



2024
SAMEA
9th BIENNIAL CONFERENCE
VUCA-VUKA
CATALYSING CHANGE THROUGH
MONITORING & EVALUATION

CONFERENCE REPORT

7-11 OCTOBER 2024

Birchwood Hotel & OR Tambo Conference Centre



the dpme

Department:
Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 9th Biennial SAMEA Conference, themed "VUCA-Vuka! Catalysing Change Through Monitoring and Evaluation", emphasised the need for proactive responses to the volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) world we navigate today. In the face of rapidly changing political, economic, environmental, and social dynamics, M&E practitioners must adapt, innovate, and remain impactful. The theme encouraged participants to not only recognise the complexities of modern challenges but also to actively engage in shaping solutions that foster positive change.

The concept of "Vuka," meaning "rise up" or "awaken" in several African languages, served as a call to action for M&E professionals to lead transformation. The conference pushed for a rethinking of traditional approaches, promoting flexible, inclusive, and responsive methodologies. This shift is essential for ensuring M&E's role in guiding policy, driving effective interventions, and ensuring accountability in increasingly complex environments.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS & PANEL DISCUSSIONS:

The conference featured keynote addresses and panel discussions with prominent international and local experts from various sectors, including development practitioners, government officials, donors, and policy influencers. These thought leaders shared valuable insights on the evolving landscape of M&E and its potential to drive sustainable change.

Topics covered in the panel discussions included:

Plenary 1: A 30-Year Review of South Africa's Democracy

Plenary 2: Decolonising Evaluation – Lessons for South Africa

Plenary 3: Responsibilities of Evaluators in a VUCA World

KEY ISSUES & CHALLENGES:

Throughout the conference, discussions highlighted several critical issues for M&E professionals to address in the face of a VUCA world:

- **Decolonisation and Mindset Change:** There was a strong call for a shift in mindsets from exploitation and extraction to adopting Indigenous approaches like relationship-building, competencies needed in the field, and social equity. The importance of incorporating diverse views, particularly from affected communities and youth, was emphasised to ensure development efforts are rooted in local knowledge systems
- **Facing the Polycrisis:** The conference underscored the need to tackle the interconnected crises of the VUCA world through restorative, distributive, and procedural justice. A shift towards community-led development was advocated, allowing local people to define "success" and ensuring M&E systems are inclusive and adaptable.



- **Adaptive Systems and System Change:** The need for M&E to move beyond project-based evaluation to systems-level approaches was highlighted. Adaptive M&E frameworks are essential for addressing complex challenges, with a focus on extensive preparation, capacity-building, and real-time data monitoring.
- **Collective Action and Collaboration:** The importance of collective action and partnership in M&E was stressed, with emphasis on fostering data interoperability, co-production efforts, and international collaboration, such as through initiatives like Twende Mbele.
- **Role of Technology:** The conference explored the dual nature of technology, as both a force for good and a potential challenge. The use of AI in M&E was discussed, alongside concerns about data privacy, bias, and the importance of validation processes.

Hosted at the Birchwood Hotel and OR Tambo Conference Centre in Johannesburg; the conference spanned five days and included keynote addresses, panel discussions, parallel sessions, and post-conference professional development workshops. The event proved to be an invaluable platform for professional growth and cross-sector collaboration, advancing the shared vision of M&E professionals as key contributors to sustainable, resilient, and adaptive societies.

In conclusion, the conference ended with a call to action for M&E professionals to strengthen their role as agents of change, supporting adaptive management practices and fostering collaboration across sectors. Future initiatives will focus on piloting decolonised evaluations, enhancing guidelines for transformative equity and climate/ecosystem health, and expanding the use of community-driven evaluations.



2. INTRODUCTION

ABOUT SAMEA

The South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association (SAMEA) aims to cultivate a vibrant community of Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) practitioners in South Africa, promoting the use of M&E as essential tools for equitable and sustainable development. SAMEA recognises the transformative power of M&E in improving decision-making, fostering accountability, and advancing social change.

Aligned with SAMEA's vision of enhancing the effectiveness of M&E across South Africa, the organisation strives to create a network that not only supports individual practitioners but also fosters collective learning and collaboration among organisations and institutions. This community works together to improve M&E standards, share best practices, and advocate for the integration of M&E in the development processes that influence policy and practice in South Africa and beyond.

