



Summit for the future
of *evaluation*

FUTURE-READY EVALUATION: INTEGRATING VOICES AND LOCALIZING EVALUATION FOR GLOBAL IMPACT

27 – 30 May, 2025 | Courtyard by Marriott Colombo, Sri Lanka

REPORT

EVALUATION CONCLAVE 2025



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About the Community of Evaluators - South Asia (CoE-SA)

www.coesa.org

The Community of Evaluators South Asia, a Section 8 company registered in India, is a consortium of evaluators from South Asia working together to strengthen the field of evaluation.

It is South Asia's largest network of Evaluators, and a platform for Evaluators to interact and engage with one another. CoE-SA provides opportunities for knowledge sharing, capacity development, networking advocacy, developing protocols and standards for evaluation in South Asia.

This Report was compiled by **Dr. Ranjith Mahindapala**, Conclave Director, Community of Evaluators – South Asia. The assistance of the Rapporteurs in capturing the salient points in the inauguration, keynote panel and the closing is gratefully acknowledged. (June 2025)

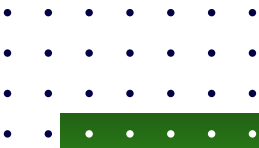
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MESSAGE FROM



Rajib Nandi 
CHAIRPERSON | CoE-SA



Dear friends and colleagues,

It is my pleasure to share the report of the Evaluation Conclave 2025 and the Summit for the Future of Evaluation—the sixth Conclave organized by the Community of Evaluators – South Asia (CoE-SA). Building on our earlier editions in Delhi (2011), Kathmandu (2013, 2015), Thimphu (2017) and a five-city hybrid Conclave in 2022, this year we gathered in Colombo, Sri Lanka, to reflect, learn, and chart the road ahead for a future-ready evaluation ecosystem.

Our theme, **“Future-Ready Evaluation: Integrating Voices and Localizing Evaluation for Global Impact”**—speaks to the imperative of centring diverse perspectives and grounding global systems in local realities. The programme combined **10 skills-building workshops**, a **keynote plenary**, **15 pre-formed panels**, **7 multi-paper sessions**, **5 roundtables**, and a **side event**, and was **inaugurated by the Hon. Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, Dr. Harini Amarasuriya**. A flagship element was the **Summit for the Future of Evaluation**, co-hosted with the UNFPA Independent Evaluation Office, EvalYouth, the Global Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation, and IOCE, featuring **six high-level plenaries** on youth leadership, ethical and effective use of AI, and strengthening institutions for the future. Together, these sessions moved us beyond assessment toward learning, adaptation, and transformation.

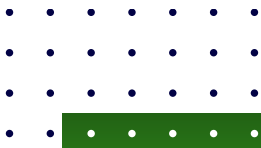
This edition brought senior leaders and young and emerging evaluators into purposeful dialogue—sharing practice, strengthening capacities, and advancing evidence-informed decision-making across South Asia and beyond. The discussions underscore our collective commitment to **inclusive, context-sensitive, and globally relevant** evaluation practice.

On behalf of CoE-SA, I extend sincere thanks to our partners, speakers, facilitators, and participants for their contributions to this milestone event. I invite you to read the full report and join us in carrying this momentum forward—so that evaluation continues to serve as a catalyst for equity, learning, and systems transformation.

Warm regards,

Dr. Rajib Nandi
Chairperson, Community of Evaluators – South Asia (CoE-SA)

MESSAGE FROM



Harini Amarasuriya ↗

Prime Minister of the Democratic Socialist
Republic of Sri Lanka



I am pleased to extend my warm greetings to all participants of the Evaluation Conclave 2025 and the Summit for the Future of Evaluation. Future-Ready Evaluation – Integrating Voices and Localizing Evaluation for Global Impact, being held in Colombo from 27 to 30 May 2025.

It is a matter of pride for Sri Lanka to host this significant event, organized by the Community of Evaluators South Asia in collaboration with global leaders in the evaluation field: the Independent Evaluation Office of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), EvalYouth, Global Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation and International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation. I commend the organizers for bringing together diverse global and regional stakeholders to foster meaningful dialogue, exchange of ideas, and advancement of evaluation practices that are both inclusive and forward-looking. I particularly appreciate the idea of promoting young and emerging evaluators as my country also need more and more competent evaluators to produce evaluations leading for us to take good decisions.

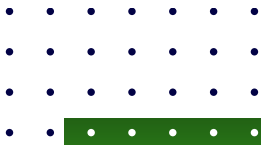
The theme of this year's conclave and the summit focusing on dialogue on future of evaluation is both timely and relevant at this critical juncture. As nations strive toward achieving sustainable development amidst rapid global changes, it becomes imperative to strengthen evaluation systems that are rooted in local realities, culturally sensitive, and globally informed. I am particularly heartened by the emphasis on integrating voices from youth, women, and marginalized communities into evaluation practices. Localizing evaluation while embracing innovation ensures that development is not only effective but also equitable.

Sri Lanka is proud to support such initiatives that encourage global cooperation and knowledge sharing. I am confident that the deliberations of this Conclave and the Summit for the Future of Evaluation will contribute significantly to shaping evaluation systems that are responsive to the challenges and opportunities of our time.

I wish the event every success in shaping the future of evaluation and extend my best wishes to all participants.

Dr. Harini Amarasuriya
Prime Minister
Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

MESSAGE FROM



Marco Segone ↗

Director | IEO, UNFPA



The UNFPA Independent Evaluation Office proudly welcomes you to the historic Summit for the Future of Evaluation, a pivotal event within the Evaluation Conclave 2025 in the vibrant city of Colombo. This Summit marks a significant milestone, celebrating years of collective action and partnership, through the fifth anniversary of the Eval4Action campaign, and the tenth anniversary of EvalYouth, the Global Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation and the International Year of Evaluation.

Inspired by the visionary spirit of the United Nations Summit of the Future and its Pact for the Future, this Summit arrives at a crucial juncture. As we strive to accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, it is clear that innovative approaches, collaborative partnerships, and a forward-thinking mindset are essential across all sectors and specifically within evaluation.

In this vision, the Summit is forging the future of evaluation by offering a unique platform to:

Catalyze global collaboration by bringing together diverse voices – seasoned evaluators, emerging young evaluation leaders, policymakers, international organizations, civil society, academia and other sectors – to collectively shape evaluation’s future.

Champion meaningful youth engagement in evaluation by recognizing that the energy, creativity, and perspectives of young people in evaluation are indispensable in building a relevant evaluation ecosystem in the future.

Navigate the ethical frontier of AI in evaluation through thoughtful dialogue on responsible integration of AI in evaluation practice.

Embrace innovation and learning by showcasing best practices and igniting future-fit evaluation approaches.

Highlighting the evaluation community’s collaborative spirit, the Summit also includes the #EvalTorch relay, a symbolic passing of knowledge, inspiration, and dialogue towards a stronger evaluation future. We will also celebrate organizations empowering young evaluators through the 2025 Youth in Evaluation Champion Awards.

Ultimately, we aspire to ignite collective commitment and action for future-ready evaluation, and to leave Colombo equipped with strengthened networks and innovative strategies to ensure credible evaluation evidence continues to drive transformative change in the future.

Welcome to the Summit for the Future of Evaluation! Together, we will shape what comes next.

Marco Segone

Director, Independent Evaluation Office United Nations Population Fund

MESSAGE FROM



Khalil Bitar ↗
President | IOCE

Dear friends and colleagues,

With great pleasure and a strong sense of shared purpose, I extend a warm welcome to you all for the EvaluationConclave 2025 and the Summit for the Future of Evaluation. I am honored to join you for these crucial events focused on Future-Ready Evaluation: Integrating Voices and Localizing Evaluation for Global Impact.

A central theme of the Conclave is the imperative to transform evaluation practices to be more inclusive, equitable, and adaptable. This involves actively amplifying diverse voices, particularly those from marginalized communities, youth, and community-based organizations, ensuring that evaluation approaches are responsive to local contexts and forward-looking, ultimately enhancing global impact in meaningful ways.

The Summit draws inspiration from the UN's Summit of the Future and its Pact for the Future, which advocate for strengthened global collaboration to address humanity's most significant challenges. In alignment with this global vision, our gathering here underscores the vital importance of reinforcing global governance through improved international cooperation in challenging global realities, accelerating progress toward sustainable development, and prioritizing promoting equity and social and environmental justice.

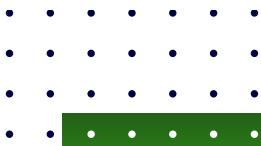
This year represents a truly significant period for the evaluation field, marked by both notable progress and considerable global complexities. We celebrate the fifth anniversary of the Decade of Evaluation for Action (#Eval4Action) Campaign and the tenth anniversary of both the EvalYouth Global Network and the Global Parliamentarian Forum for Evaluation. Furthermore, we commemorate the tenth anniversary of EvalYear2015. Building upon these critical milestones, we are also proud in IOCE and EvalPartners to launch the Global Evaluation Agenda (GEA) 2.0 - EvalAgenda. Yet, this period also presents significant uncertainties and instability in many regions of the world. These collective achievements, alongside pressing challenges, highlight the essential nature of our collaborative efforts in shaping the future of evaluation, including promoting youth engagement and embedding ethical AI use, ensuring that evaluation contributes effectively to transformative change.

The Conclave and Summit offer a uniquely valuable platform for sharing perspectives on the importance of global collaboration in evaluation, advancing the Eval4Action vision with its partners, and developing shared insights on the future direction of our field. Together, we can build a future-ready evaluation ecosystem that is not only equipped to address current development needs and challenges but is also capable of anticipating and effectively responding to emerging global trends and bottlenecks.

Thank you for your dedication to advancing evaluation worldwide. I look forward to productive discussions and collaborations with all of you.

Khalil Bitar
President, International Organization for the Cooperation in Evaluation (IOCE)

MESSAGE FROM



Ana Erika Lareza ↗
Chair | EvalYouth Global Network



It is with great enthusiasm that EvalYouth GlobalNetwork joins the global evaluation community at the Evaluation

Conclave 2025 and the Summit for the Future of Evaluation in Colombo. We are honored to contribute to this significant gathering focused on shaping the path forward for evaluation in an ever-evolving world.

As we look towards building "future-ready evaluation systems," the indispensable role of Young and Emerging Evaluators (YEEs) becomes ever clearer. YEEs bring more than just new skills and ideas; they are inherently fluent in the information technologies and innovations that are reshaping our world. Their unique access to global perspectives and cross-cultural knowledge, coupled with a deep awareness of the latest issues and trends, positions them to navigate complexity and drive innovation in evaluation practice. In a rapidly changing context marked by crises and challenges, young people possess the capacity to absorb vast amounts of information, adapt swiftly, and leverage technology in ways that can push the boundaries of what evaluation can achieve.

This potential is not merely theoretical; the story of EvalYouth itself is a testament to it. Ten years ago, a group of young evaluators were empowered and supported, becoming true agents of change. Today, EvalYouth stands as a vibrant network with a culture that empowers young people to mobilize, take action, and shape their own future within the evaluation field.

Building on this foundation, EvalYouth's vision remains steadfast: to empower YEEs to become competent evaluators and to ensure young people are meaningfully engaged in evaluation processes. Our approach is continuously adapting to the changing context, pushing through challenges like the pandemic, and leveraging emerging technologies to remain relevant and consistently deliver on our goals.

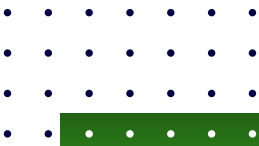
Our strategy is to persistently advocate for youth engagement until it transforms from a promising trend into a fundamental standard - where the inclusion of young voices in every evaluation conversation is the norm. In the coming years, EvalYouth will continue to be a force that challenges complacency within the broader evaluation landscape. We aim to keep the community on its toes, ensuring evaluation remains relevant, agile, inclusive, and impactful, regardless of context or crisis.

Ultimately, EvalYouth is truly an organization for young people, by young people. By bringing YEEs to the forefront of discussions and empowering them, we are not only building towards a united vision for the future but also ensuring that they are equipped to carry that vision forward. There is no future without the young people; they are its stewards. It is our collective responsibility to pass on the lessons, wisdoms, principles, and values of evaluation to the next generation. Only by equipping young people with the necessary skills and knowledge can we truly be future-ready.

We believe that the time has come for the evaluation community to fully embrace the energy and innovation that YEEs bring. Moving forward without actively engaging young people is not an option if we are to keep pace with technology, information, and the evolving global landscape. Against this backdrop, and specifically at this pivotal Summit for the Future of Evaluation, we invite our partners to reflect on how we can collectively enhance engagement with young people in all aspects of our work. This Summit represents a brand new door of opportunity, opening towards endless potential and possibilities where, together, we can co-create a better future for evaluation - one that is truly responsive to emerging trends and changes. We look forward to a productive and inspiring Summit for the Future of Evaluation.

Ana Erika Lareza
Chair of EvalYouth Global Network

MESSAGE FROM



Michael Quinn Patton 
Evaluation expert and thought leader



TRANSFORMING EVALUATION TO EVALUATE TRANSFORMATION

The evaluation profession evolved under assumptions of stability in which governments and programs had predictable and structured planning processes with clearly established goals and accountability processes. The COVID-19 crisis disrupted many of these ways of working and there is no going back. The post-Covid world is characterized by economic, political, social, and cultural turbulence and uncertainty. The current global context includes the intensifying climate emergency, world hunger increasing, violent conflicts on the rise, more refugees than at any time since World War II, widespread pollution of land, sea, and air, and none of the SGD targets on track to be attained. These intersecting and intensifying crises constitute what has come to be called a polycrisis – multiple, overlapping, and reinforcing crises.

On the political front, misinformation is the lubricant that keeps the wheels of autocratic deception flowing smoothly, breeding distrust and suspicion. It is the antithesis of evidence-based decision-making. Distortions of reality, denial of facts, and attacks on scientific truth fuel polarization. Trustworthy, valid, and useful information is at a premium in a crisis manufactured by those in power to further consolidate their power.

These and related threats to a just and sustainable world have put a spotlight on the need for systems transformation, the clarion call of our times. Evaluators enter the fray to assess the relevance and impacts of proposed transformational initiatives. But transformational initiatives offer new challenges for the design, implementation, and use of evaluations. Thus, evaluating transformation requires transforming evaluation.

Evaluation as a profession suffers its own history of being used for oppression, thus the need to decolonize evaluation. Evaluators, individually and collectively, need to be prepared to contribute to finding pathways toward system transformations for a more equitable and sustainable future. Doing so includes evaluating and extracting actionable lessons and generative insights from the nature, scope, effects, and responses to the regressive forces opposing equity and sustainability. Evaluating the effects of intentionally destructive policies, practices, and processes is a way for evaluation to counter the initiatives aimed at undermining independent evaluation and transparent accountability.

Ten substantial evaluation transformations are needed for evaluation’s future to be part of the solution rather than part of the problem: (1) moving from project modeling to systems thinking; (2) working across silos and divisions programmatically, sectorally, and geographically; (3) intergenerational evaluation to integrate different time horizons and experiences; (4) culturally responsive and Indigenous evaluation to be situationally appropriate, relevant, and meaningful; (5) transitioning from theory of change to theory of transformation (6) engaging seriously with the implications of decolonization and polycrisis complexities; (7) incorporating new technologies like AI with attention to ethical uses; (8) connecting local actions with global trends to ensure the relevance and utility of evaluations; (9) integrating human and ecological dimensions to address the interdependence of equity and sustainability; (10) enhancing the capacity of evaluators and the evaluation profession to be resilient in the face of shocks, attacks, turbulence, and turmoil by enhancing the credibility, utility, and value of what we do. What is at stake goes beyond improving programs or assessing the direction and effects of opposing worldviews about systems transformation? What is at stake is the future of all life on Earth. The future of evaluation is intrinsically connected to the future of the world.

Michael Quinn Patton
Independent organizational development and programme evaluation consultant
Founder and Director of Utilization-Focused Evaluation

1. The Evaluation Conclave, 2025

1.1. Introduction

The Evaluation Conclave, a biennial event organized by the Community of Evaluators - South Asia (CoE-SA), has progressively addressed evolving themes in the evaluation discourse. Previous conclaves have tackled critical issues such as Making Evaluation Matter (2020), Evaluation for Development (2013), the Use of Evaluation for Policy Influence (2015), New Frontiers in Evaluation (2017), and Equity and Transformation in Challenging Times (2022). Building on this rich history, the Evaluation Conclave 2025 focussed on "Integrating Voices by Localizing Evaluation for an Inclusive Change".



The current evaluation discourse is undergoing a transformation that emphasizes inclusivity and equity. This transformation highlights the importance of integrating diverse voices, including those from communities, citizens, young people, and community-based organizations. By bringing local experiential knowledge to the forefront of evaluation practices, the Conclave aimed to contribute to the discourse on the evaluation that is theoretically and evidentially responsive to the local culture and people's ways of living. Integrating voices focusing on localizing evaluation involves generating context-relevant evidence to inform policymakers and people at large. The practice of evaluation informed by local knowledge is empowering as it enables people to understand and decide what is good for them. This practice encourages evaluations to be for the people and by the people, enabling an inclusive change. To facilitate the localization of evaluation, it is essential to change our mindsets and develop both institutional and individual capacities. Considering this perspective, recognizing and valuing local expertise is crucial in enriching evaluation practices.

The relevance of the idea of localization in the context of South Asia today cannot be overstated, as many South Asian countries are still in the process of developing national evaluation policies. The advancement in evaluation education and training is also in its nascent stage. Evidence-based decision-making is not yet fully practiced, and the level of evaluative thinking is still weak. These circumstances can also be an opportunity to start thinking locally. Furthermore, the region is progressing rapidly with nations coming together to advance the evaluation discourse and practice through policy and people-centric development programs. For instance, Bhutan has made strides with its Gross National Happiness framework, integrating local culture and values into its development paradigm. In a similar vein, India's NITI Aayog has been promoting evidence-based policymaking to drive sustainable development. On the other hand, Sri Lanka and Nepal made notable progress in enacting national evaluation policies, building evaluation capacities, and promoting evaluative thinking at various levels of governance. These efforts underscore the importance of localized evaluation practices that can address unique regional challenges and leverage local knowledge for more effective and inclusive development outcomes.

The Evaluation Conclave 2025 emphasized the importance of applying methods and techniques that are relevant and embedded in local contexts. In the current practice, local involvement is often tokenistic, primarily used only as recipients of program benefits and as primary data sources. This call for change to ensure meaningful and effective evaluation practices, with genuine local participation driving equitable and inclusive outcomes.

A key highlight of the Evaluation Conclave was the Summit for the Future of Evaluation and Youth in Evaluation Champion Awards organized in collaboration with the Eval4Action campaign and its co-leaders: the UNFPA Independent Evaluation Office, EvalYouth Global Network, Global Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation (GPFE), and International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation (IOCE).

Objectives

To guide the Conclave and Summit, we set the following objectives:

- 1. Amplify Diverse Voices:** Promote the inclusion of diverse perspectives from various stakeholders, including marginalized communities, young and emerging evaluators, and indigenous and women evaluators in the evaluation process.
- 2. Localize Evaluation Practices:** Encourage bottom-up approaches and use indigenous methods to make evaluations more contextually relevant and effective.
- 3. Promote Equitable Change:** Facilitate discussions on how evaluations can drive equitable and inclusive development, particularly for vulnerable populations.
- 4. Explore Innovative Approaches:** Share and discuss practical and innovative methods for conducting evaluations in different country contexts.
- 5. Address Contemporary Challenges:** Examine how evaluations can adapt to and address contemporary global challenges such as climate change, artificial intelligence, conflicts, discrimination, capacity needs and gender issues.



Sub-Themes

- 1. Practical Ways of Doing Evaluations in Varying Country Contexts:** Countries, especially in the Global South, exhibit varying levels of development and face distinct challenges related to equality, equity, accountability, sustainability, and resource availability compared to those in the Global North. This variation must be considered when developing an evaluation ecosystem. It is crucial to explore alternative methods and practices that deviate from conventional evaluation techniques and are tailored to fit diverse local contexts.
- 2. Alternative Development and Evaluations:** Alternative development refers to human-centred thinking, integrating local culture into development, and empowering people from the ground up. This subtheme of the Conclave aims to discuss the role of evaluations in fostering alternative development paradigms that prioritize sustainability, equity, and inclusivity with a focus on mental health and overall well-being.
- 3. Transferring Evaluation Learnings in the Context of Contemporary Issues:** Several crises and complexities are emerging. Addressing the impact of global challenges such as climate change, conflicts, discrimination, and gender inequality is crucial. Additionally, dealing with emerging technologies like artificial intelligence and machine learning in evaluation practices to enhance learning and outcomes will be another area of focus at the Conclave.

1.2. Structure of the Event



The event consisted of the following components:

- ➔ **27 May 2025** (09:00 – 17:00): Pre-conclave skills development workshops focussing on building skills in evaluation
- ➔ **27 May 2025** (18:00 – 19:30): Inauguration of the Evaluation Conclave 2025 and the Summit for the Future of Evaluation
- ➔ **28 May 2025** (09:00 – 17:00): Panel presentations and roundtable discussion focussing on sharing experiences on evaluations, and side events
- ➔ **29 May 2025** (09:00 – 13:00): Panel presentations and roundtable discussion focussing on sharing experiences on evaluations, and side events
- ➔ **29 May 2025** (14:00 – 17:30): Summit for the Future of Evaluation (Sessions 1-3)
- ➔ **30 May 2025** (09:00 – 12:30): Summit for the Future of Evaluation (Sessions 4-6)
- ➔ **30 May 2025** (12:30 – 13:30): Closing of the Evaluation Conclave 2025 and the Summit for the Future of Evaluation

The complete agenda is at Annex

2. Inauguration of the Evaluation Conclave, 2025 and the Summit for the Future of Evaluation ↗



27 May 2025 | 18:00 – 19:30 | Sapphire Ballroom

The Agenda of the inauguration is at Annex 2.1.

Welcome

Dr. Rajib Nandi, Chairperson of the Community of Evaluators–South Asia (COE-SA), delivered the welcome remarks, setting the tone for the Conclave and underscoring South Asia’s leadership in advancing inclusive, regionally grounded evaluation. He highlighted the timeliness of the theme–“Future-Ready Evaluation: Integrating Voices and Localizing Evaluation for Global Impact”–and the evolving role of evaluation in a world shaped by complexity, disruption, and transformation. Convened in Colombo, the Evaluation Conclave 2025 and the Summit for the Future of Evaluation brought together regional and global stakeholders to centre marginalized perspectives while keeping global systems rooted in local realities. Through skill-building workshops, technical sessions, and summit plenaries on youth leadership, ethical AI, and future-ready institutions, the gathering emphasized moving beyond assessment toward learning, adaptation, and transformation, with the aim of strengthening evaluation’s contribution to just, evidence-informed development.

Hon. Kabir Hashim, Member of Parliament, Sri Lanka and Chair, Global Parliamentary Forum for Evaluation, warmly welcomed delegates and emphasized Sri Lanka’s strong commitment to strengthening global evaluation capacity. In his brief but impactful address, Mr Hashim emphasized that for governments and parliaments to solve today’s complex challenges, Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) must be seen as a powerful and necessary tool–not a hammer treating everything as a nail. With artificial intelligence (AI) now enhancing the speed and accessibility of evaluation, he urged participants to seize this moment to transform future evaluation practices. He closed by stating “*At the end of this conference, the important thing is not to forget.*”

Youth and Artificial Intelligence

Mr. Marco Segone, Director of the Independent Evaluation Office of the United Nations Fund for Population Activities framed the Summit as a historic moment. The world is growing more complex and resources are tight, which makes transformative and accountable development urgent. He argued that evaluation is essential in guiding this transformation—especially on the climate crisis, technology, and intergenerational equity.

He highlighted two core themes. First, youth and future generations: the 1.6 billion young people in the world are not just tomorrow’s leaders—they are shaping the present. Their energy, digital fluency, and creativity are vital for a more inclusive and equitable future. Second, artificial intelligence: AI is already changing how evaluation is done. Evaluators should neither resist it nor adopt it uncritically; instead, they must shape its ethical use.

Mr. Segone also stressed that, even amid innovation, human relationships remain at the heart of evaluation—trust, community engagement, and partnerships with decision-makers. With this in mind, the Summit’s goal is to help build a future-ready, impactful, and responsive evaluation ecosystem.

Intergenerational Engagement and Inclusion

Ms. Ana Erika Lareza, Chair of the EvalYouth Global Network, spoke passionately about how young and emerging evaluators (YEEs) are reshaping the evaluation landscape. With 20+ chapters across Asia, EvalYouth has demonstrated that youth-led innovation can achieve high impact even with limited resources. YEEs are inherently fluent in digital tools and AI, often mastering them intuitively, and hybrid formats—such as the Virtual Theater—have showcased the creativity and potential of youth-led platforms.

