

UNEG
EvalWeek
2025



UNEG
United Nations Evaluation Group

Draft Agenda

Evaluation Practice Exchange and Professional Development Seminar 2025

This document presents the draft agendas of the Evaluation Practice Exchange and Professional Development Seminars (10-12 February).

All EvalWeek 2025 will be held at UNU headquarters, 5 Chome-53-70 Jingumae, Shibuya City, Tokyo 150-8925.

Rooms for the EPE and PDS are TBC.

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Overview | 3 |
| Evaluation Practice Exchange Seminars..... | 3 |
| Professional Development Seminars | 3 |
| Participation | 3 |
| Evaluation Practice Exchange 2025 Sessions | 4 |
| EPE 2025 Agenda..... | 5 |
| EPE Session Descriptions | 7 |
| Theme 1 – Exploring new evaluation topics, tools and technologies..... | 7 |
| Theme 2 - Future of Humanitarian and HRGE Evaluation | 10 |
| Theme 3 - Strengthening Evaluation Culture and Capacity | 12 |
| Theme 4 - Enhancing Evaluation Use | 14 |
| Theme 5 - Evaluation Policies and Functions: Fit for the Future | 17 |
| Professional Development Seminar Agenda and Session Outline..... | 19 |
| PDS Session Descriptions | 20 |
| From Evaluation to Action. How to make your evaluation practice more principled and transformative | 20 |
| Visualizing and mapping evaluative evidence for decision-making | 21 |
| Reflecting Ethical Principles in Evaluation Practice | 22 |
| Mainstreaming groups in situations of vulnerability in evaluations | 23 |
| Advancing Impact Evaluation in Climate Change Interventions: Challenges, Insights, and Collaborative Solutions..... | 24 |

Overview

Evaluation Practice Exchange Seminars

The EPEs facilitate regular learning and exchange of experience amongst UNEG members (including those carrying out or managing evaluations according to the practices in different UN organizations) to improve the credibility and utility of UN evaluations and contribute to advancement of the evaluation function. The EPE provides a forum for sharing information and experiences related primarily to evaluation approaches and methodologies and enables peer learning and support.

The **overarching EPE theme** in 2025 is **the Future of Evaluation**. At the *Summit of the Future* in New York in September 2024, Member States signed a new *Pact for the Future*, pledging a new beginning in international cooperation, and striving for a safer, more peaceful, just, equal, inclusive, sustainable and prosperous world. This inevitably gives rise to questions amongst the evaluation community, e.g. how evaluation should evolve in line with the Pact for the Future? How to strengthen accountability to Member States and donors while ensuring closer collaboration and coordination amongst evaluation functions? How attentive is the UN evaluation community to local needs, stakeholders, and experiences? What opportunities have evaluators seized in recent years, or what new opportunities do evaluators see for their function at the UN? How can evaluators harness advances in knowledge and technology in support of learning and accountability?

For EPE and PDS, these and related topics have been organized along the following sub-themes:

1. Exploring New Evaluation Topics, Tools and Technologies
2. The Future of Humanitarian and Human Rights and Gender Equity (HRGE) Evaluation
3. Strengthening Evaluation Culture and Capacity
4. Enhancing Evaluation Use
5. Evaluation Policies and Functions Fit for the Future

Professional Development Seminars

The PDS are peer training sessions on topics which emerged as highly useful in evaluation work. The seminar consists of parallel sessions running either throughout the day or only half day.

PDS sessions are coordinated and organized by one or more UNEG member agency. The organizers are responsible for preparing the session agenda, developing the content, contacting external experts/speakers (if needed) and conducting the training session.

Participation

UNEG members and invited guests are welcome to attend both the EPE and PDS. There is no fee to attend the EPE or PDS, but participants must cover their own travel and associated costs.

Evaluation Practice Exchange 2025 Sessions

| Theme/ Category | EPE Session Title |
|---|---|
| 1. Exploring New Evaluation Topics, Tools, and Technologies | 1.1. The Case for Theory-based Approaches to AI-supported Open Databases |
| | 1.2. Evaluating Research and Policy Impact |
| | 1.3. Enhancing the Role and Impact of Evaluation Syntheses |
| | 1.4. Evaluating Climate Change. Approaches, Challenges and Lessons |
| | 1.5. Reimagining Evaluation. Empowering Young and Emerging Evaluators to Share the Future of Global Accountability and Learning |
| 2. The Future of Humanitarian and HRGE Evaluation | 2.1. Humanitarian Evaluation as an Entry Point for Strategic Interagency Collaborations |
| | 2.2. Early Look at the Forthcoming ALNAP Criteria for Humanitarian Evaluation |
| | 2.3. Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality (HRGE) in Evaluations |
| | 2.4. Integration of Humanitarian Principles in Evaluation of Humanitarian Action |
| 3. Strengthening Evaluation Culture and Capacity | 3.1. Strengthening Evaluation Culture in the Secretariat |
| | 3.2. Strengthening and Harmonizing National Evaluation Capacities and Capabilities |
| | 3.3. Lesson Learning from the UNEG Peer Reviews |
| | 3.4. Professionalization in UNEG |
| 4. Enhancing Evaluation Use | 4.1. Innovating Communication Practices and Methods to Improve Evaluation use |
| | 4.2. The Future of Measuring Evaluation Use: Going Beyond the Implementation of Recommendations |
| | 4.3. Use of UN-commissioned Evaluations |
| 5. Evaluation Policies and Functions Fit for the Future | 5.1. Small Evaluation Function |
| | 5.2. Evaluation of South-South Cooperation |
| | 5.3. Strengthening Decentralized Evaluation. Key features, Principles and Operational Standards |
| | 5.4. System-wide Evaluation from Policy to Practice |