SAMEA's mission to provide a platform for the development, sharing, and application of M&E expertise is at the heart of its work. Through various initiatives, including capacity-building programmes, events, and resources, SAMEA seeks to strengthen the knowledge base and skills of M&E professionals while contributing to the achievement of broader development goals. This mission is central to SAMEA's commitment to supporting sustainable development and promoting social justice through informed, evidence-based decision-making.

By fostering a dynamic community of M&E practitioners, SAMEA plays a pivotal role in shaping a future where M&E is not only seen as a technical function but as a powerful driver for positive change and social transformation.

CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES

The 9th Biennial SAMEA Conference served as a platform for M&E practitioners and champions across different sectors to share insights on new developments within the M&E field. The conference was aligned with SAMEA's broader objectives to enhance the use of M&E as vital tools for equitable and sustainable development. By creating opportunities for learning and collaboration, the event embodied the association's mission to advance the capacity of M&E professionals across South Africa and the African continent.

The conference's objectives were to:

- Foster collaborative learning and peer-to-peer exchange among diverse M&E stakeholders.
- Promote adaptive, innovative approaches to M&E in response to the volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) world.
- Highlight the critical role of M&E in steering South Africa towards achieving its sustainable development goals.
- Create opportunities for networking, knowledge sharing, and co-creation among participants from various sectors.
- Integrate indigenous knowledge and storytelling to deepen engagement and promote culturally relevant M&E practices.

In keeping with SAMEA's Vision to improve the effectiveness of M&E across Africa, the conference aimed to catalyse change and inspire action through cutting-edge discussions, workshops, and collaborative sessions. These objectives are part of SAMEA's mission to build a robust M&E community that can effectively address the continent's complex development challenges.

CONFERENCE FORMAT AND PARTICIPATION

The fully in-person conference featured a mix of co-creation sessions, oral presentations, panel discussions, World Café sessions, poster presentations, and lightning talks.

Details on the number of participants, countries represented, and sectors involved.

| | |
|------------------------|-----|
| Registrations | 654 |
| On-site attendance | 484 |
| Countries Represented | 26 |
| Workshop Registrations | 244 |



3. ORGANISING COMMITTEE

OVERVIEW

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| Conference Chair | Anniza de Wet | SAMEA Board |
| Content Lead | Mutsa Chinyamakobvu | SAMEA Board |
| Fundraising & Partnerships | Anniza de Wet Jennifer Norins Marla Naidoo Nana Davies | SAMEA Conference Portfolio Lead SAMEA Chair SAMEA Coordinator SAMEA Portfolio Lead |
| SAMEA Secretariat | Marla Naidoo Sarah Chemaly Sive Yami Stephan Paulsen | SAMEA Coordinator SAMEA Knowledge and Communications Manager SAMEA Administrator SAMEA Emerging Evaluators Coordinator |
| Engagement with PCO and Budget Management | Anniza de Wet Jennifer Norins Marla Naidoo Riedwaan Jacobs | Conference Chair SAMEA Chair SAMEA Coordinator Prestige Conference Organisers |
| Young and Emerging Evaluators Coordination | Dena Lomofsky Ilona Milner Khumo Pule Nana Davies Stephan Paulsen | Emerging Evaluator Host Organisation (Southern Hemisphere) Emerging Evaluator Partner Organisation (UNICEF SA) SAMEA Portfolio Lead SAMEA Portfolio Lead SAMEA Emerging Evaluators Coordinator |
| Conference Programme | Anniza de Wet Jennifer Norins Marla Naidoo Mutsa Chinyamakobvu Sive Yami | SAMEA Conference Chair SAMEA Chair SAMEA Coordinator SAMEA Content Lead SAMEA Administrator |
| Co-Creation | Anniza de Wet Jennifer Norins Margie Roper Mutsa Chinyamakobvu | SAMEA Conference Chair SAMEA Chair Khulisa Management Services SAMEA Content Lead |
| Social Events | Anniza de Wet Talitha Hlaka Sive Yami | SAMEA Conference Chair CLEAR-AA SAMEA Administrator |