She urged the community to move beyond treating youth inclusion as a trend and instead make it a standard across all stages of evaluation. Her message was clear: embed YEEs meaningfully in systems and practice to build a future-ready field. She closed with a reminder that resonated across the room: *“There is no future without young people. We must pass on the values of evaluation to the next generation.”*

Mr. Khalil Bitar, President of the IOCE celebrated the unprecedented intergenerational and global diversity of this conclave, calling it the most inclusive he has ever attended. He praised the strong participation of youth and acknowledged evaluation pioneers who shaped the discipline from theory to governance. He acknowledged the vision of Marco Segone in inspiring the Summit and recognized the tireless work of the Community of Evaluators South Asia and EvalYouth.

Closing with a poetic tribute to evaluation’s moral compass, he quoted Mahmoud Darwish, reminding participants to:

“Think of others... Those who have lost the right to speak... Those with nowhere to sleep... And as you liberate yourself with metaphors, think of others.”

Address by the Chief Guest

Hon. Dr. Harini Amarasuriya, MP and the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka welcomed participants to Sri Lanka and to this important evaluation gathering, addressing a diverse audience of parliamentarians, UN representatives, development practitioners, civil society actors, and young evaluators. She emphasized the importance of both the substance and spirit of the event—valuing not only what is discussed but how it connects people across generations and institutions.

Hon. Dr. Amarasuriya praised the growing relevance of evaluation in improving governance, accountability, and policymaking. When development interventions fail, the consequences go beyond financial loss; they affect lives, livelihoods, and equity.

She emphasized that evaluation must be embedded throughout the lifecycle of policies and programs, not just at the end. This includes early risk identification, progress tracking, and lessons learned for timely course correction. She acknowledged evaluation’s role across education, climate, economy, and governance, and stressed that evaluation should help expose gaps in inclusion and policy effectiveness. For this to happen, governments must invest in data systems, institutional capacity, and a culture of evidence and learning—which is still lacking globally.

She also highlighted that despite years of practice and conferences we are unable to be satisfied that there is sufficient impact on the quality of interventions. She stressed the need to build institutional capacity and data systems, foster a culture of learning, not just compliance, and create space for young evaluators while valuing the contribution of seasoned professionals.

In regard to the situation in Sri Lanka, she acknowledged institutionalization of evaluation across public institutions, but also noted that despite this, recent national crises were neither predicted nor prevented—a sign that evaluation practice must become more impactful and integrated into real-world decision-making. The participation of young and emerging evaluators is a welcome development. Their involvement brings dynamism and future-readiness to the field. At the same time, she assured seasoned professionals: *“Count us older folks in—we still have something to contribute.”*

The Prime Minister, on behalf of the Community of Evaluators, South Asia then made recognition awards to **Dr. Soma De Silva** (in recognition of her outstanding contributions to advancing the global evaluation community and championing evidence-based practices in South Asia), **Mr. Ziad Moussa** (in appreciation of his leadership and unwavering commitment to strengthening evaluation networks and fostering global collaboration), **Ms. Ada Ocampo** (in honour of her visionary leadership and dedication to promoting evaluation excellence and professionalization worldwide), and **Mr. Marco Segone** (in recognition of his pioneering efforts in advancing evaluation as a tool for evidence-based decision-making and social impact) and **Dr. Michael Quinn Patton** (In appreciation of his contributions to the field of evaluation and his dedication to shaping future-ready evaluation practices).

Evaluation Torch Handover



“As we pass the torch, we place our trust in those who will carry the world forward—with inclusive approaches and bold vision.”

The Evaluation Torch, a symbol of intergenerational and multi-stakeholder commitment, began its journey from the Parliament of Nepal in 2015 and has since travelled through 70 countries, symbolizing global commitment to knowledge sharing, accountability, and evaluation for a better world. Its arrival in Sri Lanka underscores the country’s growing role as a regional and global leader in the evaluation community.

The Torch was passed from the Eval4Action initiative to the Hon. Prime Minister, marking the country’s leadership in global evaluation discourse.



Briefing on the Community of Evaluators South Asia (CoE-SA)

An introductory video highlighted CoE-SA’s journey since 2010 as South Asia’s largest evaluation network. Key contributions included knowledge-sharing platforms, capacity building initiatives, regional standards and protocols, and hosting the flagship Evaluation Conclaves.

Reflections from the Partners

Mr. Henrique Pissaia, representing the **Independent Evaluation Office, New Development Bank (NDB)** shared the bank's evolving journey as a young multilateral institution, now marking its 10th anniversary, with Algeria recently joining as a new member alongside original BRICS nations and others like Egypt, UAE, and Bangladesh.

NDB applies a hybrid methodology combining internationally accepted evaluation standards (like those from the Evaluation Cooperation Group of Multilateral Development Banks) with local frameworks and country-specific criteria. For instance, in South Africa, evaluations include *transformative equity* and *climate/ecosystem criteria* alongside traditional relevance-effectiveness-efficiency metrics. In India, the evaluation of the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut Rapid Rail project integrates local evaluation standards (e.g., equity criteria by NITI Aayog's DME0) and includes peer reviews from the ADB and AIIB.

He announced the upcoming launch of the Global South Evaluation Platform, a collaborative space meant to amplify Southern voices and practices in evaluation and invited contributions from across the region.

He closed his remarks by saying *"Integrating voices and localizing evaluation is not just a theme—it's our principle."*

Mr. S. S. Mudalige, **Director General of Sri Lanka's Department of Project Management and Monitoring**, affirmed the country's push for a future-ready, inclusive evaluation ecosystem under the new National Evaluation Policy (2024 Financial Management Act). He noted a shift from project-by-project assessments to a coordinated, system-wide approach, backed by a National Public Investment M&E Committee (with his department as Secretariat). Since launching the programme, 11 evaluations have been completed, a 2026 cycle is in preparation, and a specialist working group is refining methods and standards. He stressed ethical use of AI, big data, and machine learning, meaningful participation of youth and communities, and blending traditional knowledge with evidence-based practice—"evaluation as a two-way dialogue with citizens."

The opening session set the tone: evaluation must evolve from a technical exercise into a movement—choosing transformation over tradition, inclusion over inertia, and courage over complacency.



Vote of Thanks



The Vote of Thanks was jointly proposed by **Dr. Shweta Anand**, Board Member, COE-SA, and **Dr. Soma De Silva**, Former President, Sri Lanka Evaluation Association.

Celebratory Dinner

The inauguration session was concluded with a celebratory dinner.



3. Keynote Plenary [↗](#)

28 May 2025 | 09:00 – 10:30 | Sapphire Ballroom

Addressing Contemporary and Emerging Global Challenges through Evaluation

Chair

- Ada Ocampo (President, IDEAS Global)

Speaker

- Michael Quinn Patton (Independent Organizational Development and Program Evaluation Consultant, and Former President, American Evaluation Association)
- Jin Zhao (Evaluation Specialist, Independent Evaluation Office, BRICS New Development Bank)
- Emmanuel Jimenez (Director General, Independent Evaluation Department, Asian Development Bank)
- Ada Ocampo opened the session by urging evaluators to reflect strategically on their evolving role in a world marked by crisis, complexity, and change. She framed evaluation not merely as a technical activity but a political and moral undertaking, calling attention to the global context of democratic backsliding, disinformation, and economic uncertainty.

Keynote Presentation – Michael Quinn Patton

In terms of Projects to System Transformation, Dr. Patton traced the trajectory of evaluation from traditional, project-based assessment to systemic transformation. He emphasized that evaluators must now engage at the level of interlinked global systems rather than isolated programme logic.

“Evaluators must engage not just in measurement, but in movement.”

The polycrisis and the Global Emergency – Dr. Patton described the convergence of crises—climate change, political instability, pandemics, and inequality—as a “polycrisis.” Highlighting that 7 of 9 planetary boundaries have already been breached, Patton asked whether we are in a global emergency. He affirmed and criticized the rapid return to business-as-usual post-COVID, urging for transformative—not incremental—change.

Defining Transformation - Drawing a sharp contrast between the Theory of Change and Theory of Transformation, he proposed a new framework:

- Multi-sectoral collaboration (e.g., anti-smoking movement as a metaphor)
- Convergence across macro/micro and global/local levels
- Addressing mental models and power structures—not just outputs

He referenced the “Water of Systems Change” model, emphasizing the under-addressed dimensions of:

- Power and relationships (relational)
- Mental models (transformational)
- Policy and resourcing (structural)

The Panel discussion that followed reflected on a number of critical areas, as follows:

Ms. Jin Zhao (Independent Evaluation Office, BRICS New Development Bank) spoke of opportunities -systems thinking that allows evaluations to become more impactful and stakeholder-relevant. Evaluation can better align with governments and communities. The challenges are really the resistance from traditional funders and gaps in systemic evidence gathering. She noted that emerging practices such as the use of AI and innovative tools, and integration of new evaluation criteria like climate and ecosystem health and transformative equity piloted in South Africa. The key insight was that evaluation transformation is not just about better tools but a shift in mindset and values.

Dr. Emmanuel Jimenez (Independent Evaluation Department, Asian Development Bank) highlighted three strategic shifts that are needed, namely, from Accountability to Learning as Learning is a public good but often under-resourced, from Projects to Initiatives needing forward-looking, systemic approaches and from short-term to long-term where transformation requires evaluations that spans decades.



Dr Jimenez also pointed out the contextual challenge, in that 46 per cent of the countries are regressing politically, from democracies to hybrid regimes, limiting policymaker engagement and dialogue. Furthermore, the institutional reality is that long-term evaluations may need to be continued by future generations. He also noted that evaluators today must establish robust data systems for continuity.

Dr Patton, reflecting on SDG evaluation, proposed a Global Evaluation Initiative for the SDGs, to focus not just on an outcome audit, but a systemic evaluation of the SDGs as a theory of transformation, and called for cross-platform synthesis, shared global learning, real-time evaluation via AI and human networks, and an independent, inter-institutional coordination.

These discussions followed an interactive session. Mr Jimenez suggested starting with modest goals and evolving gradually and highlighted the £40M contribution from the Wellcome Trust as a catalytic fund. He emphasized the need for top-level institutional buy-in as a key need. Ms Zhao proposed regional hubs (e.g., starting in Sri Lanka) and the creation of a shared knowledge and results platform especially for the Global South.

In response to the audience question on measuring mindset transformation, the Panel noted that evaluation frameworks must move from rigid indicators to adaptive, localized measurements, and that transformation should begin with the imagination of a thriving world, not just survivalist thinking. On the question of whether AI risks detaching evaluation from ground realities, the Panel noted that AI must be used responsibly, complementing—not replacing—grounded, participatory insights.

In his concluding remarks, Dr Patton stressed that it would be unrealistic to expect rigid 15-year global goal frameworks to remain relevant in complex, fast-changing systems, and that principles—like equity, shared accountability, inclusion—must guide adaptive and resilient responses to emerging challenges. He cautioned that failure to meet SDGs is not just due to crises, but due to entrenched systems that serve the powerful. His final message was:

“Nobody is in charge of transformation. It is a collective voyage through a dynamic and unpredictable system.” – Michael Patton



In concluding the session, Ms. Ada Ocampo stressed that evaluation is not just technical task. It has a political, and moral attributed and should be considered urgent. The path forward lies in rethinking evaluation as part of global transformation, rooted in interconnected systems, flexible principles, and inclusive approaches. She remarked that the session marked a pivotal moment—a challenge to the global evaluation community to think and act differently. The SDGs are not just goals to be tracked but a transformation to be realized. Evaluators must be architects of change, not just auditors of results.

4 . Skills Development Workshops ↗

4.1 Contents of the workshops

The skills development workshops were held on 27 May 2025. Short biographies of the workshop resource persons are in Annexe. A summary of the workshops is presented in the following section.

09:00 – 17:00

WS#01: Evaluation of the Transformative Power of Evaluation for a Fair and Sustainable World

Facilitators:

Adinda Van Hemelrijck, Nicola Giordano, Aydin Shahidi (Collaborative Impact, Belgium) and Phuntsho Choden (Independent Evaluator, Bhutan)



Workshop Summary:

A transformative approach to evaluation is urgently needed in international development to address the current global polycrisis and shift towards more systemic and collaborative models. This workshop explored how the Participatory Impact Assessment and Learning Approach (PIALA) could help evaluation practitioners navigate this new paradigm. PIALA is a participatory mixed-methods approach that combines diverse methodologies to assess system change and impact in complex environments. The workshop delved into PIALA's principles and applications, featuring expert presentations and breakout sessions for peer learning, aiming to enhance skills in designing and implementing rigorous, collaborative, and empowering evaluations that catalyze collective action for sustainability and resilience.



Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this workshop, participants were expected to:

- Understand the concept of PIALA and its practical applications.
- Be equipped to apply its principles, elements and standards to include different user perspectives in design decisions and different ways of knowing and valuing in analyses.
- Recognise both the benefits and the challenges of using PIALA to elevate the learning potential and transformative power of evaluation.

Target Group:

The workshop was built on interactive learning and dialogue and was targeted towards a mix of participants at young, mid-career, and senior professionals, including professionals who design and conduct evaluations, managers who produce the terms of reference for evaluations and use the results for decision-making and designing or adapting strategies, and Commissioners who manage evaluation funds and assess the value-for-money of proposals crossing their desks.

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 13

09:00 – 17:00

WS#02: From Pilot to Scale Up: Opportunities and Challenges of Evaluating AI Systems

Facilitators:

Kartik Adapa (WHO) and Alpan Raval (Wadhvani AI)

Hosted By:

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, India Office



Workshop Summary:

The rapid integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into decision-making, service delivery, and policy formulation makes rigorous evaluation essential. As AI systems transition from small pilot projects to large-scale deployments, their influence and potential risks grow. A model that succeeds in a controlled pilot may behave unexpectedly or yield unintended consequences at scale, affecting wider populations and critical outcomes.

Evaluating AI systems at each stage is therefore crucial to ensure they remain effective, fair, and accountable. Robust evaluation frameworks are needed to assess not only technical performance (e.g., accuracy) but also ethical considerations (fairness, transparency) and real-world impact (user trust, service efficiency, policy outcomes). This workshop addressed the urgent need for evaluation specialists and policymakers to scrutinize AI initiatives, ensuring that scalable AI solutions truly benefit society and align with strategic goals.

The workshop aimed to bring together experts to discuss challenges and opportunities of evaluating AI systems in various areas including but not limited in healthcare, education, agriculture, women economic empowerment; and potential strategies for mitigating the associated challenges.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this workshop, participants were expected to:

- **Acquire Critical Evaluation Skills:** The ability to critically assess AI evaluation metrics and methods, understanding their strengths, limitations, and suitability at different stages of an AI project;
- **Able to undertake Practical Application:** Experience in applying core evaluation principles to real-world AI scenarios across the project lifecycle (from pilot phase to full-scale deployment), enabling them to design and implement effective evaluation plans for AI initiatives; and
- **Acquire the Contextual Insight:** An understanding of how to integrate localized, context-specific factors into AI evaluations, ensuring that assessment approaches are relevant and sensitive to cultural, organizational, and policy considerations.



Target Group:

The workshop aimed to equip mid- and senior-level evaluation professionals and policymakers with the skills and knowledge to assess AI systems effectively as they grow from pilot to widespread use.

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 18

09:00 – 12:30

WS#03: Leveraging ICT Tools for High-Quality Data Collection, Visualization, and Decision-Making

Facilitator:

Maulik Chauhan (Trestle Research and Consulting Pvt Ltd)



Workshop Summary:

The success of evaluations in today's data-driven world depends on high-quality data and its effective management. This workshop focused on leveraging ICT tools for digital data collection, data cleaning, statistical analysis, and dynamic visualization to ensure data are reliable, actionable, and drives meaningful change. Participants were expected to gain hands-on experience with platforms like SurveyCTO, Jamovi, and Google Data/Looker Studio. By mastering these tools, professionals can make data-driven decisions, ensure transparency, and align interventions with KPIs. The workshop addressed the limitations of traditional data collection methods and highlighted the benefits of mobile data collection tools for real-time monitoring, accuracy, and geospatial insights, ultimately equipping professionals to design evaluations that support evidence-based decision-making and data-driven development.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this workshop, participants were expected to:

- Gain practical, hands-on experience with key ICT tools used in evaluation, including SurveyCTO for digital data collection, Jamovi for statistical analysis, and Google Data/Looker Studio for dashboard creation;
- Learn to apply these platforms to conduct efficient, timely, and transparent evaluations aligned with key performance indicators (KPIs);
- Strengthen their capacity to make data-driven decisions and communicate findings effectively through interactive visualizations; and
- Understand the importance of transferring these digital skills to young and emerging evaluators, helping to build a future-ready generation of professionals in the development and evaluation sectors.



Target Group:

This workshop was designed for NGOs, CSR professionals, M&E/development professionals, researchers/evaluators, government agencies, policymakers, technology enthusiasts in the development sector, and young professionals keen to build their ICT capacity in data-driven evaluation.

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 21

09:00 – 12:30

WS#04: Youth Participatory Evaluation

Facilitators:

Gabriela Renteria Flores (Mexico) and Rai Sengupta (India)



Workshop Summary:

Youth Participatory Evaluation (YPE) and Youth Transformative Participatory (YTP) Evaluation are emerging approaches that meaningfully engage young people in all stages of evaluation, guided by their lived experiences and cultural contexts. This workshop emphasized the importance of youth-led, inclusive evaluation practices that amplify young voices and enhance development impact. Despite their transformative potential, meaningful youth engagement is often hindered by limited resources, unclear participation pathways, and capacity gaps. The session aimed to build understanding, showcase global examples, and foster collaboration for sustainable youth inclusion in evaluations.



Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this workshop, participants were expected to:

- Gain Understand YPE and YTP frameworks;
- Gain practical insights for engaging youth across the evaluation cycle;
- Learn from case studies and global best practices;
- Identify actionable strategies to improve youth participation; and
- Co-develop tools for advancing youth-led evaluation in their contexts.

Target Group:

This workshop targeted young and emerging evaluators, evaluation commissioners, development practitioners, and evaluation professionals interested in inclusive, youth-centered evaluation practices.

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 12



09:00 – 12:30

WS#05: Evaluating for Equity: Strengthening Gender and Intersectionality

Facilitators:

Sonal Zaveri and Ranjani K Murthy (Independent Evaluators, India)



Workshop Summary:

This workshop focused on integrating gender and intersectionality in evaluations to ensure inclusivity and address systemic inequalities. Traditional gender evaluations often overlook diverse experiences among women, especially those from marginalized communities such as indigenous, Dalit, or disabled women. The workshop clarified how to move beyond data disaggregation and explore how intersecting power structures influence access and outcomes. Participants engaged in group discussions, case study analyses, and practical applications to better understand and apply an intersectional lens in project evaluations and SDG monitoring.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this workshop, participants were expected to:

- Deepen understanding of intersectionality in evaluation;
- Learn to apply gender-intersectional frameworks in project and SDG evaluations;
- Identify and address systemic barriers in evaluation processes; and
- Gain tools for designing inclusive, equitable, and transformative evaluations.

Target Group:

This workshop targeted young professionals, mid-career and senior evaluators, and policymakers interested in advancing gender equity and inclusive evaluation practices.



NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 12

09:00 – 12:30

WS#06: Evidence Gap Mapping

Facilitator:

Suchi Malhotra (Campbell South Asia)



Workshop Summary:

Evidence Gap Maps (EGMs) are powerful tools that visually present existing research evidence across sectors, helping identify both evidence-rich and under-researched areas. They support decision-makers, researchers, and policymakers in prioritizing future research and improving development outcomes. This interactive workshop introduced EGMs, demonstrated their use in evidence synthesis, and offered hands-on experience in designing EGMs to support data-driven decision-making.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this workshop, participants were expected to:

- Understand EGMs and their application in development and evaluation;
- Learn to frame research questions using frameworks like PICOS;
- Acquire practical skills to design, interpret, and apply EGMs; and
- Identify and address evidence gaps for enhanced policy and research planning.



Target Group:

This workshop was targeted for researchers, evaluators, policymakers, and professionals (young to senior level) in development, interested in using systematic tools like EGMs to strengthen research, policy, and programmatic decisions.

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 15

13:30 – 17:00

WS#07: How to Develop Organizational M&E System

Facilitator: Reinhard Stockmann, Saarland University, Germany

Workshop Summary:

Many organizations want to use Monitoring and Evaluation (M+E) systems to improve their work quality and steering capabilities but often lack the necessary organizational structures. Unlike national or program-level systems, organizational M+E systems need to be embedded within the organization's framework and aligned with its goals and strategies. Organizations develop systematic M+E structures, often compiled in an evaluation policy, that address evaluation forms, scopes, regularity, departmental inclusion, methodology enhancement, and quality assurance. This workshop aimed to develop an understanding of the need for organizational M+E systems and the structural elements of an effective policy. Participants examined existing policies to identify their structural elements and potential gaps.



Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this workshop, participants were expected to:

- Understand the importance of organizational M&E systems;
- Learn key structural elements of an effective M&E policy;
- Analyze real-world examples to identify gaps and best practices; and
- Gain practical insights into designing M&E systems aligned with organizational needs.

Target Group:

The workshop was intended for M+E officers, executive staff, and those responsible for implementing M+E systems in governmental and non-governmental organizations.

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 36



13:30 – 17:00

WS#08: Value for Money Assessment in M&E

Facilitators:

Priya Rampal and Radhika Menon (Oxford Policy Management, India)

Workshop Summary:

Value for money (VfM) in evaluation is crucial for ensuring projects deliver the best results with available resources, driven by funder requirements for transparency and accountability. This workshop, led by VfM experts from Oxford Policy Management (OPM), aimed to equip participants with the knowledge and skills to evaluate VfM in development projects. The workshop introduced OPM's approach, including the "5 E's" (Economy, Efficiency, Equity, Effectiveness, and Cost Effectiveness) and the 8-step process for VfM evaluation. Participants engaged in practical exercises, group discussions, and case studies to understand VfM criteria, standards, and the intersection of VfM with Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) systems. The workshop focused on framing evaluative questions, developing rubrics, combining evidence for sound judgments, and presenting clear performance assessments, ultimately enabling participants to integrate VfM into their evaluations.



Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this workshop, participants were expected to:

- Understand the concept and importance of Value for Money (VfM) in evaluation and development programming;
- Apply the “5 Es” framework—Economy, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Equity, and Cost-Effectiveness—to assess VfM in projects;
- Identify and define appropriate VfM criteria, standards, and evaluative questions for a given context;
- Learn to design and integrate VfM assessments within existing Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) systems;
- Gain hands-on experience with real-world case studies and practical exercises to strengthen decision-making around VfM; and
- Utilize evaluative reasoning and rubrics to reach credible, transparent, and evidence-based VfM judgments.



Target Group:

The workshop was designed for evaluators, implementors, monitoring, evaluation, and young to mid-career learning professionals, researchers and students.

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 19



13:30 – 17:00

WS#09: Integrating Disability Justice Lens to Gender Responsive M&E Assessment and Learning

Facilitators:

Ayusmita Samal and Aarti Batra (Mission Accessibility, India)

Workshop Summary:

In recent years, feminist and participatory MEAL (Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning) approaches have gained momentum by incorporating gender responsiveness, racial equity, and local knowledge. However, disability justice and disability-disaggregated data remain largely absent from these methodologies. This workshop aimed to bridge this gap by introducing an intersectional lens that integrates feminist and disability justice principles into MEAL systems. It guided participants in designing, monitoring, and evaluating programs that are both gender and disability responsive.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this workshop, participants were expected to:

- Gain a conceptual understanding of SMART indicators through a feminist and disability justice lens;
- Explore how "attainable" and "relevant" criteria may shift in inclusive MEAL frameworks;
- Develop technical skills for designing and applying gender and disability responsive indicators; and
- Engage in practical exercises using case studies and cost-benefit analysis to design equitable MEAL frameworks.

Target Group:

The workshop was targeted for young and mid-career professionals, evaluators, and practitioners aiming to build intersectional skills in inclusive, gender and disability-responsive MEAL systems.

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 03



13:30 – 17:00

WS#10: Evaluative Thinking Approach for Evidence-Based and Human Rights-Focused Governance

Facilitators:

Farhod Khamidov and Tetyana Nikitina (Independent Evaluators from Tajikistan and Ukraine)



Workshop Summary:

In a data-driven world, strong monitoring and management information systems (MIS) are crucial for effective governance, especially in development and humanitarian settings. While MIS and monitoring frameworks are increasingly in place, demand for evaluation remains limited. This workshop introduced the concept of evaluative thinking to bridge that gap and strengthen the use of data for evidence-based governance. It explored how robust systems can guide decision-making, ensure accountability, and enhance programme outcomes by making data actionable and policy relevant.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this workshop, participants were expected to:

- Understand the role of evaluative thinking in improving governance outcomes;
- Learn to design scalable and adaptable MIS for both long-term and emergency settings;
- Strengthen the ability to use data to inform policy, foster accountability, and support adaptive decision-making; and
- Improve preparedness for data collection, analysis, and use in diverse contexts.



Target Group:

The workshop targeted policymakers, government officials (especially in planning, development, and strategy roles), training institutions, private sector professionals, and young to mid-career professionals interested in governance and evaluation.

