

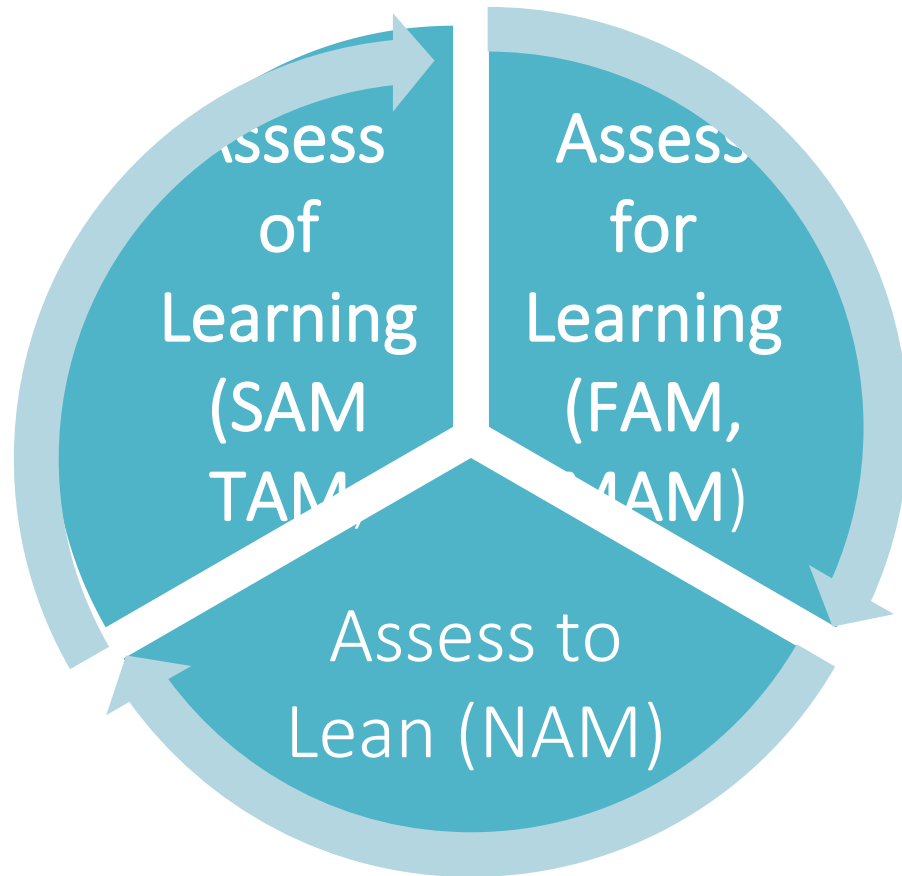
Assessing Educational Assessment
Towards Transforming the Assessment Landscape
in the New Millennium
Keynote Address

The 41st Annual regional Conference of the Association of Educational Assessment in Africa (AEAA) organized by the Educational Assessment and Examination Services Ethiopia in Collaboration with AEAA Conducted at Skylight Hotel (Addis Ababa) from 25 to 29 August, 2025

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1. Current Practices of EA
2. Core challenges in these practices
3. Reforms needed in a nutshell

Outline



1. Current practices of assessment

The three types, functions / roles of assessment that reflect three models of assessment

Major challenges

- Overemphasis on rote memo (Darling-Hammond, 2017) mainly in classroom tests
- Teaching to the test (Au, 2013); not testing to teach; narrowing down curriculum-wash back effect
- Misalignment with curriculum
- Source of stress and anxiety
- Administrative challenges affecting test results
- Equity problems and test-bias
- Dual purposes of NE affecting quality
- Wastage by testing the failures

2. Major challenges of TAM : Assessment of Learning

- Classroom exams
- National exams

- Help to monitor learning progress
- Contextualized (adopted or adapted) tools (top-bottom approach)
- Contextualizing usually language translation
- Precautions in interpreting results needed
- Recent regional assessments on early learning by World Bank showing 'learning poverty'
- *Assessment data could be fine, addressed core issue (learning to read), and aims to call action, but*
 - Literacy testing is only a component of FL
 - Children have capacities not captured by the tests
 - Learning not captured by tests but make fast recovery
 - Tools contextualized (not created), so making big claim for low data
 - Labeling is inappropriate, not ethical

MAM

Assessments for learning

Large Scale/ Sub-
National
Assessments

- TAM and MAM work to increase test scores to enhance quality education
- This test-orientation limits genuine learning/ deep learning (*Hargreaves & Sahlberg, 2013*) required in the new era.
- The 21st century requires critical thinking, collaboration, digital literacy, adaptability; which both TAM & MAM fail to measure (Pellegrino & Hilton, 2012).

Need to employ newer approaches that build holistic learning, promote personal growth, and learners becoming the owners of the assessment.

NAM

Assessment to Learning : newly emerging (21st assessments)

Focused on holistic learning, measuring non-cognitive skills as well, through alternative procedures

Integration is Key

- The trend is toward more personalized, authentic, and growth-focused than on one-time, high-stake assessment
- But, effective assessment doesn't choose one model exclusively. Instead, strategically integrate all three:
 - *Traditional methods can efficiently check for foundational knowledge.*
 - *Modern methods can help deepen understanding and assess applications, competencies*
 - *Emerging methods can personalize the learning journey and develop essential future-ready skills and mindsets.*
- Aim of effective EA is to create knowledgeable learners with competencies for adaptive, and lifelong learning.

Reforms Needed: Approaches and areas

- Approach to reform: Integration of Models or step-by-step transition?
- **What exactly the reform should take in to account?**

- **Improve evidence generation and uptake:**
 - quality evidence not yet generated at all levels;
 - though generated not accessible;
 - though accessible not used to feed the system
- **Include the missing link: regional tools, indigenous tools**
 - Regional tools and assessments to standardize education; establish equivalence and ensure student mobility in Africa
 - Go beyond contextualization and create indigenous assessment tools
- **Reform assessment system** to make them good servants; or else become bas masters
 - Use alternative assessment for non-cognitive skills- non-testable contents, and subjects (Au, 2007).
- **Be forward looking:**
 - Consider holistic learning assessment (Au, 2013)
 - Facilitate personal growth (than specified competencies)

Reforms
Needed:
what contents
need reform?

Three core areas:

- Improved use of assessment evidence
- Missing tool to put in place
- Reform existing assessment system

- **Policy provisions and capacity building:** Need for policy changes, teacher training, infrastructural improvements

- AEAA's regional assessment framework need to be rolled out

- *Stakeholder engagements: Pooling relevant institutions together: NGOs (working on assess), MoE, and EAES are already in the pool. But:*

For more sustainability universities, as a unit, be part of such a consortium than just individual experts

Assessment
reform needs
system-based
changes

Thank You