# National Evaluation Capacity in UNICEF

**EPE 2017
Stream 3
NECD**

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UNICEF- Evaluation Office

**Experience and way forward**

# National Evaluation Capacity Development in UNICEF – Experience and way forward

The context - Normative Framework

What UNICEF has done

What UNICEF has learned

The way forward

# Normative Framework

- UNICEF's Evaluation Policy 2013: NECD to support the design, implementation and use of country-led evaluations; advocating and promoting national evaluation systems; and supporting efforts to strengthen evaluation capacities in government and civil society.

- ✓ GA Resolution 69/237 "Capacity building for the evaluation of development activities at country level". Emphasizes importance of NECD. Emphasizes that national ownership and national priorities form a strong base for NEC to manage and oversee evaluations. Asks UN to report on progress.

- ✓ GA Resolution A/RES/70/1 endorsing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

- UN GA A/RES/71/243 the QCPR Emphasizes evaluation as a crosscutting theme e.g. need to strengthen national institutions' evaluation capacity; streamlining full participation of Govts in the preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, etc.

# Key definitions

| | |
|---|---|
| **National evaluation system (NES)** | The set of institutions, people, and activities, along with the policies, procedures, and relationships that link and guide them, involved in the demand, supply, and use of evaluation to support public sector accountability, learning, and decision-making. |
| **National evaluation capacity (NEC)** | The collective ability of the national evaluation system to bring about, align, and sustain its objectives, structure, processes, culture, human capital and technology to produce evaluative knowledge that informs on-going practices and decision-making in order to improve effectiveness and accountability. |

# 17 Sustainable Development Goals - 169 targets



https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org

# Evaluation integrated in the Agenda 2030

**FOLLOW-UP AND REVIEW PROCESSES (FUR)**

**Guided by the following principles:**

[...]

They will be rigorous and based on evidence, informed by **country-led evaluations** and data which is high-quality, accessible, timely, reliable and disaggregated by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migration status, disability and geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts.
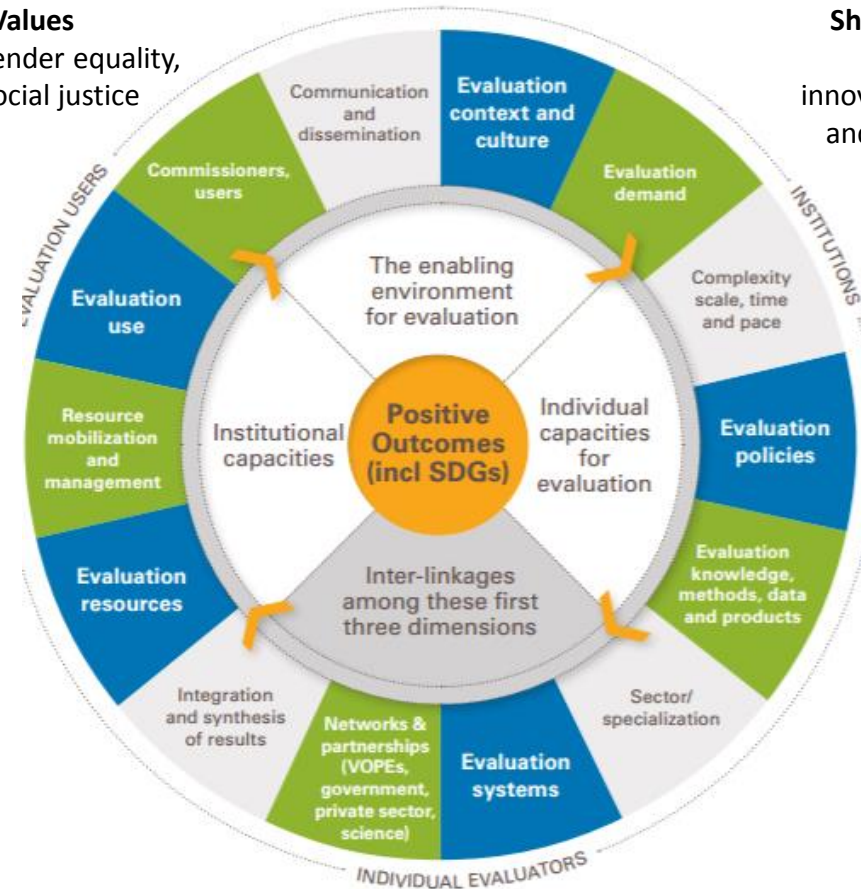
They will require enhanced capacity-building support for developing countries, **including the strengthening of national data systems and evaluation frameworks**.

[...]"

