



CONCEPT NOTE ON THE 2026 ZIMBABWE MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING (MEL) WEEK TO BE HELD IN MASVINGO, 2026

- Dates** : 31 August to 4 September 2026
- Venue** : Masvingo, Urban Lifestyles Hotel
- Partnerships** : GoZ, UN, Private Sector, NGOs, VOPEs
- Duration** : 5 Days
- Funding Partners** : GoZ, UN, Private Sector

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Following the successful hosting of the inaugural Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Week in 2025. The event was declared a platform for advancing evidence-based governance, accountability, learning, and innovation in development practice.
- 1.2 MEL Week brings together political leadership, policymakers, practitioners, academia, civil society, the private sector, and development partners to strengthen national MEL systems. This is in support of national development priorities, especially improved public service delivery, to achieve Vision 2030.

2.0 Background and Rationale

- 2.1 Zimbabwe has entered the second phase of its development journey to attain Vision 2030: “Towards a Prosperous and Empowered Upper-Middle Income Society by 2030”. The National Development Strategy (NDS) 2 sets out priorities in economic transformation, social development, infrastructure, governance, environmental sustainability, and human capital development.

- 2.2 Despite strong commitments by the Government of Zimbabwe under NDS 2, gaps in public service delivery persist, particularly at the local level (Government of Zimbabwe, 2020, 2025). These are compounded by inadequate, fragmented, and insufficiently disaggregated real-time data, constraining evidence-based decision-making, absence of harmonised operational frameworks for service delivery and weak MEL (Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning) Data systems in support of the devolution agenda. Limited availability of granular data hampers assessment of progress on Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) and weakens effective prioritisation and utilisation of scarce public resources. Furthermore, an increasingly complex and rapidly evolving context driven by climate change, global conflicts and pandemics demands adaptive, real-time MEL and data systems to inform timely and responsive decisions.
- 2.3 Consequently, central to the effective implementation of the National Development Strategy (NDS) 2 is the strengthening of Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) systems and the use of quality, disaggregated data to ensure accountability, transparency, and evidence-based policymaking. Timely and credible data are recognized as essential for planning, performance monitoring, and adaptive management in response to emerging challenges.
- 2.4 NDS 2 also provides the framework for domestication and implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and Agenda 2063, positioning Zimbabwe to meet regional and global reporting obligations while advancing the principle of leaving no one and no place behind. This creates a dual imperative: reinforcing MEL systems to achieve national priorities while responding to international expectations for measurable and accountable development results.
- 2.5 Against this backdrop, the 2026 MEL Week offers a strategic platform for dialogue, learning, and translating policy commitments into practice. It supports the implementation of NDS 2, Vision 2030, and the SDGs by strengthening MEL systems, enhancing public sector performance, and showcasing Zimbabwe's commitment to evidence-driven decision-making.

The event will also build political leadership capacity, institutional accountability, and foster collaboration among the government, development partners, civil society, academia, and the private sector. In

doing so, MEL Week positions Zimbabwe at the forefront of the global shift toward accountable, data-informed, and adaptive governance.

- 2.6 The inaugural MEL Week in 2025 marked a historic milestone in institutionalizing MEL within national governance systems. Opened with high-level political commitment from the President and Vice President, the event established MEL Week as an annual national platform. It reinforced momentum for integrating MEL principles into planning, budgeting, performance management, and information systems. Key lessons included the importance of early planning, structured governance arrangements, and sustained political leadership. Participants emphasized the need for practical, measurable outcomes and called for innovation, digitalization, and the integration of indigenous knowledge into MEL practices.
- 2.7 Zimbabwe’s participation at other MEL Week celebrations enrich approaches, insights into advanced digital platforms, artificial intelligence, real-time knowledge management, systematic tracking of resolutions, and the integration of indigenous languages and African evaluation perspectives. These national and regional lessons will directly inform the design and delivery of the 2026 MEL Week, ensuring it strengthens MEL as a central pillar of governance and development.

3.0 Objectives, Outcomes, and Outputs of the Zimbabwe MEL Week 2026

3.1 Overall Objective

To advance transformative and adaptive MEL and data systems that promote public service delivery.