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 12



5. Panel Presentations



5.1 Summaries of Panel/Roundtable presentations

Summaries of Panel/Roundtable presentations are given below:

28 May 2025 | 11:00 – 12:30 | Emerald

Panel Presentation: Advancing Regional and Global Evaluation Impact through Inclusive Practices



Presenters: Henrique Pissaia, Ada Ocampo, and Iwona Safi



Moderator:
Ziad Moussa

Summary:

The panel discussed how global and regional collaborations can improve evaluation impact through inclusive practices. Bringing together experts from international organizations and evaluation networks, the session will examine how partnerships among governments, civil society, and policymakers can strengthen evaluation systems and promote evidence-based decision-making. Panelists shared insights on engaging policymakers and fostering evaluation cultures that drive inclusive and sustainable development outcomes.

28 May 2025 | 11:00 – 12:30 | Sapphire 1

Panel Presentation: APEA's Collaborative Journey with the YEEs in Asia and the Pacific



Presenters: Jigme Sonam, Prof Yoko Ishida, Amil Epa, Qudratullah Jahid



Moderator:
Ana Erika Lareza

Summary:

The Asia Pacific Evaluation Association (APEA) recognizes the vital role of the 1.1 billion youth in the Asia Pacific region for the future of evaluation and actively promotes Young and Emerging Evaluators (YEEs) through initiatives such as capacity development workshops, webinars, and professional development opportunities in collaboration with various stakeholders. APEA, which received the Super Champion award at the Youth in Evaluation Week 2024, advocates for including YEEs in all evaluation activities. This panel discussion highlighted APEA's efforts, addressed challenges to youth participation, and proposed ways to improve collaboration with Volunteer Organizations for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs) and YEEs. The panel aimed to foster collaborative dialogue, raise awareness of youth involvement, and inspire participants to include youth in various roles within the evaluation community, ultimately setting an example for other regions to professionalize the field and prepare the next generation of evaluators.

28 May 2025 | 11:00 – 12:30 | Sapphire 3

**Panel Presentation: Localized Evaluation for Transformative Action:
Embracing Pluralism for sustainability and Resilience**



Panelist: Adinda Van Hemelrijck, Phuntsho Choden, Aydin Shahidi, and Nicola Giordano

Summary:

The world faces a polycrisis of interconnected sustainability challenges, requiring a shift from isolated development to systemic, empowering approaches. Evaluation must support this paradigm shift by fostering internal change within systems and individuals, aligning with principles of equity, inclusivity, and sustainability. This calls for an evaluative learning culture that understands power dynamics and systemic inequalities. Conventional evaluation often struggles to balance rigor with local relevance, sparking debates over standardized methods. This panel examined how localized evaluation can promote transformative action for sustainability and resilience through a pluralistic, participatory approach. The aim is to reimagine evaluation as a systemic, transformative, empowering, and inclusive practice.

28 May 2025 | 11:00 – 12:30 | Sapphire 4

Panel Presentation: Building evaluation Systems and Capacities to Leverage Context – A Way Forward



Presenters: Basavaraju R Shreshta, Khilesh Chaturvedi, Reinhard Stockmann, and Soma de Silva



Moderator:
Syeda Naghma Abidi

Summary:

Despite the focus on participatory and decolonized evaluation approaches that root development efforts in local realities and diverse perspectives, these principles are not fully incorporated into evaluation systems and methodologies. A recent study indicates that the challenge is not in technical expertise but in understanding change processes and aligning evaluation frameworks with community aspirations. This roundtable aimed to explore the true meaning of "context" in evaluation, identify systemic and methodological gaps that prevent effective context-driven evaluations, address competency gaps among evaluators, and plan a way forward for more rigorous, contextualized, and impactful evaluations. The session featured real-life examples to discuss how to recognize and adapt to context, tailor tools and methods, build capacity for contextual evaluation, and share knowledge to promote community-centered monitoring and evaluation practices that foster long-term systemic change.

28 May 2025 | 11:00 – 12:30 | Jade

Roundtable Discussion: Tracking What Matters: Innovative Pathways for Evidence-Based Decision Making in Food Security and Agriculture



Panelist: Shehan Fernando, Sudath Jayasinghe, Kavinda Gunasekara, and Nayanahari Jayakody



Moderator:
Yumna Salman

Summary:

This panel features leading voices from Sri Lanka's agriculture and food security sector. Panelists sought to explore emerging trends, policy priorities, and digital innovations that influence monitoring systems—from national census updates to cross-sector collaborations and real-time analytics. Using institutional experiences from WFP, FAO, the Ministry of Agriculture, and the Department of Census and Statistics, the discussion underscored both challenges and opportunities for enhancing evidence use in agricultural governance.

28 May 2025 | 11:00 – 12:30 | Sapphire 2

**Multi-paper Session: Advancing Equity and Inclusion:
Evidence-Based Approaches for Development Evaluation**

Moderator: Anna Maria Augustyn



Summaries of papers :

1. Towards Equitable CSR: Bridging Regional Development Disparities Through Evidence-Based Assessment of CSR Fund Allocation in Rural India (Manmeet Kaur, Saikat Ghosh, and Sandeep Ghosh)

India's CSR framework, while requiring corporate social spending, suffers from significant spatial imbalances, with industrialized states receiving most of the funds and critical sectors like environmental sustainability being overlooked. The "local area preference" clause is misunderstood, leading to localized investments that worsen regional disparities, and most companies lack a strategic implementation plan, hindering progress toward India's SDGs. This study examines the mismatch between CSR fund allocation and rural quality of life, measured by a comprehensive index, finding that CSR investments are not necessarily directed by need but are influenced by personal factors, causing inefficient and unfair deployment. The research recommends adopting a more strategic, evidence-based approach to CSR, encouraging a shift from mere compliance to impact-driven initiatives that tackle developmental gaps and support national goals.

2. Study of women collectives in the handicraft sector in Rajasthan using equitable, inclusive and intersectional methods for evaluation (Aastha Dang)

This study examined women craft collectives in Rajasthan, focusing on barriers and facilitators impacting their production, working conditions, and income. It explored how inequitable structures affect India's handicraft industry, utilizing inclusive and participatory evaluation methods adapted from Bamberger/Segone and Jhpiego frameworks. The research combines quantitative and qualitative approaches, including observations, interviews, and focus groups, conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic. Key findings revealed challenges like attrition due to better wages elsewhere, changing aspirations of young women, competition from power-loom products, caste-based disparities, and restrictive gender norms that limit women's mobility and participation. Economic issues such as low wages, inconsistent orders, and gendered roles within the craft value chain were also highlighted.

3. Empowering women to transform communities: The impact of Heifer Nepal's Strengthening Smallholder Enterprises of Livestock Value Chain (SLVC) Program on women's empowerment (Diya Dutta)

Heifer International's SLVC program in Nepal combines asset transfer and income generation with Values Based Holistic Community Development (VBHCD) to empower women. Research, including a 2021 impact study and benchmarking against national demographic surveys, demonstrated significant transformative changes. The program led to increased economic empowerment, reduced spousal violence, shared unpaid care work, and overall social and political empowerment among marginalized women, exceeding national averages. This study highlighted the effectiveness of community-centered development in achieving sustainable, long-term social norm change.

28 May 2025 | 13:30 – 15:00 | Emerald

Panel Presentation: Youth in Evaluation: Setting Standards for Future-Ready Evaluation Practice



Presenters: Marco Segone, Arshee Rizvi, and Olivia Melvin



Moderator:

Antonina Rishko-Porcescu

Summary:

Youth engagement is vital for building an inclusive and future-ready evaluation ecosystem, bringing fresh perspectives and digital fluency to complex global challenges. However, meaningful youth participation is often hindered by systemic barriers. The Youth in Evaluation Standards bridge this gap by offering a framework for organizations to involve youth in all evaluation stages, emphasizing leadership, capacity building, and resource mobilization. This panel aimed to underscore the importance of these standards, present successful examples of youth integration, discuss practical challenges and solutions, and inspire participants to promote youth engagement. Featuring Youth in Evaluation champions from diverse sectors, the panel will examine the six dimensions of the standards, share good practices, feedback from self-assessments, and strategies for intergenerational partnerships. The session aligns with the Evaluation Conclave 2025 theme by advocating for context-relevant and forward-looking evaluation practices, ultimately equipping participants with a clear understanding of the standards, insights into youth-led evaluation, approaches to overcoming barriers, and guidance on using the self-assessment tool to support the global Youth in Evaluation movement.

28 May 2025 | 13:30 – 15:00 | Sapphire 1

Panel Presentation: Integrating Indigenous Knowledge into Transportation Planning: Insights from Sri Lanka's Eastern Coastal Indigenous Communities



Presenters: Christine Prasadini Dissanayake, Kasun Deshappriya Ramanayake, and Dangallage Punya Lakmini



Moderator:

Abdul Hameed Sabeen Sharic

Summary:

This panel, led by EvalYouth Sri Lanka, explored integrating Indigenous knowledge into transportation planning by focusing on the Eastern Coastal Vedda community, one of Sri Lanka's earliest Indigenous communities. Drawing from a project funded by the Asia Pacific Evaluation Association, the discussion highlighted the mobility challenges faced by the Veddas in Kunchankulam, Batticaloa District, and how transport influenced their cultural practices and livelihoods. Panelists presented insights from community engagement, transport operators, and government stakeholders, aiming to develop culturally responsive transport systems that respect Indigenous values. The discussion covered practical recommendations for incorporating cultural elements into transport planning, addressing operational challenges, and fostering collaboration between communities and government authorities. The session emphasized participatory planning, providing actionable insights for integrating Indigenous knowledge into modern evaluation and planning processes, and inspiring a rethinking of conventional transport planning approaches to prioritize inclusivity, equity, and local relevance.

28 May 2025 | 13:30 – 15:00 | Jade

Roundtable Discussion: The Evidence Equation: Research, Evaluation, and Policy for Real-World Impact



Panelist: Swati Mantri, Bhumika T V, and Ashima Mohan

Summary:

This roundtable discussion centered on innovative research tools and methodologies for evidence synthesis, especially systematic reviews and evidence and gap maps, developed and utilized by Campbell South Asia (CSA). The session aimed to demonstrate how these methods can be used for rigorous evaluation, highlight their importance in identifying research gaps and guiding policy decisions, offer insights into practical evidence assessment tools, and promote a deeper understanding of evidence uptake for policy implementation. By showcasing CSA's projects and publications, the discussion emphasized methodological innovation, improved research reproducibility, and the need for rigour in evidence-based decision-making. Participants gained insights into various evidence tools, learned about the challenges and solutions in establishing tool credibility, and considered potential future workshops on conducting systematic reviews. Ultimately, the discussion sought to empower participants to critically assess and use available evidence, promote evidence-informed decision-making, and foster networking and collaboration in evidence synthesis.

28 May 2025 | 13:30 – 15:00 | Sapphire 2

Panel Presentation: Equitable and Inclusive Evaluation for Development – A Discussion on Gender-Transformative Approaches in Policy and Program Evaluation



Presenters: Sarbani Bose, Shubha Bhattacharya, Surabhi Awasthi, and Moumita Sarkar

Summary:

This panel discussed how research techniques can be leveraged to influence policy and inform government decision-making. The panellists shared challenges encountered in translating research into actionable policy and highlighted lessons learned. IWWAGE generated evidence using diverse research methodologies to effectively measure changes in knowledge, attitude and practices, tracking their impact on women’s empowerment to inform and shape gender-responsive policies at local, state, and national levels. Centre for Catalyzing Change: Evidence-based policies fostering grassroots women leadership to address social norms and prevention and response to gender-based violence. PRADAN shared insights on the intricacies of process documentation of a large-scale government initiative designed to attempt a shift in socio-normative transformations.

28 May 2025 | 13:30 – 15:00 | Sapphire 3

Multi-paper Session: Measuring Impact for Inclusive Development: Evaluating Gender, Mental Health, and Community Transformation

Moderator: Gulnoza Usmanova



Summaries of papers :

1. Evaluating Mental Health Interventions: Challenges and Opportunities, Nepal Experience (Karuna Onta and Jamuna Shrestha)

Nepal faces significant mental health challenges, with efforts to integrate services into primary care and civil society organizations using creative interventions like art and storytelling. Sajha Dhago (SD) employs the story-cloth methodology in healing circles for women affected by violence, using pre- and post-tests and testimonies to assess impact. This paper discusses the challenges of evaluating such interventions with limited resources, explores inclusive evaluation methods, and aims to build a network of mental health evaluators. The session facilitated experience sharing, identified effective evaluation methods, and created a collaborative network to improve mental health program evaluations.

2. Beyond Individual Interventions: Measuring Collective Impact in Child Protection Programs (Shipra Prakash)

Traditional evaluations often assess programs in isolation, missing the combined impact of multiple organizations working on complex issues. This paper proposed a shift to collective impact evaluation, demonstrating a structured approach for child protection interventions. A multi-pronged MERL design, including summative evaluation, process monitoring, and learning synthesis, captures the synergistic effects of partner activities. This methodology provided a framework for shared measurement systems and ensures rigor in multi-stakeholder evaluations, offering insights into driving collective action.

3. Challenges to measuring gender transformative change and intersectional equality (Ranjani Krishnamurthy)

This presentation posits that while the term gender transformative change is popular, evaluations often slip into assessing immediate results on gender equality amongst project participants, and do not assess changes in norms, power relations and institutions rules/legislations at the village level. This presentation presented methods and frameworks to assess gender transformative change and intersectional equality, as well as how to address these issues in evaluation objectives, context analysis, evaluation criteria and questions, theory of change, stakeholder analysis, sampling, ethical consideration, analysis of findings, conclusions and recommendations. It argued that without unpacking what gender transformative change and intersectional equality means in evaluation context, there will be little movement to the same.

28 May 2025 | 15:30 – 17:00 | Emerald

Panel Presentation: Evaluating Gender Transformative Change: Lessons, Challenges, and the Way Forward



Presenters: Eoghan Molloy and Ketevan Chkheidze
Panelists: P G P Rasanjalie, Sonal Zaveri, and Marco Segone

Moderator:
Emmanuel Jimenez

Summary:

This Gender equality remains a critical global development goal, yet recent evaluations reveal persistent gaps in translating commitments into transformative outcomes. ADB's Independent Evaluation Department (IED) found that while gender objectives are often integrated into project design, their impact is limited by fragmented implementation, outdated policies, and insufficient measurement of systemic change. This panel discussed advancing gender evaluation practices to capture the complexity of intersectional and transformative change, especially as progress on SDG 5 continues to lag.

Panelists shared insights on improving monitoring systems, embedding intersectional analysis, and enhancing institutional capacity for more impactful gender equality efforts. The session also addressed challenges in aligning strategies and policies with meaningful outcomes and identify innovations to strengthen gender-responsive evaluations across sectors and regions.

28 May 2025 | 15:30 – 17:00 | Sapphire 1

**Multi-paper Session: Harnessing Technology & Innovation:
The Future of Evaluation in a Digital Era**

Moderator: Shweta Anand



Summaries of papers :

1. **Mapping the Future: Geospatial Methods in Evaluation for a Changing South Asia (Piyush Kumar)**

Given South Asia's rapid changes and data deficiencies, policy-relevant evidence is crucial, necessitating cost-effective evaluation methods. This paper explored the use of geospatial methods to enhance context-sensitive and data-driven decision-making in the region. Through literature review, case study synthesis, and practitioner insights, it demonstrated how geospatial tools improve evaluation practices, particularly in health, education, and disaster response. Applications include poverty mapping, environmental assessments, and geospatial impact evaluation (GIE), enhancing cost-effectiveness and data availability. The paper also highlighted challenges like capacity gaps and ethical concerns, and future trends such as AI and machine learning to further improve evaluation precision.

2. **Meta-evaluation Machines: Evaluation Quality in the Age of AI (Zach Tilton)**

The author proposes “Evaluation Intelligence”, a deliberate fusion of AI capabilities with evaluative reasoning, judgment, and ethics, as the next frontier for quality assurance in MERL. Building on the NLP Community of Practice, he outlines what this requires: critical AI literacy for evaluators, new competency sets, and meta-evaluation frameworks to assess AI-assisted designs, methods, and syntheses. He argues for “augmentation, not replacement,” positioning AI as a co-pilot that can expand evidence generation while human evaluators safeguard values, context, and use. Practical takeaways include crowdsourcing open resources and learning in public, alongside a call for transdisciplinary collaboration with developers and policymakers, adaptive frameworks for rapidly evolving tools, and explicit ethical alignment. The result is a roadmap to keep evaluation relevant, rigorous, and responsible in an increasingly digital world.



28 May 2025 | 15:30 – 17:00 | Sapphire 2

Multi-paper Session: Leveraging Evaluation for Climate Resilience and Crisis Response: Insights from Agriculture, Economic Recovery, and Conservation

Moderator: Chelladurai Solomon

Summaries of papers :

1. Role of monitoring and evaluations to achieve climate resilient agriculture: Lessons from India (Biswaranjan Baraj and Aishwarya Ravi Kumar)

Given Climate change is a major threat to India's agricultural sector, which supports nearly half of the nation's workforce. Rising temperatures, erratic rainfall patterns, and increased frequency of extreme weather events have led to reduced crop yields and compromised food security. For instance, projections indicate that Kharif maize yields could decline by 18% by 2050 and 23% by 2080 due to climate-induced stresses. This paper provided a comprehensive understanding of how monitoring and evaluation contribute to achieving climate-resilient agriculture in India through various tools and techniques and through partnerships between Government, donors and other key stakeholders for the benefits of the farmers and society as a whole. The paper tried to bring lessons and best practices of different M&E practices to achieve climate resilient agriculture in India.

2. Strengthening Economic Crises Responses through MEAL System Support: Insights from FAO Sri Lanka's Emergency Response Programme (Dulmina Chamatkara)

Sri Lanka's 2022 bankruptcy, driven by multiple crises including a chemical fertilizer ban and the COVID-19 pandemic, led FAO to launch an Emergency Response Initiative. M&E played a pivotal role by strengthening accountability, ensuring aid reached the most vulnerable, and revealing the interconnectedness of projects, transforming them into a cohesive program. M&E insights also highlighted resilience pathways, guiding the transition to sustainable development initiatives like climate-smart agriculture. This experience underscores M&E's critical role in achieving transformational change during complex crises, moving from immediate relief to long-term solutions.

3. Research impact: lessons learned from the mid-term evaluation of the Climate Compatible Growth programme (Simon Trace & Radhika Menon)

The Climate Compatible Growth (CCG) program aims to deliver robust evidence to support countries for taking an integrated approach to transition to low carbon emissions. A mid-term evaluation of the program found that it is relevant, coherent, efficient, effective and sustainable. The evaluation also found that equity considerations are factored into the program. Through this paper, participants learnt about the methods and frameworks that can be used to evaluate the performance and contribution of a research and capacity development programme. They also gained insights on how evidence uptake, impact, equity and sustainability can be measured and assessed in such programmes.

4. Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool for Protected Areas in Nepal and its Management Response and Use (Sushila Chatterjee Nepali)

Nepal's diverse geography makes it a biodiversity hotspot. The Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC) was established in 1980 for conservation and ecotourism. Management effectiveness is crucial, so Nepal has adopted the Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) since 2001. METT assesses planning, processes, and outcomes to improve Protected Area management. WWF Nepal and DNPWC have used METT for 20 years to develop park and buffer zone plans. This helps address conservation challenges and enhance PA management. Therefore, the main objective of this paper presentation is to share the tools used over the past 20 years and to show how management has responded to address biodiversity threats, governance issues, climate change, and indigenous peoples' perspectives for effective PA management. An analysis from the Chitwan-Parsa Complex was shared during the presentation.

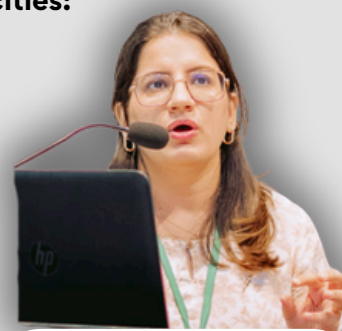
28 May 2025 | 15:30 – 17:00 | Sapphire 3

Panel Presentation: Strengthening Evaluation Systems and Capacities: Learnings and the Way Forward



Moderator: Esther Kaggwa

Discussants: Michael Quinn Patton and Soma de Silva



Presenter:
Mahima Taneja

Summary:

This panel explored innovative approaches to building robust evaluation systems and capacities, drawing from practical experiences and strategic insights. Lead presenter Mahima Taneja shared learnings from the ECD Consortium India initiative, followed by reflections from distinguished discussants. The session addressed challenges in standardizing evaluation curricula, fostering institutional capacity, and leveraging diverse stakeholder engagement to create future-ready evaluation ecosystems.

28 May 2025 | 15:30 – 17:00 | Sapphire 4

Multi-paper Session: Youth as Changemakers: Leadership, Innovation, and Advocacy in Evaluation

Moderator: Bijita Debsharma



Summaries of papers :

1. Youth as leaders in evaluation networks: Experiences from Asia Pacific (Yatin Diwakar)

This paper highlighted the vital role Young and Emerging Evaluators (YEEs) have played over the past decade in advancing the EvalYouth movement and collaborating with VOPEs across the Asia-Pacific region. Despite facing various challenges, YEEs have contributed significantly through networking, capacity building, and leadership. Many began as volunteers and have since taken on leadership roles within EvalYouth chapters and VOPEs. They've brought innovation in online collaboration, enhanced professionalism, and expanded outreach via social media. Regional initiatives like the Winter School have helped build a strong pipeline of young leaders. YEEs are not just future leaders—they are already shaping the evaluation landscape today.

2. Youth-Led Evaluation for Inclusive Development: Digital Innovation in South Asia (Md. Samsul Hussain)

Youth are underrepresented in South Asian development evaluation despite their potential to boost stakeholder engagement and digital innovation. This study explores "Digital-Native Evaluation" (DNE), focusing on how youth-led digital evaluations can enhance data quality, participation, and impact. Using a mixed-methods approach across eight initiatives, the study quantifies the effects of DNE, develops a framework for intergenerational knowledge transfer, and designs mechanisms for sustainable youth participation. It also establishes indicators to measure effectiveness, comparing digital and traditional methods and tracking the implementation of recommendations.

3. Youth in Evaluation: Leading Participation for Transformation (Gabriela Rentería Flores) [Not available]

28 May 2025 | 15:30 – 17:00 | Jade

Roundtable Discussion: Putting People First: Evaluating Human-Centered Design in Public Health Systems



Panelists: Nivedita Mishra, Jithin Jose, and Ritika Mukherjee



Moderator:
Anuradha Katyal

Summary:

This panel, Developing Human-Centred Design (HCD) in public health, is crucial for addressing inequities and improving outcomes in underserved populations by prioritising the needs of patients, providers, and communities. This roundtable explored case studies of HCD reforms in primary care, digital health, and service delivery, focusing on evaluation approaches, key metrics, and the scalability and sustainability of these projects. The discussion covered gaps in Primary Healthcare, the role of data quality and digital innovations, evaluating the impact of HCD interventions using various methods, challenges and best practices in outcome evaluation, and strategies for scaling and sustaining HCD interventions within larger public health systems.

29 May 2025 | 09:00 – 10:30 | Jade

Roundtable Discussion: Exploring Feminist Approaches in Evaluating Leadership Initiatives: Innovations and Insights



Panelist: Aliya Bhaldar, Priyasha Banerjee, Amrita Gupta, Sonal Zaveri, and Vandana Mahajan

Summary:

The Generation Equality Forum (GEF) has spurred initiatives on youth and feminist leadership, requiring dynamic evaluation methods to match the evolving nature of leadership investments. This roundtable examined whether monitoring and evaluation methodologies for such initiatives are equally adaptable, non-positivist, and sensitive to context. Funders, evaluators, and youth leaders discussed case studies from programs like CREA’s Feminist Youth Lab, EMpower youth leadership, and evaluations by GenderSphere, exploring how evaluations influence and are influenced by leadership development. Experts presented tools like outcome mapping+, outcome harvesting, and a bouquet approach to trace dynamic processes and outcomes, prioritizing youth leaders’ voices. The discussion highlighted challenges in advancing feminist evaluations and ensuring they are transformative, inclusive, and aligned with feminist principles. Key questions include how evaluations can address intersectionality and power dynamics, how participatory designs can foster transformative outcomes, and how to mainstream feminist approaches like Outcome Mapping in leadership evaluations. The session aimed to promote feminist methodologies in assessing leadership development programs, aligning with the Evaluation Conclave’s goal to amplify diverse voices and localize evaluation practices.

29 May 2025 | 09:00 – 10:30 | Sapphire 1

Panel Presentation: M&E Initiatives in General Education in Sri Lanka



Presenters: Nadeeka C Dassanayake, S Wazir, and Buddhini Gawarammana

Moderator:
A Rasika S Perera

Summary:

This panel explored recent Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) initiatives undertaken by Sri Lanka’s Ministry of Education to enhance the quality and effectiveness of general education. Panelists discussed strategies for improving data management, implementing inclusive education policies, and aligning educational outcomes with national development goals. The session aimed to share insights into how M&E practices are being integrated to support evidence-based decision-making and continuous improvement in the education sector.

