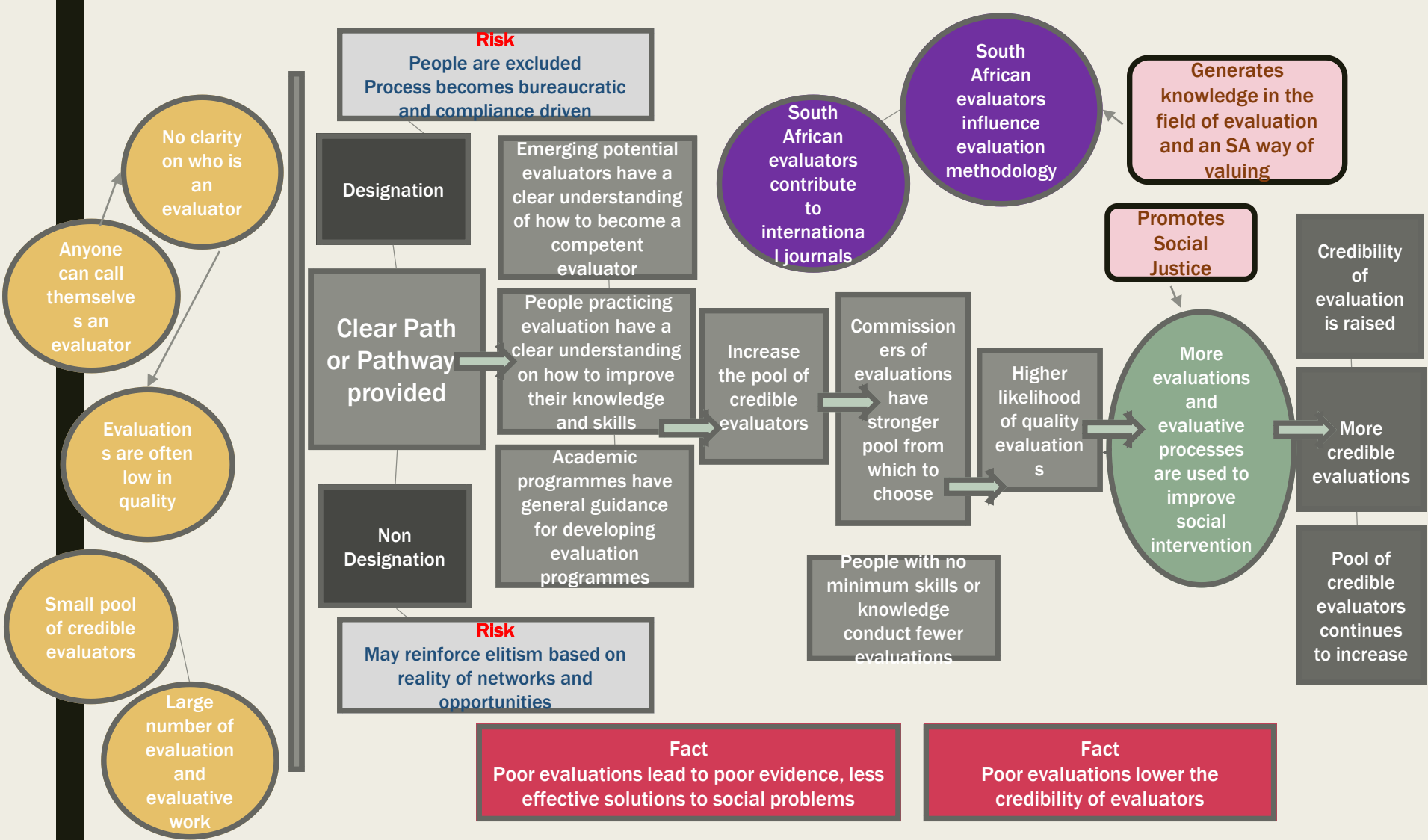




**STRENGTHENING EVALUATORS IN
SOUTH AFRICA:
WHICH PATHS TO CHOOSE?**

June 2017





The Problem

The need for competent evaluators

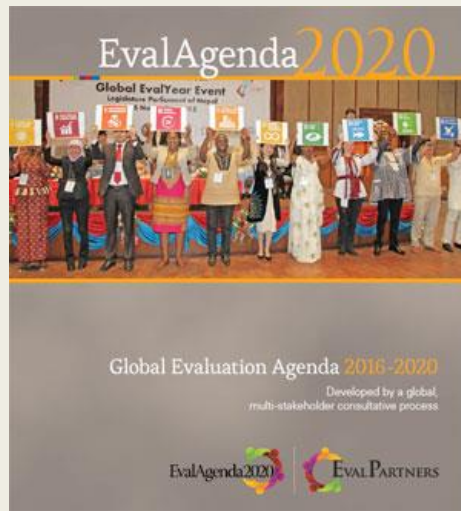
Large number of evaluation and evaluative work

No clarity on who is an evaluator

Evaluations are often low in quality

Anyone can call themselves an evaluator

Small pool of credible evaluators



Professionalism

“According to contemporary scholarship, professionalism is the outcome of a collective endeavor carried out by an occupational group to improve the relevance, quality and delivery of its expert services in the public interest.”

The Challenge



What can SAMEA do RIGHT NOW that is realistic, feasible and critical to promote professionalism?

