We have read with great interest the final report of the external evaluation of Twaweza Tanzania, as commissioned by the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), and carried out by NIRAS Sweden AB. The overall objective of the evaluation was to provide a comprehensive summary and aggregation of Twaweza’s Tanzania-based activities over the 2015-2018 period, to establish progress towards the organizational development benchmarks; the outcome, quality of outputs, and reach; as well as an assessment of the contribution to the overarching goals of Twaweza.

The purpose was for Twaweza and its development partners to reflect on the achievements and lessons learned from the 2015-2018 implementation period, and to contribute to the thinking and planning for the strategic period starting in 2019.

In the response, we reflect on the evaluation report’s main findings, additional information or clarifications that warrant the readers’ attention, the insight we have gained, the lessons that this evaluation has contributed to us learning and our proposals for addressing some of the challenges raised.

For those with little time but a keen interest in all the findings and recommendations, we refer to the Executive Summary of the full report.

---

**Relevance**

*Evaluators comment: The Strategy has become increasingly challenged during the Strategy period 2015-2018 as the increasing shrinking civic space made it harder to influence government policies and actions through the public debate and deliberations envisioned in the Strategy.*

This is one of the defining factors that impacted Twaweza’s capacity to make the type of change envisaged in our strategy happen during the period under review. Regular avenues to influence government became restricted or entirely closed, the government withdrew from the Open Government Partnership and the hard won democratic gains of the previous administration were gradually eroded. This happened and continues to happen, through a series of fast and far-reaching legal, regulatory, policy and administrative changes. In addition, any organization working around democratic values was forced to ask hard questions about the extent to which it was appropriate or acceptable to collaborate with an administration that is apparently engaging in or condoning a growing collection of extra-judicial actions and alarming violations of constitutional, due process and basic human rights.

Despite these challenges, we are proud of what we were able to achieve. We continue to publish data and research findings even if they represent inconvenient truths and thus continue to insist on the primacy of citizen voices in public and policy debates; our consistent challenges to the dominant singular narrative being perpetuated by the state – through public facing advocacy resulting in extensive local and international media coverage that presented alternative perspectives on the
country’s story; and our demonstrable commitment to standing by and for our own values even when this presented considerable personal and organizational risk.

**Evaluators comment:** Conformity has been observed between Twaweza’s priorities and the policies and needs/demand from donors, intermediate actors, such as media and other CSOs.

Twaweza is a well-grounded organization with access to more than six years of citizen perception data, diverse experiences interacting with other civic actors and close links to government officials and processes alongside an extensive international network that keeps us close to emerging practice in our fields. Our work is informed and shaped by these relationships as these spaces are in turn influenced by our discourse and strategic thinking.

**Evaluators comment:** The four major interventions all fall within Twaweza’s overall theory of change, but the degree to which they refer to, reflect upon and feed back into the theory of change differed. The SzW was considered highly relevant; KiuFunza relevant yet very narrowly reflecting the overall theory of change; Kigoma-Ujiji local government intervention highly relevant as Twaweza also moved increasingly towards local activity levels in 2017; the Election 2015 was relevant focusing on active citizens and accountable politicians, though implementation turned patchy.

Twaweza’s 2015-2018 Theory of Change is deliberately broad in scope and encompasses a multitude of pathways to change. It is true, however, that Twaweza, with citizen agency infused into our DNA, has tended to preference pathways that activate public debate, increase access to information and activate intrinsic motivations. We are pleased that we were able to maintain interventions that were deliberately designed to follow the other pathways to change embedded into our Theory of Change. These included KiuFunza which combined rigorous evidence-generation through experimentation with elaborate consultation, engagement and persuasion to spark change in policy on the delivery of school grants directly to schools and government adoption of an innovative performance pay system, as well as spark wider policy debate about the idea of incentives and performance pay more broadly.

**Evaluators comment:** Twaweza did not change fundamentally the theory of change during the implementation of the Strategy, though the increasing civic space restrictions occurred and there was a switch from a national-oriented focus early on in the period towards a more decentralized focus during the latter part of the period. Important reflections on the overall approach and strategy can be observed towards the end of the strategy period.

