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**International Forum on
Civil Society's Evaluation
Capacities
Chiang Mai, 3-6 2012**

European Evaluation Society

**Making a difference:
supporting evaluative practice
through the EES**



Background

- Founded 1992: The Hague
- Emerging professional needs of individuals
- Academics and auditors
- The Board has 12 possible members, 8 elected
- Ex President a member for one year



The mission

- The goal of the European Evaluation Society is to stimulate and promote theory, practice, and utilisation of high quality evaluation especially, but not exclusively, within Europe.



Membership: 488 individual members and 30 institutional

- academics (30%),
- free lancers (18%),
- private consultancy workers (22%)
- evaluation commissioners and evaluators at governmental institutions (8%),
- supranational (3%)
- international organizations (11%),
- NGOs-Non-profit institutions (7%).

May 2012, 82% conduct and/or do evaluation, 42% teach evaluation, 43% carry out research on evaluation, 31% commission and/or manage evaluations, and 4% are students.

The disciplinary composition of members is 15% Public Administration, 15% Economy, 13% Political Science, 13% Sociology, 10% Education, 7% Business Administration, and engineers, social workers and psychologists (3% each one; other categories 15%).

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NESE (Network of Evaluation Societies in Europe)

At the EES Conference in Berlin (2004)

The structure that emerged placed the EES as a core partner and with one other European society or network as co-coordinator for a two year term.

To date the NESE co-coordinators along with the EES have been the SFE (The French Evaluation Society), DeGEval (The German Evaluation Society) and the Italian Evaluation Association



Strategy: The enabling environment

Promote national evaluation societies in Europe with a view to strengthen the evaluation culture of national governments and the civil society

Statement on Ethics and Standards in 2004

Evaluators' capabilities framework that was validated through two surveys (2009, 2011)

Statement on impact evaluation in 2007: "The importance of a methodologically diverse approach to impact evaluation".



Developing/strengthening individual capacities

- High quality training in biennial conferences: pre-conference workshops
- International master classes on specific themes (Odense in 2009 and Seville 2007)
- Other evaluation events in non-conference years
- USPE group university based programmes in evaluation
- Student reduced membership and conference fee and special student award
- Collaboration with the Journal *Evaluation*.



Strengthening equity-focused and gender-sensitive evaluation systems and evaluations

- Influencing through the development of Thematic Working Groups (TWGs). “Gender and Evaluation”, “Evaluation of International Engagement in Fragile Situations”
- sessions on gender issues, at conferences
- The EES Board is attentive to gender balance.
- Bursaries for evaluators in developing countries to attend its biennial conferences



Institutional capacity (1)

Professionalization of EES secretariat services

EES Board meetings which are mainly held virtually, to save costs.

A typical array of groups and activities are:

- Conference
- TWGs around general areas of strategic interest.
- Members' services
- Newsletter- 'Connections'
- Professional development and capacity building
- Communications
- Non-conference years and 'ad-hoc' events
- Relations with the *Evaluation* journal
- Recruitment and fund raising



Institutional capacity (2): knowing the membership

- Analysis of the community and membership as a priority
- Surveys also as a tool which enables communication and getting active participation from members and for getting useful information on members
- In 2011, 'Individual Member Profile' in the Member Area of the web site.
- The EES will continue with more 'in-depth' analysis of its membership



Bottlenecks/challenges

- Relatively small membership which fluctuates depending on conference years
- Need for a stronger ownership and a more substantial participation of members in the society: not a service provider
- Need to utilize more efficiently Social Networks and new IT's allow
- The EES as a regional-supranational player; challenge of developing an 'European Evaluation Space'. NESE is grappling with this issue.



Progress

- Biennial conferences
- Developing events
- Thematic working groups
- Improved secretariat and service provider
- Communication
- Membership policy



Enabling factors

- Regional positioning
- Strong partners
- Dedicated four-year term Board
- Professional secretariat
- EU contacts



Innovations and lessons learned

- Dedicated plan of activities; BM working plans
- Using social and other communication media
- Strategic partnerships
- Strategic thinking space and clear vision

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Next steps

Increasing membership (participatory approaches)

Communication strategy

TWG strategy

Donors within EU

Building EES historical archive