3.2 Specific Objectives

3.2.1 To showcase practical experiences, case studies, and tested models that strengthen MEL for improved service delivery at the national and local level. **(Strand 1)**

3.2.2 To share lessons learned, including what has worked, what has not worked, and why, in applying adaptive and systems-based MEL in complex and uncertain contexts. **(Strand 2)**

3.2.3 To demonstrate effective tools, innovations, and real-world applications for building integrated, high-quality, and timely data systems that inform policy and planning. **(Strand 3)**

3.2.4 To explore practical applications of emerging technologies and AI in transforming data analytics, learning and real-time decision-making. **(Strands 4 & 6)**

3.2.5 To elevate context-responsive and Africa-centred evaluation practices by sharing indigenous knowledge approaches **(Strand 5)**

3.2.6 To amplify innovations from Young and Emerging Evaluators. **(Strands 6)**

3.3 Expected Outcomes

3.3.1 Informed Political Leadership and High-level Officials.

3.3.2 Strengthened National MEL and Data Systems.

3.3.3 Improved Digital Transformation and Innovation in MEL.

3.3.4 Institutionalized Inclusive and Indigenous Evaluation.

3.3.5 Professionalised MEL Workforce.

3.4 Outputs

3.4.1 High-level Dialogue Held

3.4.2 MEL Innovations Exhibitions

3.4.3 Strategic Field Visits/ Tour Conducted

3.4.4 MEL Journals Produced

3.4.5 MEL Innovations Exhibitions Held

4.0 Theme and Strategic Strands

Main Theme: Advancing Vision 2030, SDGs, and Agenda 2063 through Public Sector Service Delivery: Transformation of MEL and Data Systems.

4.1 Strands

To ensure coherence and relevance, all content, including papers, presentations, panel discussions, workshops, and case studies, under the Zimbabwe MEL Week strands must explicitly reference the relevant NDS 2 Priorities. This alignment demonstrates how Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) contributes to achieving the country's development goals, strengthens governance, and supports both national and global development agendas such as the SDGs.

Strand 1: MEL for Local Governance and Accountable Service Delivery
Strengthening local authorities' MEL systems to support accountability, devolution, and improved public service delivery in alignment with Vision 2030, SDGs, and Agenda 2063.

Strand 2: Adaptive and Systems-Based MEL for Complex Development Contexts
Applying systems thinking, foresighting, and adaptive MEL approaches to navigate complexity and uncertainty.

Strand 3: Strengthening Data Systems and Evidence for Decision-Making
Building integrated, high-quality, and timely data systems to generate credible evidence for planning, policy, and improved public service delivery.

Strand 4: Re-imagining MEL in the Fourth Industrial Revolution
Harnessing emerging technologies and AI to transform data collection, analysis, and learning for better decision-making.

Strand 5: Decolonising Evidence
Made in Africa Evaluations: Centering Indigenous Knowledge Systems to shape context-responsive MEL.

Strand 6: Harnessing Innovation of Young Emerging Evaluators (YEEs)
Empowering young evaluators to explore the impact of AI on Data Analytics.

To ensure that MEL Week 2026 adopts a practical and implementation-focused approach, all papers, presentations, panel discussions,

exhibitions, workshops, and case studies under each strand will be solution-oriented and action-driven. Contributors will be required to demonstrate practical applications, tools, methodologies, case examples, policy implications, and measurable results linked to National Development Strategy (NDS) 2 priorities and SDGs delivery. Emphasis will be placed on showcasing what works, lessons from implementation, scalable innovations, and concrete institutional actions rather than purely theoretical discussions

6.0 Cross – Cutting Events and Special Activities

Cross –cutting events and special activities under MEL Week 2026 will include:

- **Capacity Building Workshops**

Capacity building ahead of MEL Week will ensure that officers are adequately prepared to engage meaningfully in the technical sessions, discussions, and peer-learning exchanges. Strengthens foundational monitoring, evaluation and learning competencies beforehand. Enhances the quality of participation, promotes a shared understanding of MEL concepts across stakeholders, and equips officers with the confidence and skills needed to contribute effectively. Ensures that participants can fully absorb best practices, apply relevant methodologies to national evaluation processes and reinforce a culture of evidence-based decision-making within Government.