In Twaweza, our strategic period of four years is carefully chosen to allow sufficient time to test and understand how some of our hypotheses bear out while being sufficiently short to allow course correction relatively quickly. In addition, the process of strategy development is extensive and engaging; and reflections begin almost as soon as a strategy is signed off. Thus the strategy has not historically been amended within these four year periods. We also view this as moving the goal posts in a way that would be unseemly and unfair. Instead we learn and reflect on our strategy through our annual retreat and annual reporting process: important changes to approach, execution and resource allocation are documented there and these processes ultimately feed into the development of the next strategy.

We note well the observation that we need to more clearly extract documentation of these processes and while we continue to resist the idea of amending the strategy directly, we plan to release addendums on an at least annual basis, articulating major developments and changes in our thinking. We have also already introduced a more reflective internal quarterly review process to inform tactical adjustments based on experience and contextual dynamics.
Evaluators comment: Activities on evidence and data on service delivery seems to some extent to have been reduced in the second half of the Strategy period or at least they are not reported on to the same extent as in the first half. However, data shows that citizens’ priorities service delivery and that focusing on service delivery is recommended in the 2014 evaluation.

We acknowledge that this adjustment of focus did occur. This is entirely due to contextual changes, essentially the shifting the ground beneath our feet. In response to multiple human rights violations, and a rapid erosion of the democratic space in the country, and in light of an environment permeated by fear of pushing back, we took the opportunity to challenge these deeply worrying trends. This necessarily resulted in our reducing an emphasis on service delivery initiatives. Service delivery is a strategic entry point to governance work but in the context of this sudden rapid deterioration in the human rights situation, the response was necessary.

Evaluators comment: Twaweza limited itself in identifying key problems and concerns for its theory of change and Strategy design as it applied its analysis on a single methodology only, the problem-driven iterative adaptation.

In our new strategy, we continue to apply the problem-driven iterative adaptation approach that is gaining accolades as one of the more effective approaches to development work, given its critical features: starting with the challenge to be addressed rather than a pre-set solution or pathway to change; ensuring relevant and grounded problems that have resonance with all stakeholders and actors; incorporation of feedback loops to check progress; emphasis on ongoing course correction; careful political economy analysis to design interventions; hypothesis and assumption testing throughout. We contend that this approach encapsulates the major elements required for effective program design and execution.

Effectiveness

Evaluators comment: Based on a detailed analysis of the two domains and the LME over the four-year Strategy period, it is concluded that the activity level has been high in the two main domains, leading to numerous outputs, particularly as regards the ‘evidence’ side (data production) of the theory of change. These data are in a package format distributed online, through media and directly to government officials and politicians. They have contributed to public debates and overall reach at the intermediate outcome level, which is an important achievement in Tanzania. At the outcome level evidence on lasting and institutionalized change is limited.

During the strategic period, there were peaks and troughs in terms of government acceptance of and engagement with Twaweza’s evidence, ranging from invitations to present data during critical policy discussions (on the national anti-corruption strategy, joint education sector review, decentralization policy review) to, in the extreme, amendment of the law so that organizations like Twaweza faced tough new bureaucratic processes governing the collection and dissemination of data and statistics. Nonetheless, we see both the invitations to collaborate and the push back as evidence of the place data has come to occupy in popular and policy imagination, driven in no small part by Twaweza’s efforts over the years.

The changes have been lasting and institutionalized although not always in the direction we would hope for. In 2015, the National Bureau of Statistics invited Twaweza to submit our data collection work, Sauti za Wananchi and Uwezo, to be official data. We resisted in order to preserve the independent, alternative perspective that is vital for an informed public discourse.
Our annual critical friends’ feedback exercises point to these effects: our data informs MPs, talk show hosts and other NGOs.

Twaweza also played a constant role in the changes to the legal regime governing statistics in the country, particularly in advocating for the importance of independent data. Although the story appears to conclude in 2019, outside of the evaluation period, it demonstrates the way in which Twaweza’s engagement in the data space has yielded lasting results. When the 2015 Statistics Act was passed, Twaweza joined stakeholders in seeking clarification of seemingly open-ended definitions of official data such that they covered all data, and apparently tight restrictions on collection of independent data by non-government actors. The advocacy promoted a clear statement of clarification from the NBS, safe-guarding the space for the work. In 2017, when the NBS appeared to over-reach, Twaweza mobilized data collection actors to send a joint letter to NBS to understand their mandate for doing so. This action was ultimately reversed. And throughout the period Twaweza has continued to release citizen perception data. When the legal changes occurred in 2018, Twaweza analyzed the proposed changes, advocated against the egregious ones and engaged with critical stakeholders to help persuade government to reverse the changes. In June 2019, the law was amended again and Tanzania has returned to a more accommodating data collection and dissemination environment.