# Global Evaluation Agenda 2020

**Values**
equity, gender equality, and social justice

**Shared principles**
partnership, innovation, inclusivity, and human rights.

EVALUATION USERS

INSTITUTIONS

Communication and dissemination

Commissioners, users

Evaluation context and culture

Evaluation demand

Evaluation use

Complexity scale, time and pace

The enabling environment for evaluation

Resource mobilization and management

Institutional capacities

**Positive Outcomes (incl SDGs)**

Individual capacities for evaluation

Evaluation policies

Evaluation resources

Inter-linkages among these first three dimensions

Evaluation knowledge, methods, data and products

Integration and synthesis of results

Networks & partnerships (VOPEs, government, private sector, science)

Evaluation systems

Sector/ specialization

INDIVIDUAL EVALUATORS

Global    Regional    National    Sub-national    Local

# What UNICEF has done

- Active involvement and contribution to Global Networks and more specifically EvalPartners and EVALSDGs

- Joint work with UNEG and especially UNDP, UN Women and UNDP for specific activities e.g. side meetings HLPF

- Dissemination activities including webinars

- Inclusion of NECD in agendas of RMTs, global and regional meetings

- Technical assistance to selected COs, upon request

- Guidance and technical backstopping

- Involved regional and CO colleagues in Global Networks (to a limited extent)

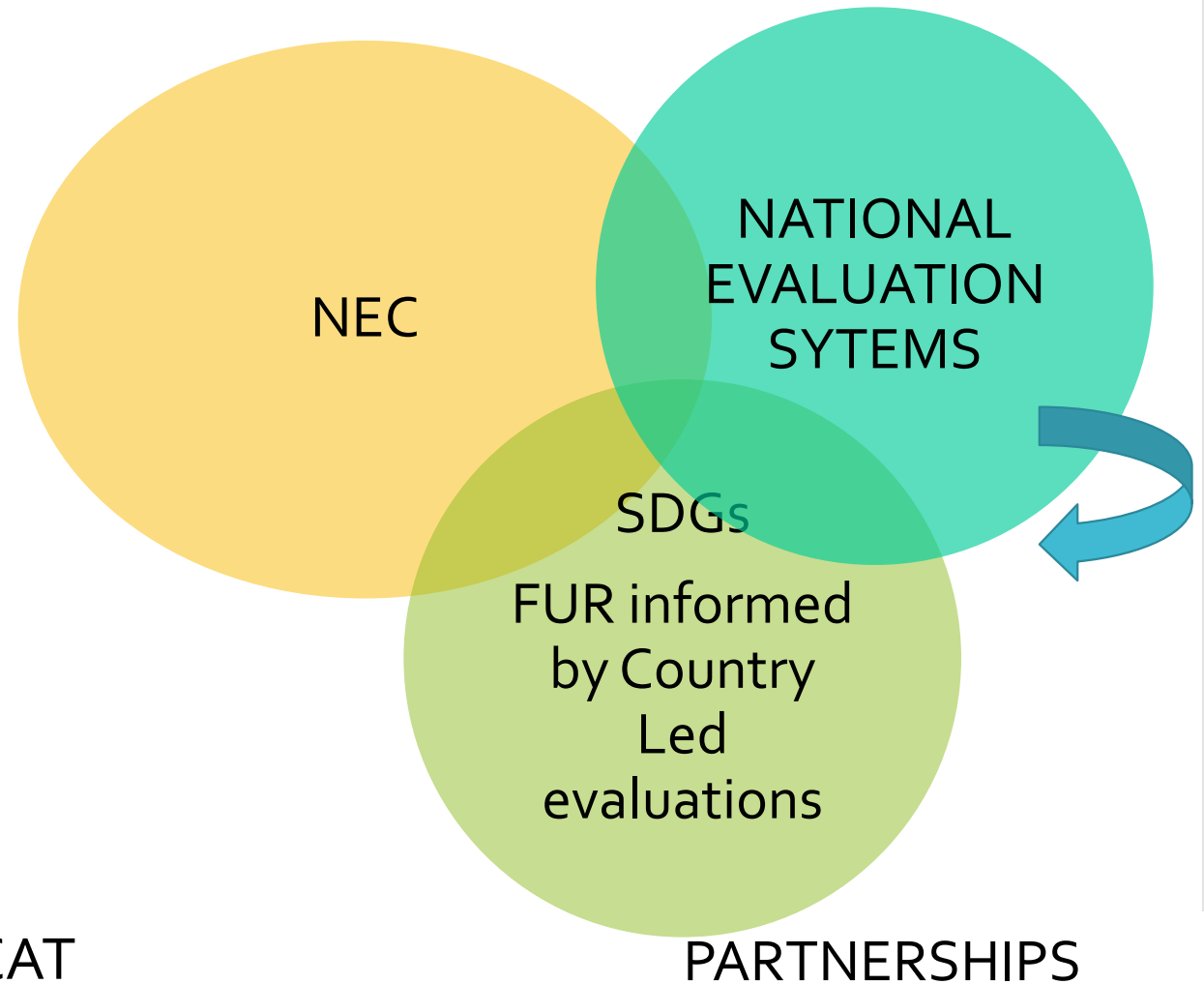- Examples:  EAPRO, Sri Lanka, Philippines, Cambodia, Argentina, etc.

