

EVALUATION REPORT TITLE: Independent evaluation of the Building Capacity to Use Research Evidence Programme

RESPONSE TO EVALUATION REPORT:

Overall we are pleased with the findings of this evaluation, which demonstrate that the BCURE pilots have produced good results across the twelve partner countries. As expected of a pilot programme, BCURE has generated a range of relevant learning on what works to improve the use of evidence in policymaking in global development. The final independent evaluation report sets out very clear lessons and recommendations for DFID to take forward in future programmes that promote evidence-informed policymaking.

As outlined under PO8123 on our supplier portal, DFID is currently thinking about future support in this area. We accept all recommendations from the evaluation, which have fed into future design choices. Given that programming in this area is currently at the pre-tender stage, this management response only provides limited detail on uptake pathways and action plans for each recommendation. However, we outline below how all six recommendations from the BCURE evaluation have fed into the formulation of five key principles for future programming in this area. Furthermore, we will share the evaluation recommendations with the suppliers for future programmes in this area, once appointed, and ensure that they consider the implications for the implementation of the programme.

Recommendation	Accepted or Rejected, and if 'Accepted', Action Plan for implementation, or if 'Rejected', reason for rejection.
<p>Recommendation I – Entry points for the Promotion of Evidence-Informed Policymaking <i>When choosing an entry point...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Identify a sector, institution or policy area where there is existing interest in evidence and clear incentives for reform,</i> • <i>Identify a unit that can provide an entry point for capacity building, and consider its status within the ministry or wider government setting</i> • <i>Explicitly consider concerns around politicised decision making and corruption that set up powerful disincentives for EIPM.</i> 	<p>Accepted</p> <p>We agree with all six recommendations, which have collectively fed into five key principles for our future evidence-informed policymaking (EIPM) programming in DFID:</p> <p>Focus: Building on initial analysis, future EIPM programming will focus on key sectors in fewer countries, allowing for closer engagement with local partners during implementation and increasing the chances of transformational impact. Decisions on sector selection will be based on political economy analysis, key policy decision points/timelines in country and senior stakeholder buy-in.</p> <p>Political economy-informed approach: Targeted political economy analysis during design, testing and implementation will ensure a problem-driven and politically smart approach in future EIPM programming. It will map the interests and incentives of major stakeholders in the political system and identify realistic entry points for project activities. PEA is essential to understand the wider political environment, as well as individual and organisational incentive structures related to the use of evidence. It will also help appreciate partner government's understanding of the underlying causes of selected development problems, as they might not view the lack of the use of evidence as an issue. Through this approach,</p>
<p>Recommendation II – Accompanying change <i>When seeking to accompany change, rather than impose it...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Invest in building trust, taking care to promote ownership and providing support in a collaborative way.</i> • <i>Consider how the programme can be designed with sufficient flexibility to allow it to respond to emerging opportunities and challenges,</i> • <i>Monitor shifting incentives, both positive and negative, and assess how these might create new opportunities or challenges.</i> 	
<p>Recommendation III – Different types of capacity building <i>When attempting to promote change at an individual level, through catalysing self-efficacy, facilitation and reinforcement...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Align training or other activities targeting individuals with incentives in the broader environment.</i> • <i>Follow the principles of adult learning theory when designing activities.</i> 	

<p>Recommendation IV – critical mass</p> <p>When seeking to catalyse a ‘critical mass’ ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Consider how to create incentives and harness resources for cascading.</i> ▪ <i>Building in an explicit ‘training of trainers’ strategy, supported by a ‘clustering’ approach, may help trainees develop the social connections to provide mutual support.</i> 	<p>interventions will be designed and framed in ways that ensure ownership and minimise isomorphic mimicry</p> <p>Combining capacity development interventions at organisational and individual levels: Future EIPM programming will fund capacity development to improve evidence use at both the organisational and the individual level. As per recommendations we agree that a more targeted combination of interventions is necessary to achieve sustainable strengthening of evidence-informed policymaking processes, ultimately contributing to more efficient and effective programmes</p> <p>Improved coordination of evidence supply and demand systems and projects. Future EIPM programming will better support projects in sectors where there is an overlap with other bilateral and national government priorities.</p> <p>Flexibility and adaptability: Building on the recommendations from BCURE future EIPM programming will be more flexible <i>and</i> adaptive. Flexibility is needed to fit with changing priorities and external shocks, and adaptation will help test more systematically and proactively which entry points work best</p>
<p>Recommendation – Showcasing tools</p> <p>When aiming to showcase the value of evidence through policy pilots or evidence tools...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Identify a recognised policy problem, so that an evidence-informed approach can be showcased while meeting priority policy objectives.</i> • <i>Seek to capitalise on existing work and partnerships, identify allies, and leverage external resources.</i> • <i>Ensure the right people are involved from within and outside government.</i> • <i>Provide flexible, responsive, hands-on support to ‘co-produce’ policies and tools,</i> • <i>Synergise with other programme activities.</i> • <i>Remain alert as to how a new tool may affect incentives, positive or negative, to use evidence.</i> 	
<p>Recommendation VI – Longer term adoption</p> <p>When attempting to promote the longer-term adoption of reforms into government systems...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Be clear from the design phase what the ultimate goal is.</i> • <i>Link activities to ongoing government initiatives and resources which may provide opportunities for adoption and scaling.</i> • <i>Explicitly identify the political economy risks that might skew genuine change into isomorphic mimicry,</i> 	