



## **SHIFTING SANDS IN EVALUATION:**

**Need for responsive, adaptive and  
future proof evaluations**

**FEBRUARY 21 -24, 2024**

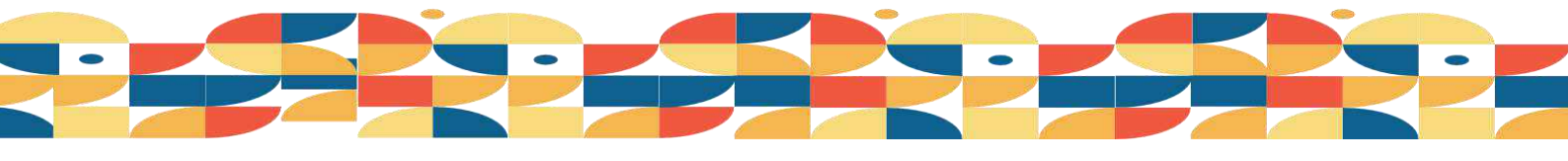
Evaluation Community of India (ECOI)

EvalYouth India (EY-I)



## ACRONYMS

3ie	International Initiative for Impact Evaluation
APEA	Asia Pacific Evaluation Association
ASER	Annual Status of Education Report
BMGF	Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DCE	Development Communication and Extension
DMEO	Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office, NITI Aayog
ECD	Evaluation Capacity Development
ECOI	Evaluation Community of India
ENS	Ethereum Name Service
EY-I	EvalYouth India
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEH	Centre for Gender Equity and Health
GENSA	Gender and Equity Network South Asia
IDEAS	International Development Evaluation Association
IEO	Independent Evaluation Office
IOCE	International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation
ISST	Institute of Social Studies Trust
IWWAGE	Institute for What Works to Advance Gender Equality
LIC	Lady Irwin College Delhi University
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MLE	Monitoring, Learning, and Evaluation
NDB	New Development Bank
NEP	National Evaluation Policy
NES	National Evaluation System
NITI	National Institution for Transforming India
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PCI	Project Concern International
ReLAC	Latin American and Caribbean Network of Monitoring, Evaluation, and Systematization
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
UN WFP	United Nations World Food Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNWWF	World Wide Fund for Nature
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VOPE	Voluntary Organization of Professional Evaluators
WFP	World Food Programme
YEE	Young and Emerging Evaluators



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We acknowledge the generous financial, operational, and technical contributions of organizations, institutions, and individuals who joined us in successfully holding the event. Our special thanks go to

- Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST) for supporting the genesis and sustaining the growth of ECOI and EvalYouth India through the years
- Our mentors Marco Segone, P.K. Anand, and A.K. Shivkumar for their steadfast support throughout our journey
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- Staff and students of the Department of Development Communication and Evaluation, Lady Irwin College, Delhi University, for their youthful energy, innovative spirit, and technical excellence in organizing the event. Special thanks to Aakar for enacting a street play during the event
- India Habitat Centre, New Delhi, for the excellent conference facilities
- Participants from India and other countries, far and near
- All others who helped in shaping the event in a small or large measure

Evaluation Community of India  
& EvalYouth India

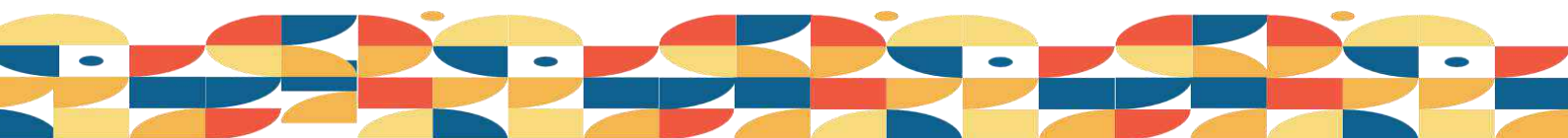


## OUR PARTNERS



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## HIGHLIGHTS AND TAKEAWAYS FROM EVALFEST 2024

EvalFest 2024 once again featured the well-established role of evaluation as the catalyst for development. Several aspects such as theoretical, methodological, organizational, practical, and so on were discussed in various sessions of the event that generated additions to existing knowledge and threw light on new areas. One of the most important takeaways from the event was the enormous opportunity it provided to evaluation professionals to reflect on the evaluation history, review current practices, and envision the profession's future.

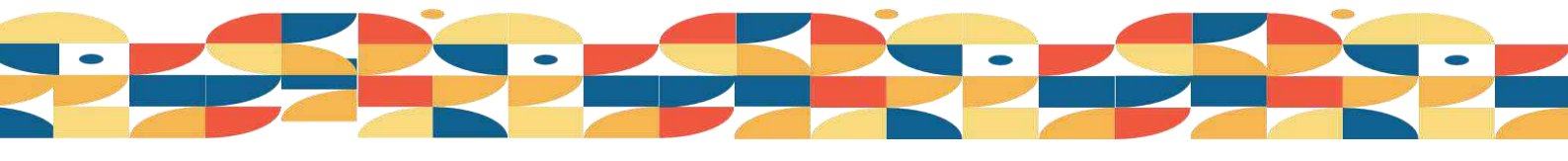
The conference noted the current difficult stage of global development, the crisis, and the role evaluation could play in the present scenario. Keynote speeches and discussions in the inaugural session emphasized the importance of evaluation in guiding development, particularly at the current stage of global development when nations are struggling to move on the path to most SDGs and to ensure that the evaluations are responsive to local needs and priorities, adaptive to emerging situations and are future-proof.

The conference brought out the need for decolonization of evaluation. The futility and dangers in the indiscriminate import and application of the principles and methodological advances of the developed North were considered and the importance of culturally relevant, effective and efficient approaches with local flavour were recommended. In this area, South-South cooperation on different aspects of evaluation, particularly in the field of evaluation capacity development was stressed.

Very few developed countries, and for that matter even many developed ones, have institutionalized evaluation that ensures evidence-based decision-making at various levels of governance. The imperative of a strong evaluation ecosystem, with evaluation policies, standards, and procedures, in place, was brought out.

A major outcome of EvalFest 2024 was the recognition that partnerships between various stakeholders, particularly with the communities, were of utmost importance. Partnerships between governments, financial institutions, academic institutions, civil society organizations, and communities are essential for the spread of evaluation culture and more so for the success of evaluation capacity development efforts. For example, ECOI's partnerships with higher educational institutions, such as Lady Irwin College, in this EvalFest and elsewhere have given a significant impetus to evaluation capacity development (ECD). The success of EvalFest 2024 can be largely attributed to these partnerships.

Community members need to be actively involved in shaping the evaluation process, setting priorities, defining success, and interpreting findings by recognizing their agency, expertise, and perspectives with an emphasis on collaboration, and participation. Communities hold a lot of power when they come together for a common mission or goal. A key lesson for researchers and evaluators working with communities is to build trust. Engaging college graduates helps them understand practical and effective community participation in planning and evaluating development work.



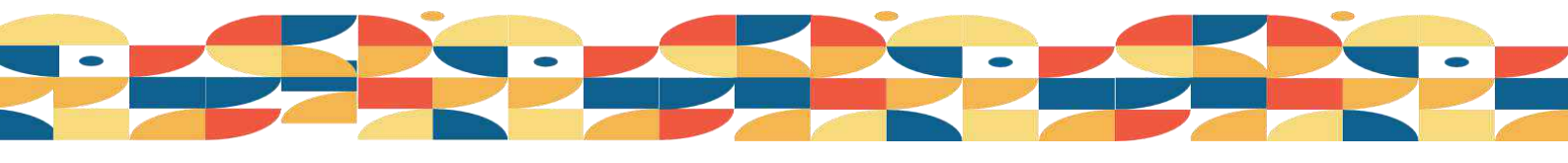
YEEs, with their often out-of-the-box approaches, are a great force to partner with in evaluation. This was conspicuously in evidence in this EvalFest, with youth making enormous professional, organizational, technological, and other contributions. The evaluation field, being still young in developing countries, will have great opportunities for the youth, and with adequate capacity-building initiatives, YEEs are certain to play an increasingly important part in the development space.

Artificial intelligence (AI) has made great strides in recent years and has gotten into almost all walks of human life, and has shown its capabilities to be of use to humanity but at the same time has shown its unpleasant side. Inevitably, the question of whether it is good or bad for application in evaluation arises. While many appreciate the advent of AI and the comfort it brings in many aspects of evaluation, design, and gathering and analysis of evidence, and even report writing, many others are worried about the possible ill effects, such as job losses, absence of application of the human mind in evaluation processes rendering them mechanical, and ethical issues as well as abuse of AI. These aspects were discussed threadbare in EvalFest. The conclusion that emerged was that prudence lies in an intelligent application. As Marco Segone observed in his presentation in the session on this subject, "AI is a double-edged sword: at its best, a beacon of innovation illuminating our future; at its worst, a shadow casting doubt on the integrity of our humanity. The balance lies in our choices. We shape and embrace AI "

Gender and equity concerns have been at the centre stage in all discussions and will remain so for quite some time to come. Evaluations must be focused on these aspects and invariably bring out evidence of how effective are the policies in this regard and how the scenario has been changing but at a slow pace. A need was felt to give result- oriented focus on equality and inclusivity issues.

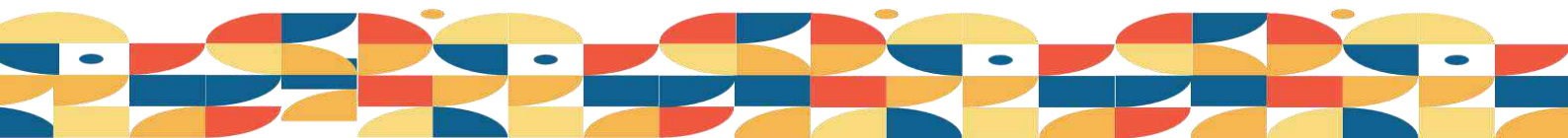
Evaluations could foster sustainable infrastructure development. The discussions emphasized the importance of incorporating lessons learned from evaluations into project design and new initiatives. The need for a standardized project appraisal mechanism, mentioning the "five cases model" that assesses economic, financial, social, and strategic aspects, including environmental sustainability was stressed. Community ownership and maintenance of infrastructure is crucial to sustainability. The implementation of projects should encourage local sourcing of materials and labour to foster a sense of ownership in the communities where the infrastructure is built.

Innovation bazaar had always been a big draw in EvalFests and was no exception in the present one. This novel way of communicating innovative ideas to the participants has great potential, enabling a larger number of participants to interact with the presenters than in a traditional speeches-and-Q&A approach. The range of presentations in this Innovation Bazaar varied from merging art with real life, as done by guests from South Africa, to building pure quantitative measures like sustainable incomes and evidence-gap maps. Similarly, the poster session was a great attraction as visuals always attract and one can say a lot with one picture. The street play was another attention-drawing event where children dramatized the importance of sex education in schools. Such art-related mediums are easy to communicate with and have a local flavour. It emerged that such art forms and many more innovative ideas could form the future of evaluation as these are out of box approaches and can go a long way with communities leading to sustainability.





Another important area that had a focus during the Evalfest was evaluation capacity development and skill upgradation. These efforts are needed at various levels. Evaluation needs to be considered as an independent discipline and it is the right time that various full-fledged courses are started at university and college level. At school level awareness generation about importance of M&E is essential. Capacity development is needed both horizontally and vertically for using various evaluation technologies, approaches and emerging techniques. ECOI in collaboration with other partners should take this initiative.



Evalfest has been organised by Evaluation Community of India and Eval Youth India in collaboration with other partners

## About ECOI and EY-I

Evaluation Community of India (ECOI) is a voluntary organization of professional evaluators (VOPE) with the mission to promote demand for and strengthen theory, practice, and utilization of evaluations through knowledge sharing and capacity building involving members, partners, and diverse networks following quality standards. Established in 2015 against the backdrop of celebrations of International Evaluation Year, and recognized as a VOPE by the IOCE, ECOI strives to promote evaluation culture in the country and contribute to evaluation capacity building. EvalYouth India (EY I) is a network of Young & Emerging Evaluators in India, functioning as an integral part of ECOI. It is also the Indian chapter of the EvalYouth Global Network, an initiative of EvalPartners. Launched in 2020, EY-I has the objective of developing young and emerging evaluators (YEE) of India to become technically sound, experienced, and well-networked professionals who contribute to evaluation capacity, and their inclusion in evaluations conducted at the national, regional, and international levels. ECOI is governed by a team of core members.

### ECOI Core Members:

Aniruddha Brahmachari, Archana Kumar, Banda VLN Rao, Garima, Harish Koilada, Itishree Sahu, Jahnvi Andharia, Nabesh Bohidar, Rajib Nandi, Rashmi Agrawal, Rituu B. Nanda, Sanjay Kumar, Shachi Joshi

## 1.1 EvalFests – Past and Present

In pursuit of its goal of promoting evaluation culture in the country and developing evaluation capacities, ECOI organizes knowledge-sharing events that serve as platforms for presenting and sharing existing knowledge and experiences and showcasing innovative ideas. EvalFests are such events organized biennially. Following a demand voiced at the evaluation conference organized in New Delhi against the backdrop of the Declaration of 2015 as the International Year of Evaluation and India becoming the first country to receive the Evaluation Torch, the Evaluation Community of India (ECOI) was launched and the first Evalfest was held in 2018, followed by similar events in 2020, 2022 and now in 2024.



**Table 1: Evalfest Themes: 2015-2024**

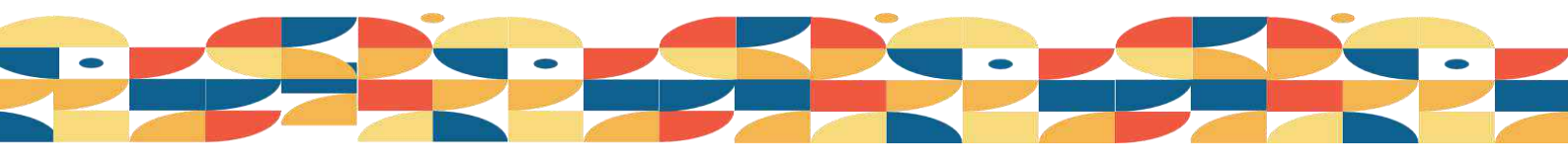
Year	Dates	Theme
2015	18-22 January 2015	India Evaluation Week 2015
2018	07-09 February 2018	Visibility, Voice, and Value in Evaluations
2020	12-14 February 2020	Evidence Building for Achieving SDGs: Digital Development and Inclusion
2022*	21-25 February 2022	Towards a Vibrant Evaluation Ecosystem: Collaboration, Creativity, and Convergence
2024	21-23 February 2024	The Shifting Sands in Evaluation: Need for Responsive, Adaptive, and Future-proof Approaches

\*The 2022 event was held in combination with the 3rd Conference of APEA and virtual mode due to Covid

## 1.2 EvalFest 2024 –themes and sub-themes

The main theme of EvalFest 2024 was “*The Shifting Sands in Evaluation: Need for Responsive, Adaptive and Future-proof Approaches*” signifying changing demands from evaluations and action needed to meet those demands. The evaluation landscape has been changing rapidly in recent times, with the new and complex challenges posed by the adoption of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), volatile situations like pandemics and conflicts, and emerging phenomena like climate change, calling for pushing at the methodological boundaries and adoption of appropriate crisis-proof approaches and techniques. The evaluations also needed to be more inclusive and more participatory, based on emerging data needs, and make use of emerging technologies in data gathering and analysis.

The evolving situations and the newer responses also require that we draw in more types of stakeholders that the evaluation community does not engage with traditionally. Conventionally, evaluation has been the responsibility of development agencies, governments, and multilateral organizations. Institutions alone cannot address new challenges in achieving SDGs, with no one left behind. It is time for the roles to be shared between government and new leaders - the youth and communities/citizens, industry, media, etc. - particularly those whose voice is not often heard and valued in the development discourse. Shifting sands in evaluation are thus a reflection of the changing development evaluation landscape. While the government still has the leadership role in national development and its evaluation, the private sector and the communities at large, particularly the youth, have today increasing claim for space and leadership in the field. The emergence of new actors and perspectives presents both opportunities and challenges for the evaluation practice. The evaluation community must be responsive to these changes and adapt its systems and processes to ensure that evaluation continues to be a relevant and valuable tool for promoting development effectiveness.



Amplifying the main theme, therefore, were the following subthemes:

- Leaving the Ledge: Sharing the Evaluation Leadership with youths, communities, and citizens
- Emerging Challenges in Evaluation: Systemic Impacts
- Using Evidence from non-official initiatives
- Technology and Evaluation: Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- Gender Equality, Social Equity and inclusivity in development
- Capacity development at various levels for various stakeholders

### 1.3 Programme Details

Details of the three-day event, woven around the above theme and sub-themes, are given in **ANNEX 1**. They comprised, apart from the inaugural and closing sessions, five keynote speeches, three plenary sessions, ten panel discussions, and four roundtables, with about a hundred speakers from India and abroad. The Innovations Bazaar session had ten individuals/teams presenting their innovative evaluation-related initiatives. This novel approach to participatory learning had been the centre of attraction in every EvalFest. A poster session was also organized, where eight posters prepared by various scholars were displayed exhibiting their experiences in evaluation.

Over the three days of the main conference, 424 participants registered in EvalFest 2024, from India and a dozen other countries - from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, and Sri Lanka in the immediate neighbourhood, the Philippines and Qatar in the rest of Asia, Republic of South Africa from Africa, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica from South America and the United States of America, and various international development organizations. More than half of the participants were young and emerging evaluators, and two-thirds (282) of those registered were women.

### 1.4 Satellite events

In addition to the main event spread over 21 – 23 February 2024, there were also two days of satellite events intended as capacity-building workshops. These sessions were organized on 19 -20 February 2024 at the Lady Irwin College (LIC), New Delhi, and Breakthrough in their offices. These workshops were well-attended with participation from twenty-nine organizations.



# INAUGURATION

(21 February 2024, 9.30 Am to 11.00 AM)

## 2.1 Inauguration

EvalFest 2024 kicked off on 21 February 2024 with Dr Archana Kumar, ECOI, welcoming the guests and the participants, and with the ceremonial lighting of lamps by the guests on the dais.



The event was then formally inaugurated by **Prof Ramesh Chand**, Member NITI Aayog, Government of India (GoI). Speaking on the occasion, Prof Chand highlighted the growing importance of evaluation in development over the past few decades and how the discipline of evaluation has been evolving conceptually and methodologically over the years. From purely

economic considerations like costs and benefits, it now pays attention to social variables like gender and equity. He discussed and demonstrated the application of four evaluation approaches: conventional, economic, and social



prices, natural resource accounting, and environmental benefit and cost, illustrating their significance in understanding long-term impacts on people's lives and the planet. Prof Ramesh Chand stressed the importance of selecting appropriate indicators for measurement in any evaluation, citing examples of studies on poverty in Rajasthan and of the impact of horticulture in Himachal Pradesh, to show that different sets of indicators

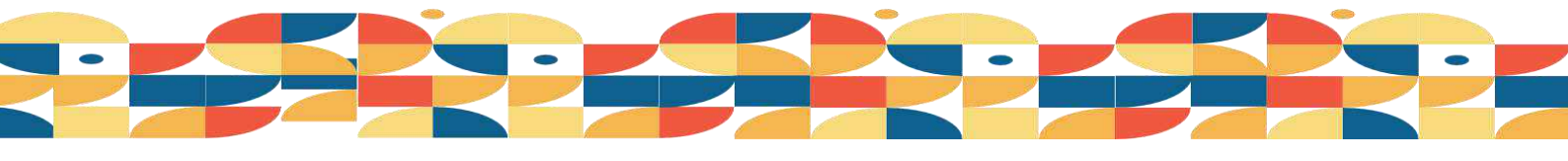


could lead to contradictory conclusions. He also felt that given the huge number of development interventions that needed to be evaluated, the Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office in the NITI Aayog could explore collaboration with institutions like ECOI.

## 2.2 Keynote speeches

Keynote speeches were delivered by

1. Ashwani K Muthoo, Director General, IEO, BRICS New Development Bank
2. Sunitha Krishnan, Deputy Country Director, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, India
3. Marco Segone, Director, IEO, UNFPA





#### 4. Marie Elisabeth Faure, Country Director, World Food programme

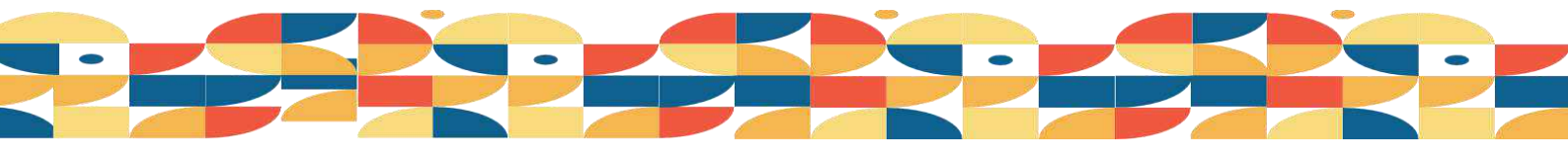
Mr. Abdul Kashem Md Mohiuddin, Secretary, Department of Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation in the Ministry of Planning, Bangladesh, and Mr. Godfrey Mashamba, Deputy Director General, Department of Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation (DPME), Republic of South Africa, who participated as special invitees also addressed the participants.

