CHANGING THE WORLD OF EVALUATION

Stocktaking Exercise of EvalPartners Accomplishments 2015-2017

Burt Perrin
Taruna Gupta

Submitted 18 June 2018 to the EvalPartners Steering Committee
# Table of Contents

Executive Summary ................................................................. i

1. Introduction ........................................................................... 1
   1.1 What is EvalPartners? ..................................................... 1
   1.2 What is the purpose of this stocktaking exercise? .......... 2
   1.3 Methodological approach and limitations ..................... 2
   1.4 Organisation of this report ............................................ 2

2. Results and accomplishments following from
   EvalPartners activities .......................................................... 3
   2.1 EvalPartners Global level activities and
       accomplishments ................................................................ 4
   2.2 EvalPartners Networks .................................................... 7
   2.3 EvalPartners Projects ..................................................... 15
   2.4 EvalPartners support to Individuals ............................... 22

   3.1 Overall assessment ........................................................ 24
   3.2 EPMG self-assessment questionnaire ............................. 24
   3.3 Comparisons to the EP 2014 evaluation ....................... 25
   3.4 Other considerations ..................................................... 25
   3.5 Networks ...................................................................... 26

4. Programming Strategy ......................................................... 27
   4.1 SOAR analysis ............................................................. 27
   4.2 EvalPartners partnerships:
       Its main strength – but also an area of vulnerability ...... 29

5. Conclusions and recommendations ..................................... 30
   5.1 Conclusions ................................................................. 30
   5.2 Recommendations ....................................................... 31
Executive Summary

Background and purpose of this EvalPartners stocktaking exercise

EvalPartners (EP) is a global voluntary movement of evaluators formed in 2012, with the aim of establishing evaluation around the world as an essential management and social change instrument and an objective of advocating for and contributing to change to the (Eval)world. EP commissioned a first comprehensive formative evaluation of its activities in 2014 and is planning another evaluation in 2019.

EP commissioned this stocktaking of its activities between 2015-2017 with the following purposes:

- To assist EvalPartners in its future planning, with better information about benefits and outcomes arising from its activities.
- To aid EvalPartners in its reporting of results to the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- To provide ideas about possible considerations that might be explored in the proposed 2019 evaluation.

While this stocktaking exercise also considered EP's management practices and programming strategy, its priority was to identify, to the extent possible, results (including outcomes, accomplishments and influence) following from what EP has done. The stocktaking considered EP's three main levels of operating:

- The global level.
- EvalPartners five networks.
- Peer-to-peer and Innovation Challenge projects funded by EP.

Data-gathering approaches, in addition to document review, interviews, email queries and some other methods, featured seven case studies across all three levels in order to get a better idea of emerging or actual outcomes arising from EP. As a stocktaking exercise rather than a full evaluation, with limited resources and barely 3 months in total to undertake, there are significant limitations to the ability of this exercise to explore all possible considerations in depth.

Key findings

Following are what we view as the three key findings of this stocktaking exercise:

- EP activities at all levels (global, networks, and projects) have contributed to an impressive array of outcomes, accomplishments and influence.
- EP partnership model has been identified as part of its DNA and represents its core strength. At the same time, we have highlighted the need for EP to do more to strengthen its partnerships, particularly with the UN, where the failure of the UN to nominate a co-chair since the beginning of 2017 needs to be addressed, otherwise the future of EP may well be fragile.
- EP organisation and functioning, considering its short lifespan and its voluntary nature, in general has been noteworthy, although we identify some areas that might benefit from some additional attention. We note that the EP governance structure has been evolving, which we view as a positive sign of responsiveness and flexibility.

The body of the report presents these, and other, findings in more detail.
Recommendations

To the EvalPartners Management Group (EPMG)

- EP volunteers and partners should take time to celebrate EP’s many accomplishments since it was founded some five years ago, recognising what a group of dedicated volunteers can bring about. EP should give some reflection to how this energy and engagement can be sustained.

- As a matter of priority, the EPMG and its Executive Committee should be proactive in (re)engaging with current and potential new partners, with priority to the UN. We consider the need for such action the most important finding arising from this stocktaking exercise.

- EP, while acknowledging its success in raising funds to support its current activities, should begin to explore future funding options so that its focus does not need to shift from implementation of activities when the current cycle of funding terminates.

- Consider ways of maximising the value of projects, for example:
  - Engage with projects at a mid-point, to provide encouragement and support to project volunteers and to get a better understanding of expected progress.
  - Consider webinars showcasing accomplishments of projects, as well as to increase awareness among EPMG members about what projects are doing.
  - Explore ways of extracting, and sharing, key findings, themes, and learnings from projects. These should inform future requests for proposals for projects so that learnings about what has worked well, or not, can be taken into consideration in future projects.
  - Identify ways of enhancing the way project information is currently stored, tracked, and could be made more accessible, to facilitate easier access to information about projects.

- Given their encouraging start, keep an eye on the networks, sharing experiences and accomplishments as well as learnings that might be of value to others, and as need be how any necessary support could be provided, including increased links across networks.

- Explore reasons for an apparent lack of consensus or uncertainty among EPMG members on many of the items of the self-assessment questionnaire regarding management practices, and as need be take steps to build a better and shared understanding.

- Examine EP’s strategic vision, including the need for refinements, as well as ideas about moving beyond Agenda 2020.

For the planned 2019 evaluation

It is beyond the scope of this stocktaking exercise to do more than to provide some initial ideas that the forthcoming EP evaluation might explore in more depth.

