



CHIANG MAI DECLARATION:

CIVIL SOCIETY WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP FOR BETTER EVALUATION

1. We, participants of the EvalPartners International Forum on Civil Society's Evaluation Capacities, meeting in Chiang Mai, Thailand, 3-6 December 2012, are united by a shared commitment to evaluation as an effective instrument for promoting and supporting equitable human development. Representing national, regional and global Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs), as well as organizations for development cooperation, we recognize that we are united by a new alliance with equity and social justice as central values, founded on shared principles of partnership, innovation, inclusivity and human rights, and common goals as explained below.
2. Development efforts work best where they are led and managed by countries themselves, tailoring approaches to their own situations and needs. With this in view, we recognize that country-led evaluation systems and functions are vital in contributing to development interventions that are effective, efficient and responsive, achieve desirable development outcomes and improve the quality of life of all.
3. Civil society organizations in general, and VOPEs in particular, must play a key role in influencing and enhancing the demand for evaluation and the use of evaluation results; in developing the capacity of national and local authorities, as well as communities, NGOs, academia and the private sector, to endorse and support evaluations of their own policies and programmes.
4. Since the early 1990s, the number of VOPEs has increased globally, from a handful to about 135 in 2012. Realizing the great potential and expertise represented by this growth, we commit ourselves to cooperating to further enhance the capacities of Civil Society Organizations - notably Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation, especially nascent and emergent ones – to contribute to local, national and global sustainable development processes through evaluation. We believe that Civil Society Organizations and Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation are especially well-positioned to engage strategically and meaningfully in national development processes by influencing and supporting the further development of evaluation systems

at national and local levels. By influencing policy makers, other key stakeholders and public opinion, they can help to ensure that public policies, programmes and processes are informed by sound evidence and lead to effective and equitable development results.

5. We commit ourselves to working together to achieve the following changes:
 - VOPEs are stronger. Their institutional and organizational capacities are enhanced;
 - VOPEs are more influential. They are better able to play strategic roles in strengthening the enabling environment for evaluation within their countries, and so help to improve national evaluation systems and promote the use of evaluation evidence in developing policies geared towards effective, equitable and gender-equality responsive development results.
 - VOPEs develop sustainable strategies to enhance the evaluation skills, knowledge and capacities of their members, and of evaluators more widely, to manage and conduct credible and useful evaluations.

6. We will hold each other accountable for making progress and regularly reporting towards these commitments that will be implemented through the 2013 action plan and the strategy towards declaring 2015 the International Year of Evaluation, as discussed in Chiang Mai, as well as joint actions beyond 2015. We accept that sustained cooperation and adherence to these common goals and principles will call for continued and dedicated support by each and every partner. We approach this undertaking with a shared sense of responsibility and accountability; with an enthusiasm to learn from one another through dialogue and shared information; and with respect for the values of diversity, integrity, gender equality and our shared humanity.

Chiang Mai, Thailand, December 2012