3. ORGANISING COMMITTEE (CONTINUED)

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| Digital Liaison and Videography | Jacobus Combrink Riedwaan Jacobs Sarah Chemaly | SA Filmworx Prestige Conference Organisers SAMEA Knowledge and Communications Manager |
| Communications and Marketing | Anniza de Wet Jennifer Norins Sarah Chemaly Communications team | SAMEA Conference Chair SAMEA Chair SAMEA Knowledge and Communications Manager Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation |
| Strand Leads | | |
| Transversal Coordinator | Mutsa Chinyamakobvu Jennifer Norins | |
| M&E for Just Transition | Cara Hartley Ian Goldman Sinenhlanhla Tsekiso | |
| Made in Africa Evaluation | Moses Mashingaidze Seirah Ngcobo Sinenhlanhla Tsekiso | |
| M&E Evidence for Continuous Adaptive Management, Reflection, and Learning | Caitlin Blaser Mapitsa Eleanor Hazell Khumo Pule | |
| Tech-Enabled MERL | Mutsa Chinyamakobvu Sean Walsh | |
| M&E for Investing in Impact/Measuring Impact | Lebohang Letsela Zulaikha Brey | |
| Evaluation for and by Youth | Nana Davies Stephan Paulsen Takunda Chirau | |
| Competencies of M&E Practitioners as Catalysts of Change in the Time of VUCA | Margie Roper Nana Davies Thokozile Molaiwa | |
| Content Working Group | David Makhado Kefiwe Sethoabane Morakane Segopolo Phendukani Hlatshwayo Thokozile Molaiwa | |



4. ABSTRACT SUBMISSIONS

The review process followed three stages, led by the Content Lead and supported by portfolio leads, along with 20 carefully selected reviewers.

The conference coordinating team reviewed 139 abstracts, ultimately selecting 113 (81%) high-quality submissions for the conference.

Accepted Abstracts Per Strand:

| | |
|--|----|
| M&E for Just Transition | 7 |
| Made in Africa Evaluation | 28 |
| M&E Evidence for Continuous Adaptive Management, Reflection, and Learning | 20 |
| Tech-Enabled MERL | 25 |
| M&E for Investing in Impact/Measuring Impact | 16 |
| Evaluation for and by Youth | 11 |
| Competencies of M&E Practitioners as Catalysts of Change in the Time of VUCA | 6 |

This streamlined process ensured that the final selection reflected the highest standards of relevance and quality for the conference.



Last week I had a privilege of forming part of the panel discussing the practical implementation of virtual evaluation at SAMEA conference - it was great catching up and sharing ideas with colleagues in our industry.

Nthutle Shadrack Mlambo



Thank you to SAMEA for their 9th Biennial Conference hosted last week. Attending my second time round has been even more insightful than the first, particularly in witnessing the growth within M&E Tech following the developments of AI in the past two years. The workshop sessions covering AI utilization especially has left me with something to carry forward in my future work in data.

I also enjoyed getting to reconnect with familiar faces in the M&E field!

Thank you to everyone who was involved in planning and presentation for making this a successful week .

Vongai Ghibvongodze



The International Evaluation Academy is collaborating with the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, CLEAR-AA and Clear Francophone Afrique and other partners to explore how evaluation and evaluation systems can be decolonized. Dr Candice Morkel, together with Prof Ian Goldman (IEAc) and Ms Thokozile Molaiwa (DPME) led a co-creation session on hashtag#Decolonising hashtag#NationalEvaluationSystems at the hashtag#SAMEAConference. The session aimed to enrich emerging thinking of how to strengthen a decolonized approach to South Africa's national evaluation system, and inform revisions to the National Evaluation Policy Framework.

Made in Africa Evaluation



5. CONFERENCE PARTNERS & SPONSORSHIP

SAMEA would like to thank the following organisations for their support, whether through financial contributions or in-kind contribution, each contribution was vital to the successful hosting of the 9th SAMEA Conference in 2024.