- Examine how effective EP has been in engaging and expanding its partnership arrangements, such as recommended in this stocktaking report.

- Take an in-depth look at the networks, in particular to identify outcomes and accomplishments arising from their activities and outputs, but potentially also considering the extent of coordination and cross fertilisation among the networks and with other partners, as well as consistency with EvalAgenda 2020 and EPMG’s strategic priorities.

- Undertake a more in-depth study of outcomes arising from a broader range of projects than was possible in this stocktaking exercise, as well as identifying how EP engages and supports the projects it funds and how learnings from projects are shared and disseminated.

- Examine how well the EPMG revised governance structure has been implemented.

- Review progress towards the EvalAgenda 2020, as well as implications for future strategic directions.
1. Introduction

1.1 What is EvalPartners?

EvalPartners (EP) is a global voluntary movement of evaluators, with a knowledge sharing platform; its objective is to advocate and contribute to change to the (Eval)world.

EP activities align to the Global Evaluation Agenda 2016-2020 which focuses on strengthening national and individual evaluation capacities, creating an enabling environment for evaluation, and providing cross cutting support to the principle ‘no-one left behind’.

EP is driven by the commitment of its volunteers, connection to authorities in evaluation and resources from those who believe in the EP cause, for example the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, United Nations Agencies, USAID and Swedish Development Cooperation, and others.

EP is not a registered entity, therefore its parent organisation is the International Organisation for Cooperation in Evaluation (IOCE)\(^1\) which has co-chaired the movement with the United Nations\(^2\). Additionally, EP has secretariat support provided by Megram in Canada and one coordinator\(^3\).

---

1 IOCE represents national and regional Voluntary Organization for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs) across the globe.
2 As of January 2017 and at the time of preparation of this report, the position of UN Co-chair has been vacant.
3 Which serves as the secretariat for IOCE, and also for the Canadian Evaluation Society.
1.2 What is the purpose of this stocktaking exercise?

- Assist EvalPartners in its future planning, with better information about benefits and outcomes arising from its activities.
- Aid EvalPartners in its reporting of results to the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs following from its support, and potentially to help in leveraging future funding from current and new sources.
- Provide ideas about possible considerations that might be explored in the proposed 2019 evaluation of EvalPartners.

1.3 Methodological approach and limitations

Methods and sources of information for the stocktaking exercise have included: document review, interviews (a few in person, most via telephone/skype) with key informants, email queries, observation (of the EPMG meeting held in Helsinki in March 2018), a management practices self-assessment questionnaire of EPMG members, and seven case studies. Annexes 1 and 2 list people interviewed, and the documents reviewed.

As a stocktaking exercise rather than a full evaluation, with limited resources and barely 3 months in total to undertake, it has not been possible to explore all possible considerations in detail, in the data gathering, analysis or reporting. We have identified some considerations that the EPMG, and/or the planned evaluation for 2019 might consider further. Nevertheless, we feel confident in our main findings.

1.4 Organisation of this report

- **Section 2:** Results and accomplishments achieved following from EvalPartners activities.
- **Section 3:** EvalPartners management practices.
- **Section 4:** EvalPartners programming strategy.
- **Section 5:** Conclusions and recommendations.
2. Results and accomplishments following from EvalPartners activities

By “results”, we refer to outcomes/achievements/accomplishments that follow from EvalPartners activities, directly or indirectly, as well as activities and outputs that influenced others to act. Due to the facilitative role of EvalPartners typically working in conjunction with others, it rarely makes sense to speak of a linear cause-and-effect relationship.

Leveraging capacity goes beyond fundraising, to explore the reach and influence of EvalPartners beyond its direct activities. We used a comprehensive questionnaire that was developed after desk review and interviews to understand the reach of three of EvalPartners networks: EvalYouth, EVALSDGs and EvalGender+. This information has been presented in Section 2.2. We will provide this tool to EvalPartners that could be used to continue to track important indicators pertaining to its influence.

This section has four sub-sections presenting highlights of results achieved at each operating level of EP.

2.1 Global level
We highlight key achievements at a global scale including those identified through a case study of the 2nd EvalPartners Global Forum in Kathmandu, November 2015 (Case Study 1).

2.2 Network level
We illustrate achievements, reach and influence of the five networks. Of these two networks have been studied in more depth as case studies: The Global Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation (GPFE) (Case Study 2) and EvalYouth (Case Study 3).

2.3 Project level
We summarise key results and learnings from the Peer-to-Peer (P2P) and Innovation Challenge (IC) projects, each of which has involved two or more VOPEs. Four projects were chosen as case studies:
- Albania, Romania and Kosovo – Localization of the Global Evaluation Agenda (P2P) – Case Study 4
- Uganda and Tanzania – Regional capacity building (P2P) – Case Study 5
- Africa, South Asia and Latin American and Caribbean – Curriculum and best practices on transformative evaluation from a gender lens (P2P) – Case Study 6
- Nepal and Sri Lanka – Monitoring and Evaluation for peace building and reconciliation efforts (IC project) – Case Study 7

2.4 Individuals
While not a main focus of the stocktaking exercise, we briefly reviewed achievements following from support provided to individuals through EvalPartners.

---

4 We note that our suggestions about strengthening partnerships in Section 4.2 might, as a side benefit, identify funding opportunities.