Evaluators comment: The numerous activities and outputs related to data evidence production have been too scattered. Based on the documentation available to the team, follow-up on activities and intermediate outcomes produced in the two domains and LME have been limited. Opportunities to build up strength on results from activities that could lead towards intermediate outcomes and sustained outcomes have not been fully utilized.

We respectfully disagree with this assertion. In 2016 Twaweza had 42 distinct projects or activities, in 2017 there were 35. Out of these, in the report 12 are highlighted as lacking follow up between 2015 and 2018. We naturally follow up on different activities differently. Some are designed to strengthen our credibility and brand so that we are trusted and invited into closed spaces. Others span years and build constantly on themselves, pushing forward in a particular space such as Uwezo or KiuFunza. For a list of outcomes by domain in the strategy period, see attached Annex 1. In Annex 2, we provide specific responses and comments on the activities that are described as not having been followed up on.

Evaluators comment: Almost 60% of the Twaweza benchmarks were achieved over the 2015-2017 period, considered only a somewhat successful accomplishment despite the restrictive socio-political context.

Twaweza provides the benchmarks as a means of ensuring accountability in production, in the extent of our delivery of what we foresee as the major outputs of our strategy. This is important given that our strategy provides more of a framework than a detailed narrative of our work plans and yet is the basis on which we seek support. However, the achievement reports are not intended to be boiled down into a single unit of delivery or compliance. We have worked for many years to advocate to donors to understand the nature of our work as complex and dynamic. The reduction of our careful, critical and detailed reporting and reflections into a single number is a problematic oversimplification.

Evaluators comment: The many different measurement tools applied by Twaweza (hypotheses, key metrics, benchmarks, outputs, outcomes, etc.) have been inefficient for effective measurement of progress and achievements of the Strategy. Twaweza has spent abundance of time on reporting on
these as to meet transparency and accountability while simplified systems would have sufficed and achieved the same.

This point resonates with our own thinking. Not wishing to change our commitments to our partners mid-course, we diligently continued to report on the multiple indicators as we agreed. Although we have again included benchmarks in the current strategy, we acknowledge that we may again be duplicating reporting types and are resolved to address this challenge.

We have also adopted additional reporting tools and templates that we hope will better capture the nuance and achievements of Twaweza’s work including a record of engagements, documenting reflective case studies of our work and a new quarterly reporting and reflection process among the management team.

However, we will continue to employ a diversity of methods and approaches to monitoring. Twaweza applies the principle of "method should follow form" - and so uses a large range of measurement approaches (surveys, interviews, focus groups) because the tool must be relevant to the initiative it is measuring, as well as what it's measuring (i.e. coverage, or feedback, or effects). LME at Twaweza is meant to be adaptive and responsive: as Twaweza implements a wide range of initiatives, so the toolbox to assessing those must be similarly varied. We don’t expect that the work of Twaweza can usefully be boiled down to a handful of "neat" indicators. However, we acknowledge that our efforts can be streamlined better.

---

**Efficiency**

*Evaluators comment:* Twaweza spent about 75% of its planned budget for the implementation of the Strategy during the four years. This is considered relatively efficient considering the limitations put on the organization as a result of the strained political context in the country, particularly during the last half-year of 2018.

In the interests of follow up and transparency, we note that budget utilization had previously been a significant challenge for Twaweza and this average of 75% represents a marked improvement. This point was highlighted in our previous end of strategy evaluation.

*Evaluators comment:* A brief comparison based on basic parameters between Twaweza and two like-minded organizations shows that Twaweza’s operations are relatively more expensive. Twaweza is highly efficient as regards its management (operations and financial management), being highly automated and following recognized standards and principles. The website is however of poor quality and the time spent on reporting on many indicators of progress and achievements also indicates some degree of inefficiency.