FINANCIAL PARTNERS

- **Conference Co-Host:** Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
- **2nd Tier:** Development Bank of Southern Africa, FirstRand Foundation, Independent Evaluation Office of New Development Bank
- **3rd Tier:** UNICEF South Africa, Zenex Foundation
- **4th Tier:** African Development Bank, African Evaluation Association, CLEAR-AA, Southern Hemisphere

IN-KIND PARTNERS

- Department of Social Development
- Development Aid
- Khulisa Management Services
- Genesis Analytics
- Twende Mbele
- Mia Melange
- JET Education Services

YOUNG EMERGING EVALUATORS AT THE CONFERENCE

- UNICEF South Africa
- African Development Bank (AfDB)
- New Development Bank
- UN World Food Programme
- Fazeela Hoosen (Independent Evaluation Consultant)

SAMEA BOARD ORGANISATIONS

We thank the respective organisations of our board members for their support of SAMEA and the 9th SAMEA Conference 2024 through their contributions.

- African Botho
- CLEAR-AA
- Data Innovators
- Department of Sport, Arts and Culture
- DNA Economics
- Genesis Analytics
- MIET Africa
- Nation Builder
- Southern Hemisphere



I've been sitting for the past few days trying to put into words how I feel post#SAMEAconference. I am filled with so many emotions – happy, excited, sad, and relieved all at the same time. Wow, what an experience!

Being on the other side of the conference, involved in the planning process, has been an incredible honor. Seeing everything come together so beautifully was deeply rewarding. I still remember a few months ago when we asked ourselves whether we could pull it off and if the members and attendees would understand the theme: Vuka Vuka – Catalysing change through Monitoring and Evaluation. But somehow, we soldiered through!

This conference would not have been possible without so many people. A big thank you to our co-hosts, sponsors, delegates, and friends – your support made it all happen. I also had the pleasure of spending time with some of the Emerging Evaluators (you are truly phenomenal, and the future of M&E is bright with you in it

Sive Yami

5. CONFERENCE PARTNERS & SPONSORSHIP (CONTINUED)

FINANCIAL SPONSORS



IN-KIND SPONSORS



5. CONFERENCE PARTNERS & SPONSORSHIP (CONTINUED)

EMERGING EVALUATORS



Fazeela Hoosen
Independent Evaluation Consultant



BOARD ORGANISATIONS



6. CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

SAMEA aimed to “unconference” the event by integrating elements that fostered co-creation, peer-to-peer learning, and community-building. To enrich the conference with an indigenous African heartbeat, storytelling was infused as a critical form of knowledge sharing. The programme featured a mix of co-creative mini-hackathons or mini-workshops, oral presentations, panel discussions, World Café sessions, poster presentations, and lightning talks.

PLENARIES

PLENARY 1: OPENING PLENARY

The 30-Year Review Report presented the government’s assessment of progress since the transition to democratic governance.

During the opening plenary, the DPME unpacked the critical lessons, progress, challenges, and recommendations highlighted by the report to inform future planning and ensure the promise of a better life for all.

Keynote Speakers:

- Honourable Deputy Minister Mr. Seiso J. Mohai
- Indran A. Naidoo (PhD), Director of the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD
- Ashwani K. Muthoo, Director General of the Independent Evaluation Office at the BRICS New Development Bank

Panel Facilitator: Dr Anusha Naidoo, Chief Director: Human Resources Planning, Employment and Performance Management

Panel Discussion – 30-Year Review:

- DG Dr Robert Nkuna, DPME
- DDG Godfrey Mashamba, DPME
- Peter Shube, Mpumalanga Office of the Premier

PLENARY 2: DECOLONISATION

This panel explored the imperative of decolonising evaluation, highlighting the need for contextually relevant, locally driven approaches that reflect South Africa's diverse realities. Panellists discussed challenges in shifting away from Western-centric methodologies and shared insights on embedding indigenous knowledge, participatory practices, and equity-driven frameworks into evaluation processes.

Keynote Speakers:

- Dr. Mamphela Ramphele – Activist, Medical Doctor, Academic, Businesswoman and Global Thought Leader
- Prof. Bagele Chilisa, University of Botswana

Panel Facilitator: Prof. Ian Goldman, IEAC

Panel Discussion – Decolonising Evaluation—Lessons for South Africa:

- Prof. Bagele Chilisa, University of Botswana
- Andrealisa Belzer, Canadian Evaluation Society
- Thokozile Molaiwa, DPME
- Dr. Mamphela Ramphele

PLENARY 3: CLOSING PLENARY

In an era defined by **volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA)**, this panel examined the evolving role of evaluators in navigating rapid change and uncertainty. Panellists discussed the need for adaptability, ethical accountability, and innovative methodologies to ensure that evaluation remains relevant, responsive, and impactful in dynamic global and local contexts.

