project to bring impact and success, are there proverbs that bring out these values? 5) Assess the extent to which the selected project utilized the above wisdom in crafting the data collection, interpretation and analysis approach; Who was involved?



Project phase	Strategy	Main Evaluation Questions
Project Implementation	Evaluators engage project implementers to find out if the wisdom from proverbs, myths, folktales were used in the implementation of the project	• Who were/are the key players in implementing the project? • When delivering the project, was there any local wisdom used in delivering the project • Did you use the wisdom of proverbs, myths, or folktales that foster ownership, participation, inclusiveness, respect, relationships when implementing this project? If you used them, which proverbs did you use and which values did you incorporate in this project based on the wisdom from these proverbs? If not used, why? • If you did not use local wisdom, we would like to role play implementing this project using local wisdom from proverbs, myths, folktales that foster these values During implementation of the project, we want inclusiveness, engagement to succeed, commitment, devotion by the participants; are there any proverbs, myths, folk tales that foster these values, working hard?
Project Evaluation Reporting and Communication	Inquire if wisdom from proverbs were used on the different appropriate ways of reporting and communicating the evaluation findings to the communities and key stakeholders	1) Who are/were the key players in reporting and communicating the project progress and evaluation findings? 2) Did you use the wisdom of proverbs, myths, or folktales that foster ownership, unity, respect, relationships when preparing tools and approaches for reporting and communicating project information? If you used them, which proverbs did you use and which values did you incorporate in this project based on the wisdom from these proverbs? If not used, why? 3) If you did not use local wisdom, we would like to role play reporting and communicating project data and information using local wisdom from proverbs, myths, folktales that foster these values

Users of the COLABEV

The COLABEV can be used in evaluation of African communities by all evaluation stakeholders, mostly the funders, commissioners of evaluations, communities, evaluators/researchers, ethics bodies and universities/academia. The COLABEV will be applicable in most communities in Africa that use proverbs, stories, folktales, idioms or any other community language for assessing their daily context and happenings. The degree to which each stakeholder group uses the COLABEV will vary by the phase of the evaluation, ranging from low to high **(Table 3).** In some cases, the degree of application may be high in some phases and not others for different stakeholders.

Table 3: Degree of use of the COLABEV by the different evaluation stakeholders

	Level of engagement at the stages of the evaluation cycle			
Users	**Project Evaluation Initiation**	**Project Evaluation Design**	**Project Evaluation Data Collection & Analysis**	**Project evaluation reporting & Communication**
Funders	High	Low	Low	High
Commissioners	High	Medium	Medium	High
Community	High	Medium	Medium	High
Evaluators/Researchers	High	High	High	High
Ethic Bodies	High	Low	Low	Medium
Academia	High	High	High	High

Scale: Low = 1; Medium = 2; High = 3

What the COLABEV offers

- Gives convening space to the targeted beneficiaries, project designers and implementers and funders to discuss the applicable proverbs and other community languages in their community that can shape the project intended purpose, projected outcomes and indicators of success.
- Ownership of projects is fostered in projects when evaluation is culturally sensitive.
- The framework improves relevance and impact of the project interventions through informing the design, implementation, monitoring and communication of evaluation findings.

- The tool advocates for voice, participation, inclusiveness, unity, relations, respect, connectedness and wellness in interventions.
- The solicitation of community languages and the wisdom embedded at each stage of the project cycle encourages more participation and relation building among young people and women.

Conclusion

The Community Based Evaluation Framework can be used together with other PAIEC developed tools. Community languages can be used to create togetherness, involvement and participation at every stage of project cycle to support planning, implementation and evaluation.

7. Technology Integration in African Rooted Evaluation Frameworks



Introduction

African-rooted evaluation recognises Indigenous knowledge systems, cultural expression, oral traditions, symbols, storytelling and collective meaning-making as legitimate and essential sources of evidence. Technology, when intentionally and ethically applied, can strengthen these practices by enhancing how such knowledge is gathered, preserved, interpreted and shared. This guideline outlines how digital tools can be integrated in a way that respects context, mitigates digital exclusion, and protects cultural integrity while improving the quality, credibility and reach of evaluation processes.

Rationale

The integration of technology in African-rooted evaluation is justified by the following drivers:

- **Preservation of cultural knowledge**: Video, audio and visual tools capture gesture, tone, symbolism and performance that written methods cannot.
- **Expanded participation**: Mobile tools allow broader inclusion where literacy, language or distance are barriers.
- **Youth engagement**: Digital platforms align with the tools and environments already used by young people.
- **Efficiency and data integrity**: Digital systems reduce data loss, improve traceability and enable multiple formats of evidence capture.
- **Equity and accessibility**: Offline functionality and local language adaptations allow inclusion in low-connectivity and marginalised communities.

