







# **Evaluation and Civil Society**

Stakeholders' perspectives on National Evaluation Capacity Development





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This is the first volume of a proposed series of publications on Evaluation and Civil Society. It should be read together with the forthcoming second volume "Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation: Learning from Africa, Americas, Asia, Australasia, Europe and Middle East." It will include case studies that illustrate how the concepts described in this first volume are being implemented by many regional and national Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation.

## **Evaluation and Civil Society**

### Stakeholders' perspectives on National Evaluation Capacity Development

*Editors* Marco Segone and Jim Rugh

### Authors

Tessie Tzavaras Catsambas	Claudia Maldonado Trujillo
Soma De Silva	Riitta Oksanen
Diva Dhar	Ximena
John Floretta	Fernandez Ordonez
Cristina	Stephen Porter
Galíndez Hernández	Jim Rugh
Caroline Heider	Belen Sanz Luque
Megan Kennedy-Chouane	Murray Saunders
Nidhi Khattri	Marco Segone
Colin Kirk	Inga Sniukaite

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Riitta Oksanen, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finland, and Chair, OECD/DAC/EVALNET Task Force on Evaluation Capacity Development; Soma de Silva, President, IOCE, and Co-chair EvalPartners; Belen Sanz, Chair, UNEG, and Head, Evaluation Office, UN Women
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### HERE IS A QUICK GLANCE AT THE BOOK'S KEY MESSAGES

- National ownership and leadership are overarching factors for ensuring relevant development outcomes
- National Evaluation Capacities should be seen as integral parts of good governance
- There is a need to create synergies based on a shared framework for National Evaluation Capacity Development
- The shared framework for National Evaluation Capacity Development is based on a systems approach, underlining the importance of strengthening both demand and supply capacities for equity-focused and gender-responsive evaluation at three levels: enabling environment, institutional capacities and individual capacities
- EvalPartners is an international collaborative partnership to strengthen civil society's evaluation capacities to meaningfully contribute to equity-focused and genderresponsive enhanced evaluation policies and systems
- There is a growing recognition of the roles of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in general, and Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs) in particular in National Evaluation Capacity Development
- In addition to national governments and CSOs, different stakeholders within the international community can play helpful roles in supporting National Evaluation Capacities. For example:

### The United Nation Evaluation Group (UNEG) should:

 contribute to strengthening evaluation enabling environments by acting as a "neutral broker" facilitating dialogue between the demand and supply side of evaluations for evidence-based policy-making;

- act as a "knowledge broker" facilitating «South-South» generation and sharing of good practices and lessons learned on equity-focused and gender-responsive countryled evaluation systems;
- coordinate initiatives with key partners to promote countryled evaluation systems;
- promote the professionalization of evaluation.

# *The OECD DAC Network on Development Evaluation should:*

- promote international evaluation standards and guidance;
- implement targeted capacity building interventions;
- share evaluation plans;
- involve partner country stakeholders in evaluations, and
- fund specific ECD activities.

# The CLEAR (Centers for Learning on Evaluation and Results), a multilateral partnership programme, should:

- support a network of partner countries' academic institutions, to harness local innovation, knowledge, and experience;
- integrate this with international know-how in order to develop the capacity of government and civil society.





# Prefaces and Editorial

#### Prefaces

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#### Editorial

### INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR COOPERATION IN EVALUATION

This book breaks new ground. It brings to our attention the potential evaluation has to strengthen the capacity of civil society in social and economic development, policy and decision-making. While there are many reasons for the growth in this potential, an important consideration is the increasingly acute requirement that the large investment (in material and human terms) in social and economic change can be trusted as worthwhile in terms of effectiveness and equity. We can call this broadly a social and political imperative for evaluation.

It is here that a robust and legitimate set of evaluative practices can play a role. In this sense, evaluative practice can be understood as a response to the need to build social capital in the processes, protocols and procedures associated with decisions on development. Some policy domains are slippery, ambiguous and unformed, relying on enabling networks, collaborations and partnerships. Increasingly, evaluation is being understood as part of the process by which 'policy learning' or institutional growth and development might be encouraged.

This helps to explain the accelerated growth in the last two decades of Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs) as examples of civil society organisations, and the need to support and develop their capacity. There are of course many definitions of civil society organizations but there is some consensus that it refers to the wide array of non-governmental and not-for-profit organizations that have a presence in public life, expressing the interests and values of their members or others, based on ethical, cultural, political, scientific, religious or philanthropic considerations.

The number of VOPEs has increased from about 15 in the mid-1990s to over one hundred and twenty- five. This growth is not confined to numbers. It is also in the scope of activities and areas of influence of VOPEs. The focus of VOPEs

has evolved to a more active engagement with governments, policy dialogues, and even coordination of international and regional-level work. This has raised the bar of expectation of VOPEs. It requires an increasingly sophisticated understanding of the subtleties of the political process, its intersection with evaluative practice and approaches and how evaluations might be used to positive effect. Yet, a large number of VOPEs are at the early stages of development and are facing major challenges in establishing themselves firmly and achieving adequate capacities to make significant contributions to, and influence on, the way national evaluation systems are developing.

In addition to the growth of VOPEs, there have also been some significant positive changes in the contexts and opportunities within governments and international organizations. Governments have increasingly recognized the need for evaluation in national development processes and acknowledged the potential role of VOPEs in contributing to the evaluation systems.

International organizations have recognized that civil society organizations can and should play a role in national development processes as articulated in the Accra – and the Declaration of the Busan High- level Forum. For VOPEs these developments offer a unique opportunity to examine their own potential for partnering by enabling the use of evaluation to achieve development results effectively, efficiently and equitably.

Partnerships and networks form important strategies to strengthen VOPEs. Through partnerships and networks, the individual VOPEs benefit from learning from good practices, mutual cooperation and knowledge exchange opportunities. Peer to peer collaborations, for example, offer opportunities to expand the scope and spheres of influence of individual VOPEs through south-south and north-south partnerships. What individual VOPEs have worked hard to achieve in isolation becomes easier to achieve through partnerships that are supported internationally, not only by other VOPEs but also by development organizations such as the UN, and bilateral and multi-lateral development partners. EvalPartners is the articulation of a forum for such partnerships. It is intended to bring together the VOPEs, leaders in evaluation, academic institutions and international development partners to promote partnerships. It is an effort to bring about synergies in evaluation practice that can promote good practice internationally and to harmonize the efforts of VOPEs. In this way partnering, involving a range of specific activities, is an example of a theory of change. Its aim is to bring about the increased effectiveness of VOPEs to contribute to evaluation in national, regional and global contexts.

We are very pleased that the IOCE is a strategic partner in EvalPartners along with UNICEF, other UN Agencies, development partners and academia. It is a great encouragement to see the extensive and whole-hearted participation of VOPEs from both north and south in this initiative. This publication brings together the current thinking on the importance of evaluation in development processes, and the significant role that national and regional VOPEs can play, along with international development partners. The next volume will carry case studies of a large number of VOPEs which serve as a cross-sectional mapping of the VOPE situation at this point in time, which will also be a significant land mark to look back on as future leaders take stock of evaluation's achievements and challenges.

Our sincere hope is that the information, ideas and reflections of a wide variety of leaders in the field of evaluation, brought together in these publications, will be optimally utilized both for purposes of learning and of implementing strategies, to expand the spheres of influence of evaluation to achieve development results for citizens.

> Soma De Silva, President

Murray Saunders, Vice President

IOCE

IOCE

### UNICEF

In the past few years, discussions about development issues have shifted radically from a focus on development assistance towards wider concerns about what is required to successfully achieve strong and sustainable development results. We are currently seeing the rise of broad global alliances and partnerships bringing together a wide range of stakeholders pushing for more effective development and more equitable development results. The 4th High Level Forum held in Busan at the end of 2011 helped to crystallize the move beyond aid effectiveness towards a concern for greater development effectiveness, and for the first time recognized civil society representatives as formal partners in such a forum. Such recognition is long overdue, as it brings to the table groups who are perhaps closest to the day to day experience of the ordinary citizens whom, directly or indirectly, development efforts are intended to reach. The delegates meeting in Busan acknowledged that "country-led development" requires the engagement of civil society and private sector partners as well as the national authorities, and that broad-based ownership lends development efforts greater momentum and durability.

It was agreed at Busan that effective development requires not only a strong focus on results, but also arrangements which emphasize ownership and accountability – including accountability to the intended beneficiaries of development co-operation. This in turn requires better management, including increased attention to monitoring, evaluation and communication of development results. Greater transparency also strengthens development efforts and not only helps to ensure that assistance reaches those who are supposed to benefit, but also provides increased opportunities for citizens to participate actively in the development processes that affect their lives.

The present volume on "Evaluation and Civil Society" therefore comes at a very timely moment, as more inclusive development structures take shape, as opportunities emerge for citizens to engage actively in development processes, and as

accountability to those citizens is more widely accepted as a key element in effective and equitable development. The papers in this book explore many facets of the role civil society can play, through evaluation activities, to push for policies and programmes that truly serve ordinary people, their families and their communities, not least in meeting the needs of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in society. Evaluation contributes towards public accountability: it provides an avenue for challenging and changing development practices which do not adequately serve the needs, rights and aspirations of all. The focus on evaluation also affords opportunities to learn from experience and to improve development policies and programmes so that better results can be achieved, and achieved more efficiently. In the hands of civil society, evaluation therefore carries the potential to become a powerful tool for change, improvement and public accountability.

However, in most countries there is some way to go before professional evaluators are able to organize themselves into effective associations to promote evaluation activities and use evaluation in ways which can influence decision-makers. Yet the case studies in the next volume demonstrate that headway is already being made in this direction, with the support of a range of international institutions. These books helpfully provide not only an informative "state of the art" snapshot but also inspiration and examples for further efforts in this area by all involved.

I believe that we are on the point of seeing rapid progress in the development of associations of professional evaluators around the globe, poised to make a constructive contribution to the new development patterns which are emerging. These volumes serve as a milestone and as a guide on this exciting journey.

> Colin Kirk, Director Evaluation Office, UNICEF

## INDEPENDENT EVALUATION GROUP, WORLD BANK

Evaluation is essential to progress. We all evaluate the individual choices we make to determine whether they were right or whether corrective action is needed.

The development community, among many others, has formalized this process: evaluation professionals engage in systematic assessments of projects, strategies, and policies. They have done so through a variety of methods that have increasingly taken on a more participatory approach, such as asking for feedback from stakeholders – both those who should be benefiting and those who do not, through focus group discussions and participatory methods. As this volume indicates: there is a further step to go, namely in fostering evaluation capacities that recognize the important role of civil society.

Communities, when empowered to evaluate and determine the value of an intervention, take corrective action when and as soon as necessary, and report back on the things that do work and those that do not. They are powerful allies in the evaluators' quest to attain learning and accountability and therefore greater development effectiveness. Likewise, evaluation associations that bring together professional evaluators to advance the profession in a country, region, or globally, have become essential parts of the evaluation landscape and have established a platform to advocate for the use of evidence in decision-making. Some such associations have existed for a long time, others have had exciting histories of rapid development and challenges that have set them back. The need for these professional associations will continue to grow as much as the evaluation profession.

The Independent Evaluation Group (IEG), which I lead, has been supporting evaluation capacity development efforts for as long as I have been an evaluator. Early work included working with governments to develop skills and knowledge, developing materials that could be easily shared, and providing technical assistance. To increase training in development evaluation, IEG founded the International Program for Development Evaluation Training (IPDET). IEG is also the home of the CLEAR (Centers for Learning on Evaluation and Results) initiative, for which you will see a chapter in this book. CLEAR works through a network of professional institutions to increase and systematize evaluation training for governments, the private sector, and civil society. Together with the United Kingdom's Department for International Development and the United Nations Development Programme, IEG sponsored the founding of the International Development Evaluation Association (IDEAS), which is a global association of evaluators, of which I am a lifetime member.

There are many other initiatives, which have brought together a number of evaluators from multilateral banks and United Nations organizations, bilateral agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and committed individuals, to share information and increase the synergy between what each of us is trying to achieve: a stronger evaluation profession. This book contributes further to the necessary exchange of information and sharing of knowledge.

> Caroline Heider, Director-General and Senior Vice-President

Independent Evaluation Group, World Bank

### MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, FINLAND, AND EVALUATION CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT TASK, OECD/DAC EVALNET

I write the preface to this publication with pleasure and enthusiasm. Evaluation capacity development has been one of the key pillars in Finland's development evaluation policy since 2011. Setting evaluation capacity development as a priority at policy level has given us the mandate to dedicate the necessary resources and to allocate funding for engagement in this important area. The strategy that Finland has selected is to work in partnership with other institutions that similarly prioritise evaluation capacity development for stronger national evaluations systems. By combining our resources and efforts with others we aim for greater impact from the Finnish contribution, compared to what could be achieved through bilateral activities. Working together brings with it the possibility of synergies and comprehensive responses to the capacity development needs of our partners. The EvalPartners community has provided a framework for doing this, corresponding with our strategic priorities.

Another important reference group for us is the Evaluation Capacity Development Task Team of the OECD/DAC evaluation network. Finland is currently chairing the Task Team that works on good practice for donors in supporting evaluation capacity development.

Why do we think that evaluation capacity in general and evaluation capacity of civil society in particular, is important? Finland's 2012 development policy puts increasing emphasis on democratic processes, accountability, transparency and openness. We see support to national evaluation systems as an important part of this commitment. The public sector and civil society both have key roles in demanding and supplying evidence for policy design and implementation. Furthermore, Finland promotes the principles of effective development cooperation. We have taken important steps in aligning our support to the priorities and management systems of our partners. Alignment of evaluation practices, however, seems to be lagging behind, and is still too often donor-driven. Evaluation capacity and functional national evaluation systems are the basis for progress in this area.

This book is a welcome contribution to the discourse on evaluation capacity development but also to the practical implementation. It adds value particularly in addressing the roles and cooperation of the public and civil society actors and the implications of this interplay for capacity development. It also includes the perspective of the international community reflecting a strong commitment to continued cooperation for evaluation capacity development.

Most importantly: This and the next book let us hear from the Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation. Their analysis tells us what already exists in countries, and how to best build future demand-driven cooperation for stronger national evaluation systems on that foundation. Let us listen carefully to what they tell us.

> Riitta Oksanen, Senior Evaluation Adviser, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland

Evaluation Capacity Development Task Team Chair OECD/DAC/EVALNET

### **EDITORIAL**

This publication aims to contribute to the international discussions on how different stakeholders can create synergies and partnerships to contribute to equity-focused and gender-responsive country-led evaluation systems. This book highlights in particular the strategic roles of Civil Society Organizations, notably the Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs) are playing to promote the use of evaluation to enhance evidence-based policymaking, transparency and learning; and the role of EvalPartners, the new International Evaluation Initiative to strengthen Civil Society's evaluation capacities through collaborative partnerships.

This book makes a significant contribution to these discussions by offering a number of strong contributions from senior leaders of institutions dealing with international development and evaluation. These are: UNEG, UNICEF and UN Women from the United Nations; the Independent Evaluation Group and the CLEAR centres from the World Bank; OECD/DAC Evaluation Network and the Government of Finland from the bilaterals; and the International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation (IOCE) representing the global community of VOPEs.

The book is divided into two parts. Part I presents a shared framework for National Evaluation Capacity Development (NECD), highlighting the role of Civil Society Organizations. Part II focuses on the roles different stakeholders in the international community are playing or could play.

In Part I, **Segone, Heider, Oksanen, de Silva and Sanz** introduce a systems approach to National Evaluation Capacity Development, underlining the importance of strengthening both demand and supply capacities for equity-focused and gender-responsive evaluation at three levels: enabling environment, institutional capacities and individual capacities.

**Catsambas, Segone, de Silva and Saunders** then present Eval-Partners, an international partnership to strengthen civil society's evaluation capacities in the three levels, as well as brainstorming equity-focused and gender-responsive approaches. The authors also present EvalPartners' vision, targeted outcomes and principles.

**Segone, de Silva, Saunders and Sniukaite** present the role of civil society in enhancing equity-focused and gender-responsive country-led evaluation systems. They argue that public actors have

increasingly recognized the potential benefits of working with nonpublic actors, such as Civil Society Organizations (CSO). In addition, they make the case for CSO participation, and explain the added value of partnership and collaborative relationships with civil society to achieve better equitable development results.

**Porter** argues that Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation could play an important role in sustainable learning strategies through innovation intermediation. In the context of the profession of evaluation, an innovation intermediary, which is an organization that acts as a broker in any aspect of the innovation process, works between those who undertake and support evaluation (supply) and those who require evidence for decision-making (demand). VOPEs can legitimately contribute to innovation intermediation either by taking on the role themselves or by partnering with other organizations that work in this space, such as the Regional Centers for Learning on Evaluation and Results (CLEAR).

In part II, **Segone and Sniukaite** describe how the United National Evaluation Group (UNEG) embraces the systems approach to National Evaluation Capacity Development. Within that framework, UNEG should: a) contribute to strengthening the evaluation culture by acting as a "neutral broker" facilitating dialogue between the demand and supply side of evaluations for evidence-based policymaking; b) act as a "knowledge broker" facilitating "South-South" generation and sharing of good practices and lessons learned on national evaluation systems, as well as mutual learning; c) coordinate evaluative initiatives with key partners to promote country-led evaluations and national evaluation systems; and, d) promote the professionalization of evaluation.

**Oksanen and Kennedy-Chouane** explain that the OECD DAC Network on Development Evaluation has the mandate to promote and support Evaluation Capacity Development in partner countries. The network and its members work toward this goal by: a) developing international evaluation standards and guidance; b) implementing targeted capacity building interventions; c) sharing evaluation plans and involving partner country stakeholders in evaluations; and, d) funding specific ECD activities. Members work through their own development co-operation systems, with partner governments and in collaboration with evaluation networks or civil society organisations.

Last but not least, **Khattri, Fernandez Ordonez, Porter, Galindez, Maldonado, Floretta and Dhar** explain the role of CLEAR (Centres for Learning on Evaluation and Results), a multilateral partnership programme, to address the gaps in country M&E capacity. CLEAR's goal is to strengthen partner countries' M&E capacities for results-based management to achieve development outcomes. CLEAR's immediate objective is to support a network of partner countries' academic institutions, to harness local innovation, knowledge, and experience, and to integrate this with international know-how in order to develop the capacity of government and civil society.

This is the first volume of a proposed series of publications on Evaluation and Civil Society. It should be read together with the forthcoming second volume "Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation: Learning from Africa, Americas, Asia, Australasia, Europe and Middle East." It will include case studies that illustrate how the concepts described in this first volume are being implemented by many regional and national VOPEs.

We hope this stream of work will enhance the capacity of the evaluation community to strengthen the relevance and quality of evaluations so as to better inform equitable interventions. We wish you an interesting and inspiring read.

> Marco Segone and Jim Rugh, Editors





# Part 1

## Evaluation Capacity Development, EvalPartners and Civil Society

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### TOWARDS A SHARED FRAMEWORK FOR NATIONAL EVALUATION CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT<sup>1</sup>

#### Marco Segone

UNICEF Evaluation Office, Co-chair EvalPartners, Co-chair UNEG Task Force on National Evaluation Capacity Development

#### **Caroline Heider**

Director General and Senior Vice-President, Independent Evaluation Group, World Bank

#### **Riitta Oksanen**

Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finland Chair OECD/DAC Task Force on Evaluation Capacity Development

### Soma de Silva

President, IOCE, and Co-chair EvalPartners

#### Belen Sanz

Chair, UNEG, and Head, Evaluation Office, UN Women

### Introduction

# National ownership and leadership as overarching factors for ensuring relevant development outcomes

The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness endorsed in 2005, and the 2008 Accra follow-up meeting, state that national ownership and leadership are overarching factors for ensuring good development outcomes. The implication for the evaluation function is fundamental. The principle of ownership means that partner countries should own and lead their own country-led evaluation systems, while donors and international organizations should support sustainable national evaluation capacity development. The 2012 Busan High-level forum re-affirmed the above principles, while recognizing

This article is based on: a) Segone, M. (2010). Moving from policies to results by developing capacities for country monitoring and evaluation systems. UNICEF, DevInfo, IDEAS, ILO, IOCE, UNDP, UNIFEM, WFP and World Bank, and b) Heider, C. (2011). Conceptual Framework for Developing Evaluation Capacities. Building on Good Practice. In: Influencing Change. Building Evaluation Capacity to Strengthen Governance. The World Bank.

that the international development arena has changed significantly. As a result, new modalities such as south/south and triangular cooperation, and new stakeholders such as Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), have been explicitly recognized in the Busan's "Partnership for effective development cooperation". The Busan principles are also supported by the United Nations. The UN General Assembly has requested the UN system to pursue and intensify its efforts to strengthen evaluation capacities in programme countries, taking into account national conditions and ensuring respect for national ownership, strategies and sovereignty.

# National Evaluation Capacities as part of Good Governance

As countries take greater ownership of, and leadership in, their development processes, they have also increasingly developed their systems to lead, manage and account for resources invested in these processes and results produced with them. Resultsbased budgeting and management have been part of the agenda to strengthen governance and go hand in hand with capacities for monitoring and evaluation. Evaluation capacities empower stakeholders - from national governments to CSOs - to guestion, understand and take charge of necessary changes to development processes as and when evidence indicates policies, programs and projects can be more successful, effective and efficient. Exercising evaluation in an independent, credible and useful way is essential to realize the contribution it can make to good governance, including accountability from governments to their citizens and their development partners, transparency in the use of resources and their results, and in learning from experience. Understanding how powerful evaluation can be in making informed decisions will lead to the creation of an enabling environment and demand for evaluation as an integral part of debates and decision-making processes, and will stimulate development or strengthening of evaluation systems to meet these demands.

### Strengthening existing National Evaluation Capacities

In a number of countries, public policy evaluation functions are in place (UNEG, 2011). Examples are those set up through the implementation of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, which link monitoring and evaluation systems to poverty reduction. Seventy per cent of countries in Africa have this type of set up with different institutions having the mandate for evaluation. There is a positive move towards independence of the evaluation function in several countries. A growing number of countries have included the evaluation function in the Constitution or mandated it via Acts of Parliament. In some countries the involvement of civil society is gaining momentum through dialogue and peer review mechanisms.

However, while many governments have defined evaluation functions, and put in place institutional arrangements for evaluation to deliver evidence to inform policy-making, existing capacity varies very significantly from country to country.

This means that any initiative to strengthen national evaluation capacities should recognized existing capacities and strengthen them, being sensitive to different levels of capacity, rather than stimulating new and parallel capacities.

### *The growing role of Civil Society Organizations in National Evaluation Capacity Development*

Along the lines of the recent Busan Declaration, CSOs can and should play a central role in advocating for transparency in the allocation and expenditure of public budgets; accountability for the implementation of public policies; strengthening the demand and use of evaluation to inform evidence-based policy-making; and, strengthening capacities of qualified evaluators to produce credible and useful evaluations based on national and international evaluation standards.

While National evaluation capacity is often understood as government capacity, it should be a country-based capacity, including Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation<sup>2</sup> (VOPEs), universities, think tanks and Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs). Civil Society Organizations and parliamentarians need evaluations to support their understanding of issues and participation in decision-making. This can strengthen the quality of democracy whereby informed citizens are able to influence decisionmaking.

In the last decades, members of both civil society and the private sector have been playing increasingly central and active roles in promoting greater accountability for public actions through evaluation.

<sup>2</sup> Since a number of different names are used to describe these groups, the term Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs) has been introduced. VOPEs include formally constituted associations or societies, as well as informal networks and communities of practice. Their memberships are open not only to those who conduct evaluations but also to those who commission and utilize evaluations and those engaged in building the evaluation field.