EPE 2025 Agenda¹

| Monday 10 th February | | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|--|---|--|
| 09.00-09.45 | Registration, morning coffee | | | |
| 09.45-10.20 | Welcome by UNU & EPE Organizing Committee (plenary) | | | |
| 10.30-12.00 | 1.1 The Case for Theory-Based Approaches to Ethically AI-supported Open Databases | 2.1 Humanitarian Evaluation as an Entry Point for Strategic Interagency Collaborations | 3.1 Strengthening Evaluation Culture in the Secretariat | 4.1 Innovating Communication Practices and Methods to Improve Evaluation Use |
| 12.00-13.30 | Lunch | | | |
| 13.30-15.00 | 1.2 Evaluating Research and Policy Impact | 2.2 Early Look at the Forthcoming ALNAP Criteria for Humanitarian Evaluation | 3.2 Strengthening and Harmonizing National Evaluation Capacities and Capabilities | 5.1 Small Evaluation Function Development |
| 15.00-15.30 | Break | | | |
| 15.30-17.00 | 2.3 Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality (HRGE) in Evaluations | 3.3 Lesson Learning from the UNEG Peer Reviews | 4.2 The Future of Measuring Evaluation Use | 5.2 Evaluation of South-South Cooperation |
| 17:00-18.00 | <p>Evaluation Tools Display & Welcome Cocktail</p> <p>During the cocktail, participants are invited to showcase posters, reports or other materials to present their novel tools, best practices and real-world applications, and engage with participants on challenges and solutions.</p> <p>Members interested in bringing a poster or other materials to display should email Nicolas du Bois, UNU: dubois@unu.edu</p> | | | |

¹ Room details TBC.

| Tuesday 11 th February | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|--|--|
| 09:00-10:30 | 1.3 Enhancing the Role and Impact of Evaluation Syntheses | 2.4 Integration of Humanitarian Principles in the Evaluation of Humanitarian Action | 3.4 Professionalization in UNEG | 5.3 Strengthening Decentralized Evaluation |
| 10:30-11:00 | Break | | | |
| 11:00-12:00 | Keynote addresses on the Future of Evaluation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof. Tshilidzi Marwala, UNU Rector will provide an overview of the latest UN efforts in technology and AI before discussing the opportunities and challenges this offers for the organisation. • Isabelle Mercier, UNEG Chair and Director, UNDP Independent Evaluation Office will explore how new technologies may support and strengthen the role of evaluation, and what this means for the evaluation community. | | | |
| 12:00-13:30 | Lunch | | | |
| 13:30-15:00 | 1.4 Evaluating Climate Change: Approaches, Challenges and Lessons | 1.5 Reimagining Evaluation: Empowering Young and Emerging Evaluators | 4.3 Use of UN Commissioned Evaluations | 5.4 System-Wide Evaluation from Policy to Practice |
| 15:00-15:30 | Break | | | |
| 15:30-16:30 | Panel discussion on the Future of Evaluation. Moderated by Sabine Becker-Thierry, UNU Panelists: Andrea Cook, UNSDG System Wide Evaluation Office, Anne-Claire Luzot, WFP, and Robert McCouch, UNICEF | | | |
| 16:30-17:00 | Closing session | | | |
| 19:00 | Self-paid dinner | | | |

EPE Session Descriptions

Theme 1 – Exploring new evaluation topics, tools and technologies

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|------------------------------|---|
| Monday 10 Feb 10.30-12.00 | 1.1 The case for theory-based approaches to ethically AI-supported open databases for evaluations |
|------------------------------|---|

Lead facilitator: Tami Aritomi, Evaluation Officer, UNICEF EO, taritomi@unicef.org

Summary: This session will provide an overview of the benefits and challenges of utilizing AI tools to support evaluations, comparing exploratory designs versus theory-based designs. This interactive session will require participants to use public AI-powered assistant platforms (such as ChatGPT or CoPilot) to produce exploratory summary analyses. These summary analyses will be compared to those produced using a locally run AI-tool using theory-based designs from a recent meta-synthesis exercise using information from publicly available evaluations. Discussions about the observed differences between these two use cases as well as the benefits and the ethical considerations around using these different tools and models to produce openly available databases from public sources, will follow.