- **Pre-National Conference Provincial Engagements**

Engagements through Provincial Development Committees (PDCs) to localise MEL, data use, and SDGs monitoring.

- **High-Level Guest Speaker and Keynote Addresses**

His Excellency the President of Zimbabwe, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, and regional and global thought leaders.

- **Round Table Discussions and Policy Dialogues**

Focused on NDS 2 implementation, MEL institutionalisation, and accountability.

- **Professional Development Workshops**
Targeting government officials, YEEs, and practitioners.
- **Exhibitions and Innovation Showcases**
Featuring MEL tools, digital platforms, data innovations, and partnerships
- **Evaluation Awards**
Recognising outstanding practices in scalable innovation, effective use of evidence, demonstration of what works, and concrete institutional actions.
- **Excursion/Tours**
To have an appreciation of the projects being implemented by the Government

7.0 Participants

Participants will include:

- Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC)
- Line Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAS)
- Parliament of Zimbabwe
- United Nations and Development Partners
- Civil Society and NGOs
- Academia and Research Institutions
- Private Sector
- Voluntary Organisations in Professional Evaluations (VOPEs)
- Young and Emerging Evaluators
- Regional and International MEL Experts

8.0 Partnerships and Resource Mobilisation

Funding of this programme will be incurred by Government of Zimbabwe, United Nations Agencies and the Private Sector.

9.0 Date and Venue

The Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Week will run for five (5) days starting from 31 August 2026 to 04 September 2026. This will be held at Urban Lifestyles Hotel in Masvingo, Zimbabwe.

10.0 Conference and Registration Fees

Conference facilities and excursions will be available ONLY to participants who have completed registration and paid the required fees.

Fees Structure

Participant Category	Group	Early Bird (1 May, 2026)	Late Registration (30 June, 2026)	On-Site
International	International Professionals	\$300	\$350	\$400
	International YEEs	\$200	\$250	\$300
Africa	Professionals	\$250	\$300	\$350
	Africa YEEs	\$100	\$150	\$200
SADC	Professionals	\$200	\$250	\$300
	SADC YEEs	\$100	\$150	\$200
Zimbabweans	Professionals	\$75	\$100	\$150
	Zimbabwean YEEs	\$50	\$75	\$100
Students	International	\$100	\$150	\$200
	National	\$20	\$20	\$20
Virtual Participants	International/ National	\$100	\$100	\$100
Exhibition Space Per Booth/Area	International	\$300	N/A	N/A
	National	\$300	N/A	N/A
Excursion	Tugwi Mkosi/Great Zimbabwe Ruins/ Kyle Dam	\$50	\$50	\$50

Fees: All fees should be paid to the accounts below:

1. Office of the President and Cabinet	
Account Name	Office of the President and Cabinet
Bank	CBZ
Branch	Kwame Nkrumah
Account Number	01121172120020
Currency	ZWG

2. Zimbabwe Evaluation Association	
Account Name	Zimbabwe Evaluation Association
Bank	NEDBANK
Branch	Avondale
Account Number	1990185079
Branch Code	1801
Currency	USD
Swift Code	MBCAZWHXXXX

11.0 Key Contacts

Name	Title	Contact Details
Ms. C. Makuvire	Director - Evaluation, Research and Learning	+263 712 836 400
Mrs. K. Hamamiti	Director - Management Information Systems	+263 719 329 554 meal@opc.gov.zw
Dr. S. Muyengwa	President – Zimbabwe Evaluation Association	+263 779 970 322 Shylock.muyengwa@c4impacteval.org

12.0 Call for Abstracts

Call for Abstracts Open: 01 May 2026

Deadline for Abstract Submission: 31 May 2026

Notification of Abstract Acceptance/Rejection: 15 June 2026

Confirmation of Speakers: 30 June 2026

Registration Deadline: 30 June 2026

Registration link: <https://opcmeal.gov.zw/nmel-week-register/>

Official Website: www.opcmeal.gov.zw