29 May 2025 | 09:00 – 10:30 | Sapphire 2

Panel Presentation: Embedded evaluation approach for strengthening health systems and improving programme implementation



Presenters: Samiksha Singh, Radhika Dayal, Avishek Hazra and Niranjana Saggurti



Moderator:
Monica Srivastav

Summary:

This session explored how embedded evaluation can be a powerful tool for equitable health systems strengthening and program improvement. Through four diverse case studies from India—spanning Meghalaya, Uttar Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, and Gujarat—participants gained insights into real-time, context-sensitive evaluations that have informed health service delivery and planning. The session featured presentations on leveraging embedded evaluations for strategic planning, system adaptability, and digital innovation to enhance equity and effectiveness in health interventions.

29 May 2025 | 09:00 – 10:30 | Sapphire 3

Multi-paper session: Strengthening Evaluation through Global and Regional Collaboration: Lessons from Climate Resilience, Financial Literacy, and Governance

Moderator: Iwona Safi



Summaries of papers :

1. Evaluation of Small Business and Financial literacy training in Rural Hilly Regions of Nepal (Anvesha Khandelwa Punjani & Alexandra Birch)

In Nepal's hilly regions, financial literacy is low, leaving marginalized communities vulnerable. Good Return's CAFE initiative offers 20 weeks of financial literacy and 16 weeks of business coaching to these communities, focusing on women and people with disabilities. Local youth are trained as enumerators and coaches. A quasi-experimental, mixed-method study evaluated the program's effectiveness using pre- and post-training surveys and qualitative data. The study tracked improvements in financial capability, business management skills, and women's empowerment. It also examined collaboration between local and international organizations and government support, aiming to identify effective participatory mechanisms for program evaluation and addressing inequalities.

2. Quality assurance frameworks for strengthening national evaluation systems: Lessons from Georgia for global impact (Dea Tsartsidze, Nodar Kherkheulidze & Ketevan Tsanova)

Systematic quality assurance frameworks can improve evaluation practices by setting standards and building capacity, but they need detailed quality assessment methodologies to ensure consistent application and reliability. This study provided recommendations for strengthening these mechanisms, including establishing assessment criteria, scoring systems, and cross-institutional coordination. The research offered practical guidance for localizing evaluation standards and bridging the gap between theory and implementation, providing tools for enhancing evaluation quality and evidence-based policy development.

3. Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for Sustainable Development at the Subnational Level: Insights from Sri Lanka (J Pradeep N Mallawaarachchi)

Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) locally requires adaptable, context-sensitive M&E frameworks that align global ambitions with subnational realities. This study used content analysis of recent literature, policy reports, and evolving SDG frameworks to assess institutional, policy, and data-related dimensions of local implementation. Drawing on recommendations by Mallawaarachchi and Dissanayake (2024) and conceptual foundations by Kawakubo and Murakami (2020), the research developed a subnational M&E framework tailored to Sri Lanka's context.

The framework emphasized collaboration across international, national, and local levels, integrating global SDG indicators with localized priorities. It highlighted the importance of stakeholder coordination, data ecosystems, and policy alignment. Developed through sustained partnerships with global experts, national institutions, and local stakeholders, the framework offered a scalable model for countries facing similar governance and development challenges. By bridging global commitments with local needs, it enhances subnational evaluation capacities and contributes a practical approach to effective SDG monitoring and shared accountability.

29 May 2025 | 09:00 – 10:30 | Sapphire 4

Panel Presentation: The Promise of People Power: Sketching Equity-Centred Evaluation for Collective Action



Moderator:
Harpreet Bhullar



Presenters: Anusha Chandrasekharan, Srilakshmi, and Sneha Shashidhara

Summary:

Public discussion and social interaction are crucial for public reasoning, value formation, and preventing injustice. While collective action builds knowledge and demands better policies, there's a lack of evidence on its long-term impact in the Global South. Existing evaluation designs often mirror structural inequalities, impacting participation and outcomes. This panel discussion addressed this gap by exploring the integration of equity principles into evaluating collective action interventions. Panelists discussed good practices, participatory evaluation, feminist and intersectional approaches, and power-building models for historically impacted communities. The panel aimed to generate new insights on evaluating collective action, address challenges, and contribute to the knowledge base on power-building in South Asia, focusing on equity and inclusion. Key takeaways included new tools for strengthening collective action evaluations and a deeper understanding of the stakeholder landscape.

29 May 2025 | 11:00 – 12:30 | Sapphire 1

Panel Presentation: Teaching of Evaluation in Higher Education



Moderator:
Shyam Singh

Presenters: Reinhard Stockmann, Anis Ben Brik, Yoko Ishida, and Khalil Bitar

Summary:

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) education is vital for building evaluation capacity among young professionals. Despite efforts to promote academic M&E courses, challenges persist, especially in countries where institutional support is limited. In Sri Lanka, the University of Sri Jayewardenepura has pioneered M&E education, while the Asia Pacific Evaluation Association's Consortium has mobilized institutions across the region to develop a comprehensive M&E curriculum. Yet, many countries still lack formal M&E education.

The Centre for Evaluation, Asia Pacific Evaluation Association, and the Consortium of Institutions on M&E Education in Asia Pacific organized the first Academic Symposium on M&E Education in 2024 to foster collaboration and knowledge exchange.

This panel discussed diverse perspectives on teaching evaluation in higher education, including institutional support, faculty engagement, pedagogical approaches, and policy alignment. By examining these dimensions, the panel aimed to advance competency-based M&E education and promote its integration into academic curricula worldwide.

29 May 2025 | 11:00 – 12:30 | Sapphire 2

Panel Presentation: Youth at the Center: Advancing Rights and Results through Meaningful Participation in Evaluations



Presenters: Daniel Alonso Valckx, Panchal Abeysinghe, and Andi Reza Zulkarnain



Moderator:
Meaghan Carly Shevell

Summary:

Youth participation in evaluations is a human rights imperative and strategic necessity, aligned with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Sustainable Development Goals, yet it remains underutilized. This panel discussion explored how meaningful youth involvement strengthens evaluations, drawing on the UNICEF Indonesia Country Programme Evaluation (CPE) which implemented practical approaches like youth representation in reference groups, capacity building for youth co-facilitators, and youth-sensitive data collection tools. These methods enhanced evaluation credibility, relevance, and utility by empowering young people as knowledge producers, fostering intergenerational dialogue, and providing critical feedback, while also addressing challenges like budgeting and adult attitudes. The CPE serves as a roadmap for scaling youth participation globally, recommending its systematic integration into all evaluation phases, including terms of reference, resource allocation, and feedback mechanisms, to create robust, rights-based evaluation systems.



29 May 2025 | 11:00 – 12:30 | Jade

Roundtable discussion: Bridging Gaps: Advancing Women’s Empowerment through Equitable and Inclusive Evaluation for Development



Panelist: Monika Bhutunguru, Rohan Shah, Sarbani Bose and Aastha Dang



Moderator:
Divya Pandey

Summary:

This roundtable contributed to fostering a collaborative dialogue to create inclusive, impactful development and evaluation practices that empower women and close the digital divide. The key outcomes that we seek to achieve are:

- Actionable recommendations for integrating equity-focused evaluation in women's empowerment programs.
- Enhanced understanding of contextual relevance in designing and implementing evaluations.
- Highlight the importance of partnerships involving governments and civil society stakeholders as champions for evaluation and evidence-based decision-making.

29 May 2025 | 11:00 – 12:30 | Sapphire 3

Panel Presentation: Emerging Gaps in South Asia for Integrating Gender in Evaluation



Presenters: Karuna Onta, Alpaxee Kashyap, and Thilini de Alwis



Moderator:
Jahnvi Andharia

Summary:

South Asia ranks lowest globally in closing the gender gap, with only 62.4% of the gap closed and an estimated 197 years needed to achieve parity. Despite a strong history of feminist research and women's movements, robust evidence-based policymaking on gender issues remains limited. Capacity-building programs to evaluate development initiatives from a gender perspective are scarce. At ISST, the course "Facilitating Gender Transformative Evaluations" has revealed critical skill gaps, ranging from basic concepts of gender and research methods among early-career professionals to integrating gender in evaluations among senior practitioners. This session discussed bridging these gaps by sharing insights from research, evaluation, and women's movements across South Asia. Panelists from Nepal, India, and Sri Lanka will share experiences, highlighting the importance of mainstreaming gender in evaluations and building skills to ensure inclusive, evidence-based development practices that truly "leave no one behind."

29 May 2025 | 11:00 – 12:30 | Sapphire 4

Multi-paper Session: Integrating Diverse Voices: Contextualizing Evaluation for Social Transformation and Inclusivity

Moderator: Rashmi Agarwal



Summaries of papers :

1. Challenging Assumptions: Evaluating Social Norms with Feminist and Localized Lenses (Sonal Zaveri)

Despite gender equality being a fundamental right, progress is slow due to persistent discriminatory social norms, particularly in the Global South. There is a lack of global consensus on how to change these norms, with many programs failing to consider local realities. Evaluating social norm change is challenging, requiring innovative, context-sensitive, and participatory methodologies. This paper utilized feminist-adapted frameworks with intersectionality and developmental approaches to co-create evaluation tools in selected countries. Participants learnt about social norms in the Global South, critically examine theories of change, acquire knowledge of feminist and participatory methodologies, and understand factors enabling or hindering social norm change, focusing on community-driven approaches.

2. Evaluating interactivity in stakeholder platforms (Anna Augustyn)

This presentation explored the under-examined topic of interactivity in evaluations, emphasizing its importance in understanding project success and stakeholder engagement. Using the LIAISON project as a case study, which involved agricultural, environmental, and climate initiatives in various contexts, the presentation focused on developing indicators to measure interactivity in both real and virtual settings. The process was participatory and iterative, involving both professional and non-professional evaluators. This led to the creation of sets of indicators that can complement existing evaluation tools like Social Network Analysis and Stakeholder Mapping. The presentation also highlighted the capacity development of intermediaries who facilitated indicator development with beneficiaries and the creation of an open-access evaluation handbook.

3. Tracing Footprints, Finding Pathways: Storytelling for Evaluation and Organizational Learning (Pallavi Sobti-Rajpal)

This paper presented insights from the qualitative evaluation titled “Transformative Narratives: Storytelling for Evaluation and Organizational Learning through a Gender Justice Lens” commissioned by Utthan, a Gujarat-based NGO. The evaluation examined the impact of a multi-themed project (2021–2024) supported by the EdelGive Foundation. Adopting a contextual, participatory, and feminist approach, the evaluation aimed to understand community-defined impact, challenges of structural inequalities, and community-driven strategies for change. A key output was the Zine “Tracing Footprints, Finding Pathways”, a creative, multilingual (English and Gujarati) documentation integrating perspectives from women, men, youth, and marginalized communities. The Zine, a collaborative effort between Utthan, community leaders, and evaluators, used storytelling to capture empowerment, resilience, and leadership, emphasizing the power of creative dissemination in fostering organizational learning and stakeholder engagement. This approach highlighted storytelling as a transformative evaluation tool, especially for promoting gender justice and community-driven change.

5.2 SIDE EVENT

29 May 2025 | 17:30 – 18:30 | Sapphire 4

**Pre-Launch Session for the Global Evaluation Agenda (GEA) 2.0
(Organised by IOCE and EvalPartners)**

Moderator: Ziad Moussa

Panelists: Khalil Bitar, Chelladurai Solomon, Marco Segone, Anna Erika Lareza, Michael Quinn Patton, Yoko Ishida, and Ada Ocampo



SUMMARY

The International Organisation for Cooperation in Evaluation (IOCE) and EvalPartners plan to launch the Global Evaluation Agenda (GEA) 2.0 EvalAgenda in June 2025. GEA 2.0 is a road map for Vision 2030, where “evaluation becomes an integral part of the government, civil society, and the private sector to improve the lives and conditions of all citizens.” The Agenda includes a comprehensive approach to strengthening evaluation capacity at individual and organizational levels and enabling environment levels and their interlinkages. It is an effort to build a better world through improved global evaluation. The official global launch in June will include a panel discussion, a key highlight of GEA 2.0 and set relevant actions at different levels in motion.

The pre-launch session aimed to raise awareness about the launch and the GEA 2.0 overall and to get initial feedback from participants that will be helpful for the launch.

In this session, the facilitators discussed what was learned from the first agenda and GEA 2.0 and its significance for the future of evaluation. The Panelists engaged the participants on how they see the Agenda’s four strategic dimensions: 1) enabling environment for evaluation, 2) institutional and organizational capacities, 3) individual capabilities and professionalisation, and 4) improving synergies, relevant to their country contexts and what can be improved.

6 . Summit for the Future of Evaluation ➤

The Summit (29–30 May) served as a global platform to reflect on the evolution and future of evaluation. It was co-designed by EvalYouth, Eval4Action, COE-SA, IOCE, and the UNFPA IEO.

The Summit was a testament to true intergenerational collaboration, co-created, co-led, and co-delivered by young, emerging, and experienced evaluators. This unique partnership cultivated a dynamic space for innovation, learning, and growth, sparking high interactivity via a virtual theater with live 2D avatar participation, AI-generated avatar-based videos, and other engaging sessions.

A significant highlight was the **2025 Youth in Evaluation Champion Awards**, which honored 25 organizations for their commitment to meaningful youth engagement in evaluation. Awardees included two governments (Nigeria and Uganda), seven VOPEs, an EvalYouth chapter, four universities, six international organizations, two youth organizations, and three private sector entities.

Session 1 - The Significance of the UN Pact for the Future:

This session explored how current geopolitical shifts and financial constraints are shaping the role of evaluation in driving global transformation. Recorded remarks by Dr. Natalia Kanem (Executive Director, UNFPA) and Felipe Paullier (UN Assistant Secretary-General for Youth Affairs) provided compelling global framing for the discussion.

The session concluded with a talk show moderated by Mr. Khalil Bitar, President of IOCE. Panelists—Marco Segone (Director, IEO-UNFPA), Ana Erika Lareza (Chair, EvalYouth Global Network), Kabir Hashim (Chair, Global Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation), and Dr. Rajib Nandi (Chair, Community of Evaluators South Asia)—shared their perspectives on the significance of the UN Pact for the Future. Each emphasized the need for evaluation systems to become more relevant, impactful, and inclusive in light of global challenges.



Session 2 - Youth in Evaluation Champions Awards:

This session celebrated excellence in youth engagement by recognizing 25 Youth in Evaluation champions - organizations leading the way across sectors by upholding the Youth in Evaluation standards, and inspiring others to follow suit.

Session 3 – Roundtable: Shaping the Future of Evaluation with AI and Youth :

The future of evaluation is at a critical juncture, driven by the powerful interplay of demographic shifts (including a youth bulge and an aging global population) and the rapid development of digital technologies, especially AI. This session examined this dynamic convergence, showing how these megatrends are transforming and shaping the evaluation landscape. It highlighted practical AI applications in evaluation and emphasized key ethical and responsible innovation considerations. The discussion focused on how AI can empower the next generation of evaluators and foster intergenerational partnerships in evaluation. This roundtable featured Arshee Rizvi and Zach Tilton, who encouraged participants to think critically and practically about the ethical and responsible use of AI in evaluation.



Session 4 – From YEEs to International Evaluation Leaders:

The session delved into the transformative journey of young evaluators as they evolve into international evaluation leaders. The session explored the pathways these rising leaders have taken, examining the challenges they faced and the milestones they achieved along the way. The session featured personal leadership journeys of Ana Erika Lareza (Chair, EvalYouth Global Network), Qudratullah Jahid (Vice-President, APEA), Miche' Ouedraogo (President, AfrEA) and Khalil Bitar (President, IOCE, Co-chair, EvalPartners), who shared how they overcame challenges, built networks, and emerged as global evaluation leaders.



The young evaluation leaders shared their firsthand accounts of navigating the complexities of the evaluation field, how they developed essential skills, and cultivated a strong professional identity. The leaders shared the strategies they employed to build their expertise, expand their networks, and seize opportunities for growth. This session also illuminated the roles of senior professionals and mentorship in nurturing the next generation of evaluation leaders.

Session 5 – The Future of EvalYouth and Eval4Action:

This open and insightful session explored the motivations, goals, and challenges driving EvalYouth, Eval4Action, and the wider evaluation community. The session offered a unique opportunity for the audience to contribute to a digital time capsule by leaving a message for their future selves (to be opened in 10 years), outlining a personal commitment to the future of evaluation.



Session 6 – Multi-stakeholder and Intergenerational Partnerships:

Inspired by insights shared through the global evaluation community's interactive mural on the 'Future of Evaluation', this session involved a collaborative exploration of adaptations and transformations to build a stronger future for evaluation.

Discussions from the Summit continue to resonate globally and a follow-up **monthly webinar series on the future of evaluation** will be launched soon. The #EvalTorch continues its journey as a symbol of our collective vision.



7. Closing Session of the Evaluation Conclave and the Summit for Future of Evaluation



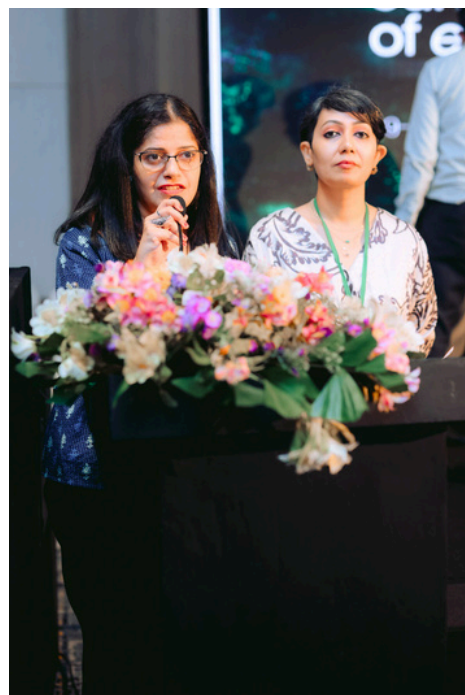
30 May 2025 | 12:30 – 13:30 | Sapphire Ballroom

The closing session was moderated by Bijita Devsharma and Shweta Anand [Board Members, COE-SA]. They reflected on the 4-day event in the beautiful and most hospitable city of Colombo and asked the audience about what they have seen; what they have heard; and what all that meant to them.

At the outset, they shared their experiences. The event meant the coming together of some of the best individuals from the world of evaluation. It was a collaboration that aimed to work together to create something beautiful, something meaningful for everyone to take back and learn from. As an evaluator belonging to the Global south and as Board members of one of the pioneering VOPE's from Asia- the Community of Evaluators of South Asia, they respected the spirit of such collaboration and wanted to thank the people who have worked tirelessly to make the event happen.

As practitioners from the field of development, they opined that 'space' is a social construct, it is created by human activity and relationships. The space that was created around the event witnessed many new relations being formed where-

- YEEs connected with established evaluators, understood the evaluation ecosystem, felt welcomed and built bridges.
- The participants saw exchange of information between global north and global south, a safe space where both agreements and disagreements could be voiced and seeds for some newer discussions were sown.
- This space also tried to be intentionally intersectional, opening up newer discourses on disability, climate change, mental health and gender yet fully acknowledging that there is still a long way to go to in the actual implementation of intersectional work.



- There was also recognition for acknowledging the presence of newer and more dynamic technological developments around the world and the need for evaluation to adapt. Hence, discussions on the use and ethical integration of AI was seen as a prominent theme.
- Evaluation is political and both external and internal factors affect it. The world is in a state of crisis like never before- financial, social and political. Every country is fighting their own battle. And through so many panels and discussions the participants learnt about the nuanced and layered contexts in which evaluations are conducted.
- As someone who stood up for gender and equity, this space has tried to intentionally seek the 'what' and 'how to' of evaluations, allowing for the creation of a dynamic and sometimes disruptive space. In the true spirit of evaluation, the participants have witnessed shifts in the way they ask pertinent questions and as they close this conclave, they expected each one of the participants to similarly reflect on what have been some of their personal takeaways. The moderators then requested reflections from the audience.
- It was suggested that we focus on identifying existing resources and opportunities. The reduction in aid can be seen not just as a setback, but as a transformative opportunity to move beyond aid dependency and take control of achieving rights-based development. Sri Lanka, for example, significantly reduced infant mortality during a period when external aid was minimal. It is necessary to explore how evaluation itself can evolve to influence the context and enable us to better manage our own affairs. We have resources, we have resilience—let us harness these and reimagine the role of evaluation. (ex-UNICEF staff Member).
- When we speak of democracy, the discourse often leans toward the negative. One critical oversight is the exclusion of the executive branch from the stakeholder framework. As the implementers of policies and strategies, they serve as the vital link between policymakers and the people, holding access to bureaucratic mechanisms and rights. (ex-UNICEF staff Member).



CHALLENGES IN EVALUATIONS

- **Stakeholder Inclusion and Purpose:** "We need to critically examine the 'stakeholder box'—who is included, and why. Why are we conducting evaluations? Are we doing so with specific intent for key actors such as parliamentarians, beneficiaries, and community partners?"
- **Pressure to Present Positive Findings:** "There have been instances where we were asked to revise evaluation reports to cast the project in a more favourable light, especially when future phases of the project were pending approval. This compromises the neutrality and credibility of the evaluation process."

- **Stakeholder Inclusion and Purpose:** "We need to critically examine the 'stakeholder box'—who is included, and why. Why are we conducting evaluations? Are we doing so with specific intent for key actors such as parliamentarians, beneficiaries, and community partners?"
- **Pressure to Present Positive Findings:** "There have been instances where we were asked to revise evaluation reports to cast the project in a more favourable light, especially when future phases of the project were pending approval. This compromises the neutrality and credibility of the evaluation process."
- **Unintended Results and Methodological Integrity:** "In project evaluations, we often encounter both intended and unintended results. While intended outcomes are usually straightforward to report, unintended results raise critical questions: Was the methodology flawed? Were we asking the wrong questions? These issues require careful reflection and methodological rigour."
- **Capacity Building for Parliamentarians:** "We need to change Parliamentarians. They are elected through popular vote; they are not necessarily academics or experts in evaluation. Yet, they play a crucial role in shaping policy based on evaluation findings. Therefore, it is essential to build their capacity. The question is: how can we effectively translate evaluation knowledge into practical tools and understanding that empower parliamentarians to engage meaningfully in the evaluation process?"
- **Evaluation vs. Research:** "There is often confusion between evaluation and research. This distinction needs to be made clear, particularly for decision-makers."



CHALLENGES RELATING TO DATA

- **Access to Quality Data:** "Do we have reliable repositories of data? Ensuring access to quality data remains a major challenge. In India, for instance, public resource data is difficult to access. The absence of a national census since 2021 means we are often working with data that is over 14 years old. This poses a significant issue when collecting primary data—how can we identify trends or establish benchmarks without current, reliable data?"
- **Evidence of Transformative Impact:** "Do we have sufficient data to demonstrate that evaluation has resulted in transformative change? Such evidence is crucial not only to build credibility, but also to inspire confidence in scaling and amplifying the work of evaluation."
- **Artificial Intelligence and Metadata Analysis:** "AI tools depend heavily on existing datasets. If these datasets are outdated or of poor quality, the outputs generated by AI cannot be considered truly contemporary or contextually accurate. This raises questions about the relevance and reliability of AI-driven analysis in the absence of real-time data."

- **Data Duplication and Lack of Coordination:** Currently, data are often collected independently by different organisations without coordination, leading to repeated surveys of the same communities. This not only burdens respondents but also results in inefficient use of resources.

As evaluators—many of whom are connected through professional networks—there is an opportunity to collaborate during data collection. Sharing plans and datasets could minimise duplication and enhance the quality and coverage of evaluation efforts.

Young and emerging evaluators are especially encouraged to coordinate with one another and share data where appropriate. Collaboration is key to building a more efficient and ethical evaluation practice.

- **Progress in Joint Data Collection:** "We are now moving towards joint data collection and conducting assessments collaboratively, rather than as isolated efforts by individual organisations. This is a significant step forward in improving efficiency and coherence." [Representative of UN OCHA]

Despite these improvements, some gaps still persist. Full coordination remains a challenge, and further efforts are needed to ensure comprehensive, harmonised assessments across all actors.

CONCLUDING REMARKS



Mr. Marco Segone (Director, UNFPA IEO) shared reflections on the evolving role of evaluation. He alluded to two powerful speeches during the Conclave, which made the central theme. He stressed the need to demonstrate independence in evaluations and emphasised the importance of presenting concrete country examples where evaluation has maintained its independence and has made a tangible difference in policy or program outcomes. Equally important is acknowledging cases where evaluation findings have been overlooked, highlighting the need to strengthen the uptake and influence of evaluation. Marco admitted that over time, he has seen his role shift from being an Evaluator to a Facilitator—underscoring the increasingly collaborative and enabling nature of evaluation work.

Mr. Chelladurai Solomon (Board Member, CoE-SA) traced his 15-year journey in evaluation networks including CoE SA; it was the passion for evaluation and evaluation as a tool that drove his passion. Sometimes, the passion dampened; only event like this rekindled the passion. Sometimes, he felt that evaluators were seen as activists – the mere fact that evaluators work with communities sometimes brings activism into their work. When evaluation is an ideology or a belief, it can turn into activism.