5 The reach and influence summarise the leveraging capacity of EvalPartners networks in terms of the credibility they have developed over a two-year period.
2.1 EvalPartners Global level activities and accomplishments

In this section we highlight key achievements at a global scale including the declaration of International Year of Evaluation; the 3rd global evaluation forum in Bishkek; regional conferences supported by EvalPartners; and a case study of the 2nd EvalPartners Global Forum in Kathmandu, November 2015 (Case Study 1).

The 3rd global evaluation forum in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, April 2017 had 153 participants from 51 countries and across many different sectors. As with the Kathmandu conference, it featured active participation of parliamentarians, and indeed took place in part in the Kyrgyzstan parliament with strong support from local parliamentarians. We heard evidence indicating that this event helped to capture the attention of other parliamentarians in the region.

On 19th December 2014 the United Nations General Assembly, adopted a resolution titled “Capacity building for the evaluation of development activities at the country level”, supported by 42 countries. EvalPartners members and partners played a leading role in developing the idea, creating momentum, and tabling it in front of the right people.

EvalPartners was able to mobilise support for EvalYear, engaging civil society, many national governments, UN agencies and others. We view EvalYear, and the UN resolution, as important outcomes, leading to many spinoff effects as well.

The resolution recognised EvalYear, and made history, because it was the first time an entire year was dedicated to a profession as opposed to a specific topic. This took EvalYear beyond VOPEs, to become a global initiative. The EvalTorch passed via 92 events during 2015 which increased the profile of evaluation by starting a dialogue on a way forward; finding means to connect to policy making; mainstreaming ‘leave no one behind’ principles for evaluation; and promoting the development of National Evaluation Policies. In conclusion to EvalYear, EvalPartners hosted the 2nd global evaluation forum in Kathmandu, Nepal, which we discuss below as a case study.
This forum advanced understanding of how the Evaluation Agenda fits in with the Sustainable Development Goals, and launched two flagship programs which set new priority areas for EvalPartners and is expected to be implemented through a collaboration of all the networks.

- Flagship Program 1: will provide support to 16 countries to strengthen national evaluation policies and systems.
- Flagship Program 2: will raise the profile of evaluation amongst new stakeholders and simplify the language around key evaluation messages.

During 2016-2017, EvalPartners provided USD 85,476 to the following conferences to enable discussions to promote the Global Evaluation Agenda, as well as the five networks:

- EvalMENA conference, Tunisia, April 2016.
- The Conclave of the Community of Evaluators in South Asia, Bhutan, June 2017.

It was beyond the scope of this stocktaking exercise to be able to follow up with regional representatives of these conferences to explore outcomes. However, we observe that without this funding, South-based evaluation communities would not have the opportunity to network face-to-face, to learn new tools, methods and processes, to build momentum within their regions, and to discuss ways in which they could become active participants in EP networks.
The EvalPartners Global Evaluation Forum II was held from 23rd to 27th November 2015, during the global evaluation week. As a result of Hon. Ananda Prasad Pokharel (Minister for Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation in Nepal) championing evaluation, the forum was the first evaluation event held in a Parliament. Following this event two additional national parliaments held evaluation events: the regional Tunisia Forum and the EvalPartners 3rd Global Evaluation Forum in Kyrgyzstan.

After observing some impressive initial results and the range of high level stakeholders who were gathered and willing to undertake subsequent work to advance the demand for, and use of, evaluation, donors appreciated the potential of EvalPartners, and the Forum has leveraged additional funding.

“More than just a conference”, as one stakeholder described this event. It not only fuelled considerable energy and contacts across sectors and regions; it helped to set in motion a range of activities and initiatives.

The Forum saw the launch of two new initiatives and the five new EvalPartners networks⁶ as illustrated below.

After observing some impressive initial results and the range of high level stakeholders who were gathered and willing to undertake subsequent work to advance the demand for, and use of, evaluation, donors appreciated the potential of EvalPartners, and the Forum has leveraged additional funding.

“The greatest accomplishments of the forum in Kathmandu, was to have had Parliamentarians from over 30 countries present. This is because parliamentarians went from having little interest in evaluation to becoming active lobbyists in their own countries.”

“We found that the creation of networks was an important step in growing EvalPartners as it took it from being a small group of active volunteers, to a movement that provides diverse entry points for different people with different areas of interest.”

⁶ A lot of groundwork for the launch of the networks and the Global Evaluation Agenda had been completed prior to the forum in Kathmandu, which helped contribute to the productivity of the forum.
2.2 EvalPartners Networks

In this section, we start with an in-depth analysis of two networks which feature as case studies: The Global Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation (Case Study 2) and EvalYouth (Case Study 3). We then move to give a light-touch review of the other networks: EVALSDGs, EvalGender+, and EvalIndigenous.

Note: The limited scope of the stocktaking exercise did not permit in-depth exploration of the work, and possible outcomes, of three networks EVALSDGs, EvalGender+ and EvalIndigenous. In particular, there was limited opportunity to probe for accomplishments brought on by the activities and outputs of these networks. We examined existing information in EvalPartners files, carried out an extensive internet search of network activities and accomplishments, and followed this up with a short set of questions sent to the chairs of each network, who were not always able to respond in time. The networks’ activities have contributed to several outcomes, with the information below providing a snapshot of their reach and influence.
The Global Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation (GPFE) is a platform for engaging parliamentarians to discuss evaluation and share their experiences at national, regional and international levels.