Panel Discussion – Responsibilities of Evaluators in a VUCA world:

Panel Facilitator: Mokgophana Ramasobana, Tiyimele Consulting

Panellists

- Dr Candice Morkel, CLEAR-AA
- Andrealisa Belzer: Canadian Evaluation Society
- Josephine Watera, AfrEA
- Dr Victor Naidu, DPME

7. HIGHLIGHTS OF THE CONFERENCE

Exciting Social Events

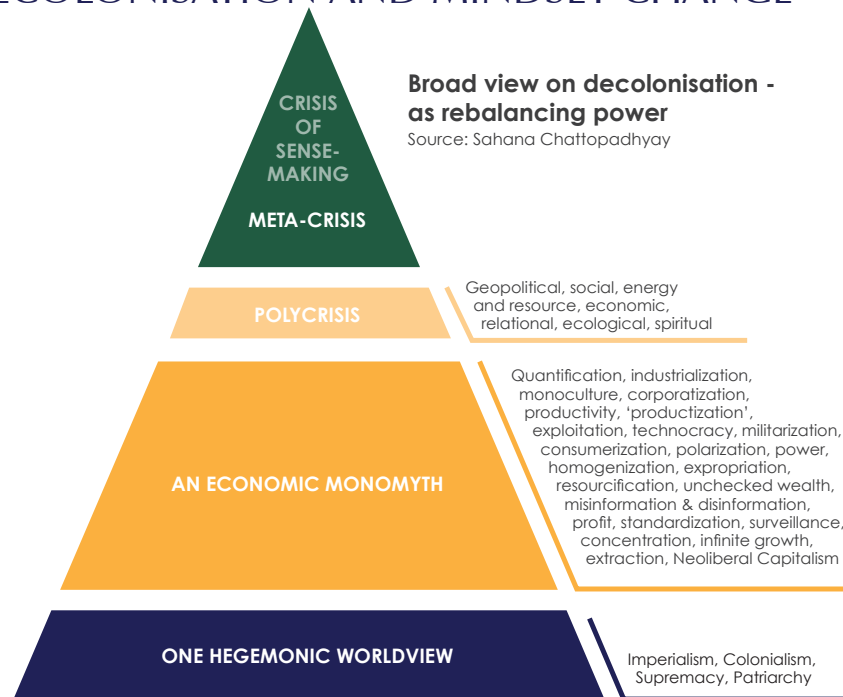
The conference began with a vibrant Welcome Event on the evening of Day 1 (7 October), held in partnership with Southern Hemisphere. This event provided participants with an opportunity to showcase their heritage attire, network with peers, and enjoy delicious cocktail snacks. The highlight of the evening was a live poetry performance by the locally renowned Puno Selesho, which added a unique and inspiring touch to the gathering.

Launch of the Competency Self-Assessment Tool

In 2024, through funding from the Zenex Foundation, SAMEA partnered with LEARN Evaluation to put the SAMEA evaluator competencies onto an online self-assessment tool.

On Day 2, October 8th SAMEA introduced this essential tool, designed to empower Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) practitioners to drive their professional development by completing the assessment as a first step.

DECOLONISATION AND MINDSET CHANGE



Complete the assessment and receive a free report that outlines your strengths, limitations and learning needs as an evaluator. Complete the Evaluators Competency framework to better understand your strengths, areas for growth, and key learning needs as an evaluator.

Dialogue on Professionalisation

Attendees participated in an engaging discussion titled "What Does This Mean for Professionalisation in South Africa?" The session explored the implications and pathways for enhancing professional standards within the M&E field.

Panel Discussion on DPME's 30-Year Review:

During the opening session on Monday, October 7th, a panel discussion unpacked the 30-Year Review Report, which presented the government's assessment of progress since the transition to democratic governance. The discussion highlighted critical lessons, progress, challenges, and recommendations to inform future planning and ensure the promise of a better life for all.