The website absolutely does require updating and is in the finishing stages of the same. We pride ourselves on our continued high standards of transparency, efficiency and accountability in our financial management. Given that ‘expensive’ is a relative concept, we are eager to be schooled on how very different organizations (in objectives, mission, size, scope, activity portfolio, etc.) can be usefully compared to one another in terms of their operating costs, more so in the absence in the evaluation report, of any productivity analysis.

*Evaluators comment:* 16 out of 20 of Twaweza’s main partners entered into formal contracts or MoUs indicating a sufficient degree of efficiency applied by Twaweza’s in its relationship with
partners. Yet, while collaboration has shown an overall ad hoc nature, there is no doubt that Twaweza has provided significant support to partners in their ability to become more innovative and enabled them to strengthen their organizations.

We are proud of what we consider a unique approach to partnership with high standards of accountability on both sides of the relationship and requirements to find programmatic, value and learning-orientated partnerships. We are pleased that this is born out in this evaluation and are working as a ‘field-builder’\(^1\) for citizen agency work in our new strategy.

## Sustainability

**Evaluators comment:** Partners’ perceptions of real and potentially sustained benefits produced in collaboration with Twaweza are high. 17 out of 20 partners claim sustainability if Twaweza would leave. However, limited evidence is provided as to verify such claims.

We are pleased that our partners feel our work with them is sustainable. We have been more recently deliberately trying to work more supportively and collaboratively such that Twaweza’s contribution includes enabling our partners to seek further sources of funds, to try new ideas, and to learn about what they do.

**Evaluators comment:** The close work with the government in the education sector produced some sustained benefits. Early involvement of government in work processes in the basic education domain has catered for such sustained results.

We refer readers to Annex 1 for specifics of these achievements. Key successes include:

- Early grade primary curriculum revised to focus on 3Rs (Reading, Writing and Arithmetic) in 2015.
- Standard 2 assessment framework developed and implemented from 2016.
- Capitation grants sent directly to schools instead of local authorities from January 2016.
- The KiuFunza randomized control trial improved learning outcomes; on average in the nationally representative sample of schools pupils gain an extra one third of a year of learning in one school year.
- KiuFunza adopted for government trial with a signed Memorandum of Understanding between Twaweza and the Ministries of education and local government.

**Evaluators comment:** In comparison to the education problem area, efforts to develop sustained benefits in the Open Government domain have been less obvious. This is due to the gradual civic space restrictiveness imposed by the government, but also because of Twaweza’s less strategic focus in their choice of activities.

Readers are referred to Annex 1 for a list of outcomes achieved between 2015 and 2018.

It is important to note that changes in the civic space context from 2015 included an upsurge in violent killings, disappearances and outright human rights violations. Although we continued to look

---

\(^1\) Field-building is about broad support to address specific problems rather than scale up a particular organization or intervention. Field-building involves playing a supportive, sometimes coordinating role to other organizations or individuals working on the same issue and particularly emphasizes the idea of harnessing disparate efforts to ensure they contribute to broader social change.
for constructive opportunities to engage, there was a clear set of moral choices to be made in doing so.

Nonetheless, we did look for new avenues for engagement with government. The government of Tanzania withdrew from the Open Government Partnership at the end of 2017. Between then and the end of the strategy period, Twaweza has successfully worked with the OGP and international media to raise the challenges we have faced in operating and pressure the government on these, we have continued to work with Kigoma to infuse the principles of transparency, participation and accountability into their local government despite the withdrawal, and we have created multiple new channels of engagement with government such that: we are regularly invited to comment on draft legislation for MPs on diverse topics from establishing a teachers’ board, to media services to Dodoma as a capital city; we have engaged with the anti-corruption committee in Parliament and have been invited to join the steering committee for the implementation of the third anti-corruption strategy (NASCAP III); we have developed a relationship with the sectoral coordination unit in the local government ministry, presenting to 14 directors about our work in November 2018; and we have been in discussions about collaborative projects and shared specially collected detailed research findings with the police, the ministry of constitutional and legal affairs (judiciary) and the department of information services. This continues into our 2019-2022 strategy with our work with the sectoral coordination unit in the ministry for local government on a national decentralization policy.