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| Monday 10 Feb 13.30-15.00 | 1.2 Evaluating research and policy impact |
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Lead facilitators:

- Sabine Becker-Thierry, Executive and Strategy Officer, UNU, sabine.becker@unu.edu
- Alexandra Ivanovic, Senior Programme Manager, ivanovic@unu.edu
- Nicolas Dubois, Programme Manager, UNU, dubois@unu.edu

Summary: The evaluation experience and guidance developed by UNEG reflects the main areas of the UN’s work: development, humanitarian response, and peacebuilding. Similar guidance on norm setting as well as research is more limited, not least as fewer UN entities’ mandates focus on them.

The session will give an overview of the United Nations University’s (UNU) efforts in evaluating research generated by the university with regards to its uptake and use by key stakeholder groups, such as UN agencies, member states, policy makers, and experts, many of which operate further removed from UNU. The session offers an opportunity to learn from UNEG colleagues on how they have approached the assessment of research-focused work.

Participants will have the opportunity to discuss how best to assess policy-relevant research work in breakout groups. One group will approach the topic from an evaluator perspective while the other group will take the perspective of UNU leadership/researchers. Together, these findings will provide a deeper understanding of the specific tools that can be deployed as well as the challenges that remain when evaluating policy relevant research and its impact.

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| Tuesday 11 Feb 09:00-10:30 | 1.3 More than the Sum of its Parts: Enhancing the Role and Impact of Evaluation Syntheses |
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Lead facilitator: Shivit Bakrania, Evaluation Specialist, UNDP IEO, shivit.bakrania@undp.org

Co-facilitators:

- Andrea Cook, Executive Director, UN SDG System Wide Evaluation Office, andrea.cook@un.org
- Deborah McWhinney, Senior Evaluation Advisor, UNFPA IEO, mcwhinney@unfpa.org

Summary: This session by the UNEG Evaluation Synthesis Working Group focuses on the evaluation synthesis guidance currently under development, covering cover key sections of the guidance and exploring how colleagues can effectively apply it in their work. A highlight of the session will be an in-depth exploration of mixed methods approaches to synthesis, addressing both the benefits and challenges, as well as examining current practices. Additionally, the session will delve into multi-agency governance and management arrangements for evaluation syntheses.

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| Tuesday 11 Feb 13:30-15:00 | 1.4 Evaluating Climate Change. Approaches, Challenges and Lessons |
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Lead facilitator: Elke Johanna de Buhr, Evaluation Specialist, UNICEF, edebuhr@unicef.org

Co-facilitators:

- Carlos Tarazona, Senior Evaluation Officer, FAO, carlos.tarazona@fao.org
- Luisa Belli, Evaluation Officer, FAO, Luisa.belli@fao.org
- Janet Wildish, OIC, UNEP, janet.wildish@un.org
- Vladislav Arnaudov, AF-TERG Secretariat Coordinator & Senior Evaluation Officer, varnaudov@adaptation-fund.org

Summary: There is growing recognition that climate change is both a driver and a result of unsustainable practices in a wide spectrum of areas, such as food, energy, natural resource management, infrastructure, trade and industrial development, travel and transport, and consumption.

An increasing number of UNEG members have gained experience in, and developed guidance for, evaluating climate-related interventions. Meanwhile UNEG has been working on a new Norm and Standard on integrating environmental and social considerations into evaluations.

This session will discuss and reflect on the approaches, methodological challenges and lessons learned from assessing climate-related interventions, as well as on good practices in mainstreaming climate considerations in evaluations. The learning resulting from this exchange will serve as input to UNEG and other guidance currently being developed.

Tuesday 11 Feb
13.30-15.00

1.5 Reimagining Evaluation. Empowering young and emerging evaluators (YEEs) to shape the future of global accountability and learning

Lead facilitators:

- Taipei Dlamini, Associate Evaluator, UNESCO, t.dlamini@unesco.org
- Faith Nsanshya Chilupula, Evaluation Analyst, UNFPA, Chilupula@unfpa.org
- Jiayi He, Associate Evaluation officer, OIOS, jiayi.he@un.org
- Agnes Nyaga, Associate Human Rights Officer, OHCHR, anyaga@un.org

Summary: This intergenerational session will explore how YEEs, in collaboration with senior evaluators, can drive the transformation of evaluation processes within the UN. By fostering cross-generational dialogue and learning, the session will demonstrate how the unique perspectives and experiences YEEs can shape the future of global accountability and learning.