Purpose

To provide empirical research that would guide SAMEA leadership in its decision-making

Only VOPEs have the legitimacy to promote evaluation professionalism within their distinctive contexts (EvalAgenda2020, Pg. 22)

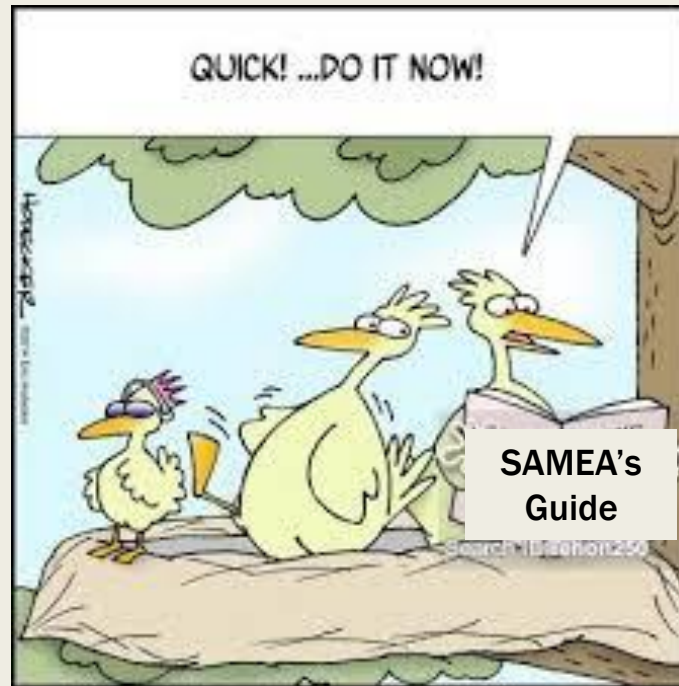




SAMEA BOARD

The Question

What, if anything, can be feasibly considered for use in South Africa while the challenge of competencies is being addressed?



Approach



- A qualitative study
- Desk review, literature review (includes YouTube of other interviews focus on AEA, CES and UKES)
- Open ended and semi-structured interviews
 - *Two SAMEA board members to ensure research focus and approach would be useful. Long, intense interview (2) and then shorter confirmatory (1)*
 - *One interview to identify additional global data and access resources*
- Five expert interviews, with some people being interviewed five times
- Member checks and data triangulation
- Thematic analysis

The Disaster



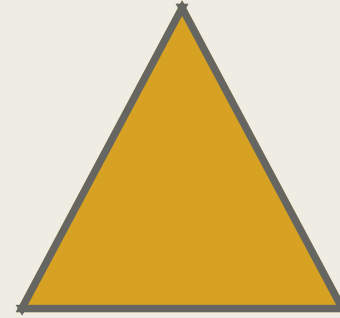






Findings

Findings



- **EvalAgenda 2020**
- **What does it mean to be a member of an evaluation society?**
- **Several building blocks in place before moving toward any form of formal process of credentialing, establishing competencies or strengthening evaluators.**
- **Two types: Assessment or learning—The approach that supports or perceives to support inclusion is likely a more appropriate approach in South Africa.**
- **Except CES, not demand driven (note critical point on CES)**

Implications for system strengthening

(They mean suggestions
that will make a
difference, dude)



3 suggestions

1 removed

2 Feasible Suggestions

Strengthening SAMEA

Provide SAMEA members with a shared vision of what it means to be an evaluator or SAMEA member.

- **Purpose of an ethical statement:** Providing SAMEA members with a unifying statement will make membership meaningful, provide evaluators with a sense of identity and aim to provide a “bottom” line for what it means to be a South African evaluator.
- **Purpose of a code of conduct:** Developing a code of conduct(s) are a “low hanging fruit” to be plucked. Having a code of conduct statement to which members agree, is encouraging membership to be aware of the very basic element of what it means to be an evaluator, and



Step 1: SAMEA Task Force explores the various ethical and/or other code of conducts

Step 2: The Task Force then involves SAMEA membership to develop, share, discuss and develop each idea further.

Step 3: Board makes decision.

Step 4: When becoming or renewing a membership, a “tick” will need to be placed that acknowledges having read and agreeing to abide by these ethics.

- Developing an ethical statement or code of conduct would not likely meet considerable resistance from membership— For example, an ethic of “do no harm” or “appreciate and respect local cultural practices”



Strengthening Members

Encourage SAMEA members to improve their knowledge and skills.

Purpose of committing to self-improvement:

Providing SAMEA members with formal encouragement to continually improve their skills and knowledge may help to ensure that members are aware of the need to continually grow their evaluation knowledge and skills.



- **Step 1:** Task force will identify basic steps evaluators can take to improve their knowledge or skills. Suggestions include taking or teaching one evaluation course every two years, submitting a paper to an evaluation conference, or other indicators of a SAMEA member continuing to improve their practice.
- **Step 2:** Board approves
- **Step 3:** Have members tick a box when they renew their membership. Again, ticking a box would *indicate* the achievement. Let members know that there is a chance at being randomly selected may greatly improve truthfulness.



**Advocacy:
Strengthening
Evaluation Users**

- **Challenge:** D... tely reflect the
multi... l to
e

It's about quality not quantity.



Conclusions and Recommendations

- **Identify as a SAMEA Member:** Establish legitimate ethical standards and codes of conduct adapted to diverse cultural contexts, which all members recognise.
- **Encourage capacity development.** Self development with ongoing efforts to develop a broad framework of evaluator qualifications, guided by the UKES model, which would serve to provide guidance to evaluators and those who build the capacity of evaluators.
- **Promote quality evaluation.** Engage all stakeholders in promoting quality evaluation. Advocate for evaluation and the need for competent evaluators in all sectors.

Problem Solving/Decision Making



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