In addition, it is fair to say that as the context changed, the open government challenges that were framed around open data became less relevant. Instead energy was focused on an expanded area of work around access to information and open civic space (as articulated in all of our annual reports, we did update the focus of the access to information problem area to address broader civic space challenges) and modelling accountability and responsiveness.

**Evaluators comment:** Twaweza contributed to policy change in the Open Government area, primarily through its inputs and improvements to the Access to Information Act. It further developed its activities on analyzing and commenting on bills over the strategy period. Whereas the effect of these activities was not always clear, it did help inform decision makers and the public about the implications of upcoming legislation.

Despite the restrictive nature of the political context, the passage of the Access to Information Act was an important philosophical and political success for all those working on civic space.

Subsequent legal analysis work has followed individualized trajectories:

- The work and outcomes of engagement around the Statistics Act is described previously
- Twaweza was the only civil society organization to analyses and engage around all three versions of the Media Services Bill. Despite minor changes, the law as enacted ultimately restricts the operation of a free and independent media. Nonetheless, Twaweza gained valuable insight into the legislative process.
- Twaweza’s engagement on the Online Content Regulations in coalition contributed to a pause in enactment of these regulations although they were ultimately passed with problematic (from a freedom of expression perspective) clauses intact. We have followed this up with legal action, again unsuccessful and an appeal is being planned.

The above represented pieces of legislation with which we engaged substantively. However, our other written and oral submissions in parliament (alongside the above) have culminated in representatives from the Parliamentary Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs visiting
Twaweza to establish a closer working relationship, and asking us to support the contributions to public hearings of other groups affected by specific laws (in 2019). We have done so.

**Evaluators comment:** The LME has developed sustained institutionalized results with the creation of an internal advisory body on research and evaluation (REAG) and the staff expansion of the LME unit.

We are happy with these achievements of the learning, monitoring and evaluation function at Twaweza. However, we continue to want to emphasize a reflective and adaptive posture and thus have introduced in the 2019 – 2022 strategy, the following additional approaches to institutionalizing learning:

- all staff participation in monitoring fieldwork for major projects
- new quarterly reflective management meeting and reporting template
- adoption of case study format for major interventions, minimum three per year

---

**Impact**

**Evaluators comment:** By the end of 2018, Twaweza wanted to have made a measureable impact on four development dimensions, i.e. school children for learning; authorities’ responsiveness to public demands; accessing information for deepened accountability; and transforming government practices based on evidenced knowledge. While these ambitious impacts were clearly aimed at by Twaweza, they were, apart from elements of the ‘school learning’, only achieved to a limited extent.

We contend, and demonstrate below, that we have had rather more than ‘limited’ impact in our key outcomes areas:

**Children in school are learning as parents, teachers, school administrators and policy makers focus on measuring and improving the learning outcomes resulting from the large [social] investment in basic education.**

- Uwezo data has shown a year on year improvement in Kiswahili literacy skills.
- Learning increased through KiuFunza.
- Multiple policy interventions have been introduced that emphasize learning: curriculum review to focus on 3Rs in early primary, the Standard 2 assessment framework which focus on basic learning outcomes, and the references to learning outcomes in multiple policy documents including the new policy launched in 2015 and joint sectoral reviews.
- Sub-national and national officials reference the importance of learning outcomes.

**Public authorities are responsive to public demand, and they promote and protect citizens’ right to high quality, relevant and meaningful information.**

Although responsiveness in its broader sense has continued to be elusive, the Access to Information Act does protect, promote and institutionalize citizens’ right to information. This is further emphasized by subsequent public statements on the requirement for citizens to have access to information by the Prime Minister, the Minister for Regional Administration and Local Government, and a director in the ministry for information.

**Citizens and civil society are asking for, getting and using information to improve their situation and engage public officials to deepen accountability and improve the quality of public service delivery.**

This is perhaps the most important insight of the previous strategy. We continued to grapple with how exactly to stimulate citizen agency beyond access to information, expressions of voice and
stimulating public debate between 2015 and 2018. Through implementation of the Public Agency initiative, our own research and data collection, as well as the latest developments in the field, we did however learn important lessons about Twaweza’s animating principle. In the 2019 – 2022 strategy, we are building on a tested model of local animation but attempting to explore new modalities for scale, scope and replication of the practices and ideas from the approach. This emphasis on hyper-local interventions (at community level), the freedom for communities to identify their own challenges rather than responding to a preset agenda from Twaweza and the intensely personal nature of the actions to promote change are all built on lessons from this area of work. We are confident that we have found a pathway towards solving the citizen agency puzzle.