These benefits are only realised when digital exclusion risks (poor connectivity, limited digital literacy, cost of data, and cultural misrepresentation in AI tools) are intentionally managed.

Key Concepts

In this framework, key concepts listed below are considered and important aspects of designing and selecting technologies in implementing MAE frameworks:

Table 2 Key concepts and terminology relevant to tech-integration in MAE frameworks

African-Rooted Evidence	Knowledge expressed through proverbs, storytelling, symbols, performance, drawings, community dialogue and lived experience.
Context-Responsive Technology	Technology selected based on connectivity realities, language needs, cultural appropriateness and user capability.
Offline-First Design	Prioritising tools that function without internet access, with later synchronisation.
Multimodal Data	Combining voice, video, photographs, text and symbolic representation as valid evidence forms.
Ethical Digital Practice	Informed consent, control over representation, safeguarding of cultural knowledge and mitigation of misuse or misinterpretation.
Facilitated Sense-Making	Technology supports, but does not replace, the relational and dialogical nature of African-rooted evaluation.

Integrating Technology Across the Project Cycle

Tech integration is relevant across the project cycle and in implementation of all MAE frameworks. To operationalise technology integration, steps and tools related to data collection, facilitation, analysis, communication and project management are considered. These are relevant across 6 project stages. As listed below:

- **Stage 1: Planning and Design –** to establish culturally grounded, technologically feasible evaluation design.
- **Stage 2: Community Entry and Relationship Building –** to establish trust and cultural grounding of the process.
- **Stage 3: Data Collection –** to collect culturally valid, multimodal data.
- Stage 4: Facilitation and Collective Meaning-Making - to enable culturally grounded dialogue and reflection.
- **Stage 5: Analysis and Synthesis –** to transform raw cultural data into credible evaluative findings.
- **Stage 6: Communication and Knowledge –** to share knowledge to communities and share findings ethically.

The following table details the relevant steps/application of tech, suggested tech tools and considerations that support the implementation of MAE frameworks.

Table 3 Operationalising tech-integration in MAE implementation

Stage	Application/Steps	Suggested tech tools	Key considerations
Stage 1: Planning and Design	1.1 Determine the tech context of the project, including digital literacy, connectivity, and access to hardware. 1.2 Determine relevant tech tools to integrate throughout the project for data collection, facilitation, analysis, communication and project management. 1.3 Set-up and pilot or test all tools before implementing	*As listed in following stages*	• Prioritise offline functionality. • Pre-test all tools in local conditions. • Build translation capacity into the design.
Stage 2: Community Engagement	2.1 Implement tech that supports community engagement activities. These may include: 2.1.1 Data collection: Digital consent tools with audio explanations in local languages. 2.1.2 Facilitation: Tablets or projectors to share digital stories and visual metaphors. 2.1.3 Analysis: Digital logging of community expectations and priorities. 2.1.4 Communication: Use simple visual recordings to document community-defined success markers.	• Tablets or Android smartphones to display visual prompts, storyboards or informative materials digitally during community meetings • Pre-loaded multimedia files (e.g. videos, audio, images) to facilitate explanation of evaluation aims in accessible, culturally appropriate formats. • Offline-capable presentation tools or document viewers.	• Technology must not replace face-to-face engagement. • All recordings must be voluntary and consent-based.
Stage 3: Data Collection	3.1 Conduct tech-based facilitation and data collection of quantitative and qualitive data as designed using MAE frameworks.	• Android smartphones or tablets running KoBoCollect (the mobile app of KoBoToolbox) or ODK Collect for offline-capable survey/data collection.	• Prioritise audio and visual alongside text and numerical.