From 2007 Hon. Kabir Hashim and Asela Kalugampitiya from Sri Lanka were strongly advocating for the creation of a Regional Chapter for Parliamentarians in South Asia, which was formed six years later, and their first meeting was held in Kathmandu in 2013. Members of EvalPartners were present at this meeting, saw the potential of the initiative and decided to support it. EvalPartners, UNICEF and UN Women accelerated efforts through mobilising financial resources and personnel who have access to parliamentarians.

EvalPartners soon after the meeting provided funding for undertaking a global mapping exercise on the status of National Evaluation Policies which was published in December 2013 and updated in February 2015.

This provided a clear picture of who had developed policies. This enabled sharing of learnings with others in the process of developing policies and who could benefit from support, as well as identification of others not currently developing policies and who thus might be suitable targets for advocacy efforts from the evaluation community.

An EvalPartners Innovation Challenge project enabled parliamentarians from many different parts of the world to come together during the European Evaluation Society (EES) conference in Dublin, 2014, where participants agreed on the formal creation of a global parliamentarian’s forum.

GPFE has been advocating and providing technical advice on how to advocate for National Evaluation Policies and Systems at regional consultations in South Asia; Asia Pacific; Africa; Middle East and North Africa; Eurasia; and Latin America and Caribbean.

One of the key informants noted that “EvalPartners joining forces with committed political champions was a key turning point because without this, the parliamentarians’ initiative may still have remained as regional chapters rather than a global movement with a huge momentum.”
As a result of the above, we have been told that **actions of parliaments have led to the creation of National Evaluation Policies in their countries**, as well as other outcomes. These are shown in the text box below.

GPFE clearly is not the only player promoting National Evaluation Policies and systems. Action often follows from advocacy and support from multiple sources.

But, clearly, as the examples below suggest, GPFE has played a major role in aiding parliamentarians to bring about change in their countries, including national evaluation policies, changes to legislation and even constitutions, and implementation.

Sri Lanka, is going one step further in strengthening national evaluation systems. Hon Kabir Hashim, chair of GPFE, secured USAID funding for an M&E unit within parliament where evaluation reports will be summarised into one page for use in debates.

GPFE has increased awareness of how evaluation can contribute to good governance, prompting changes in the role of the parliament in its oversight function. It has published advocacy materials that have been broadly disseminated in various languages. Notably, 38 videos were created by parliamentarians for parliamentarians in 2016 focused on mobilisation, training and to show others how evaluation can be used for advocacy. Additionally, there have been examples of requests for evidence in decision making and evidence for putting together government bills.

The evaluation community has created somewhat of a tradition of inviting Parliamentarians to speak at their conferences which provides a platform for increasing international visibility that, in turn, provides stronger status, and gives access to more opportunities, expertise, and resources for affecting important parliamentary processes.

> "We are happy that GPFE was created. Just the fact that GPFE exists helps us to engage members of the Kyrgyz Parliament in evaluation-related activities at the country level and keep the issues of professional growth of evaluators in evaluation on the national agenda."
> – Hon. Natalia Nikitenko, a parliamentarian in Kyrgyzstan

**Case Study**

**Nepal** – Evaluation was included in the constitution in 2015, GPFE member Hon. Ananda Pokharel was instrumental in this; Nepal – draft M&E policy act is being finalised so evaluation becomes law.

**Côte d’Ivoire** – Evaluation was included in the constitution in 2016, APNODE (African Parliamentary Network on Development Evaluation) member parliamentarians were helpful in contributing to this. Note: To our knowledge, Morocco is the only other country besides Nepal and Côte d’Ivoire at the moment to have evaluation mentioned in their constitution within the Global South.

**Sri Lanka** – A draft National Evaluation Policy was published on newspapers for public comments in 2018, this has been underway since 2013. In 2016 two motions were endorsed: a) to endorse the National Evaluation Policy and, b) to allocate resources to it. In the budget speech by the Minister of Finance in 2018, funds were allocated to the National Evaluation Policy.

**Kenya** – A new National Evaluation Policy was developed in 2017. The Evaluation Society of Kenya, together with Parliamentarians, received support from EvalPartners separately and were able to hold breakfast meetings, as well as a parliamentarians’ caucus on evaluation, which contributed to work on the National Evaluation Policy. This also represents the potential of collaboration between parliamentarians and the VOPE, which might represent a good practice for other countries.

**Zimbabwe** – A new National Evaluation Policy has been endorsed by the President, but at the moment does not yet appear to have been actively implemented.

**Kyrgyzstan** – Monitoring and evaluation law was approved by the parliament in 2014; GPFE member and leader, Hon. Natalia Nikitenko was instrumental in this.

**Tunisia** – Included evaluation in the Parliament bylaws. The rest of Middle East and North Africa region require significant advocacy efforts to convince parliamentarians of the benefits of National Evaluation Policy.

**Afghanistan** – draft National Evaluation Policy was submitted to the president’s office in 2017 for review.

**Bhutan** – a draft National Evaluation Policy is being finalised.
Case Study 3: EvalYouth

EvalYouth’s philosophy is based upon principles of Inclusion and Transparency, recognising that contributions and a participatory approach are critical ingredients for motivating and managing volunteers. The photographs below show evidence of the opportunities created for young and emerging evaluators (YEs) across the globe.
The leveraging capacity of EvalYouth in terms of their reach and influence are illustrated below.

**Volunteer hours**

EvalYouth spokespersons indicate that:

~16,500 hours of voluntary work, over 2016-2017 the equivalent of 5 full-time staff.

**Social media**

16,643 followers

1,090 followers

1,117 followers

**Fundraising**

USD 30,501 raised through the MasterCard Foundation.