Panel Discussion on Just Transition:

As part of the conference, the Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of the BRICS New Development Bank (NDB) hosted a panel discussion on the sub-theme "M&E for Just Transition." The session, titled "Harnessing Just Transition through Sustainable Infrastructure: Experience of the New Development Bank and Other Key Development Partners," featured esteemed representatives from the National Treasury of South Africa, the Development Bank of Southern Africa, the IEO, and the Africa Regional Centre of NDB.

EMBRACING SUSTAINABILITY AT THE CONFERENCE

At the 9th Biennial SAMEA Conference, we demonstrated our commitment to sustainability by implementing eco-conscious practices throughout the event.

Key initiatives included the use of refillable water stations to reduce plastic waste, strategically placed recycling bins to promote proper waste disposal, and a digital-first approach to minimise paper usage by utilising a conference app. Our venue partnership ensured food waste was either donated or composted, avoiding landfills, and we supported the local economy by collaborating with South African artisans to provide eco-friendly gifts for keynote speakers and delegates.

These efforts highlighted our dedication to leading by example and inspiring sustainable practices within our community.

8. STRAND OUTCOMES

M&E FOR JUST TRANSITION

A key theme from the discussions in this strand was the need for M&E to evolve beyond project-based evaluations to support systemic transformative shifts, particularly in the Just Transition. The growing emphasis on decentralised, inclusive, and future-oriented approaches highlights the profession's role in shaping and assessing large-scale change.

The Just Transition discussions emphasised the importance of systemic transformation, moving beyond project-level M&E to more holistic, future-oriented approaches that empower local communities and address structural challenges. While progress is being made through frameworks like the Just Energy Transition Investment Plan and emerging M&E tools, the field must continue adapting to effectively support and evaluate transformative change.

MADE IN AFRICA EVALUATION

The Made in Africa Evaluation sessions highlighted the importance of decolonising evaluation frameworks by prioritising indigenous knowledge, traditional leadership, and community-driven approaches. Calls for collaboration across African countries and youth inclusion reinforced the need for locally designed M&E systems that reflect Africa's diverse cultural and historical contexts.

The discussions underscored the necessity of integrating community perspectives into learning, monitoring, and evaluation processes, emphasising the role of indigenous knowledge systems in enriching evaluation practices. The session also stressed the need for African-tailored M&E systems that move beyond Western models and incorporate local governance structures, cultural norms, and youth voices.

M&E EVIDENCE FOR CONTINUOUS ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT, REFLECTION, AND LEARNING

A key insight from the discussions was the importance of "good enough" data—data that is timely and sufficient for decision-making, even if not perfect—allowing for quicker adaptation in dynamic environments.

The discussions highlighted the crucial link between monitoring, evaluation, and adaptive management, emphasizing the extensive preparation, data, and decision-making processes required for effective adaptation. Participants agreed on the need to bridge the gap between evaluation and adaptive management, ensuring that monitoring and evaluation insights contribute more effectively to adaptive decision-making.

TECH-ENABLED MERL

A key highlight from the discussions in this strand was the growing role of AI in data analysis and decision-making, with tools like ChatGPT demonstrating potential for large-scale document analysis. However, human oversight remains essential to ensure accuracy, ethical considerations, and the reliability of AI-generated insights.

The Tech-enabled MERL discussions explored how AI, blockchain, and digital platforms are transforming monitoring, evaluation, research, and learning (MERL) practices, with tools like Kinaki and DocChat enhancing data management and analysis. However, challenges such as outdated reporting systems, data security concerns, and the need for ethical AI use highlight the importance of human oversight, standardising definitions of evidence, and capacity-building to fully leverage these technologies.

8. STRAND OUTCOMES (CONTINUED)

M&E FOR INVESTING IN IMPACT/MEASURING IMPACT

These parallel sessions were highly attended, demonstrating strong interest in impact measurement, with discussions emphasising the importance of rigorous methodologies, due diligence, and balancing data quality, quantity, and return on investment to enhance credibility in impact investing.

The discussions on M&E for Investing in Impact explored key frameworks and best practices in impact measurement, highlighting collaboration, due diligence, and the need for clear methodologies to ensure credibility and prevent “impact-washing.” An interactive co-creation session allowed delegates to contribute to best practice guidelines, with five SAMEA delegates committing to further developing these standards in collaboration with IISA.