**Ashwani Muthoo** highlighted the importance of generating a range of ideas to achieve SDGs and a world free of hunger and poverty. Mr. Muthoo provided insights into the New Development Bank (NDB), a relatively new multilateral organization established by four



founding BRIC countries. Since 2015, NDB has funded almost 4,000 projects worth 25 billion US dollars, aiming to expand membership to include countries like Egypt, Bangladesh, and Iran. In India alone, NDB has funded 26 projects worth 8.5 billion dollars, covering areas from infrastructure to environmental sustainability. Its ambitious work plan for 2024 includes country portfolio evaluation. He mentioned that beyond evaluation, NDB would partner with stakeholders on topics of mutual interest. Mr. Muthoo emphasized the need for responsiveness, adaptability, and future-proof approaches in evaluation, particularly stressing the importance of culturally tailored and fundamentally efficient adaptive approaches.

**Sunitha Krishnan** highlighted the interconnectedness of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those relating to ending poverty and protecting the planet, underscoring the importance of addressing multiple dimensions and considering local contexts while adopting different strategies. She drew attention to the necessity for partnership and collaboration with various stakeholders, and stressed the need for collective action in the face of overlapping economic and climate crises, which she termed as "polycrisis." Dr. Krishnan outlined five key amplifications regarding evaluation. Firstly, she advocated for adopting systems thinking in evaluation, incorporating feedback loops across different sectors, and identifying leverage points for intervention. Secondly, she emphasized the multiplicity of outcomes, highlighting that changes are not linear and require adaptation, modernization, and measurability. Thirdly, Krishnan discussed methodological diversity, emphasizing the importance of using a variety of approaches and conducting network analysis for greater responsiveness. Fourthly, she stressed leveraging existing data to produce timely insights and ensuring that methods are familiar and user-friendly. Dr. Sunitha Krishnan stressed the importance of a people-centered approach that is contextualized within local perspectives. She brought to the fore the necessity of building teams with diverse skills and methods tailored to local contexts, particularly addressing poverty, inclusion, and marginalization while avoiding the production of irrelevant risks. Finally, she underscored the significance of evaluating evidence and continuous reflection for refinement. Dr. Krishnan urged evaluators to assess how policies worked and consider questions such as how to increase ownership and momentum for policies. She emphasized the importance of designing analysis and interpretation, building relationships with end-users, embracing systems thinking, and understanding the purpose of evaluation.



**Marco Segone** underscored the pivotal role of evaluation as a multiplier for transformative change and a fundamental tool for development. He highlighted the global context, noting that the COVID-19 pandemic has not only been a health crisis but has also triggered social and economic crises, disproportionately affecting vulnerable populations. Mr. Marco Segone expressed concern that progress towards one-third of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was off track, jeopardizing their achievement. He drew attention to the prevalence of conflicts worldwide since World War II and the erosion of trust not only between countries but also within communities. He emphasized the importance of demand-driven evaluation involving all stakeholders to enhance its relevance. The need for engaging young people in evaluation, conducting real-time assessments for rapid decision-making, and enhancing capacity in artificial intelligence was stressed upon.

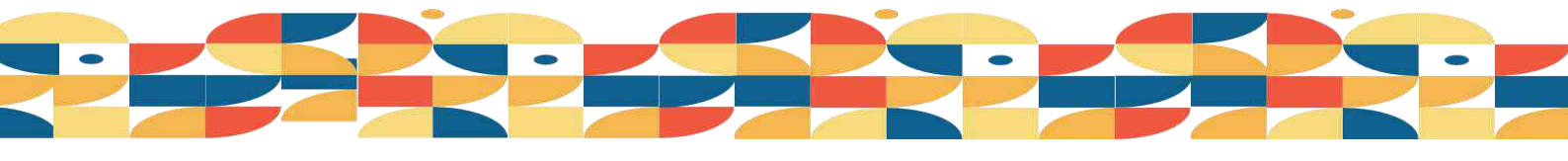
Mr. Marco mentioned an upcoming summit focusing on future-proof approaches to leverage development across various fronts, including science and technology, agriculture, and youth engagement. He concluded by outlining two key strategies for effective evaluation: meaningful engagement of young people and maximizing the potential benefits of artificial intelligence while minimizing risks through responsive use.

**Marie Elisabeth Faure** shared insights into WFP's global efforts, particularly focusing on nutrition, sustainable agriculture, and collaboration with various stakeholders. Faure emphasized the importance of partnerships and collaborations with academia, research institutions, NGOs, and other sectors to address global challenges. She highlighted the significance of improving nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture to achieve SDG 2, which aims to end hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture.

Faure discussed five main areas of focus for WFP:

- Strengthening food distribution.
- Providing nutritional support.
- Empowering self-help groups (SHGs).
- Supporting governments in risk management.
- Researching and generating evidence in nutrition.

She stressed the importance of monitoring and evaluation in maintaining operational results. Indicating the activities of WFP she stated that the focus of the organisation is also on monitoring its operations including food security, and utilizing mobile technology for humanitarian decision-making. She provided examples of developing preparedness in humanitarian approaches. Additionally, Ms. Faure highlighted the importance of real-time surveillance and analysis of information from various data sources. She said that WFP conducts market assessments, considering factors such as price fluctuations, food security, market data, supply chain, and distance. She noted that women and tribal communities are often most affected by disasters. WFP implements evidence-based approaches, employs participatory methods, and considers cultural contexts in its interventions.



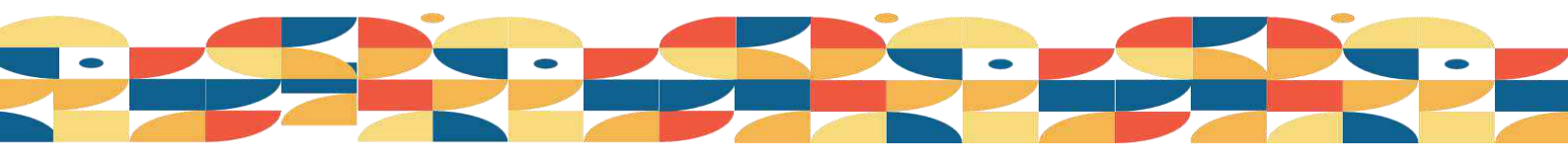
**Abdul Kashem Md Mohiuddin** emphasized the importance of evaluation in the realm of development. He stated that evaluation serves as a guiding compass for programs, allowing stakeholders to truly see the impact of policies. Mr. Mohiuddin stressed the need to allocate resources judiciously and underlined the importance of robust capacity building to equip individuals with the skills necessary for proactive learning and effective utilization of evaluation tools. He said that capacity building is not only a prerequisite but also a strategic imperative for development.

He mentioned that an evaluation policy draft for Bangladesh had been finalized, and efforts would be made to formulate this policy. Mr. Mohiuddin mentioned developing comprehensive evaluation manuals by 2024 to enhance evaluation practices. He also suggested that collaboration between ECOI and IU (Implementation Unit) to strengthen partnerships to share knowledge and improve evaluation practices would be fruitful.

**Godfrey Mashamba** underscored the importance of a) a national evaluation system to institutionalize evaluation practices across various sectors, including the public sector, NGOs, and domestic and private organizations, and ensure that evaluation becomes an integral part of decision-making processes and program implementation; b) addressing national priorities in the country's development agenda, ensuring that resources are allocated efficiently and effectively to achieve desired outcomes, c) ongoing engagement with evaluation making it a continuous process that involves stakeholders at various stages, from planning to implementation and feedback, fostering transparency, accountability, and learning.

To sum up, the inaugural session emphasized the importance of evaluation in guiding development, particularly in the current stage of global development when nations are struggling to move on the path to most SDGs and to ensure that the evaluations are responsive to local needs and priorities, adaptive to emerging situations and are future-proof. A strong evaluation ecosystem with evaluation policies and partnerships between various stakeholders, particularly with the communities, was suggested. The keynote speeches laid the foundation for further discussions in subsequent sessions.

The session ended with a vote of thanks to the chief guest and other dignitaries by Rashmi Agrawal, Core Group Member of ECOI.



## Plenary 1

# USE OF AI IN EVALUATION: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

(February 21, 2024, 11.30 AM to 1.00 PM)

### 3.1 Background

This first Plenary Session provided a platform to deliberate on the transformative role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the evaluation landscape, addressing the potential benefits and challenges associated with incorporating AI methodologies in evaluation processes.

### 3.2 The Speakers

1. Anupam Anand, Senior Evaluation Officer, Independent Evaluation Office (IEO), GEF
2. Marco Segone, Director, Evaluation Office, UNFPA
3. Suhel Bidani, Lead - Digital, BMGF India
4. Sebastian Martinez, Director of Evaluation, 3ie

Dr Jahnvi Andharia, Director, ISST, was in the Chair.

### 3.3 The Session Highlights

The discussions drew attention to the dual nature of AI, as a potentially destructive force as well as offering a multitude of opportunities. The importance of understanding and harnessing its potential for positive impact was stressed upon. AI's transformative capabilities, particularly in its capacity to expedite progress towards Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and potential to contribute to addressing challenges related to climate change, education, job creation, and economic growth etc were elaborated. Speakers highlighted AI's capacity for data synthesis and analysis, exemplified by its ability to rapidly generate COVID-19 mapping data and conduct geospatial analysis for example. The inherent dangers and ethical concerns surrounding AI, emphasizing issues such as privacy infringement, bias, discrimination, and the risk of intellectual property theft were underscored.



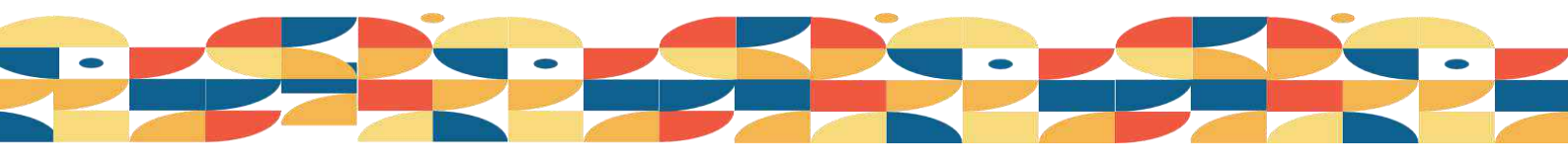




The discussions then shifted towards the necessity for regulatory frameworks to govern AI usage, especially in safeguarding individuals' rights and addressing the digital divide that often excludes populations in the Global South from benefiting from technological advancements. It was unanimously echoed that AI should be viewed as a tool to complement human evaluators rather than replace them entirely. It was pointed out that the human mind could not comprehend the rate at which the AI is changing, and that "it is learning the very moment we are pointing out its mistakes".

The dialogue further delved into concerns regarding the potential redundancy of human skills in the face of rapid AI advancement. The panellists emphasized the importance of continuous adaptation and learning for evaluators to remain relevant in an increasingly narrow field.

To sum up, the discussions underscored the complex interplay between AI's promise and challenges in evaluation processes. While AI offers unprecedented opportunities for efficiency and innovation, ethical considerations, human oversight, and equitable access to technology remain paramount to ensuring its responsible and inclusive integration into evaluation practices. As pointed out by Marco, "AI, is a double-edged sword: at its best, a beacon of innovation illuminating our future; at its worst, a shadow casting doubt on the integrity of our humanity. The balance lies in our choices. We shape and embrace AI."





# EVALUATION APPROACHES AND LESSONS ON SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

## (21 February 2024, 02.00 PM to 03.30 PM)

(This Panel discussion was organized by IEO, BRICS New Development Bank)

### 4.1 Background

Sustainable infrastructure development is pivotal for progress, fostering economic growth, social equity, and environmental sustainability. The BRICS New Development Bank (NDB) and key development partners have been instrumental in bridging the infrastructure financing gap and driving economic progress in emerging economies. This session explored these institutions' experiences, emphasizing best practices and approaches to assess their development impact.

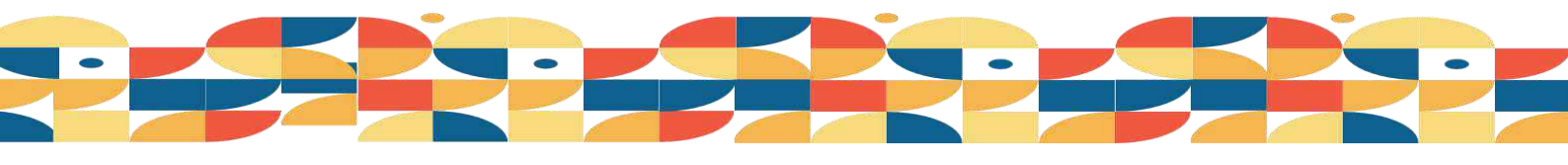
### 4.2 The Speakers

1. Abdul Kashem Md. Mohiuddin, Secretary, Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation, Ministry of Planning, Bangladesh
2. Sergio Firpo (Secretary, Monitoring and Evaluation of Public Policies, Ministry of Planning and Budget, Brazil
3. Prasanna V. Salian (Director, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, India, and India's Alternate Director on the NDB Board of Directors
4. Godfrey Mashamba, Deputy Director General, Ministry of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, South Africa
5. D.J. Pandian, Director General, India Regional Office, NDB

The session was moderated by Henrique Pissai, Principal Professional, IEO, NDB

### 4.3 The Discussions and Highlights

The speakers discussed and emphasized the need for sustainable infrastructure development with sustainability and innovative financing instruments for inclusive development. Some of the issues of the session *inter alia* included whether an Integrated or Cluster Approach to Infrastructure Development is to be preferred; inclusion of sustainability and long-term maintenance of infrastructure in evaluation; acknowledgement and support for the environmental and social safeguards; avoiding debt trap and sustainable financing by financial institutions with emphasis on exploring ways for multilateral development banks to collaborate with countries, avoiding debt traps and promoting sustainable financing. The need for devising innovative financing instruments was also discussed in this connection. Integrating new



knowledge into the design of new projects and the need to share knowledge across projects was emphasised. Logistic and operational difficulties related to starting and running businesses, such as power dynamics within and outside households, and the need for social support to start-up businesses in creating adequate awareness on various aspects were the issues to be looked into.



Speakers highlighted the significance of integrating knowledge sharing into the design of new projects and emphasized the transition from knowledge sharing to cross-project learning. The speakers also stressed the importance of NDB working as a system, providing a comprehensive package for both low-income and advanced economies. They agreed on the cluster approach and the relevance of Ethereum Name Service (ENS)-

related matters. Additionally, they called for an innovative approach to monitoring and evaluation, going beyond a project-specific focus.

### Take Aways:

The discussions emphasized incorporating lessons learned from evaluations into project design and new initiatives. The speakers highlighted the need for a standardized project appraisal



mechanism, mentioning the "five cases model" that assesses economic, financial, social, and strategic aspects, including environmental sustainability. Additionally, they addressed the significance of community ownership and maintenance of infrastructure, emphasizing that it's not only about project delivery but also preservation. The implementation of projects

includes encouraging local sourcing of materials and labour to foster a sense of ownership in the communities where the infrastructure is built. Regarding the Multi-national Development Bank's (MDB) debt versus development focus, the speakers considered the ongoing debate and suggested using instruments like local currency financing to reduce the burden and avoid foreign exchange risks for the countries involved. It was agreed that the evaluation of infrastructure products should always consider the project's long-term sustainability and environmental impacts.



## WHO DRIVES MEL? WHO USES MEL?

(21 February 2024, 02.00 PM to 03.30 PM)

(A parallel session organized by PORTICUS)

### 5.1 Background

The aim of this session, supported by PORTICUS was to present the discourse surrounding the role of communities in Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) and research, to build upon the outcomes of the deliberations. The session's objectives included initiating a dialogue among funders, evaluation professionals, youth, and community-based organizations, and promoting motivation to share power and foster collaborative efforts towards meaningful participation.

It was an activity oriented-session with the objective of 'including all'.

### 5.2 Facilitators



This was an interactive session which was facilitated by **Rituu B Nanda**. The Co-facilitators were -Amol Shaila Suresh, Bhuban Bajracharya, Ana Erika Lareza, Garima Agrawal, Jhank Shreshtha, Madhuka Liyanagamage, Namita Dandekar, Nita Aggarwal, and Randika Lawson de Mel

### 5.3 Operational Details

The session focused on exploring the driving forces behind Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL), emphasizing the pivotal role of the community in shaping MEL initiatives. The interactive nature of the session included group activities, strategically designed to encourage participants to collaborate, brainstorm, and articulate their ideas and perspectives on the influence of key stakeholders and the community in the MEL process. The process was planned to make participants feel energized and motivated to share power and foster collaborative efforts towards meaningful participation during sessions as well as learn to be a proactive community member.



The session started with an ice-breaking activity, after which the participants shared their experiences in the field of participatory MEL.

## 5.4 Key Learnings and Takeaways

- The participation of the local communities will greatly enhance their ownership if such interactions and participation discuss not just how the interventions are likely to be beneficial to them, and how they can be made more beneficial, but also try to dig out their real needs and show preparedness to incorporate them in the proposed interventions.

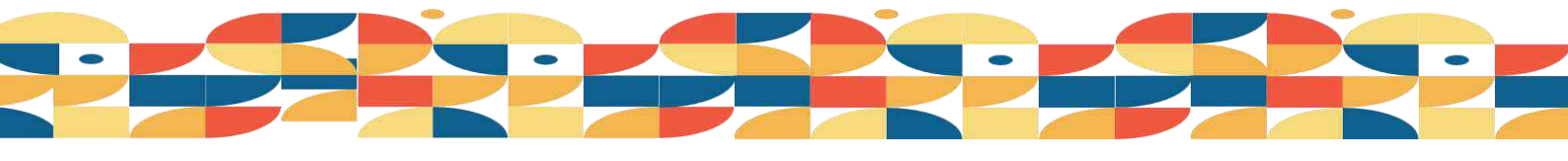


- Fostering trust and encouraging community involvement in development interventions is crucial for relevance, as it draws on their real-life experiences. This active participation increases engagement and fosters a sense of ownership, ultimately promoting sustainability. Moreover, it bolsters accountability, creating a balanced power dynamic within the community.



- Communities need to be included at all the stages of the evaluation process - in planning the intervention, formulating the M&E plan, designing the questionnaire, data collection, analysis, and disseminating evaluation insights. It is pertinent to enhance the capacities of the communities to bring them into evaluation and increase their ownership.

The session showcase as to how communities can be involved in the whole evaluation process through adopting culturally sensitive approaches which are activity based and participatory. In applying such approaches trust building is a pre-requisite which is possible through simple ice-breaking activities.





# BUILDING RESPONSIVE AND ADAPTIVE EVALUATION FUNCTIONS FOR THE 2030 (CHILD-CENTERED SDGS) (21 February 2024, 04.00 PM to 05.30 PM)

(Organized by UNICEF, India)

## 6.1 Background

The session was organised in the form of a panel discussion. The panel explored capacities, structures, and systems essential for future-proofing the evaluation functions, sharing insights into how these functions can proactively adapt to emerging trends and crises. Speakers provided insights into the architecture of their respective evaluation structures, along with the challenges and successes they have encountered. The panel aspired to catalyse a paradigm shift, instilling a vision where evaluation functions are not merely reactive but serve as proactive instruments in advancing the well-being of children and achieving the SDGs by 2030. The session was discussion-based and interactive.

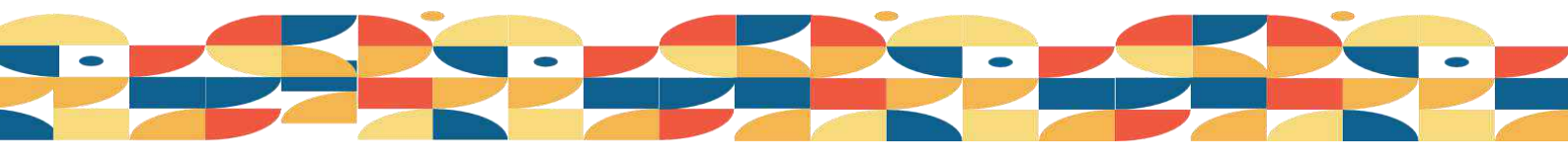
## 6.2 The Speakers

1. Esther Kaggwa, Regional Evaluation Adviser, UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia
2. Wilima Wadhwa, Director, ASER Centre
3. Rajesh Khanna, Director, Athena Infonomics
4. Stuart Coupe, Evaluation Consultant, Regional Evaluation Unit, WFP Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok (RBB)

**Maaïke Bijker**, Chief of Evidence (Data, Research and Evaluation), UNICEF, India chaired the session

## 6.3 Discussions and Highlights

The discussion was initiated by highlighting the importance of future-proofing, evidence-based research, policy considerations, and technological adaptation within the session's context. The significance of focusing on learning outcomes, culminating with the assertion that "Learning outcomes are recognized nationally and internationally." Was emphasised. Some thought-provoking questions on evaluation efforts and strategies for efficient operation amidst challenges, capacity-building needs, changing environments, and human factors were poised for discussion.