23 young and emerging evaluators (YEEs) travelled to the 2nd EvalPartners Global Evaluation Forum in Kathmandu and set priorities of the network.

UNFPA has also provided funding to EvalYouth.

**Creating a local presence**

5 Regional chapters7 have been established, with the Community of Evaluators South Asia under development.

8 national YEE chapters8 established, with Canada & Switzerland under development.

**Publications**

9 thematic papers proposals accepted by the American Journal of Evaluation about EvalYouth and the state of evaluation for YEEs across multiple regions.

7 articles for the AEA365 blog - this helped with reach, awareness raising and knowledge sharing.

4 blogs on LinkedIn; 1857 clicks.

**Youth in leadership**

Election of YEEs within governance bodies of many regional and national VOPeS’ e.g. Rodrigo Luna from Nicaragua was elected to the board of ReLAC and consequently to the EPMG.

12 videos created advocating for the inclusion of YEEs in VOPeS to be launched in 2018.

**Mentoring**

The first global mentoring program for YEEs with:

852 Applications, from 114 countries.

50 pairs, supported with 6 learning modules translated in 3 languages (Spanish, French and Arabic).

To better understand the outcomes and influences of the mentoring program, an evaluation will be conducted in late 20189.

**Having YEE voices heard**

15 EvalYouth members received invitations to speak at conferences, expert review committees, technical advisory groups, or chair a panel talk.

9 regional conferences held with an EvalYouth theme.

**EvalYouth events**

2 virtual conferences, 2 webinars and 1 e-learning held - using the online platform VoiceBoxer, which translates information into multiple languages in real time.

YEE (Taiwo Adesoba) paper accepted at Asian Evaluation Week 2017.

Joint EvalGender+ and EvalYouth workshop in Mexico 2017, held promoting collaboration between networks.

---

7 RFE (Réseau Francophone d’Évaluation); Africa; Middle East and North Africa; Latin America and Caribbean; and Eastern Europe Central Asia and South Caucasus; the latter two have been able to raise funding through UNFPA.

8 Argentina, Equator, Mexico, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Senegal, Zimbabwe and South Africa.

9 To ensure that a relationship is maintained with the mentors and mentees, EvalYouth will continue to send them updates of their activities.
**EVALSDGs**

We illustrate the influential reach of EVALSDGs through indicators that are not traditionally tracked. At the time of this stocktaking, EVALSDGs was only two-and-a-half years old and therefore it may be premature for many of its expected results to have materialised. However, from the following table, it seems clear that EVALSDGs has been very active, and in particular interacting with other partners on joint activities, including developing resources for sharing knowledge of evaluation and the SDGS; and using evaluation to orient the review and follow up process for the SDGs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Volunteer hours</th>
<th>Social media</th>
<th>Partnerships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EVALSDGs spokespeople indicate that:</td>
<td></td>
<td>15 collaborations with international organisations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−9,388 hours of voluntary work, over 2016-2017 the equivalent of 3 full-time staff.</td>
<td></td>
<td>5 new high-profile champions in evaluation supported the network.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Membership</th>
<th>Publications</th>
<th>External Visibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>195 members from 65 countries.</td>
<td>4 EVALSDGs Pop-Up Notes published. 16 Country spotlights. 12 other publications on SDGS.</td>
<td>10+ webinars and workshops held relating to evaluation &amp; SDGs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52 from the UN</td>
<td>9 Policy briefings, downloaded 16,139 times and thousands of copies printed and circulated.</td>
<td>Contributed to 2 UNEF side events for High Level Political Forums.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 from the private sector</td>
<td>“Evaluation a crucial ingredient for SDG success” was the most downloaded paper on IIED with over 4000 downloads.</td>
<td>Participated in 4 UNICEF-UNDP regional reviews of National Evaluation Systems &amp; Capacities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 from government</td>
<td></td>
<td>Members spoke at 8 conferences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 from academia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 from the donor community</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 from NGOs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~45 from national and regional VOPES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 from other organisations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong advocates for the use of evidence in Voluntary National Reviews and as a result, the Africa representative to the UN has asked for a pan-African meeting to support national evaluation capacities development for the region.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translate all their documents into Russian, French, Spanish and Arabic breaking down the language barrier and providing global access.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EvalGender+

EvalGender+ appears to have a clear sense of purpose, and it has been a strong advocate for other areas to take an equity focused and gender responsive approach to evaluation. We have heard examples of how EvalGender+ influence has led to increased emphasis on mainstreaming of gender considerations in other areas. Case study 6 below is an example of this at the regional level. The network has leveraged funding from UN Women and from funded grant programs.

In the table below, we illustrate the influential reach of EvalGender+ through indicators that are not traditionally tracked.

### Connections
- 3123 members on the Gender and Evaluation Community of Practice, which is a EvalGender+ platform.
- 37 international agencies have provided endorsements to EvalGender+.
- 2,801 followers
- 1,208 followers

### Fund raising
- USD 291,000 raised through UN Women.

### Local chapters
- EvalGender+ networks established in 20 Francophone countries and Mexico.
- EvalGender+ inspired creation of Gender and Evaluation Thematic Interest Group in Chile.

### Strengthening evaluation systems
**Guidelines and training package** for evaluating SDGs with a “No one Left Behind Lens” developed through a multi-stage participatory process.

**Technical assistance** provided at:
- 15 country workshops, with parliamentarians present for Kenya, Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe
- 2 regional workshops in MENA and Asia Pacific with parliamentarians present at both consultations.