Referring to the work of the Community of Evaluators, South Asia, he wondered whether it is in the pertinent track; there are many things to do but it is becoming increasingly evident that volunteerism will not help achieve the objectives of CoE SA. In 2009, CoE SA was a pioneer; since then, the canvas has drastically changed with many networks now in place. CoE SA needs to have a broader outreach; the collaboration with IOCE and EvalPartners has enriched the outreach of CoE SA. Of particular importance is the youth engagement, which was very evident in this Conclave.



Dr. Phuntsho Choden (Vice Chairperson, COE-SA and Chairperson, Evaluation Association of Bhutan) reflected on the conclave and summit. She highlighted the conclave's focus on localization, including community-based, culturally responsive, and transdisciplinary approaches, seeing this as significant progress and a celebration of localization. Discussions emphasized evaluation's role beyond accountability. Regarding the summit, she noted the synergy between youth and AI. She praised the confidence of young people, suggesting a bright future. Her advice to young and emerging evaluators included: (1) understanding their local context; (2) engaging with or establishing VOPEs in their countries and connecting with the APEA VOPE Theme group; and (3) keep working with passion, building trust, and advancing the field of evaluation.



Ms. Natalia Nikitenko (Member, Global Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation) congratulated the participants for the intergenerational communication which was evident throughout the four days. She considered this as an important outcome of the Conclave. This was also an opportunity to celebrate 10 years of EvalPartner work. There have been many legal instruments and framework developed over time in various countries, which is a testament to the influence brought out by the evaluators at fora like this.

Ms. Anna Erika Lareza (Chair, EvalYouth Global Network) observed that the four days of deliberations saw the changes that have happened in the evaluation arena. As a youth, she was not aware what the evaluation canvas 10 years ago; the deliberation during the last four days showed that the passion for evaluation is intense, and there is excitement to collaborate with each other. She asked everyone to take home on 'little action' to continue there in the future. If a youth shows any interest in evaluation, she asked them to be connected to EvalYouth. The four days showed that there are many opportunities to advance evaluations.



Mr. Khalil Bitar (President IOCE) thanked everyone for the splendid organisation of the event, and for the hard work put in by many to make the event a success. He observed that there have been a lot of sharing of ideas, provoking discussions, and demonstrated spirit of collaboration. He has been to many conferences, but he saw something different in this one - the active engagement and intergenerational collaboration and sharing.

27 MAY 2025

SKILL BUILDING WORKSHOPS

09:00 – 17:00	<p>WS#01: Evaluation of the Transformative Power of Evaluation for a Fair and Sustainable World: Adinda Van Hemelrijck, Nicola Giordano, Aydin Shahidi (Collaborative Impact, Belgium) and Phuntsho Choden (Independent Evaluator, Bhutan)</p>
09:00 – 17:00	<p>WS#02: From Pilot to Scale Up: Opportunities and Challenges of Evaluating AI Systems: (Workshop hosted by the Gates Foundation, India Office)</p>
09:00 – 12:30	<p>WS#03: Leveraging ICT Tools for High-Quality Data Collection, Visualization, and Decision-Making: Maulik Chauhan (Trestle Research and Consulting Pvt Ltd)</p> <p>WS#04: Youth Participatory Evaluation: Gabriela Renteria Flores (Mexico) and Rai Sengupta (India)</p> <p>WS#05: Evaluating for Equity: Strengthening Gender and Intersectionality: Sonal Zaveri and Ranjani K. Murthy (Independent Evaluators, India)</p> <p>WS#06: Evidence Gap Mapping: Suchi Malhotra (Campbell South Asia)</p>
13:30 – 17:00	<p>WS#07: How to Develop Organizational M&E System: Reinhard Stockmann, Saarland University, Germany</p> <p>WS#08: Value for Money Assessment in M&E: Priya Rampal and Radhika Menon [Oxford Policy Management, India]</p> <p>WS#09: Integrating Disability Justice Lens to Gender Responsive M&E Assessment and Learning: Ayusmita Samal and Aarti Batra (Mission Accessibility, India)</p> <p>WS#10: Evaluative Thinking Approach for Evidence-Based and Human Rights-Focused Governance: Farhod Khamidov and Tetyana Nikitina [Independent Evaluators from Tajikistan and Ukraine]</p>

INAUGURATION

18.00 – 19.30	<p>Inauguration Evaluation Conclave and the Summit for the Future of Evaluation</p>
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DAY 1 | EVALUATION CONCLAVE: PLENARY AND TECHNICAL SESSIONS

09:00 – 10:30	<p>Keynote Plenary: Michael Quinn Patton [Independent Organizational Development and Program Evaluation Consultant, and Former President, American Evaluation Association]; Jin Zhao [Evaluation Specialist, Independent Evaluation Office, BRICS New Development Bank]; Emmanuel Jimenez [Director General, Independent Evaluation Department, Asian Development Bank]</p> <p>Chair: Ada Ocampo [President, IDEAS Global]</p>
11:00 – 12:30	<p>Panel Presentation: Advancing Regional and Global Evaluation Impact through Inclusive Practices: Henrique Pissaia, Ada Ocampo, Iwona Safi</p> <p>Moderator: Ziad Moussa</p>
11:00 – 12:30	<p>Panel Presentation: APEA's Collaborative Journey with the YEEs in Asia and the Pacific: Jigme Sonam; Yoko Ishida, Amil Epa, Quadratullah Jahid</p> <p>Moderator: Ana Erika Lareza</p>
11:00 – 12:30	<p>Multi-paper Session: Advancing Equity and Inclusion: Evidence-Based Approaches for Development Evaluation: Manmeet Kaur, Diya Dutta, Aastha Dang</p> <p>Moderator: Anna Maria Augustyn</p>
11:00 – 12:30	<p>Panel Presentation: Localized Evaluation for Transformative Action: Embracing Pluralism for sustainability and Resilience: Adinda Van Hemelrijck, Phuntsho Choden, Aydin Shahidi, Nicola Giordano</p>
11:00 – 12:30	<p>Panel presentation: Building evaluation Systems and Capacities to Leverage Context – A Way Forward: Basavaraju R Shreshta, Khilesh Chaturvedi, Reinhard Stockmann, Soma de Silva</p> <p>Moderator: Syeda Naghma Abidi</p>
11:00 – 12:30	<p>Roundtable Discussion: Tracking What Matters: Innovative Pathways for Evidence-Based Decision Making in Food Security and Agriculture: Shehan Fernando, Sudath Jayasinghe, Kavinda Gunasekara, Nayanahari Jayakody</p> <p>Moderator: Yumna Salman</p>
13:30 – 15:00	<p>Panel Presentation: Youth in Evaluation: Setting Standards for Future-Ready Evaluation Practice: Marco Segone, Arshee Rizvi, Olivia Melvin</p> <p>Moderator: Antonina Rishko-Porcescu</p>
13:30 – 15:00	<p>Panel presentation: Integrating Indigenous Knowledge into Transportation Planning: Insights from Sri Lanka's Eastern Coastal Indigenous Communities: Christine Prasadini Dissanayake, Kasun Deshappriya Ramanayake, Dangallage Punya Lakmini</p> <p>Moderator: Abdul Hameed Sabeen Sharic</p>

13:30 – 15:00	Roundtable Discussion: The Evidence Equation: Research, Evaluation, and Policy for Real-World Impact: Swati Mantri, Bhumika TV, Ashima Mohan
11:00 – 12:30	Panel Presentation: Advancing Regional and Global Evaluation Impact through Inclusive Practices: Henrique Pissaia, Ada Ocampo, Iwona Safi Moderator: Ziad Moussa
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13:30 – 15:00	Panel presentation: Equitable and Inclusive Evaluation for Development – A Discussion on Gender-Transformative Approaches in Policy and Program Evaluation: Sarbani Bose, Shubha Bhattacharya, Surabhi Awasthi, Moumita Sarkar

13:30 – 15:00	Multi-paper Session: Measuring Impact for Inclusive Development: Evaluating Gender, Mental Health, and Community Transformation: Karuna Onta, Shipra Prakash, Ranjani Krishnamurthy Moderator: Gulnoza Usmanova
15:30 – 17:00	Panel Presentation: Evaluating Gender Transformative Change: Lessons, Challenges, and the Way Forward: Eoghan Molloy, Ketevan Chkheidze, P.G.P. Rasanjalie, Sonal Zaveri, Marco Segone Moderator: Emmanuel Jimenez
15:30 – 17:00	Multi-paper Session: Harnessing Technology & Innovation: The Future of Evaluation in a Digital Era: Piyush Kumar, Zach Tilton Moderator: Shweta Anand
15:30 – 17:00	Multi-paper Session: Leveraging Evaluation for Climate Resilience and Crisis Response: Insights from Agriculture, Economic Recovery, and Conservation: Biswaranjan Baraj, Aishwarya Ravi Kumar, Dulmina Chamatkara, Radhika Menon, Simon Trace, Sushila Chatterjee Nepali Moderator: Chelladurai Solomon
15:30 – 17:00	Panel Presentation: Strengthening Evaluation Systems and Capacities: Learnings and the Way Forward: Mahima Taneja, Michael Quinn Patton, Soma de Silva Moderator: Esther Kaggwa
15:30 – 17:00	Multi-paper Session: Youth as Changemakers: Leadership, Innovation, and Advocacy in Evaluation: Yatin Diwakar, Md. Samsul Hussain, Gabriela Rentería Flores Moderator: Bijita Debsharma
15:30 – 17:00	Roundtable Discussion: Putting People First: Evaluating Human-Centered Design in Public Health Systems: Nivedita Mishra, Jithin Jose, Ritika Mukherjee Moderator: Anuradha Katyal



29 MAY 2025

DAY 2 | EVALUATION CONCLAVE

09:00 – 10:30	Roundtable Discussion: Exploring Feminist Approaches in Evaluating Leadership Initiatives: Innovations and Insights: Aliya Bhalldar, Priyasha Banerjee, Amrita Gupta, Anuradha Rajan, Sonal Zaveri, Vandana Mahajan
09:00 – 10:30	Panel Presentation: M&E Initiatives in General Education in Sri Lanka: Nadeeka C. Dassanayake, S Wazir, Buddhini Gawarammana Moderator: A Rasika S Perera
09:00 – 10:30	Panel Presentation: Embedded evaluation approach for strengthening health systems and improving programme implementation: Samiksha Singh, Radhika Dayal, Niranjan Saggurti, Avishek Hazra Moderator: Monica Srivastav
09:00 – 10:30	Multi-paper session: Strengthening Evaluation through Global and Regional Collaboration: Lessons from Climate Resilience, Financial Literacy, and Governance: Anvesha Khandelwa Punjani, Alexandra Birch, Dea Tsartsidze, Nodar Kherkheulidze, Ketevan Tsanova, J. Pradeep N. Mallawaarachchi Moderator: Iwona Safi
09:00 – 10:30	Panel Presentation: The Promise of People Power: Sketching Equity-Centred Evaluation for Collective Action: Anusha Chandrasekharan, Srilakshmi, Sneha Shashidhara Moderator: Harpreet Bhullar
11:00 – 12:30	Panel Presentation: Teaching of Evaluation in Higher Education: Reinhard Stockmann, Anis Ben Brik, Khalil Bitar Moderator: Shyam Singh
11:00 – 12:30	Panel Presentation: Youth at the Center: Advancing Rights and Results through Meaningful Participation in Evaluations: Daniel Alonso Valckx, Panchal Abeyasinghe, Andi Reza Zulkarnain Moderator: Meaghan Carly Shevell
11:00 – 12:30	Roundtable Discussion: Bridging Gaps: Advancing Women's Empowerment through Equitable and Inclusive Evaluation for Development: Monika Bhutunguru, Rohan Shah, Sarbani Bose, Aastha Dang Moderator: Divya Pandey
11:00 – 12:30	Panel Presentation: Emerging Gaps in South Asia for Integrating Gender in Evaluation: Karuna Onta, Alpaxee Kashyap, Thilini de Alwis Moderator: Jahnvi Andharia
11:00 – 12:30	Multi-paper Session: Integrating Diverse Voices: Contextualizing Evaluation for Social Transformation and Inclusivity: Sonal Zaveri, Anna Augustyn, Pallavi Sobti-Rajpal, Moderator: Rashmi Agrawal

SIDE EVENT

17:35 – 18:35	Pre-Launch Session for the Global Evaluation Agenda (GEA) 2.0 Session organized by IOCE and EvalPartners: Khalil Bitar, Chelladurai Solomon, Marco Segone, Erika Lareza, Michael Quinn Patton, Yoko Ishida, Ada Ocampo Moderator: Ziad Moussa
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SUMMIT FOR THE FUTURE OF EVALUATION

29 MAY 2025

14:00 – 15:15	Session 1: The significance of the United Nations Pact for the Future for the Future of Evaluation: Marco Segone, Ana Erika Lareza, Kabir Hashim, Rajib Nandi Moderator: Khalil Bitar
15:15 – 16:00	Session 2: 2025 Youth in Evaluation Champions Awards Moderators: Lea Corsetti, Baraka Mfilinge
16:30 – 17:30	Session 3: Roundtable: Shaping the Future of Evaluation with AI and Youth: Arshee Rizvi, Zach Tilton Moderator: Neha Karkara

30 MAY 2025

09:00 – 09:45	Session 4: From YEEs to international evaluation leaders: Evalyouth co-leaders Moderators: Marco Segone, Ziad Moussa, Ada Ocampo, Asela Kalugampitiya
09:45 – 10:30	Session 5: The future of EvalYouth and Eval4Action: From EvalYouth+10 and Eval4Action+5 to EvalYouth+20 and Eval4Action+15: Daisy Ramos, Olivia Melvin, Madeline Brou, Shyam Singh, Pooja Pandey, Antonina Rishko Moderator: Gabriela Renteria Flores
11:10 – 12:25	Session 6: Multi-stakeholder and Intergenerational Partnership to Shape the Future of Evaluation: Nino Chokheli, Ada Ocampo, Natalia Nikitenko, Kai Brand-Jacobsen, Ruchi Kaushik, Daniel Alonso Valckx Moderator: Michael Quinn Patton



CLOSING CEREMONY

12:25 – 13:20	A united path for the future of evaluation: Concluding the Evaluation Conclave 2025 and the Summit for the Future of Evaluation: Marco Segone, Khalil Bitar, Natalia Nikitenko, Erika Lareza, Chelladurai Solomon, Phuntsho Choden Moderators: Bijita Devsharma and Shweta Anand
13.20 – 13.30	Passing of the Evaluation Torch to AfrEA Song on the Future of Evaluation: Michael Quinn Patton



AGENDA FOR THE INAUGURATION



27 MAY 2025 | 18:00 – 19:30

Welcome remarks:

- Dr. Rajib Nandi, Chairperson, COE-SA
- Hon. Kabir Hashim, Chair, Global Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation

Opening remarks:

- Marco Segone, Director, UNFPA IEO
- Ana Erika Lareza, Chair, EvalYouth Global Network
- Khalil Bitar, President, IOCE

Remarks by Partners:

- Ashwani Muthoo, Director General, NDB-IEO
- S S Mudalige, Director General, Department of Project Management and Monitoring

Speech by the Chief guest:

- Dr. Harini Amarasuriya, Hon. Prime Minister of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

Awards for excellence in the field of evaluation:

- Presented by Community of Evaluators South Asia

Passing of the Evaluation Torch to the Hon. Prime Minister

Vote of thanks:

- Dr. Shweta Anand, Board Member, COE-SA
- Dr. Soma De Silva, Former President, Sri Lanka Evaluation Association

2.1 FEEDBACK ON THE WORKSHOPS

Overall, the participants felt that it was worthwhile participating in the workshops (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1 – Was it worthwhile to participate in the workshops

WORKSHOP	NO	YES	NOT SURE
FULL-DAY WORKSHOPS			
WS#01 Evaluation of the Transformative Power of Evaluation for a Fair and Sustainable World [Adinda Van Hemelrijck, Nicola Giordano, Aydin Shahidi, & Phuntsho Choden] (n-16)		75%	25%
WS#02 From pilot to Scale up: Opportunities and Challenges of Evaluating AI System [Karthik Adapa & Alpan Raval] (n-22)		100%	
HALF-DAY WORKSHOPS			
WS#03 Leveraging ICT Tools for High-Quality Data Collection, Visualization, and Decision-Making [Maulik Chauhan] (n-19)		100%	
WS#04 Youth Participatory Evaluation [Gabriela Rentería Flores and Rai Sengupta] (n-5)		100%	
WS#05 Evaluating for Equity: Strengthening Gender and Intersectionality [Sonal Zaveri & Ranjani K Murthy] (n-10)	10%	90%	
WS#06 Evidence Gap Mapping [Suchi Malhotra] (n-10)		100%	
WS#07 How to Develop Organizational M&E System [Reinhard Stockmann] (n-17)	6%	94%	
WS#08 Value for Money Assessment in M&E [Priya Rampal & Radhika Menon] (n-7)		100%	

The following two workshops were not assessed as the number of respondents was less than 3.

- **WS#09** Integrating Disability Justice Lens to Gender Responsive M&E Assessment and Learning [Ayushmita Samal & Aarti Batra] (n-2)
- **WS#10** Evaluative Thinking Approach for Evidence Based and Human Rights Focused Governance [Farhod Khamidov & Tetyana Nikitina] (n-1)

The participants perception on the overall programmatic content was quite positive with only four workshops receiving 'average' rating (Table 2.2).

Table 2.2 – Participant perception on the programmatic content (technical information and level of detail)

WORKSHOP	AVERAGE	GOOD	EXCELLENT
FULL-DAY WORKSHOPS			
WS#01 Evaluation of the Transformative Power of Evaluation for a Fair and Sustainable World [Adinda Van Hemelrijck, Nicola Giordano, Aydin Shahidi, & Phuntsho Choden] (n-16)	37.50%	18.80%	43.80%
WS#02 From pilot to Scale up: Opportunities and Challenges of Evaluating AI System [Karthik Adapa & Alpan Raval] (n-22)		86%	14%
HALF-DAY WORKSHOPS			
WS#03 Leveraging ICT Tools for High-Quality Data Collection, Visualization, and Decision-Making [Maulik Chauhan] (n-19)		84%	16%
WS#04 Youth Participatory Evaluation [Gabriela Rentería Flores and Rai Sengupta] (n-5)		100%	
WS#05 Evaluating for Equity: Strengthening Gender and Intersectionality [Sonal Zaveri & Ranjani K Murthy] (n-10)	10%	60%	30%
WS#06 Evidence Gap Mapping [Suchi Malhotra] (n-10)	30%	30%	40%
WS#07 How to Develop Organizational M&E System [Reinhard Stockmann] (n-17)		76%	24%
WS#08 Value for Money Assessment in M&E [Priya Rampal & Radhika Menon] (n-7)	28%	43%	29%

The ratings for interaction amongst participants were, in general, good; however, there were some concerns on the level of interaction primarily because of the limited time available for the workshops (Table 2.3).



Table 2.3 – Participant perception on the interaction amongst the participants

WORKSHOP	POOR	AVERAGE	GOOD	EXCELLENT
FULL-DAY WORKSHOPS				
WS#01 Evaluation of the Transformative Power of Evaluation for a Fair and Sustainable World [Adinda Van Hemelrijck, Nicola Giordano, Aydin Shahidi, & Phuntsho Choden] (n-16)		38%	31%	31%
WS#02 From pilot to Scale up: Opportunities and Challenges of Evaluating AI System [Karthik Adapa & Alpan Raval] (n-22)		14%	59%	36%
HALF-DAY WORKSHOPS				
WS#03 Leveraging ICT Tools for High-Quality Data Collection, Visualization, and Decision-Making [Maulik Chauhan] (n-19)	5%		74%	21%
WS#04 Youth Participatory Evaluation [Gabriela Renteria Flores and Rai Sengupta] (n-5)	20%	40%	40%	
WS#05 Evaluating for Equity: Strengthening Gender and Intersectionality [Sonal Zaveri & Ranjani K Murthy] (n-10)		10%	70%	20%
WS#06 Evidence Gap Mapping [Suchi Malhotra] (n-10)		40%	30%	40%
WS#07 How to Develop Organizational M&E System [Reinhard Stockmann] (n-17)	6%	17%	59%	18%
WS#08 Value for Money Assessment in M&E [Priya Rampal & Radhika Menon] (n-7)		14%	57%	29%

Similarly, the participant’s views on the facilitators and their method of training were, in general, good (Table 2.4).

Table 2.4 – Participants rating on the workshop facilitators and their method of training

WORKSHOP	POOR	AVERAGE	GOOD	EXCELLENT
FULL-DAY WORKSHOPS				
WS#01 Evaluation of the Transformative Power of Evaluation for a Fair and Sustainable World [Adinda Van Hemelrijck, Nicola Giordano, Aydin Shahidi, & Phuntsho Choden] (n-16)	6%	31%	13%	50%
WS#02 From pilot to Scale up: Opportunities and Challenges of Evaluating AI System [Karthik Adapa & Alpan Raval] (n-22)			64%	36%
HALF-DAY WORKSHOPS				
WS#03 Leveraging ICT Tools for High-Quality Data Collection, Visualization, and Decision-Making [Maulik Chauhan] (n-19)			63%	37%
WS#04 Youth Participatory Evaluation [Gabriela Renteria Flores and Rai Sengupta] (n-5)			80%	20%
WS#05 Evaluating for Equity: Strengthening Gender and Intersectionality [Sonal Zaveri & Ranjani K Murthy] (n-10)		20%	70%	10%
WS#06 Evidence Gap Mapping [Suchi Malhotra] (n-10)		40%	40%	20%
WS#07 How to Develop Organizational M&E System [Reinhard Stockmann] (n-17)		12%	53%	35%
WS#08 Value for Money Assessment in M&E [Priya Rampal & Radhika Menon] (n-7)		29%	71%	

Workshop materials: In regard to the provision of workshop materials, it would appear that not all received materials. Overall, about 40 percent indicated that they received materials and information. Their perception on the quality of the materials/information is presented in Table 2.5.

Table 2.5 – Participants rating of the workshop materials/information provided

WORKSHOP	POOR	AVERAGE	GOOD	EXCELLENT
FULL-DAY WORKSHOPS				
WS#01 Evaluation of the Transformative Power of Evaluation for a Fair and Sustainable World [Adinda Van Hemelrijck, Nicola Giordano, Aydin Shahidi, & Phuntsho Choden] (n-16)	8%	25%	42%	25%
WS#02 From pilot to Scale up: Opportunities and Challenges of Evaluating AI System [Karthik Adapa & Alpan Raval] (n-22)		65%	88%	6%
HALF-DAY WORKSHOPS				
WS#03 Leveraging ICT Tools for High-Quality Data Collection, Visualization, and Decision-Making [Maulik Chauhan] (n-19)		25%	67%	8%
WS#04 Youth Participatory Evaluation [Gabriela Renteria Flores and Rai Sengupta] (n-5)			100%	
WS#05 Evaluating for Equity: Strengthening Gender and Intersectionality [Sonal Zaveri & Ranjani K Murthy] (n-10)			83%	17%
WS#06 Evidence Gap Mapping [Suchi Malhotra] (n-10)	14%	14%	72%	
WS#07 How to Develop Organizational M&E System [Reinhard Stockmann] (n-17)	6%	20%	67%	7%
WS#08 Value for Money Assessment in M&E [Priya Rampal & Radhika Menon] (n-7)			50%	50%

Participants rating of the satisfaction of new skills acquired by attending the workshops is summarised in Table 2.6.

Table 2.6 – Participants rating of the satisfaction of new skills acquired

WORKSHOP	POOR	AVERAGE	GOOD	EXCELLENT
FULL-DAY WORKSHOPS				
WS#01 Evaluation of the Transformative Power of Evaluation for a Fair and Sustainable World [Adinda Van Hemelrijck, Nicola Giordano, Aydin Shahidi, & Phuntsho Choden] (n-16)		38%	38%	24%
WS#02 From pilot to Scale up: Opportunities and Challenges of Evaluating AI System [Karthik Adapa & Alpan Raval] (n-22)		13%	73%	14%
HALF-DAY WORKSHOPS				
WS#03 Leveraging ICT Tools for High-Quality Data Collection, Visualization, and Decision-Making [Maulik Chauhan] (n-19)		11%	84%	5%
WS#04 Youth Participatory Evaluation [Gabriela Rentería Flores and Rai Sengupta] (n-5)		40%	60%	
WS#05 Evaluating for Equity: Strengthening Gender and Intersectionality [Sonal Zaveri & Ranjani K Murthy] (n-10)		20%	70%	10%
WS#06 Evidence Gap Mapping [Suchi Malhotra] (n-10)		20%	60%	20%
WS#07 How to Develop Organizational M&E System [Reinhard Stockmann] (n-17)	6%	12%	82%	
WS#08 Value for Money Assessment in M&E [Priya Rampal & Radhika Menon] (n-7)			86%	14%

In regard to the overall rating of the workshop experience, the responses are summarised in Table 2.7.