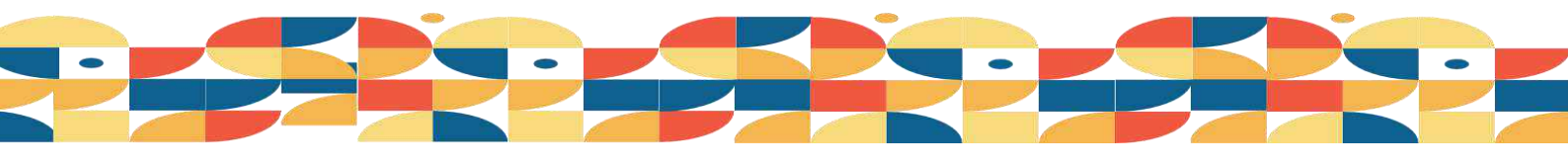
The changing climate and resulting actions concerning children in the 2030 agenda, stressing the imperative of leaving no one behind and advocating for necessities to improve the quality of life universally were concerns, speakers delved into. The need for unity, innovation, and adaptability in response to dynamic challenges in crisis situations like COVID-19 and other upcoming environmental issues were essential. It was also highlighted that the increasing demand for rigor from shrinking donors, underlining the importance of striking a balance between rigor and efficiency in evaluation processes need to be looked into even though there is a need for robust evaluation systems to address significant issues effectively. Speakers advocated for streamlining evaluation processes, emphasizing the allocation of more time for engaging and meaningful work.

The session then discussed the issues relating to the effective utilization of data in evaluation designs. The importance of considering the target audience and intended use of data to drive action, providing examples to illustrate the significance of outcome-oriented data dissemination was elaborated along with the importance of rigor, community participation, and reliable data availability for quality evaluation outcomes and for building responsive and adaptive evaluations due to the evolving expectations in evaluation highlighting the transition from traditional to proactive approaches. The need for strong evaluation systems to meet efficiency demands, particularly from the private sector was brought in focus. The use of innovation and AI in analysis, and the importance of linking indicators to outcomes for effective evaluation practices were emphasised.

Discussions during the Q&A session revolved around bridging the gap between data and action, condensing findings for quick dissemination, and addressing challenges in accessing quality data amidst decreasing attention spans. The trade-off between the demands of the community which might differ from the demands of the programme supporters need to be taken into focus.



Concluding the session, work out trade-offs between the different demands, The importance of rigor, scientific methods, adaptation to changing environments, and stakeholder engagement in evaluation processes were the highlights of the session.





## MEASURING WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT: FINDINGS AND EXPERIENCES IN IMPLEMENTING GENDER EVALUATION TOOLS (21 February 2024, 04.00 PM to 05.30 PM)

(Organized by 3ie)

### 7.1 Background

Several developmental organizations are adopting strategies that seek to integrate a gender perspective into their policies, programmes, activities, and decision-making processes. This session looked at the findings and experiences in implementing gender evaluation tools to collate learnings to ensure steady progress to achieve specific points related to gender equality as mentioned under SDG 5. The session was interactive and discussion-based.

### 7.2 Speakers

1. Anjani Kumar Singh, Senior Program Officer, BMGF
2. P. Usha Rani, Lead - IBCBSISD & HR, National Rural Livelihood Mission, Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India
3. Sonal Jaitley, Associate Partner, MicroSave consulting
4. Aastha Dang, Evaluation Specialist, International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie)
5. Rohan Shah, Evaluation Specialist, Specialist, International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie)

The session was chaired by **Neelakshi Mann, Program Director Asia, 3ie**

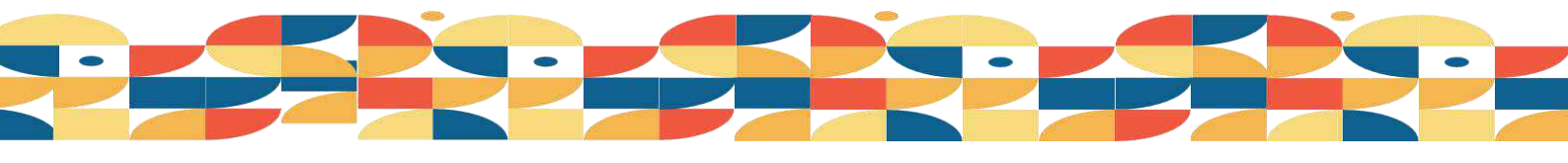
### 7.3 Discussions

The session discussed various measures of women's empowerment such as agency, ownership, mobility, challenging gender norms, power relations, social networks, and the importance of gender-disaggregated data. Structural barriers were also addressed along with strategies on how



to effectively navigate and overcome them. The theory of change and its role in driving gender empowerment initiatives were explored, alongside identifying key indicators to measure progress. Emphasis was laid on adopting a participatory approach and utilizing gender transformative methods to foster meaningful change. The significance of mainstreaming gender monitoring and evaluation tools across all projects was

highlighted. The importance of capacity building was also emphasised as an important



ingredient in gender empowerment and evaluations. Sustainability and accountability of projects were underlined, with a focus on the transformative potential of gender-inclusive economic participation by women.

The participation for the participants brought home the issues of women's unpaid work, non-recognition of work done by them, lack of data on time use, and the need for asking scenario-specific questions to measure women's decision-making powers.

## 7.4 Summing Up

The session provided a comprehensive overview of the implementation of Gender Evaluation Tools to measure women's empowerment. Key takeaways include the importance of integrating a gender perspective into development projects, understanding the Gender Analysis Framework, and recognizing the complexities in measuring women's empowerment, particularly regarding intra-household dynamics. Speakers emphasized the need for contextualization in survey instruments and the necessity of considering women's agency and control in assessing empowerment. Overall, the session underscored the critical role of gender-sensitive approaches in achieving sustainable development goals, particularly SDG 5, and highlighted the imperative of ongoing learning and collaboration to advance gender equality. Several gender tools are available that need to be shared, adopted, and adapted as per contextual needs.



The session brought out that in spite of the substantial discussions on gender equality on various platforms and specific focus of SDGs on gender, not much progress has been made in this connection. A gender sensitive approach in all developments and evaluations is essential if the goal of inclusivity is to be achieved.





# STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIP FOR DEVELOPING EVALUATION CAPACITY (ECD) IN INDIA (21 February 2024, 02.00 P.M to 03.30 PM)

(Organized by ECD Working Group and SAMBODHI)

## 8.1 Background

Diverse initiatives aim to enhance evaluation skills in India. With limited stakeholder dialogue, these efforts often lack coordination and a comprehensive understanding of ECD. To address this, a working group was formed to comprehend ECD efforts in India, focusing on needs, actors, approaches, outcomes, and adequacy. This working group focussed on four key ideas: developing a position paper, standardizing and validating the M&E curriculum, creating instructional design and a cadre of trainers, and establishing a knowledge hub. A Roundtable presented these initiatives to foster a dialogue with the participants to discuss present and future activities, ensuring support and ownership of proposed endeavours.

This session was a mix of speakers' presentations and comments from discussants.

## 8.2 Speakers

1. Maaïke Bijker, Chief of Evidence (Data, Research and Evaluation), UNICEF India
2. Megha Pradhan, Associate Director -Training, J-PAL South Asia; Director, CLEAR South Asia
3. Kaoustav Bandopadhyay, Director, Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA)
4. Apurva Kumar, Senior Manager, Sambodhi

The session was chaired by **Neeta Goel, Country Lead, MLE, BMGF**

## 8.3 Discussants

1. Dharmendra Chandurkar, Chief Knowledge Officer, Sambodhi
2. Jahnvi Andharia, Director ISST
3. Archana Kumar, Professor, Lady Irwin College
4. Vikas Chaudhry, Vice-President, Sambodhi
5. Asela Kalugampitiya, Director, Centre for Evaluation, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka
6. Anis Ben Brik, Associate Professor, School of Public Policy, Hamid Bin Khalifa University, Doha, Qatar
7. Celeste Ghiano, President ReLAC; Coordinator, Professionalization Task Force of IOCE.





## 8.4 Discussions and Highlights

The speakers provide a bird's eye view about the efforts made in evaluation capacity development in respective organisations/countries and challenges faced. For instance, the first Evaluation Research Centre at the University of Jayawardenepura in Sri Lanka was established in 2016, which focused on conceptual frameworks, curriculum development, and training for monitoring and evaluation. While some other countries efforts are still on to take such initiatives. Speakers emphasized the need for individual capacity-building and the significance of short-term training for the effective use of evaluation evidence, citing the example of sustainable evaluation used at Sambodhi, India. The gaps and challenges in M&E in India, emphasizing the need for consistency and comprehensive coverage was elaborated. The conversation attempted to identify the constraints and find ways to overcome them, focusing on learning and



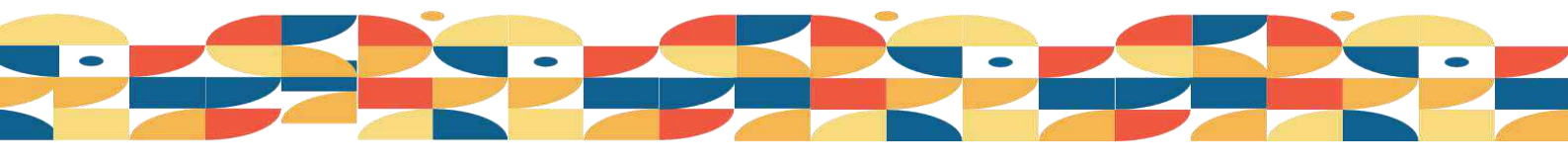
accountability as the purpose of evaluation. It was pointed out that the importance of maintaining engagement in institutional courses, incorporating needs assessments into the design of evaluations, and identifying indicators of success was needed. The issue of adequate funds for evaluation capacity building was brought forward as a challenge in capacity development efforts. Faculty confidence, internal dissent, and the need for hands-on support were some of the other areas that needed focus. The importance of core competencies and practical

experience, particularly in M&E internships, was emphasized.

Many participants highlighted the need for evaluation policymakers and evaluators to understand the implementation and cultural embedding. Standardizing and localizing evaluation courses was seen as crucial, with a focus on designing strategies for effective evaluation capacity. Participants also asked about the soft skills needed for becoming evaluators and about leveraging alumni of the institutions for ECD.

## 8.5 Summing Up

The Roundtable emphasized the importance of designing a curriculum for the benefit of society, promoting effective methods of data collection, and ensuring that communities can comprehend and appreciate the benefits of evaluation. The overall discussion revolved around identifying challenges, proposing solutions, and fostering effective evaluation capacity development and need for funding.



# MAKING EVALUATIONS HEARD: NAVIGATING THE EVALUATION DISCOURSE WITHIN THE GLOBAL SOUTH

(21 February 2024, 04.00 PM to 05.30 PM)

## 9.1 Background

The perception of evaluation vastly differs between the Global North and the Global South. While it acts as a critical tool for policy and programme inputs in the Global North, evaluation is often viewed as a tool for ensuring accountability in the Global South. This Roundtable aimed to address the challenges encountered by the Global South in shaping evaluation methodologies, frameworks, and practices. Pathways to enhance knowledge sharing and contribution from the Global South within the broader evaluation community were also explored. The session was in the form of an informal discussion.

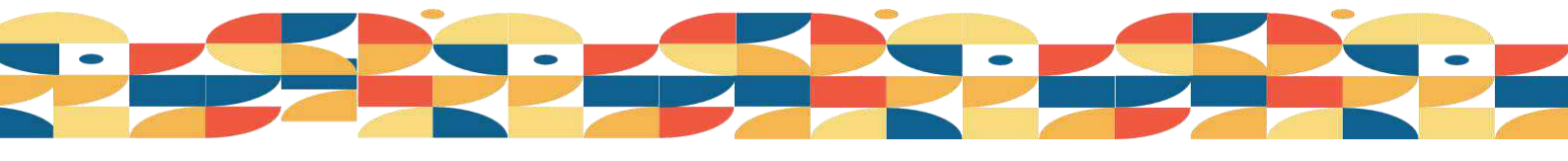
## 9.2 Facilitator

The session was facilitated by **Ramanshu Ganguly**, Associate Director, Climate Insights, Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation, New Delhi

## 9.3 Discussions and Highlights

The facilitator set the ball rolling with the query as to why evaluation is typically regarded as a post-design element rather than being integrated at the inception of the process. He also posed various other questions, intended to go into the formal aspects of evaluation and explore the importance of ensuring that evaluations are acknowledged from the outset. Some of these questions were what kind of indicators should be part of the system? Are we limited in those terms; what goes into evaluation communication; do only good findings make it to evaluation results; Are we only looking at statistics/numbers? What do we think about findings not said/written; what about the essence of learning through the process and how much are we allowed to disseminate; what can go out, and what cannot?

Focussing upon the above questions, it was argued that the prevailing norm of treating evaluation as a post-design function was identified as a significant challenge. This approach limits the incorporation of evaluative considerations during the initial phases of program development. Concerns were raised regarding the constraints of indicators, resulting in a restricted scope for comprehensive evaluation. This limitation hampers the ability to capture the nuanced aspects of program performance. A noteworthy challenge highlighted was the potential bias towards obtaining favourable findings, potentially leading to ignoring critical

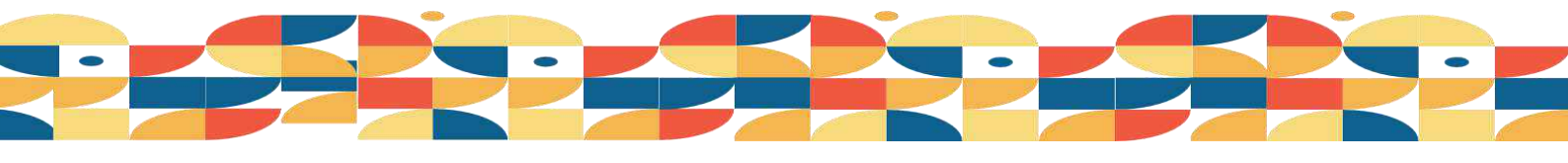


issues. The inclination towards positive outcomes might compromise the thoroughness of the evaluation process.

The session pointed to the occasional confusion between monitoring and evaluation. It was emphasized that these distinct processes are often conflated, hindering the clarity of purpose and outcomes. The undervaluation of evaluation, attributed to the post-release availability of results and a general lack of interest in delving into the data, was acknowledged as a pervasive issue. Anecdotal accounts were noted to be preferred over rigorous data analysis. The global disparity in funding for evaluation, particularly in the Global South, was featured as a critical issue. This financial gap exacerbates the divide between regions with varying capacities for robust evaluation practices.



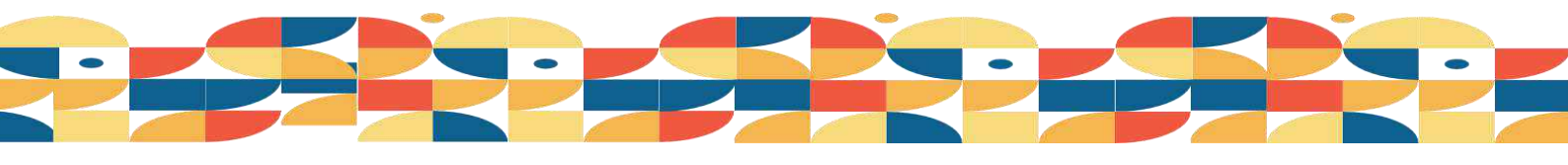
The difficulty in evaluating intangible results was discussed, noting that many projects yield positive outcomes that are challenging to measure quantitatively. Strategies to capture and assess the qualitative successes were identified as a pressing need. The session raised concerns about the selection of evaluators, emphasizing the importance of practical experience over technical expertise. It was suggested that individuals with on-the-ground experience should be prioritized for evaluator roles. The imperative to narrow down the issues for evaluation was emphasized. A strategic approach involves prioritizing and evaluating specific aspects, ensuring concentrated effort on key program components. The prevalence of subjectivity in evaluation processes was acknowledged as a challenge. The lack of a standardized framework for assessment contributes to varying interpretations and conclusions. The need for systemic integration in evaluations was highlighted. Budget allocation challenges, with funders and organizations having divergent result expectations, were discussed, noting the shortfalls between budget allocations and program design needs, particularly in government funding for evaluations. Communication of findings and putting it into public domain was also discussed as constraints. It was pointed out that pointing out the shortcomings are not taken as learnings



but as a fault finding which restricts the wider communication of evaluation findings. Commissioners also sometime need a ‘feel-good’ report due to various reasons.

## 9.4 Summing up

The discussions brought out various challenges - technical, organizational, financial, and those resulting from prejudiced mindsets - to making evidence the basis of policy making. One participant pointed out that it is more policy-based evidence-making than evidence-based policy-making. There were also issues like evaluating intangible processes. Qualitative aspects needed to be included. Evaluation is not just about using Python and Java; it is about the field experience and quality. However, there are still little spaces one can navigate; we just need to know who to leverage with. To enhance public interest in evaluation, evaluation results should be freely shared with the community. Publishing of findings and observations as documentation is important. For instance, it can be through journals, research papers, blogs, etc. Organizations like ECOI could provide a platform that helps people come together and present their evaluative work for all to see. If the working models or strategies operating in the Global North could be studied and modified and somehow made to work in the Global South as well, it could help in the process of evaluation discourse. The most important is to change the mind set and see evaluations as a learning tool for improving programs and policies.





## Plenary 2

# EMERGING CONCERNS AND SYSTEMIC IMPACTS OF EVALUATION

(22 February 2024, 9.30 AM to 11.00 AM)

### 10.1 Background

The session focused on the dynamic changes that evaluation practices underwent and their crucial significance in achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It delved into the contributions of evaluations towards SDGs advancement and scrutinized their influence on broader thematic sectors and systems. Various evaluation approaches and methodologies were explored, aiming to contribute to societal progress and sustainable development.

### 10.2 Speakers

1. Neeta Goel, Country Lead MLE, BMGF
2. Ajay Singh, Chief Controller of Accounts, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, GoI
3. Paramjyoti Chattopadhyay, Head of RAM and Evaluation, WFP, India
4. Maaïke Bijker, Chief of Evidence (Data, Research and Evaluation, UNICEF, INDIA)

The session was chaired by **Sanjay Kumar**, Director General, DMEO, NITI Aayog, GoI and moderated by **Manas Puri**, Senior Professional, IEO, NDB

### 10.3 Discussions and Highlights

The discussions centred on transformative shifts in evaluation practices for sustainable development. Neeta Goel highlighted the challenges and adaptations within the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, emphasizing a departure from evaluating isolated actions to measuring contributions to broader outcomes. The call for a broader perspective resonated throughout, advocating evaluations that consider the entire ecosystem and involve diverse stakeholders. Reflective donor practices, building capacity around equity, and the significance of partnerships were emphasized. Challenges in coordinating evaluations and establishing coherence in indicators were acknowledged, signalling a commitment to ongoing improvement.





Speakers delved into the complexities of evaluating government schemes, questioning the effectiveness of schemes without pre-decided indicators and evaluation parameters. Two schemes as examples were cited in this context, the PM Housing scheme (Prime Minister Awaas Yojana) and the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). The argument was that the beneficiaries and indicators were very clearly specified in the former making the scheme amenable to proper monitoring and evaluation, it was not so in the case of the latter, making evaluation difficult. Insights into the evolving landscape of government evaluations revealed a shift towards outcome-based assessments and



a focus on diverse sectors. The World Food Programme's approach to global evaluations, including disaster risk reduction and sustainability, providing a multidimensional perspective was elaborated. Challenges in evaluating Sustainable Development Goals were acknowledged, emphasizing the need for stakeholder involvement and robust evaluation processes. Systemic impacts can be truly assessed through thematic evaluations rather than just isolated program outcome indicator assessments. Focus of the discussions were on detailing strategies that make evaluation influential

and impactful by engendering evaluation as a part of the program design and an incentive for implementation.

