

UNICEF Contributions to the NATIONAL EVALUATION CAPACITIES (NEC) CONFERENCE

The [National Evaluation Capacities \(NEC\) 2019 Conference](#) under the theme “Leaving No One Behind: Evaluation for Agenda 2030”, jointly organized by UNDP and the Government of Egypt, was held in Hurghada, Egypt from 20 to 24 October 2019. Over five days, more than 500 participants from 117 countries joined forces to work collectively on strengthening national evaluation capacities. The programme included keynotes, panel discussions, training workshops as well as other innovative arrangements. UNICEF participated in the conference by taking the lead or joining hands with partners in organizing a one-day workshop and two panels which will be briefly presented in this snapshot.

Workshop on “Embedding Evaluation in Voluntary National Reviews”

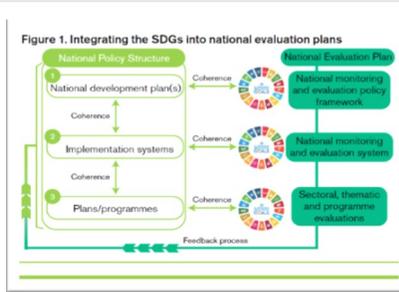
[UNICEF](#) and [EVALSDGs](#) organized this one-day workshop which was attended by 33 participants from 24 countries, representing governments, VOPEs, parliaments and development partners.

The learning objectives of the workshop were:

- ◆ *Increase the capacity of countries to embed evidence from evaluations in VNRs.*
- ◆ *Understand the relevance of scaling up evidence from evaluations to inform national policies and VNRs to accelerate progress towards the SDGs.*
- ◆ *Improve the ability to use evidence from evaluations and other sources in actions towards future VNRs.*

The workshop delivered key messages and featured presentations on the first SDGs evaluation conducted by Finland, as well as the first SDGs evaluation being conducted by a country of the global South, Nigeria. Concrete examples from selected countries were shared with the participants and highlighted the importance of national evaluation policies, systems, and plans.

In the end, the participants agreed on short and long-term actions to be implemented in their countries and organizations to ensure VNRs are more evidence-based.



Panel on “Making the case for country-led evaluations of the SDGs”

Panelists:

- ◇ **Abdoulaye Gounou**, Chief of the Bureau of Evaluation at the Presidency, Republic of Benin
- ◇ **Jared Ichwara**, M&E Specialist, National Treasury and Planning, Kenya
- ◇ **Ulla Järvelä-Seppinen**, Development Policy Adviser at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland
- ◇ **Dorothy Lucks**, EVALSDGs Co-chair

Jointly organized by [UNICEF](#) and [EVALSDGs](#), the panel aimed at promoting a multi-stakeholder dialogue on the relevance and urgency of country-led evaluations of the SDGs. Panelists emphasized the importance of M&E systems at the national level. They also highlighted the need for governments to work together with civil society organizations, parliamentarians



and development partners to ensure inclusive and dynamic country-led evaluations and evidence-based VNRs. Questions discussed included:

- ◇ *Almost four years have passed since the endorsement of the 2030 Agenda, yet evaluation continues to be absent from the national reporting on the progress towards the SDGs. Only one country has completed a country led-evaluation. What actions are needed to reverse this situation and why is it important?*
- ◇ *What are the main challenges countries are facing in moving towards country-led evaluations? How can these be overcome? What is the role of key players including parliamentarians and development organizations?*
- ◇ *What are the lessons from countries that have moved towards evaluating the SDGs (Nigeria and Finland)?*

Panel on “Strengthening demand for and use of national evaluation systems to inform national development strategies”

[UNFPA](#), the [Global Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation \(GFPE\)](#), and [UNICEF](#) jointly organized this panel that fostered a dialogue between

parliamentarians, policy makers and the evaluation community. Panelists emphasized the importance of National Evaluation Policies and Systems for an evaluation enabling environment — an

environment in which key government leaders understand the benefits of evaluation and promote its use. The panel also emphasized that Parliamentarians are key players for the creation of a demand for evaluation, especially in the context of the 2030 Agenda.



Panelists:

- ◇ **Hon. Evelyn Naomi Mpagi Kaabule**, President of APNODE and Former Member of Parliament, Uganda;
- ◇ **Abdelilah El Halouti**, 2ème vice-président de la Chambre des Conseillers, Morocco;
- ◇ **Marco Segone**, Director Evaluation, UNFPA
- ◇ **Asela Kalugampitiya**, GPFE Secretariat, Sri Lanka; and
- ◇ **Josephine Watera**, Head of Evaluation Unit, Parliament of Uganda