This session offers an opportunity to deep dive into the findings of the UNEG YEE Working Group on the status of YEE engagement across UNEG agencies, notably how YEEs can serve as catalysts for innovative, inclusive, and transformative evaluation practices within the UN. Through a world café exercise, participants will experience the role of mentorship, capacity-building, and institutional support enabling YEEs to meaningfully engage before concluding with actionable strategies.

Theme 2 - Future of Humanitarian and HRGE Evaluation

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| Monday 10 Feb 10.30-12.00 | 2.1 Humanitarian Evaluation as an Entry Point for Strategic Interagency Collaborations |
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Lead facilitator: Marta Duda-Nyczak, Programme Management Officer, UNDSS, duda-nyczak@un.org

Co-facilitator:

- Michele Tarsilla, Chief, Humanitarian Evaluation, UNICEF, mtarsilla@unicef.org
- Ali Buzurukov, Chief, Evaluation and Oversight Section, OCHA, buzurukov@un.org

Summary: This session will explore how interagency collaboration in evaluation can drive mutual institutional learning, better use of evaluations, ultimately leading to strategic improvements in both programme delivery and the evaluation function itself. The presenters will share their experience in collaborating between a large evaluation office (UNICEF) and a smaller evaluation function (UNDSS) – with further collaboration with OCHA – and the results before a group discussion on new ideas for inter-agency collaborations to lead to more meaningful dissemination of evaluation evidence, greater acceptance and uptake of evaluation conclusions, and recommendations among decision-makers.

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| Monday 10 Feb 13.30-15.00 | 2.2 Early Look at the Forthcoming ALNAP Criteria for Humanitarian Evaluation |
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Lead facilitators:

- Laura Olsen, Evaluation Specialist, OCHA laura.olsen@un.org
- Sara Holst, Evaluation Officer, FAO, sara.holst@fao.org

Co-facilitators:

- Sarah Gharbi, Senior Evaluation Specialist, ALNAP

Summary: In March 2025, the new ALNAP criteria for humanitarian evaluation will be launched. This EPE session will provide a preview of the new criteria. Authors will present the criteria to participants and describe practical usage in the evaluation of humanitarian action. Presenters will take an interactive approach by applying the new criteria to various case studies, discussing challenges and changes for the humanitarian evaluation community.

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| Monday 10 Feb 15:30-17:00 | 2.3 Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality (HRGE) in Evaluations: Good Practices and Lessons Learned |
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Lead facilitators:

- Aditi Bhola, Programme Management Officer, OHCHR, aditi.bhola@un.org
- Agnes Nyaga, Associate Human Rights Officer, OHCHR, anyaga@un.org

Summary: The session will look at the implementation of the revised UNEG guidance on integrating human rights and gender equality (HRGE) in evaluations – some practical examples and techniques for including it in evaluations, lessons learned from recent evaluation cases, and how to overcome any challenges associated with it. The session will include input from practitioners who have implemented the guidance in their evaluations, discussing relevant good practices (including tools) together with an open discussion and Q&A.

Group work may then be included, with participants split into groups and asked to discuss around the following guiding questions to come up with proposals and practices to strengthen work in this area:

- What are some good practices you have used for integrating HRGE into evaluations?
- Why did they work? What were some challenges you faced?
- What can be recommended for improving the integration of HRGE in evaluations?

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| Tuesday 11 Feb 09.00-10.30 | 2.4 Feedback Session on the Guidance on the Integration of Humanitarian Principles in the Evaluation of Humanitarian Action |
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Lead facilitators:

- Sara Holst, Evaluation Officer, FAO, sara.holst@fao.org
- Laura Olsen, Evaluation Specialist, OCHA, laura.olsen@un.org

Co-facilitator: Michele Tarsilla, Chief, Humanitarian Evaluation, UNICEF, mtarsilla@unicef.org

Summary: The purpose of the proposed EPE is to solicit feedback from evaluation managers and experts on the recently developed "Guidance on the Integration of Humanitarian Principles in the Evaluation of Humanitarian Action". This feedback will help refine the guidance document and ensure that it is relevant, applicable, and user-friendly for humanitarian actors and all evaluation practitioners. The session will also show how humanitarian principles could be of interest to a wider variety of evaluations than initially thought beyond humanitarian evaluations. The World Café format will encourage diverse perspectives and collaborative exploration of key issues related to the use of the guidance.

Theme 3 - Strengthening Evaluation Culture and Capacity

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| Monday 10 Feb 10.30-12.00 | 3.1 Strengthening Evaluation Culture in the Secretariat |
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Lead facilitators:

- Yuen Ching Ho, Chief, Evaluation Section DMSPC, yuenching.ho@un.org
- Kevin Summersgill, Chief of Service, DMSPC, kevin.summersgill@un.org

Summary: The revised Administrative Instruction on evaluation in the Secretariat will likely be issued in late 2024. This presents a good opportunity to reflect on evaluation-related aspects of management reform, and to discuss approaches to further embedding evaluation culture in United Nations Secretariat entities. This will be an opportunity for colleagues to discuss cooperation and collaboration relating to evaluation culture (for example, including sharing experiences of, and approaches to, accessing national evaluation expertise, evaluation management and tracking tools and senior management commitment and support to evaluation).