Stage	Application/Steps	Suggested tech tools	Key considerations
	3.1.1 Data collection: Offline digital surveys (e.g., KoboCollect); Voice-recorded open responses; Tablet-based video and audio capture of discussions, gestures, drawings, dance and storytelling. 3.1.2 Facilitation: Tablets used as shared tools within group sessions; AI generated digital visual prompts for proverbs, folktales and reflective exercises. 3.1.3 Analysis: Secure digital storage of raw multimodal data; AI transcription and translation with manual review or training of AI translation tool. 3.1.4 Communication: Secure sharing of raw recordings within the evaluation team using cloud-based tools.	• Microphones to ensure quality audio recording. • Devices that support multimodal data: photo, video, audio, GPS/geolocation, timestamping. KoBoToolbox/ODK support many of these data types. • MidJourney, Dall-E or tools that integrate AI image generation like Canva for visual creation. • Otter.AI and similar tools for transcription and translation. • OneDrive/GoogleDrive or similar cloud storage platforms that allow for increasing space to store large video/audio/image/document files.	• Maintain high attention to recording quality. • Avoid over-reliance on AI transcription where dialects are poorly supported.
Stage 4: Collective Sense-Making	4.1 Utilise tech to support and capture-sense making processes. 4.1.1 Data collection: Live recording of group sense-making sessions, capturing gestures and intonation as well; utilise social media to simulate challenges and group sharing. 4.1.2 Facilitation: Tech-assisted storytelling using visual and audio story prompts; Display of AI-generated or illustrated stories and symbols; tablet-based participatory exercises. 4.1.3 Analysis: Coding of visual, audio and narrative data using thematic frameworks;	• Tablets or laptops with video/audio playback — for showing recorded stories, visuals, or prompt material during participatory sessions. • Simple digital whiteboard apps or drawing/note-taking apps (on tablets) for community members to sketch, draw, annotate or symbolically represent ideas (e.g. drawings, diagrams, symbols). • Whatsapp and other social media to use challenge based insights sharing.	• Facilitator skill is more important than the tool. • AI-generated content must be reviewed for cultural bias.

Stage	Application/Steps	Suggested tech tools	Key considerations
	Comparative review of symbolic and narrative patterns. 4.1.4 Communication: Internal digital synthesis products (visual summaries, audio highlights).	• Where literacy or digital literacy is limited — rely on audio-visual facilitation rather than text-heavy tools.	
Stage 5: Analysis and Synthesis	5.1 Using tech software to process and synthesise data collected during the project. 5.1.1 Data collection: Not applicable – focus shifts to processing. 5.1.2 Facilitation: Digital validation workshops using video clips, images and storyboards. 5.1.3 Analysis: Manual and software-assisted coding of transcripts; Thematic analysis of gestures, symbolism and narrative structures. 5.1.4 Communication: Draft digital products including images, animations and audio narratives.	• Computers (laptops or desktops) with sufficient storage and processing capabilities. • Qualitative data analysis software (or lighter open-source alternatives) – e.g. NVivo or QDminer. For more complex or quantitative data use traditional statistical or data-analysis tools (depending on the evaluation design), possibly spreadsheets, statistical packages, or custom dashboards – e.g. MS Excel and Stata. • Storage solutions: local servers or secure cloud hosting (depending on connectivity, consent, and data-governance considerations).	• Preserve original meaning through translator and cultural review. • Avoid stripping stories of context in favour of technical brevity.
Stage 6: Communication and Knowledge Sharing	6.1 Implement tech supported assimilation of lessons and dissemination in formats that empower community members to engage and use the insights. 6.1.1 Data collection: Capture community feedback through voice and video.	• Tablets / laptops / projectors — for community screenings or sharing sessions. If electricity/ infrastructure allows, use projectors or large screens for community gatherings. • Multimedia authoring tools like Canva or MS Video to create digital storytelling outputs: e.g. combining	• Use private, moderated spaces where appropriate. • Apply safeguards around ownership and misuse of cultural knowledge.

Stage	Application/Steps	Suggested tech tools	Key considerations
	6.1.2 Facilitation: Community screenings of digital stories and findings; Use of tablets or projectors to display visuals. 6.1.3 Analysis: Review community reactions and incorporate into final learning. 6.1.4 Communication: AI-assisted storytelling products (images, voice-overs, animations); Controlled use of social media via private groups (e.g., WhatsApp); TikTok-style simulations for youth-focused dissemination.	audio, visuals, narrative to produce community-oriented reports or story-products. Depending on resources, this could be simple video-editing software, slide tools, or even basic audio-visual assemblers. • Controlled digital dissemination platforms: where appropriate and consented private messaging groups (e.g. WhatsApp), community-shared digital libraries, or local offline-accessible storage (e.g. USBs, shared devices). • If wider stakeholder or donor communication is needed: standard reporting tools, with inclusion of multimedia outputs as annexes. • Digital repositories / archives: Use secure servers or databases (local or cloud, per consent) to store evaluation data, Multimedia outputs, stories, lessons learned.	

Conclusion

Technology in African-rooted evaluation should function as an enabler of cultural expression rather than a replacement for relational, story-based and community-centred practices. When selected with contextual intelligence, and governed by strong ethical standards, technology strengthens both the authenticity and influence of evaluation practice.