EVALUATION FOR AND BY YOUTH

The discussions in this strand emphasised that meaningful youth engagement in evaluation should go beyond token participation, ensuring young evaluators are actively involved in data analysis, decision-making, and leadership roles. Structured mentorship, capacity-building, and hands-on learning opportunities—such as the UNICEF and SAMEA-supported Rapid Evaluation of Phalamani Young Minds—are essential to equipping Emerging Evaluators (EEs) with the skills needed for the future workforce.

The strand highlighted the importance of meaningful youth engagement in evaluation, advocating for young evaluators to be involved not just in data collection but also in analysis and decision-making. It also underscored the need for structured mentorship, university-industry alignment, and hands-on learning opportunities to develop Emerging Evaluators (EEs) into future leaders in the field.



COMPETENCIES OF M&E PRACTITIONERS AS CATALYSTS OF CHANGE IN THE TIME OF VUCA

The SAMEA Self-Assessment Competency Tool was recognised as a valuable resource for developing M&E practitioners, with recommendations to enhance its usability by simplifying descriptions, incorporating monitoring dimensions, and providing clearer pathways for addressing skill gaps.

The strand reflected on the development and application of M&E competencies, highlighting the diverse pathways practitioners take in their careers and the need for better alignment between training and practice. The SAMEA Self-Assessment Competency Tool was identified as a key asset for professional growth, with discussions emphasising its potential improvements and the ongoing debate around professionalising the field.

9. LESSONS LEARNT

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Establishing positive partnerships with various stakeholders, significantly contributed to ticket sales, marketing efforts, and the co-production of programme content. These collaborations proved beneficial and should be leveraged in future planning to enhance event outcomes.

YOUTH INCLUSION AND FUTURE-FOCUSED CAPACITY BUILDING

Engaging young evaluators is crucial for sustainability and innovation in the field. Investment in mentorship, capacity-building, and inclusive participation will ensure the next generation of evaluators is equipped to drive transformative change. The attendance of the Young Emerging Evaluators played a significant role in the development of the next generation of Evaluators.

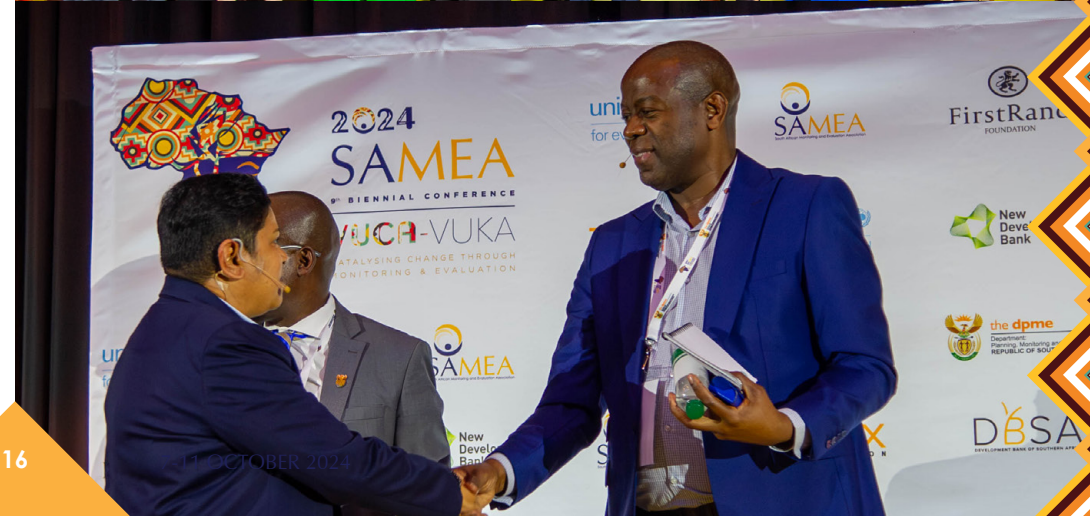
SPACE CONSTRAINTS

The organising committee encountered significant challenges in predicting the size and popularity of various strands, which ultimately affected the planning of room sizes and capacities. The selected breakout rooms, which were designed to accommodate 30-50 participants, proved inadequate, particularly for the co-creation sessions that required more expansive space.

