

Evidence Stories – Rationale and Content guidelines

What is the purpose of the ‘Evidence Stories’ project?

The *Evidence Stories* project is the content arm of the EvalPartners *Evidence Matters* flagship program. *Evidence Matters* aims to raise the profile of evaluation amongst a wide range of stakeholders. Within the framework of this program, EvalPartners investigates and responds to demand for evaluation with new stakeholders, simplifies evaluation language for better communication and generates key messages that promotes the use of evidence for use by the evaluation sector.

The *Evidence Stories* project provides a curated platform for the publication of evaluative evidence, written in simple language. Through the curated content portal, which is published on the Evidence Matters microsite, the stories promote the use of evaluative evidence as a tool to inform the implementation of Agenda 2030.

The pitch and messaging related to global evaluation can be very high-level and abstract, but many evaluations are about individual projects or programmes. Often, they are at country, institutional or sector level.

The *Evidence Stories* aims to provide examples of how the evidence from these evaluations – the findings, lessons and recommendations – contributed, or could contribute, to informing new projects, programs and policies to make them more effective in future and have greater development results. In this way, the use of evaluative evidence contributes towards achieving Agenda 2030.

On the *Evidence Stories* portal we:

1. Republish existing evidence syntheses by various international development agencies, think tanks, academic institutions or individual evaluators
2. Co-publish blogs, thought leadership pieces and interviews that focus specifically on the use of evaluative evidence linked to one or more of the 17 SDGs
3. Publish *original* first-person narratives of Evidence Stories – this is the heart of the content platform where we want to make evaluative evidence come ALIVE (see the specific guidelines on pg. 2)

* *Republished or co-published content can be submitted in an individual capacity, or by an organization. However, original first-person accounts can only be posted in an individual capacity*

* *All stories can be submitted in text or video format (for video guidelines [see this link](#))*

Guidelines for submitting first-person *Evidence Stories*

1. Original *Evidence Stories* should be written in the first person. For example, “When I first visited the Sahel region to conduct semi-structured interviews in 2017...”

Evaluation often speaks in the abstract and in intangible terms, yet usually the real focus is about something far more concrete: a migrating farmer who seeks to supplement his livelihood in a neighbouring country; a young mother in a refugee camp; a girl with the dream of becoming a doctor.

The purpose of the EvalPartners Evidence Matters flagship program is to break through the acronyms and technical speak and get to the *heart* of how evidence can improve peoples’ lives.

To achieve this, we want to know about *your* experience – what you sensed, what you felt, what you learnt. Personal stories are more relatable, and as evaluators we work in a specific field, because we care.

2. Related to Point 1 *Evidence Stories* should have a reference to people. Evaluation needs a face. The evidence that evaluators collect in the field is ultimately aimed at improving development outcomes so that people and their environments could improve. Who did you meet during the evaluation process? Who inspired you? Why? What did you learn from that person? Do not use people’s real names if you do not have consent, but try to capture the truth behind your engagements with people.
3. *Evidence Stories* should be submitted by evaluators or development professionals who have worked closely on evaluation projects and reflect on how a specific evaluation (ideally published) has contributed to one or more of the Sustainable Development Goals. Your story should reflect and describe *how* evidence has contributed to making the project or program better, or how evidence would contribute to improving the project or program in the future. Ultimately, your *Evidence Story* should answer the question: *Why does Evidence Matter?*
4. If your *Evidence Story* isn’t field related and you spend a significant portion of your time in an office, seminar rooms or conference facilities conducting capacity building workshops, reviewing documents and synthesising data, your story still needs to be personal and it still needs to reflect on the importance of using evidence in decision-making processes and policy development.
5. *Evidence Stories* can take on one of two formats:
 - A 800-1400 word long-form narrative account (a story)
 - A short 1-2 minute video (for video guidelines [see this link](#))
6. Your *Evidence Story* should be tagged with one or more of the 17 SDGs and a link to the evaluation that you refer to in your story is published.

For more information, send your requests to coordinator@evalpartners.org