National and regional VOPEs grew from 15 in the 1990s to more than 150 nowadays<sup>3</sup>.

In this context, 25 organizations launched EvalPartners<sup>4</sup>, an international collaborative initiative to contribute to the enhancement of the capacities of CSOs – notably VOPEs – to influence policy-makers, public opinion and other key stakeholders so that public policies are evidence-based, equitable and effective. The main objective is to enhance the capacities of CSOs/VOPEs to engage in a strategic and meaningful manner in national evaluation processes, to be able to influence country-led evaluation systems.

### *Towards a shared framework for National Evaluation Capacity Development*

In addition to Governments, VOPEs and NGOs at country level, a multitude of stakeholders is currently engaged in supporting National Evaluation Capacity Development: the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) and its members, the Evaluation Cooperation Group (ECG) of the International Financial Institutions (IFIs). the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the regional CLEAR centres, among others. However, in certain cases different actors have not coordinated their support and initiatives, making it difficult to create positive synergies and efficiency. In extreme cases, duplications and parallel processes are supported by different agencies. Therefore, there is felt to be a need to create synergies based on a shared framework for National Evaluation Capacity Development. This will help to guide development activities in a comprehensive way to strengthen national evaluation systems as a whole, in addition to providing guidance on good practice, based on evidence of what works and why.

# Defining capacity and evaluation capacity development

The United Nations Development Group (UNDG) defines *capacity* as the ability of individuals, institutions and societies to perform functions, solve problems, and set and achieve objectives in a sustainable manner, and capacity development as the process through

<sup>3</sup> IOCE maintains a database of VOPEs on its www.IOCE.net website, including an interactive world map showing the locations of and contact information for national and regional VOPEs.

<sup>4</sup> Please visit http://www.mymande.org/evalpartners for additional information.

which the abilities to do so are obtained, strengthened, adapted and maintained over time.

For OECD, *evaluation capacities* are the ability of people and organisations to define and achieve their evaluation objectives (OECD, 2006). Capacity involves three interdependent levels: individual, organisational and the enabling environment. These interrelated capacities function together to demand, supply and use evaluation. Evaluation capacities include the power to set the evaluation agenda and to determine what is evaluated and what questions are asked (OECD, 2011). Further, capacities include the ability not just to produce evaluations but also to manage evaluation processes and effectively use evaluation results to influence policy and programme decisions. It is useful to distinguish between the capacity to manage evaluations and the capacity to conduct them, as both are necessary (Feinstein, 2009).

*Evaluation Capacity Development* (ECD) is understood as the process of unleashing, strengthening and maintaining evaluation capacities. Capacity development is a long-term, endogenous change process that takes place in the context of on-going partner and donor efforts to strengthen related systems of management, governance, accountability and learning, to improve development effectiveness. The best capacity development approaches are flexible, adapted and sustainable.

Strengthening evaluation capacities is not an end goal in itself, but should be seen, rather, as a means to support more effective development activities and informed policy-making. Evaluation implicates actors across the entire range of stakeholders involved in and affected by public policy: governments, intended beneficiaries, civil society, and the general public.

### A systems approach to National Evaluation Capacity Development

National Evaluation Capacity Development (NECD) is a complex field in which several stakeholders have different roles to play based on their respective value added. This complexity encourages the use of a systems approach to NECD. This means that it is necessary not only to look at actors at different levels and across sectors but also, crucially, to look at the network of relationships or connections between them. Such a viewpoint illustrates the fact that weaknesses in capacity at any level or with any key actor will affect the capacity of the whole system to deal with a problem in order to achieve a goal. Therefore, a systems approach to NECD is needed.

# Individual and institutional evaluation capacities enabled by a supportive environment

In the past, evaluation capacity development focused on strengthening the capacities of individuals' knowledge and skills. However, it is by now clear that capacity development should be based on a systemic approach that takes into account three major levels (individual, institutional, and external enabling environment), and two components (demand and supply<sup>5</sup>) tailored to the specific context of each country.

# Figure 1: a systemic and integrated approach to National Evaluation Capacities Development



<sup>5 &</sup>quot;Supply" refers to the capability of professional evaluators to provide sound and trustworthy evaluative evidence; "Demand" refers to the capability by policy makers and senior managers to request sound and trustworthy evaluative evidence with the aim of using it in strategic decision-making processes

### Enabling Environment: the enabling environment provides a context that fosters (or binders) the performance and results of individuals and organizations

- Strong evaluation culture:
  - evaluative (critical) thinking;
  - protective environment;
  - managers and other decision-makers value and use evaluation.
- Public administration committed to transparency and managing for results and accountability, through results-based public budgeting and evidence-based policy-making.
- Political will to institutionalize evaluation.
- Existence of adequate information and statistical systems.
- Legislation and/or policies to institutionalize monitoring and evaluation systems.
- Duty bearers, i.e. Governments and national authorities, have capacity and willingness to be accountable for results.
- Rights holders i.e. citizens and CSO, have capacity to demand that policy and programmes are monitored and evaluated.
- National VOPE exists, has the necessary capacities, is recognized and given a consultative role.
- National evaluation standards and norms developed and implemented.

### Institutional Level: the institutional framework in which individuals work needs to provide a system and structures to perform and attain results individually as well as collectively as an organization

- Evaluation policy exits and is implemented.
- An evaluation unit with a clearly defined role, responsibilities and an independent place in the institutional structure exists and is functional.
- Quality Assurance system exists and is functional.
- Independence of funding for evaluations.
- Adequate (number & expertise) staffing of the evaluation function.
- System to plan, undertake and report evaluation findings in an independent, credible and useful way exists.
- System to establish a formal management response to the recommendations of evaluations feeding back to policies and programmes, follow-up of implementation, exists.

- Open dissemination of evaluation results.
- Knowledge management systems in support of the evaluation function exists and is used.
- Technical competence for conducting evaluations exist.

### Individual Level: the individual whose knowledge, skills and competences are essential to perform task and manage processes and relationships

- Senior management capacity to:
  - strategically plan evaluations;
  - assure the development of relevant and appropriate Terms of Reference for evaluations;
  - manage evaluation for independence and credibility;
  - promote the use of evaluation findings;
  - follow up recommendations.
- At mid-management level, understanding of the role of evaluation as a tool for effectively achieving development results.
- Identify and support leaders or natural champions.
- Behavioral independence and professional competences of those who manage and/ or conduct evaluations.
- Promote capacity development and involvement of a growing number of evaluators.

Source: Adapted from Segone, 2010, Moving from policies to results by developing national capacities for countryled monitoring and evaluation systems.

The enabling environment for evaluation is determined by a culture of learning and accountability, meaning the degree to which information is sought about past performance, the extent to which there is a drive to continuously improve, and to be responsible or accountable for actions taken, resources spent, and results achieved. Such culture is embedded in tacit norms of behavior, the understanding of what can and should – or should not – be done, in many cases behaviors being role-modeled by leaders. Through a set of values and attitudes supporting evaluative (critical) thinking within an organization, individuals are more self-directed learners and use information to act; to take higher risks but, also to develop a greater sense of personal accountability and responsibility; and, to consult, coach, and support each other more. In this context,

organizations with a culture of evaluation are able to develop innovative ideas and strategies: change more guickly according to variations in the external environment; and, increase efficiency and effectiveness by systematically using lessons learned to improve programmes and policies. There is less direction from top management and a much more positive attitude and self-accountability at all organizational levels. An organization with a culture of evaluation has an effective, structured and accepted use of evaluation to support change and development. Managers value and use evaluation findings to test out innovation or assess progress towards expected results. These tacit norms of behaviors are, or should be codified in government legislation and/or an evaluation policy that expresses the leadership's or an organization's commitment to learning, accountability and the evaluation principles. A two-tier strategy should be put in place to strengthen the capacity of dutybearers (policy-makers) to demand and use sound evidence while developing rights-holders' (i.e. citizens, CSO, etc.) capacity to demand and to assess policy implementation, by putting in place systems and mechanisms to engage citizen groups, and to capture and utilize their feedback.

An enabling environment is also supported or created through governance structures that demand independent evaluation, be it through parliaments or governing bodies, and is further enhanced through VOPEs that set standards and strive towards greater professionalism in evaluation. Therefore, VOPEs should be supported to enable them to foster indigenous demand and supply of evaluation, including by setting national evaluation standards and norms. There are also examples of governments soliciting the advice and involvement of VOPEs in not only the formulation of evaluation policies and systems, but also in the implementation of evaluations consistent with those policies (Presidency of South Africa, 2011).

The structural independence of an evaluation function is important to set an enabling environment: by placing the evaluation function in such a way that it is not controlled by the person or function responsible for the policies, strategies or operations that are evaluated, and in a way that creates an environment that enables greater independence, credibility and utility. Ideally, the enabling environment is such that decision-makers proactively demand impartial evaluations to inform their debates and choices, which increases the usefulness of evaluations.

The *institutional framework for evaluation* ensures that a system exists to implement and safeguard the independence, credibility

and utility of evaluation within an organization. Such an institutional framework has the following characteristics:

- *Includes a system of peer review* or assurance that the evaluation function is set up to safeguard and implement the principles of independence, credibility and utility.
- Establishes safeguards to protect individual evaluators evaluators, evaluation managers, and heads of evaluation functions – when exercising their independence, including transparent and credible processes for the selection, appointment, renewal (if applicable) and termination of contract of the head of evaluation and assurances that evaluation staff do not suffer in promotion exercises.
- *Ensures a multidisciplinary team* exists in the evaluation function, or on an evaluation team, that ensures credibility of evaluation by understanding multiple dimensions of evaluation subjects and combining the necessary technical competence.
- Secures the independence of funding of evaluations, at an adequate level, to ensure that necessary evaluations are carried out and that budget holders do not exercise inappropriate influence or control over what is evaluated and how. Therefore, funding should be under the direct control of the head of the evaluation function, and should be adequate for a reasonable work programme. The adequacy of funding for evaluation can be determined through a ratio of evaluation resources (human and financial) over the total programme size (some organizations aim to allocate 1 to 3 per cent of their total budget for evaluation) or the coverage rate of evaluations (for instance, evaluating 25 per cent of the overall programme).
- Combines measures for impartial or purposive selection of evaluation subjects to ensure impartiality on the one hand and increased utility on the other by making deliberate choices linked to decision-making processes. To ensure utility, for instance of strategic or thematic evaluations, these may be chosen purposively (rather than to establish a representative sample) to link the conduct of the evaluation to the information needs and decision-making processes of those using evaluation findings. In these cases, a consultation process to determine what the most important/strategic topics are for evaluation is important to ensure various stakeholder needs are considered.

- Sets out a system to plan, undertake and report evaluation findings in an independent, credible and useful way. To increase objectivity in the planning and conduct of evaluation, systems are needed that increase the rigor, transparency and predictability of evaluation processes and products. Such systems can include more or less detailed process descriptions or guidelines for the design of evaluations, for preparatory work that needs to be conducted and reported on, and for reporting findings. The processes should have built-in steps for communication, consultation and quality assurance, and be communicated to stakeholders to enhance transparency and to secure their willingness to share information.
- Institutes measures that increase the usefulness of evaluations, including the sharing of findings and lessons that can be applied to other subjects. Evaluations should be undertaken with the intention – of stakeholders and evaluators – to use their results, and management's responses developed and implemented. The timeliness of planning and conducting evaluations and presenting their findings is equally important to ensure utility. Finally, accessibility means that evaluations are available to the public, can be retrieved (for instance through a user-friendly website), are written in ways that are understandable (clear language and limited jargon), and are distributed to a wide group of relevant stakeholders in formats appropriate to different audiences.

Even with structures and systems in place, the independence and impartiality of evaluation depends on the integrity and professionalism of *individuals* as evaluators, evaluation managers, and the head of evaluation. The profession, and its ethics, requires limiting personal biases to the extent possible. In some circumstances, external evaluators are believed to exercise greater independence than those who work in an organization, because they are less exposed to institutional or peer pressures or have not absorbed the corporate culture in an unquestioning way. However, individual or intellectual independence is dependent on the individual, who demonstrates in his/her behavior the adherence to, and practice of, the evaluation principles: avoiding conflict of interest; acting with integrity and with an independence of mind; engaging in evaluations for which they are competent; acting impartially; and, undertaking an evaluation with a clear understanding of the clients or decisionmaking process and how these need to be informed (see AEA, 2003). Many VOPEs and evaluation functions of national and international organizations have adopted codes of conduct for evalua-
tors. In addition to these, the UN Evaluation Group developed ethical guidelines (UNEG, 2005). Debates about professional standards and the accreditation of evaluators and evaluation managers have been ongoing for many years within professional forums.

### Development of national evaluation capacity

An institutional framework to institutionalize the evaluation function should be developed within the organization. This should include assistance to develop an evaluation policy, which foresees the setting-up or strengthening of a credible evaluation department, including endorsement of evaluation standards and quality assurance systems (including peer review). A diagnosis of the existing evaluation function and/or system (or, if not existing, of the preconditions to develop it), which would include functional clarity, effective human and financial resources management and a robust coordination mechanism, should be carried out to enable the crafting of a context-specific evaluation policy and system. The diagnostic would identify bottlenecks in the policy or system which could be addressed through targeted technical support with the intention of strengthening country capacity.

A good practice is to strengthen knowledge management systems in support of the evaluation function. Knowledge has traditionally been fostered at the individual level, mostly through education. However, seen from the perspective of the three levels identified above, knowledge should also be created and shared within an organization through an effective knowledge management system, and supported through an enabling environment of effective educational systems and policies.

# Figure 2: Tips for stakeholders to help reinforce an enabling environment for evaluation

### Governing bodies (Parliaments, Executive Boards, etc.)

- Be aware of the threats to independence, credibility and utility of evaluation and demand measures to safeguard these principles.
- Adopt and oversee the implementation of legislation and/or policies, which institutionalize the independence, credibility and utility of evaluation.
- Put in place effective oversight mechanisms over the quality of evaluation.
- Use evaluation findings and recommendations in national and subnational policies, programmes and legislation.

# Head of State, Ministers, Policy-makers, Chief executives officers

- Demonstrate leadership in setting a culture of learning and accountability.
- Seek and use evidence from evaluations to validate the attainment of goals and objectives and to improve performance whenever possible.
- Understand evaluation as part of good governance that aims to use public resources. effectively and efficiently to achieve the goals which governments or organizations aim to achieve.

### **Evaluation** function

- Demonstrate the value added of independent, credible and useful evaluations.
- Raise the awareness of stakeholders of the role and importance of evaluation and of the evaluation principles.
- Contribute to evaluative thinking through awareness building, dialogue, and training.
- Define and build evaluation competencies at different levels of public office.

### **VOPEs**

- Work with governments to set standards as benchmarks which can be used to convince other stakeholders of the importance of the evaluation principles and measures to safeguard them.
- Foster indigenous demand and supply of evaluation.
- Be available to advise commissioners of evaluations on the relevance of Terms
  of Reference for evaluations, including choices of appropriate designs and
  methodologies to answer key questions.
- Promote the capacity of evaluators to perform quality, credible and useful evaluations.
- Advocate for equity-focused and gender-sensitive evaluation systems.

Source: Adapted and expanded upon from Heider, 2011, Conceptual framework for developing evaluation capacities

At the individual level, a capacity development strategy should strengthen *senior management capacity to strategically plan* evaluations (and to identify the key evaluation questions); to *manage* evaluation for independence and credibility; and, to *use evaluation*.

MacKay (2007) underlines the importance of *identifying and supporting leaders or natural champions* who have the ability to influence, inspire and motivate others to design and implement effective evaluation systems. Leadership is not necessarily synonymous with a position of authority; it can also be informal and be exercised at many levels. Therefore, the evaluation capacity development strategy should, especially in the initial stages, identify and support as appropriate, national and local leaders in the public administration, in inter-governmental monitoring, and in evaluation groups and national VOPEs.

On the supply side, a capacity development strategy should enhance *behavioural independence* (independence of mind and integrity; knowledge and respect of evaluation standards; agreed evaluation processes and products) as well as *professional competences* through formal education; specialized training; professional conferences and meetings; on the job training (such as joint country-led evaluations); and, communities of practice and networking, e.g. VOPEs.

# Figure 3: Tips for stakeholders to help develop an institutional framework for evaluation

### Governing bodies (Parliaments, Executive Boards, etc.)

- Be briefed about the evaluation system so as to understand whether the institutional framework includes adequate checks and balances and to become a discerning user of evaluation reports.
- Introduce processes for the selection of the head of evaluation which ensures his/ her independence.
- Provide secure, separate and adequate funding for evaluation in the regular programme budgets.

# Head of State, Ministers, Policy-makers, Chief executives officers

- Be briefed about the evaluation system so as to understand whether the institutional framework includes adequate checks and balances, and to become a discerning user of evaluation reports.
- Establish or strengthen evaluation training at graduate and undergraduate levels to provide professional evaluators in appropriate quantities.
- Create professional evaluation positions in support of the evaluation function in government bodies.

### **Evaluation** function

- Develop and document systems for the selection, design, conduct and reporting on evaluations.
- Provide briefings on these standards to increase transparency and confidence in the process and products, and so to enhance credibility.
- Develop mechanisms to ensure lessons from evaluation are systematically shared and integrated into debates and decision-making processes.

### **VOPEs**

- Provide guidance to set professional standards and good practice standards.
- Assist the government to develop and implement professionalization, accreditation, and credentialing systems.

Source: Adapted from Heider, 2011, Conceptual framework for developing evaluation capacities

# Fostering demand for and supply of evaluation

A distinction should be made between the capacity of policy-makers/policy advisors to use evidence and the capacity of evaluation professionals to provide sound evidence. While it may be unrealistic for policy-makers/policy advisors to be competent experts in evaluation, it is both reasonable and necessary for such people to be able to understand and use evidence produced by evaluation systems in their policy and practice. Integrating evidence into practice is a central feature of policy-making processes. An increasingly necessary skill for professional policy-makers/policy advisors is to know about the different kinds of evidence available; how to gain access to it; and, how to critically appraise it. Without such knowledge and understanding it is difficult to see how a strong *demand* for evidence can be established and, hence, how to enhance its practical application.

However, it is also important to take into consideration that the design and implementation of policy reform is a political process, informed by evidence. The use of evidence in policy reform and implementation depends on the combination of capacity to provide quality and trustworthy evidence on the one hand, and the will-ingness and capacity of policy-makers to use it on the other. The extent to which evidence is used by policy-makers depends, in turn, on the policy environment.

To strengthen an enabling policy environment, policy-makers may need incentives to use evidence. These include mechanisms to increase the 'pull' for evidence, such as requiring spending bids to be supported by an analysis of the existing evidence-base, and mechanisms to facilitate evidence-use, such as integrating analytical staff at all stages of the policy implementation.

Civil society organizations, including VOPEs, should play a major role in advocating for the use of evidence in policy implementation. Think-tanks, with the support of mass media, may also make evidence available to citizens, and citizens may demand that policymakers make more use of it.

It is therefore clear that a strategy for developing national evaluation capacities should be tailored to the situation and context in which a specific country finds itself, as illustrated in figure 4 below, and detailed below:

- Vicious circle countries. Evidence is technically weak and policymakers have little capacity to make use of it. Policy decisions are mainly taken on political judgment and personal experience, which may result in poor policy design and, consequently, poor results. In this case, it is necessary to adopt measures which will simultaneously increase both the demand and supply of evidence, as well as improve the dialogue between producers and users of evidence.
- Evidence supply-constrained countries. Although evidence is technically weak, it is increasingly demanded by policy-makers. However, evidence deficiency reduces the quality of decision-making and therefore the quality of services delivered. Policy-makers are likely to resent being held to account on the basis of inadequate evidence. Therefore, the priority should be to adopt measures to increase the quantity and quality of evidence. The challenge is to strike a balance between quickly generating improvements to evidence, while laying the foundations for better performance of the country evaluation system in the long-run.
- Evidence demand-constrained countries. The quantity and quality of evidence is improving, but it is not demanded for decisionmaking because policy-makers lack the incentives and/or capacity to utilize it. Policy-makers are likely to be at the very least wary of (or may even actively dislike) having more and better evidence pushed at them when it may not support decisions they have already taken or wish to take. In this case, priority should be

# Figure 4: Capacity development framework addressing the demand as well as the supply side



Source: Adapted from Segone, 2009, Enbancing evidence-based policy-making through country-led monitoring and evaluation systems

given to the adoption of measures to increase the demand for evidence, as well as to improve the dialogue between producers and users of data.

• *Virtuous circle countries.* Evidence is technically robust and is being used increasingly for decision-making. The production of good (or at least improved) evidence is matched by its widespread (or at least increased) use in decision-making. These two processes are mutually reinforcing, resulting in better policy design and implementation, and ultimately, better development results.

The virtuous circle countries situation is the goal which should be set, since it provides a useful benchmark against which to compare the other three cases. Developing a culture of evidence-based policy-making is a slow process which may take years, but the potential rewards are worth the effort. Essential elements for sustaining a virtuous circle linking evaluation professionals to policy-makers are: strengthening the democratic process by requiring transparency and accountability in public sector decision-making, and establishing clear accounting standards and an effective regulatory framework for the private sector.

## Key principles of National Evaluation Capacity Development

The number of stakeholders and the range of capacities and capabilities discussed above illustrate the complexities of capacity development and flag the need for planning and implementation tools that are able to address complexity, something that blueprints tend not to be good at. Instead, space needs to be created for analysing capacity gaps in a participatory way, agreeing on common goals and translating them into a joint strategy. At the same time the flexibility and capability should be maintained to take up opportunities as they arise, learn from experience and change tactics, and work on various levels of capacity at the same time.

The principles of *national ownership and leadership* have to do with the realization that capacity development needs to come from within and/or have strong internal champions, whether it is when developing a national system or a function in an organization. If an idea is imposed from the outside, chances are that capacity development is not likely to succeed. The drive from within relates to the capability "to commit and engage." It includes:

- a) ownership, which manifests itself in having local or internal champions, resource allocations, and engagement. It is, however, difficult to measure, not homogenous across internal stakeholders, and not constant over time;
- b) leadership, which is important, especially for setting the culture of learning and accountability, but also must fit with the context and its culture; and
- c) collective action, motivation and commitment, meaning that capacity development will not occur if it is one person writing documents, but requires engaging various stakeholders whose capacities and capabilities will be developed.

Capacity development should therefore be underpinned by the fundamental characteristic of national ownership. Taking a capacity development strategy to scale requires linking it to national and local plans, processes, budgets and systems. To be sustained, a comprehensive capacity development response must link to, and draw from, relevant national reforms.

The above is particularly important as capacity development is about transformations and must address how best to manage change within the existing policy environment. The tendency to often look only inside an organization and to downplay the larger institutional context, in which the organization resides, has proven unsuccessful. To ensure continued political commitment and resource support, a capacity development strategy can and often must show both short and long-term gains. Experience shows that capacity traps are more often pertinent to the "soft side" of the policy environment, such as vested interests, ethic and attitudes, rather than to "hard" technical competencies.

The principle of *context-specific capacity development* means that capacity must be understood in terms of a specific cultural, social and political context. Capacity must be understood as something that exists in degrees at all levels of society: individual, household, community, institutional and national systems. Capacity can exist without outside intervention, though it may be constrained. This implies that one must first understand capacities or elements of capacity that already exist before engaging in any effort to build on or strengthen them.