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| Monday 10 Feb 13.30-15.00 | 3.2 Strengthening and Harmonizing National Evaluation Capacities and Capabilities |
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Lead facilitators: Denis Jobin, Senior Evaluation Specialist, UNICEF, djobin@unicef.org

Summary: UNEG members have a shared responsibility to support National Evaluation Capacity Development (NECD) to ensure that member states can effectively monitor, evaluate, and make informed decisions for better development outcomes.

At the 2024 NEC Conference (Beijing), the importance of developing national evaluation capabilities as part of capacity development was underlined to ensure that National Evaluation Systems are not only well-established but also capable of fulfilling their roles effectively, ultimately ensuring modern public management, notably learning and accountability. These efforts also align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) and ongoing UN reforms, which advocate for cohesive and integrated support to national priorities, including the development of evaluation capacities and capabilities. By situating NECD within the context of the UNSDCF and UN reform, UNEG members can ensure that their initiatives are coherent, coordinated, and responsive to the evolving needs of member states.

This session offers an opportunity for UNEG participants to share practices, exchange thoughts on the potential benefit of harmonizing approaches to NECD and develop recommendations that could be put forward to, not only UNEG members, but international development partners and member states interested in strengthening national evaluation capacities and capabilities.

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| Monday 10 Feb 15.30-17.00 | 3.3 Lesson Learning from the UNEG Peer Reviews |
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Lead facilitators: Organised by the UNEG Peer Review Working Group coordinators

- Claudia Ibarguen, Chief, Evaluation Section UNESCO, c.ibarguen@unesco.org
- Judit Jankovic, Senior Evaluation Specialist, ICC, Judit.Jankovic@icc-cpi.int

Summary: This session will provide an opportunity for agency representatives to share lessons and reflections from UNEG peer reviews. By using cases studies in small group settings, the session will also consider approaches to maximizing the utility and credibility of UNEG peer reviews especially for smaller evaluation functions, and through discussion, participants will contribute to broadening the discussion beyond the stocktaking exercise on the utility of the peer review conducted in 2022.

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| Tuesday 11 Feb 09.00-10.30 | 3.4 Professionalization in UNEG |
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Lead facilitators:

- Brook Boyer, Head of Planning, Performance and Results Section, UNITAR, brook.boyer@unitar.org
- Mona Selim, Evaluation Officer, WFP, mona.selim@wfp.org

Summary: The session will take stock of progress towards professionalization, particularly in relation to. (i) the launch of the UNEG Certificate Course; and (ii) Evaluation Community Page on the SDGLearn platform.

Participants will discuss feedback from UNEG professionalization initiatives and brainstorm on ways to further disseminate, improve and build on them. Participants will also brainstorm on how to link to and ensure complementarity with other evaluation capacity development initiatives outside UNEG, and opportunities to leverage guidance and initiatives of other working groups in UNEG.

Theme 4 - Enhancing Evaluation Use

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| Monday 10 Feb 10.30-12.00 | 4.1 Innovating communication practices and methods to improve evaluation use |
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Lead facilitator:

- Janette Murawski, Communications & Knowledge Management Officer, ILO, murawski@ilo.org
- Katinka Koke, Specialist, UNITAR, Katinka.koke@unitar.org

Summary: The purpose of the session is to exchange good practices and learn about new and cutting-edge methods that can be applied to improve evaluation use. This will be done by focusing on answering two questions.

- What are some innovative and tangible communication products that are proven to increase evaluation use? (examples: storytelling “life stories”, digital guides or infoguides, communication and implementation plans, dashboards, etc.)
- How can evaluation offices/units improve evaluation use through modern and dynamic activities? (examples: training/capacity-building initiatives through innovative formats, actively building a user-focused approach for complex evaluations, etc.)

Through these discussions, it is intended that participants walk away with some concrete ideas and inspiration to improve evaluation use in their own work.

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| Monday 10 Feb 15.30-17.00 | 4.2 The future of measuring evaluation use: Going beyond implementation of recommendations |
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Lead facilitators:

- Katinka Koke, Specialist, UNITAR, Katinka.koke@unitar.org

Co-facilitators:

- Anand Sivasankara Kurup, Evaluation Officer, WHO, sivasankarakurupa@who.int
- Marta Duda-Nyczak, Programme Management Officer, Department of Safety and Security, duda-nyczak@un.org
- Andres Botero, Senior Evaluation Officer, IOM, abotero@iom.int
- Michele Tarsilla, Chief, Humanitarian Evaluation, UNICEF, mtarsilla@unicef.org

Summary: The session focuses on measuring evaluation use beyond the conventional metrics already in place (e.g., implementation status of recommendations). In doing so, it acknowledges and promotes other types of use, considering both measurement challenges and opportunities of the agencies commissioning the evaluations as well as their respective partners. The session aims first to unpack the construct of evaluation use by delineating it across different types of process use (instrumental, conceptual, and symbolic use). Next it intends to classify the use of findings in a more robust manner, by distinguishing among individual, group and organizational use. The co-facilitators contributing to this session will also interact with the audience to explore additional indicators that could be employed to measure different types of use.