**Public and policy actors are using evidence-based knowledge to transforming governance practice and the provision of basic education.**

Through KiuFunza, both the current pilot in partnership with government and the practice change of sending grant money directly to schools, Twaweza has ensured that policy actors are responding to evidence. Our involvement as country co-lead for the Research in Improving Systems in Education plays a similar role.

However, in the open government domain, like much of this work at the time, Twaweza was rooted in what was perceived as the more sanitized, politically palatable side of open government work, specifically in open data and with some interest in open contracting. The idea was to brandish successes achieved from these less terse area of open government reform to make the case for more wide-ranging use of transparency, accountability, participation principles. This strategy and approach quickly became untenable with the new administration and thus Twaweza was forced to change course, opting for navigating between watchdog and collaborator with varying and sometimes intangible impact.

**Evaluators comment:** It was obviously a highly ambitious theory of change that Twaweza embarked upon in 2015. Even before the setbacks from 2015 onwards, civic space was restricted in Tanzania. A precondition for achieving the measurable impact was thus the continued democratization and expansion of civic space in Tanzania. This did not occur, and government restrictions increased. These factors points to the fact that the government play a bigger role than reflected in Twaweza’s theory of change.

It is fair to say that Twaweza did not anticipate the extent of the changes and democratic reversals that have taken place during the period under review. The strategy is predicated on assumptions around the perpetuation of certain democratic values which did not consistently hold. But government occupies a central role in the Theory of Change, outcomes and strategic goals of the strategy.

**Evaluators comment:** SDG data has been increasingly included in the Twaweza databases, particularly educational data (Uwezo) but also government related data, such as social sector data, including health and water.

We will continue to emphasize our focus on collecting genuinely useful data to inject into public and policy dialogues.
What we are taking on board and working on

Due to the fast changing socio-political context, the theory of change should be regularly subject to review, e.g. every sixth month.

- We are proposing at minimum annual addendums to present and discuss changes.

Twaweza should continue to contribute to public debates in Tanzania through the generation of evidence and experiments, but balance thoughtfully this against development goals, that is, delivering and sustaining results.

- Our new strategy includes a new approach to scale, emphasizes co-creation with government and an inbuilt orientation towards solving service delivery problems at community level.

Twaweza should continue its high activity level, follow-up on those activities that have potential to drive the theory of change forward, i.e. identifying improved pathways for improved opportunities for change.

- The new strategy is more coherent and connected with each area of work contributing to the others thus enhancing the potential for impact.

Twaweza should review the results matrix, simplify, and continue describing activities and outputs and ensure that they are clear and logically linked towards effects. In the light of achieved outcomes – or the lack of them – regularly revisit the Strategy’s theory of change, including initiate alternative entries to problem analysis and adjust hypotheses and activities accordingly. The number of assessment tools should be reduced, including benchmarks.

- We are reviewing our reporting formats and how we present our theory of change reflections.

In order to become more precise on how to achieve intermediate outcomes and outcomes, Twaweza should analyze and more clearly distinguish between what it can control itself, what it can influence directly or through partners, and what is required by other actors to achieve outcomes.

- By using outcome mapping in our local work, we are more clearly delineating roles and responsibilities.

Twaweza should continue its efforts to improve its value for money, through, for example, continuous application of advanced technology, ensure that trained staff apply learned skills and when possible adjust salary levels.

- Value for money is a core principle for Twaweza.

Twaweza should expand on its partner networking, formalize relationships whenever possible but balance realistically against plans. Efforts should particularly be on supporting partners in their monitoring and evaluation knowledge and skills to ensure their ability to manage projects in general but particular those initiated/facilitated by Twaweza, a process in which Twaweza is already engaged.

- Closer and more facilitative engagement with partners, different types of partner relationships (financial for organizational development, financial for delivery of activities, capacity exchange, coalition, facilitative) are already being explored and employed.
Related to the fact that some of the main outcomes over the past strategy periods have been achieved through sustained engagement with government authorities, Twaweza should generally seek to engage these authorities prior to initiating major interventions and incentivize their continuous involvement and participation throughout the project cycle whenever possible.