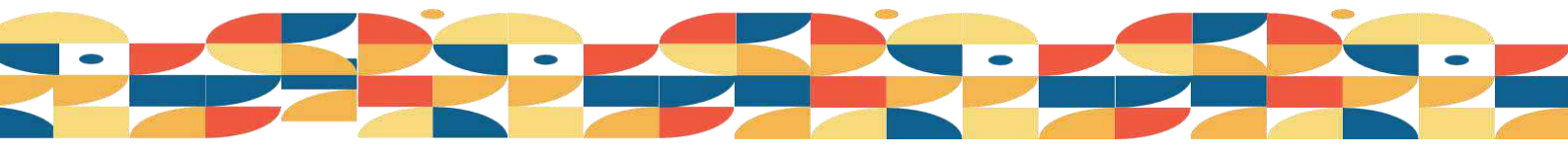
## 10.4 Takeaways

In conclusion, the discussion provided a comprehensive exploration of the evolving landscape of evaluation practices with a focus on sustainable development. strategizing partnerships to maximize impacts, evolving evaluation strategies for fast-tracking towards SDGs, and



learnings from other organisations was brought out specifically. Example was given of UNICEF as to how this organisation leverages data and how it contributes to evaluation. The discussion encapsulated a dynamic journey, emphasizing adaptability, collaboration, and a holistic approach for impactful evaluations in the realm of sustainable development.

The advocacy for portfolio-level assessments reflected a collective commitment to a more comprehensive understanding of impacts, while the prioritization of equity, inclusion, and diverse stakeholder involvement aimed at fostering unbiased evaluations. Challenges in coordination, coherence, and the complexities of evaluating government schemes were openly acknowledged, signalling a commitment to addressing and improving existing methodologies. The session provided valuable insights into the government's shift towards outcome-based assessments, acknowledging the need for ongoing improvements in the evaluation framework. Finally, the emphasis on stakeholder involvement and robust processes in evaluating Sustainable Development Goals encapsulated the overarching commitment to a holistic and impactful evaluation landscape.



# LEVERAGING STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS FOR NATIONAL EVALUATION SYSTEMS (NES)

(22 February 2024, 11.00 AM to 01.00 PM)

(Organized by UNFPA)

## 11.1 Background

Leveraging stakeholder partnerships is crucial for strengthening National Evaluation Systems (NES) and establishing an effective evaluation framework. By fostering collaboration among government agencies, civil society organizations, academia, and international bodies, NES can tap into a wealth of perspectives and expertise. This collaborative approach enhances evaluation credibility, and inclusivity, and provides a more comprehensive understanding of the socio-economic landscape. The panel highlighted these strategic partnerships, and how NES can effectively navigate challenges, share resources, and cultivate a shared vision for advancing national-level evaluation practices. It was an interactive discussion-based panel.

## 11.2 Speakers

1. Abinash Dash (Director, DMEO, NITI Aayog, GoI)
2. Ada Ocampo (President, IDEAS)
3. Yatin Diwakar (Ph.D. Scholar, IIT Bombay)
4. Ana Erika Lareza (Co-leader, EvalYouth Asia)

The session was chaired by **Marco Segone**, Director, IEO, UNFPA

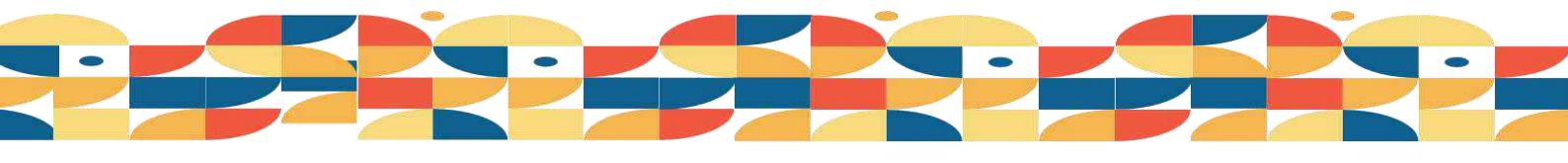
## 11.3 Discussions and Highlights

The main emphasis of this session was to discuss the importance and modus operandi of partnerships for achieving better results in evaluation and development. The idea of development of partnerships was supported through the example of the Philippines where



collaboration among three levels of organizations was facilitated through the Eval Youth Festival, showcasing opportunities for joint efforts. Collective evaluations benefit all partners involved, focusing on the quality of data through well-structured questionnaires to avoid respondent burden.

It is, however, important to understand who is involved and how partnerships are constructed. Clear roles and responsibilities, power dynamics, and equality considerations are vital in partnerships, fostering trust and credibility among partners. Mutual trust is the foundation of successful partnerships. Partnership at times



means sitting on the negotiation table. Conflicting goals and priorities of partners need to be resolved. Power dynamics in a partnership could be challenging, sometimes making decision-making difficult. Ada Ocampo pointed out partnership is always a compromise. It was concluded that there is a need to identify opportunities for building evaluation capacity and implement programs through partnerships. These partnerships can be with universities, other academic institutions, VOPEs, and research institutions. Participants raised questions about how conflicts can be resolved between partners such as different Ministries or the Central and State governments. It was explained that partnerships should be nurtured with common goals and team-building efforts.

## 11.4 Takeaways

Partnerships facilitate moving forward and fulfil the goal of working together for a common cause. National, regional, local, and societal settings are where we need to participate, and partner with each other, without romanticising partnerships. One should know how to negotiate in partnership. Partnerships with educational institutions are essential to promote evaluation capacity development and other evaluation activities. Personal bias needs to be kept away while working together.





# ENGENDERING SDG MONITORING: MULTIPLE PATHWAYS

(22 February 2024, 11.30 AM to 01.00 PM)

(Organized by ISST)

## 12.1 Background

Ensuring a gender-sensitive approach to achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) involves exploring diverse pathways in monitoring. This multifaceted endeavour requires integrating gender perspectives into monitoring mechanisms, incorporating inclusive data collection, gender disaggregation, and empowering women in decision-making. These multiple pathways enable effective tracking of progress toward SDG targets, promoting gender equality and revealing nuanced insights into challenges faced by women and girls. The emphasis on addressing gender disparities is a key component in the broader sustainable development agenda, fostering a more inclusive and equitable path toward SDG achievement.

## 12.2 Speakers

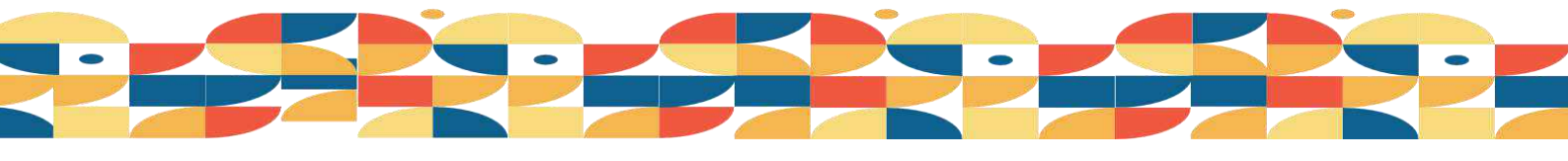
1. Ranjani Murthy (Independent Evaluator)
2. Anweshaa Ghosh (Research Fellow and programme lead, ISST)
3. Nilangi Sardeshpande (Project anchor, SAHAJ)
4. Nidhi Sen (Evaluation Consultant, UN Women's Regional Office for Asia and Pacific)
5. Alpaxee Kashyap (Independent Consultant)

The session was chaired by **Jahnvi Andharia**, Director ISST

## 12.3 Discussions and Highlights

The growing focus on evaluating Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and how they provide a common language for discussing global issues was in centre of the discussions.

There is no single method to achieve SDGs, and therefore a multifaceted endeavour that involves integrating gender perspectives into monitoring mechanisms is needed. This includes inclusive data collection, gender disaggregation, and empowering women in decision-making. Speakers underscored the importance of localizing SDGs and building an ecosystem for capacity building through the lens of gender. She stressed the need for professionals to understand where capacity was required and highlighted the gap in gender



transformative evaluation. The government's efforts, partnerships at global and local levels, and the role of evidence generation, challenges, such as varying sample sizes and hurdles in addressing marginalized groups were highlighted. Speakers delved into the methodology of evaluating SDGs, particularly focusing on sexual and reproductive health indicators. Assessing



indicators' adequacy, considering social determinants, and analyzing policy changes are important while adopting a methodology. In this context, the nuances of SDG 5.3, specifically in terms of leadership were examined. They discussed the complexities of evaluating SEWA's (Self Employed Women's Association) work on women's issues, considering precarious, multifaceted, and international aspects.

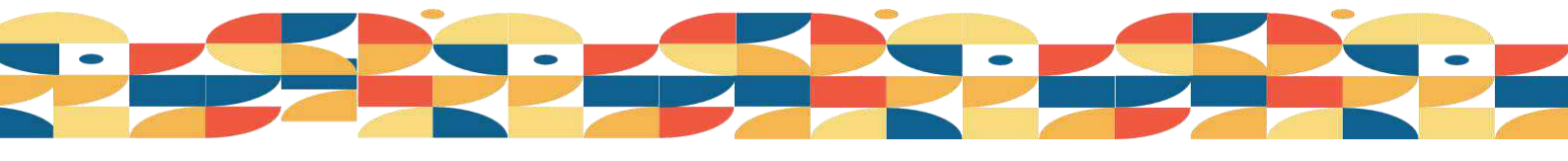
## 12.4 Conclusions

The discussions collectively underscored the multidimensional nature of approaching Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), emphasizing the need for diverse perspectives and pathways to address global challenges. It was emphasised that a gender lens is needed with localization of SDGs. The significance of evidence generation and partnerships at both global and local levels to effectively achieve SDG targets was highlighted.



The need for nuanced methodologies, including the Theory of Change and participatory approaches, to effectively measure progress and impact was emphasized.

The discussion focussed on capacity building, especially through a gender lens, highlighting the crucial role of professionals in understanding and addressing gaps.





# ADVANCING DATA DEMOCRACY THROUGH TECHNOLOGY AND OWNERSHIP

(22 February 2024)

(Organized by SAMBODHI)

## 13.1 Background

Data democratization empowers citizens, irrespective of technical expertise, fostering informed decision-making for equitable, sustainable, and responsive development. This session aimed to look at the data capacities of important stakeholders. The discussion focused on the use of public intent data and explored ways to better utilize it while addressing structural and technological challenges. The session emphasized creative deployment for efficiency and accountability and addressed the challenges and intentions of data democratization from both the demand and supply sides while examining the existing gaps in data capacities.

## 13.2 Speakers

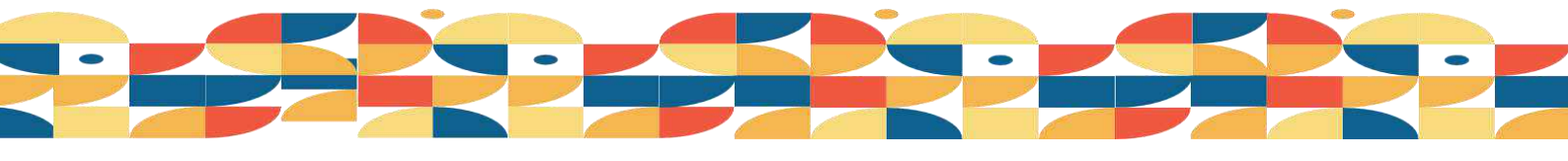
1. Sandeep Ghosh (Senior Consultant, Sambodhi)
2. Preeti Das (Statistics and Monitoring Specialist at UNICEF India)
3. Vijay Avinandan (Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, WFP, India)
4. Akashi Kaul (Head - Research, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning, Central Square Foundation)

The session was moderated by **Subrato Mondal** (Senior Advisor-MEL and Research at USAID/India)

## 13.3 Discussions and Highlights

Session was started by underlining the perpetual nature of learning and the ethical responsibility entailed in handling data. The importance of ensuring data practices that do not cause harm, particularly in sensitive situations such as during the COVID pandemic was area of concern. Insights into the evolving landscape of data privacy concerns and the importance of empowering citizens through capacity building and ethical considerations were discussed. Anecdotes were shared, including a failed attempt to utilize meteorological data via smartphones in rural areas, highlighting the necessity of understanding local contexts and community knowledge in data utilization efforts. Additionally, the need for individuals to be mindful of how data is presented to avoid any negative repercussions on individuals was underscored. An illustrative example of such harming was shared regarding the COVID pandemic, highlighting how individuals disclosing their COVID status often faced overwhelming information bombardment, inadvertently leading to their social isolation, thereby underscoring the challenge of accessibility in data dissemination.

Insights into the evolving landscape of data abundance, noting a significant shift in the volume of available data, challenges posed by the lack of communication between the numerous governmental ministries, with as many as fifty-eight operating independently were pointed out. The transformative potential of initiatives like the Local Government Directory (LGT) and the National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy (NDAP) in facilitating data integration across diverse sources were indicated. Speakers mentioned about the absence of consumer feedback due to limited household-level interactions and the unavailability of essential datasets, such as railway and telecom data, resulting in unequal data access. They brought to attention the



intersection of Big Data with Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) in development, noting the prevalent issue of data fragmentation within governmental silos. The discussion turned to the Local Global Directory, which despite its potential, saw limited adoption by ministries except for the Panchayati Raj. Concerns regarding trust in certain entities, such as Essar, were voiced alongside reflections on the proliferation of data-related training programs over the past decade. The conversation delved into the extensive surveys conducted by the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), covering a vast number of villages and indicators. However, limitations were acknowledged, particularly the lack of consumer feedback due to data collectors primarily engaging with office-based administration rather than household-level interactions. Emphasizing the imperative of ensuring universal access to data and empowering women and children in decision-making processes, evidence-based decision-making and the importance of transparency and accountability were stressed upon. Multifaceted nature of data democracy, emphasizing its legal, policy, and technological dimensions, with a focus on data protection and empowerment were elucidated.



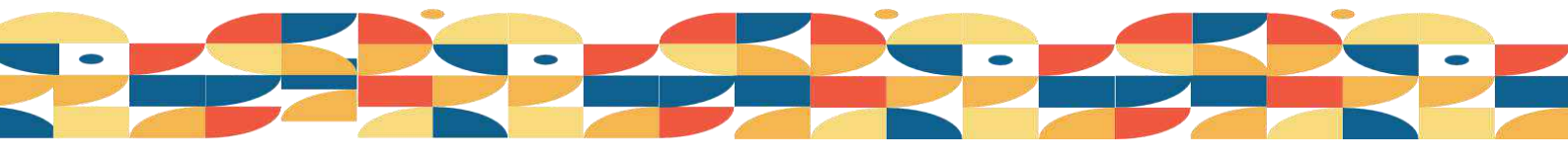
Participants highlighted the importance of healthy competition and the government's role in evaluating data from central ministries, emphasizing the need for effective data governance and utilization with safeguarding the rights of marginalized communities.

### 13.4 Takeaways

The session delved into the complexities and opportunities surrounding the democratization of data in fostering equitable, sustainable, and responsive development. Key takeaways included



adopting responsible data practices with transparency and good governance. Future actions suggested included investment in the data platform and capacity development in handling and dissemination of data. The potential of data democratization to drive positive change while emphasizing the importance of responsible data practices, collaborative efforts, and inclusive governance frameworks were the ideas that emerged with the discussions in this session.



# RE-IMAGING GOVERNMENT EVALUATION CAPACITIES

(22 February 2024, 02.00 PM to 03.30 PM)

(Organized by World Food Programme)

## 14.1 Background

The session looked at global evaluation systems, positioning India within this continuum. Speakers addressed the scope and needs for government evaluation capacity development, exploring the role of partners and emphasizing evaluations in the national review of SDGs, with a focus on food security and nutrition. Strategies for contextualizing evaluation capacity building at the state or sub-state level, along with the support needs of state governments, were examined. The discussion also covered embedding evidence and evaluation capacities within multilateral funding frameworks. The session was a mix of presentations and discussions.

## 14.2 Speakers

1. Sonia Pant, Deputy Director General, DMEO, NITI Aayog, GoI
2. Maria Celeste Ghiano, Chair, ReLAC
3. Henrique Pissaia, Principal Professional, IEO, NDB
4. Shyam Singh, Professor, IRMA

The session was chaired by **P. K. Anand** (IAS), Visiting Fellow, Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS)

## 14.3 Discussions and Highlights

The speaker from the government gave insights about scheme implementation from a budgetary point of view. DMEO, even though being attached to Niti Aayog, has autonomy in terms of hiring and has a separate budget which also means having its cadre of people to carry out surveys. The major challenges faced by them included ministries viewing evaluation and monitoring as external tasks rather than their own, the absence of minimum benchmarks for evaluating schemes, and the need for an annual evaluation plan with a dedicated budget. The suggestion was that the evaluation should be ongoing, concurrent evaluation to improve the quality of the final end-of-term assessment. During the fiscal years 2020-2022, the DMEO evaluated 126 Centrally Sponsored Schemes scheduled for budgetary renewal. These were broken down into 9-10 thematic groups. The results led to the rationalization of numerous schemes and modification in the design of some schemes. DMEO also completed the evaluation of many



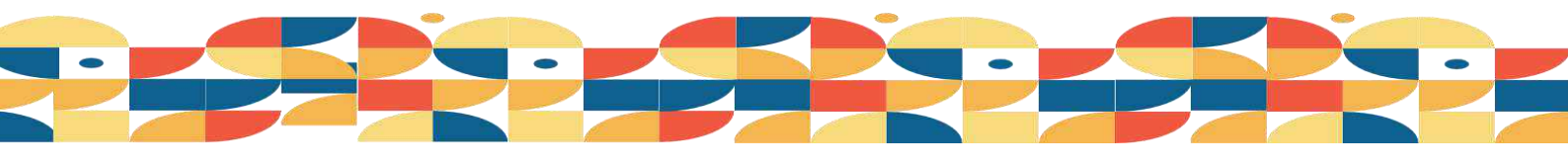


Central sector schemes. DMEO was working on the evaluation of MGNREGA and PM Kisan Yojna. With a focus on increasing geographical reach, students of educational institutions were being trained in M&E. Capacity building of officials and policymakers in this context is essential as it was not only about the accountability of public money but it was about learning from the evidence we generated. We need areas where training and programmes are standardized to make things easily understood by those belonging to the field. Speakers defined evidence as the mirror we need to look at. Emphasis was on the creating a robust evaluation ecosystem and intertwining it with monitoring practices to enhance overall effectiveness. Evaluation systems should be integrated into national development plans. By aligning evaluation frameworks with broader development agenda, stakeholders can systematically assess the impact of their initiatives and identify areas for improvement. By embedding evaluation principles into the fabric of national strategies, they can catalyse positive change and ensure that resources are utilized effectively to address pressing societal needs. The New Development Bank's focus is on partnerships with countries like India, Africa, Brazil, and their public policies. Contextualization and localization are crucial, and so are partnerships as one cannot do everything. The next generation of evaluators should also look at different social aspects, then only would they know the ground reality and its related aspects. The issue of evaluators encountering marginalization and insufficient recognition compared to other stakeholders involved in policy, program, and organizational decision-making processes was also addressed by speakers. The apprehension among evaluators, highlighting the challenges they faced, including neglect and lack of importance attributed to their roles was put forth. However, it was also observed that we tend to act as auditors rather than evaluators and that our focus should be on the most vulnerable sections of society.



## 14.4 Conclusions

The session underscored the need for comprehensive and inclusive approaches to monitoring and evaluation, recognizing its critical role in informing decision-making and driving positive change across diverse sectors. The government has a vital role in M&E processes, particularly regarding how government policies influence evaluation and monitoring practices. Discussions revolved around the importance of incorporating M&E courses into academic curricula, both at the school and college levels. Speakers addressed the challenges faced by evaluators, including criticism and neglect, highlighting the disparities in importance given to evaluators compared to other stakeholders in policy and program development processes. Need to dovetail the evaluation system in national planning was highlighted.



## MEASURING AGENCY AND NORMS: EXPERIENCES AND WAY FORWARD (22 February 2024, 11.30 AM to 01.00 PM) (Organized by GEH, UCSD, and AGENCY for ALL)

### 15.1 Background

This session was in the format of a Round Table which discussed the importance and complexities of integrating measurement and analysis of agency, the power and freedom to take risks, seize opportunities, and shape one's life, and the prevailing social norms regarding gender into evaluations and related research projects. Participants discussed research and experiences from a USAID-funded implementation science project, a cross-sectional survey focused on agency and norms in women's work, and the use of large datasets to measure and examine shifts in agency and norms over time.

### 15.2 Speakers

1. Vedavati Patwardhan, Research Scientist, Centre on Gender Equity and Health, UC San Diego
2. Sanchita Ohri, Research Fellow, Good Business Lab, India
3. Priyanka Sarda, Research Fellow, Good Business Lab, India

**Vikas Choudhry**, Vice-President, Sambodhi acted as moderator of the session

### 15.3 Discussions and Highlights

It was experiential learning session where speakers discussed about their experiences in



measuring Agency and Norms in their respective projects.