### Training
Members of EvalGender+ are supporting the evaluation in the context of fragility, conflict and violence, by incorporating a component of Gender-based Analysis+ in the training offered to EP projects.

### Publications
- 3 EvalGender+ newsletters
- 7 articles
- 25+ Blogs

### External visibility
- Member spoke at 17 meetings in 8 countries.
- Travel bursaries provided to 9 conference participants, from 8 different countries.
EvalIndigenous

EvalIndigenous, compared to the other networks, still seems to be in the early stages of implementation. Following are some of its recent activities.

There are an estimated 370 million indigenous people in the world, living across 90 countries. EvalIndigenous is trying to reach indigenous evaluators and to bring awareness of indigenous issues.

EvalIndigenous conducted a member web-based survey which identified how the network can engage new members, as well as identifying current members’ affiliation and interests.

The network conducted a web-based survey which was completed by 28 VOPEs. The survey provided key information on the support EvalPartners can provide to VOPEs to increase the likelihood of Indigenous evaluators becoming members; and VOPEs requirements for working with Indigenous communities.

EvalIndigenous is undertaking the ‘Voices Project’ to document the voices of Indigenous practitioners, using video-recorded interviews. Videos in USA (complete), Columbia (underway) and Guatemala (planned), Ecuador (planned), and Canada (planned).

EvalIndigenous attended the Latin America regional conference held by ReLAC and International Development Evaluation Association, in Mexico December 2017. They raised the profile of indigenous research methodologies by participating in four panel discussions.

https://stories.undp.org/10-things-we-all-should-know-about-indigenous-people
2.3 EvalPartners Projects

Over the 2015-2017 period EP funded 19 P2P and 4 IC projects, of which 14 were funded by Finland. These projects collectively represent activities in approximately 50 countries. Annex 3 provides a list of the funded projects and the countries involved.

The EP Results Framework\(^\text{11}\) (see Annex 4) identifies the following key results from the 2016/2017 P2P grants:

1. The P2P project in Peru and Ecuador recruited 3 parliamentarians to join the Global Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation.
2. 5 projects attracted at least one key policy person to speak face-to-face with the VOPE about evaluation-informed policy making.
3. 2 projects disseminated at least one public statement about the value of evaluation.
4. 2 projects sent an official communication to at least one relevant government agency or civil society organisation about the value of evaluation.
5. 4 projects produced/updated mapping of the status of evaluation in the country.
6. All projects decided specific actions the VOPE will take to advance at least one aspect of the EvalAgenda 2020.
7. 8 projects showed evidence of improved capacity through new programs/ courses/ workshops/ training.
8. 5 projects shared knowledge of EvalPartners networks and designated at least one member to participate in a network.
9. 4 projects reported increasing membership especially among young and emerging evaluators from both sexes.

While we examined final reports for all projects, we found very few with any indication of outcomes (most of the reports focused on activities and on outputs). To better understand outcomes and accomplishments of the projects, we, in consultation with the EPMG Steering Committee for the stocktaking exercise, selected three P2P projects and one Innovation Challenge project, as case studies:

a) Albania, Romania and Kosovo (Case Study 4),
b) Uganda and Tanzania (Case Study 5),
c) ReLAC and REDWIM (Case Study 6),
d) Sri Lanka, and Nepal (Case Study 7).

Following are highlights of these case studies.

\(^{11}\) The results framework for the projects was developed by EvalPartners to better capture the outputs and thus outcomes of the P2P grants. The framework was provided in the request for proposals and in the reporting template, to ensure that from design through to reporting key outputs were being met. We found this provided projects with some guidance and can assist in reporting to funders for EvalPartners. Therefore, this does appear to represent a useful tool.
Case Study 4: Transnational cooperation towards the implementation of Global Evaluation Agenda 2016-2020

P2P project involving the following VOPEs: Albania, Romania And Kosovo (USD 13,500)

Overview
At the end of 2016, VOPEs in Albania, Romania and Kosovo received P2P support for a project focussed on taking forward the Global Evaluation Agenda 2020. The funding totalled USD 13,500.

Results
The project was able to bring about the following results:

The Kosovo government, through its Office of the Prime Minister, has endorsed the Global Evaluation Agenda 2020, and the Institute of Public Administration is now striving to develop capacities of civil servants in policy evaluations. This was a significant achievement for the VOPE which had been created just six months prior to the project start.

All three countries mapped the state of evaluation, focused particularly on an analysis of the current situation and evaluation capacity in each context. These documents were well received, and are now being used by government and civil society as a reference tool for enhancing their evaluation functions.

In Kosovo, the University of Pristina and the American University in Kosovo Training and Development Institutes are working on designing and launching university programs in evaluations. The project enabled the sharing of learnings from previous experience in developing university programs in Romania and Albania for use by the team in Kosovo.

In Albania, there has been engagement and follow up action on evaluation activities by municipalities and local government, this was absent prior to the start of the project.

All countries during the project actively advocated for the use of evaluation and facilitated members to join different EvalPartners networks. Notably, further to a one-day training session, eight new YEEs joined their country VOPEs.