"Context-specific" capacity development means that no blue-print should be applied, but high degrees of flexibility should be combined with systematic approaches to entail a recognition that capacity development, while systematic, does not (always) follow an ordered process. Instead it includes planned as well as incremental and emergent approaches. On the other hand, when trying to influence culture to become more supportive of learning and accountability, opportunities might arise at short notice, in various settings and without prior notice, and include an informal conversation with a key stakeholder. In these contexts, capacity development initiatives would be incremental and emergent in response to opportunities as they arise. Capacity development also requires recognizing the less tangible aspects of capacities and combining small and large initiatives, depending on context and opportunities. It requires finding the right balance between an operating space that allows capacities to evolve and accountability for capacity development results; a balance that is hard to attain. And finally, capacity development takes time, so it is necessary to stay the course (even through adverse times), but build quick wins into the process (to keep up motivation and build on success), and time to reflect and evaluate whether progress is being made.

The process of developing and agreeing on clear expectations in "country-specific" capacity development is in itself part of the capacity development process. Developing a common understanding of capacity weaknesses through a participatory, structured diagnostic – using tools like the conceptual framework in Figure 1 above - can serve as an analytical framework to move attention from resource gaps to recognize broader issues, and a shared vision of the needed capacities are important steps in channelling resources towards clear objectives. Very often the many actors in capacity development have tacit understandings of what capacity is needed and how its development should happen. Few of them have explicit strategies, which makes it more difficult to find a common ground and work in the same direction. A diagnosis of existing capacities is necessary to find entry points to start capacity development. This diagnosis benefits from being developed in a participatory way that develops ownership at the same time.

# Aligning with national evaluation capacity development strategies and systems

Strong national ownership and leadership are the foundation for aligning external support that leads to sustainable results. National evaluation capacity development strategies provide the starting point. When the national strategies are of high quality in terms of having clear priorities, being results-oriented and operational, they are a natural basis for cooperation and alignment. Another important indication of national commitment is the resource allocations in the institutions' budgets, and staffing for the implementation of the capacity development strategies.

Alignment also means that country systems are used when providing external support. This includes the use of the national institutions' own systems of planning, financial management, monitoring, reporting and evaluation. Country systems should be fully used when they provide reliable assessments of performance, ensure transparency and accountability of the systems, and take necessary steps to strengthen and reform the systems. Providers of external support may align their contributions to national systems fully or partially. If alignment is only partial, the decisions should be regularly reconsidered with the development of the country systems. Step-by-step progress in alignment means that efforts and results in improving country systems are appropriately acknowledged.

In some cases the biggest challenge for alignment comes from a long history of working together in an externally-led and supplydriven set-up. A recent summary of lessons learned, from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) Peer Reviews, on supporting partners to develop their capacity, calls on the DAC donors to "take partner ownership and leadership seriously". The summary concludes that instead of focusing on donors' domestic accountability and getting the job done with short term results, a change of mentality is necessary for longer term sustainable capacity development results.

# *Use of external expert inputs (technical assistance) for demand-driven evaluation capacity development*

Capacity development implies *intentionality to strengthen capacities*. For example, technical assistance may strengthen country capacities only if it is clearly oriented towards this aim, by engaging country stakeholders in the evaluation process, creating space for learning by doing (i.e. in joint country-led evaluations), and facilitating access to knowledge. Capacity development-focused technical assistance is therefore demand-driven rather than supply-driven, and it focuses on the process and outcomes rather than the inputs of technical assistance.

Guiding principles to be applied when external expert inputs (technical assistance) for evaluation capacity development are provided include:

- Technical assistance should be accountable to the national institution rather than an external stakeholder.
- The Terms of Reference of externally appointed staff should be determined by the national institution jointly with the provider of external support.
- The technical assistance should be jointly selected and managed by partners.
- Use of national and regional resources should be promoted, e.g. through South-South cooperation.



#### Figure 5: The shift in paradigm from technical assistance to a capacity development approach

Source: UNDG, 2009. A collective approach to supporting capacity development

## *Working jointly for evaluation capacity development led by national institutions*

Initiatives and institutions for national evaluation capacity development have rapidly increased both in the public sector and in civil society. There are also signs of growing interest to support these efforts. The expanding number of partnerships for evaluation capacity development brings with it the traditional challenges of coordination and promotion of joint work. It is important that national institutions exercise leadership in coordinating external support. This implies an active role for the national institutions in all decision-making, including in joint management structures with external partners. Coordination is necessary to avoid overlapping activities and to ensure a complementary approach in comprehensively supporting the evaluation system. Clear division of labour between the partners should be the objective. Working jointly with others should always be the preferred option, and carefully analysed before launching less efficient bilateral activities.

### Managing for results

Capacity development monitoring and reporting often suffer if the focus is simply on what has been done and immediately achieved. Reports on training sessions organised and numbers of people trained are familiar to all. A shift to emphasising medium and longer term results is necessary. The important thing is to report on what actually changes in individuals' knowledge, skills and will, in institutions and in the operating environment as a result of capacity development efforts. Furthermore, understanding why the selected strategies succeed or fail in causing changes, is the input that is needed for future planning. The basis for useful monitoring is in high level planning – clear and measurable objectives accompanied with baseline data. The national institutions' own results-oriented reporting and results frameworks should be used and developed, or common arrangements made among providers of external support.

### Mutual accountability

All partners should be held accountable for their commitments. Consultation and participatory approaches by institutions in planning, implementation, and assessing progress are key strategies for openness and accountability. For external partners, medium-term predictability remains a challenge. Timely, transparent, comprehensive information on external support, including finance flows, is important for national planning processes.

## Conclusions

In the past, several stakeholders worked to strengthen National Evaluation Capacities focusing on training individuals, rather than strengthening institutional capacities and an enabling environment. In addition, thanks to the changing external environment and the recognition and involvement of new stakeholders (notably CSOs, including VOPEs) and the need for better partnerships to support nationally owned and led evaluation system, the lack of a shared framework for National Evaluation Capacity development has become evident. This article is a step towards addressing this weakness, as a first step to create better networked partnership, as in the example of EvalPartners.

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## EVALPARTNERS: AN INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIP TO STRENGTHEN CIVIL SOCIETY'S EVALUATION CAPACITIES AND PROMOTE EQUITY

**Tessie Tzavaras Catsambas** 

IOCE Secretary

Marco Segone EvalPartners Co-Chair

**Soma de Silva** EvalPartners Co-Chair and IOCE President

Murray Saunders

## Introducing EvalPartners

EvalPartners<sup>1</sup> is a global initiative that promotes coordinated efforts among development funders, governments and civil society to improve civil society evaluation capacity in order to strengthen the voice of civil society in policy-making, and promote equity-focused and gender-responsive evaluations.

The operational goal of the EvalPartners Initiative is to contribute to the enhancement of the capacities of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), especially, Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs), to influence policy-makers, other key stakeholders and public opinion. This is in order that public policies and programmes are evidence-informed and support equity in development processes and results. EvalPartners expects to enhance the capacities of CSOs/VOPEs so they might engage strategically and meaningfully in national evaluation processes, to be better able to influence country-led evaluation systems.

In recent years, and in line with the Millennium Declaration, multilateral and bilateral development partners have been working collectively and individually to promote programmes that foster human rights and equity, and that are gender-responsive. The underlying

<sup>1</sup> International Evaluation Partnership Initiative to Promote Civil Society Evaluation Capacities

convergence of these social sector agendas place civil society at the centre of strategies for promoting them, as international development partners recognize the significant role that civil society can play to enable meaningful progress in social justice and equity promotion efforts. In this way, development partners have been working to build institutional capacities in civil society in general. Eval-Partners represents the widespread consensus on the importance of evaluation as one effective instrument to support development programmes to achieve equitable and gender responsive results.

Evaluation has been increasingly recognized by policy-makers and programme planners as a key component in the programme cycle that helps effective implementation and improved policy development. Evaluation is:

- i) a source of evidence for good practices, and lessons for improved programme design;
- ii) a knowledge resource of strategic intervention designs which work
- iii) a means for ensuring accountability through focused reporting; and,
- iii) a key input in advocacy strategies to make the case for important public policy decisions.

The thinking behind EvalPartners suggests that civil society should encourage and engage in evaluations that present robust evidence on social issues, thus strengthening advocacy agendas and campaigns. It is, therefore, imperative to strengthen civil society's capacity to conduct evaluations that influence policy makers and public opinion, and to use evaluation strategies that highlight social issues and give voice to those with less access to power and resources. EvalPartners argues that that evaluation capacity in civil society can become a catalyst in promoting equity-focused and gender-responsive policies and action at this time. Figure 1 presents an overview of the theory of change of EvalPartners using an adaptation of outcome mapping to emphasize the role of partners in achieving the outcomes of EvalPartners. Thus, EvalPartners is essentially an initiative of peer organizations that want to influence each other to move in coordinated action toward the ultimate outcomes of equity and gender responsiveness.

# Figure 1: High-level logic model for EvalPartners' Theory of Change

Outcomes



While EvalPartners mainly facilitates cooperation and synergies among partners at national, regional and international level, it also seeks to foster collaborations to implement the following strategic activities:

- Development of a toolkit for supporting VOPE capacity building, which will be developed by contributions of all VOPEs that are interested
- 2. Facilitate peer-to-peer collaborations among VOPEs
- 3. Expansion of the knowledge base of evaluation,
- 4. The enhancement of the knowledge management for better development results

5. Development and implementation of an Advocacy strategy to enhance an enabling environment for evaluation

# The role of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in national evaluation systems

In the last few decades, members of both civil society and the private sector have been playing increasingly central and active roles in promoting greater accountability for public actions through evaluation. The number of VOPEs grew from about 15 in the 1990s to more than 150 by 2012.<sup>2</sup> The International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation (IOCE), the association that identifies, links and supports VOPEs all over the world, was established in 2003 with the mandate to contribute to building evaluation leadership and capacity, especially in developing countries; to foster the cross-fertilization of evaluation theory and practice around the world; address international challenges in evaluation; and, to assist the evaluation profession to take a more global approach to contributing to the identification and solution of world problems.

As emphasized in the recent Busan Partnership<sup>3</sup>, CSOs can and should play a central role in advocating for transparency in the allocation and expenditure of public budgets; ensuring accountability for the implementation of public policies; strengthening the demand for the use of evaluation to inform evidence-based policy making; and, in developing the capacity of qualified evaluators to produce credible and useful evaluations based on national and international evaluation standards. For additional information on the role of CSOs in general, and VOPEs in particular, please read the article by Marco Segone, Soma de Silva, Murray Saunders and Inga Sniukaite in the next article of this book.

## The EvalPartners initiative

EvalPartners was launched in Accra, Ghana, in January 2012, under the auspices of UNICEF and the IOCE, with funding from the Government of Finland. It was met with a surge of enthusiasm evidenced in the joining of 27 members including all regional Volunteer Organizations for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs) within a very short time span of eleven months.

<sup>2</sup> See the map and database at www.IOCE.net.

<sup>3</sup> Modalities such as South-South and triangular cooperation, and new stakeholders such as Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), have been explicitly recognized in the Busan Declaration on "Partnership for effective development cooperation".

The institutional channels for EvalPartners are the IOCE and UNICEF. The IOCE represents the international, regional, and national voluntary organizations for professional evaluation—encompassing evaluation associations, societies, networks, and other forms of associations. The IOCE is a neutral umbrella organization that acts as an advocate for the evaluation profession at country level and internationally, and promotes socially-minded evaluation in government decision-making. UNICEF's role in the secretariat of EvalPartners brings independence in oversight, international experience in evaluation capacity development, executive and administrative expertise, and credibility and capacity in equity-focused evaluations.

### EvalPartners vision and targeted outcomes

EvalPartners envisions a world where there is a more equitable sharing of resources, and where national and international policies and programmes reach out to those who have less and constitute the disadvantaged in society. EvalPartners works towards this vision by collaborating with the UN, other development partners including funders, and the not-for-profit sector to build evaluation capacity in civil society, and encourage equity-focused evaluations.

The overall goal of the EvalPartners Initiative is to contribute to the enhancement of the capacities of CSOs – especially VOPEs - to influence policy-makers, other key stakeholders and public opinion so that public policies are evidence-informed and support equity in development processes and results. Figure 2 presents an overview of EvalPartners' areas of focus.

Based on the shared conceptual framework on National Evaluation Capacity Development presented by Segone, Heider, Oksanen, De Silva and Sanz in this book, EvalPartners' expected outcomes are to help VOPEs to become:

- stronger: their institutional and organizational capacities are enhanced;
- more influential: they are better able to play strategic roles in strengthening the enabling environment for evaluation within their countries, and so help to improve national evaluation systems and promote the use of evaluation evidence in developing policies geared towards effective, equitable and gender-equality responsive development results; and,
- More strategic: they are better able to develop sustainable strategies to enhance the evaluation skills, knowledge and

capacities of their members, and of evaluators more widely, to manage and conduct credible and useful evaluations.



Figure 2: Overview of EvalPartners areas of focus

### **Guiding principles**

The EvalPartners Initiative is guided by the following principles:

*Strategic partnership.* Major stakeholders (especially, Core Partners) contribute to the conceptualization and implementation of the initiative. These include global and regional VOPEs, UNEG, UNICEF and other UN agencies; and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Evaluation group, and bilateral donors. In addition, based on the Busan new Partnership for effective development cooperation, new emerging donors/middle income countries, as well as international NGOs and private foundations, are also invited.

*Innovation.* Taking advantage of the power of new technology and social media, innovative methods of engagement and democratic participation are used, including social networks, webinars and communities of practice, conducted through www.mymande.org.

*Inclusion.* While the focus of the initiative is on VOPEs, other CSOs, including universities and local training institutes engaged in

national evaluation capacity development, are also welcome, as are people interested in setting up new VOPEs in their own countries, or strengthening those already emerging.

Focus on Human rights, gender responsiveness and social equity. EvalPartners will be guided by principles of Human Rights, Gender Equality and Social Equity, with a special focus on the way evaluations work within decision-making and their connections with diverse communities.

### Governance structure

The governance of EvalPartners is in line with its principles and includes all Core Partners in an inclusive framework. The governance structure takes into account the need for the provision of space for the creativity of partners and the promotion of synergies among partners' contributions.

Based on the above principles, and taking into consideration the fact that EvalPartners is growing significantly, the EvalPartners governance structure is composed of three groups:

- Management Group (MG);
- Executive Committee (EC), also part of the MG; and,
- International Advisory Group (IAG).

The MG is the "engine" of EvalPartners that provides leadership and 'drives' the initiative. In particular, the MG:

- Prepares concrete proposals on activities for EvalPartners to implement, based on EvalPartners' vision and purpose.
- Ensures activities are implemented appropriately.
- Advises on the composition of the IAG.
- Liaise with the IAG.
- Raises funds for the initiative.
- Advises on and invites potential strategic partners to join EvalPartners.
- Facilitates the communication between EvalPartners participants and other stakeholders.

The MG is composed of representatives of founding and core partners (including IOCE Board members who's Regional VOPE has joined EvalPartners). The founding members are represented in the EC (see below). The MG may also create ad-hoc task forces to deal with specific activities (i.e. peer to peer mutual support programme; international fora; e-learning programmes), and manage them.

The EC of the MG is the body with ultimate responsibility and accountability to ensure that EvalPartners activities are aligned and consistent with EvalPartners' vision and objectives. The EC takes decisions (by agreement) on funding, major activities and any major related issues, dealing with the direction of EvalPartners. When making its decisions, the EC takes into account the advice provided by the IAG on MG proposals. The EC is composed of representatives of the Founder Partners.

The IAG provides advice, guidance and recommendations on the conceptualization and implementation of the initiative, including the proposals developed by the MG. The IAG is composed of senior representatives of the Core Partners, plus selected influential evaluators.

## Conclusion

EvalPartners is the first global initiative with the aim of promoting coordinated efforts among development funders, governments and civil society, in order to strengthen civil society evaluation capacity to play a more effective role in policy-making.

In line with the Millennium Declaration, multi-lateral and bilateral development partners have been active in promoting programmes that foster human rights and equity, and that are gender-responsive. There is recognition of the role that civil society can play in enabling progress in social justice and equity promotion efforts.

In this way, EvalPartners represents widespread consensus on the importance of evaluation as one effective tool in supporting development programmes to achieve equitable and gender-responsive results.

## THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN ENHANCING EQUITY-FOCUSED AND GENDER-RESPONSIVE COUNTRY-LED EVALUATION SYSTEMS

#### Marco Segone

UNICEF Evaluation Office, Co-chair EvalPartners, and Co-chair UNEG Task Force on National Evaluation Capacity Development

Soma de Silva

EvalPartners Co-chair, and President, IOCE

**Murray Saunders** 

Vice- President, IOCE

#### Inga Sniukaite

Deputy Head, Evaluation Office, UNWomen, and Co-chair UNEG Task Force on National Evaluation Capacity Development

'Not only do you (civil society organizations) bring to life the concept of 'We, the Peoples,' in whose name our Charter was written; you bring to us the promise that 'people power' can make the Charter work for all the world's peoples in the twenty-first century.'

UN Secretary General, Millennium Summit.

### Introduction

Important progress has been made in human development over the past decades, providing people, including the most marginalized, with improved opportunities to develop to their full potential. However, the world is also confronted with a number of pressing challenges, and new ones are evolving. Poverty and hunger continue to affect families in large numbers and threaten children's chances of survival and development. Dangerous diseases continue to spread, and millions of children are still deprived of their right to a quality education. Climate change and environmental degradation increasingly endanger human habitats, limiting the availability of fresh water and undermining efforts to improve food security. Human rights violations, instability and conflict are affecting many societies. These developments have a potentially devastating impact on sustainable and equitable human development.

The international community has been struggling to cope with these challenges. Designing effective responses requires the concerted effort of many actors, as well as specialized information and evidence on what works and what does not work, and in what contexts for equitable development results. Public donors have not been able to provide sufficient resources for tackling these problems, and the current economic crisis is likely to increase the strains on public budgets. Aid provided by members of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has fallen short of predicted rates of increase (especially if considered without debt relief), though assistance by non-DAC countries, as well as foreign direct investments and private remittances, saw a significant increase over the past decade (UNICEF, 2009).

Confronted with these pressures, and acknowledging that they cannot be resolved alone, public actors have increasingly recognized the potential benefits of working with non-public actors. Most United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, multilateral development banks and many bilateral donors have become more open to, and more proactive in, seeking cooperation with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), business actors, philanthropic foundations, and knowledge institutions. The Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 was the first United Nations conference to officially recognize the important role of actors such as women, youth, business and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and others in achieving sustainable development. The World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2002 and in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 2012, acknowledged partnerships with non-public actors as an official outcome of the meeting. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have been explicitly recognized in the Busan Outcome document on "Partnership for effective development cooperation".

World leaders at the Millennium Summit declared the need for more equitable globalization as the most pressing challenge of the new century. A reinvigorated partnership with CSOs is central to delivering the promises of the Millennium Declaration within the context of the increasingly uneven distribution of costs and benefits associated with rapid global economic integration. Given the collective power of CSOs in building social, economic and political agendas – both locally and globally – there is a clear argument that strengthening partnerships with CSOs is crucial (UNICEF, 2009). This means positioning CSOs more centrally in the social capital available to agents of change and improvement within countries. The idea of social capital is important here in that it is associated with building strong processes, systems and institutional structures for the future. The role of evaluation in governance, development and progress can be broadly understood as one in which it contributes to 'social capital' in social and economic development. The idea that underlies social capital has a long history but for our purposes we see it as the procedures, practices and connections that help a society or an organization to work effectively and fairly. Some commentators refer to social cohesion and connectedness.

Thus CSOs can be understood as a form of social capital for the future, and the challenge is in how they might contribute to strong, inclusive processes and structures. Social capital is seen as being almost a necessary condition for positive development. It is argued that a low level of social capital leads to an excessively rigid and unresponsive political system and high levels of corruption. An optimistic view suggests that formal and informal public institutions and processes require social capital in order to function healthily, with transparent and open decision-making. There is therefore an underlying concern with how CSOs might contribute to meeting and addressing the challenges we identify above.

## **Civil Society definition**

It is difficult to define civil society in a few words, because it involves diverse actors within and across countries. UNICEF understands civil society as the sphere of autonomous associations that are independent of the government and for-profit sectors and designed to advance collective interests and ideas. CSOs may be formal or informal, and they work within a broad range of political, legal, economic, social and cultural contexts. They do not represent a unified social force or a coherent set of values. They are as diverse as the people and issues around which they organize, and the structure and organized forms they take: international and national nongovernmental organizations; community-based organizations; social movements; advocacy groups; trade unions; women's groups; foundations; faith-based organizations; professional voluntary associations; kinship-based networks; youth-led organizations; ethnic and tribal associations; independent media; social networks; think tanks and research institutes (UNICEF, 2012). All these forms contribute to the social capital available for decision-makers and policymakers to strengthen and authenticate the quality of policy, social and economic development.

UNDP defines civil society as an arena of voluntary collective actions around shared interests, purposes and values distinct from families, state and profit seeking institutions. The term civil society includes the full range of formal and informal organizations that are outside the state and the market – including social movements, volunteer involving organizations, mass-based membership organizations, faith-based groups, NGOs, and community-based organizations, as well as communities and citizens acting individually and collectively (UNDP, 2010).

The Center for Civil Society Studies of the Johns Hopkins University defines a civil society organization as an entity that is: organized, i.e. institutionalized to some extent; private, i.e. institutionally separate from government; non-profit-distributing, i.e. not returning profits generated to their owners or directors; self-governing, i.e. equipped to control their own activities; and voluntary, i.e. involving some meaningful degree of voluntary participation.

# The case for civil society participation in policy-making

Over the past decades, democracy has proliferated at the national level to the point where more people, and more countries, are now more than ever before, ruled by democratically elected governments. Democratic governance, in all of its forms, has become the uncontested benchmark of political legitimacy; we could argue strongly that there are no longer any respectable alternatives (World Bank, 2005). While national governments still play a central role in articulating and representing the interests of their citizens, and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future, it can no longer be credibly argued that they are the exclusive representatives of their people. Democratic standards are becoming the benchmark against which citizens evaluate their national governments. To earn public confidence and legitimacy, governments and institutions must therefore provide opportunities for multiple actors to play a role in articulating the best interest and judgment of the public. This requires that they engage the public directly, and that they are responsive and accountable to public concerns. Moreover, the traditional view of exclusive state representation is no longer consistent with actual practice. As citizens have become more aware of how decisions made by governmental institutions can affect their lives and livelihoods, they have become increasingly assertive about influencing public decision-making. Through non-governmental organizations, social movements, and other voluntary advocacy associations, they have placed issues of pressing concern on the public agenda and have mobilized public opinion to demand that they are adequately addressed. Also when these issues have not been adequately addressed, citizens have expressed their dissatisfaction with how their governments' claims to retain the exclusive authority to articulate public interests (World Bank, 2005).

Civil society is therefore both a critical **component of, and an essential resource in** addressing a wide range of development and policy challenges. Hence, many civil society organizations have been at the forefront of advocating principles of social justice, equity and environmental conservation. Sustainable development cannot be achieved today without a robust partnership with such organizations. While external support can help, improved governance must ultimately come from within and be owned by a country and its citizens. CSOs therefore have vital roles to play as participants, legitimizers and endorsers of government policy and action, as watchdogs on the behaviour of regimes and public agencies, and as collaborators in the national development effort.

From the **human-rights perspective**, CSOs can be both rightsholders and duty-bearers. They promote civic engagement, thereby creating an environment conducive for people, individually and collectively, to develop their full potential and to be able to pursue their needs and interests, and so to lead productive lives. Human rights and human development share a common vision and a common purpose—to secure, for every human being, freedom, well-being and dignity. Human rights are an intrinsic part of development and bring principles of accountability and social justice to the process of human development. Rights-based approaches are based on the recognition that real success in tackling poverty and vulnerability requires giving the poor and vulnerable a stake, a voice and real protection in the societies where they live (UNDP, 2009).