Table 2.7 – Overall rating of the workshops

WORKSHOP	AVERAGE	GOOD	EXCELLENT
FULL-DAY WORKSHOPS			
WS#01 Evaluation of the Transformative Power of Evaluation for a Fair and Sustainable World [Adinda Van Hemelrijck, Nicola Giordano, Aydin Shahidi, & Phuntsho Choden] (n-16)	37%	25%	38%
WS#02 From pilot to Scale up: Opportunities and Challenges of Evaluating AI System [Karthik Adapa & Alpan Raval] (n-22)	14%	59%	27%
HALF-DAY WORKSHOPS			
WS#03 Leveraging ICT Tools for High-Quality Data Collection, Visualization, and Decision-Making [Maulik Chauhan] (n-19)	10%	74%	16%
WS#04 Youth Participatory Evaluation [Gabriela Rentería Flores and Rai Sengupta] (n-5)	20%	80%	
WS#05 Evaluating for Equity: Strengthening Gender and Intersectionality [Sonal Zaveri & Ranjani K Murthy] (n-10)	10%	70%	20%
WS#06 Evidence Gap Mapping [Suchi Malhotra] (n-10)	20%	50%	30%
WS#07 How to Develop Organizational M&E System [Reinhard Stockmann] (n-17)	12%	76%	12%
WS#08 Value for Money Assessment in M&E [Priya Rampal & Radhika Menon] (n-7)	14%	72%	14%

2.2 SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF WORKSHOPS

The following suggestions have been made by the participants with a view to improve future workshops:

- The workshops were more informative and provided opportunities to learn. It would be good to add more skills development workshops and allow some time for networking. It would also be useful to facilitate the sustenance of networks among participants.
- I believe more reading materials and takeaways would be beneficial. There is only so much we can absorb in one session. I would also love to continue to learn from the group and create new opportunities for collaboration.
- I feel that distributing the workshop reading materials in advance would enhance the overall experience.

- Parallel workshops meant that I could not attend some important workshops.
- Half-days are insufficient as the topics require more reflection and deliberation. One of the workshops I attended had two facilitators; one was quite an excellent facilitator who explained key concepts very well, including their application, challenges, and limitations. However, the other facilitator struggled with these aspects. They seemed a bit inflexible or inarticulate in their communication. As a result, it was a mixed experience. My suggestion for improvement is for facilitators to either hold a full-day workshop in such summits or reduce the workshop content to thoroughly cover one sub-topic, including its application and a variety of examples. The examples used were quite limited; incorporating examples from more diverse issue areas and geographical regions would help build a deeper understanding of the key concepts.
- Practical work and exercises were very limited. The amount of hands-on work in the workshop was limited; it was more about presenting case studies rather than teaching skills.
- Instead of many panel discussions, workshops should be increased as they offer a really good learning experience; yet this is an excellent effort, which is appreciated.
- One of the workshops I attended was too technical and very complicated.
- Organisers can specify in advance the expected skill level or suitable participants for the workshop. The workshop I attended was good overall, but it did not add value for me since I already knew the content covered during the session.

Annex 3



3.1 FEEDBACK ON PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Ninety-three per cent (93%) of the participants rated Panel presentations as worthwhile attending. Of the participants, 84 per cent rated the clarity of content and level of details of the presentations 'good' and 'excellent' (Fig. 3.1).

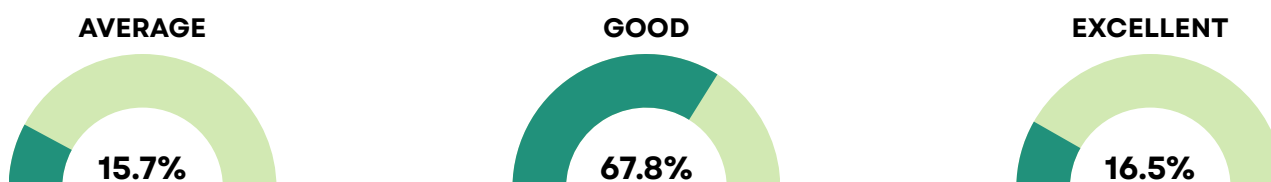


Fig. 3.1 - Rating of the overall content of Panel Discussions (n-121)

In regard to the usefulness of the panels, over 78 per cent rated them as 'good' and 'excellent' (Fig. 3.2).



Fig. 3.2 - Overall usefulness of Panel Discussions (n-121)

In regard to the level of interaction, nearly 88 per cent indicated interaction as 'good' and 'excellent' (Fig. 3.3).



Fig. 3.3 - Rating on the level of interaction (n-121)

3.2 SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS

- There were too many Panels running concurrently, and it was not possible to attend some important Panel discussions. Not sure how this can be resolved, but I missed some important Panels. Some of the Panel discussions could have been scheduled for the afternoon of the 3rd day so that those interested could attend instead of the Summit.
- Most of the speakers were excellent, and great discussions and side discussions happened, but some speakers lacked experience, and it was visible in their speeches. In some cases, the moderator was ineffective, and the audience microphone ended up with the same set of people. Thus, interaction was limited.
- The primary limitation of the panel presentations was that there were at least 5 different presentations happening at the same time; as a result, participants had to split up among the 5 different options and thereby reducing the attendance (and somewhat generating a level of competitiveness to compete with others for people to attend a particular panel) and therefore impacting the level of engagement for each.
- There should be networking time provided.... The presentation need to be according to the topic. Some presenters just showed their organisation's video or activity slides, without even linking them to the given topic. Also, the presenters themselves lacked clarity in distinguishing between monitoring and evaluation. Organisers should have verified the presentations as it was demanded well in advance to be submitted.

- Most of the presentations were primarily focused on showcasing individual organisational work, with limited space for collective reflection or cross-organisational dialogue. It would be great to see future editions of the conclave intentionally designed to foster more interaction, creative presentation and panel discussion formats, shared learning, and discussion – especially among like-minded organisations facing similar challenges. Structured opportunities for exchange, collaboration, or even co-creation could make the experience more enriching for all participants.
- The panel presentations were sometimes generic and felt like only rhetoric. Many of these concepts are already known to evaluators. The learning emerges when we see papers, use cases, and on-the-ground risk mitigation experience. Although these were a part of the panels, I believe the focus can be largely on these and minimize the theoretical rhetoric. The panels with too many presenters were therefore not as engaging.
- I attended a Panel discussion with the expectation to acquire new knowledge. However, the Panel was essentially a conversation, and the panellist was asking the audience what to do, which was not what I, as a participant, was looking for, nor what I thought the discussion would be about. I hope this feedback was useful, and thank you for your efforts!
- I think the panellists should include more speakers from the African sub-continent; also, speakers from the grassroots level to speak about their experience would have been useful.
- I wish there were more global north discussions around evaluation.
- The reading materials are very useful -please provide access to them for future learning.
- Reduce the number of panel discussions next time and allocate more time for learning activities, such as workshops. Some panels were empty, while others attracted many attendees.
- Sharper panel content will be helpful. Also, it would be useful to access the materials used by the Panellists online.
- Some panellists were not quite prepared.
- South Asian context relevance and learnings for this context seemed missing in the panel presentations. Dialogues could have been emphasised more, rather than showcasing the work of individuals and networks.
- The number of papers on gender equity was 15%. This is a concern. Next time, once the thematic focus of panels is decided, special gender experts could be invited on the same.



Overall Assessment of the Evaluation Conclave 2025

4.1 INTRODUCTION

As part of the management of the Evaluation Conclave, 2025, it was decided to conduct an overall evaluation of the Conclave. A structured assessment form was provided online to all participants after the event closed on 30 May 2025. The participants were regularly reminded to complete the questionnaire, which was available online until 28 June 2025. The assessment covered the following areas:

- Skills Development Workshops
- Panel/roundtable discussions
- Overall perception of the event

4.2 METHODOLOGY

The events were evaluated from 121 individual responses received online. The key features of the respondents are as follows:

- Only 32 participants (or 26.4%) have participated in a previous Evaluation Conclave conducted by the Community of Evaluators, South Asia;
- Nearly 63 per cent of the participants were in the age range 31 – 50 years (Fig. 4.1).

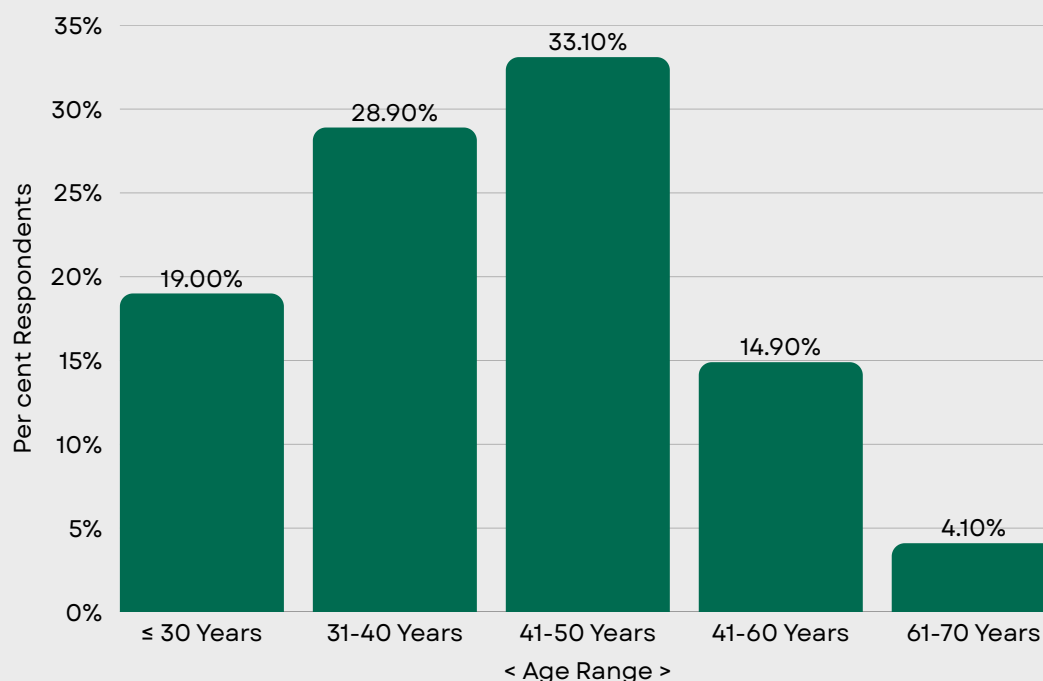


Fig. 4.1 - Age of the participants (n-121)

- Among the participants, 42 individuals, or 34.7%, were males.;
- Sixty-three (63) participants, making up 52%, were members of a professional evaluation network;
- In terms of their evaluation experience, over 40 per cent of participants were professional evaluators (Fig. 4.2).

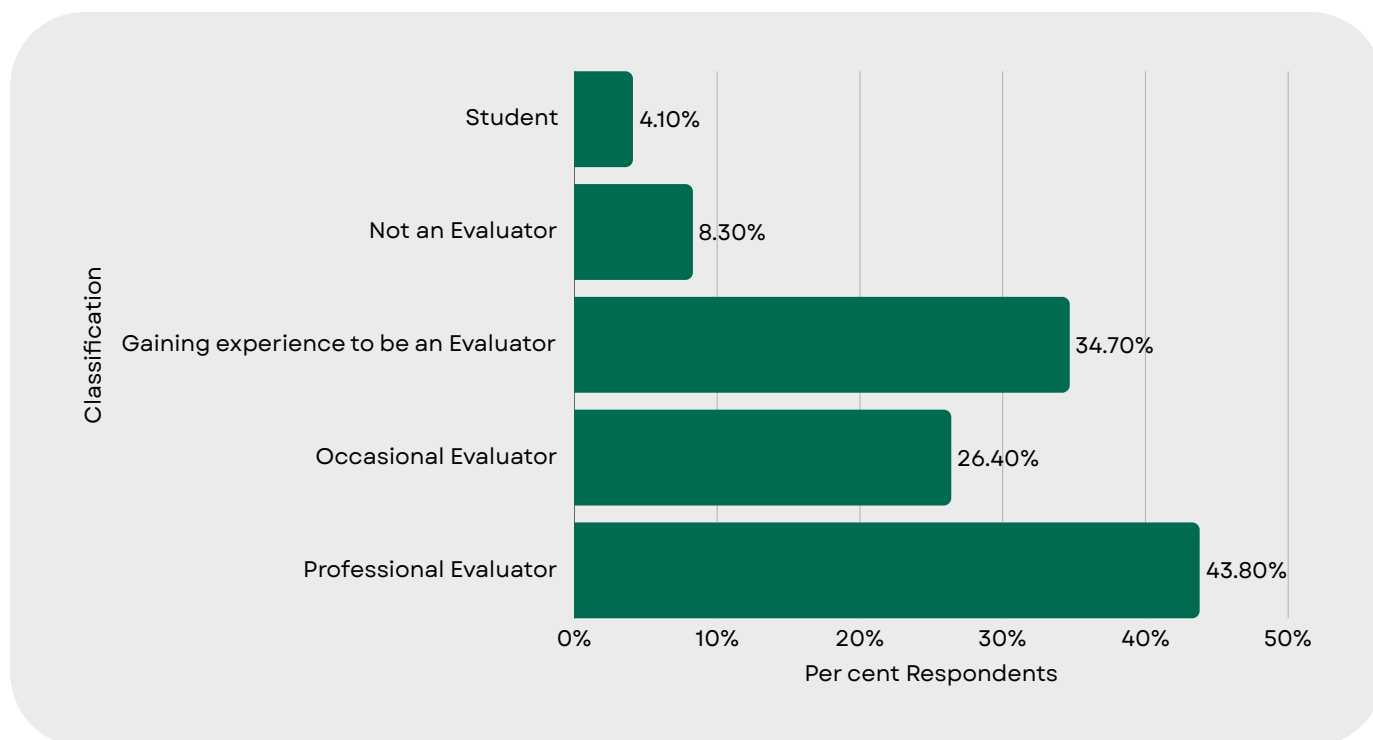


Fig. 4.2 - Evaluation experience of the participants (multiple choices) (n-121)

4.3 RESULTS

Data analysis of assessments covered (a) skills development workshops, (b) Panel/roundtable discussions, and (c) the overall experience of the Evaluation Conclave, 2025.

(a) Overall Feedback on the Skills Development Workshops

Some of the detailed assessments relating to the skills development workshops have been reported in Annex 2.

The overall usefulness of the workshops was around 90 per cent indicating their positive contribution to skills development of the participants (Fig. 4.3).

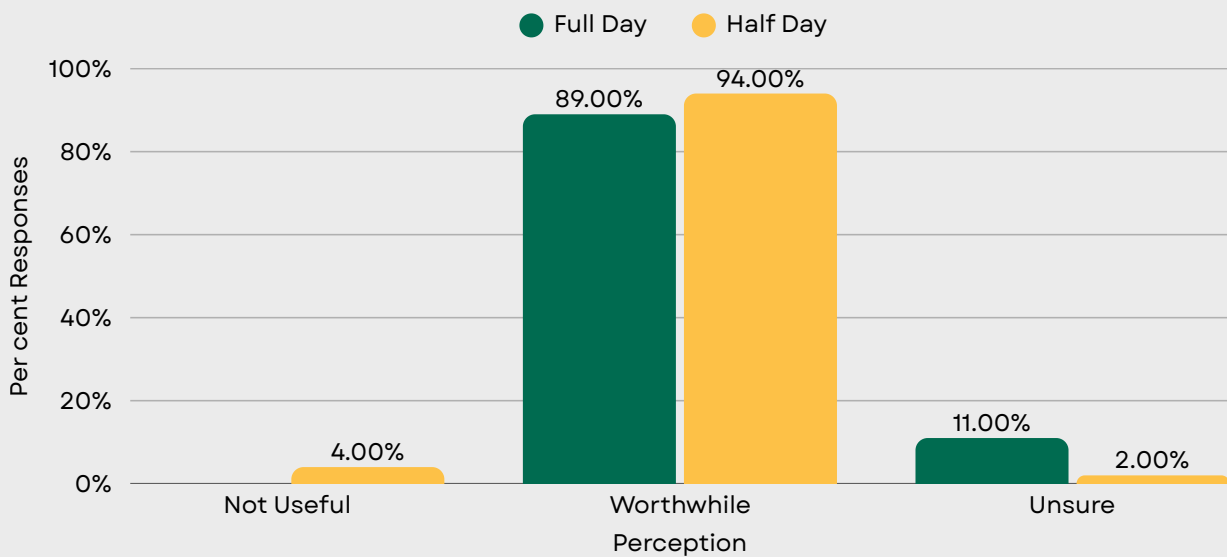


Fig. 4.3 - Overall usefulness of workshops (n=88)

The overall assessment of the programmatic content (technical information and level of detail) is very satisfactory (Fig. 4.4).

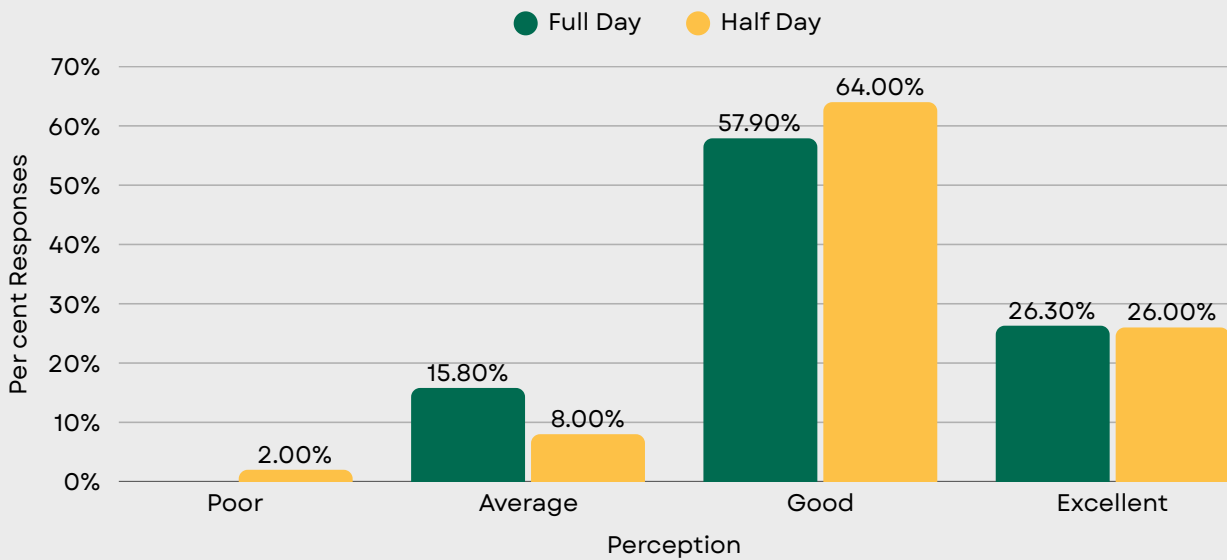


Fig. 4.4 - Overall assessment of the programmatic content of the workshops

The level of interaction is depicted in Fig. 4.5. Interaction could have been better.

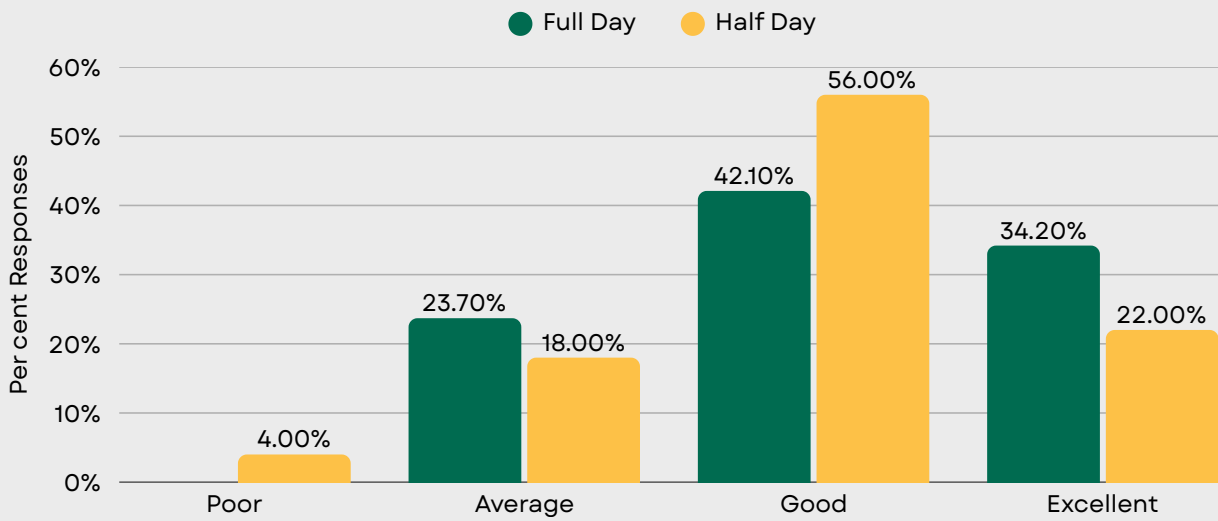


Fig. 4.5 - Overall level of interaction in the workshops

The overall perception on the facilitators and their method of training indicates that there is room for improvement (Fig. 4.6).

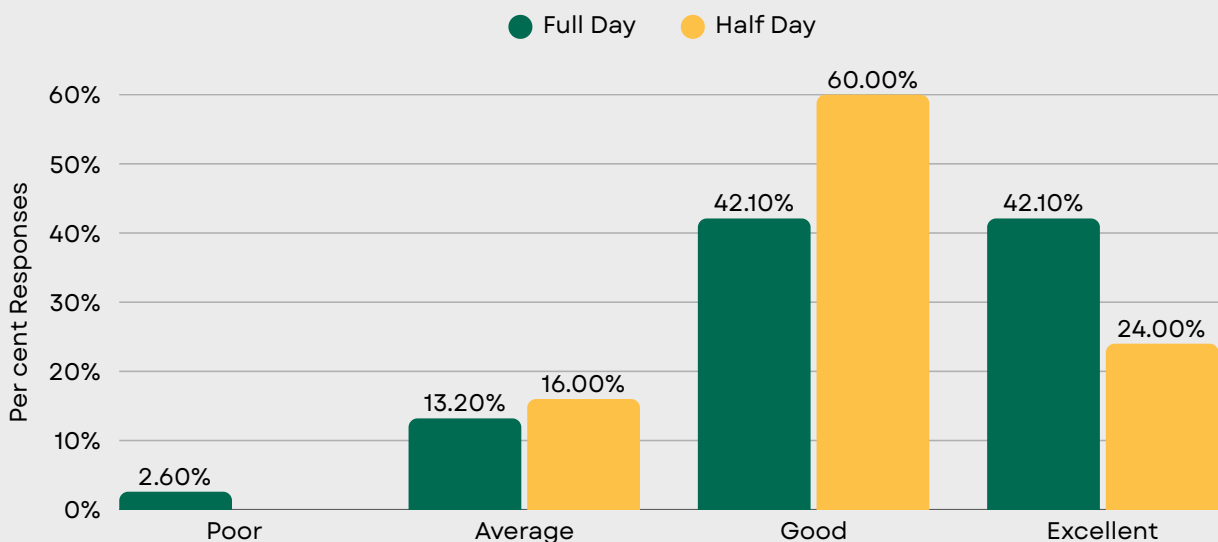


Fig. 4.6- Overall level of interaction in the workshops

In regard to the new skills acquired, the situation could have been improved if prior announcement was made in regard to the experience/knowledge the potential participants should have to attend the workshops. Some felt that they attended the workshops but did not learn new skills (Fig. 4.7).

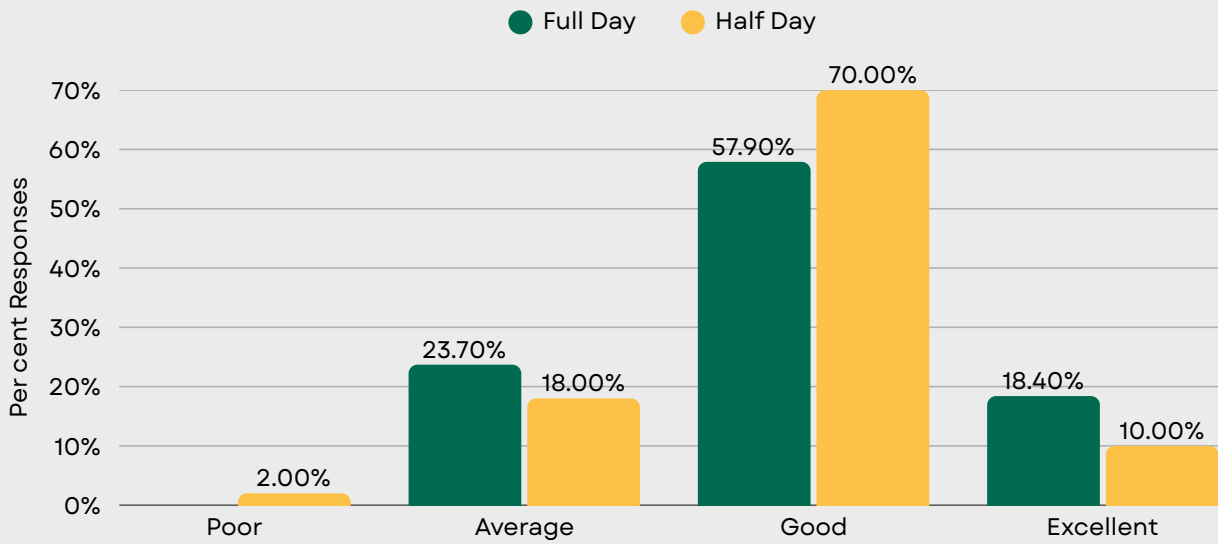


Fig. 4.7 - Overall perception on new skills acquired

The overall workshop experience has been very positively indicated (Fig. 4.8).