HAVE WE BEEN SYSTEMATIC?
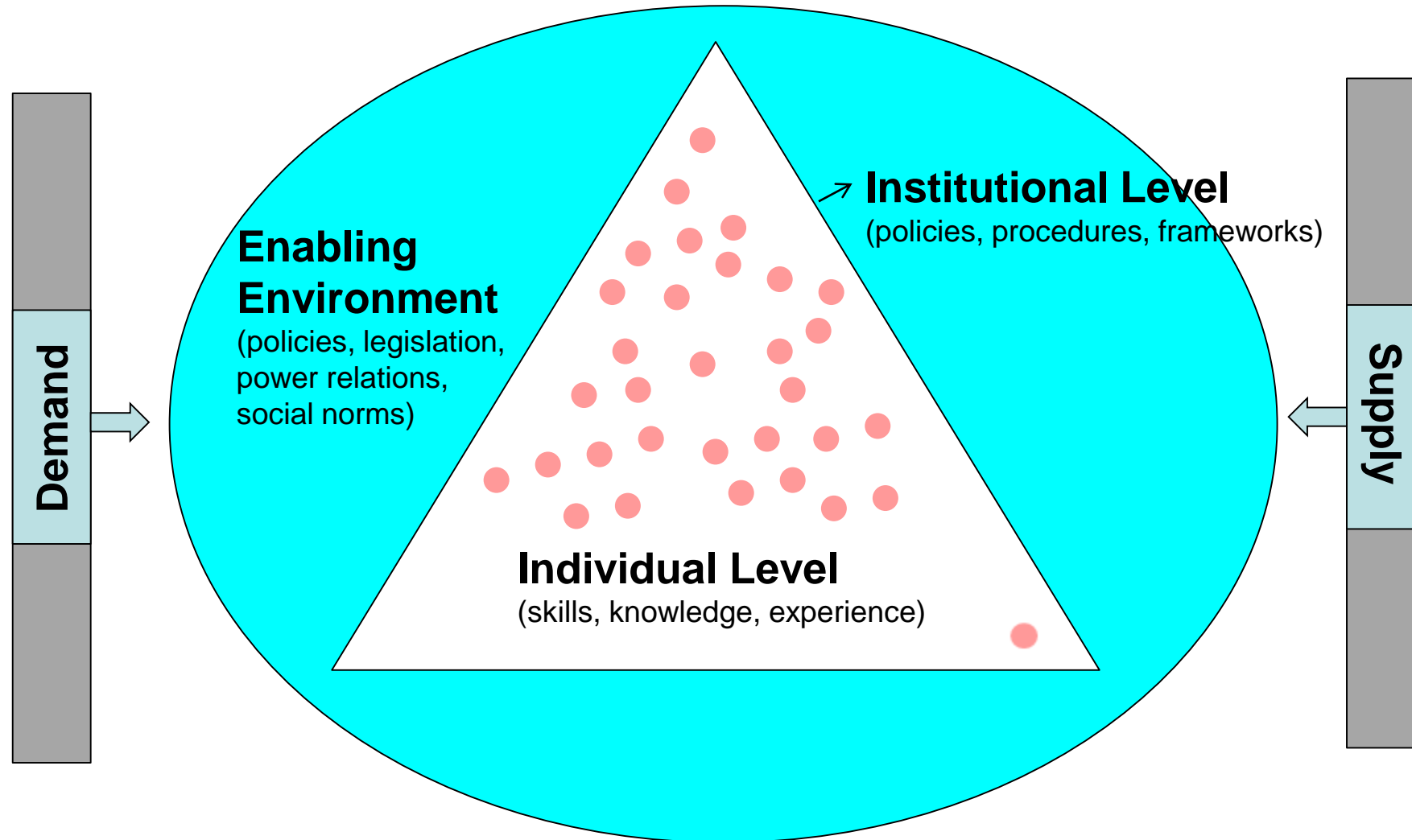
HAVE WE TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF OUR NORMATIVE FRAMEWORKS?

HAVE WE HAD AN STRATEGIC APPROACH TOWARDS NECD?