### Box 1: Citizens and Civil Society

"The citizen is the building block of civil society. We need both good civil society and good government, and we need to create the basis for them to work together creatively to address poverty. Increasingly CSOs engage at global, national, and local levels simultaneously as they seek to influence international institutions and policy while also operating nationally and locally."

Source: Kumi Naidoo, Honorary President of CIVICUS, "Role of Civil Society in Enhancing Aid Effectiveness" (Accra High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, 2008).

Box 2: Human rights-based programming	
Defining elements of the human rights-based approach	Good programming practices essential to a human rights-based approach
Assessment and analysis take place in order to identify the human rights claims of rights- holders and the corresponding human rights obligations of duty-bearers as well as the immediate, underlying and structural causes of the non- realization of rights.	<ul><li>People are recognized as key actors in their own development, rather than passive recipients of commodities and services.</li><li>Participation is both a means and a goal.</li><li>Strategies are empowering, not disempowering.</li><li>Both outcomes and processes are monitored and evaluated.</li><li>Analysis includes all stakeholders.</li></ul>
Programmes assess the capa- city of rights-holders to claim their rights and of the duty-bea- rer to fulfill their obligations. They then develop strategies to build these capacities. Programmes monitor and eva- luate both outcomes and pro- cesses guided by human rights standards and principles. Programming is informed by the recommendations of inter- national human rights bodies and mechanism.	<ul> <li>Programmes focus on marginalized, disadvantaged and excluded groups.</li> <li>The development process is locally owned.</li> <li>Programmes support accountability of all stakeholders.</li> <li>Programmes aim to reduce disparity.</li> <li>Top-down and bottom-up approaches are used in synergy.</li> <li>Situation analysis is used to identify immediate, underlying and basic causes of development problems.</li> <li>Measurable goals and targets are important in programming.</li> <li>Strategic partnerships are developed and sustained.</li> </ul>

Source: United Nations Development Group, "The Human Rights Based Approach to Development Cooperation: Towards a Common Understanding Among the UN Agencies", UNDG, New York, 2003. **Good governance** is no longer viewed as primarily a governmental concern but one that involves governmental institutions, CSOs, citizens' movements, academia and the mass media. The emergence of civil society organizations reflects a surge in the will and capacity of people to take control of their lives. In addition, civil society participation promotes citizen action for participatory democracy and development. This will support civic engagement to:

- support democratic governance through collective citizen action for accountability, drawing on the expertise and experience of others in this arena to facilitate more productive State-citizen interactions in national processes; and
- scale-up community actions for local development and upstream impact.

Accountability and voice mechanisms that foster sustained civic engagement in national policy and budget dialogues are critical to the success of national development and poverty reduction strategies. Participatory governance through civic engagement today focuses on creating inclusive and responsive democratic institutions and increasing opportunities for the citizen's voice. While citizen or civil society-led initiatives are increasingly seen as critical for accountability and transparency, it is equally important to focus on 'both sides of the citizen-State equation' to facilitate accountability – i.e., also supporting the capacity of governments to respond to citizen demand. The success of democratic governance depends on the existence of both a robust state and a healthy and active civil society (UNDP, 2009).

Development is no longer viewed as a primarily top-down, government-driven endeavor. Rather, there is now a broad recognition that development initiatives are more likely to be sustainable, equitable and effective if they are based upon affected people's own analyses of the problems they face and the appropriate solutions. Securing effective citizen participation in decision-making is one of the main prerequisites of sustainable and equitable development. Increased public participation in decision-making advances equitable development in two important ways. First, it significantly improves development effectiveness. The World Bank has consistently found a high correlation between the extent and quality of public participation and overall public services quality (World Bank, 2005). Moreover, democratic participation and accountability have also been shown to be critical in enabling societies to avert catastrophes such as war and famines, by providing governments with the information and political incentives necessary to avoid them. Second, increasing people's ability to participate in public decision-making is also a constitutive component of development. Development is now understood to be a multidimensional challenge that is broader than alleviating income poverty. It includes improving the capacity of the poor to exercise their voice and political power to gain equitable access to resources and opportunities, and to defend their rights and interests in the political process. As the World Bank has recognized, empowering the poor to influence the decisions that will affect their lives is therefore a critical dimension of development. This requires that the poor are able to express their interests, and to impose sanctions on decision-makers that fail to respond effectively to those interests (World Bank, 2005).

### The added value of partnership and collaborative relationships with civil society to achieve better equitable development results

Including civil society within the policy-making processes can enhance the following<sup>1</sup>:

- Stronger advocacy for equitable development results. Partnerships and collaborative relationships mobilize actors to catalyze policy change. The participation of CSOs, women and youth generate broader support for specific issues and thereby increase the legitimacy and effectiveness of advocacy campaigns.
- **Transformative potential.** When CSOs get involved in the governance of public policies, including in evaluating them and using the evidence generated by evaluation to inform policy advocacy, they can make a considerable contribution to the development and transformation of societies through policy learning.
- **Innovations for equitable development results.** Partnerships and collaborative relationships often contribute to the introduction of innovative approaches to programming, monitoring and evaluation of public policies and programmes.

1

Adapted from UNICEF, 2012

- **Strengthened knowledge base.** Another crucial area for partnerships and collaborative relationships is the exchange of knowledge and expertise around evaluation's issues.
- Additional resources for equity-focused and genderresponsive country-led evaluation systems. Partnerships and collaborative relationships also play an important role in attracting financial and other resources for equity-focused and gender-responsive country-led evaluation systems by influencing the decisions of Governments regarding allocation, mobilizing additional resources from foundations and the corporate sector, and creating innovative financing mechanisms.

### *Box 3: How does civil society contribute to equitable development programmes?*

- Advocacy: Mobilizing public and political support for a particular issue.
- **Watchdog:** Monitoring government or private sector performance, and assessing the social and economic impacts.
- **Coordination:** Building cooperation and coordination with other CSOs working in a particular sector.
- **Research:** Collecting and analyzing data, often in relation to any advocacy initiative.
- **Representation:** Representing a set of stakeholders on a particular issue.
- **Technical expertise:** Providing the public with information or advice and undertaking advocacy on issues within their expertise.
- **Capacity development:** Providing support to civil society and/or government actors for technical, organizational, or professional development issues.
- Service-delivery: Implementing development projects or providing services.

Source: Adapted from UNICEF Intranet, Civil Society Partnerships, 2012

# Box 4. CSOs monitoring government commitments for women's empowerment

Women's rights organizations have a very important role in making the landmark 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (the CEDAW Convention) a key instrument of women's empowerment, through advocacy and monitoring their government's implementation of the treaty. The Convention's enforcement mechanism is based on a reporting system, which makes it imperative that NGOs understand and use the reporting mechanism to ensure government accountability both inside the country and at the United Nations. In recent years, civil society advocates of women's human rights have made big strides in their efforts to stregnthen CEDAW. A key victory is the wider recognition the CEDAW Committee now accords to the role of non-governmental organizations in monitoring compliance of the Convention. In some countries, coalitions of NGOs, political parties and the government have succeeded in activating CEDAW in domestic political activity and policy formulation.

# Guiding principles for partnership with Civil Society<sup>2</sup>

Partnership with CSOs should be guided by the following principles:

### Transparency and access to information

Transparency involves making information accessible and understandable to interested stakeholders. Transparency enables people to participate meaningfully in public decision-making by providing them with the information they need to understand, evaluate, and influence the actions of decision-makers. As such, it serves both normative and instrumental functions - it gives content to the public's right to know what their representatives are doing in their names, and it leads to better governance and decision-making. Effective transparency mechanisms not only make information available to citizens, but also ensure that this is done in ways in which the information can influence their political choices. They provide complete information about activities and options before key decisions are made, and in local languages, culturally appropriate formats, and in ways that are readily accessible and affordable. This requires both a general *presumption of disclosure*, in which information is considered to be public unless there are compelling reasons to keep it secret, and specific mechanisms to ensure that disclosure is timely and adequate.

2

Adapted from World Bank (2005)

### Inclusiveness

Inclusiveness requires that all people have the opportunity to participate in making decisions that will directly affect their lives. Inclusive participation is critical to the political legitimacy of decisionmaking. Even in democratic regimes, it is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain societal consensus around decisions reached in secret by small groups of elites – particularly when those decisions impose substantial burdens and costs on excluded groups. As a result, policy solutions are more likely to gain public acceptance when all those who are affected have a voice in developing them.

Inclusive participation improves the effectiveness and quality of decision-making in two important ways. Firstly, by expanding the pool of information available to decision-makers, it increases the likelihood that critical issues will be addressed. Secondly, decision-making processes that expose people to diverse ideas and perspectives serve an important moderating function. They help to build a culture of pluralism that dampens the tendency towards extremism that can occur when decision-makers only listen to people who see the world as they do. Proactive efforts to include marginalized stakeholders are often required to ensure that they have the opportunity to participate. This may include efforts to:

- systematically identify all those whose rights may be affected or who may bear the risks associated with the decision; and
- reach out to them and provide whatever assistance they may need to participate (e.g. translation services, travel support, etc.).

### Quality of discourse and deliberation

Decision-making processes must also allow participants to engage in meaningful deliberations about policy alternatives and objectives. They should be interactive and influential – that is, they should be structured to facilitate deliberative discussion and direct political exchange between all affected parties, and they should have a direct impact on policy outcomes. "Consultations" that seek only to extract information, or apprise stakeholders of decisions that have already been taken elsewhere, are rarely sufficient. Deliberative processes allow affected people to freely and equally express their competing interests, perspectives, and visions of the public good. All contested issues, including those that are highly complex or technical, should be open to debate. Participants should have the opportunity to make arguments and raise concerns with the

expectation that the best ideas, not the most powerful interests, will prevail, and that they will be reflected in final decisions. Ideally, the objective is to resolve differences through negotiated outcomes that do not simply aggregate pre-existing preferences, but allow for those preferences to change, and common interests to be revealed, through reasoned discourse, ethical reflection, and political bargaining. For decision-making to be based on deliberation rather than raw political power, marginalized stakeholders must be enabled to participate on an equal basis with more entrenched interests. Thus, where contested issues are highly technical, all participants should have comparable access to the expertise necessary to independently challenge the claims of other parties. Participants must also have the option to withhold their consent to an agreement if their concerns are not adequately addressed. The freedom to withhold consent can help to neutralize the profound inequities in political power and technical capacity between participants, and can help ensure that the concerns and aspirations of key participants will be accommodated.

### Fairness under rule of Law

Public governance can be potentially conflictual. Decisions about priorities, policy options, and objectives often require difficult tradeoffs between interests, and at least some groups may not be wellserved by the outcomes. The willingness of those groups to bear the costs of collective decisions depends in large measure on their having been treated fairly in the decision-making process. If they do not believe that they have been treated fairly, they will have little reason to view adverse decisions as legitimate. Fairness, then, is a necessary prerequisite for the legitimacy of participatory decision-making. Fairness requires that both the process and its substantive outcomes comport with shared principles of justice and equity. Procedural fairness requires that policies, rules and standards be developed and enforced in impartial and predictable ways, and that processes of representation, decision-making and enforcement are clear, mandatory and internally consistent. Common mechanisms to ensure procedural fairness include clear and mandatory rule-making procedures, public participation requirements, and guarantees of individual access to appeals processes and other dispute resolution mechanisms. Substantive fairness requires that the distribution of costs, benefits and risks from policy outcomes are just and equitable. Principles of substantive fairness include equal protection under law, protection for fundamental rights, and prohibition on apportioning outcomes on the basis of invidious distinctions between groups or individuals.
A clear commitment to fairness is particularly important for politically marginalized stakeholders that lack the wherewithal to defend their interests through raw political power. Fairness principles can provide these stakeholders with indispensable assurances that their concerns will be heard, their interests will be balanced equitably, and that the agreements they negotiate will be respected. To provide these assurances, however, fairness principles must be mandatory and consistently enforced. Occasional or discretionary enforcement of these principles sends a signal that fairness is only a second-order concern, and is not likely to be sufficient to induce politically vulnerable groups to voluntarily participate.

#### Accountability

Accountability implies that decision-makers must answer for their actions and, depending on the answer, be exposed to potential sanctions. Accountability mechanisms allow citizens to control the behavior of government officials and representatives to whom they have delegated public power. Effective accountability mechanisms have four core components: *transparency, justification, compliance with standards, and enforcement or sanctions. Transparency* and *justification* have been discussed in detail above. In short, they require that citizens be able to understand what public officials are doing and why. *Compliance* involves evaluating their actions against clear standards that are based on publicly accepted norms. These include both procedural standards (regarding transparency, inclusiveness, etc.) and standards for assessing outcomes (e.g., on poverty reduction, social equity, and human rights). *Enforcement i*nvolves imposing sanctions for failing to comply with those standards.

## The case for participation of Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation in designing and implementing equityfocused and gender-responsive countryled evaluation systems

National ownership and leadership are overarching factors for ensuring good development outcomes. This has been emphasized by the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness endorsed in 2005, the Accra follow-up meeting in 2008 and the Busan Outcome document I 2012. This has operational significance for the national evaluation functions with respect to the implementation of development pro-

grammes cooperation. Ownership implies that countries determine the scope, structure and implementation modalities within their own social, cultural and economic contexts. Leadership implies that countries play the lead role in their own evaluation systems ensuring that the need for evaluations, the implementation of evaluations and the utilisation of evaluations serve the needs of the national development processes. The role of donors and international organizations is to support the countries to institutionalise the capacities required to set up and sustain country owned and led evaluation systems. The 2012 Busan High-level forum re-affirmed the above principles of national ownership and leadership. The Forum also recognised the significant changes that had occurred in the international and national development contexts. The consideration of these changes has led to the explicit recognition in the Busan Outcome document on "Partnership for effective development cooperation" of the need for new modalities of cooperation, such as South-South and triangular cooperation, and new stakeholders such as Civil Society Organizations (CSOs).

The importance of ownership and leadership of countries is unequivocally supported in the UN General Assembly's request to the UN system to intensify its efforts to strengthen national evaluation capacities taking into account national conditions and ensuring respect for national ownership, strategies and sovereignty. The UN system is the collective of governments. Thus the governments, UN agencies and international development partners all agree that evaluation systems are important and that they need to be country-owned and country-led. Integral to these fundamental principles is the role of the CSOs that has emerged and continues to grow in its influence on national development processes. In the field of evaluation Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation (VOPE) are the key CSOs. Their leadership and participation in supporting the national evaluation systems has now come to be well recognised and accepted.

A key consideration in evaluation systems that have emerged with the foregoing considerations relates to the fundamental qualities of evaluation. For decades evaluation has been perceived as an externally imposed fault finding, used merely as a document with no practical utility. This situation has slowly changed as evaluation came to be used as an integral component and a valuable tool in achieving development results. Evaluations are now judged for their utility. Utility depends on the extent to which they address development issues. A fundamental requirement of development results are that they bring equitable results, not only growth. Growth without equity has been shown to result in social disharmony and other social problems. Utility also depends on the extent to which the evaluations are responsive to the needs of key different segments of the population. One major division is gender. Therefore gender-responsiveness is a requirement of an evaluation. Thus for evaluations to serve their purpose of providing credible evidence that is responsive to the needs of a people, they should help promote equity and be gender-responsive. The evaluations themselves have come to be valued when they are equity-focused and genderresponsive.

# Potential roles of Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation

Traditionally, VOPEs have played the role of technical resource in contributing to national evaluation capacities. Among the key activities of VOPEs have been training; especially short training programmes, professional development workshops and seminars. Evaluation conferences have been flagship events. They have also played advocacy roles and at times influenced the governments to adopt evaluation systems, evaluation standards and policies, facilitated access to resources, and offered their services as quality assurance mechanisms for key evaluations.

The developments discussed in the previous section can be considered to provide a broad framework for VOPEs to play a strong role in establishing and shaping national evaluation systems. Such a role could be beyond the traditional role of a technical assistance provider. A role can be carved out for being an integral member of development partners to enable development processes to achieve results that are equitable. The opportunities for this are probably unprecedented. They have been enhanced by recent developments in the international agreements on development cooperation. The development cooperation has changed. The North-South paradigm is getting supplemented by South-South development cooperation as the traditional provider-recipient relationships changed and new donors emerged. These complexities are increasingly recognised and the new actors in the South, including civil society organisations, are recognised as resources for development and partners in development cooperation.

The Busan Outcome document, which builds on the Paris Declaration and the Accra Consensus, welcomes the opportunities presented by diverse approaches to development, such as South-South cooperation, as well as the civil society organisations and private actors. It commits to work together to build on and learn from their achievements and their innovations, recognising their unique characteristics and respective merits.

In this environment of renewed commitment for partnerships with all stakeholders, VOPEs could play a very significant role in those areas of common principles and the catalytic role of development cooperation. These principles laid down in the Busan Outcome document are given below with a suggested role for VOPEs.

**Ownership of development priorities by developing countries.** VOPEs can support the evaluation systems to be country-led and tailored to country specific situations and needs. Through this an essential factor for successful partnerships is facilitated.

**Focus on results.** Development investments needs to bring sustainable impact on eradicating poverty whilst reducing inequities in line with national development agendas. VOPEs can play a very effective role here by helping to develop national capacities for results-based management and emphasising the need for integrating the evaluation function as a critical component of results basedmanagement. Facilitating and catalysing the national efforts establish, expand and sustain results-based management practices as a feasible and highly effective contribution to achievement of development results.

**Inclusive development partnerships.** Openness, trust and mutual respect and learning are core essentials for effective partnerships. Transparent practices form the basis for enhanced accountability. VOPEs could advocate for the use of evaluation as an impartial, professional means for improving accountability practices.

**Inclusive approach to evaluation design.** We argue that the voice of programme recipients should be prominent in evaluation design, on the basis that their voice will authenticate and validate the provenance of evaluation and improve and strengthen design. Their experience should be articulated faithfully by the evaluation and it is on this basis that the policy-makers and programme designers who promulgate policy, and who are being evaluated, will have the best resources on which to make judgements about their policies or programmes.

The voice of the recipients of programmes and policies can be heard in four ways:

- By involving them in identifying and using key questions, indicators or issues (a concern with participatory approaches) outlined graphically in empowerment evaluation at the 'strong' end of the participatory evaluation continuum (see Fetterman et al 1996 and its critique by Patton 1997)
- Being part of an ethically justifiable process (a concern with evaluation ethics)
- Making sure their experience is faithfully reported even under political pressure (a concern with declamatory platforms)
- Evaluation products entry into a public debate (a concern with evaluation as part of a democratic process and as a way of promoting democratic participation)

The first characteristic of this inclusive approach is authentication by simply asking the programme recipients to identify what the key questions might be that cut to the essence of a programme's effects on them. There is potential that this group's interests in the programme are embedded in the evaluation design (Saunders 2006).

In order for VOPEs to play these complementing roles there should be certain capacities in place. EvalPartners see these capacities as three fold. One is stronger institutional capacities of VOPEs. The second is the enhanced professional competencies of VOPE members. The third is an enabling environment for VOPEs to act proactively and collaboratively. VOPEs' evaluation capacity needs to be seen as part of a country-based capacity where other NGOs, academic institutions and think tanks complement the Government capacities. A step towards enhancing these capacities is to take stock of the existing situation and identify critical areas where a small enhancement in capacities could make a strategic difference. Action then needs to be taken to achieve those capacities. Partnerships and networking are effective ways of doing so.

EvalPartners is designed for the specific purpose of facilitating opportunities for such partnerships between VOPEs, governments and other stakeholders, that support evaluation such as the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG); the Evaluation Cooperation Group (ECG) of the International Financial Institutions (IFIs); and the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); among others. These partnerships are expected to minimise duplication of efforts and to create synergies, promote harmonisation and ensure that efforts are directed to yield necessary and sufficient conditions for results.

## Conclusions

Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation have increased in numbers and gained increasing recognition as strategic partners in strengthening national evaluation systems. The international commitments such as the Paris Declaration followed by the Accra Consensus and the Busan Outcome document have provided a strong framework within which VOPEs could make stronger contributions to the establishment and strengthening of national evaluation systems. Frameworks are available for more holistic and integrated contributions moving away from isolated or ad hoc interventions. Partnerships and networking can provide expanded opportunities to learn from one another and adopt more strategic approaches in positioning the VOPEs as partners along with governments and international stakeholders. While individual VOPEs are the leaders in producing this change, initiatives such as EvalPartners can catalyse the VOPEs' role in evaluation for development results.

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## MOVING BEYOND TEACHING PEOPLE TO FISH. THE ROLE OF VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL EVALUATION IN SUSTAINABLE LEARNING STRATEGIES THROUGH INNOVATION INTERMEDIATION

#### **Stephen Porter**

Acting Director, Centre for Learning on Evaluation and Results (CLEAR Anglophone Africa)

## Introduction

The context in which evaluation operates in Africa is undergoing huge change. The societal context is undergoing rapid reformulations, while new country-led monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems are emerging. These twin changes require the re-tooling of the evaluation profession in Africa, from being donor orientated to one which is context specific (Ofir et al. 2012; Porter 2012). Meanwhile Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs), which can provide a meeting place for evaluators to learn lessons about adapting to the changing context in Africa, are fragile. Many are just being (re)formed (Kenya and Uganda), while some of the older ones, for example, the South Africa Monitoring and Evaluation Association (SAMEA) and the African Evaluation Association (AfrEA) have small cushions to help them deal with crisis. These organizations need to balance their aspirations to lead learning processes on evaluation with mature recognition of their limitations as volunteer organizations in a young discipline with limited professional structures. It is argued here that the concept of innovation intermediation may help VOPEs achieve balance between their aspirations and limitations by directing them to a tangible set of strategies, which engage stakeholders from across the changing context.

The link between sustainable learning strategies on evaluation and VOPEs that support innovation, is succinctly made through the old metaphor about fishing, with a slight amendment:

If you give me a fish you have fed me for a day.

If you teach me to fish then you have fed me until the river is contaminated or the shoreline seized for 'development'.

But if you work with me to organize then whatever the challenge I can join together with my peers and we will fashion our own solution.

Source: Adapted from The Barefoot Collective (2009: 6)

In the same way if you commission and undertake an evaluation for someone, then the report often sits on the shelf. If you teach people to commission and undertake evaluations they will do so until they realize that the evaluations do not link to their context. If stakeholders who want to improve evidence-based practice are organized (in a VOPE) then they can innovate at a systems level by sharing and developing practice to meet changing contexts. In this approach learning is not an event that takes place. Rather it is a process of an organized profession developing knowledge, applying skills and demonstrating competence. Being competent is a longterm learning endeavor. Competence can be demonstrated at individual, organizational and systems levels by drawing upon a store of knowledge and skills and adapting to the specific context.

For VOPEs to support learning on evaluation that is sustainable they need to play a role in the emergence of country-led monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems. It is at the level of these systems that societal changes meet most directly with the evaluation profession. Given the young nature of these systems innovations will occur in their development. These innovations are important as they represent real time learning and adaptations. An innovation intermediary is defined by Howells (2006: 720) as an "organization or body that acts as an agent or broker in any aspect of the innovation process between two or more parties." By embracing the concept of innovation intermediation in accordance with their capacity VOPEs can help to provide organization and broker learning and dissemination of innovation processes.

The argument in this chapter reflects on the experience of the Centre for Learning on Evaluation and Results for Anglophone Africa (from herein CLEAR-AA) in working with two VOPEs in Africa. In CLEAR-AA we have found that becoming conscious of the concept of an innovation intermediary and drawing upon the associated evidence-base (see for example, Howells 2006; Klerkx and Leeuwis 2008) is usefully directing our work with VOPEs and our other partners in developing a sustainable learning agenda. This chapter takes this experience further by suggesting that VOPEs could explore innovation intermediation as a framing concept to support sustained learning strategies across boards. Being voluntary means that organizations of professional evaluators have limited capacity. Yet the conscious recognition of their role as an innovation intermediary could help to strategically frame efforts that are already being undertaken, or to direct attention to neglected strategies in the broader literature thereby inspiring different ways of working.