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| Tuesday 11 Feb 13:30-15:00 | 4.3 Use of UN-commissioned evaluations |
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Lead facilitators:

- Anand Sivasankara Kurup, Evaluation Officer, WHO, sivasakankarakurupa@who.int

Co-facilitators:

- Riccardo Polastro, Chief Evaluation Officer, WHO, polastror@who.int

Summary: This session explores the use of UN commissioned evaluations by external stakeholders and WHO commissioned evaluations by internal stakeholders. It is intended to offer insights to enhance evidence-based decision-making.

The first segment shares emerging findings from a UNEG Working Group 3 study on how external stakeholders, such as donors, governments, and aid agencies, utilize UN-commissioned evaluations. It examines the demand for evaluation, the operational realities of these stakeholders, and how evidence informs policies and programmes. Participants will discuss whether these findings resonate with their expectations.

The second segment focuses on WHO's internal use of evaluations, highlighting key findings from a recent study. It examines how results are applied across WHO operations, identifying types of evaluation use (e.g., instrumental, conceptual) and factors influencing uptake, such as organizational culture and leadership support. The session aims to foster dialogue on enablers, barriers, and best practices, encouraging strategies to improve evaluation application and drive impact across UN agencies.

Theme 5 - Evaluation Policies and Functions: Fit for the Future

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| Monday 10 Feb 13.30-15.00 | 5.1 Small Evaluation Function Development |
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Lead facilitators:

- Veridiana Mansour Mendes, Evaluation Officer, IMO, vmansour@imo.org
- Gugsya Yimer Farice, Evaluation Specialist, ICAO, gfarice@icao.int
- Judit Jankovic, Senior Evaluation Specialist ICC, co-coordinator of the Peer Review Working Group, judit.jankovic@icc-cpi.int

Summary: The session will foster an exchange of organizational experiences focused on specific challenges faced by small evaluation functions as well as opportunities for navigating them individually and collectively. Through interactive features involving the participants, it will invite collective reflection around priorities and potential strategic areas that should be incorporated in the next UNEG Strategy (2025-2029).

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| Monday 10 Feb 15.30-17:00 | 5.2 Evaluation of South-South Cooperation |
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Lead facilitators:

- Carlos Tarazona, Senior Evaluation Officer, FAO, Carlos.Tarazona@fao.org
- Xin Xin Yang, Multi-country Evaluation Specialist, UNICEF, xxyang@unicef.org

Co-facilitator: Javier Guarnizo, Director, Evaluation Office, UNIDO, J.guarnizo@unido.org

Summary: The recent Summit of the Future underscored the critical importance of sustainable development and South-South Cooperation (SSC) in advancing global development goals. A key focus was the evaluation of SSC initiatives, essential for measuring their impact, scaling effective practices, and fostering accountability in international cooperation—aligning with the Summit's overarching objectives.

Currently, evaluation practices and related literature on SSC remain limited. Only a few UN agencies conduct thematic and project-specific evaluations or incorporate SSC into their Country Programme Evaluations and Reviews. Additionally, many UN agencies and developing countries engaged in SSC do not adhere to OECD-DAC criteria in their assessments. This highlights the need to explore diverse models of SSC evaluation and assess their suitability in varying contexts.

To address this, co-facilitators from Rome, Vienna, and Beijing will share diverse perspectives, presenting their experience, practices and methodologies for evaluating SSC. Participants, working in small groups, will share insights and discuss ways to improve evaluations of SSC interventions.

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| Tuesday 11 Feb 09.00-10.30 | 5.3 Strengthening Decentralized Evaluation. Key features, principles and operational standards |
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Lead facilitator: Grace Igweta, Senior Evaluation Officer, WFP, grace.igweta@wfp.org

Summary: Building on the mapping of the Decentralized Evaluation (DE) function conducted by UNEG members over the last few years, the UNEG Decentralized Evaluation Working Group has been developing a paper on principles, operational standards, and a potential assessment framework for DE functions across UN agencies. This session provides a great opportunity for UNEG members to discuss the results of this work so far and to consider how principles and operational standards could be applied to each participant’s specific evaluation set-up.