NECD in the context of the GA and the Agenda 2030

NECD support

NEC

NATIONAL EVALUATION SYTEMS

SDGs

FUR informed by Country Led evaluations

ADVOCACY COMMUNICAT

PARTNERSHIPS

# A Systemic approach to National Evaluation Capacity Development

**Demand**

**Supply**

**Enabling Environment**
(policies, legislation, power relations, social norms)

↗ **Institutional Level**
(policies, procedures, frameworks)

**Individual Level**
(skills, knowledge, experience)

- *Tailored to the specific context of each country*
- *Country leadership and ownership*

## GLOBAL EVALUATION AGENDA

- ➢ **EVALSDGs**
- ➢ **EvalYouth**
- ➢ **EvalGender+**
- ➢ **GPFE - Global Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation**
- ➢ **EvalIndigenous**

- • **The United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) brings together the evaluation units of the UN system. It currently has 46 members and observers.**
- ❖ **Setting norms and standards**
- ❖ **Providing guidance**
- ❖ **Advocating for evaluation in UN policies and programming**
- ❖ **Engaging in evaluation partnerships**
- ❖ *Common approach/strategy for NECD in the 2030 era*

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# EVALSDGs Briefing Papers

The EVALSDGs Network has partnered with the International Institute of Environment and Development (IIED) to produce a series of Briefing Papers on Evaluation of the SDGs. The Briefing Papers' main intent is to raise awareness on the importance of embedding evaluation in national review processes in the frame of the 2030 Agenda.

The 1st Briefing entitled "Evaluation a crucial ingredient for SDG success" (April 2016), argues that, to be useful to policy makers and citizens, national review processes must incorporate country-led evaluations. The 2nd Briefing paper (July 2016) "Counting critically: SDG 'follow-up and review" needs interlinked indicators, monitoring and evaluation", states that global indicators carry the risk of masking subnational and thematic variations; and that indicators alone cannot explain how or why change occurred; therefore, evaluation can help assess the worth, merit and significance of national policies. The 3rd Briefing paper was released in September 2016 under the title: "Five considerations for national evaluation agendas informed by the SDGs". This Briefing emphasizes the importance of taking into consideration the inter-connected nature of the sustainable development goals. It summarizes five lessons for evaluation from the MDGs era, and discusses their implications for national evaluation agendas that support countries' achievement of the SDGs. The 4th Briefing, "Realising the SDGs by reflecting on the way(s) we reason, plan, and act: the importance of evaluative thinking" was just released which focuses on the importance of evaluative thinking for effective follow-up and review frameworks and mechanisms. The 5th Briefing, "Developing national evaluation capacities in the sustainable development era: four key challenges"

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https://www.unicef.org/evaluation/index_89750.html

# Lessons learned

1. Importance of a strategy ensuring alignment with normative frameworks and other frameworks e.g. Global Evaluation Agenda 2020; and with a clear theory of change; an accountability framework - roles and responsibilities at the global, regional and country level.

2. A monitoring framework to track implementation of the NECD strategy.

3. EO(s) include evaluation of NEC in their global evaluation agendas

4. Advocacy campaigns, dissemination initiatives and guidance triggering good results but also adding to the already existent confusion. No evidence on results

5. Demand for country led/ exists? If so, is it explicit? Are we working on creating/clarifying demands?

6. It is hypothesized that the use of evaluation will translate into better governance and more effective programs that will eventually lead to the successful delivery on the SDGs. Can one ascertain this is happening or likely to happen?

7. Importance to take advantage of our normative frameworks e.g. GA Resolution on NEC.

# Challenges

➢ Common understanding on what NECD is about.

➢ Making explicit linkages NECD –UNICEF's mandate

➢ Senior Management awareness and support

➢ Resources both human and financial

➢ Systematic work

➢ Addressing complexities and interconnectedness:  beyond advocating for evaluation of one or more specific SDGs

➢ Evaluation of SDGs or Evaluation and SDGs?

➢ UNEG strategy on NECD : we need one!!

➢ More systematic joint UN work

➢ Increasing the number of NECD advocates  - **JOIN US**!

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# Way forward

- Reinforce engagement in partnerships at the global level EvalPartners, Parliamentarians, EVALSDGs, EvalGender, Evalyouth. Clarify/ communicate value addition.

- Encourage and support ROs to COs engagement in partnerships and to join existing partnerships (from UNICEF's mandate point of view).

- Support to efforts towards National Evaluation Systems

- Mapping of our work in NECD leading to a NECD strategy (including accountability framework)

- Monitoring framework – tracking progress towards results on NECD

- Documentation and dissemination of case studies and regional syntheses

➢ Linking UNICEF COs with VOPEs, Parliamentarians, Govt, other UN agencies   ---- National Evaluation Systems

➢ Working towards a UNEG strategy on NECD

# Thank you!

# MANY THANKS