Although this chapter draws mainly on experience in Africa the conceptual and organizational framework may have resonance globally. For example, in reviewing the website of the American Evaluation Association (AEA) they already arguably implement a number of strategies linked to innovation intermediation, such as: brokering networks, clarifying demands and supporting processes of innovation (www.eval.org).

Supporting the analysis in this chapter is the evidence gathered by Kerkx and Leeuwis (2008) about innovation intermediaries for agricultural support services in the Netherlands. Through this discussion it is also demonstrated that the evidence gathered by Kerkx and Leeuwis is apt for reflection on the development of the field of evaluation. In presenting this chapter: first, innovation intermediation is defined; secondly, the contextual changes that are driving African evaluation are outlined; thirdly, the gaps in evaluation practice which arise from these changes are discussed; fourthly, VOPEs' role in shaping responses to these gaps by working through innovation intermediation is explored; and finally, the tensions VOPEs may face while working as an innovation intermediary are discussed.

## Innovation intermediation

In the context of the profession of evaluation, an innovation intermediary, which is an organization that acts as a broker in any aspect of the innovation process (Howells 2006: 720), works between those who undertake and support evaluation (supply) and those who require evidence for decision-making (demand). VOPEs can legitimately contribute to innovation intermediation either by taking on the role themselves or by partnering with other organizations that work in this space, such as the Regional Centers for Learning on Evaluation and Results (CLEAR). VOPEs are in a unique position in the evaluation field to promote intermediation as they can draw representatives from both supply and demand sides of evaluation into their membership and generate space to organize innovation.

VOPEs that are seeking to promote innovation intermediation will broadly target three areas of work:

- (i) deepening practice through network brokerage;
- (ii) supporting the development of a market for evidence through demand articulation; and
- (iii) promoting initiatives for contextually relevant high quality evaluation practice through innovation process management (Klerkx and Leeuwis 2008: 262 - 63). Taking on an innovation intermediation role would mean that VOPEs would consciously seek to organize themselves and work with others in a manner that is aware of these three linked interventions, beyond the life cycle of one board. Further discussion of the manner and extent to which VOPEs can take on these roles is started following discussion of the contextual changes and the gaps that the contextual challenges give rise to in evaluation practice.

# The changes defining the learning context of evaluation in Africa

There are multiple sources of change acting upon Africa. Evaluation can be of use in helping to direct these changes through the generation of salient, legitimate, and credible evidence (Clark et al. 2006). In order for the field of evaluation to strengthen its ability to produce relevant evidence, innovation in practice is required that feeds into learning processes. This chapter analyses two areas of change that are shifting the terrain in which evaluation takes place; namely, societal context and the development of country-owned M&E systems. These two changes are affecting societies across the continent and demonstrate the need for African VOPEs to think and act at the systems level in order to support sustainable learning for evaluation.

Africa's evolving societal context is the first broad area of change discussed. Africa is changing rapidly, in ways that require ongoing adaptation of evaluation practice. Within a proposal for an African Thought Leaders Forum for Evaluation and Development by Ofir, Porter, Gariba, Moore and Wally (2012: 1) it was noted that a "number of quiet, yet sometimes profound revolutions are taking place that over the next decade will significantly affect Africa's position in the world. Evaluation can help to positively shape these revolutions." Building upon this analysis the authors identify five axis of change that will shake the way evaluation can be undertaken:

- i) Politically, democratic governance has been slowly improving (EIU 2012: 9). The executive branch in African countries is increasingly being held to account through institutionalized checks and balances.
- Economically, the continent's collective GDP has quickly recovered from the dip in 2009 after growing at around 6% per year for nearly a decade. In 2011 growth was back to more than 5% in sub-Saharan Africa (World Bank 2012), although the distribution of growth remains uneven and inequitable.
- Socially, Africa has the youngest population in the world (AU 2012), and there is a growing middle class with new demands.
  Yet on this increasingly urbanized continent different forms of marginalization are becoming more visible.
- iv) Environmentally, Africa is clearly affected by climate change (Tadesse 2010). Poor access to services such as housing, water, sanitation, and energy are key drivers of poverty and are also contributors to environmental degradation.
- v) Technologically, the explosion in mobile telephone use and the significantly enhanced broadband connectivity of many countries are increasing Africans' connections to one another and to the rest of the world. Africans are front-runner in adapting technological innovations to their context as demonstrated by the world leading M-Pesa cell phone banking in Kenya.

These collective societal changes intermingle and expand the range of evaluative demands. These changes also require innovative evaluation to generate useful evidence for governmental and non-governmental programming.

The development of country owned M&E systems is the second main area of change discussed. As argued in Porter (2012), monitoring is the dominant form of measurement in the M&E equation in Africa. Historically, the demand for M&E in Africa has mainly come from the donor community and to a smaller extent the non-

governmental sector (AfrEA, 2007; Ofir et al., 2012; Porter, 2012). This demand has generally had a monitoring bias or been for evaluations conducted for donor related accountability reasons. A range of donor accountability mechanisms maintains the persistence of the bias. For example, the *Results and Accountability Building Block* (Effectiveness, 2012) that was presented at the recent Busan forum on aid effectiveness mentions monitoring five times and focuses heavily on reporting against monitoring indicators; evaluation is only mentioned once in the document.

However, there is evidence of "increasing evaluation practice and endogenous demand from African governments for country-led M&E systems" (Porter 2012: 7). The slow shift in demanding evaluation is important and potentially related to governments responding to societal changes identified above. In an M&E system, monitoring helps managers and policy-makers understand what a financial investment is producing, and whether plans are being followed. Evaluation, meanwhile, helps to establish why the level of performance is being achieved; what difference is being made; what has been learned; and, what should be done next in the implementation of a programme or policy (Porter 2012). Evaluation helps to answer deeper questions in the development of an evidence-base for programming. This means that evaluators who have previously been responding to donor-led demands for evaluation, or who have been working mainly on monitoring, need to strengthen their orientation to the emerging government and civil society demands. This also entails the development of African orientated practices that produce legitimate evidence for government systems.

These two areas of change mean that the field of evaluation needs to adapt. Specifically, these changes will mean an increase in the number of demands emanating from governments and civil society. These changes increase the heterogeneity of demand. In other words, demand for evaluation will become more diverse and differentiated. Evaluators, through the production of salient evidence, can aspire to play a critical role in ensuring that development is sound, just and sustainable in the light of these changes (Ofir et al. 2012). Sustainable learning processes need to purposefully interact with the two thrusts of change described in this section. If VOPEs are able to be supportive of learning in this emergent environment they will need to contribute to the development of an evaluation practice that is of high quality, context-sensitive and appropriate to evolving needs.

# Gaps in evaluation that arise from the contextual changes

Based upon these challenges three gaps in evaluation practice arise. These three gaps can, to a good extent, be addressed through organizations acting as innovation intermediaries. As a result the gaps provide the basis for VOPEs to identify their role in innovation intermediation. The three gaps in evaluation practice, which arise from the two challenges detailed above, are: market failure; knowledge fragmentation; and demand articulation. These gaps in practice affect sustained learning on both the supply and demand sides of evaluation. If these gaps are not addressed then differences between the supply and demand for evaluation become exacerbated, this in turn reduces the salience of evaluation in decision-making processes. Given their position VOPEs can respond to these gaps by shaping systems of interaction to promote organization and innovation in evaluation. The ongoing diagnostic work of CLEAR helped to identify these gaps in the evaluation field. For this analysis these gaps were connected with challenges for innovation identified by Klerkx and Leeuwis (2008: 261 - 62) to help shape the argument based upon an existing evidence base.

Firstly, market failure is a gap that arises in a context where there is increasing heterogeneity in the marketplace (Klerkx and Leeuwis 2008: 261-62). As well as donor driven M&E there are government, corporate and civil society demands emerging. In a market where demand is budding, incentives exist for informational asymmetry, which leads to issues with service value. George Akerloff's (1970) classic article The Market for Lemons highlights the importance of informational asymmetry in the quality of the delivery of goods and services. He uses the example of the automobile market to demonstrate that where the seller of a used car has more information than the buyer, incentives are produced to up the price and conceal defects in the car. In the same way, where an evaluator on the surface has more information on the kinds of evaluation that are possible, incentives are produced to offer lower quality services. In other words, because some of the demand is new, the demand side of evaluation does not necessarily have the background to adequately commission evaluation, meaning that lower quality evaluations become passable.

Secondly, with many new players in the field of evaluation in Africa the systems of knowledge distribution can become fragmented. Klerkx and Leeuwis (2008: 262) argue that because of "increas-

ing strategic interests, weakening institutional links and inherent cultural differences between actors, agricultural knowledge infrastructures have become more closed." For evaluation, this gap in practice is currently a warning rather than reality. Many evaluation knowledge products are either public goods or published in the public domain. For example, the McConnell foundation's primer on developmental evaluation (Gamble 2008), the resources available through websites, such as that Better Evaluation (http://www. betterevaluation.org/); the International Development Evaluation Association (IDEAS); and, the World Bank's Independent Evaluation Group (IEG), website and publications, such as the recently released Advancing Evaluation Practices in Philanthropy (SSIR 2012), and the CLEAR case studies on African Monitoring and Evaluation Systems (CLEAR 2012b). With the changes noted earlier it is possible that as the market and government systems develop there could be increased fragmentation of knowledge. Disruption of the knowledge transfer system would restrict feedback loops and limit synergistic linkages (Klerkx and Leeuwis 2008: 262), which would reduce the potential of learning from the work of others.

Finally, with new role-players demanding evaluation there are gaps in articulating their requirements. For example, in both Kenya and in South Africa the legislative as well as the executive have powers to demand evaluation. Part of the issue being worked through by new role-players, for example the South African legislature, is how to utilize these new powers and what can be reasonably requested. Nooteboom (cited in Klerkx and Leeuwis, 2008: 261) argues "'cognitive distance' between the different actors involved may cause coordination and learning problems during innovation processes." Essentially, if the actors cannot understand each other's demands then the salience, legitimacy and creditability of an evaluation will be undermined, in turn limiting the utilization of evaluation (Clark et al. 2006; Packard Foundation 2010). With this gap the field of evaluation would find it difficult to provide information on evaluation, as they would be unclear on requirements and communication channels with stakeholders.

In summary, each of these gaps for evaluation practice relates to how societal change and country-led M&E systems are affecting practice. Market failure is brought about by a limited ability of commissioners to oversee the quality of evaluation work. Knowledge systems failure arises through increasing limitations in collating increasingly varied sources of knowledge. Issues with demand articulation decrease the ability of evaluators to respond to new clients. For each of these gaps VOPEs are well placed to respond by becoming conscious of their role as innovation intermediaries. This is further discussed below.

# VOPEs role in shaping responses to these gaps through innovation intermediation

VOPEs can help to address these three gaps by supporting the organization of innovation processes between evaluation supply and demand (Figure 1 illustrates the relationships discussed in this paper). The aim of this work would be to build learning processes linked to innovations being undertaken in the evaluation field, either directly or through partners. When these learning processes work well the relationships that are brokered can exist independently of the VOPE and other partners. Working in this way would contribute towards self-regulating interaction between evaluation supply and demand. In supporting the organization of innovation processes VOPEs would take on some of the characteristics of an innovation intermediary as defined by Howells (2006: 720) in that they would have elements of:

"An organization or body that acts as an agent or broker in any aspect of the innovation process between two or more parties. Such intermediary activities include: helping to provide information about potential collaborators; brokering a transaction between two or more parties; acting as a mediator, or gobetween bodies or organizations that are already collaborating; and helping to find advice, funding and support for the innovation outcomes of such collaborations".

In developing VOPEs role to address the gaps of market failure, knowledge fragmentation, and demand articulation the framing of innovation intermediation services become useful. Specifically, three interrelated interventions adapted from Klerkx and Leeuwis (2008), are particularly pertinent in enabling improved links between supply and demand around the gaps noted above. These three interventions are: demand articulation; network brokerage and innovation process management. This section proceeds by illustrating each of these areas of intervention by drawing examples from work being conducted by CLEAR within the field of evaluation.

# Figure 1: The role of innovation intermediation in the changing field of evaluation

African M&E Context: "a number of quiet, yet sometimes profound revolutions are taking place that over the next decade will significantly affect Africa's position in the world. Evaluation can help to positively shape these revolutions." (Ofir, Porter, Gariba, Moore and Wally, 2012)



Firstly, demand articulation is important. Without clear demand it is difficult for evaluators to respond to the questions of decisionmakers. Demand articulation comprises "diagnosis and analysis of problems and articulation of (latent) needs" (Kodama, 1995; Howells, 2006; Boon et al., 2008 cited in Klerkx and Leeuwis, 2008). Working as an innovation intermediary means that VOPEs in Africa would consciously develop partnerships to help connect new role-players, for example, government evaluation units or the newly empowered legislatures, in order to develop channels to help clarify demands. Doing this has a direct market-building role by helping to create transparency in the market and enabling the VOPE to clarify the shape of demand to members. Conversations around demands with decision-makers can also help to raise their understanding of evaluation and reduce information asymmetries. Liaising on the development of evaluation standards and competencies with the Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) in South Africa has involved CLEAR in demand articulation and, to a lesser extent, the South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association (SAMEA). The DPME, although taking the lead in the development of the first draft of the competencies and standards, is engaging with SAMEA and CLEAR to refine and test them. SAMEA can play a key role in demand articulation by clarification with members, and with deepening the engagement with other partners around the standards and competencies. In this way the VOPE (SAMEA) can help to resolve imbalances in information between evaluation supply and demand by helping to mediate the demands of government and communicating them to the field of evaluation. Working in this way can help to generate a more transparent market where the terms of engagement between the buyer and sellers of evaluation are delimited.

Secondly, network brokerage is an innovation function that VOPEs can undertake. Network brokerage moves beyond implementation of conferences, which are often a large focus of VOPE activities. Vertical knowledge transfer often dominates a conference's formal agenda: people sit and they listen to an 'expert'. On the other hand, for participants, the informal agenda can be more important where peers learn from each other in a more horizontal fashion. A network brokerage role means making these kinds of informal spaces a central function of activities where evaluators come together. Recognizing a role as an innovation intermediary means exploring the development of networking functions by instigating processes for deepening practice that are self-owned and perpetuated. Examples of these types of learning processes include horizontal learning (Reeler 2005), and open space technology (Owen 2008).

Undertaking the brokerage role calls for learning focused approaches to spaces of exchange. CLEAR, in partnership with the DPME, for example, attempted to broker learning between seven African lead M&E agencies. This entailed the development of case studies prior to a learning activity where different countries met, exchanged and developed their practice (CLEAR 2012b, 2012a). The longer-term results of this activity are too early to tell. However, there is ongoing exchange between Benin, South Africa and Uganda emanating from this process. This ongoing exchange relies upon the champions in the different countries rather than CLEAR. This is the central point to these activities: The network is brokered, but not owned by CLEAR. VOPEs can play a similar role by becoming alert to the potentials of systematically opening spaces, developing mechanisms for supporting learning activities and developing partnerships for interchange, beyond vertical knowledge transfer and Internet based exchanges. Working in this way helps to create

ongoing spaces for communication, knowledge transfer and generating understanding of demands.

Finally, innovation process management entails promoting initiatives for contextually relevant high guality evaluation that bridges supply and demand. Work in this space can assist with building and disseminating a variety of contextually relevant knowledge and evaluation techniques. The process of generating contextually high quality evaluation techniques entails generating innovation processes to match supply and demand. The Thought Leadership Process for Evaluation and Development being undertaken by CLEAR and AfrEA is an example of a partnership in innovation process management. This process aims to more thoroughly unpack and put into operation the evaluation practice rooted in African development perspectives. Undertaking this process entails bringing together Africans who have worked with and between both supply and demand, and who therefore have knowledge of both development and evaluation discourses. The aim of the initial process is to define an agenda to develop informed approaches to evaluation in Africa that link to global development issues. The end product of this is the development of new intellectual materials, and new directions for the articulation of evaluation, as well as teaching and learning materials. The role of the VOPE in this process is as a partner who can identify gaps in practice, provide legitimate leadership to the initiative, bring together resources, and provide platforms for dissemination of the learning generated.

In summary, these three intervention areas provide a variety of streams through which VOPEs can seek to interact with the gaps in evaluation practice that emerge from the changing field. The examples cited are specific to the work of CLEAR in the African context. However, these approaches in different contexts may have resonance. The above analysis has touched on the contributions of VOPEs acting in the innovation intermediation role, such as, improving market transparency, deepening practice, opening spaces for communication and providing legitimate leadership. Working in this way can help build continuity in practice, which over time reduces the transaction costs of working in innovation intermediation. A range of reported contributions of innovation intermediaries have been outlined by Klerkx and Leeuwis (2008: 266-69), which expand upon the analysis, further clarifying the value add by positioning VOPEs as:

- impartial players to act as a bridge for interaction and learning;
- knowledge sources;

- brokers for sustainable learning due to their cognitive and cultural proximity with both producers and end-users;
- entry points for capacity development for both demand and supply side; and,
- entry points for innovative concepts, which are exempted from market forces and current policy agendas.

# Tensions involved in working as an innovation intermediary

It should be noted that in taking the role of an innovation intermediary a range of tensions are likely to arise in the work of VOPEs. The management of these tensions will in turn affect the extent to which sustainable learning strategies are effective. Unlike in the previous section where we could cite examples of work currently being undertaken in the role of an innovation intermediary, we do not yet have the experience to identify which of these tensions need to be given priority for VOPEs. Priority will depend on context. The analysis below attempts to draw upon related examples and anecdotal information in order to flesh-out three tensions, which have been adapted from the work of Klerkx and Leeuwis (2008: 270-71).

Firstly, stakeholders who finance VOPEs may exercise pressure to realize their objectives, which can affect the VOPEs ability to balance the expectations of demand and supply sides. Within a VOPE there is a risk that in developing partnerships, a limited range of interests could dominate its innovation and sustainable learning agendas. This could happen from the supply-side where a limited number of consultants use the VOPE to further their own financial or status interests. On the demand-side, where there are large institutional contributors, the VOPE may turn into a vehicle to articulate its interests, perhaps unwittingly. Although either of these scenarios could happen without the VOPE trying to act as an innovation intermediary, the likelihood is heightened due to the more in-depth forms of partnership that are required in these processes. A balancing act is required to identify and work with innovative partners, but not to be in reverence to their agendas. Should the VOPE become the vehicle for others then its legitimacy will suffer, thereby reducing the role it can play in organizing innovation for sustainable learning.

Secondly, work as an innovation intermediary often has invisible and non-measurable service value. The board or membership of VOPEs may not see the benefits of the efforts being undertaken as part of an innovation intermediary role. Klerkx and Leeuwis (2008: 270) observe that some "process-oriented services of innovation intermediaries, such as demand articulation and brokerage, take place in the early phases of the innovation process and are highly intangible and invisible, i.e. non-compatible with SMART criteria." This means that the aims of the activities being undertaken, even if they are intangible, should be clear to important stakeholders.

Finally, for the VOPE there are tensions in the extent to which they can take on the role of an innovative intermediary. They may not be able to meet expectations for the package of innovation services due to a mandate that is too limited. Or evaluators may perceive the VOPE as competition. Demand articulation, network brokerage or innovation process management can be done alone, but working across these three areas helps to support unique contributions (Klerkx and Leeuwis 2008: 270). VOPEs, in undertaking this strategic direction, would need to differentiate themselves from other knowledge business who could contribute similar services (such as Universities). Given that the network brokerage and the demand articulation roles are established in VOPEs, as demonstrated in the previous section, these will require less justification. However, VOPE involvement as an impartial intermediary in the innovation process is not yet so accepted or conceptualized. Unless the process is carefully managed, evaluators may see the VOPE as competing in services that they should be providing. However, as Klerkx and Leeuwis (2008: 270) argue "when no such process management is offered, lack of momentum in innovations may cause processes to peter out." VOPE's ability to instigate future orientated work is dependent upon their ability to grow partnerships that are directed at the development of services beyond current market and policy demands.

In summary, in seeking to provide innovation intermediation current evidence points towards a number of areas where tensions exist. This means that VOPEs who take on these roles need to be conscious of the issues and develop tactics to help to mitigate the tensions.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the context in which evaluation operates in Africa is undergoing huge change. VOPEs can support sustainable learning within these emerging patterns by recognizing their potential to work through partnerships as an innovation intermediary. This strategic approach helps VOPEs to work to promote sustainable learning by establishing the ground for continuity of vision and for partnerships and approaches that seek to affect the systems that define how M&E functions within a specific context. In addition, working through the concept of innovation intermediation opens a broader evidence base to guide practice by connecting with an established area of practice. VOPEs can take on the role of an innovation intermediary by working by themselves and with others in areas related to networking, the development of a market for evidence, and supporting initiatives for high quality practice that bridges supply and demand. The examples in this paper illustrate this kind of work in action. VOPEs may need to partner with another organization similar to CLEAR to help mobilize action.

Tensions exist in undertaking this role. Principally, the VOPE would need buy-in from both demand and supply and good management mechanisms for regulating relationships, as well as volunteers and some funding to undertake these activities. Evidence shows that innovation intermediaries can make contributions to sustainable learning by deepening links between evaluators, brokering interaction between supply and demand, and developing innovative concepts. In essence an innovation intermediary is about supporting the organization of others to respond to the changing system. When contexts change, whether people are fishing or evaluating, those who are organized for innovation are better able to learn and adapt.

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# Part 2

# Perspectives of the International community

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## POTENTIAL ROLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS EVALUATION GROUP IN NATIONAL EVALUATION CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT<sup>1</sup>

#### Marco Segone

Co-chair, UNEG Task Force on national Evaluation Capacity Development

#### Inga Sniukaite

Co-chair, UNEG Task Force on national Evaluation Capacity Development

## **Background and introduction**

The United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) is a professional network that brings together the units responsible for evaluation in the UN system, including the specialised agencies, funds, programmes and affiliated organizations. UNEG currently has 43 members and three observers. It aims to strengthen the objectivity, effectiveness and visibility of the evaluation function across the UN system and to advocate the importance of evaluation for learning, decision-making and accountability. UNEG provides a forum for members to establish common norms and standards for evaluation; develop methodologies addressing UN concerns; strengthen evaluation functions through peer review and information exchange; and, establish partnerships with the wider evaluation community. It also plays a role in facilitating support to member countries in building evaluation capacity at national level to better equip them to evaluate their own programmes and policies.

Within the UN system, there has been an increasing focus in recent years on the importance of well-functioning national evaluation systems to accountable and transparent public management, and the possible role of UN organizations in supporting this. The Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review presented at the 22 October 2012 General Assembly meeting, called upon the United Nations development system to "strengthen its focus on develop-

<sup>1</sup> This article is based on the document: Possible roles for UNEG in National Evaluation Capacity Development, UNEG, 2010

ing national capacities for development planning, monitoring and evaluation", recognizing that "capacity development and ownership of national development strategies are essential for the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals". In response to these resolutions, many UN organizations have been requested by their respective governing boards to support the capacity building of national evaluation systems, with central evaluation units often taking the lead.