- This is essential and it may even be legally mandated under the current national context.

Overall, focus more on the building of organizational capacity of external partners and stakeholders as this will help institutionalize change. This is more important as Twaweza currently seems to be pivoting towards activities at the local level where capacity is often limited. It is also important in a context with increasingly centralized decision-making in order to build resilience towards pressure from central government.

- We take this fully on board and have already started to engage more strategically in capacity and knowledge exchange activities.

Efforts have been made by Twaweza to achieve ambitious and measurable outcomes/goals. Yet, circumstances of repressiveness towards the civil space and Twaweza’s too activity-focused approach resulted in low impact. Forward-looking Twaweza should assess impact through development of pathways in which likelihoods of achievements are realistically designed.

- We believe our new strategy has even more coherent articulations of our strategic ambitions and plans.

Twaweza should continue to apply SDG data in both education and government areas when it coincides with its plans. SDGs, being a government responsibility Twaweza’s data collection, could be a one of several openings into collaboration with the government system for longer term effect.

- We will continue to collect SDG data and data around government priorities, entitlements and standards as well as citizens’ feedback on government initiatives and performance.

**What we are still thinking about**

When Twaweza embarks on identifying key problems and concerns as well as assign major interventions, thorough and diversified analytic methods should apply. This will contribute to the design of a more realistic theory of change and development of improved pathways to its realization.

- We are continuing to explore this and possible implications although we do believe the problem driven approach remains relevant and useful.

Internally, develop scenarios with different trade-offs between working with the government (generating evidence on service delivery in a non-partisan way) and pursuing a watchdog push back approach. Based on these scenarios and thorough risk analyses identify the maneuverability of Twaweza in the current socio-political context and let the outcome help sustain Twaweza’s future strategy and activities as well as its organizational structures.

- While we will always need to be open to playing either of these roles, it may be helpful to develop criteria or checklists of sorts to determine which particular strategy is germane to the specific situation at hand.

**What we disagree with**

Twaweza should re-think its approach to service delivery so as to better reflect the fact that evidence and data collection on service delivery are in demand as it is the most important need perceived by its main target group, Tanzanian citizens.

- We continue to assert, and indeed a central principle for our work is, that there is need for a critical independent civil society sector focused on advocating for transparent, inclusive and
accountable government both as an end in itself and as a means to better address service delivery challenges for all. The OGP has recently published case study evidence suggests that open government results in better outcomes across a variety of areas including public service delivery, the prevention of corruption and efficiency of public contracts. This is a fundamental value for Twaweza and is supported by citizens, according to Sauti za Wananchi data in which over 90% say that democracy matters for development. 

Given the changing socio-political context in Tanzania, Twaweza may further develop its activities targeting and protecting the shrinking civic space, but it should maintain a core of activities related to data and work on service delivery, which have proved a main entry point to positive engagement with government authorities.

- Our proposed community interventions target service delivery challenges as well. More importantly, it has been our lived experience that what is controversial varies over time. It is important to stand for fundamental principles.

CONCLUSIONS

In concluding, we note two areas in which we feel greater attention could have been paid.

One is contextual perspective. Through a perfect storm of unfortunate circumstances, the evaluation team changed their local consultant twice during the exercise. This undoubtedly affected their collective understanding of the dynamic and nuanced Tanzanian context in which Twaweza works.

More substantively, and linked perhaps to the point above, we find that the evaluation does not provide a macro assessment of the value (or not) that Twaweza brings to Tanzania as a governance-focused civil society organization in this historical moment in time. The report could have usefully helped the uninitiated reader to understand what role the various and varied activities implemented by Twaweza play in the current socio-political environment, and then to assess its contribution to the country. Are we successful in keeping independent voices in the media, in national-level debates? Are we managing at the same time to work "behind the scenes" to build trust and inroads with certain key government offices / individuals? What is the overall delicate balance of civil society presence in the country - including the push from the government to "just focus on service delivery" and therefore less on accountability, and how is Twaweza managing this?

Nonetheless, we wish to deeply thank the evaluation team for their efforts in this endeavor.