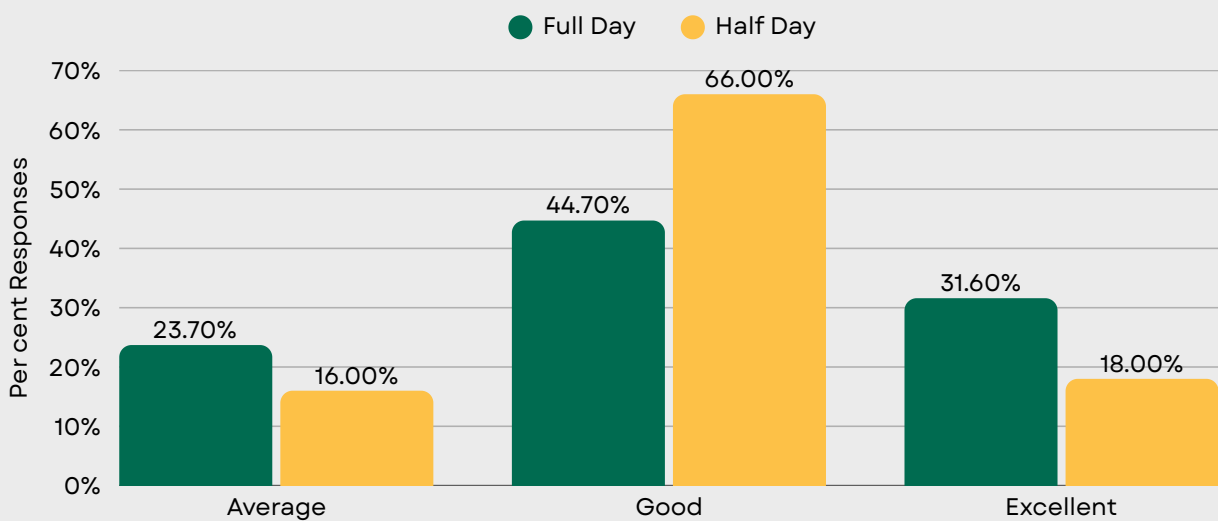


Fig. 4.8 - Overall workshop experience

(b) Overall experience of the Evaluation Conclave 2025

The participants perception on event organisation and coordinating staff is presented in Fig. 4.9. Nearly 93 per cent of the participants rated organisation and coordination as ‘good’ and ‘excellent’.

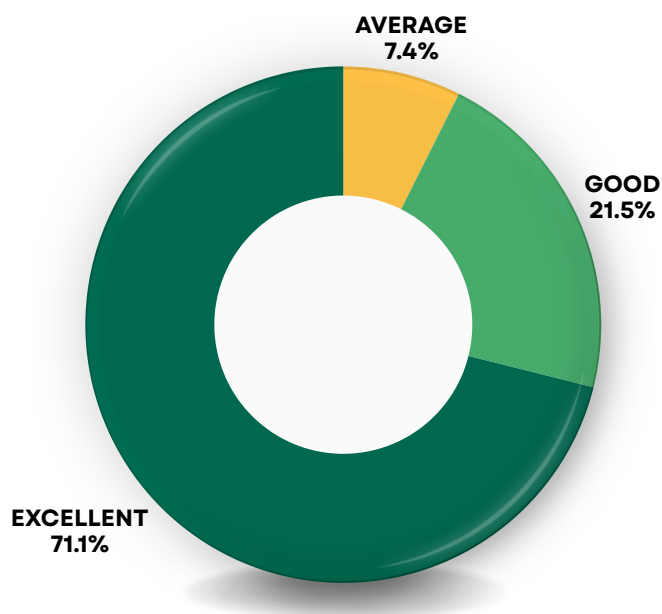


Fig. 4.9 - Participants rating of event organisation/coordinating staff (n-121)

- The organizers and the secretariat staff were very accommodating and helpful. The responses to my various queries were promptly addressed.
- While I congratulate you on organising an excellent event filled with content, I would be remiss if I did not mention the very human side of the organisers, the Secretariat cramped in a corner, and the event management team.

In regard to the facilities at the venue of the event (food, seating, audio-visuals), nearly 94 per cent of the participants rated ‘good’ (28%) and ‘excellent’ (66%) (Fig. 6.10). Some shortcomings highlighted are as follows:

- Inadequate choice of vegetarian food
- Inadequate supply of drinking water in the meeting rooms
- Participants overall experience is presented in Fig. 4.11 – with 41% and 58% indicating ‘good’ and ‘excellent’, respectively.

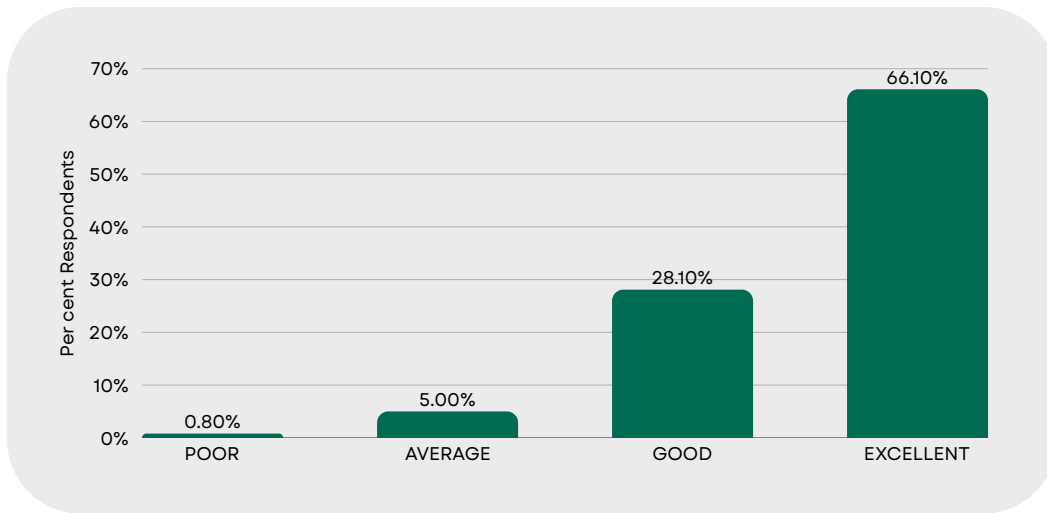


Fig. 4.10 - Participants rating of the event (n-121)

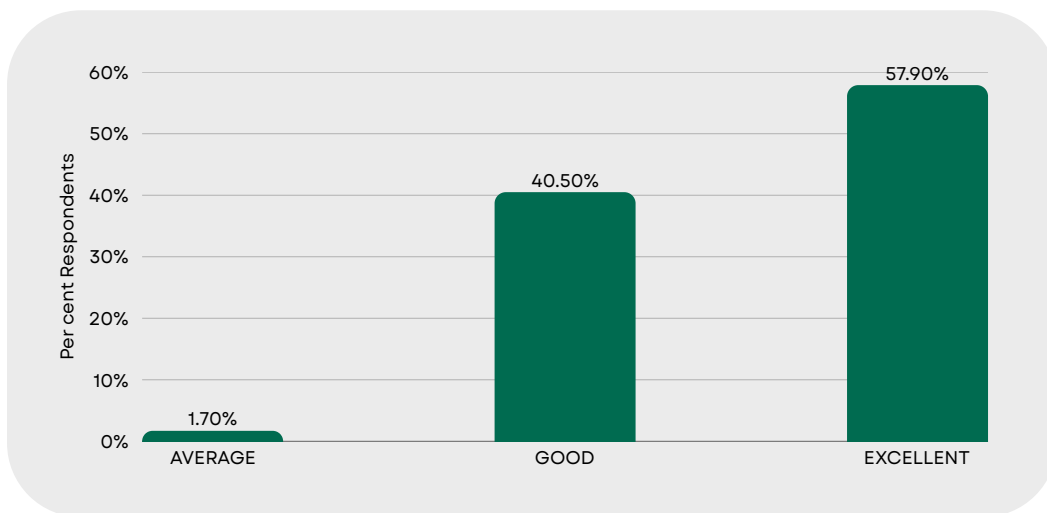


Fig. 4.11 - Participants overall experience (n-121)



- Thank you for excellent organisation, and the opportunity; the programme was excellent, and the engagement was ensured throughout the conference and was a fantastic learning experience. However, the youth programme lacked a clear focus.
- It was a great opportunity for cross-learning and the event was really well organized. I also got the chance to expand my professional network. A big thank you to the organizing committee for giving me this opportunity through the bursary support.



- **(c) Suggestions for improvement of the Evaluation Conclave 2025**

- While workshops and panel discussions were rich in content, the Summit lacked technical substance. As a paid participant, the Summit was not value-for-money. I would have preferred it if there were alternate workshops/technical panels during the Summit time so that we could have used our time more productively.
- To enhance the overall experience and create stronger connections among participants, I suggest integrating evening cultural activities such as traditional dances and a shared dinner. These informal settings promote deeper networking, cross-cultural exchange, and a sense of community beyond formal sessions. Such social elements also provide space for regional bonding, storytelling, and informal mentorship, especially valuable in a global and intergenerational gathering like the Conclave.
- Most sessions started late, time management should have been better. The moderators did not manage time well.
- A follow-up conference on selected areas will be definitely useful for us.
- Have sessions on different approaches to evaluation. Arrange more sessions on the use of evaluation results for policy making.
- I suggest that institutional affiliation or contact information be included with the names of resource persons; this would help in contacting them for follow-up work with them.
- The inauguration would have arranged differently than to be seated table wise.
- The reading materials are very useful -please provide access to them for future learning.
- A small issue was the delay in sharing the template for PPTs - for example, I initially asked if there was a template we needed to follow, was told there wasn't one, and then close to the conference date I was notified about using the conference template... this created a bit of confusion and extra work to reconfigure the PPT with the template shared later.

General Information about the Evaluation Conclave 2025.

5.1 PARTICIPATION AT THE EVALUATION CONCLAVE, 2025

Registration:

Registration for participation in the Evaluation Conclave, 2025 was opened on 25 February 2025. The registration fees are given in Table 5.1

CATEGORY	Pre-Conclave Workshops Only (27 May)	Evaluation Conclave & Summit (28–30 May)	Full Event (27–30 May)
Early-Bird (Until 10 April 2025)	USD 75	USD 250	USD 300
Regular (After 10 April 2025)	USD 100	USD 275	USD 350
COE-SA Members	USD 75	USD 250	USD 300
Sri Lankan Citizens	LKR 20,000	LKR 60,000	LKR 75,000

Group registrations (three or more individuals) were provided with a 20 percent discount.

Registration Concessions:

The registration fee was exempted for workshop leads, keynote speakers, one representative each from donors, CoE Board Members, Secretariat, selected UNFPA staff, and Event Management personnel.



Participation:

Altogether 195 participants from 33 countries attended the Conclave (Table 5.2).

Country	No	Country	No	Country	No
Argentina	1	Ireland	1	Sri Lanka	54
Australia	1	Ivory Coast	1	Switzerland	1
Bangladesh	4	Japan	1	Tajikistan	1
Belgium	1	Kyrgyzstan	1	Tanzania	1
Bhutan	3	Libya	1	Turkey	1
Brazil	1	Mexico	1	Ukraine	2
Canada	3	Moldova	1	United States	7
China	1	Nepal	4	Vietnam	1
Egypt	1	Peru	2	Zambia	1
Georgia	4	Philippines	3		
Germany	2	Poland	2		
India	82	South Africa	1		
Indonesia	1	Spain	2		

TOTAL : 195

5.2 MANAGEMENT OF THE EVALUATION CONCLAVE, 2025

The Evaluation Conclave 2025 was managed by the Conclave Director, ably guided by the Chairperson and Board of Directors of CoE SA and its Committees.

5.3 RESPONSE TO THE CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

In response to the Call for Contributions, the Community of Evaluators, South Asia received over 100 proposals (75 were from Asia, 18 from Africa, Middle East and Latin America, and 7 from evaluators placed in Global North). The Contributions were reviewed by specially appointed experts. Several proponents withdrew their proposals due to variety of reasons, chiefly lack of funds. From the abstracts available, seven (7) multi-paper panels were formed.

Thirty-eight (38) proposals were finally scheduled (Table 5.3).

Contribution	Final selection
Skills Development Workshops	10
Pre-formed Panels	15
Multi-paper Panels	7
Roundtables	5
TOTAL	38



A desk review of the contributions was compiled by **Dr. Mahima Taneja**, Independent Consultant, which proved useful reading material (Annex 6).

5.4 EVENT MANAGEMENT

The events of the Evaluation Conclave 2025 and the Summit for the Future of Evaluations were ably managed by the International Institute of Knowledge Management, Sri Lanka.

5.5 RAPORTEURING SERVICES

The Institute for Participatory Interaction in Development (IPID), Sri Lanka provided rapporteuring services for the Conclave.

5.6 ASSESSMENT OF THE CONCLAVE

An online assessment of the Evaluation Conclave, 2025 was undertaken after the completion of the event; the online questionnaire was made available to the participants from 1 to 28 June 2025.

5.7 FUND-RAISING & BURSARIES

Financial assistance was received from UNFPA, International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada, the Asian Development Bank (Sri Lanka Office), the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), and the New Development Bank. The grant from ADB was mainly used to sponsor participants from Sri Lanka.

NEW DIRECTIONS AND DEBATES IN EVALUATION: VOICES FROM GLOBAL SOUTH ^[1]

Highlights from COE-SA Evaluation Conclave 2025 Submissions

Introduction

This discussion paper distills key themes, debates, and innovations emerging from 100 panel, paper, and roundtable abstracts submitted for the Community of Evaluators-South Asia (COE-SA) Evaluation Conclave 2025. Out of the 100 proposals received, 75 were from Asia, 18 from Africa, Middle East and Latin America, and 7 from evaluators placed in Global North. Drawing from a thematic analysis of these contributions, the discussion paper captures the state of current thinking and evolving priorities in the evaluation field with a particular emphasis on voices and directions from the Global South.^[2] Hopefully, this document will serve as an important resource for evaluators across the globe.

Decolonizing and localizing evaluation: Diverse Voices and Contextual Relevance in Evaluation

One of the most prominent themes across proposals—especially from South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa—was the call to **decolonize and localize evaluation**. This push challenges donor-driven, top-down paradigms and emphasizes **culturally rooted, community-led, and participatory approaches**. **Across 25+ papers and panel proposals, evaluation was framed not as a neutral or technical task**, but as a deeply political and epistemic process. Authors questioned standard terms like “impact” and “context,” arguing that communities should shape not just the evaluation methods, but also how impact is defined.

It was exciting to see that several paper and panel proposals touched upon epistemic justice, calling for shifts from Western-centric tools to locally grounded, indigenous, and oral knowledge systems. A growing number of practitioners, particularly from India, Nepal, Kenya, Uganda, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka advocated for co-creation and participatory methods, elevating community narratives and lived realities through storytelling and culturally responsive evaluation methods. In India and Nepal, evaluators showcased **river journeys, well-being thermometers, and feminist storytelling** to explore mental health, gender transformation, and community-defined impact. In Kenya, an environmental evaluation with the Ogiek community promoted **“two-eyed seeing,”** integrating Indigenous and Western knowledge systems. A youth-led panel from Sri Lanka reimagined transport planning by grounding it in the lived experiences of the Vedda community, highlighting how evaluation and planning can centre Indigenous perspectives.

[1] This brief is based on analysis by Mahima Taneja, Independent Evaluator and CoE-SA member (Correspondence Email: tanejamahima@gmail.com). Recommended Citation: Taneja, Mahima. “New Directions & Debates in Evaluation: Voices from Global South.” Colombo: Community of Evaluators-South Asia Evaluation Conclave 2025. May 2025.

[2] The categories of “Global North” and “Global South” are used here as broad geopolitical, historical and political references, which should be further unpacked. In practice, the boundaries between them are increasingly fluid. Many evaluators from the Global North have spent their careers embedded in Global South contexts, while practitioners from the Global South often work within influential institutions based in the North. Moreover, while development aid and technical expertise have traditionally flowed from the North to the South, this dynamic is shifting. There is a growing emphasis on domestic funding, country-led evaluation systems, and in-country expertise—reshaping power, ownership, and knowledge production in the evaluation field.

Submissions critiqued how **public health and development evaluations often exclude local wisdom**, through examples of large-scale programs in South Asia (like POSHAN Abhiyaan) that did not engage indigenous knowledge in their evaluation frameworks. These cases underscore the shift from seeing communities as “respondents” or passive beneficiaries to recognizing them as **co-creators** and active leaders of evaluation. Several proposals also addressed **power in evaluation—who holds it, who defines evidence, and whose experiences count**. Many called for **community-led evaluation models**, such as Bangladesh’s **Community-Led Real-Time Evaluation**, where local actors play leading roles in learning, accountability, and decision-making. This emphasis on **local empowerment** was a recurring theme across geographies.

In terms of methods, proposals advocated for sequential mixed-methods, human-centred design, digital ethnography, and a range of qualitative and participatory tools such as body mapping, spider web diagrams, participatory storytelling, and the Most Significant Change technique. These approaches were valued for capturing complex social realities and for enabling collaborative meaning-making. While “participation” has become a buzzword in the evaluation sector, many proposals sought to reclaim its transformative potential by pairing it with culturally relevant indicators and frameworks and innovative qualitative tools. However, some critical blind spots remained as broad terms like “culture” and “context” **obscured exclusions based on caste, tribe, or ethnicity**.

Youth in Evaluation: An important voice shaping the Future of the Field

The conclave will feature discussions on the current landscape of youth evaluation, particularly in countries like India, Nepal, Indonesia, Bangladesh, and Uganda. Around 12 submissions called for meaningful youth engagement, mitigating barriers that Young and Emerging Evaluators (YEEs) face, sharing best practices from youth-led or youth-engaged evaluations, and developing strategies for integrating youth into evaluation networks. Collaborations such as **APEA’s journey with YEEs in the Asia Pacific** will also be discussed.

YEEs are increasingly recognized as critical agents of change, driving the professionalization and institutionalization of evaluation, and bringing in fresh perspectives. Proposals argue that **youth should be engaged as active contributors** in evaluation processes. Their involvement enriches findings, fosters digital and methodological innovation, and helps build dynamic evaluation cultures. For example, a panel drawing from UNICEF’s Indonesia country program will examine how **Meaningful Adolescent and Youth Participation (MAYP)** strengthens evaluations, empowers young people as knowledge producers, fosters intergenerational dialogue, and informs effective programming. Other submissions argued that YEEs challenge **power dynamics, biases, and contradictions** related to gender, equity, and human rights within evaluations. Drawing from personal and community experiences, youth—such as one case from Ivory Coast will demonstrate—**offer solutions grounded in local realities** while also leveraging modern tools and professional networks. This transformative potential is further demonstrated by youth-led digital evaluation approaches, which enhances data quality and stakeholder participation by combining YEEs’ digital expertise with established evaluation principles.

To support this shift, **structured frameworks and standards** are emerging. Submissions discussed the ‘**Youth in Evaluation Standards**’, which outline youth engagement across evaluation phases—from leadership and advocacy to capacity development, human resources, and funding. The MAYP framework will also be showcased, along with practical approaches such as **youth representation in evaluation reference groups, co-facilitator training, shared sense-making sessions** and **interactive, youth-sensitive data collection tools**. Several proposals also emphasized integrating **evaluation education into school systems** to build foundational skills and foster early engagement. By **amplifying youth voices**, evaluations can better reflect their needs, promote inclusive decision-making, introduce diverse perspectives and introduce **technological innovations** rooted in real-world experience.

There was also strong interest in ethics, reflexivity, and equity, particularly in critical areas such as mental health, climate change, and artificial intelligence. Traditional surveys, many noted, tend to underreport or miss the subtleties of these domains. Together, these proposals argued for a shift from **extractive forms of inquiry** toward **evaluation as a process of shared learning and meaning making** where **lived experience** holds as much value as statistical data. Across the board, there was a marked concern with decolonising knowledge systems, centring community voices, and embracing plurality of knowledge.

Evaluations in Fragile and Crisis Contexts

This theme echoed across 9–10 proposals that addressed evaluation in the context of overlapping crises—climate collapse, pandemics, armed conflict, economic instability, social trauma, and shifting funding priorities. These submissions, particularly from South Asia and Africa, emphasized that **linear and standardized evaluation approaches fall short** in fragile settings. Instead, they advocate for **adaptive, participatory, and community-centered methods** that account for uncertainty, urgency, and systemic inequities. Evaluators from climate-vulnerable countries shared grounded models of **resilience evaluation**. A case from Bangladesh assessed a climate adaptation project with coastal women using a **stratified RCT with a phase-in design, so that no one is left behind**. It examined impacts on household well-being, resilience, and women’s empowerment while acknowledging the **methodological challenges** of conducting rigorous evaluations in volatile, resource-constrained contexts. Papers also advocated for **evidence-based and locally rooted responses to climate disasters**.

Several papers argued for **bottom-up approaches to evaluating climate adaptation**. An analysis from India presented a systematic review of participatory methods in the Global South, stressing the need to centre marginalized communities who face the brunt of climate change but are excluded from planning and evaluation decisions. The paper argued for participatory techniques at all stages – from framing the evaluation questions to data collection and reporting to ensure the community at stake has a seat at the decision-making table. It also underlined contextual specificity of adapting communities and explored how intersecting axes of vulnerability interact. At the same time, it acknowledged challenges posed by tight timelines and donor-driven constraints, thus requiring methodological innovation and flexibility. Another paper from India argued for integrating **climate indicators into agricultural evaluations** and showcased a dual approach combining satellite imagery and field surveys to assess climate-induced stress on crops and soil. Other innovative frameworks included the Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool used in Nepal’s protected areas which has informed biodiversity conservation planning since two decades. It uses ecological and governance indicators while increasingly integrating Indigenous perspectives and community priorities.

Mental health evaluation also emerged as a critical focus in fragile contexts. A session proposed from Nepal explored the use of story-cloth circles to support trauma healing among adolescents and women survivors of violence. The initiative frames evaluation as both a **healing and learning process**, posing important questions around ethical practice and harm prevention in sensitive settings. Other papers discussed the challenges of evaluation in **fragile politico-economic contexts**. A submission from Burkina Faso examined financial education programs in conflict zones, underscoring the lack of data on how interventions perform in settings affected by chronic insecurity. This highlighted a broader gap: the need to examine how well-established interventions translate—or falter—when transplanted into fragile or high-risk environments.

In Sri Lanka, evaluators navigating multiple crisis highlighted the value of integrated Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) systems to generate coherence across fragmented interventions. One paper shared how unifying eight sectoral projects into a single M&E framework revealed interlinked resilience pathways. This also strengthened accountability and supported a smoother transition from emergency response to sustainable development. It emphasized that **evaluating programs in isolation can overlook their collective impact**, especially when several partners work toward shared goals. Overall, the clarion call was to design **context-specific, politically aware evaluations that are shaped by those most affected**.



Gender, equity and intersectionality in evaluations

Across approximately 15 proposals, a multifaceted discourse emerged around embedding **gender, equity, and intersectionality** into evaluation design, implementation, and use. These submissions moved beyond gender-disaggregated indicators, calling instead for **transformative and feminist approaches** that challenge systemic inequities and make power visible within the evaluation process itself. Broadly, these submissions could be divided into – (i) measurement challenges with women’s empowerment, social norms etc., and (ii) feminist and gender transformative approaches to evaluations, in general.

Several papers interrogated the **limits of current measurement frameworks for women’s empowerment**. They pointed to the inadequacy of short-term evaluations in capturing the **slow, iterative nature of empowerment**, especially changes in **agency, voice, and intra-household dynamics**. Evaluators proposed showcasing **mixed-methods and culturally grounded frameworks** that can attend to both tangible and intangible shifts. These included reflections on methodological tensions: while quantitative data offer breadth, they often miss subtle shifts in decision-making power, confidence, or leadership emergence. Qualitative methods, while richer, are often undervalued in donor-driven evaluation cultures. Evaluators also highlighted the **complexity of measuring social norm change**, particularly where shifts are non-linear, culturally embedded, and slow-moving. One paper explicitly noted the lack of consensus and tools to track such change, advocating for **participatory, feminist-adapted methodologies** that combine **intersectionality, reflexivity, and context sensitivity**. Another proposed the use of **norm-tracking instruments and intra-household analyses** to reveal shifts in power relations, voice, and agency. Discussions also addressed how **gendered social norms shape entire value chains**, such as in handicrafts or agriculture, with intersectional overlays of caste, class, and age.