The UNEG, responding to increasing demands for evaluation units to engage in support of national evaluation capacity development (ECD), undertook two studies. First, the "Map of existing supply and known demand for national ECD, including UN agencies involvement", which was commissioned by the Task Force for Country Level Evaluations of the United Nations Evaluation Group in 2009/2010. This study was based on a survey carried out by an independent consultant in January and February 2010, to identify and map ECD interventions by major players, including United Nations organizations, funds and programmes. The UNEG Task Force for National Evaluation Capacity Development (NECD), drawing on the results of the mapping, developed the second report: "Concept Note on possible roles for UNEG members in national evaluation capacity development", which was adopted at UNEG Annual General Meeting in 2011. This paper is based on the insights of these two studies. It analyses the institutional conditions and the context of NECD; provides the rational for the UNEG's engagement with NECD; proposes a systemic approach to NECD; identifies professional strengths and experiences of UN agencies in this area of work; and, finally proposes a number of possible roles that UNEG members could play in strengthening national evaluation capacities.

#### **UN framework conditions**

The regulations governing evaluation of UN activities date back to the Secretary General's (SG) bulletin of April 2000 (Document ST/ SBG/2000/8 of 19 April 2000). In accordance with UN resolutions, UNEG defined norms and standards for evaluations aiming at the professionalization of evaluation functions and providing guidance to the member agencies in preparing their evaluation policies. As a network of evaluation professionals representing the central evaluation units / departments of UN agencies, UNEG is translating the spirit of the General Assembly (GA) Resolution 59/250. The aim is an inter-agency intensification of information sharing on: "good practices and experience gained; results achieved; benchmarks and indicators; and monitoring and evaluation criteria concerning their capacity-building activities". This should result in the strengthening of system-wide collaboration on evaluation, harmonization and simplification of methodologies, norms and standards.

Resolution 59/250 encouraged the UN development system to strengthen its evaluation activities, focusing on development results based on the results matrix of the UNDAF and systematically using monitoring and evaluation approaches at the system-wide level and collaborative approaches to evaluation like joint evaluations. GA Resolution 62/208 reaffirmed the importance of this role and requested the UN development system to support the development of country specific frameworks aimed at enabling programme countries to design, monitor and evaluate results from national efforts to achieve development goals and strategies.

#### Development focus

There is a growing interest in results-based approaches and evidence-based policy-making in member countries around the world that has been nurtured by the broad consensus on international development goals promoted and agreed upon at major United Nations conferences and summits. These include the Millennium Declaration and Development Goals (MDGs) of 2000; the World Summit on Sustainable Development of 2002 and 2012; and, the World Summit of 2005. These and other internationally agreed development goals are the reference point for the UN system and for national governments that have adopted results-based approaches for development activities and developed evaluation policies to cope with the requirements of accountability and learning.

#### The dynamics of Evaluation Capacity Development

In many programme countries there is a growing awareness of the usefulness of good evaluations and appropriate monitoring and evaluation systems. This awareness comes from an increase in demand and in national supply, or at least a growing consensus on the need for the development of national evaluation capacity. Evaluation functions have been defined, institutions mandated to undertake evaluations to deliver evidence for planners and policy-makers. The approaches used may be very different and are often far from being perfect, however having systems in place is an important step forward and these systems and approaches must be taken into consideration and respected by any external intervention, as affirmed several times by UN resolutions.

Evaluation Capacity Development (ECD) is a dynamic and guickly changing field of work with efforts and initiatives from a multitude of stakeholders. The Paris Declaration (PD) on Aid Effectiveness, endorsed in 2005; the Accra Agenda for Action (2008); and, the Busan Outcome document (2012), alongside the UN resolutions, deliver further important frameworks for programme countries activities, as well as for their development partners. On the supply side, in addition to those of UNEG, there have been important contributions and developments in recent years from the Evaluation Cooperation Group (ECG) of the International Financial Institutions (IFIs); the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); and, the Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs) all over the world. The Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP) developed standards, norms, and principles for humanitarian assistance and promoted a common understanding of monitoring and evaluation standards in emergencies. At present ALNAP is also strengthening its role in the field of FCD.

## Rationale for UNEG and its members' engagement in Evaluation Capacity Development

National ownership and capacity development are key ingredients in development. This is also the case for ECD at national level. Programme countries need to exercise leadership in developing and implementing national development strategies, including national monitoring and evaluation systems, and 'donor' countries and agencies must respect national leadership and help strengthen the capacity that is needed to fully develop and use national evaluation systems.

#### UNEG-response to the General Assembly mandate for Evaluation Capacity Development

In response to the GA resolutions, UNEG contributed to the professionalization of the evaluation function in the UN system by elaborating a number of key documents including norms, standards, ethical guidelines and core competencies for different functions within the evaluation systems. UNEG also started exchange seminars, on evaluation for practitioners, before the UNEG AGM and developed training courses for evaluators within the UN system. The professionalization of the evaluation functions is a condition *sine qua non* for the UN system to successfully fulfill its evaluation functions, as outlined in the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Reviews (TCPR, GA resolutions 59/250 of 2004 and 62/208 of 2007). Notably, the latter requested that the "UN system pursue and intensify its efforts to strengthen evaluation capacities in programme countries", "taking into account national conditions and ensuring respect for national ownership, strategies and sovereignty".

Resolution 62/208 emphasizes the importance of a systematic use of monitoring and evaluation approaches at the system-wide level and the promotion of coordinated approaches to evaluation, as well as the need for country-level evaluation of the UNDAFs at the end of the programming cycle 'with full participation and leadership of the recipient Government'.

Exchange of experience and coordination of activities and approaches are part of the harmonization processes for improved aid effectiveness. UN agencies are mandated by the General Assembly to play a role in this harmonization. To enhance systemwide coherence and to bring about real progress towards the MDGs the 'Delivery as One' approach (DAO), recommended by the Secretary General's High Level Forum, was started in eight pilot countries. UNEG supported the DAO initiative by conducting evaluability assessments and offering technical assistance for country-led evaluations.

# Evaluation Capacity Development: a challenge for UNEG

Many UN agencies started long ago to build and support national capacity and practices related to evaluation of national programmes and projects linked to UNDAF. There are other agencies where the central evaluation units / departments have no mandate for ECD. However, in some cases, capacity development for evaluation purposes is in practice carried out by decentralised (operational) units, often at country or at sector-level.

The challenge, given the diversity of structures, size and mandates of the UNEG member agencies, is to build on the experience of individual agencies; to strengthen coordination among them (and with others); to enhance coherence, in spite of the existing differences; and, to align with national policies, respecting national monitoring and evaluation systems.

# Understanding Evaluation Capacity Development

#### A systemic approach to Evaluation Capacity Development

A systematic approach to Evaluation Capacity Development considers three levels of capacity as entry points for capacity development: the individual level, the institutional level and the enabling environment (Segone, 2010).

The individual level refers to skills, experience and knowledge that allow a person to perform. Whereas access to resources and experience that allow a person to grow are largely dependent on organizational and environmental factors; these in turn may also be influenced by the development of the capacity of individuals.

The institutional level refers to the internal structure, policies and procedures determining an organisation's effectiveness. It is here that the benefits of the enabling environment are put into action and a collection of individuals come together. The better resourced and aligned these elements are, the greater the potential for growing capacity.

An enabling environment is the social system within which people and organizations function. This environment defines the overall scope for capacity development. The social system is characterized by all rules, norms, laws, policies and power relations setting the frame for social engagement.

#### UNEG capacity at the three levels

UNEG and its members have specific strengths at the individual, institutional and environmental levels, as described below.

Individual level. The environmental factors shaping the access to resources and experiences provided by the UN system, and the procedures and practices established by UNEG (introductory course to evaluation developed by one of the Task Forces; peer-reviewmechanisms; exchange among colleagues; access to information and exposure to joint and country-led evaluations) are promising. However, some small agencies, for lack of resources, cannot offer much support for the individual's development; in other agencies, management may not be fully convinced of the importance of the evaluation function. Institutional level. Most UN agencies have developed an evaluation policy and thus institutionalized independence, credibility and use of evaluations. In most agencies, evaluation units are not subordinate to the management, operational or policy departments, some report to a governing body. The position outside management structures allows for greater independence, but may also bear the risk of isolation from the operational units. UNEG has developed a code of conduct, principles of working together, and norms and standards for evaluation, thus offering conditions to enhance a growing awareness and culture of evaluation among the members.

Evaluation units mandated with evaluation functions are mostly in possession of funds allocated for this function, although in some cases the funds are rather scarce and the structures and functions still very new. Evaluation policies of most agencies refer to both accountability and learning as the main objectives. If there is no evaluation policy or mandate in the agency evaluation units, often they refer to UN or UNEG organisational or procedural documents.

Structural links between the central evaluation unit and the operational units may be non-existent in some agencies. Sometimes it is not known what happens outside the evaluation unit related to evaluation. The complete detachment of the evaluation unit from the rest of the organisation may result in less influence on the overall evaluation practice of the organisation. In other agencies the central unit is mandated to offer technical expertise to the rest of the organization, building capacity within the organization to conduct or manage evaluations and to use the results. It is important to note that many of the agencies have different organisational units mandated with evaluation.

*Enabling environments.* For the UN monitoring and evaluation are high on the agenda and the system has several inbuilt mechanisms to assure both at different levels. Re-organisation of evaluation, and strengthening of evaluation capacities within the UN system, is part and parcel of the UN reform. A clear mandate has been given by the GA for the strengthening of internal capacities and the support for national initiatives on strengthening evaluation capacities in member countries.

# Acknowledging challenges in Evaluation Capacity Development

The UN's work on ECD will need to address challenges associated with varying degrees of political will at country level and also the

political sensitivities/perceived risks associated with evaluation. The UN, as a neutral partner, can consider this as part of its comparative advantage for work in the ECD area.

Sometimes governments fear the (critical) results of evaluations and are not ready to rethink policies or take other decisions on reforms that might be necessary. At national level there may not yet be enough know-how to manage and /or conduct evaluations, or the mechanisms to use results of evaluations for decision-making and planning are not clearly in place. Monitoring for accountability is often led by Ministries of Finance, yet the link to evaluation is not always clear.

Other countries may have problems with reliable data and the establishment of baselines. Data collection is linked to donor requirements for projects / programmes and donors set the agenda for evaluation, hence it may not be available for central national planning.

'National' evaluation capacity is often understood as government capacity, and not as country-based, leaving out professional evaluators from VOPEs and NGOs. The importance of evaluative information delivered by universities or think tanks is often neglected. Civil society organizations and parliamentarians need evaluations in order to be informed about issues which need their participation in decisions. These groups need to know how to use evaluations. Only informed citizens can influence the decisions thus enhance the quality of democracy. Civil society organisations, such as VOPEs, are well placed to both strengthen indigenous demand and supply for evaluation.

Identifying the 'potential' evaluation supply (existing evaluators who need an opportunity to conduct evaluations), the 'potential' demand (not yet articulated for lack of funding) and the 'latent' demand (not yet articulated for lack of a clear understanding of evaluations) can help to identify gaps in evaluation capacity and give hints for possible support.

Gaps may occur between 'potential' and actual supply of national evaluation capacities that may result in providing opportunities for potential evaluators to practice evaluation; between potential and actual demand, which may require funding mechanisms, that can be tapped to commission evaluations or a consultation mechanism to enable parliamentarians to participate in defining an evaluation agenda; or a gap between the actual and latent demand for evaluation that may require the development of the capacity to use evaluations, such as offering introductions to evaluation literacy (Feinstein 2009).

Independence, credibility and utility of evaluations are accepted evaluation principles. But the institutional setting, donor influence on the choice of evaluation subjects and dependency on funds, or dependency of individual evaluators, may threaten the independence. This has an influence on the credibility of such evaluations. Success stories are more popular than the stories of failures among donors and national governments but the learning effect from a negative experience may even be higher. A real danger is that critical reports get less attention and are not sufficiently dealt with. The utility of evaluations may be undermined if the connection with the national development plan is not clear.

# Capitalizing on strengths and professional experience of UN agencies

The member agencies of UNEG have different ways of handling ECD, due to their individual character and mandates. Not all agencies have a mandate for ECD, but there is a growing demand from member countries for assistance in developing evaluation capacities. In practice, several of these agencies offer learning about evaluation by doing them. The exposure to team work contributes to developing the skills and competences of the individuals involved and when staff are seconded from government ranks, it also contributes to some extent to the capacity of the concerned institution. This does not necessarily happen through the central evaluation units, represented in UNEG, but more often through the operational departments and through country offices.

#### Learning from the member agencies' experience

Joint evaluations. Some agencies are operating in a highly decentralised way and do most evaluations at country level, using them as joint learning opportunities. Most evaluations of projects or programmes are either coordinated with other UN agencies or other development partners. In general the number of country-level, but country-led evaluations is growing.

*Working with VOPEs.* UN agencies are instrumental in the support for VOPEs, with a specific focus on the International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation (IOCE) and theme-centred networks

(e.g. gender), but also VOPEs at regional and national level. UNICEF is playing a leading role in strengthening VOPEs offering the most systematic support. Other agencies also have a share, sometimes providing specific training on issues (UN Women), or offering learning opportunities through evaluations (different agencies), or technical advice. UNEG member agencies such as UNICEF, UN Women, UNESCO, FAO, ILO, WHO, UNDP, IFAD, and UNFPA, have a particular importance for the development of programmes within social policies that require good monitoring and evaluation. Members of VOPEs are often included in evaluative work as local experts and consider this as an important learning experience.

Guardians of cross-cutting issues. UN Women has a system-wide mandate for the promotion of gender equality and women's rights in the UN system. Building on this mandate and UN Women's comparative advantage, the UN Women Evaluation Office spearheads gender equality and the women's empowerment agenda within the efforts on evaluation capacity development. The overarching goal of UN Women engagement in this field is to facilitate knowledge exchange and learning on gender equality and human rights responsive evaluations and to contribute to accountability on the implementation of national gender equality commitments. UN Women approached its work on evaluation capacity development through the development of partnerships and networks with VOPEs, think tank organizations, research institutions and UN agencies. It provided support to regional evaluation networks such as the African Gender Development Evaluation Network (AGDEN): the International Programme Evaluation Network (IPEN); and, Red de Evaluación y Monitoreo para América Latina y el Caribe (RELAC). UN Women facilitated North-South global collaborations with the American Evaluation Association, the European Evaluation Society, and the Gender@Work think tank, by enabling the evaluators from the South to attend cutting edge evaluation events and influence the agenda of training courses, conferences and seminars, by putting gender equality and human rights at the center of evaluation discussion. These meetings galvanized a desire amongst many UN Women partners to deepen their understanding of gender and human rights responsive evaluation terrain and brought new awareness by connecting evaluation to decision-making, advocacy, policy and community learning and reflective practice.

Similarly, UNICEF is leading a comprehensive strategy to strengthen capacity to manage Equity-focused evaluation, by enhancing global learning through developing manuals and resource centers, and by

making key material available in English, French, Spanish, Russian and Arabic. In addition, UNICEF also developed a series of live webinars with world-level evaluators and innovative e-learning, which attracted up to 4.500 people from 162 countries, among others.

## Potential roles of UNEG and its members

The United Nations General Assembly requested that the "UN system pursue and intensify its efforts to strengthen evaluation capacities in programme countries" (TCPR, GA resolution 62/208 of 2007) "taking into account national conditions and ensuring respect for national ownership, strategies and sovereignty." While not all evaluation units have a mandate or request from their respective Executive Boards to support NECD, UNEG as the network of representatives of these evaluation units, has contributed to the professionalization of evaluation functions and the coordination and coherence of evaluation policies. In 2009, UNEG established a Task Force on NECD with the aim of contributing to this work. The task force identified the following roles and strategies to strengthen each of the three levels:

*Enabling environment.* According to the perceived role of the UN as "politically neutral brokers" acting in the joint interest of peoples and nations without political or other bias, the UNEG Task Force will contribute to strengthening the evaluation culture by acting as a "neutral broker" facilitating dialogue between the demand and supply side of evaluations for evidence-based policy-making.

Institutional level. Building on the strengths and experience of the UNEG members and the joint experience of UNEG in country-led evaluations, and based on the perceived role as a multifaceted professional 'knowledge broker' and 'guardian of cross-cutting issues', UNEG will act as a 'knowledge broker' facilitating "South-South" generation and sharing of good practices and lessons learned on national evaluation systems, as well as mutual learning. The concrete activities suggested would be:

 Identify good practice in national evaluation systems in different settings (different geographical regions, middle income and low income countries, etc.) and facilitate south-south knowledge sharing between countries with identified "good practices" and countries that are developing and/or strengthening national evaluation systems. This can be done using web 2.0 technologies,
such as webinars, as well as study tours, among other aspects, and may build on the expertise of specific agencies.

- In partnership with IOCE, support global and regional VOPEs in creating or strengthening national VOPEs, enhancing evaluation standards, and facilitating knowledge sharing between VOPEs using webinars and/or study tours. This activity could be combined with the South-South knowledge sharing.
- Develop and actively disseminate material on, and facilitate the institutionalization of, human rights, equity and gender equality perspectives in evaluations. The activity should build on the specific knowledge and experience of UN Women, UNICEF and OHCHR.
- Further on UNEG should actively disseminate UNEG Norms and any other guidance document UNEG will produce in future, thus contributing to a strengthening of the evaluation culture and of concerned institutions.

In addition, UNEG will coordinate evaluative initiatives with key partners to promote country-led evaluations and national evaluation systems. The following concrete activities are suggested:

- Produce and disseminate a short and user-friendly note on "Tips to strengthen national evaluation systems" to guide UN country teams (UNCT) and different UN agencies in their own initiatives to strengthen national evaluation capacities, including in the management of their own evaluations to support DAO countries in carrying out good quality country-led evaluations.
- Further encourage UN agencies and UNCTs to design and manage evaluations that support national evaluation systems in line with GA resolutions and systematize the experience thus contributing further to good practice in ECD.

*Individual level.* The recommendation to support the individual level of ECD is based on the specific strength of UNEG as a professional network of evaluation specialists, on the experience of UNEG with training and of member agencies with training approaches. It is also building on the UNEG access to the different stakeholders in evaluation based on the roles as 'neutral brokers' and 'knowledge brokers'. UNEG should therefore **promote the professionalization of evaluation**, including e-learning platform and knowledge management systems.

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# SUPPORTING EVALUATION CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT. THE ROLE OF THE OECD DAC NETWORK ON DEVELOPMENT EVALUATION

#### Riitta Oksanen

Senior Evaluation advisor, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finland, and Chair, Evaluation Capacity Development Task Team, OECD/DAC Network on Development Evaluation

### Megan Kennedy-Chouane

Policy Analyst, Development Co-operation Directorate, OECD

International development partners recognise that credible, effective evaluation systems can help governments and development organisations design and implement the most effective policies for achieving development results. Evaluation provides useful evidence to enhance our understanding of how development works and to improve transparency and mutual accountability by demonstrating the results of development co-operation. Many development agencies have invested heavily in strengthening their own capacities to manage and assess development results. Increasingly, donors are focusing on capacities in partner countries, with the aims of strengthening mutual accountability. Development partners share a mutual interest in building strong, credible evaluation systems that provide valuable evidence for improving development outcomes, supporting learning and enhancing accountability for results.

Evaluation capacity development (ECD) is the process whereby people, organisations and society as a whole unleash, strengthen, create, adapt and maintain capacities for the systematic and objective assessment of an on-going or completed development project, programme or policy, its design, implementation and results. It takes place in the context of on-going efforts to strengthen related systems of management, governance, accountability and learning. While capacity development is understood as a long-term, endogenous process of change, international partners play an important role in supporting or undermining capacity changes at the country-level.

While some capacity development work is carried out by the technical assistance or capacity development departments of development agencies, evaluation departments are increasingly being tasked with ECD work. The evaluation process itself is gradually being viewed as an opportunity for learning-by-doing. As evaluation itself comes into line with the Paris Principles of harmonisation and country ownership, capacity development has become a priority concern for the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) and its Network on Development Evaluation (EVALNET). The network is a unique international forum bringing together evaluation experts from OECD member governments and multilateral institutions, to strengthen norms and standards and support collaboration. This chapter looks at the on-going work of the network and its members.

### Why does partner capacity matter to donors?

Stronger evaluation systems would benefit domestic and international stakeholders alike, buttress domestic and mutual accountabilities, support stronger partner ownership and provide needed evidence to improve development policies and programmes. Network members, both individually and collectively, have actively contributed to supporting partner efforts to strengthen evaluation systems and skills in a variety of ways over the past twenty years.

With the signing of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in 2005, the members of the OECD DAC committed to use and strengthen country systems, including partner capacities to monitor and evaluate development activities. Long before that, and from the early days of the Evaluation Network, the role of partner countries in evaluating development co-operation activities has been acknowledged and the need to support adequate capacities for evaluation has been underlined. Strengthening evaluation capacities in member and partner developing countries is part of the mandate of the OECD/DAC Network on Development Evaluation and has long been an area of interest for individual members. Over the years, the discussion has shifted from looking at individual capacity development to talking about country systems, and understanding evaluation as part of development governance. The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, Accra Agenda for Action and Busan Global Partnership all support the concept of country-led monitoring and evaluation systems. Since the agreement of the Paris Declaration in 2005, the network has worked to better understand what the aid effectiveness principles of alignment, ownership, harmonisation and mutual accountability mean for evaluation.

The 2010 DAC Quality Standards for Development Evaluation (OECD 2010) provide further impetus for development actors to engage in capacity development efforts, exhorting evaluators to involve all relevant stakeholders in the evaluation process and to opt for collaborative approaches that strengthen capacities.

Increasing pressure in OECD countries to demonstrate what impact aid is having on development means that evaluation departments are also being asked to look beyond process indicators and outputs and understand the broader political and economic context in developing countries. Looking at questions of "development effectiveness" and assessing higher level impacts requires looking beyond donor inputs and development assistance. This has led to an increasing interest in working with developing country partners and to rely on country-led systems – and thus concern for helping to strengthen requisite capacities.

# Past work and emerging lessons on capacity development

Over the years, EVALNET has developed a knowledge base drawing on member and partner experiences, analysis and workshops. Japan sponsored a fact-finding survey in 2006 to catalogue member ECD activities and found that many members were involved in capacity development work (OECD, 2006). In 2010 the OECD/DAC Secretariat carried out a stock taking and literature review to identify emerging lessons.

We now collectively know quite a lot about what makes for success in an individual capacity development activity: ownership; focus on supply and demand; support for champions; strengthening management and use of findings as well as evaluating skills; taking a partnership approach; learning by doing; and drawing on experiences from others; especially through south-south sharing.

What seems to be lacking is more information about the role external support can and should play. There is also a feeling among donors that a more strategic understanding of how various efforts add up, how they should be sequenced and where it is best to concentrate efforts, is needed. It is clear that strategies should focus on engaging at all three levels (individual training, management and institutional support, and nurturing an enabling environment for accountability more broadly). Literature also emphasises the importance of ownership and strategic leadership from a dedicated core in-country. This means that funding of isolated, individual evaluation training is unlikely to create the critical mass needed to spur country systems in a useful way. Developing country partners and network members have repeatedly expressed the need for a more joined-up and strategic approach to evaluation capacity development.

Experiences have also shown that the way donor evaluation departments operate has capacity implications – both positive and negative. For example, involvement in evaluation processes can provide opportunities to learn about how evaluations are managed, or to become more familiar with evaluation methodologies. On the other hand, if donors don't share their evaluation plans this can result in multiple, overlapping or uncoordinated field visits – putting pressure on in-country capacities to respond to data requests or provide input on evaluation questions. To address these unintended effects, a tip-sheet was developed in 2010 (OECD, 2010) to help evaluation managers take partner capacities into account in their own day-to-day work, to capitalise on learning opportunities and avoid inadvertently undermining evaluation capacity. The tip sheet outlines 10 elements of a more "capacity-friendly" approach to evaluation, based on the key principles of harmonisation, alignment and use of partner country evaluation systems.