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| Tuesday 11 Feb 13.30-15.00 | 5.4 System wide evaluation from policy to practice: unique perspectives and collective learning |
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Lead facilitator: Andrea Cook, Executive Director, UN SDG System Wide Evaluation Office, andrea.cook@un.org

Co-facilitator: Tom Barton, Evaluation Officer, UN SDG System Wide Evaluation Office, thomas.barton@un.org

Summary: The session, proposed by the UN SDG System Wide Evaluation Office, will set out the key features of the UN SDG System Wide Evaluation Policy and provide an opportunity for reflection on this unique function which enables a system-wide perspective on the efforts by UN entities to support delivery of the SDGs. In small group settings, participants will explore the lessons and implications from the pilot initiative to harness AI tools to map evidence from 950 UN evaluations published since 2021 and generate rapid, user-friendly summaries of evidence to contribute to the 2024 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review.

Professional Development Seminar Agenda and Session Outline

Full or half-day peer training and exchange on substantive evaluation topics. Attendees to attend **one** PDS session for the full session (be it full or half day).

| Wednesday 12 th February | |
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| 9.00-12.30 | PDS morning session |
| 12.30-14.00 | Lunch |
| 14.00-17.00 | PDS afternoon session (continuation of morning sessions) |
| 18.00 | Cocktail reception at UNU |

| Session title | Organizer(s) |
|---|-------------------------|
| From Evaluation to Action. How to make your evaluation practice more principled and transformative | UNICEF |
| Visualizing and mapping evaluative evidence for decision-making | Evaluation Synthesis WG |
| Reflecting Ethical Principles in Evaluation Practice | Ethics WG |
| Mainstreaming groups in situations of vulnerability in evaluations | OHCHR/UN Women |
| Advancing Impact Evaluation in Climate Change Interventions: Challenges, Insights, and Collaborative Solutions (half-day session) | GCF |

PDS Session Descriptions

From Evaluation to Action. How to make your evaluation practice more principled and transformative

Lead facilitator: Michele Tarsilla, Chief, Humanitarian Evaluation, UNICEF, mtarsilla@unicef.org

Summary: Evaluation practitioners are expected to follow professional standards in order to enhance the technical rigor and acceptability of their work. However, ensuring the “perfect compliance” between one’s own practice and oft-aspirational principles can be quite challenging with the risk that evaluation managers and evaluation consultants get overwhelmed by the increasing number of principles and dimensions that they are being asked to abide by and include, respectively, in their evaluation conceptual frameworks. This workshop will endeavor to provide practical guidance on how to reconcile the vast array of principles underlying contemporary evaluation practice, provide experience-based recommendations on how to apply them holistically to equip evaluation managers with the tools to enhance the capacity of the national evaluation societies or private firms/vendors rendering evaluation services to their respective Agencies/ Organizations. The workshop will also build on some of the most recent Guidance endorsed by UNEG.

Learning Objectives. The workshop will provide a unique opportunity to.

1. Be part of a collective reflection on the value of principles not only in today’s humanitarian evaluation work but also within the scope of Humanitarian-Development-Peace evaluations (Session 1. 30 minutes)
2. Learn what research and evaluations have taught us on the state of applicability of principles in contemporary evaluation practice and sharing of experiences (Session 2. 40 minutes)
3. Gain familiarity with some of the new UNEG guidance documents on principles (key frameworks, fit-for-purpose evaluation questions, methods to be used, etc...) (Session 3. 2 hours)
4. Apply the newly acquired knowledge to a variety of contexts through scenario-based group work and simulation (Session 4. 60 minutes)
5. Report back to the plenary (Session 5. 30 minutes)
6. Personal and Organizational Commitment (Session 6. 20 minutes).
7. Concluding remarks and workshop evaluation (Session 7. 20 minutes)

Throughout the workshop, participants will have the opportunity to network with other colleagues interested in upholding “principled” evaluation practices both regionally and globally. To this end and in accordance with the planning of any other UNEG EvalWeek’s social activity included in the agenda, the facilitators will try to organize a dinner outing with all the workshop participants either on the same day as the workshop or the following day.

Visualizing and mapping evaluative evidence for decision-making

Lead facilitator: Shivit Bakrania, Evaluation Specialist, UNDP IEO, shivit.bakrania@undp.org

Co-facilitators:

- Andrea Cook, Executive Director, UN SDG System Wide Evaluation Office, andrea.cook@un.org;
- Deborah McWhinney, Senior Evaluation Advisor, UNFPA IEO, mcwhinney@unfpa.org

Summary: Organizational success is more likely when decisions are based on rigorous evidence about what works, how it works, and for whom. However, integrating such evidence into policies or programs can be challenging due to the overwhelming amount of information and time constraints on decision-makers. Evidence maps help by visually organizing the available evaluative evidence on specific topics, facilitating more informed, efficient, and transparent decision-making.

Typically presented in a matrix format, evidence maps highlight where evidence exists and where it is lacking. They are beneficial in several ways.