Thanks must go to the colleagues at Sida Tanzania, for their substantive support to Twaweza and for commissioning this vital evaluation exercise. Many thanks also to all our committed, inspiring and intellectually stimulating donors and Board members, and all the partners who have worked with us to achieve what we have together.
Annex 1 | List of Outcomes 2015-18

Open Government

- In 2016 an Access to Information Act which, importantly, allows information provided under the Act to be shared.
- Increasing support for access to information among citizens between 2015 and 2018
- Contributed to amendments to five laws, one policy, one initiative (Big Results Now), four sets of regulations.
- Over 40 datasets published on Open Data Portal
- Open data circular from Chief Secretary to all government ministries, departments, agencies and local government authorities in 2015; public order to be transparent from minister for local government (2018), prime minister (twice, 2017), government spokesperson (2018).
- Political parties altered their campaign tactics in response to a Sauti za Wananchi poll in 2015.
- Constitutional referendum on a draft that was based on a bankrupt process was cancelled after Twaweza data showing the vote was split, in 2015.
- In 2015, Twaweza inspired small protests in 2-3 locations and inspired a citizen-led poll after the results of our political poll were made public. More broadly, data and statistics became increasingly referenced in popular public discourse (these mock protests were one manifestation of this). While political polls garnered more headlines, our frequent data releases came to be relied on as important input into a wide range of policy discussions ranging from food security issues to the return of teenage mothers to public schools.
- Increasing interest in Open Government Partnership (OGP) from other civil society actors evidenced by increased number of comments on third National Action Plan.
- Over 1,000 pieces of coverage, almost all of which reference our data thus contributing to public debate and data journalism.
- 18 MPs have fast-tracked in-constituency development projects and have shared their contact details with constituents for them to raise their issues.

Government responsiveness – over the course of implementing the strategy, we came to learn that these first stage outcomes of just persuading government to engage with, respond to, or even try to address findings or stories are important first steps in creating more impactful change. The public reach, media coverage and social media data as provided in the Annual Reports are some others of these important foundational outcomes. They are also the outcomes that are most easily attributable to Twaweza directly, as is apparent above, other outcomes are generally caused by a plethora of actors and factors.

- Public statements in response to our data from ministers on six occasions.
- Twaweza data inspired an MP to become a champion of education issues.
- Twaweza corruption perception data referenced in the third National Anti-corruption Strategy.
- Government officials, media make use of Twaweza data as a reference point.
• Created the first opportunity or experience of seeing ministers answer citizens’ questions for 60% of viewers of *Njoo Tuongee* talk show. Increased their belief in citizens’ capacity to interrogate ministers: 79% - viewers vs. 64% - non-viewers.

**Education**

• Early grade primary curriculum revised to focus on 3Rs (Reading, Writing and Arithmetic) in 2015.
• Standard 2 assessment framework developed and implemented from 2016.
• Capitation grants sent directly to schools instead of local authorities from January 2016.
• The KiuFunza randomized control trial improved learning outcomes; on average in the nationally representative sample of schools pupils gain an extra one third of a year of learning in one school year.
• KiuFunza adopted for government trial with a signed Memorandum of Understanding between Twaweza and the Ministries of education and local government.
• KiuFunza I scientific paper accepted for publication the world’s premier economics journal – the Quarterly Journal of Economics.
• 2014/5 Education and Training Policy makes extensive reference to learning outcomes as a policy priority.
• Uwezo data used as a justification for and to monitor major interventions in education: EQUIP-T, Tusome.
• In Bukoba, parents engaged more in schools following the validated participation intervention.
• Contributed to global knowledge with a number of references in the 2018 World Development Report on education.

**Government responsiveness – as above.**

• Uwezo data used as part of education sectoral review by government.
• Spurred the creation of by-laws based on citizens’ concern in two locations.
• Prompted a lively debate among 150 MPs on learning outcomes, a handful of them followed up with requests for further data.
• Public service management commission reached out to request details about KiuFunza because they are interested in introducing performance contracts in other sectors.
• District officials commit to helping to address the learning crisis at Uwezo sub-national launches. A handful have gone on to initiate follow up actions including organising extra classes.

**LME**

• Part of the formative discussions and design, and a member, of the Learning Collaborative.
• Contributed to field discourse through presentations and articles.