The collective knowledge base on capacity development is further informed by sharing of member and partner country experiences at network meetings, and the work of the multilateral development banks, the United Nations and the International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation (IOCE). Contributions of note have been made in this field through: the World Bank's Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) Evaluation Capacity Development Series and How to Build M&E Systems to Support Better Government (2007); various UNDP works on national evaluation capacities; Kusek and Rist (2004 and 2008), and the UNICEF et al Evaluation Working Papers, to name just a few. Literature on capacity development, including the Supporting Partners to Develop their Capacity – 12 Lessons from DAC Peer Reviews (OECD, 2012) and DAC's on Good Practice Document on Capacity Development (OECD, 2006) also inform the approach. The DAC norms and standards for development evaluation provide a framework for ECD efforts and a shared basis for collaborative work.

# Current work of the DAC Network on Development Evaluation

In addition to helping improve the capacity of its own members, the DAC Network on Development Evaluation has the mandate to "promote and support evaluation capacity development in partner countries." The network and its members work toward this goal by developing international evaluation standards and guidance, implementing targeted capacity building interventions, sharing evaluation plans, involving partner country stakeholders in evaluations and funding specific ECD activities. Members work through their own development co-operation systems, with partner governments and in collaboration with evaluation networks or civil society organisations.

There is consensus among members that improving partner capacity is important. Despite this consensus, however, there are differences among members in terms of the roles evaluation departments play in capacity work. A 2006 study by Japan (OECD, 2006) for the network found that 22 members (of the 26 responding agencies) were currently conducting evaluation capacity development work. About half of member units do not have the mandate to deal with capacity development, either because it is covered by another department or because it is not a priority area for the development agency. Responses to the 2009 questionnaire show that the other 50% of members have "evaluation capacity development in partner countries" in their evaluation policies. There is a range of coverage. with some policies simply mentioning "the importance of capacity development" and others providing a strong mandate to evaluation departments to do capacity building - often with a dual mandate of supporting capacities inside and outside their own agency. For example, Danida's mandate includes "contributing to the development of evaluation capacity in partner countries through bilateral and multilateral cooperation and contributing to the development of evaluation capacity in NGOs and the Danish resource base."

There seems to be relatively little strategic engagement on capacity development, even among those members that have a mandate to do so. Also, the level of activity varies widely, with some members holding individual training sessions for development staff in one or two countries, while others actively involve partners in joint work as part of an overarching capacity development strategy. For example, the Evaluation Department of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) works in collaboration with partner country Ministries of Planning (or equivalent organisation) to jointly plan and supervise the ECD process. JICA agreed to support ECD in Vietnam, Philippines, and Indonesia by signing memoranda of understanding for co-operation in evaluation. Through this support, JICA aims to help partner countries to establish project cycle management methods in which the lessons learned and recommendations from the evaluations would be utilised in future development projects. The Evaluation Department also conducts annual ODA Loan evaluation seminars.

# Moving ahead on the Evaluation Capacity Development agenda

The OECD/DAC Evaluation Capacity Development Task Team was reorganised after a discussion in the EVALNET meeting in February 2012. Finland chairs the group with support from the EVALNET Secretariat. The African Development Bank, Austria, Germany, Ireland, Sweden, UK and the USA are members of the team. The Task Team is charged with moving forward the work on capacity development.

The Task Team has agreed on a general approach to the work, building on the DAC and EVALNET mandates. The team will promote and facilitate partnerships for ECD by actively reaching beyond the group. The team wishes to take full benefit of existing networks that focus on evaluation capacity development. It will especially seek cooperation with networks of partner countries and also other existing networks. In accordance with the overall role of DAC, the Task Team will establish frameworks and guidance to improve members' support to evaluation capacity development. The team strongly believes in the importance of working together, and will promote and facilitate joint work to support evaluation capacity development.

The team wishes to be selective in a strategic way by focusing particularly on emerging needs and innovative approaches to evaluation capacity development. There is already an understanding on the gaps where more support is needed e.g. capacity in demand and use of evaluations, development of institutional evaluation capacity, and supporting a conducive environment for evaluation. Furthermore, the team finds it important to continuously review evidence through evaluations of evaluation capacity development. The team may consider conducting joint evaluations during the coming years.

The main objective of the task team is to help members become better evaluation capacity development donors so that members make best possible contributions to stronger evaluation capacity in partner countries, for transparent and evidence-based policies. The objective is also to align evaluation activities and use the evaluation systems of partner countries.

Based on this general approach and objectives the Task Team has developed a work plan that focuses on five clusters of activities:

• Demand-driven and needs-based ECD support through networking with ECD networks representing partner countries for discussions on ECD needs, ECD frameworks and role of donors.

- Evidence-based frameworks and guidance for more effective ECD support through taking stock and mapping of ECD initiatives, approaches, concepts, results frameworks. The team will exchange information on good and bad support practice and experience. Eventually the team will establish guidance for appropriate support approaches in different contexts for evaluation capacity development.
- More efficient and coordinated ECD support through making the Task Team as a "market place" for exchange information of on-going and planned ECD support activities with potential for joint work. The team will actively reach beyond the task team by identifying ECD networks that are relevant for the ECD Task Team priorities, and contact them for discussions and potential partnerships.
- Evidence-based ECD support through reviews of existing ECD evaluations and by promoting joint evaluations.

A positive surprise during 2012 has been the strong interest and commitment of a wide range of stakeholders in evaluation capacity development. It makes perfect sense to listen very carefully to partner institutions' own views on where external support is needed. A lot is already going on at national level as national initiatives. The key issue is to find a complementary role for external support. Moreover, there is an obvious opportunity for synergies among the international providers of ECD support. Let us not miss these opportunities.

NB. More information on evaluation capacity development and updates on the task team can be found on the OECD DAC website: http://oecd/ecd

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# THE ROLE OF THE CLEAR INITIATIVE IN COUNTRY EVALUATION CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

### Nidhi Khattri

Lead Evaluation Officer and Head of CLEAR Secretariat, Independent Evaluation Group, World Bank

### Ximena Fernandez Ordonez

Evaluation Officer, Independent Evaluation Group, World Bank

Effective development is guided by evidence. Yet availability of useful and timely evidence to drive decision-making has been a challenge, as revealed by many evaluations (e.g., *Evaluation of the Implementation of the Paris Declaration*). Countries' capacity for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) varies: data and credible information are often missing, approaches to gathering evidence and analysis are of uneven quality, and the systematic use of evidence for making decisions to drive development is less than desired.

Established in 2010, CLEAR (Centers for Learning on Evaluation and Results) is a multilateral partnership programme to address the gaps in country M&E capacity. The goal is to strengthen partner countries' M&E capacities for results-based management to achieve development outcomes. CLEAR's immediate objective is to support a network of partner countries' academic institutions, to harness local innovation, knowledge, and experience, and to integrate this with international know-how in order to develop the capacity of government and civil society. The CLEAR Secretariat is housed in the Independent Evaluation Group of the World Bank.

This chapter summarizes the rationale underpinning CLEAR and provides examples of CLEAR's regional work to date.

## Demand for country M&E capacity

Recent years have seen a rapid increase in demand for results and evaluation-based knowledge for effective development. A range of factors, both internal and external, have led to this demand. Paradoxically, these same forces have uncovered the gaps and weaknesses in national capacities and systems to measure results and to make evidence-based decisions. The capacities and systems vary tremendously, both within and across regions, creating opportunities for peer-learning and mutual support.

# Internal demand: results-oriented reforms in partner countries

Significant public sector reforms, including decentralization and results-informed budgeting, have fueled the need for credible performance information. At the same time, the push from civil society and citizens for transparency and accountability has created the demand for measuring results and evidence-based decisions.

In Africa, a majority of sub-Saharan countries are implementing poverty reduction strategies (PRSs). These countries are at various stages of design and implementation of institutional systems to meet the PRS monitoring needs adequately. They are experimenting with different management models, including assigning monitoring and evaluation responsibilities to multiple layers of the administrative system, from national to district and community levels. Some countries, such as South Africa and Uganda, are also establishing more sophisticated evaluation systems to generate evidence-based knowledge for programme and policy development. In many countries, however, monitoring systems are dominant. This leads to gaps in the evidence base, as deeper questions about programme performance are not being answered.

In Latin America, more than half of the countries are developing or consolidating their M&E systems at the national and sub-national levels, many as part of larger results-informed budgeting reforms. For example, in recent years Mexico has mandated an annual evaluation of all federal programmes to be presented to Congress and has introduced a national Performance Evaluation System linked to its Ministry of Finance. Several countries are also engaged in rigorous impact evaluations of social programmes (beginning with Mexico's acclaimed evaluation of the Opportunidades programme and continuing with programmes such as Brazil's Bolsa Familia).

Similarly, in Asia several countries are undertaking reforms related to results-based management. In China, for example, there is a concerted effort to establish a coherent M&E system (IEG, 2012; ADB, 2007). India has also embarked on using ministry-level results-frameworks and the Planning Commission's programme evaluation office routinely conducts evaluation of large public programmes. The Commission is in the process of establishing an independent evaluation office for its large flagship development schemes.

However, evaluation capacity is low in both countries, and few programmes are actually subject to rigorous evaluation.

These public sector reforms and accountability forces have also created a need for M&E capacity, which varies significantly across countries. In sub-Saharan Africa, many governments and civil society partners are still struggling to collect adequate monitoring data whereas in Latin America some countries (e.g., Mexico and Chile) have the capacity to conduct impact evaluations as a matter of routine. Within regions as well, some countries are well advanced in developing an institutionalized M&E culture (e.g., South Africa) while others are still defining fundamental M&E systems (e.g., Zambia). Some countries' laws have enabled vibrant civil society monitoring for accountability and results (e.g., India), while in others the non-governmental sector is nascent (e.g., China).

Professional networks and associations equipped to both drive the demand for M&E and to supply M&E expertise and knowledge are also gaining strength across regions, but with different degrees of influence. Some are already well-respected communities of practice, such as the Latin American M&E network, encompassing professional evaluators as well as consumers of evaluation information, while some are just beginning to establish themselves in their countries and regions.

# External demand: pressure to demonstrate aid effectiveness

The demand for results and evaluation of public programmes derives also from forces external to national boundaries. Donors – including bilateral and multilateral aid agencies, foundations, and international non-government organizations (NGOs), are focusing on accounting based on the results of development aid. Agreed upon in 2000, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have placed an emphasis on measuring results in key development areas. A series of subsequent agreements – the Paris Declaration (2005), the Accra Agenda for Action (2008), and the Bussan Partnership for Effective Development (2011) – similarly reinforced the measuring of results and placed a premium on developing evaluation capacity.

The evaluation of the Paris Declaration concluded, however, that further strengthening of the capacities and systems of partner countries would be required to advance the reforms articulated in the Declaration. The 2008 Survey on Monitoring the Paris Declaration noted that little progress had been made with respect to indicator 11: "countries develop sound frameworks for monitoring development results" and suggested that "an enormous change of pace" would be required." (page 11). The evaluation specifically recommended that: "Donors should provide more support for evidence-based policy-making by helping countries to improve their statistical, monitoring and evaluation systems." (page 16). More recently, the Busan Partnership for Effective Development (2011) re-emphasized the need for: "...strengthening national capacities and leveraging diverse resources and initiatives in support of development results." Highlighting partnerships and south-south learning, it specifically called for an action plan to address capacity gaps: to monitor progress, evaluate impact, and ensure transparency and accountability.

In the not-for-profit sector, large international not-for-profit development organizations such as Oxfam, Action Aid, Save the Children, ALNAP, Interaction, PACT and CIVICUS, to name a few, have also added their voices to the need for increased capacity in resultsbased monitoring, evaluation, and learning from evaluations. Some have responded by establishing global and regional M&E Communities of Practice and training programmes within the limited scope of their constituency.

Several other existing analyses (e.g., an African Development Bank 2006 study of the Bank's Country Assistance Strategy papers for a sample of 12 African countries<sup>1</sup>) all underscore the need to strengthen or create M&E capacities and systems.

# The supply side: need for relevant, practical, and cost-effective capacity development

While the need to build sustained capacities and systems has been clearly recognized for a while, practical, cost-effective, and sustainable ways to address the capacity gaps are only now receiving the attention they deserve. The current supply of relevant, cost-effective, and comprehensive capacity development, ranging from understanding of practical uses of evaluation for policy decisions to technical hands-on learning, is limited. There is also a mismatch between supply and demand. While there are good examples of smaller M&E capacity development programmes, the

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Burundi, Comoros, Gambia, DRC, Malawi, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Ethiopia, Ghana, Madagascar, and Mali

larger scale M&E services are primarily formal, standardized training programmes, which tend to be expensive if provided by external sources. In addition, current programmes often tend to be narrow in scope – focusing on technical aspects of M&E (such as M&E for HIV Aids, fiscal reform, education or agriculture) rather than on institution-building and the demand aspects of results measurement and evaluation. They also pay little attention to contextspecific issues on the customization of technical know-how to local conditions and to capitalize and disseminate information from local bodies of knowledge (such as civil society organizations).

A rapid assessment of available M&E capacity development programmes also showed that:

- On average, the cost of one week of international training provided by multilateral organizations in partner countries tends to be six times higher than that of a Latin American institution and three times that of an African one (although information on the quality of these programmes was not available for review).<sup>2</sup>
- Existing regional training endeavors focus mainly on the macro level without focusing on specific needs for specific situations and without customization to contexts.
- The courses available from universities are long and have a formal, highly theoretical approach, whereas the courses available through multilateral organizations are shorter-term and more applied but seemingly limited to the demands of only a few countries.
- M&E and learning capacity development services provided by the not-for-profit sector, although often of high quality and tailored to local conditions, tend to be limited in reach to their own constituencies and not available to other development partners (interview response).

Consultations with advisory committees of M&E experts and representatives of civil society and government who were convened by the IEG to explore the M&E landscape in Africa, South Asia, and Latin America,<sup>3</sup> revealed a specific demand for practical, hands-on capacity development programmes, utilizing case-based approaches, action learning, mentoring, and ongoing engagement.

<sup>2</sup> Independent Evaluation Group, World Bank. Rapid Assessment. University-based programmes also cost considerably less in Latin America and Africa.

<sup>3</sup> IEG-convened committees of government and civil society experts on monitoring and evaluation capacity needs in the regions.

They also highlighted the need for learning from best practice and cutting-edge approaches from around the world and from peers, but tailored to fit local circumstances and needs.

### CLEAR's Response: strengthening a network of institutions in partner countries

CLEAR aims to network and strengthen the capacity of knowledge/ training institutions located within partner countries. By so doing, the programme aims to create a situation whereby the countries can demand capacity development from regional institutions, rather than relying on developed-country institutions. Thus, a key strategy is to *build institutional capacity to develop capacity* in partner countries.

The networks of institutions were selected competitively to house CLEAR centers and to develop an innovative but practical and cost-effective programme focusing on:

- Nurturing regional leadership in monitoring and evaluation.
- Improving understanding of M&E and fostering demand for evidence and evidence-based decisions among influential stakeholders in government and civil society.
- Sharing and disseminating practical knowledge and experience and promoting peer-to-peer learning through communities of practice and regional professional associations.
- Developing institutional, organizational, and individual capacity for practical, relevant, and context-specific M&E based on international technical standards customized for local needs and situations. The capacities would be built through workshops, onthe-job training, mentoring, advisory services, and research and evaluation.

CLEAR centers are currently housed at the following institutions:

- *CLEAR East Asia* at Asia-Pacific Finance and Development Center (AFDC) in Shanghai, China ('grandfathered' into the program, based on existing partnership with IEG).
- *CLEAR Francophone Africa* at Centre Africain d'Etudes Superieurs et Administration et Gestion (CESAG) in Senegal, with its partner 2IE in Burkina Faso, established in January 2012.

- *CLEAR Latin America* (Spanish-speaking) at Centro de Investigacion y Docencia Economicas (CIDE) in Mexico, established in January 2012.
- *CLEAR South Asia* at Jameel Poverty Action Lab South Asia, at the Institute for Financial Management and Research (JPSA) in Chennai, India, with their partner, the Center for Economic Research in Pakistan (CERP), established in June 2011.
- *CLEAR Anglophone Africa* at the University of Witwatersrand (Wits) in South Africa, with their partners, the Ghana Institute of Public Management and Administration (GIMPA) and the Kenya School of Government (KSG), established in June 2011.

### Advantages of a regionally based approach

CLEAR's regional approach provides several benefits, including:

*Relevance to regional and country-specific issues.* A regional approach enables countries to take ownership of the centers, as the services are developed and customized on the basis of their demands and needs, with attention to country contexts. Thus the programme is to focus on relevance and also fill the gaps in supply. Furthermore, by virtue of their location, the regionally based centers provide services to several countries within the region that encourages south-south and peer learning. This approach meets a large, currently unfulfilled demand for "how-to" knowledge.

*Cost-effectiveness.* Harnessing in-region innovation, talent, and expertise, and providing capacity development within-region is expected to bring down the costs of capacity development programmes.

*Expanded regional reach.* The centers work with clusters of several countries and reach a critical mass of professionals engaged in results-based management and evaluation applications.

*Sustainability.* CLEAR supports institutions, based on a strategic business plan to work towards becoming self-sustaining after a period of five to eight years. Thus, the capacity to build capacity remains in partner countries.

*Reduced fragmentation through partnerships.* CLEAR is enabling partnerships across funders and local stakeholders to reduce fragmentation and catalyze collaboration. For example, the Ministries of Finance in China and Mexico, and the World Bank's Institutional Development Fund, joined the programme in 2012. CLEAR has also

enabled collaboration at the regional level among institutions participating in the programme.

The approaches the CLEAR centers are taking and the examples of their work are profiled below.

# CLEAR Anglophone Africa (CLEAR-AA)

### Stephen Porter, Acting Director

The context in which the Anglophone Africa center is embedded is dynamic. The region encompasses a wide spectrum of economic development and levels of capacity for using M&E for development. On the one hand, there is a significant push for M&E for accountability and effective development from almost all governments and broad segments of civil society. Concurrently, there is a growing awareness of the importance of shifting M&E from a donor-driven exercise to one that is owned by the countries themselves. These forces have resulted in increased demand for M&E capacity. On the other hand, understanding of the deep technical and institutional issues M&E entails is limited, with commitment more evident "on paper" than in reality.

CLEAR-AA works strategically as an innovation intermediary in order to remedy the mismatches, and fill gaps, between M&E supply and demand by developing a sophisticated market for evaluation with the aim of improving governance. An innovation intermediary is defined by Howells (2006: 720) as an "organization or body that acts as an agent or broker in any aspect of the innovation process between two or more parties." In the context of the profession of evaluation, an innovation intermediary works between those who undertake evaluation (supply) and those who require evidence (demand). CLEAR-AA is working in three areas of innovation intermediation: supporting the articulation of demand; undertaking network brokerage; and promoting initiatives for contextually relevant, high-quality, and innovative evaluation practices.

CLEAR-AA's work with lead M&E units in African governments, the non-government organization Black Sash, the African Evaluation Association (AfREA) and the South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association (SAMEA) is illustrative of the three areas of work it is undertaking.

CLEAR CLEAR-AA has established a broad programme of support for the Department for Performance Monitoring and Evalua-

tion (DPME) in the South African Presidency. An important part of the work entails working with the DPME in partnership to develop a deeper understanding of the links between planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation. This understanding has led DPME to increase interactions with the South African Treasury around relating the programme structures to the budget for improved programme performance information. In part this work is fostered through coordinating peer-learning programmes with other countries and organizing fora for practitioner-to-practitioner exchange of knowledge and information. CLEAR-AA partners with DPME on an ongoing basis to feed into the design of other aspects of the institutional M&E system and develop key knowledge products and guidelines (e.g., the National Evaluation Policy Framework and Plan, Planning Guidelines, and the Competencies and Standards Frameworks for Evaluation). As a result of understanding the demands of the system. CLEAR-AA has also supported customized evaluation training for DPME's staff and is assisting with the rollout of the National Evaluation Plan. CLEAR has thus supported champions from within DPME who consistently seize the opportunities to move the system forward.

As part of this collaboration with DPME, similar transformative work is envisaged in Uganda, Kenya, Ghana, and other countries that are beginning to take a 'systems' approach to institutionalizing M&E. The development and sharing of exploratory country case studies, which serve as initial diagnostics in Ghana, Kenya, Uganda, Benin, Burundi, Senegal, and South Africa, offer a first general overview of the current state of M&E systems in these countries. The case studies themselves fed into a first engagement to deepen a network of practice among these countries. There has been initial follow-up through ongoing engagement between the DPME in South Africa and the lead agencies in Uganda and Benin. Work is also expanding in Kenya and Ghana linked to these cases and locally developing demand, for example, in impact evaluation (Kenya) and programme budgeting (Ghana).

CLEAR-AA is also engaging with AfREA and SAMEA and has provided technical workshops at AfREA and SAMEA conferences. It has initiated a joint initiative entitled "Thought Leadership for Evaluation and Development," to begin unpacking the linkages between development and evaluation challenges in Africa. Undertaking this process entails the bringing together of Africans who have worked with both evaluation supply and demand and who have an understanding of development and evaluation imperatives. Finally, CLEAR-AA is starting to work with civil society organizations Black Sash (NGO) and HIVAN (HIV networking organization), to support their innovative work in citizen-based monitoring. At the core of the monitoring approach is the use of mobile phone technology to:

- (i) focus information gathering and analysis on the issues most relevant to local stakeholders;
- (ii) develop the capacity of organizations to use information; and
- (iii) contextualize monitoring concepts for public health services and social grant provision within local contexts.

# CLEAR Spanish-speaking Latin America (CLEAR-LA)

### Cristina Galíndez, Executive Director

### Claudia Maldonado, General Director

The need for evidence-based policy-making and results-oriented public management has long been at the center of theoretical developments and academic discourse in public administration and public policy in Latin America. Since the early 1990s, Latin American countries have promoted the development of M&E and Performance Management (PM) systems and the establishment of the required institutional platforms. Although many Latin American countries have already incorporated the practice of M&E in their legal frameworks, there are persistent differences in their approaches. These differences include their degree of sophistication, the quality and pertinence of the evaluative activities and methods, and the extent to which these systems have been organizationally internalized by public agencies across sectors, levels of government, and beyond (non-governmental actors). Most importantly, there is great variation in the basic political economy conditions for long-term sustainability and institutionalization of M&E and PM systems.

The core logic and the strategic orientation of CLEAR-LA are directly influenced by these background conditions, and the attributes of the demand-structure in the region. In Latin America, while some of the regulatory fundamentals of these systems may already be in place, it must also be acknowledged that certain political and administrative conditions can jeopardize the continuation of these efforts, in the absence of a more pivotal and politically-neutral participation of academic institutions and private and civil society organizations.

CLEAR-LA's starting premise is that the formal establishment of evaluation and performance management instruments and practices are necessary but not sufficient for development outcomes. Rather, the language, the instruments, and the information produced by public agencies that structure complex accountability relationships in democratic settings need to be appropriated by a wider set of actors in reforms towards results-oriented management and policy-making. This appropriation is only possible if the information flow enabled by these systems is relevant, credible and delivers high quality inputs for decision-making. It is only possible when demands for accountability shape incentives for the utilization of evaluation results by actors that have the political, administrative and legal capacity to effect changes in the design and implementation of public programmes, and when these choices are subject to public scrutiny and successive evaluation. From this perspective, the development of a well-functioning market of evaluation is best understood as an incremental learning process jointly determined by demand and supply factors.