1. Identifying gaps. Evidence maps point to areas with limited research or evaluations, guiding future efforts.
2. Summarizing evidence. They offer a comprehensive overview of the evidence.
3. Efficient resource allocation. Decision-makers can prioritize resources toward well-supported interventions or areas needing more evaluation.
4. Enhancing transparency. By presenting information in an accessible format, evidence maps make it easier for non-experts to grasp complex data.
5. Promoting evidence-based decisions. They support the development of policies and practices grounded in solid research, improving the effectiveness of interventions.

Learning Objectives. This interactive workshop will introduce evidence maps, an online interactive and visual tool that can support evidence informed decision-making. Workshop participants will learn.

- What evidence maps are and what can they be used for
- How to interpret and use evidence maps
- About the utility and value of evidence maps for summarizing bodies of evidence, identifying evidence gaps, enhancing transparency and accessibility, and promoting evidence-informed decision-making
- About different types of evidence maps and different approaches to designing them, including approaches based upon co-production
- How to develop an evidence map, from developing the framework to collecting and coding the studies to be included in a map
- How to encourage stakeholder engagement in the production and use of evidence maps as a basis for evidence-informed decision making

Reflecting Ethical Principles in Evaluation Practice

Lead facilitators: UNEG Working Group on Ethics in Evaluation

- Saara Ehlert, Evaluation Officer, UNHCR, ehlert@unhcr.org
- Silvina Coria, Director, OIO OPCW, silvina.coria@opcw.org

Summary:

This session will focus on supporting practical implementation of the UNEG Ethical principles for Evaluation - drawing on case examples and real-life challenges from UNEG members. Discussion will focus on both common concerns arising in designing, contracting and implementing ethical evaluations as well as new and emerging challenges.

Learning Objectives:

The aim is to support participants to build capacity to apply the principles in their day-to-day work, and to share and support colleagues to do the same. This will include new and emerging ethical challenges.

Mainstreaming groups in situations of vulnerability in evaluations

Lead facilitators:

- Aditi Bhola, Programme Management Officer, OHCHR, aditi.bhola@un.org

Other facilitators.

- Agnes Nyaga, Associate Human Rights Officer, OHCHR, anyaga@un.org

Summary: This joint PDS with the Young and Emerging Evaluators WG looks at mainstreaming groups in situations of vulnerability in evaluations. These include but not are limited to, women and girls, all children, youth, persons with disabilities, people living with HIV and AIDS, older persons, Indigenous peoples, refugees, internally displaced people, migrants, minorities, stateless people and all people facing discrimination

Participants will acquire the most recent knowledge of the key approaches and methodologies used in mainstreaming groups in situations of vulnerability in evaluations, with practical examples, good practices and exercises.

Learning objectives: The goal of the seminar is to promote greater inclusivity and equity in evaluations. By the end of the seminar, with this knowledge, participants will be able to reflect on their work, to ensure that mainstreaming groups in situations in vulnerability in considered in the planning, scope, design, implementation and reporting of evaluations. The seminar will also provide space for participants to conduct hands-on real-life exercises, engage in peer-review of key evaluation documents and exchange/propose innovative approaches.

Advancing Impact Evaluation in Climate Change Interventions: Challenges, Insights, and Collaborative Solutions

Note: Half-day PDS on Wednesday 12th January morning

Lead facilitator: Susumu Yoshida, Evaluation Specialist - Implementation Science, Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU), Green Climate Fund (GCF), syoshida@gcfund.org

Other facilitators:

- Daisuke Horikoshi, Principal Evaluation Officer, IEU GCF, dhorikoshi@gcfund.org
- Marco D'Errico, Impact Evaluation Officer, IEU GCF, mderrico@gcfund.org

Summary: This session will explore the challenges of conducting impact evaluations for climate interventions within the framework of the Green Climate Fund's (GCF) multi-year Learning-Oriented Real-Time Impact Assessment (LORTA) programme. These challenges are not unique to GCF but resonate across the United Nations network and beyond. Participants will have the opportunity to share their experiences, presenting both the challenges and impact evidence from their respective organizations. The session aims to foster peer learning, encourage the exchange of insights, and facilitate discussions on innovative solutions. Additionally, it will provide a platform to identify concrete opportunities for collaboration on impact evaluations. Building on the discussions initiated at the Global Impact Evaluation Forum 2024 in New York, this session seeks to deepen the dialogue and strengthen partnerships for advancing robust impact evaluation practices.

Session format

1. **Welcome and Introductions** (30 minutes) Icebreaker and overview of session objectives.
2. **Challenges in Impact Evaluation** (45 minutes) Interactive discussion where participants share experiences and key hurdles.
3. **Coffee Break** (15 minutes)
4. **Exploring Opportunities** (45 minutes) - Collaborative discussion on potential solutions and innovative approaches.
5. **Academic Dialogue** (60 minutes) Presentations by 2–3 professors showcasing relevant research, followed by a Q&A session.
6. **Wrap-Up and Closing** (15 minutes) Summary of key insights, next steps, and closing remarks.