Speakers observed that women's responsibility for children and household chores, general attitude towards female workers, and mobility restrictions posed a barrier to owning and running a business. However, a positive relationship between supportive norms and running a business by women was observed. When decisions were made solely by women, it was more

likely for them to engage in paid work. The contextualization for project planning, implementation monitoring, and evaluation was stressed. Social norms shift for women entering the labour force when income is needed by the household. There is a lot of heterogeneity among women intra-house and within the community. There are various hurdles in designing and measuring the Agency. Speakers also discussed social observability, locally driven measurement of Agency and Agency in different areas. For a sustainable outcome, it is essential to unpack social norms and the Agency's role. To mitigate the challenges in





measuring Agency and norms, it is important to focus on longer labour force surveys and partnerships.

Participants wanted to know a) the meaning of social norms, how they could be changed, and if women in work were an indicator of empowerment. b) What measurement frameworks could be used for 14 to 24-year-old girls as other frameworks usually are for married women? What does the Agency look like for them? And c) How women's aspirations for Agencies are measured?



Speakers explained the definitions of agency and social norms and their complex nature. Change in social norms is a long-term process that depends on education, advocacy, societal attitudes, and traditions. They mentioned that women working does not necessarily imply they are empowered. It could be a good indicator of empowerment if women had decision-making power and ownership rights over their incomes. Suitable questions should

be incorporated into surveys used in impact evaluations to address the needs of young girls. Organizations like UNICEF and J-PAL have developed practical guides to measuring women's and girls' empowerment.

## 15.4 Takeaways

The session provided valuable insights into the significance and challenges of measuring agency and norms, emphasizing the necessity of integrating these factors into evaluation and research endeavours. Speakers highlighted the complexities inherent in assessing agency,



particularly within the context of social norms and diverse community dynamics. They underscored the importance of tailored approaches, long-term measures, and collaborative partnerships to effectively capture and address these complexities. Key takeaways included the recognition of the evolving nature of agency, the necessity of contextualization in project planning and evaluation, and the imperative of unpacking social norms to foster sustainable outcomes. Action items identified included the exploration of innovative measurement frameworks for different demographics, such as adolescent girls, and the ongoing engagement of men in challenging and reshaping norms. Overall, the session

underscored the multidimensional nature of agency and norms, advocating for nuanced and comprehensive approaches to measurement and intervention for meaningful impact.



# STANDARDS FOR MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT OF YOUTH IN EVALUATION

(22 February 2024, 02.00 PM to 02.30 PM)

(Organized by Eval4Action)

## 16.1 Background

The session introduced the standards designed to elevate the meaningful engagement of youth in evaluation. These standards foster accountability and facilitate youth's effective involvement in evaluation processes. Offering practical guidance and pathways, these standards cater to a diverse range of organizations, including Eval4Action partners, youth organizations, international bodies, Voluntary Organisations for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs), academia, the private sector, and the wider evaluation community.

## 16.2 Speakers

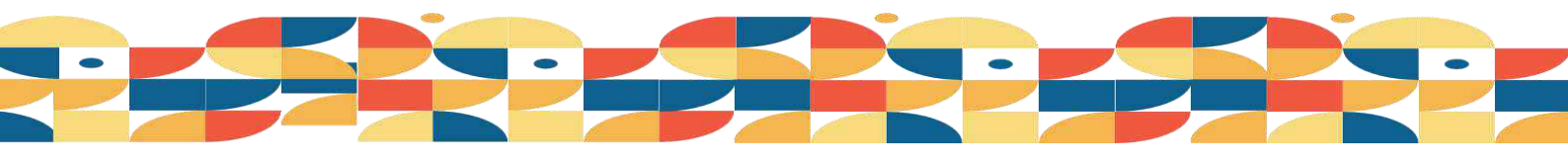
1. Shikha Rana, Senior Manager, Sambodhi Research and Communications
2. Phuntsho Choden, President, Evaluation Office, Bhutan
3. Ruchi Gaur, Assistant Professor, LIC, Delhi University
4. Shruti Singh, Assistant Director, DMEO, NITI Aayog

**Marco Segone**, Director, Evaluation Office, UNFPA was the Lead Presenter

## 16.3 Discussions and Highlights

The session focused on highlighting the importance of youth in evaluation and creating awareness about the benefits that program evaluators can have while engaging the youth in the evaluation process. The presentation elaborated the concept of meaningful evaluation and introduced a systematic approach to enhancing participation and engagement of youth.

The discussants argued that partnership with youth requires shared, inclusive, and respectful spaces. The goal of partnership and building a sense of leadership in the youth while engaging them was emphasised. Being mindful of the diversity of youth is one of the most important checkpoints. Speaker gave the example of Sambodhi, where they run “The Wednesday Sessions” and cross-learning sessions, that focus on building capacities of the workforce. The three key factors for future-proofing evaluations were identified. These were multistakeholder relationships, strong evaluator capacity, and the professionalization of organizations. Speaker noted that while community engagement is challenging, youth engagement is even more so. The stress was on the importance of engaging youth at all stages and highlighted that this engagement should be a continuous process.



One of the speakers indicated the contents of the Monitoring and Evaluation course currently being taught in the Department of Development Communication and Extension, Lady Irwin College, University of Delhi. A lens of monitoring and evaluation can be given to the other courses. Speaker gave the example of CSR project on Social Impact Assessment that was done for PVR NEST, which included students in designing, data collection, and analyses of the same. Peer-to-



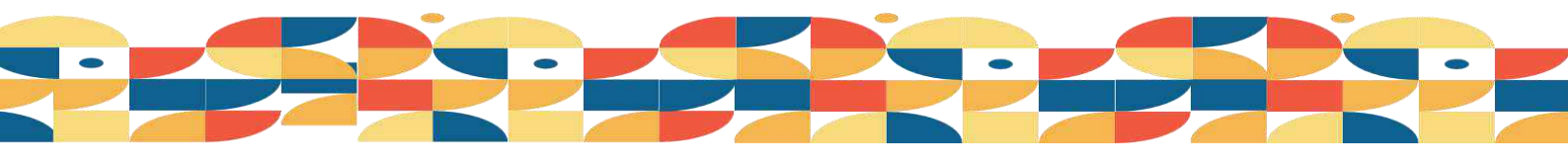
peer evaluation along with participatory monitoring and evaluation approaches for engaging vulnerable communities, especially youth was also important. It was mentioned that the approach should go beyond mere consultation, and create more spaces for people. The project of Niti Ayog on Monitoring and Evaluation for building the capacities in universities is going on in India. There were 10 teams allocated to 10 universities assessing and analyzing eight government programs. This highlighted the multi-stakeholder partnerships.

Participants posed questions based on themes such as groups and levels of youth engagement in evaluation, motivations, and incentives of the participants and organizations, evaluation with or for youth, and engagement of youth in competitive space. In response to these, the speakers highlighted the importance of self-motivation as an incentive leading to progressive and innovative minds of youth, the adaptive strategies of youth according to different levels, the importance of inclusion and ownership in capacity building, creating closed spaces along with a sense of leadership amongst youth, the role of participatory monitoring and evaluation, and maintaining the continuity of the process.

## 16.4 Takeaways



The key areas discussed in the session were inclusive participation along with leadership support, future-proven evaluation, continuous efforts of the evaluators towards the people and youth across all sectors, using technical and collaborative approaches with the integration of peer-to-peer evaluation, providing space to take ownership and leadership, and networking with academics. It was proposed that post-session, a dialogue will be initiated among the speakers, focusing on the utilization and adoption of these evaluation standards.



## Plenary 3

# TRANSFORMATION IN EVALUATION: EMERGING NETWORKS, APPROACHES, AND FUTURE PARADIGMS

**(22 February 2024, 04.00 PM to 05.30 PM)**

### 17.1 Background

This session explored the increased involvement of different stakeholders as evaluation practices have developed to encompass a wider range of perspectives. While initial evaluations focused mainly on outcomes and impacts, today's evaluations tackle more intricate issues such as social equity, gender disparities, and the often-overlooked domain of human rights. Recent global challenges like climate change, conflicts, pandemics, and their significant effects on development underscore the need for evaluations to adapt and progress. It is essential to actively engage communities and citizens to ensure thorough coverage, with a priority on reaching the most remote areas. This conversation examined the changing landscape of evaluation networks and their role in addressing contemporary challenges to foster effective and inclusive development.

### 17.2 Speakers

1. A. K. Shiva Kumar, Development Economist and policy adviser, India
2. Ada Ocampo, President IDEAS Global
3. Asela Kalugampitiya, Director, Centre for Evaluation, Sri Jayewardenepura University, Sri Lanka
4. Chelladurai Solomon, Vice-President, IOCE

**Henrique Pissaiia**, Principal Professional, IEO, NDB chaired the session

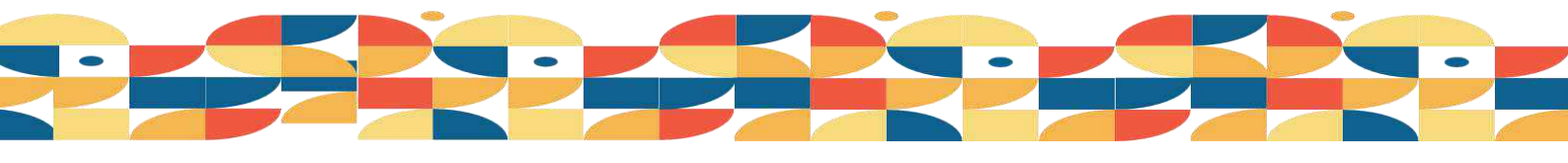
### 17.3 Discussions and Highlights

Giving a panoramic view of the development and evaluation space that has evolved over the past twenty years, the speaker mentioned about the two decades witnessed a transformation in economic development all over the developing world. There had been a huge improvement in



the health sector, women's empowerment was increasing, and freedom for girls expanding. The physical transformation had been remarkable, with infrastructure improvements, and access to electricity, road connections, and access to water. Evaluation standards, techniques, and quality too had improved and evaluation had developed into a discipline. Evaluators can now make greater use of evidence, with strong empirical support, improving accountability, and building trust and transparency.

However, there are also threats from the spread of misinformation on social media platforms, biases in polarisation, and the creation of echo chambers. Data credibility and the speed of dissemination of fake news can lead to trust issues with institutions when bombarded with so





much information. The second challenge is evidence gathering; for this, a multifaceted approach is needed, along with leveraging technology to combat fake news. Evaluation embedded in the practice of democracy is effective and efficient. He suggested that evaluators needed the courage to speak truth to power. It could make the world better, safer, and more secure.



Examples of failures of some of Sri Lanka's well-funded development interventions were illustrated and argument was the absence of consideration for factors including relevance, proper planning, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, performance management, sustainability, and continuous monitoring and evaluation, as key reasons for the failures. The speaker called for a paradigm shift in evaluation through transformative leadership, competent evaluators, vision, innovation, genuine efforts,

and a focused drive for success

The emerging social enterprise sector and its performance evaluations, emphasizing its significance in measuring equity and development were detailed. Three significant changes driving this sector: demographic shifts, growing demand within the business, and increased commitment from the government. Notably, the substantial presence of social enterprises, with 2 million in India and 2.8 million in the European Union, underlining their importance as a tool



in the development sector. The speaker emphasized the involvement of multiple stakeholders at various levels, including producers, communities, traditional heads, and government institutions.

The history of monitoring and evaluation, tracing its evolution as a discipline within the planning cycle, particularly noting its establishment by the World Bank in the 1970s to gather evidence was outlined. The recognition of contradictions within monitoring and evaluation

systems propelled the need for effectiveness and power in their implementation, presenting opportunities for evolution. Speaker said that in the 1980s the definition of poverty was redefined to encompass multi-dimensional aspects beyond economics, emphasizing the incorporation of social dimensions and the adoption of qualitative approach frameworks. This shift prompted the search for new and effective bases for monitoring and evaluation methodologies. The evolving lens of monitoring and evaluation, progressing from gender to equity to sustainability and ultimately to a transformative approach, encapsulating micro, meso, and macro linkages, and the significance of indigenous knowledge in providing quality data was emphasised. Stressing the importance of the political dimension and participation in evaluation processes, speaker advocated for active participation to ensure that influential evaluations drive political decisions. Additionally, she proposed that evaluation associations need to play participatory roles in national policy-making processes, advocating for inclusivity and clarity regarding participants' roles and terms. Evaluations serve as an agent





for change, encouraging employees to understand and utilize evaluation outcomes in decision-making processes. Responding to questions from the floor, the panellists explained how in the current context evaluators benefited from a degree of bias as it informs their subjective judgments, providing depth and context to assessments. Bias can stem from personal experiences, cultural backgrounds, and expertise, enhancing the evaluative process by offering diverse perspectives and insights, ultimately leading to more holistic and nuanced evaluations.

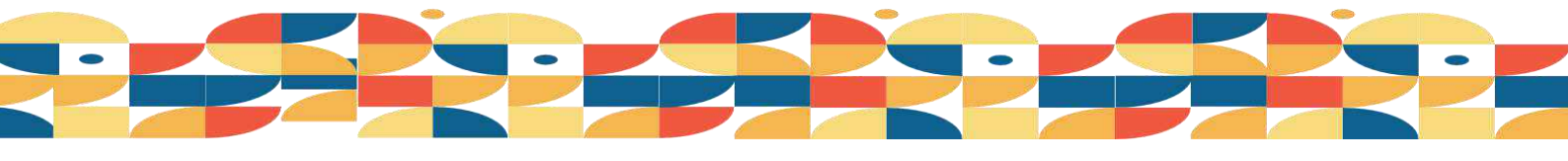
## 17.4 Takeaways

The session provided a comprehensive exploration of the evolving landscape of evaluation practices, highlighting the increased involvement of diverse stakeholders and the imperative for adaptability in addressing contemporary challenges. Speakers underscored the need for a paradigm shift in evaluation methodologies, emphasizing the importance of considering social



equity, gender disparities, and human rights in addition to traditional outcome and impact assessments. The discussions shed light on the challenges faced in evaluating development interventions, ranging from issues of relevance and effectiveness to the abstract nature of evaluation in the social enterprise sector. Despite these challenges, the session emphasized, the potential for transformative leadership, innovative approaches, and stakeholder engagement to drive meaningful change and foster inclusive

development. Moving forward, it is essential to continue fostering dialogue, collaboration, and knowledge-sharing among evaluators, policymakers, and communities to ensure evaluations remain relevant, effective, and responsive to the evolving needs of society.



## BRIDGING VOICES: THE EVAL SOUTH APPROACH (23 February 2024, 02.00 PM to 03.30 PM)

(Organized jointly by the School of Public Policy, Hamid bin Khalifa University, and ECOI)

### 18.1 Background

The session's objective was to bring evaluators from developing nations together to exchange insights and learn from one another's methodologies. It advocated for evaluations grounded in indigenous cultures and wisdom, moving beyond solely Western techniques. This initiative sought to establish a hub brimming with diverse ideas and approaches, enhancing the relevance and efficacy of evaluations in the Global South. By fostering this collaborative environment, the panel envisioned a future where evaluation practices are not just transplanted from one context to another but are instead deeply rooted in the local socio-cultural fabric.

### 18.2 Speakers

1. Anis Ben Brik, Associate Professor, College of Public Policy, Hamid bin Khalifa University, Qatar
2. Asela Kalugampitiya, Director, Centre for Evaluation, Sri Jayewardenepura University, Sri Lanka
3. Madri Jansen van Rensburg, Founder, Reliance Analysis Consulting, South Africa
4. Henrique Pissaia, Principal Professional, IEO, NDB
5. Aditya Bhol, M&E Specialist, DME0, NITI Aayog, GoI

**Maria Celeste Ghiano**, Chair, ReLAC chaired the session

### 18.3 Discussions



Insights on EvalSouth cooperation, shaping a new era of evaluation in the global South were shared. Challenges of evaluation in the global South arise from a variety of economic, social, political, and infrastructural issues. Political leaders often show limited interest, and



evaluators might face challenges related to political interference, bias, and ethical dilemmas. There is a need for integrating local knowledge and methodologies to ensure culturally relevant evaluations and to incorporate local knowledge and cultural considerations. There is a continuous scarcity of financial, and technological resources, as well as trained professionals



in evaluation. Poor data infrastructure, lack of data collection capabilities, and inadequate data management systems are also common challenges. The importance of South-South exchange of learning, mentioning that solutions and lessons learned would be more directly applicable and relevant across similar settings were explained. Collaboration with organizations such as Hamid bin Khalifa University's Centre for Policy Planning, UNFPA, and New Development Bank, has led to overcoming many challenges. The main goal of this South-South cooperation was to foster mutual learning and knowledge sharing. The objectives of the EvalSouth network were to enable the exchange of evaluation methodologies, best practices, and lessons learned, enhance the professional skills of evaluators, develop and disseminate evaluation approaches that are inclusive and sensitive to the cultural, social, and political contexts of countries within the Global South, and collectively advocate for the development and implementation of supportive policies and frameworks for evaluation at national and regional levels.

Various studies on the extent of institutionalization of evaluation in the global North conducted in different years and to a more recent study of Asia Pacific countries conducted under the project Evaluation Globa of Saarland University, Germany and Global mapping of National Evaluation Policies (NEPs) were mentioned. Evidence from all these studies indicated that in Global South countries, regulations, though present in some countries, had not become a pre-condition for regular evaluations. The organizational setting for evaluations had not widely spread across public sector institutions, resources for evaluations were rarely allocated from national budgets, parliaments and audit offices had not played a significant role, evaluations were often conducted without professionally recognized evaluators and nationally owned guidelines/standards, and evaluations remained predominantly donor-driven rather than country-led.

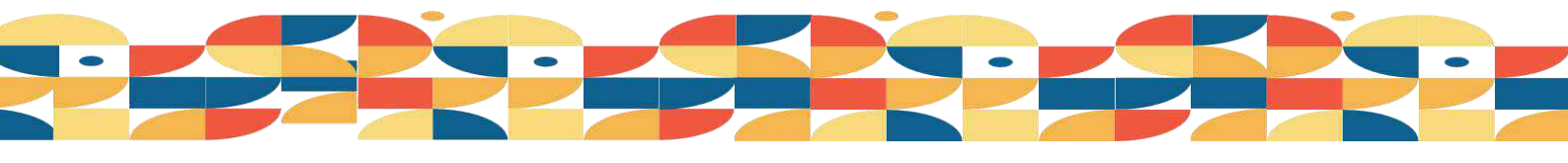


Significance of South-South or peer-to-peer projects in evaluating and collaborating between countries was noted. A notable example focused on investing in curriculum to address gender



disparities, with an emphasis on building evaluation capacity. Projects within this initiative were actively underway. The speaker highlighted the critical contribution of various regions and emphasized the importance of evidence, particularly in involving young people. Lessons learned from South Africa were compared to ensure culturally appropriate gender definitions in countries like Uganda and South Africa. The challenge lies in adapting or developing tools in diverse contexts. The speaker, currently engaged in a Corporate Social

Responsibility (CSR) project evaluating 10,000 families, illustrated the importance of changing perspectives. Instead of assuming that people are hungry because they need food, the organization conducting food needs assessments aims to effectively understand how to distribute and provide food at an individual level. The emphasis was on adapting and responding to community needs. In the context of a transformational evaluation conference, the speaker stressed the evaluator's responsibility as a knowledge broker. Using approaches appropriate to the community, such as localization, allows for the adoption and construction of local tools. The speaker called for reframing perspectives and embracing knowledge-brokering relationships to better serve community needs and ensure impactful outcomes.



Speakers emphasized the need to adhere to OECD/DAC criteria of evaluation while adapting



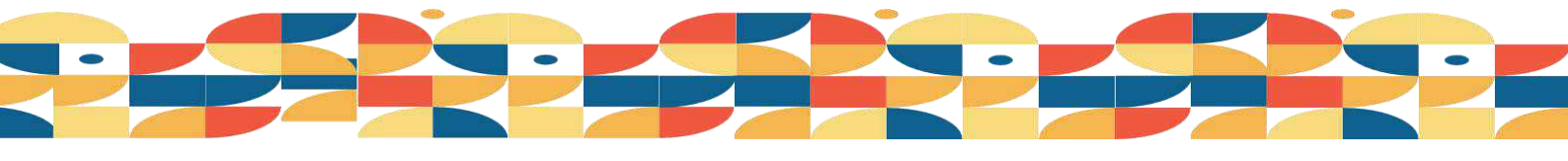
it for the global South. There is a need to provide space for experimentation and learning from mistakes. In NITI Aayog, the approach involved considering societal aspects, employing evidence-gathering diagnostic tools, and integrating the OECD/DAC criteria. The speaker emphasized the importance of adapting evaluation practices to different contexts, necessitating constant evolution and contextualization of frameworks based on identified needs. The speaker noted the absence of formative evaluations, explaining the cyclical nature of the process aligned with scheme

objectives. DMEO engaged in process evaluation, as well as mid and summative evaluations, employing OECD/DAC criteria such as relevance and impact and the developmental evolution of the model, emphasizing a transition towards result-based financing approaches at the state level. This shift is informed by assessments and data system requirements aimed at enhancing implementation. The formulation of a Theory of Change (TOC) is instrumental in creating logical models, generating diverse outputs for schemes, and projecting long-term impacts.