Keeping with one of the key sub-themes of this year's conclave, there was also a focus on equity-focused and intersectional evaluation approaches. A few submissions tackled how gender, caste, indigeneity, disability, and age intersect to shape access, outcomes, and risk. A proposed roundtable on leadership programs examined how **intersectional, feminist designs could amplify marginalized voices and confront embedded power structures**. Other submissions proposed tools like **Outcome Mapping and Value for Money** frameworks adapted with **GEDSI (Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion) principles** to ensure that evaluations inform more inclusive and equitable investments.

A notable theme running through the submissions was the advocacy for **feminist and gender-transformative evaluations**. One proposed panel emphasized that evaluations must confront power at every level—from who commissions and conducts evaluations, to how risks, accountability, and success are defined. It emphasized the **importance of structural analysis**, especially when evaluating the work of women's rights organizations operating under severe constraints or backlash. Other submissions introduced or refined **feminist meta-evaluation frameworks**, proposing that evaluations should be judged not only by methods and results, but by how well they incorporate gender and equity at every procedural step. Another panel from India explored **gender-transformative evaluation training**, asking what skills, tools, and mindset shifts are needed to truly integrate gender into M&E.

Gender, equity and intersectionality in evaluation

Technology is seen both as a frontier and a risk in the evaluation field. 15 proposals submitted for the conclave explored how digital tools are transforming evaluation, while also critically examining the accompanying **risks and ethical concerns**. While there was a substantial emphasis on the use of AI, machine learning, and real-time analytics for large-scale M&E to spotlight innovation and efficiency, the discourse also seems to be focused on governance and ethics of digital evaluation tools. This included concerns around consent, community control, exclusion, digital literacy, and bias in tech-tools.

Several submissions highlighted the use and potential of **Generative AI (GenAI), machine learning, big data analytics, and predictive analytics** to revolutionize evaluation.^[3] They highlighted applications like literature synthesis, stakeholder mapping, bias detection, **interactive reporting and geospatial assessments**. Additionally, there was also a strong emphasis on the **ethical implications of digital evaluation tools**. Abstracts raised concerns about **data privacy, algorithmic bias, risks to human judgment, and the exclusion of marginalized voices**. One proposal from South Africa introduced the **3E Framework (Ethical-Efficiency-Equilibrium)** to help practitioners leverage GenAI's efficiency while safeguarding human expertise and robust ethical principles. It stressed the need for **diverse training datasets, transparent decision-making, and ongoing bias audits**. Another abstract from Zimbabwe examined **biases in data-driven evaluations**, focusing on fairness and ethical datafication practices. Concerns were also raised about how AI-driven evaluations may **exclude oral traditions and indigenous knowledge**, especially in the Global South, and exacerbate existing power asymmetries. One proposal warned that digital approaches risk eroding participatory practices if not grounded in local contexts.

[3] Apart from GIS, innovations in mobile tools, CAPI, CATI, and online platforms were also mentioned. However, these technologies have been in use for over a decade and therefore this note focuses on the discussions around on ethics, inclusion, and sustainability around AI, ML, GIS etc.

Others pointed to the need for inclusive frameworks that ensure fair representation and do not deepen existing inequalities. Some papers emphasized the need for **hybrid, human-centered approaches** that combine the efficiency of digital tools with local cultural contexts and lived realities. An innovative approach that came up was the integration of Social Network Analysis (SNA) with AI for participatory developmental evaluations. By capturing complex community dynamics, structure and flow of relations, and network patterns, AI-enhanced SNA was posited as a tool to deepen community engagement and generate efficient and predictive insights about behavioural changes across sectors like health and education.

Geospatial tools were another major area of interest. Proposals discussed how GIS data can enhance evaluations, long-term monitoring, visualization, and cost-effective data availability in otherwise data-scarce environments. Applications included poverty mapping, environment impact assessments, geospatial mapping of inequalities, and measuring accessibility. A paper from Zambia highlighted the importance of GIS, big data, and mobile tools in making evaluations more accurate, timely, and scalable. Another paper drew on evaluations across Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka to showcase how geospatial data can be used to map inequalities and inform policy. The paper stressed the value of combining GIS, spatial econometrics and participatory mapping, while also noting challenges like data gaps, computational constraints, data harmonization issues, capacity gaps, and ethical concerns. It called for strengthening National Spatial Data Infrastructures and building local capacities to better integrate geospatial tools into traditional evaluation methods like field surveys to enhance 'evaluation precision'.

Real-time monitoring emerged as another application of tech-enabled evaluation.^[4] One abstract from India paper exemplified how AI and big data can be used for agile project management to provide real-time insights through analysis of large datasets and automating processes, allowing for early detection of issues and timely adjustments. Another shared how technology-enabled monitoring system has improved child protection services in India by enhancing service delivery, accountability, and policy formulation. Another proposed roundtable from India demonstrated how real-time data collection and analysis can improve program delivery. It featured three case studies highlighting use of community-driven data for improving family planning, use of tech for education reform in Bihar and Karnataka through dashboards and targeted support for underperforming areas; and use of integrated participatory M&E with satellite data for real-time insights in natural resource management. Some abstracts focus on the application and challenges of technology in evaluation within specific sectors like climate change. One abstract for example assessed how **AI can be used to evaluate climate-related risks and opportunities**.

Across the proposals, there is a clear shift toward ensuring that tech-enabled evaluations are ethically sound, inclusive, and responsive to local contexts. Whether through AI, GIS, or mobile platforms, the field is grappling with how to balance innovation with accountability, and efficiency with sensitivity. The 2025 Conclave will serve as a critical space to explore these evolving tensions.

[4] The critical role of robust monitoring systems as a prerequisite for effective evaluation is emphasized in papers on other themes also, underlining their interdependence.

Institutionalizing Evaluation Capacities: A Focus on Capacities and Policies

The conclave received 14-15 abstracts on institutionalising evaluation capacities through **national evaluation policies (NEPs)** and **evaluation capacity development (ECD)** efforts. The discussions highlight a concerted effort to embed evaluation into governance structures, enhance professional competencies, and promote evidence-based decision-making.

Several abstracts discuss the development and implementation of **NEPs**, particularly in the context of localising evaluation and shifting global power dynamics. For example, Côte d'Ivoire's NEP, adopted in 2022, and a subsequent law on public policy evaluation mark important milestones, though challenges remain in integrating local authorities into evaluation processes. Nepal's landmark Monitoring and Evaluation Act 2024 is presented as a key legislative initiative, with discussions planned on its drafting process, provisions, and implications for decentralization and development. From the Republic of Congo, one abstract proposed the concept of 'pro-evaluative jurisprudence'—a framework to systematically embed evaluation into parliamentary processes at all stages: ex-ante, in itinere, and ex-post. It underscored the importance of parliaments in enhancing public policy through evaluation. Proposals also highlighted the use of evaluation ecosystem diagnostics to assess national systems. Tools such as the National Evaluation Capacities Index by WFP and the MESA Diagnostic Tool by CLEAR South Asia which are being used in Bhutan, Sri Lanka, and India to identify system strengths and gaps are slated for discussion. Apart from NEPs, submissions also reflected on the influence of political will, donor presence, and local evaluation networks in shaping national evaluation systems. A paper by EVAL MENA network highlighted the shift from supply-driven to country-led, demand-driven evaluation models, arguing that local competencies and policies can move evaluation from a donor-driven, accountability function to a community-owned, learning-oriented process.

On the theme of **ECD**, the focus was on fostering individual and institutional evaluator competencies suited to complex, system-transformative interventions. These include technical skills, but also relational and adaptive abilities, such as community engagement, interpersonal skills, and embedded evaluator orientation—especially in contexts like India and the broader Global South. Academic institutions play a critical role in this capacity-building effort. For example, the University of Sri Jayewardenepura (Sri Lanka) and the Consortium of Institutions on M&E Education in Asia Pacific (supported by APEA) are advancing competency-based M&E training. The outcomes of the first Academic Symposium on M&E Education, co-hosted by APEA, will be shared during the Conclave. In Bangladesh, efforts are underway to integrate M&E into university curricula and professional training, with a focus on empowering youth. However, challenges like outdated syllabi and lack of mentorship remain, which would be discussed during the conclave. In **India**, social work education has emerged as one of the drivers of M&E capacity building. A panel from **Tata Institute of Social Studies** will discuss how partnerships, training like social audit education for community auditors, and curriculum design are helping build evaluation skills. The panel will cover content and pedagogy needed to strengthen evaluation research and competencies within academic settings.

However, a key gap in ECD discussions is often the lack of reflection on its effectiveness. Are these efforts achieving their intended outcomes? Are we developing a clear theory of change and robust mechanisms to measure the impact of ECD initiatives? One submission from **Bhutan** showcased an interesting evaluation of a professional development program for **local government leaders, underlining the importance of context-sensitive training content** and **robust Theory of Change frameworks** for ECD programs.

Together, the abstracts reflect a shared commitment towards institutionalising evaluation, addressing the symbiotic relationship between well-defined national policies and strong evaluation capacities at all levels. The discussions aim to share practical experiences, innovative methodologies, and strategic insights to foster resilient and impactful evaluation ecosystems globally and regionally.

Global and Regional Collaboration and Future of Evaluation

A final set of proposals for the **COE-SA Evaluation Conclave 2025** revolved around the **future of evaluation**, focusing on global and regional collaboration, power dynamics, and evolving evaluation practices to respond to complex global challenges. There emerged a growing emphasis on **south-south partnerships**, mutual learning, and the **adaptation of global standards to diverse contexts**.

Several proposals focused on building stronger ties between **international organizations and regional networks**, emphasizing collaborative frameworks, and **South-South learning**. One abstract examined the role of global associations such as the **International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation** and **EvalPartners** in supporting African evaluation capacity, through partnerships with national networks like **AfrEA**. The proposed panel will showcase approaches such as knowledge transfer through **virtual learning platforms, mentorship programs, and joint research**, using case studies from Ghana, Kenya, and South Africa to demonstrate how these collaborations improve evaluation quality. Another panel, led by the **Independent Evaluation Office of the New Development Bank** will present the **BRICS collaboration** as a model for advancing global evaluation standards and improving impact in emerging economies. This panel will explore how local perspectives can be integrated into evaluation frameworks while addressing shared global challenges, with a strong focus on **youth engagement**.

The abstracts also discussed the multifaceted challenges inherent in conducting evaluations of interventions that address globally interconnected issues, with a growing need to synergize evaluation practices. One abstract from Nepal shared how collaboration between government departments, international organizations, and local actors facilitated the delivery and evaluation of financial literacy programs in rural areas. Another paper focused on climate finance, proposing evidence-based approaches to ensure funds reach the most vulnerable communities.

Across different themes, abstracts stressed the importance of involving **policymakers, youth advocates, and regional leaders** in building **future-ready, localized evaluation systems**. A roundtable proposed bringing together actors like the **Global Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation** and regional networks in South Asia to promote **inclusive, evidence-based evaluation cultures**. Others focused on collaborative frameworks for **multi-country programs**. One abstract, based on 9 case studies across EU and non-EU countries, underlined the **importance of fostering and measuring interactivity**—between donors, implementers, and end-users—as key to ownership and result uptake. Several proposals also called for better ways to measure collective impact. Instead of evaluating isolated interventions, they stressed the need for frameworks that assess the combined effects of multiple organizations working on shared social issues. These proposals emphasized the challenge of maintaining methodological rigor while building shared measurement systems. One panel also spotlighted the importance of systems thinking in evaluation, particularly when assessing complex social change. The panel strongly called for shifting from attribution to valuing contribution, and from static achievements to adaptive learning, especially in the face of interlinked, long-term challenges, encouraging evaluators to develop new competencies and use complexity-sensitive methods.

Conclusion

The Evaluation Conclave 2025 highlights a sector at a critical inflection point—rethinking its purpose, power structures, and practices for future-readiness in response to complex global realities. Across more than 100 proposals received from diverse global contexts, a common thread emerges: the call for evaluation to be more ethical, inclusive, context-sensitive, and collaborative.

Themes of decolonization and localization stood out, especially in the Global South, where practitioners emphasized indigenous knowledge systems, participatory tools, and culturally grounded frameworks. This shift signals a **move away from historically extractive evaluation practices toward evaluations shaped and owned by communities**. Evaluators working in fragile contexts are also adapting, developing responsive, equity-focused methods better suited to conditions of uncertainty and urgency. There is also an increasing attention to gender and intersectionality, including efforts to measure shifts in social norms and power dynamics. On the frontier of technology, abstracts showed both excitement and caution. **While AI, GIS, and real-time tools offer new possibilities, concerns around ethics, exclusion, and algorithmic bias are pressing**, highlighting the need for human-centred and accountable tech use. Simultaneously, efforts to institutionalize evaluation through national policies, academic programs to build core competencies, and country-led evaluation capacity development are gaining traction. **Global and regional collaboration**—through south-south exchanges, cross-border partnerships, and shared learning platforms—is seen as essential for shaping the field’s future. Yet, more direct conversations are still needed on power asymmetries between funders and civil society organizations, and whose agendas drive evaluation practice. Importantly, the use and communication of evaluation findings—how they shape decisions, inform the public, or shift power—remains underdiscussed.

Looking ahead, the future of evaluation will not be dictated by a single region, methodology, or institution. Instead, it will emerge from a dynamic interplay of global and regional dialogue deeply grounded in local wisdom. This future hinges on shared commitments to justice, adaptability, collective learning, and institutional humility, shaping a field equipped to meet the complex challenges of our time.

Annex 7



7.1 Biographies of the keynote Panel

Michael Quinn Patton is the Founder and CEO of Utilization-Focused Evaluation, specializing in organizational development and program evaluation. Holding a doctorate in sociology from the University of Wisconsin–Madison, he served on the faculty of the University of Minnesota for 18 years. An influential thought leader in the field, he has authored numerous landmark books, including *Blue Marble Evaluation* and *Utilization-Focused Evaluation*. Patton has received prestigious accolades, such as the Alva and Gunnar Myrdal Award and the Paul F. Lazarsfeld Award from the American Evaluation Association. Passionate about nature, he enjoys kayaking and hiking from his home in Saint Paul, Minnesota.



Jin Zhao, a national of China, joined IEO as evaluation specialist in September 2023. Prior to that, she worked in various positions in the government, Ernst & Young and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization. With more than 10 years of professional experience, Jin has worked throughout the project lifecycle, including project design, implementation, coordination, partnerships, monitoring and evaluation, and quality assurance control based on the standards of international organizations. She is also familiar with policy research and economic analysis, evaluating and optimizing organizational structures, processes and strategies for international clients. Jin holds a PhD in Public Policy and Management, an LLM in International Law and an MPA; she also holds dual bachelor's degrees in accounting and English (minor degree). She was granted Advanced Diploma in International Taxation (ADIT) by the Chartered Institute of Taxation in London.



Emmanuel Jiménez is the Director General of the Independent Evaluation Department at the Asian Development Bank. With over 30 years of experience in evaluation, policy advice, and economic development, he previously served as the Executive Director of the International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3IE) and led global advocacy for evidence-based decision-making. Earlier, he headed the Public Sector Department at the World Bank Group's Independent Evaluation Group, focusing on human development and social policies. A prolific author, he has published extensively on public policy and development and serves as the managing editor of *The Journal of Development Effectiveness*.



Ada Ocampo is the President of the International Development Evaluation Association (IDEAS) and a seasoned evaluator with over 30 years of experience working with UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, and IFAD across Latin America, Africa, and Asia. A sociologist with a master's degree in development planning from the University of Wales, she has contributed to evaluation capacity development globally. She is a prolific author and lecturer, she has taught at institutions like Carleton University, FLACSO, and BRAC University. A founding member of IOCE and ReLAC, Ada has also co-chaired EVALSDGs and supported the Global Parliamentarians Forum of Evaluation (GPFE).



7.2 Short biographies of the workshop resource persons

Karthik Adapa is a physician-scientist specializing in digital health, governance, and artificial intelligence, with a career spanning government, academia, and international organizations. As an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer, he held pivotal leadership positions, including Health and IT Secretary for Punjab, where he spearheaded India's first blockchain-based recruitment system in healthcare and conducted a real-world evaluation of breast cancer screening tool at the population level. Currently serving as the Regional Adviser for Digital Health at the WHO-South-East Asia Regional Office. Karthik led the development of national digital health blueprints for six countries across two continents, making the South-East Asia Region the first WHO region to achieve 80%-member state coverage in digital health strategy development.

Karthik holds a Ph.D. in Health Informatics from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he also serves as an Adjunct faculty member. A recognized thought leader, he serves on the editorial boards of five leading scientific journals, including Nature, has co-authored WHO technical briefs on AI, and has delivered keynote addresses at prestigious global forums such as the Global Partnership on AI Summit. As a Fulbright Scholar and recipient of multiple international awards, Dr. Adapa continues to drive innovation in AI for clinical applications, patient safety, and digital health transformation worldwide.

Aarti Batra is a neurodivergent PhD Research Scholar at the University of Delhi, focusing on illness narratives to foster ethical competencies in healthcare. As the Javed Abidi Fellow, she assessed healthcare accessibility for persons with disabilities and trained over 100 ASHA workers. She has organized experience simulation zones, conducted training for field staff on sexual and reproductive health, and contributed to various public health studies. Proficient in NVivo and R, her work centers on intersectional disability research, qualitative methodologies, and the development of sensitization programs.

Maulik Chauhan is the founder of Trestle Research, and has 15+ years of experience in research, data management, and M&E. He worked at JPAL South Asia on RCTs and was a UN consultant, digitizing Africa's CPI data collection. He has worked on The World Bank, Harvard, LSE, and MIT projects. He holds degrees in engineering, business, public administration, and development studies, along with certifications in data science, Python, and GIS, strengthening his expertise in development research.

Phuntsho Choden is an independent evaluation consultant with expertise in development economics, M&E, social capital, and wellbeing. She holds a PhD from QUT Business School in Australia and an MA in Economics. She has 20+ years of experience in government, academia, and the private sector. She is a passionate advocate of research and culturally responsive evaluation. Currently, she is the Chairperson of Evaluation Association of Bhutan and a Board member of Community of Evaluators-South Asia.

Nicola Giordano has extensive MEL experience within the humanitarian and development sector. He has coordinated, overseen, or led over 40 MEL services, combining theory-based with quantitative methodologies and participatory processes. Nicola has led evaluations across thematic areas such as food security, food systems, social protection, refugees, financial inclusion, governance, and climate change resilience with numerous organizations. He has facilitated a wide range of training, strategy, and learning processes, and managed evaluations for large-scale humanitarian interventions.

Farhod Khamidov is a national of Tajikistan with a degree in Development and Economics. He has over 20 years of experience in programme development, strategic planning, and M&E in both development and humanitarian contexts. Specializing in evaluations, surveys, capacity building, and evidence-based policy advocacy, he has worked across sectors including education, health, social and child protection, and WASH. Farhod has led cross-sectoral teams and played a key role in strengthening national M&E systems across Europe, Central Asia, South Asia, and the Middle East.

Suchi Kapoor Malhotra is a development professional with 13+ years of experience, specializing in evidence synthesis, donor management, and capacity building. As Director of Research at Campbell South Asia, she leads high-impact projects like Evidence Gap Maps (EGMs) and systematic reviews across thematic areas, including gender, humanitarian aid, and conflict prevention. Skilled in stakeholder collaboration, grant management, and training, she has published 20+ studies and presented at global summits, contributing significantly to evidence-informed policymaking.

Radhika Menon leads on evidence use at Oxford Policy Management and has over 15 years of experience in using rigorous methods to monitor, measure and evaluate evidence use in decision-making. She is currently the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Lead and Evaluation Workstream lead for multiple research projects. Radhika was earlier the Deputy Director of the FCDO funded Strengthening Evidence Use for Development Impact programme.

Ranjani K Murthy has over 25 years of experience in evaluation, e-teaching, training, and gender and development research. Her expertise spans project, strategic, thematic, and meta-evaluations. She co-facilitates a South Asian course on gender-transformative evaluation, with sectoral focus on economic empowerment, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), disaster risk reduction, and masculinities. Ranjani collaborates with UN agencies, ADB, and NGOs, emphasizing intersectionality and non-binary gender perspectives. She also serves on advisory boards, editorial committees, and NGOs across South Asia and globally.

Tetyana Nikitina is a Ukrainian national with a degree in Public Administration and over 15 years of professional experience. She has held various positions in complex development and humanitarian contexts, working in information management and data systems, development of child rights monitoring systems, and promotion of national M&E systems, policy-making, and capacity building. Her work spans North Africa, Europe, Central Asia, and South Asia. She is passionate about child rights, innovation, and human-centred technology.

Priya Rampal is a Senior Consultant in the Research & Evidence Team in OPM-India. A PhD in development economics, she has almost 15 years of experience in the field of monitoring and evaluation. She is an expert in value for money (VfM) in evaluation and has conducted VfM assessments in India, Kenya, and Somalia. She also co-leads the value for money technical community of practice at OPM-Global

Alpan Raval is the Chief AI/ML Scientist at the Wadhvani Institute for Artificial Intelligence, a non-profit devoted to developing and deploying AI for social impact across the global South. The Institute currently builds AI solutions for public health, agriculture and education. Alpan has been working in applied AI space for over two decades, initially as a professor at the Claremont Colleges in California, and later at D.E. Shaw Research, Amazon, and LinkedIn. He is the author of a book on network biology, Introduction to Biological Networks. Alpan holds a PhD in theoretical physics from the University of Maryland, USA and an undergraduate degree from the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur.

Gabriela Renteria Flores is an evaluation specialist with experience in international and economic development. From 2021 to 2024, Gabriela served as the Chair of EvalYouth Global and co-lead of the Eval4Action campaign, where she championed initiatives to strengthen the meaningful participation of Youth in Evaluation. She holds a Master's in Development Economics and a Bachelor's in Economics. Gabriela has been an advocate for YEEs, actively supporting capacity building and evidence-based practices within global networks.

Ayushmita Samal is a queer feminist mixed-methods researcher and MEAL expert who identifies as neurodivergent. She specializes in decolonial and participatory approaches to MEAL, utilizing innovative techniques such as outcome harvesting, photovoice, and appreciative inquiry. A strong advocate for utilization-focused evaluations, Ayushmita strives to anchor her work in lived experiences and Global South-led approaches. She believes in co-creating evaluations and indicators with program stakeholders through an ecosystem and lifecycle approach.

Rai Sengupta serves as an Evaluation Consultant with the UNICEF Evaluation Office and supports the UNICEF Headquarters in evaluating UNICEF programming globally in the areas of health and nutrition, child protection, and climate change and WASH. She brings over 6 years of experience in evaluating large-scale development programmes globally, in partnership with governments, bilateral agencies, and multilateral organisations. Rai holds an MSc in Evidence-Based Social Intervention and Policy Evaluation from the University of Oxford.

Aydin Shahidi has extensive experience in Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL), with a strong background in Strategy and Operations within the peace building sector. He specializes in designing and implementing adaptive, inclusive, and holistic learning and evaluation ecosystems that empower organizations to deepen their understanding of impact, engage in adaptive management, and foster cross-portfolio learning. His work is rooted in participatory and feminist approaches, ensuring that structurally silenced voices shape evaluation design, findings, and decisions.

Reinhard Stockmann is Senior Professor of Sociology and Founder and Director of the Center for Evaluation (CEval) at Saarland University, shareholder of the university spin-off CEval GmbH, Director of the English-language Master of Evaluation program, co-founder and (from 2002 to 2022 Managing) Editor of the Journal of Evaluation, founding member of the German Evaluation Society (DeGEval) and of the AK Entwicklungspolitik. From 2004 to 2021, he directed the first German-language master's program in evaluation, which he co-founded. He has published and edited about 300 articles and about 50 books some of which have been translated into 6 languages. He has conducted several hundred evaluations in numerous countries and for more than 40 years has been particularly concerned with theories and methods of evaluation as well as with the topics of development cooperation/policy, education, vocational training, the environment, and foreign cultural policy. Stockmann has lectured at the following foreign universities: King Mongkut's Institute of Technology, Bangkok (Thailand); Peking University (PR China); Higher School of Economics, Moscow (Russia); Universidad de Costa Rica, San José (Costa Rica); Pontifical Catholic University of Ecuador, Quito (Ecuador); Tongji University, Shanghai (PR China); University of Bern (Switzerland).

Aidinda van Hemelrijck has over 25 years' experience in international development, fostering sustainable and equitable solutions through collaborative evaluation, strategy and learning. She is known for her breadth of knowledge of the methodological landscape and her expertise in combining rigorous analysis and evaluative reasoning with well-facilitated stakeholder engagements. She pioneered the Participatory Impact Assessment & Learning Approach (PIALA) with the International Fund for Agricultural development (IFAD).

Sonal Zaveri is an independent consultant with over 30 years of experience in strategic planning, capacity building, and evaluation. She has worked in more than 25 countries, completed over 75 evaluations, teaches online, and has published extensively. A Fleishman Fellow at Duke University, she co-founded the Community of Evaluators – South Asia (CoE-SA) and Gender and Evaluation Network South Asia (GENSA). She also co-chairs EvalGender+ and serves on the boards of the International Evaluation Academy (IEAc) and IDEAS. Sonal is recognized globally for her leadership in gender and equity-focused evaluation, promoting systemic change through inclusive and transformative approaches.

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