The chosen venue did not adequately support the co-creation aspect of our programme. Future events would benefit from exploring venues that are designed with modern adult learning principles in mind, rather than adhering to traditional conference layouts.

INTEGRATION OF EXHIBITION AND SOCIAL EVENTS

Combining the exhibition area with social events resulted in increased attendance for both activities. This strategic decision fostered greater engagement among participants and enhanced the overall experience.



10. STATEMENT OF GRATITUDE

On behalf of the SAMEA conference team, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who contributed to the success of this event. We deeply appreciate the invaluable efforts of our abstract reviewers, diligent scribes, Prestige Conference Organisers (PCO), strand leads, and the dedicated conference organising committee. Your expertise, commitment, and collaborative spirit transformed this conference into a dynamic and enriching experience for all.

For more information and resources, please visit the SAMEA website:

www.samea.org

Great achievements from SAMEA this year in the different areas of work, and great to have lots of YEEs. Not least a sold out conference with 484 attendees. Congrats to the board and staff team.

Ian Goldman



Kudos to our colleague, Mutsa Carole Chinyamakobvu for her exceptional work on this year's SAMEA Conference!

As a current board member of SAMEA, Mutsa's tireless efforts and dedication to this year's theme, "Vuca-Vuka! Catalysing Change through Monitoring and Evaluation", have been truly commendable.

Her passion for driving adaptive, collaborative, and innovative M&E practices has been instrumental in shaping this year's conference. The focus on proactively responding to our VUCA world resonates deeply, and we're grateful for Mutsa's leadership.

Siyavuka sisebenzele ikusasa elingcono! (Wake up, let's build a better future together!)



Last day of the #SAMEACONFERENCE VUCA/VUKA: Catalysing change through monitoring and evaluation. So grateful for Anniza de Wet and Mutsa Chinyamakobvu for their dedication and energy to make this conference a success. South African Monitoring Evaluation Association is a vibe!

Jennifer Norins

11. CONFERENCE REFLECTIONS



12. EXPLORE SAMEA'S KNOWLEDGE HUB – THE LOCAL THOUGHT-LEADERSHIP PLATFORM FOR M&E RESOURCES

SAMEA's Knowledge Hub is a dynamic and ever-growing repository of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) resources. Continuously updated with insights from our conferences, collaborations, capacity-building workshops, and contributions from the M&E community, the Hub offers valuable knowledge to support professional growth and enhance evaluation practice.

- Join SAMEA as a member to access exclusive content
- Or explore our open-access resources at www.samea.org.za

Stay informed. Stay engaged. Strengthen your M&E expertise with SAMEA!



An incredible experience at the SAMEA Conference 2024!

M&E in a VUKA world

Our team had the privilege of attending the SAMEA Conference 2024 and successfully presenting papers and hosting workshops that sparked insightful discussions on monitoring, evaluation and learning practices.

Did you know that the rallying call for the Polycrisis – volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA), has a meaning in African languages? VUKA means RISE UP or WAKE UP. The uncertainties and volatilities of the last several years call for us to wake up – Siyavuka sisebenzele ikusasa elingcono.

Southern Hemisphere

13. APPENDIX A: EXHIBITORS

| | |
|--|---|
| Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) |  |
| Africa Evidence Network (AEN) |  |
| Africa Evidence Youth League (AEYL) |  |
| Breadline Africa (BA) |  |
| CLEAR-AA |  |
| Data Innovators (DI) |  |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Development Bank of Southern Africa |  |
| DNA Economics (Pty) Ltd |  |
| Edutech Institute |  |
| FirstRand Foundation |  |
| Genesis Analytics (GA) |  |
| Morar Incorporated |  |

| | |
|---|---|
| Nation Builder |  |
| New Development Bank |  |
| Pan-Africa Collective for Evidence (PACE) |  |
| Southern Hemisphere |  |
| Trevor Noah Foundation |  |
| Twende Mbele |  |
| University of Cape Town |  |



2024
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9th BIENNIAL CONFERENCE
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CATALYSING CHANGE THROUGH
MONITORING & EVALUATION

THANK YOU

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