The participants raised questions regarding the perception of US-based evaluation and the conflict between global south-centred China and the South-South model. The panellists clarified that they did not see a conflict in these models, emphasizing the impossibility of having a standard evaluation due to the varying perspectives among evaluators. They rather highlighted the lack of lessons learned and the importance of considering different viewpoints. The importance of disseminating information in multiple languages, including English, Hindi, Russian, and Chinese, was highlighted to ensure accessibility and understanding across diverse populations. Overall, the discussion emphasized the complexity of evaluation models, the need for localized approaches, and robust data validation processes to ensure accurate and comprehensive evaluations.

## 18.4 Takeaways

The session served as a platform for evaluators from the Global South to exchange ideas and emphasized the importance of culturally relevant evaluation practices and decolonized methodologies. Throughout the dialogue, emphasis was placed on collaborative knowledge-sharing among evaluators, recognizing the diverse contexts and challenges present in the Global South. The session underscored the need to establish a collaborative platform between practitioners and academics, aiming to transform evaluation practices to better align with the region's unique experiences and requirements.





# GENDER EQUALITY, SOCIAL EQUITY AND INCLUSIVITY IN DEVELOPMENT

**(23 July 2024, 02.00 PM to 03.30 PM)**

(Organized by IWWAGE AND PCI)

## 18.1 Background

The panel aimed to amplify the experiences of emerging and seasoned researchers through success stories and challenges faced when integrating research into public sector programmes. The session focused on the utilization of curated advocacy tools as a strategy to engage policymakers, academia, practitioners, and experts, ultimately advancing the mandate of gender equality and women's empowerment.

## 18.2 Speakers

1. Sudipta Mondal, Senior Director, MLE, Project Concern International (PCI)
2. Sushmita Mukherjee, Director – Gender and Adolescent Girls, PCI
3. Moumita Sarkar, Co-Lead, SWAYAM, IWWAGE
4. Surabhi Awasthi, Senior Research Associate, IWWAGE

**Radha Chellappa**, Executive Director, IWWAGE moderated the session

## 18.3 Discussions

The discussions were multi-faceted encompassing various crucial aspects relating to gender equality and inclusivity through following social norms that are gender sensitive. The speakers discussed the impact of gender norms on family planning initiatives, emphasizing the necessity of understanding cultural dynamics through ethnographic studies to tailor interventions effectively. Highlighting the importance of standardized capacity building, they underscored the need for gender-transformative models to address entrenched societal norms. The discourse extended to the concept of norm transformation, elucidating how shifting gender norms can catalyse progress toward gender equality.

The speakers emphasized evidence-based policymaking, advocating for approaches grounded in contextualized needs assessments. They underscored the significance of establishing gender resource centres to serve as hubs for research, advocacy, and capacity building. The discussions also broached sensitive topics such as cultural norms perpetuating violence against women, necessitating comprehensive stakeholder engagement to tackle entrenched challenges. Throughout the session, speakers shared insights from their research projects and experiences, illuminating both the complexities and potential solutions in promoting gender equality and social equity in development endeavours. By confronting challenges head-on and fostering collaborative approaches, the session fostered a deeper understanding of the nuanced intersections between gender, social norms, and inclusive development.



## 18.4 Takeaways

Addressing the issue of women not fully enjoying their agency is paramount, as they should be recognized as citizens rather than mere recipients of aid. However, resource constraints pose a significant challenge to implementing effective strategies. It's crucial to acknowledge that norms evolve slowly and vary across regions, necessitating innovative approaches to measure and understand them. Recognizing this, every policy should carefully consider the drivers and factors of social norms. Furthermore, addressing issues like violence against women requires a thorough understanding that comes from directly engaging with the experiences of those affected. Without this holistic approach, meaningful progress toward gender equality may remain elusive.



# INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF NATIONAL EVALUATION CAPACITIES:

## LEARNING FROM YOUTH NETWORKS

**(23 February 2024, 02.00 PM to 3.30 PM)**

(Organized by EvalYouth India)

### 19.1 Background

The Manila Declaration adopted at the recent 4th APEA conference called for action for the institutionalization of M&E for achieving the SDGs. Previously in 2018, the Colombo Declaration called for institutionalization of evaluation with parliaments. In 2013, the participants of the National Evaluation Capacities Conference developed and signed 18 NEC committees to enhance national evaluation capacities and to encourage accountability by calling participant countries to commit to action and collaborate. Such calls to action have been actively supported by Indian evaluators in recent times. The roundtable aimed to gather ideas from Young and Emerging Evaluators (YEEs) on contextualizing various commitments and developing an action agenda for India.

### 19.2 Speakers

1. Arshee Rizvi, Data Scientist, IIT, Madras, Chennai
2. Amol Shaila Suresh, Co-Leader, EvalYouth Asia
3. Nikita Khanna, MEL Coordinator, Restless Development
4. Saundharaya Khanna, Manager Sustainable Finance and Green Entrepreneurship, Development Alternatives
5. Madhuka Kiyanagamage, Coordinator, APEA
6. Shazina Saeed, Assistant Professor, Amity University
7. Achintya Ghosal, Regional Coordinator, Indian Youth Climate Network
8. Bijita Devsharma, MEL Specialist for RiseUp, World YWCA

**Umesh Jadhav**, Engagement Manager, International Innovation Corps, moderated the session

### 19.3 Discussions

The necessity for incorporating youth in M&E with their active participation in the process was emphasised. A historical context of EvalYouth India's establishment was elaborated as to how it is functioning in close collaboration with ECOI. Speakers felt that political support, along with strong backing within power structures, was necessary for the institutionalization of



evaluation. It was suggested that building awareness and support through advocacy and establishing networks to create platforms for collaboration would be helpful. The need for structured educational initiatives with defined curricula and objectives for on-the-job learning opportunities were

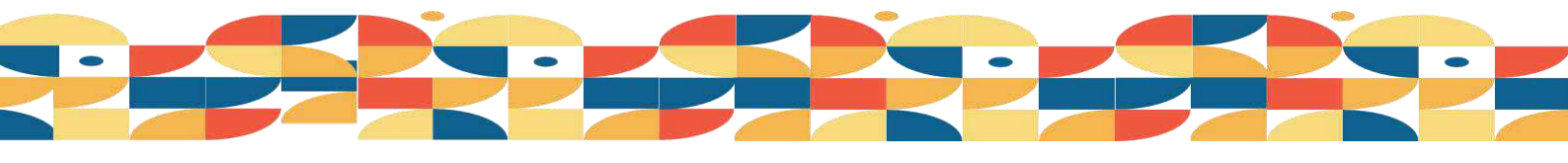


essential components of youth involvement. Highlighting the potential of evaluation as a rewarding and impactful career path would encourage youth, the introduction of evaluation concepts in schools, and creating networks for sharing of views and experiences would give a stimulus to the discipline. Emphasizing the requirement for more informed and evidence-based decision-making practices, and promoting the participation of youth in decision-making would help. The potential of long-term benefits and positive impact on societal development through targeted investments in youth and suggested enhanced investments in youth-related programmes were discussed. Tailoring interventions to fit the specific context and cultural nuances of the target community or region, and customizing strategies to address unique challenges and capitalize on local strengths would help. Exploring ways to incentivize collaboration and teamwork and encouraging cross-functional collaboration to harness collective strengths and promote a more integrated approach would be needed.



Participants' questions were focused on identifying unaddressed challenges and empowering youth as major drivers in M&E, promoting youth involvement, and providing opportunities for Young Professionals. In response, the speakers highlighted the challenges such as the demand for monitoring and

evaluation in communities, the preferred demand for quantitative data instead of qualitative data by the funders, the effects of their influence on the study, the low number of young evaluators, political involvement, and a separate evaluation design from an overall program design. Further, the panel highlighted how youth can become drivers of change and cater to these challenges.



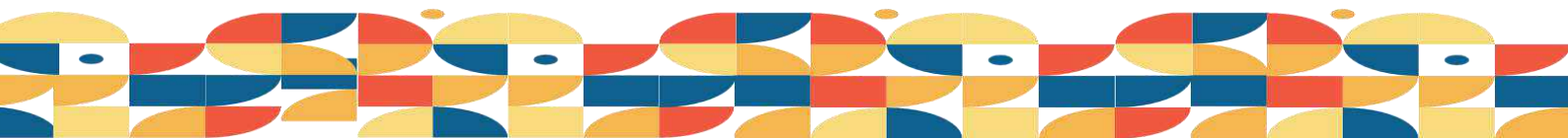


## 19.4 Takeaways



collaborative efforts and a holistic approach to enhance evaluation capacities at the national level.

The session delved into various aspects of institutionalizing national evaluation capacities through the lens of youth networks. The speakers highlighted the importance of political support, advocacy, networking, mentorship, intentional evaluations, data-based decision-making, and youth participation in decision-making processes. Addressing these key areas would pave the way for systemic change in M&E practices in India, emphasizing the need for



## INNOVATION BAZAAR

### (23 February 2024, 09.30 AM to 01.00 PM)

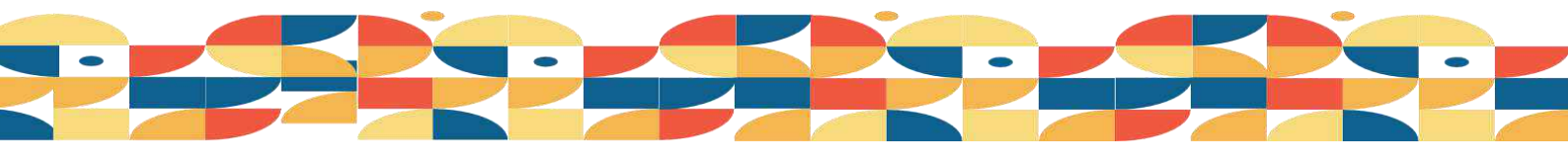
#### 20.1 Background

Innovation Bazaars have been a special feature of EvalFests, capturing the participants' attention. 'Innovation Bazaar' is where individuals/organizations present their creative work around evaluation and, in exchange, receive participants' feedback and experience to enable improvements. The bazaar featured a space where each selected presenter had a stall to showcase their innovation, and the participants visited the 'bazaar stalls' to hear from the presenters in an interactive form. Presentations were around evaluation methodologies and techniques around Indigenous evaluation practice, participatory sensemaking using visual maps, Youth-Led Research Methodology, Use of Art Cards, and many more. The presenters were open to using innovative mediums such as story-telling, posters, cards, models, etc. Just as in a bazaar, the participants moved from one stall to the other as per their interests and interacted with the presenters.

#### 20.2 Presenters in EvalFest 2024

##### EvalFest 2024: PRESENTERS AT INNOVATION BAZAAR

Sl. No	Name of the Organization	Name(s) of proposers	Subject
1	South Africa	Alisa Ray	The use of Art Cards to generate in-depth conversations
2	Resilience Analysis Consulting, South Africa	Madri Jansen van Rensburg	Participatory sensemaking using visual maps
3	Heifer India/Passing Gifts Private Ltd.	Ritesh Laddha	Assessing Sustainable Living Income: The Heifer Household Transformation Model
4	Campbell South Asia	Suchi Kapoor Malhotra	Navigating the Methodological Pathways: Evidence Revolution
5	PRAXIS India	Tarini S, Rohini Chhari, Priyaswara Bharti, Basker R, Manjutha C)	Innovation in the Field of Community-Led Evaluation: Building சிந்தனை (Sindhanai - critically reflecting) Evaluators
6	APEA	Randika, Madhuka	Toolkit for Indigenous Evaluations in the Asia Pacific Region
7	CGIAR	Sonal Zaveri, Shweta Anand/Vij	Social Network Analysis (SNA) to Facilitate Evaluating Quality of Science- Visualizing Evidence for Research4Development (R4D) by positioning methodology
8	Rural Aid	Dhiraj Lepcha	Adolescent-led Dissemination of root cause study in tea gardens of



			Kalchini Block, Alipurduar district, West Bengal.
9	Restless Development India	Saumya Gupta (Franklin Paul Anand, Nikita Khanna, Angelina Jenifer)	Youth-led Research Methodology
10	Miracle Foundation of India	Sandhya Mishra, Pritam Prasun	Thrive Scale TM APP: An Evaluation Tool in the Realm of Child Care & Protection
11	Evaluation Latin American Network - ReLAC, Costa Rica	Ana Louisa Guzman	Innovative Methodology: Humanize Evaluation, "Let's Build Together".

**Details of the presentations are in ANNEX II.**

## 20.3 Takeaway

The Innovation Bazaar served as an excellent platform for presenters to showcase their innovative ideas and evaluation methodologies. It fostered a co-learning environment, benefiting both presenters and participants. The discussions revolved around a diverse array of evaluative methodologies applied to significant issues, employing innovative mediums. This exposure allowed participants to grasp the adaptability of these methods in their respective fields. The interactive nature of the bazaar facilitated valuable feedback on the presented methodologies, enabling clarification of doubts regarding the usage and applicability of these innovative evaluation methods. In essence, the event not only facilitated the exchange of cutting-edge ideas but also encouraged a dialogue that contributed to the collective understanding of how innovative evaluation techniques can be effectively implemented across various domains.

## 20.4 A Glimpse of Innovation bazaar



## SATELLITE EVENTS

A number of satellite events were organised as pre conference sessions in the form of workshops. Details of the same are as below:

### EXPLORING SOCIAL NORMS

(19 and 20 February 2024, organized by Social Norms and Agency Learning Collaborative (SNALC), Sambodhi, and PCI India at Department of Communication and Extension, (Lady Irwin College, Delhi University))

#### 21.1 Background

Social Norms are foundational to human behaviour and thinking. These unwritten rules are so deeply embedded in our brains; that our behaviours, attitudes, and beliefs get shaped across all life stages and contexts. The objective of the workshop was to understand the theory and concepts of social norms and discuss how norms influence attitudes and behaviours. It was facilitated by Social Norms and Agency Learning Collaborative (SNALC), Sambodhi, and PCI India. SNALC is a platform of institutions and individuals who are researchers, practitioners, and enthusiasts working in the domain of social norms. SNALC aims to engage with the evidence and learning from research, implementation, and measurement of norms–shifting interventions.



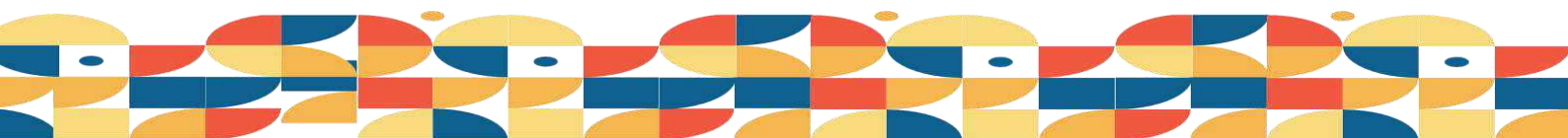
A workshop was organized on the subject on two half days– one on the 19<sup>th</sup> and the other on the 20<sup>th</sup> of February 2024.

#### 21.2 Resource Persons

1. Dr. Vikas Choudhry, Vice-President and Public Health Expert at Sambodhi
2. Shikha Rana, Senior Manager Research, Sambodhi
3. Dr. Shobhit Srivastava, Drishti,
4. Vineha Tatkar, Drishti

#### 21.3 Discussions

The workshop was conducted in participatory mode and discussion covered the definition of social norms, exploring their types and the mechanisms through which they are observed and moulded in society. Participants gained clarity on descriptive and normative norms. The session elucidated the distinction between attitude and behaviour, emphasizing how their





alignment is influenced by overarching social norms, such as meta norms. The discourse also delved into the consequences of adhering to social norms, including rewards and sanctions. The second session involved a group exercise on constructing a problem tree. The specific focus areas within this activity included expectations regarding expressing emotions, discrimination against the LGBTQ+ community, gender equality, the stigma surrounding mental health, and issues related to peer pressure and substance abuse. The facilitators explained the Social Norms Exploration Tools (SNET) and their applications. Qualitative Tools to understand norms included “The Five Whys”; “Problem Tree” and “Vignettes”. An activity to create a Problem Tree was further conducted with the participants after explaining them in detail about each method.

## 21. 4 Takeaways

The session delved into the realm of social norms, encompassing unspoken guidelines shaping conduct within a society, defining expectations, accepted practices, and moral standards. These norms govern individual behaviour based on descriptive and normative expectations. The discussion extended to meta norms, anchored in beliefs and values, influencing other norms, and gender norms moulding behaviour across genders. The session underscored the impact of attitudes, derived from socialization, on behaviour, with alignment influenced by societal expectations and peer dynamics. It emphasized that problematic behaviour often arises from the apprehension of societal sanction. Recognizing and comprehending reference groups emerged as pivotal for effective social interventions and behavioural transformations.

## GENDER EMPOWERMENT: THEORY, MEASURES AND DATA

(19 February 2024, organized by Center on Gender Equity and Health, University of California, San Diego at the Department of Communication and Extension, Lady Irwin College, Delhi University)

### 22.1 Background

At a time when many gender indicators continue to show disparities, it is important to collect, monitor, and evaluate gender-disaggregated data to understand key contributing factors to gender equity. The constructs of agency and social norms are important components of gender empowerment, programs, policies, and evaluation. This workshop explained how these constructs are theorized, and how they can be measured (with examples from existing surveys). The objective of the workshop was to share context-specific gender empowerment measures.



## 22.2 Resource Persons

1. Vedavati Patwardhan, Research Scientist, Center on Gender Equity and Health, University of California, San Diego
2. Shruti Ambast, Gender Policy Consultant, Center on Gender Equity and Health, University of California, San Diego

## 22.3 Discussions and Highlights



Basic definitions of sex, gender, empowerment, and gender equity were discussed. Empowerment as a process and outcome was elaborated which stressed intersectionality and the process of change. EMERGE conceptual framework for measuring empowerment was discussed which highlighted 3 non-linear steps – critical consciousness and choice, agency to act on choice, and achievement of self-determined goals. The concept of agency was elaborated, which can be understood from three

aspects – can, act, and resist.

## 22.4 Takeaways

Gender empowerment is a multidimensional, complex process whose understanding is constantly evolving. Empowerment encompasses many elements, including choice and agency, and operates individually and collectively. We can have direct measures of empowerment but they might not effectively capture the true essence of all groups and individuals. Good data and contextual knowledge to track progress related to gender empowerment are required for advancing policies.

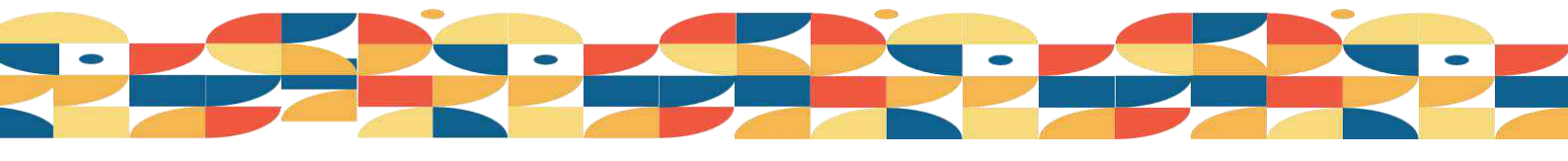
## USE OF EVIDENCE WORKSHOP

(19 February 2024, organized by Campbell Foundation, South Asia at DCE, Lady Irwin College)

## 23.1 Background

There is a growing attention to the use of evidence to inform policy and practice. But what is the evidence? What sort of evidence is of most use to policymakers? And how can they trust whether the evidence is trustworthy or not? This half-day workshop answered these questions through the presentation of the policy, programme, project, and practice evidence cycle. The workshop was facilitated by the Campbell Foundation, South Asia. The workshop was divided into 4 sessions:

- a) Stages of Evidence-Based Policy and Program Cycle: Uses of Different Types of Evidence



- b) Evidence Gap Map and Evidence Portals
- c) Finding and Using Evidence
- d) Confidence in Evidence Claims

## 23.2 Facilitators

1. Arshita Saran, Deputy Director of the Evaluation and Evidence Synthesis Programme at Global Development Network (GDN)
2. Suchi Kapoor Malhotra, Lead. Evidence Synthesis, Campbell Foundation, South Asia

## 23.4 Takeaway

The "Use of Evidence Workshop" provided a comprehensive overview of evidence-based policy and practice, addressing key questions regarding the nature of evidence, its relevance to policymakers, and methods for assessing its trustworthiness. Through four insightful sessions participants delved into the stages of the evidence cycle, types of evaluation, knowledge translation, and strategies for finding and critically evaluating evidence. The workshop not only equipped attendees with practical tools and methodologies but also emphasized the importance of evidence synthesis and contextualization in policy formulation and program implementation.