The capacity development efforts of CLEAR-LA are guided by the overarching objective of contributing to the development of this full circle of results-oriented accountability for better development outcomes, in response to the specific needs of the different actors involved and the identification of the missing links and gaps that need to be filled to advance this goal. Following this logic, CLEAR-LA seeks to scale-up existing capacities beyond the strictly governmental, and branch out from strong niches in evaluation, such as social programmes, beyond those policy sectors where these practices are already rooted, so that acquired lessons can spill over to relatively unexplored areas in the field of evaluation, such as public security, access to effective justice, judicial performance, natural disaster response systems, and citizen participation policies among others. CLEAR-LA actively supports the incursion of M&E and PM concepts and references in these new frontiers, by way of replicating and adapting existing or proven methods and approaches to other national contexts or policy domains.

While the programme is being fully developed, CLEAR-LA has begun a series of seminars on M&E in public security (a key issue in Latin American countries), published a book on how evaluation recommendations can be implemented, and is working with the Peruvian Ministry of Women and Vulnerable Populations and the Mexican Ministries of Finance, Social Development, and Foreign Affairs, on the effectiveness of their programmes. In addition, the center is helping countries figure out the "entry points" for M&E and supporting champions for institutionalizing and using M&E more effectively than has been the case in the past.

The center is also becoming a visible convener of workshops on technical issues, including high-demand topics of performancebased budgeting and impact evaluation. It is working as a core partner and knowledge provider in the Latin America M&E network and ReLAC (Red de Seguimiento, Evaluación y Sistematización en América Latina y el Caribe).

CLEAR-LA's strategy includes the differentiated provision of technical capacity-development to diversified audiences, technical assistance for evaluation and the institutional and organizational design of M&E and PM systems at the national and subnational levels, the development of applied research in these areas and the dissemination of knowledge tailored for practical application.

CLEAR-LA's strategy is an interdisciplinary, rigorous problem-oriented approach and a core concern for good government and transparency are basic elements of this that will guide innovation in new policy arenas. CLEAR-LA is positioning itself as a methods-neutral and credible space to consolidate institutional alliances and promote dialogue among different stakeholders within the region.

# **CLEAR South Asia (CLEAR-SA)**

### John Floretta, Deputy Director

### Diva Dhar, Policy and Training Manager

South Asia is host to a vibrant civil society committed to monitoring government performance, accountability, and transparency. However, the impact of many civil society organizations in this sphere has been limited due to their relatively weak evaluation and analytical capacities. In the public sector, too, within specific agencies and subnational governments, most budding champions of reform have the will but little understanding of the power of M&E to improve development policy and programmes. On the supply side, the M&E community in South Asia is still nascent and inadequately networked.

CLEAR-SA's work in the first year has focused on seizing emerging opportunities to promote evidence- based policy in partnership with influential organizations, both in the public and the not-forprofit sectors. Three long-term engagements illustrate how CLEAR-SA is working to improve the profile, quality, and use of monitoring and evaluation through hands-on, action-learning approaches. The examples include: CLEAR SA's work with Pratham, a leading education NGO; the Government of Haryana; and the Janasree Sustainable Development Mission, a major development-oriented NGO in Kerala.

Pratham, India's largest NGO, works to provide quality education for millions of underprivileged children in rural and urban areas. CLEAR-SA, with Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL), has developed a partnership with Pratham based on a shared belief in evidence-based policy-making. Over the last decade, J-PAL has conducted several randomized evaluations of Pratham's pilot programmes. Results from these evaluations have helped the NGO improve the design, delivery, and impact of its programmes. As an organization committed to learning, Pratham was interested in integrating impact evaluation into its M&E systems and requested support to help build the capacity of its management, programme, and M&E teams to design, run, and interpret the results of randomized evaluations.

CLEAR-SA supported a long-term capacity development initiative designed around the evaluation of a Pratham pilot programme assessing the impact of improving mothers' literacy on child learning outcomes. In tandem with the two-year evaluation, CLEAR-SA held four workshops covering: theory of change; evaluation design; sampling; instrument design; data collection and analysis; and interpreting and communicating results. The week-long workshops incorporated group exercises and fieldwork for Pratham staff and were followed by homework requiring participants to apply what they had learned. The multi-pronged capacity development built greater ownership among Pratham teams for evaluation and increased the staff's ability to learn from and effectively communicate the impact of its programmes.

CLEAR-SA is also leveraging its expertise in primary data collection and analysis to support the Government of Haryana's Centre for Research and Experiments for Action and Policy (REAP) based at the State Council for Educational Research and Training (SCERT). The state has 2.7 million students enrolled in 15,000 government schools. While there has been good progress in recent years toward increasing enrolment rates, there is significant room to improve the quality of education. REAP was established within the Education Department to provide research, monitoring, and evaluation of state education programmes. It aims to provide timely feedback so that its findings can influence policy decisions. As a new center, REAP and the Education Department sought assistance from CLEAR-SA to help establish robust systems and practices.

Over the past year, CLEAR-SA has advised and mentored a core staff of three REAP members monitoring government education programmes through survey data and summarizing findings for policy-makers. CLEAR joined forces with the Assessment Survey Evaluation Research (ASER) centre to train 28 district level staff, who work full time to collect data, on the rollout of the Right to Education programmes in the state. To date, four REAP reports based on analysis of primary data collected by these teams have been presented to the top government officials in Haryana, to inform them on the progress of the signature education programmes in the state. CLEAR-SA seeks to help REAP develop the expertise and experience to provide this key information without further assistance within the next two years.

In addition to support to REAP on establishing programme monitoring systems, CLEAR-SA is working with Janasree Sustainable Development Mission to pilot a participatory monitoring framework. Janasree is one of the largest NGOs in the state of Kerala, encompassing 60,000 self-help groups (SHGs) comprising both men and women. It provides small loans to the SHGs and helps coordinate regular group meetings. In addition to financial empowerment, Janasree seeks to contribute to greater gender equality. Kerala presents a paradox for gender equality: although there is little gender disparity in literacy and life expectancy, indicators of economic empowerment remain low for women. The most recent National Family Household Survey (NFHS-3, 2006) figures show that only 21 per cent of women (ages 15-49) have some control over household finances.

In collaboration with CLEAR-SA, Janasree and the Kerala State Planning Board are pioneering a participatory approach to gendersensitive monitoring. CLEAR-SA supported a series of workshops and SHG consultations to develop a monitoring tool based on the priorities of the groups. Jansree will use the monitoring instrument to track progress on improving the financial and gender equality outcomes of its members. In the first phase, CLEAR-SA facilitated grassroots discussion and debate regarding gender equality and relevant indicators for measuring gender-related changes. Next, the monitoring tool was piloted in one district. The second phase of the collaboration will expand the monitoring system to a state-wide pilot involving 750 SHGs. CLEAR-SA is supporting Janasree to build sustainable internal systems for monitoring, data collection, and analysis. The results will help Janasree design future programmes based on a clearer understanding of the financial and gender-related circumstances of its members.

The long-term engagements discussed above are demonstration models of how stronger M&E systems can link to policy and programme decision-making. Experiences and lessons from these projects are being shared through workshops and webcast roundtables with broader communities of practice and networks. The demonstrations are generating interest in the potential of M&E to play a meaningful role in development policy and practice.

The Centre for Economic Research in Pakistan (CERP) is leading CLEAR-SA activities in Pakistan and CLEAR-SA is collaborating with the NGO BRAC and Innovation for Poverty Actions in Bangladesh. It is also engaging with the South Asia Community of Evaluators to support networks of M&E professionals and communities of practice.

### Common ground in meeting the challenges

All centers working on the ground are facing some common challenges. Some key challenges, and how CLEAR is addressing them are noted below.

*Focus on shaping demand.* It will be vital for the CLEAR centers not simply to focus on supply of expert know-how in M&E, but also to help shape demand and demonstrate the potential of M&E for contributing to development effectiveness. The centers thus are working not just on the technical aspects of M&E, but also on building the capacity of those constituents who can drive and demand performance information for making decisions.

Focus on quality, relevance, and innovation. Related to the point above, there is a private sector supply for M&E that is important to support, rather than compete with, in order to foster a robust market of services in the region. A key role for CLEAR is to fill the currently existing gaps, focusing on quality and relevance and driving innovations in areas where information is sparse or not well supported by the market. Developing capacity to build capacity. CLEAR responds to demand for capacity development services at the time when the centers are building their own internal capacities in complex areas. This challenge is being addressed through the CLEAR global programme by networking the centers and by harnessing international experiences and technical expertise in support of the centers.

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## **AUTHOR VITÆ**



**CATSAMBAS, Tessie Tzavaras** is President of EnCompass LLC and brings 30 years of experience in planning, evaluation and management of international programs and activities. Ms. Catsambas is an innovator and practitioner in appreciative evaluation methods. She co-authored with Hallie Preskill a book entitled. *Reframing Evalua*-

*tion Through Appreciative Inquiry* (Sage Publications 2006).Ms. Catsambas was appointed to the IOCE Board in 2011 where she is part of the Executive Committee serving as Secretary.



**DE SILVA, Soma** is a former UNICEF South Asia Regional Monitoring and Evaluation Officer. She is a founder member and two times past president of the Sri Lanka Evaluation Association and the current president of the International Organisation for Collaboration in Evaluation (IOCE) and co-chair of EvalPartners. She has initiated and is

currently coordinating the project 'Teaching Evaluation in South Asia' which is designed to establish evaluation training at post graduate diploma level in academic institutions in South Asia and is sponsored by the International Development Research Centre. For nearly twenty years she has worked in the field of monitoring and evaluation, commissioning, organizing and supporting evaluations of national development programmes. She initiated and coordinated the South Asia Evaluation volume published in 2008.



**DHAR, Diva** is a Policy and Training Manager for CLEAR/J-PAL South Asia at IFMR. Diva works on strengthening monitoring and evaluation capacity in the regional policy and decision-making. She has previously worked as a Research Manager for J-PAL South Asia and as a Project Associate for J-PAL/IPA in Morocco. She has overseen several

randomized evaluations dealing with education, gender, urban services, governance and microcredit in India, Morocco and Bangladesh. She has also worked as a consultant for the Planning Commission and with the UN and NGOs in India. Her research interests include gender and education. Diva has a Masters in International and Development Economics from Yale University and a B.A. in Economics and International Relations from Mount Holyoke College.



**FLORETTA, John** is Deputy Director at J-PAL South Asia at IFMR. A primary focus of his role is management of the CLEAR South Asia Regional Center. John works on building monitoring and evaluation capacity in the region and promoting evidenced-based policy and scale-up of successful programs. His career has concentrated on

international development program management and analysis. During 2004-2009, he worked in the United Nations system in China in volunteer and civil society strengthening, disaster management, and food security. He was later based in U.S. conducting analysis and evaluations with Mercy Corps and implementing learning management strategies at Nike Foundation. He holds a Masters of Arts in Law and Diplomacy from the Fletcher School at Tufts University where he was a Board of Overseers Scholar.



**HERNÁNDEZ, Cristina Galíndez** is Executive Director, CLEAR Center for Spanish-speaking Latin America. She has worked as a consultant for the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation (Mexico office) and for the McArthur and Ford Foundation (Mexico and Central America Office). Her consulting practice focused on improving

non-profit organizational performance, non -profit legal and fiscal frameworks, strategic planning, program evaluation, design of administrative processes, and grant monitoring. Ms. Galíndez has also consulted to the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Inter-American Foundation, the Inter-American Development Bank, Abt Associates Inc., Casals & Associates Inc., and Management Systems International (USAID contractors working in Mexico).



**HEIDER, Caroline** is the Director-General and Senior Vice President of the Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) at the World Bank. IEG evaluates the development effectiveness of the World Bank Group and reports directly to the Board of Executive Directors through the Committee on Development Effectiveness (CODE). Previously,

Caroline headed the Office of Evaluation at the World Food Programme. She provided strong leadership and vision to the transformation of this evaluation function to make it a more effective contributor to ensuring WFP fulfills its mission. In transforming the office, she brought together people's skills to relate to stakeholders and inspire her team to strive for excellence, introduced new types of evaluations based on her extensive experience in leading and managing them, and a proven track record of accomplishing tasks within time and budget limitations. Caroline's experience encompasses complex strategic evaluations, country portfolio evaluations and program/project evaluations in a vast array of sectors. She has been a trend-setter for developing and testing new evaluation tools, appropriately transferring methods and skills from one context to another.



**KENNEDY-CHOUANE, Megan G.**, a development professional with expertise in evaluation and peace studies, works as a policy analyst at the OECD, supporting the DAC Network on Development Evaluation. Megan carried out a major comparative analysis of development evaluation systems in 2010 and has also led work on

evaluation capacity development, joint evaluation and engagement with emerging donors. Prior to working at the OECD, Megan held various positions in the public and non-profit sectors, working with vulnerable families in the Women, Infants & Children (WIC) nutrition program in the United States, and coordinating peacebuilding work on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. She spent one year as a Thomas J. Watson fellow. In 2008, she completed a Master's degree in Public Administration and International Management, with a focus on public policy evaluation. She holds a post-graduate diploma in Children, Youth and Development Studies and a dual Bachelor's degree in Economics and in Peace & Global Studies.



**KHATTRI, Nidhi** is Lead Evaluation Officer, Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) of the World Bank, and Head, CLEAR Secretariat. For the past 20 years Nidhi has focused on evaluation, program development, and research, primarily in education and adult learning programs. Before joining IEG, she was Senior Evaluation Officer

and Acting Manager at the World Bank Institute's evaluation group. Before that she was Senior Researcher at the American Institutes for Research, Washington D.C., where she led research and evaluation projects for OECD countries. From 1997 through 2000, Nidhi lived in China and worked with a number of development agencies, including the Australian Agency for International Development, UNICEF, UNDP, and the World Bank. Nidhi has authored several research papers and reports, including *Principles and Practices of*  *Performance Assessments* (Erlbaum, 1997). She received her Ph.D. in social psychology from Columbia University.



**KIRK, Colin** has been UNICEF's Director of Evaluation since April 2011. The Director is responsible for providing leadership of the evaluation function across UNICEF, and in particular for managing the Evaluation Office. Colin was previously the Evaluation Director at the African Development Bank (2007-11), based in Tunis; Head of

DFID's Rwanda country office, based in Kigali (2004-7); and Head of DFID's Evaluation Office (1999-2003). Before that, he served with DFID as a social development specialist, working mainly in India and West Africa. In 2008, he served as Chair of the Evaluation Cooperation Group, the professional network linking the evaluation offices of the various international financial institutions; and was Vice-Chair of the Evaluation Network of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee in 2002. He studied at the universities of Cambridge and Colombo before completing a DPhil in social anthropology at the University of Sussex, based on fieldwork in Sri Lanka.



**MALDONADO TRUJILLO, Claudia** is General Director, CLEAR Center for Spanish-speaking Latin America. Professor-Researcher at the Public Administration Division at CIDE. She has a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Notre Dame and holds a Master's Degree in Public Affairs from Princeton University. Her research

focuses on the political economy of conditional cash transfers in Latin America and comparative development (Mexico and Brazil). She works on social policy and program evaluation. Ms. Maldonado has coordinated capacity-building efforts in M&E for CONEVAL, and worked for the General Direction for Evaluation at Oportunidades, the most important conditional cash transfer program in Mexico



**OKSANEN, Riitta** is a senior advisor on development evaluation in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finland. Riitta's tasks include evaluation capacity development in the Ministry and support to partner countries. Since the Ministry's strategy is to support evaluation capacity development through partnerships, Riitta represents the Minis-

try in international initiatives aiming at stronger national evaluation systems in the partner countries. She also currently chairs the

OECD/DAC evaluation network's task team that focuses on evaluation capacity development.

Riitta's background is in development policy and management of development cooperation. She has previously worked in the Ministry as director for development policy and as an advisor on management and effectiveness of development cooperation. She worked in Finland's permanent EU delegation as counsellor responsible for EU development policy and cooperation, and chaired the Council's working group on development cooperation during the Finnish EU Presidency in 2006. Before joining the Ministry in 1999 she worked as a consultant specialising in management of development cooperation.



**ORDONEZ, Ximena Fernandez** is Evaluation Officer, Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) of the World Bank. Her responsibilities include providing technical assistance to governments and bank teams on Monitoring and Evaluation and Performance Management Systems, producing related knowledge products, and task managing

the Anglophone Africa and Latin America CLEAR Centers. She has previously been a visiting scholar at MIT's Media Lab, where she also incubated and founded the company "Assured Labor". She also worked as a researcher in the think tank PENT in Argentina, and consulted for the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). Ximena has a Master's in Public Administration from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, and a Masters in Social Policies from FLACSO Argentina. She was a Fulbright and IDB Scholar, and has published numerous articles on development and evaluation.



**PORTER, Stephen** is currently Acting Director of the Centre for Learning on Evaluation and Results (CLEAR Anglophone Africa) at the University of the Witwatersrand. Stephen has a 10 year career in developing and implementing Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) systems in Africa and is well versed in theories of change. Currently Stephen

is working with the Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) in South Africa on a range of evaluation issues. Stephen has designed and supported the implementation of a range of community based M&E systems that balanced donor, government and organisational requirements, including an integrated mobile technology pilot to improve health care in KZN. Stephen has developed good practice M&E systems for USAID and DFID funded initiatives at VSO and AMREF. Stephen has conducted a provincial level evaluation of the institutional barriers to the outcomes based approach and is currently teaching courses at Wits. Stephen has also assisted an FAO division on the development of simple monitoring systems. Stephen has a range of peer-reviewed publications on institutional, collaborative, and rights-based M&E approaches. Stephen holds a Master's degree in Public Policy and is currently working on his Ph.D.



**RUGH, Jim** has been professionally involved for 48 years in rural community development in Africa, Asia, Appalachia and other parts of the world. For the past 32 years he has specialized in international program evaluation. He served as head of Design, Monitoring and Evaluation for Accountability and Learning for CARE Interna-

tional for 12 years, responsible for promoting strategies for enhanced evaluation capacity throughout that world-wide organization. He is recognized as a leader in the international evaluation profession. From 2008-2011 he served as the AEA Representative to the IOCE where he was an active member of the Executive Committee. He was asked by UNICEF and IOCE to coordinate the Eval-Partners Initiative. Jim co-authored the popular and practical *Real-World Evaluation* book (2<sup>nd</sup> edition published by Sage 2012, see www.RealWorldEvaluation.org). In recognition of his contributions to the evaluation profession he was awarded the 2010 Alva and Gunnar Myrdal Practice Award by AEA.



**SANZ LUQUE, Belen** is Head of Evaluation at the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UN WOMEN) where she has been since 2007. She is the co-chair of the Taskforce on Gender Equality and Human Rights evaluation of the United Nations Evaluation Group. Her academic background is in Social Anthropology, with post-

graduate degrees in Anthropology from the University of London and in Evaluation of Public Policies and Programmes from the Complutense University of Madrid. During the last 10 years she has specialized in evaluation of development programmes and policies, with a focus on gender equality policies and strategies. She has focused on the development of systems, methods and tools for organizations to use evaluation as a function for learning and improvement, and on the integration of gender equality into evaluation. Previous to the United Nations, Belen worked as Head of Evaluation in the Spanish Development Cooperation. She acted in 2006 as vice-Chair of the DAC/OECD Evaluation Network, and was a member of the DAC/OECD Gendernet Bureau between 2003 and 2004.



**SAUNDERS, Murray** is Director of the HERE Centre (Higher Education Research and Evaluation), in the Department of Educational Research, Lancaster University, and Professor of Evaluation in Education and Work. Murray has acted as a consultant to, and undertaken a wide range of evaluation projects for, the British Council, DfES

[Department for Education and Skills], DFID [Department for International Development], ESRC [The Education and Social Research Council], HEFCE [Higher Education Funding Council], the UNRWA and a variety of regional agencies. Murray has carried out evaluation and research projects in a wide range of cultural contexts, including in Asia: China, Japan, Singapore and India; in Africa: Tanzania, Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana and Ethiopia; in Latin America: Mexico and Chile: In the Middle East: Jordan as well as other member states of the EU and Russia. Murray is involved in promoting and developing evaluation practice as past president and Council member of the UK Evaluation Society, Board member and immediate past president of the European Evaluation Society, chair of the co-ordinating committee for the establishment of the IOCE [International Organisation for Cooperation in Evaluation] and currently Vice President of the IOCE. He is associate editor of the only international multidisciplinary academic journal in the European context - Evaluation.



**SEGONE, Marco** is responsible for the Decentralized evaluation function as well as the National Evaluation Capacity Development portfolios at UNICEF Evaluation Office. He is the Co-Chair of the EvalPartners and the UNEG Task Force on National Evaluation Capacities since 2009. Previously, he was Regional Chief, Monitoring and

Evaluation in the UNICEF Regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE/CIS), during which he represented UNICEF on the Board of Trustees of the International Programme Evaluation Network (IPEN). During his 21 years in international development, he worked in Bangladesh, Pakistan, Thailand, Uganda and Albania in integrated development projects. In 1996 he joined UNICEF to work for the UNICEF Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean; UNICEF Niger, where
he founded and for two years coordinated the Niger M&E Network (ReNSE); UNICEF Brazil, where he was one of the founders and coordinator of the Brazilian Evaluation Network. In 2003 he was elected Vice-President of IOCE and was one of the founders of the Latin America and the Caribbean Network for Monitoring, Evaluation and Systematization (RELAC). Marco authored and/or edited several books and articles, including *Evaluation for equitable development results; How to design and manage Equity-focused evaluations; From policies to results; Country-led M&E systems; Bridging the gap. The role of M&E in evidence-based policy making; New trends in development evaluation; Creating and developing evaluation organizations; and Democratic evaluation.* In recognition of his contributions to the evaluation profession he was awarded the 2012 Alva and Gunnar Myrdal Practice Award by AEA.



**SNIUKAITE, Inga** is a Deputy Chief of Evaluation in UN WOMEN Evaluation Office. She is responsible for the management of UN WOMEN corporate evaluations, evaluation capacity building initiatives, and providing advice on M&E to the global and regional programmes of UN WOMEN. She is a co-chair of UNEG National Evaluation Capacity

Development task force and a member of Management Group for EvalPartners. Inga holds Ph.D. in Sociology and has extensive experience in social research and evaluation projects, including the assessments of international, national and community programmes. Inga worked in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in Kosovo as a Gender Advisor, being responsible for gender mainstreaming in democratization processes and developing women's community initiatives for peace building and post conflict recovery. Inga taught on a number of sociology, development and gender courses at Warwick University (UK). She published in the areas of social inclusion and women's online activism.

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# Learn how Evaluation can contribute to equitable development results!

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## NOTES


In recent decades, civil society has increasingly played a central and active role in promoting greater accountability for public action, through the use of evaluation. National and regional Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs) grew from 15 in the 1990s to more than 150 by 2012.

Acknowledging the enhanced role of civil society, UNICEF and IOCE launched EvalPartners. This is a global initiative that promotes coordinated effort among development organizations, governments and civil society, with the aim of strengthening civil society evaluation capacity, in order to fortify the voice of civil society in policy-making and in promoting equity-focused and gender-responsive evaluations. EvalPartners was met with a surge of enthusiasm evidenced in the joining of 27 members, including all regional VOPEs, within a few months of its launch.

The goal of the EvalPartners Initiative is to contribute to the enhancement of the capacity of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) – notably, VOPEs – to influence policy-makers, other key stakeholders and public opinion, so that public policies are evidence-informed and support equity in development processes and results.

The expected outcome of EvalPartners is three-fold:

- VOPEs are stronger. Their institutional and organizational capacities are enhanced.
- VOPEs are more influential. They are better able to play strategic roles in strengthening the enabling environment for evaluation within their countries. In so doing, they help to improve national evaluation systems and to promote the use of evaluation evidence in the development of policies geared towards effective, equitable and gender-equality responsive development results.
- VOPEs develop sustainable strategies to enhance the evaluation skills, knowledge and capacities of their members, and of evaluators more widely, to manage and conduct credible and useful evaluations.



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