Figure 4: Examples of tech-assisted processes and outputs for MAE (a) AI-generated visual prompts, (b) social media challenge, (c) participatory content creation

(a)



(b)



(c)



Resources

Table 4 . Comparison of data collection tools for MAE

Tool/ approach	Purpose	Benefits	Limitations	Requirements
1. WhatsApp Chat Bot (Turn.io)	Remote elicitation survey data collection, multimedia capture	Ease of use and user familiarity, multi-media to assist with communication and capture, AI translation integration	Requires connectivity; requires proof of company and Meta account, inflated cost	Mobile devices, tablets, Local sim cards, data
2. Fatima	Buck-up for remote elicitation survey data collection in low connectivity	Ease of use, offline functionality, AI translation integration	Limited use of multi-media, moderate cost	Mobile devices, tablets, Local sim cards, data
3. KoboCollect	Buck-up for remote elicitation survey data collection in low connectivity	No subscription fee, Ease of use, offline functionality, Manual translation integration	Limited use of multi-media	Mobile devices, tablets, Local sim cards, data

Table 5. Multimodal data for MAE

Tool/ approach	Purpose	Benefits	Limitations	Requirements
1. Video recording – qualitative data capture	Video capture of pilot process and engagements	Digital capture gestures, audio, dance, role play	Requires consent, intensive editing, and synthesis	Mobile devices, tablets, tripods
2. Photography – qualitative data capture	Photographic capture of drawing and art content	Digital capture of symbolic and visual elements	Requires context and consent	Mobile devices, tablets
3. Sound – qualitative data capture	Sound capture of drawing and art content	Digital voice, sound, and intonation	Requires context and consent	Mobile devices, tablets, microphones

8. Conclusion

Five evaluation frameworks were presented, all the five frameworks are informed by a participatory epistemology, which is the believe that knowledge is co-created through dynamic interactions of people with each other and with the environment. All the frameworks address inequitable partnerships and power relations between communities and funders, commissioners and evaluators. Co-creation is at the centre of each one of the frameworks. For projects that are already operating, evaluators and communities co-create objectives, implementation, strategies, output, outcomes that measure impact and the envisioned future. For projects at the initiation stage, evaluators work with multiple stakeholders to find solutions to problems and to map the objectives, process, outcome indicators and the envisioned future. Each framework nevertheless addresses a specific gap in the evaluation landscape.

All frameworks recognise that project activities are part of a larger system, governed by an understanding of interconnectedness and relationship building. All projects therefore emphasise relationship building, prioritising community needs, cultural sensitivity and respect for all. Ownership of evaluation has remained with the elites while sustainability has become a form of evaluation that is conducted two or more years after the project has ended. All frameworks have an inbuilt sustainability design and evaluation.

Ngwanake Empowerment Framework: It is an empowerment evaluation framework focusing on strengthening youth capacity to integrate indigenous knowledge and technology in their project design, monitoring, and evaluation. It is a participant-driven evaluation where youth conduct their own monitoring and evaluation with the support of the evaluator

People, Environment, Place, Space, and Time Context Responsive Framework

The PEPST focuses its evaluation on context, exploring how a worldview that honors people's relationship with each other and with the universe may influence project implementation and perspectives on what counts as project benefits and success, and how building relationships, changing mindsets, integrating knowledge systems, caring for the environment, and future thinking are important to measure to drive a transformative agenda.

THE PAMOJA SAFARINI THEORY OF PRACTICE

It's an indigenous Theory of Change that integrates African worldviews. The PSTP framework introduces six interconnected principles that guide programme design, implementation, and evaluation across the full project cycle

The Engagement, Participation, Involvement and Ownership (EPIO): It is a planning and management framework that ensures communities are meaningfully engaged at every stage of project design and implementation. It promotes community collective ownership of projects, enabling community-driven decision-making and long-term project impact grounded in Ubuntu values. It brings a new approach to planning, managing, and evaluating projects that leads to people-centred solutions, engagement, participation, involvement, and ownership.

Community Language Based Evaluation Framework

The COLABEV is a four-stage framework that enables evaluators to undertake evaluation from the initiation, design, data collection and reporting and communication phases, using community languages.

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[i] The philosophy of Ngwanake emanates from the systematic review findings that Stated that youths were not active on utilizing cultural evaluations approaches during their design thinking; and implementation of projects; where we noted lack of cultural integration. The tool endeavours to encourage the youth to participate in evaluations with its uniqueness grounded on empowerment emphases, inculcating African culture in the context of interconnectedness; intracultural relationships; thus, fostering overall cultural empowerment on Evaluation practices.