## **ROLE OF COMMUNITY IN MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND LEARNING WORKSHOP ORGANISED BY PORTICUS**

(20 February 2024, at DCE, Lady Irwin College)

### 24.1 Resource persons

1. Bhuvan Bajracharya, Evaluator, Nepal
2. Amol Shaila Suresh, EvalYouth Asia
3. Ranika De Mel, Manager, APEA
4. Rituu B Nanda, ECOI, moderated the session

### 24.2 Background

The workshop was facilitated by the members of the Community of Evaluation Practice from South Asia with PORTICUS support. As a philanthropic organization, Porticus works to build a just and sustainable future where human dignity flourishes.

The workshop demonstrated how to meaningfully engage the community in evaluation. Through real and meaningful engagement, the workshop called on evaluators, community leaders, and citizens to recognize the role of community ownership in evaluation and to increase awareness and enhance knowledge.



## 24.3 Discussions

The workshop discussed about the sharing and Collective Wisdom, Inclusivity of Affected Groups, Indigenous Perspectives, Global Fund for Children and Group Reflection. The discussion concluded with the importance of group reflection, underlining the need for communities to emerge and evolve organically.

## 24.4 Takeaway

The discussion underscores the transformative power of sharing experiences for collective action, emphasizing the community as a vital resource. While active engagement of the most affected is crucial, inclusivity of diverse stakeholders is deemed essential for comprehensive problem-solving.

The "Stepping Back" approach prioritizes ownership over mere power transfer, utilizing the SALT framework for community acknowledgment. The significance of group reflection is emphasized for genuine, organic collaborative partnerships in monitoring, evaluation, and learning.

## WORKSHOP ON EVALUATION QUALITY ASSURANCE BY WORLD FOOD PROGRAM

(20 February 2024, at DCE, Lady Irwin College)

## 25.1 Background

This interactive Workshop delved into national and state-level evaluation systems in India. Subsequently, the workshop focussed on data quality and strategies to enhance the robustness of evaluations, ensuring the integrity of evaluation findings and judgments. The session then provided an overview of evaluation regulations within the UN system, referencing the UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation, as well as the OECD Quality Standards for Development Evaluation. Case studies spotlighted nation-states that have implemented evaluation policies, showcasing advancements in quality assurance (QA). Moving forward, the workshop centred discussions on the content of the UNEG Quality Checklist for Terms of Reference (ToRs), Inception Reports, and Evaluation Reports.

## 25.2 Facilitators

1. Stuart Coupe, Evaluation Consultant, Regional Evaluation Unit, WFP Regional Bureau of Bangkok (RBB), World Food Programme
2. Mimansa Misra, World Food Programme
3. Dr. Masot and Akash moderated the workshop





## 25.3 Discussions

The concept of Evaluation Quality was explored, emphasizing attributes such as impact assessment, clarity, error-free execution, and ethical considerations. Common quality issues identified included the tendency for evaluation studies to produce generic findings lacking nuance or specificity, as well as instances of convoluted language and insufficiently analyzed data.

Discussion on the causes of quality issues within the evaluation process highlighted challenges arising from broad Terms of Reference (TOR), inadequate communication within evaluation teams, and the dominance of a single Point of Contact (POC) who may not effectively engage with the team.

An analysis of evaluation challenges in India revealed systemic issues such as the absence of an evaluation policy framework, a dearth of dedicated curriculum, and a limited pool of credible evaluators, as outlined in a collaborative study conducted by the World Food Programme (WFP) and DMEO. UNEG Norms and Standards of Evaluation were discussed, emphasizing the necessity of evaluation policies, frameworks, institutions, guidelines, and quality assurance systems to uphold evaluation integrity.

In the second part of the session, the WFP Evaluation Decentralized Quality Assurance System was introduced, featuring templates, checklists, technical notes, and process guides.

Finally, a case study of South Africa highlighted the lessons learned from implementing an evaluation policy, underscoring the significance of incorporating these lessons into evaluation practices.

## 25.4 Takeaway

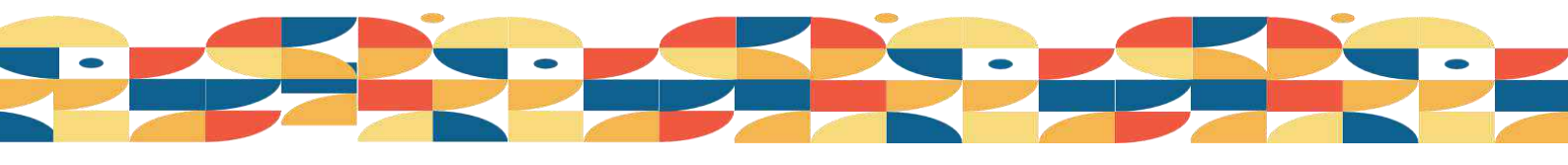
The session provided insights into India's evaluation mechanisms, emphasizing the importance of quality, independence, and alignment with global standards. Participants identified challenges such as generic findings, communication gaps, and a lack of evaluators, underlining the need for systemic improvements.

## DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE SYSTEMS AT SCALE

(20 July 2024, Organized by Breakthrough)

### 26.1 Background

Breakthrough's Scale programme is a multi-layered entity with diverse components; systematic government engagement, internal process monitoring, research (action research), RCTs, teacher/relevant stakeholder interaction, and training- all of which examine effective and sustainable Gender Transformative Education Systems (GTES) change work operable at scale. It demands innovative, out-of-the-box thinking to support problem mapping and troubleshooting to build an adaptive and responsive long-term scalable model. As a vital step towards creating consolidated composite repositories of shared learning and best practices,



Breakthrough hosted this satellite event as part of the Evaluation Festival 2024- to bring together domain experts with significant experience concerning system change work at scale. The idea is to build collaborative spaces conducive to collective deliberation and brainstorming.

## 26.2 Facilitators

1. Swati Chakraborty, Director, Research and Evaluation, Breakthrough Trust
2. Manjusha Madhu, Senior Researcher, Research and Evaluation, Breakthrough Trust

## 26.3 Discussions and Highlights



The discussions shed light on the multifaceted challenges and opportunities in advancing gender equality within the education sector. Participants highlighted strategies to address these challenges, drawing insights from specific states and projects/organisations. The interactions included on the importance issues like systemic barriers, collaborative partnerships, intersectional perspective, grassroot insights, comprehensive evaluations and integrating existing frameworks for addressing gender equality. Factors like caste, class, disability, language and other local context are important.

## 26.4 Takeaway

- Recognizing the absence of gender focus in initiatives and advocating for a more inclusive approach that empowers women, exploring avenues for collaboration with State Councils of Educational Research and Training (SCERTs), advocating for transparent data collection, incorporating gender lens indicators, implementing a phased exit strategy, collaborating with government entities, utilising a consortium framework and sustainable planning were some of the action points that emerged during this workshop.

Overall, the discussions underscored the importance of holistic approaches to advancing gender equality in education, incorporating diverse perspectives, and fostering collaborative partnerships to drive meaningful change. By implementing these takeaway strategies, stakeholders can work together to create more inclusive and equitable learning environments, ultimately contributing to the empowerment of individuals and communities across diverse socio-cultural background.



## POSTER PRESENTATIONS

(22-23 February 2024)

### 27.1 Background

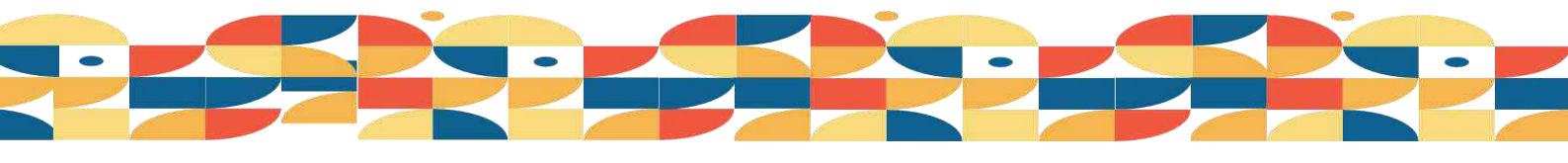
Young professionals and students were invited in EvalFest 2024 to come up and share their thoughts and experiences through posters showcasing their ideas about any of the conference sub- themes

### 27.2 Posters Exhibited

In response to a call from the organizers, the following presentations were received on their evaluation experiences in the form of posters, which were exhibited at the venue of the conference on the second and third days of the EvalFest 2024. The presenters explained their theme of posters to the visiting participants.

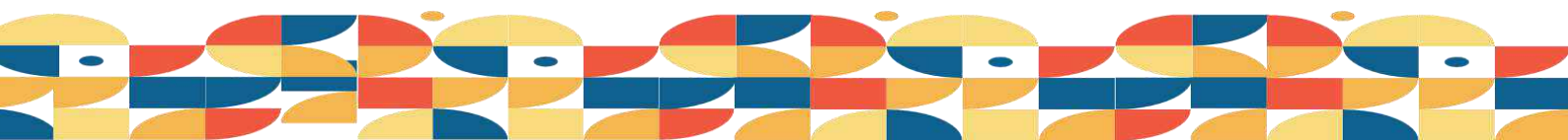
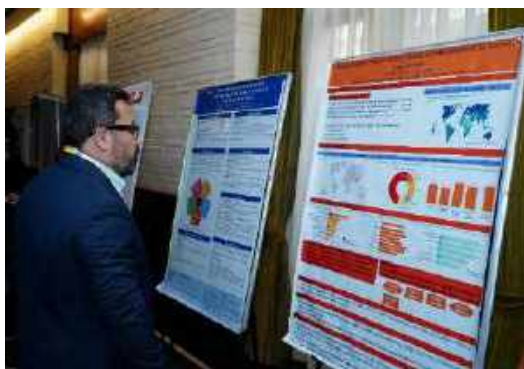
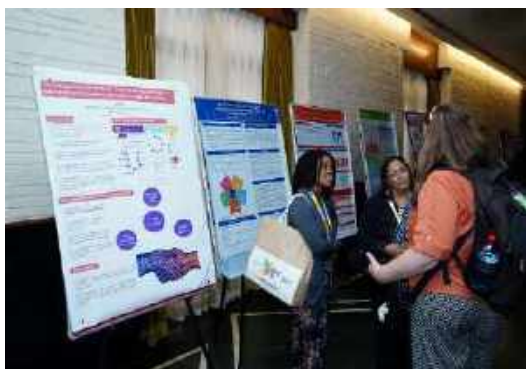
**Table: POSTER PRESENTATIONS**

Sl.No.	Name of presenter	Poster Title
1	Himani Bharat	Usage of Digital Technologies amongst SHG Women in Uttarakhand, India
2	Alisa Ray, South Africa	Art Cards to Access Vital Content
3	Madri vanensburg, South Africa	Applying visual methods to all stages of the evaluation cycle
4	Ana Louisa Guzman, Costa Rica	“Humanizing evaluation is everyone’s task: let’s build together”
5	Norma: Kok, N; Masuko, D & Dlongwana, T. South Africa	‘Connection before Content’ – The role of rapport and trust relationships in boosting responses to M&E deliverables.
6	Nidhi Vahi	Charting Progress; Financial Literacy, Inclusion, and M& E Milestones for Women’s Empowerment
7	Richa Dhir	evaluation of coping mechanisms of gender-based cyber fraud
8.	Tanya Srivastava, Pritam Prasun Miracle Foundation, India	“The Journey of Children’s Participation in Community-Level Prevention: The Role of Bal Panchayat”
9	Community owns MEL and research (Madhuka Liyanagamage <madhukalg@gmail.com>), Randika Lawson De Mel <a href="mailto:rldemel@gmail.com">rldemel@gmail.com</a> and Ana Erika Lareza <a href="mailto:a.e.lareza@gmail.com">a.e.lareza@gmail.com</a> and rituu	Co-created by the session on 21 <sup>st</sup> February, afternoon





### 27.3 Glimpse of Posters Presented



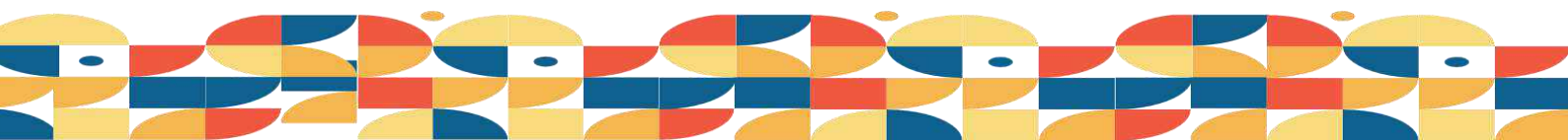


## STREET PLAY

(23 February 2024, enacted by Aakar Street Play Society, Lady Irwin College, Delhi)

Aakar Street Play Society, Lady Irwin College, presented a street play titled “Ät your Own Risk” to generate awareness of the importance of sex education in Schools.

### Glimpse of Street Play



## CLOSING

(23 February 2024, 04.00 PM to 05.30 PM)

### 29.1 Speakers

Rajib Nandi	Moderator, ECOI
Yatin Diwakar	EvalYouth India,
Sanyukata Samaddar	Commissioner, National Capital Region, Govt. of Uttar Pradesh
Ashwani K Muthoo	Director General, IEO, NDB
Ada Ocampo	President, IDEAS Global
Godfrey Mashamba	Deputy Director General of Evaluation, Evidence and Knowledge Systems, Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, South Africa
Aniruddha Brahmachari	ECOI
Garima Agrawal	ECOI

### 29.2 Proceedings

EvalFest 2024 was formally concluded in the late afternoon session of 23 February 2024. It began with **Rajib Nandi** welcoming the guest speakers and participants and thanking them for their support. He then surveyed the context and contents of the current event. He said that, with the inclusion of several keynote speeches, panel discussions, roundtables, a street play, and an innovations bazaar, as well as two days of satellite events by partners, covering a variety of subjects like technology, gender, youth, partnerships, community leadership, this was a great opportunity to learn about the transformation of evaluation during the past two decades. **Yatin Diwakar** made a presentation about the outcomes and key takeaways from the conference, such as the exchange of ideas on the significance of the entry of AI in the field of evaluation, recognizing the importance of partnerships of all stakeholders for evaluation capacity building, of South-South cooperation for promoting decolonization of evaluation through local and culturally relevant methodologies





and practices, the emergence of youth as an important component of evaluation fraternity, and the importance of the growing community participation.

What followed was an absorbing exposition by **Sanyukta Samaddar** of the monitoring and evaluation system in India and the process of localization of SDG monitoring in India over the past decade. She referred to the functioning of DMEO in NITI Aayog and other institutions, encouraged evidence-based policymaking, and stated that the country aimed at strengthening the M&E system through strong institutional partnerships. Over the past 7-8 years, India has implemented a process of localizing SDG monitoring, initially extending to States and Union Territories, then to districts, and later to urban areas. India's SDG localization model is built on four pillars: institutional ownership, a robust review and monitoring system, capacity development, and a whole-of-society approach. The approach involves a nodal agency, collaborative competition, and a comprehensive societal approach. Most state governments are now embracing modern technologies like big data and AI to strengthen administrative data monitoring at various levels. Ms.Sanyukta ended her



address on a concerning note about the current state of SDG achievement at the mid-point of the journey, with many SDGs not being on track, quoting Mr. Antonio Guterres, Secretary General of the United Nations, who observed that “Unless we act *now*, the 2030 Agenda will become an *epitaph* for a world that might have been”.

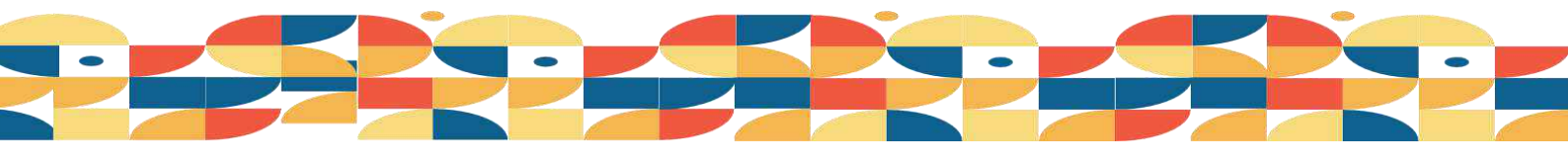


**Mr. Ashwani Muthoo** appreciated the efforts made by ECOI in organizing EvalFest 2024. He was delighted that the event discussed global perspectives on evaluation, emphasizing the need for partnerships, decolonization, and making voices from

the South heard. He felt that evaluation was central to all development programmes. Mr. Muthoo suggested that the event should have had greater participation from the North to make it more collaborative and globally representative. **Ms.**



**Ada Ocampo** expressed her commitment to her challenging ideas on evaluation if only they



resulted in generating valuable contributions to the development of the profession. **Mr. Godfrey Mashamba** encouraged global participation, urging increased interaction among young evaluators for collaborative advancements.



Aniruddha Brahmachari and Garima Agrawal representing ECOI and EvalYouth India respectively proposed a Vote of Thanks.



The session also witnessed the presentation by ECOI of lifetime awards for contribution to evaluation to Ms. Ada Ocampo and Mr. Banda Rao.





# ANNEXES

## ANNEX 1

### EVALFEST 2024: PROGRAMME DETAILS

(21 – 23 February 2024)

21 February 2024				
Venues	9:30-11:00	11:30 – 1:00	2:00 – 3:30	4:00-5:30
Silver Oak I	Inauguration	<b>Plenary 1</b> Use of AI in Evaluation; Opportunities and Challenges	<b>Panel 1</b> Evaluation Approaches and Lessons on Sustainable Infrastructure Development by BRICS New Development Bank and other Development Partners	<b>Panel 3</b> Building Responsive and Adaptive Evaluation Functions for the 2030 Child-Centered SDGs
Silver Oak II			<b>Panel 2</b> Who drives MEL? Who uses MEL?	<b>Panel 4</b> Measuring women's empowerment: Findings and experiences in implementing gender evaluation tools
Marigold			<b>Roundtable 1</b> Stakeholder Partnership for Developing Evaluation Capacity in India	<b>Roundtable 2</b> Making Evaluations Heard: Navigating the Evaluation Discourse within the Global South Context

Tea Breaks: 11:00 – 11:30 am; 3:30 – 4:00 pm & Lunch: 1:00 – 2:00 pm]



22 February 2024				
Venues	9:30-11:00	11:30 – 1:00	2:00 – 3:30	4:00-5:30
Silver Oak I	<b>Plenary 2</b> Emerging Concerns and Systemic Impacts of Evaluation	<b>Panel 5</b> Leveraging Stakeholder partnership for National Evaluation Systems	<b>Panel 7</b> Empowering South Asian Communities: Advancing Data Democracy through Technology and Ownership	<b>Plenary 3</b> Transformation in Evaluation: Emerging Networks, Approaches, Actors, and Future Paradigms
Silver Oak II		<b>Panel 6</b> Engendering SDG Monitoring: Multiple Pathways	<b>Panel 8</b> Reimagining government evaluation capacities – The way forward	
Marigold		<b>Roundtable 3</b> Measuring Agency and Norms: Experiences and Way Forward	<b>Roundtable 4</b> Standards for Meaningful Engagement of Youth in Evaluation	

Poster Presentations: 9:00 – 9:30 am (Silver Oak Foyer) | Street Play: 1:00 – 1:15 pm (silver Oak Patio)  
[Tea Breaks: 11:00 – 11:30 am; 3:30 – 4:00 pm & Lunch: 1:00 – 2:00 pm]

23 February 2024				
Venues	9:30-11:00	11:30 – 1:00	2:00 – 3:30	4:00-5:30
Silver Oak I	<b>Innovation Bazar</b>		<b>Panel 9</b> Bridging Voices: The Eval South Approach	<b>Closing Ceremony</b>
Silver Oak II			<b>Panel 10</b> Gender equality, social equity and inclusivity in development	
Marigold			<b>Roundtable 5</b> Institutionalization of National Evaluation Capacities: Learning from Youth Networks	

Poster Presentations: 9:00 am – 9:30 am (Silver Oak Foyer)  
Tea Breaks: 11:00 – 11:30 am; 3:30 – 4:00 pm & Lunch: 1:00 – 2:00 pm]



## ANNEX II

### PRESENTATIONS AT INNOVATION BAZAAR

**a) Stall 1: Madhuka Liyanagamage, Randika Lawson De Mel (APEA): "Toolkit for Indigenous Evaluations in the Asia Pacific Region"**

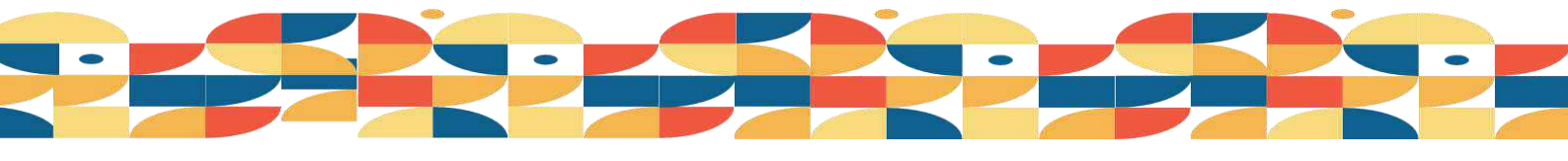
The speakers outlined their comprehensive methodology, conducting fieldwork in the Kalahan indigenous community in Philippines and multiple locations in Sri Lanka. They employed various research methods, including focus group discussions, key informant interviews, and online surveys, focusing on indigenous communities in the Asia-Pacific region. The Indigenous Voices Project, a toolkit developed by APIA and Ibal Indigenous, aims to address scepticism and concerns within over-researched Indigenous communities by promoting culturally responsive evaluation techniques.