Kosovo has formed valuable connections with the Western Balkan Evaluation Network and has increased dialogue with other VOPES, which spokespersons indicate aids in the effective use of resources through the sharing of ideas and learning.
Learning

It is noteworthy that the Romania and Albania VOPEs’ capacity to act as a mentor to another VOPE in the Region has been strengthened through previous EEP grants:

- **2012**: The Société Québécoise d’Évaluation de Programme (SQEP) supported the development of institutional capacity of the Albanian Society of Program Evaluation and individual capacity of its members, at a time when there was neither supply nor demand for evaluation in the country.
- **2013**: Albania partnered for a second time with SQEP that identified needs and led to the development and delivery of training to selected government municipalities on evaluation of public policy.
- **2014**: Romania developed an action plan with Macedonia to initiate the professionalisation of evaluation in Macedonia.
- **2015**: The VOPEs in Albania and Romania drafted a code of practice and decided on a professionalisation of evaluation in Albania through development of a curriculum for a Master Programme in Elbasan University of Economics, based upon transfer of expertise from the Romanian VOPE.

Case Study 5: Regional Integration of Capacities in Evaluation Project

P2P project involving the following VOPEs: Uganda Evaluation Association (UEA) and Tanzania Evaluation Association (TanEA) (USD 10,000)

**Overview**

The purpose of this Peer-to-Peer project was capacity building of the Tanzania Evaluation Association, via exchange visits and virtual meetings.

Uganda Evaluation Association supported TanEA through the P2P project in sharing their experiences so that TanEA did not need to re-invent the wheel. Given the existing good relations with the Kenya Evaluation Society, interaction with Tanzania seemed to represent a step towards strengthening the East Africa Region.

*Uganda is one of the three countries in Africa with a National Evaluation Policy. It also is actively engaged with the Prime Minister’s office, which has a Monitoring and Evaluation unit. In 2013, an earlier P2P project enabled a representative from Uganda to visit South Africa for a knowledge sharing session on strengthening governmental evaluation policies and systems.*

**Results**

The project was able to bring about the following results:

---

12 Three countries in Africa have National Evaluation Policies: Morocco, Kenya and Uganda.
Learning

• In the future it would be beneficial to plan a week-long visit with advanced notice to key decision making stakeholders, to better facilitate availability that could provide for increased interaction and hence better results.

• Representatives of TanEA suggested that it would be helpful if the EvalPartners representative could visit/conduct a meeting during the middle of the project, which could motivate volunteers and reinforce the relevance of their activities. The AfrEA conference where several officials were present would have been a means of doing this.
Case Study 6: Curriculum and best practices on transformative evaluation from a gender lens

P2P project involving the following VOPEs: Africa Gender and Development Evaluators Network (AGDEN), Community of Evaluators- South Asia (CoE-SA), Latin American and Caribbean Monitoring, Evaluation and Systematization Network (ReLAC) and Latin-American and Caribbean Network Women in Management (REDWIM) (USD 14,000)

Note: The project after its initial survey found that despite several advances, the principles of gender-based evaluation have failed to get established as routine standards for evaluating projects. Therefore, the P2P project developed a training module and not a curriculum as suggested by the project title.

Overview

The project had three milestones that evolved with the support of EvalPartners and EvalGender+:

• 1st milestone – REDWIM with CLEAR won an Innovation Challenge project whereby a competency profile for Gender Transformative Evaluation Approaches with cultural sensitivity was drafted.
• 2nd milestone – Regional representatives met at a High-Level EvalGender+ meeting in New York where they discussed a south-south regional project; consequently they responded to the request for proposals for P2P grants, and received funding for this case study.
• 3rd milestone – after the P2P was negotiated, EvalGender+ agreed to provide additional funding to consolidate and disseminate learning products.

There was a shared goal among three regional representatives, regarding how to effectively institutionalise Gender Transformative Evaluation (GTE) approaches with cultural sensitivity in the professionalisation of evaluation. Each region brought different strengths, perspectives and learning to this goal:

• **Latin America and Caribbean** had developed competencies required to conduct GTE with cultural sensitivity. They used the P2P project to test, validate, translate and circulate their work on technical and leadership competencies to other regions.
• **Africa** identified case studies in different African countries of good practice that were used to revise the existing AGDEN Training.
• **South Asia** brought a very strong GTE curriculum and GTE methodological aspects.

---

13 “Gender-transformative evaluations examine how far the program has contributed to changing power relations within institutions based on gender and other identities.” Renu & K. Murthy, Ranjani & Zaveri, Sonal. (2016). Gender transformative Evaluations: Principles and Frameworks. 16-37
Results
The project had the following accomplishments:

• Collaboration, exchange of experiences, and interest generated within and between regions, among activists, academia and policy makers were invaluable, for example as suggested by the overwhelming interest in participating in the follow up activities of the P2P project.

• The project assisted in bringing GTE Approaches onto the international agenda, especially for discussions pertaining to professionalisation of evaluation. Notably, the findings were presented at the UNEG evaluation week conference, in Rome, May 2018.

• The P2P project team has engaged with a Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation initiative to upgrade the “Made in Africa Evaluation: South-South Cooperation” into a broader project to “advance evaluation theory and practice for development, that embodies and emanates from realities of the global South”.

• As a condition to receiving EvalGender + funding, the project is working with two other networks, EvalYouth and EvalIndigenous, on its 3rd phase. This facilitated the project to start thinking of going beyond a gender lens and look at a generational approach with a youth focus.