Emphasizing transparency, genuineness, and commitment, the speakers highlighted the need for respectful engagement with marginalized Indigenous communities. The toolkit's development focuses on rectifying past issues where communities felt taken advantage of by researchers. During the Q&A, the importance of community involvement in survey development and ongoing improvements to the toolkit were discussed. The speakers stressed the inclusion of Indigenous community members in the research team to build evaluation capacity and foster continuous engagement. They addressed the question of time spent with communities, emphasizing the importance of fostering relationships beyond fieldwork. Strategies for building rapport included having an entry point and a trusted community member.

The speakers shared experiences from the Kalahan community, showcasing initiatives for improved engagement through grants and leveraging trusted individuals. The discussion covered the significance of clear communication and building trust when entering Indigenous communities, acknowledging the challenges, and emphasizing the welcoming nature of many communities. The conversation delved into the guidelines for evaluation, disputing the notion that participatory approaches must start from the project design phase. The need for adaptability, considering diverse communities and researchers, and ensuring a minimum level of quality were highlighted. The speakers expressed gratitude and humorously mentioned having a QR code for further interaction, wrapping up the discussion.

**b) Stall 2: Ana Louisa Guzman (Evaluation Latin American Network RELAC): "Innovative Methodology: Humanize Evaluation - Let's Build Together"**

The Costa Rican Centre for Logotherapy Viktor Frankl (ReLAC) is an organization that promotes a culture of inclusion, equality, and equity, is respectful of human rights, and in no way allows discriminatory actions towards people, both individually and collectively. The stall at the Innovation Bazaar called "The Shifting Sands in Evaluation: Need for Responsive, Adaptive and Future-proof Approaches" talked about humanizing the evaluation process through the neo-approach of logotherapy.

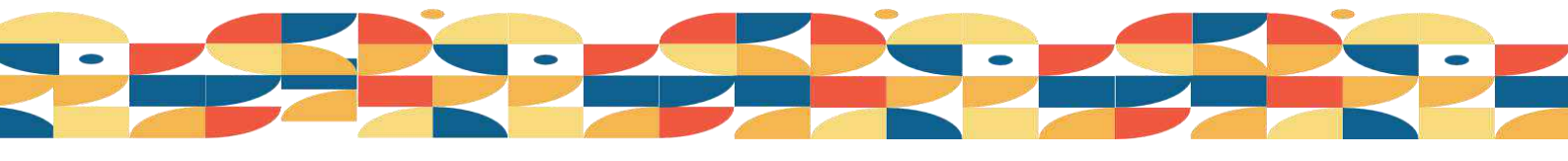


Logotherapy is a therapeutic approach that helps people find personal meaning in life. It's a form of psychotherapy that is focused on the future and on our ability to endure hardship and suffering through a search for purpose.

ReLAC helps people design and execute strategies and then further evaluate the same on issues like violence, female empowerment, and other problems identified by the people themselves. They also work with school children, their parents, and teachers on issues of bullying and caring for the environment to build the children's emotional abilities so that they become self-aware and build a conducive environment of care for each other. The stall displayed a mediocre engagement with a high curiosity among people about the neo-approach of logotherapy. This endeavour not only showcases their commitment to promoting a culture of inclusion, equality, and equity but also highlights the indispensable role of empathy and purpose in driving meaningful change. As we move forward, the insights and methodologies introduced by them could very well lay the groundwork for more compassionate, effective, and resilient evaluation processes, ultimately contributing to more equitable and sustainable outcomes for communities worldwide.

**c) Stall 3: Ritesh Laddha (Heifer India/Passing Gifts Private Ltd.): “Assessing Sustainable Living 3 Income: The Heifer Household Transformation Model”**

The stall was led by Heifer International where the presenters from the organization- Ritesh Laddha, Debanjana, and Rajni were showcasing the comprehensive three-phase assessment tool aligned with Sustainable Development Goals. The Household Transformation Model is a tool developed by Heifer International to evaluate households' progress towards achieving sustainable living income. It goes beyond traditional income-centric approaches by considering multiple dimensions of well-being, including economic, social, and environmental factors. The model consists of three core pillars namely; People, Profit, and Planet. It assesses household status across five outcome domains: income, food security, Women's empowerment, Climate-smart agriculture, and Social Capital. This model aligns with several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDGs 1 (No Poverty), 2 (Zero Hunger), 5 (Gender Equality), 13 (Climate Action), and 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions). The model offers a holistic approach to assessing household well-being, providing valuable insights beyond purely economic indicators. Its flexibility allows for context-specific adaptation, making it applicable across diverse settings and fostering long-term sustainable development. Organizations can adopt and adapt the Household Transformation Model by incorporating its principles and methodologies into their project design and monitoring frameworks. They can customize the indicators and assessments to align with their specific goals and contexts. The model complements other poverty measurement tools that focus solely on income or material deprivation; The HTTM offers a broader perspective that encompasses social and environmental dimensions by integrating multiple assessment approaches, organizations can gain a more nuanced understanding of poverty and tailor interventions accordingly.



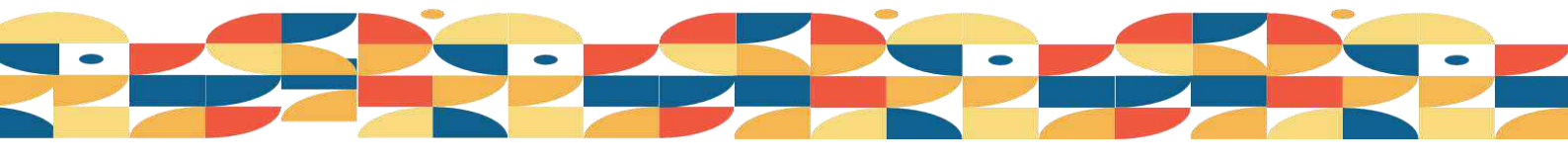


**d) Stall 4: Tarini S, Rohini Chhari, Priyaswara Bharti, Basker R, Manjutha C (PRAXIS India): “Innovation in Field of Community-Led Evaluation: Building ge (Sindhanai critically reflecting) Evaluators”**

The presenters highlight the crucial role of community volunteer evaluators in extracting evaluation information, aiming to reduce language, caste, and stereotypes for diverse community perspectives. They use a 'Chess Analogy' to depict the multi-layered nature of communities, emphasizing control by specific individuals. Involving community evaluators enriches the process with diverse viewpoints. The year-long, six-state evaluation engaged sex workers, sanitation workers, and LGBTQ individuals. Twenty-one community evaluators were trained, showcasing inclusive knowledge systems. Their pitch emphasizes the need to go on the ground for meaningful change. They also outline their work timeline, encompassing workshops, webinars, PRA tool use, and research paper writing. The chessboard layers symbolize societal complexities—caste, patriarchy, occupation, and stereotypes. Feedback suggests adopting a community-based game for relatability, moving away from chess seen as elite. Positive comments note the interest and effectiveness of the tools. The presenters highlight the importance of going on the ground to truly understand and instigate meaningful change. They covered their work timeline, including workshops, webinars, the utilization of PRA tools, and research paper writing. The other crucial feedback they received was to consider a community-based game, aligning with people's experiences, to better convey the societal analogy instead of using chess, perceived as an elite game. Other Individuals (visitors in the stall) commented positively, expressing interest and commending the effectiveness of the tools that they employed at the ground level.

**e) Stall 5: Sandhya Mishra & Pritam Prasun (Miracle Foundation of India): “Thrive Scale TM APP. An Evaluation Tool in the Realm of Child Care & Protection”**

Thrive Scale is an initiative under the Miracle Foundation aimed at measuring, tracking, and improving wellness areas during home assessments for children returning to families. The organization's primary focus is on upholding child rights and protection, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to be with a family, thus preventing the separation of children from their families. The Home Thrive Scale evaluates a child's potential to remain or reunite with their family while identifying necessary support services for successful reintegration. The Thrive Scale assesses five key areas of well-being: physical and mental health, education, family and social relationships, home finances, and living conditions. Currently in the pilot stage, the application is not for self-assessment; rather, experienced community members conduct the assessments. The Thrive application serves as a participatory tool facilitating assessment, planning, tracking, and intervention suggestion processes. Before gathering information, the app requests consent through a consent form embedded within it. Upon consent approval, the app collects background information such as name, date of birth, and place of residence. Following this, an assessment questionnaire is administered. Upon



completion, the app generates data in the form of a network graph. Subsequently, the intervention phase begins, offering various options tailored to the case's needs. The app also conducts follow-ups to monitor progress and identifies areas for improvement. A progress report is generated, and accessible to administrators or managers for review. Data is recorded in a dashboard, providing insights into family well-being through line graphs. The Thrive app offers customization, allowing for tailored interventions based on specific parameters set according to category scales. It provides questions in three languages: English, Hindi, and Tamil, facilitating user comfort and engagement by enabling responses in local languages.

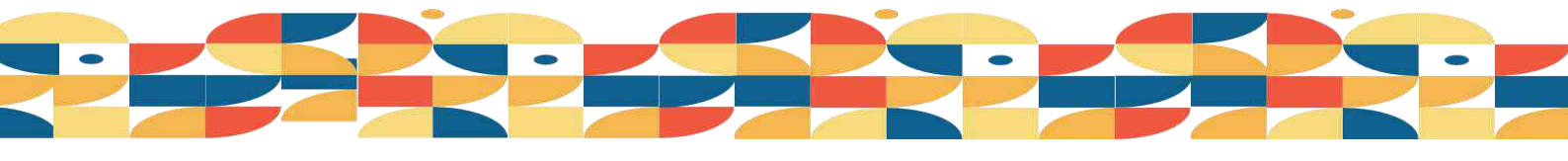
Thrive Scale addresses the critical issue of reducing reliance on orphanages and ensuring children grow up in safe and secure environments. In collaboration with the foundation, the developers devised the Thrive Scale as a solution to meet the needs of vulnerable children. The methodology serves as a vital tool in child case management, complementing social investigation reports and individual care plans. By identifying issues, recommending actions, and empowering government officials with data-driven insights, the Thrive Scale contributes to informed decision-making and enhances overall well-being. Its adaptability to Indian languages facilitates training for government officials and partners on the ground, enabling early intervention and support for at-risk families, thus preventing separations.

In conclusion, the Thrive Scale app stands as a testament to innovation in child welfare, offering a comprehensive solution for assessing and enhancing the well-being of vulnerable children and their families. Through its user-friendly interface, multilingual support, and customizable features, the app empowers communities, government agencies, and stakeholders to work collaboratively towards a common goal of ensuring that every child has the opportunity to thrive within a supportive family environment.

**f) Stall 6: Suchi Kapoor Malhotra (Campbell South Asia): Navigating the Methodological Pathways: Evidence Revolution**

Stall 6 showcased the concept of systematic evidence uptake, elucidating how data is meticulously filtered for policymakers and evaluators. The project's focus areas encompass humanitarian needs, health, youth crime, women empowerment, social protection, and other pertinent subjects. A geographical landscape model was employed to illustrate the process of knowledge creation and filtration at various levels.

The emphasis was notably on two levels from the data pyramid - Systematic Review and Evidence in Gap. Systematic reviews necessitate adherence to protocols and guidelines, ensuring a rigorous process. On the other hand, the Evidence Gap model consolidates existing evidence on responses, offering a graphical representation of areas with strong, weak, or no evidence resources based on predefined themes. The COVID-19 pandemic served as an illustrative example of the Evidence in Gap Maps. Critical appraisal for the study was conducted using a tool developed and pretested by the team, encompassing categories such as ease of use, clarity of purpose, achievement



of purpose, updating with new information, source of available content, and an overall rating of evidence resources. The primary focus lies in the meticulous assessment of evidence. For Evidence in Gap Maps, the team utilized the EPPI Reviewer tool, aiding in the graphical representation of the data.

In conclusion, Campbell South Asia, as the Regional Centre for the Campbell Collaboration, stands at the forefront of advancing Campbell's mission within its region. The recent exhibition at Stall 6 adeptly conveyed the imperative concept of systematic evidence uptake, shedding light on the meticulous process of data filtration for policymakers and evaluators.

With a dedicated focus on humanitarian needs and health, the centre demonstrated a comprehensive understanding through a geographical landscape model, illustrating knowledge creation and filtration across different levels. Notably, the emphasis on Systematic Review and Evidence in Gap within the data pyramid showcased a commitment to robust methodologies and evidence consolidation.

**g) Stall 7: Sonal Zaveri, & Shweta Anand Vij (CGIAR): “Social Network Analysis (SNA) to Facilitate Evaluating Quality of Science - Visualizing Evidence for 7 Research4Development (R4D) by positioning methodology”**

The stall was led by CGIAR and handled by Shweta Anand Vij and Sonal Zaveri. Social network analysis (SNA) is a useful tool for evaluating development interventions and efforts by examining social networks comprising individuals, institutions, groups, geographical sites, or even items. Networks and graph theory are used to examine social structures. They are widely utilized to analyse patterns of behaviour and connection, the flow of information, and monitor & forecast the success of treatments or initiatives.

An activity was conducted with the participants to make them understand a few concepts such as edges and centrality. The participants were divided into two groups of 4-5 participants and each member was asked to make three columns on a sheet of paper. In the first column, they were asked to list the names of people they had interacted with since yesterday regarding evaluation. In the second column, they were asked to mention their relationship with those people. In the third column, they mentioned the names of people who associated them with the concept of evaluation and this conference. After this, all group members were given an A3 sheet on which they wrote the names of all the people they had interacted with. They were then asked to identify the common people they had interacted with. After this, each participant drew arrows from their name to the people they had interacted with. At the end, a web of networks was created illustrating the concept of networking and how it takes place. In conclusion, the stall focused on social networking. It illustrated how we engage in social networks and how we can enable ourselves to become part of these networks.



**h) Stall 8: Saumya Gupta, Franklin Paul Anand, Nikita Khanna, Angelina Jenifer (Restless Development India): “Youth-led Research Methodology”**

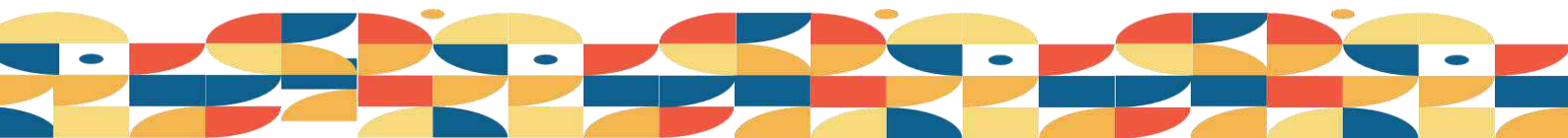
The stall aimed to showcase a unique research approach where youth from communities are actively involved in every step of the research process. The methodology emphasized six key steps which included- Setting the frame, Designing the questions, Collecting the data, Analyzing the findings, conducting validation exercises, and Conveying conversation for action. A distinctive feature of the methodology is the active involvement of youth from the community in each research step. Through training and capacity-building initiatives, youth are empowered to lead the research process. While the age criteria typically range from 18 to 29, it may vary based on context. The stall emphasized the importance of youth participation and highlighted their role as “Action Researchers.”

They started with an interactive activity where participants were asked to identify steps of research where youth involvement was maximized. The results indicated that youth were predominantly engaged in writing questions and collecting data. Subsequently, the discussion delved into the methodology’s application, with a focus on the “Youth Climate Action Lab” project in Bangalore. This project exemplified how youth-led research can address pressing issues like climate change. During the discussion, the audience engaged with queries regarding the project model, its primary goals, strategies for involving marginalized communities, criteria for selecting youth participants, and plans for sustainability. At the end, they asked the participants to suggest any changes to the research methodology.

Overall, the stall on “Youth-Led Research Methodology” by Restless Development provided valuable insights into an innovative approach to research. By involving youth from communities in all stages of the research process, the methodology not only ensures representation but also fosters meaningful youth participation and empowerment. The interactive activity and project examples effectively demonstrated the methodology’s effectiveness and potential for creating positive change. The stall served as a platform for dialogue, learning, and inspiration for all attendees.

**i) Stall 9: Madri Jansen van Rensburg (Resilience Analysis Consulting, South Africa): “Participatory Sensemaking Using Visual Maps”**

The stall was led by Ms. Madri, who emphasized participation beyond data collection by using visual methods to make sense of data. The session was conducted in four ways and by using four different types of participatory methods including - Divide the sand glass, Living Tree Division, Ginger Bread Man Division, 3-Pillars of House Division 4 House. These techniques were employed to engage attendees in the session, encouraging them to actively participate by expressing their views on what they deemed essential in participatory methods and community engagement. Further sticky notes were provided to the audience to jot down their thoughts and affix them onto charts displayed on the board. Afterward, stickers were distributed to invite participants to further indicate the aspects they considered pivotal in community participation by



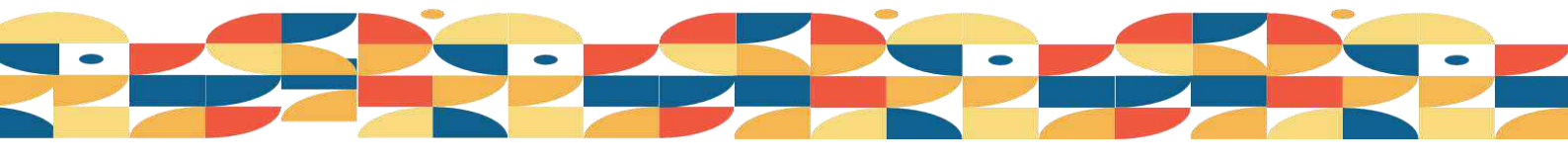


placing them on the board in alignment with their priorities. The audience was highly engaged and actively participating. Also, a key-chain was given as an incentive which increased the engagement of the audience.

**j) Stall 10: Alisa Ray (South Africa): “The Use of Art Cards Generate In-depth Conversations”**

The stall was led by Ms. Alisa Ray who is an art therapist from Johannesburg South Africa. She works with diverse communities in Johannesburg. She brings the concept of free association to the innovation bazaar. Participants experienced how to use the cards to generate concepts related to the conference around the themes of responsiveness, adaptiveness, and future-proofing. This presentation/stall on the use of abstract art cards adopted the format of participative interaction. The people had to sit together in groups (5-6 members) and select a card from the random set of art cards spread on the ground. A sticky note of the colour (neon, orange, and pink) was attached to the back of each card. The participants had to reflect on the card and write why they chose the card, and what came to their mind after seeing the visual on the card. The host took out some words from the theme “The Shifting Sands in Evaluation: Need for Responsive, Adaptive and Future proof approaches” to fit in the context of the activity to relate it more with the evaluation process. After the participants wrote down all the emotions and keywords, the host asked them to relate them with the three words according to the colour of their sticky notes. The outcome of the activity came out to be a collective quest for peace in the future and a lack of time to reflect on the past. For Responsiveness, the most prominent thoughts were accepting the past making yourself strong throughout the journey, and overcoming your fears. For Adaptability, what came out was one should not give up and go with the flow, remain positive, and try to tackle the overlapping emotions of our modern hectic lives. For the future, the words were peace, calm, evolved, full of opportunities, spreading happiness, and colourful.

Overall, this activity can help to bring out the current emotions of people, make them reflect, and have an overview of the future they want for themselves and the world. Most importantly it will also help them to relate their emotions to the present state of their lives. Further, it can be used as an ice-breaking/ rapport formation activity with different stakeholders as it aims to put people at ease so that they open up more in the subsequent process and it's easier for them to respond openly. It helps individuals feel that they and their feelings are important.



## ANNEX III

### Coordination and Rapporteurs

#### Coordinators and facilitators from ISST

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#### Coordination from ECOI

Mridula Kapil Bhargava

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