Learning
• The project connected other P2P projects, for example for a workshop in Argentina where resources were optimised between the two projects (e.g. flight tickets). It was suggested that EvalPartners should encourage/facilitate communication and coordination across different P2P projects, especially regionally.
• Concerned VOPEs under P2P projects should connect with appropriate EvalPartners networks, to take advantage of sources of expert information. This will enable projects to achieve large objectives with few resources.
• At present funding for sharing findings from P2P grants is sought externally. EvalPartners should consider making funding available for presentations at conferences, to enhance validity, to share findings, and to aid in moving forward on the global evaluation agenda.
• In the Latin America region, there is a need to promote English learning among Young and Emerging Evaluators in order to enable them to participate in global exchanges.
Case Study 7: Strengthening National Monitoring and Evaluation Capacities for Peacebuilding and Reconciliation in Sri Lanka (IC)

Innovation Challenge project involving the following VOPEs: Sri Lanka Evaluation Association (SLEvA) and Community of Evaluator-Nepal (CoE-Nepal) (USD 10,575)

Overview
The Sri Lankan Evaluation Association (SLEvA) wanted to address a pressing need within their country when they heard of funds being made available through EvalPartners. In spite of already having a detailed problem analysis for the country, at the proposal stage they visited government officials to identify what they would like addressed most. They found that the outcomes of projects being run for peace building and reconciliation were not being observed in a credible way. This may surprise some given that this topic has been at the forefront of discussions for decades, but the Sri Lankan Evaluation Association was quick to realise that perhaps putting peace building and reconciliation efforts together with evaluation would be innovative.

The project provided training on monitoring and evaluation to the peacebuilding community. SLEvA strategically included 19 government staff from relevant line ministries, 26 actors from civil society, and 41 women and 19 youth implementors from community-based organisations. Feedback after the training showed that:
- **87%** of government and civil society actors indicated their commitment to continue to refine their implementation plans and ongoing activities.
- **65%** of women and youth indicated their commitment to use monitoring tools for their awareness programme.

Results
Stakeholders were able to identify the following results of the project:

1. The project initiated the development of a reconciliation scorecard to track and score progress made for reconciliation efforts, and it initiated discussions for the reconciliation barometer which is a public perception survey. The Ministry has identified SLEvA as a key stakeholder for taking forward the barometer and scorecard metrics with development partners.

2. The project brought together government and Civil Society Organisations actors working in peacebuilding in Sri Lanka for the first time. The dialogue facilitated an understanding between the two key stakeholders that previously had underlying tensions. In order to follow up and maintain dialogue, SLEvA initiated an email group with all interested parties to facilitate ongoing sharing. Moreover, a symposium on peacebuilding and reconciliation is planned for May 15th 2018, sponsored by the Ministry of National Integration and Reconciliation, SLEvA and Social Scientists Association.

3. In line with an EvalPartners requirement to involve a Young Emerging Evaluator in the project, a Tamil speaking YEE was selected from the diploma course in evaluation being run by SLEvA. He was provided with a special opportunity of how to put theory into practice by delivering the training in Tamil. Inspired by what he saw, he subsequently independently conducted an evaluation of a reconciliation project.
Learning

- If SLEvA were to receive additional funding and able to repeat the training for women and youth, this would enable them to provide training in the provinces rather than just in the Ministry to reduce the distance for travel. They would like to be able to provide a daily stipend for the loss of work and ensure that Tamil and Sinhalese speaking trainers were used.
- The ownership that SLEvA garnered from government, by listening to their needs and by actively involving them at an early stage were key ingredients for continuity of the project. This was evidenced when the Secretary of the Ministry, personally attended a three-day training session, and has mobilised funds from the Asian Development Bank.
- SLEvA chose Project Managers with strong networks in the government and with Development Partners, which helped increase the profile of the project and provide access to key stakeholders.
- The limited degree of involvement of the Community of Evaluators of Nepal is seen as a missed opportunity, as the engagement could have been enhanced beyond a visit to the workshop. This is something that SLEvA intend to rectify in the future by carefully thinking through the role of their project partners.

2.4 EvalPartners support to Individuals

EP’s primary focus has been at the global, network and project levels. This similarly is the focus of this stocktaking exercise. However, it is also worth noting that over the course of 2015 to 2017, EvalPartners also funded individual evaluators with the intent of increasing evaluation capacity.

- Ten YEEs were provided with financial support to enable them to attend the global forum in Kathmandu in 2015.
- Three individuals were sponsored to attend the European Evaluation Society meeting in 2016.
- Fifteen individuals were sponsored to attend the American Evaluation Association conference in 2017.

It was beyond the scope of this stocktaking exercise to follow up with individuals to identify what they have gained from the above participation and what they were able to do differently as a result. However, each participant was required: a) to actively share updates on social media regarding the conference, and b) to share new learning with their national or regional VOPE in the form of a presentation/training session.
The e-learning courses developed between 2012 and 2014 by EvalPartners also continued to see steady increase in participation over the period 2015-2017 as illustrated below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>E-learning Courses</th>
<th>Dec-14</th>
<th>Dec-15</th>
<th>Dec-16</th>
<th>Dec-17</th>
<th>Trend Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equity-Focused and Gender-Responsive Evaluations</td>
<td>2104</td>
<td>2976</td>
<td>3400</td>
<td>7364</td>
<td>71% increase in course participants between 2015-2017, with 12% pass rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Evaluation Capacity Development for Country-led M&amp;E Systems</td>
<td>1334</td>
<td>1873</td>
<td>2211</td>
<td>2658</td>
<td>50% increase in course participants between 2015-2017, with 29% pass rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emerging Practices in Development Evaluations</td>
<td>1465</td>
<td>2074</td>
<td>2410</td>
<td>2560</td>
<td>43% increase in course participants between 2015-2017, with 30% pass rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocating for Evaluation</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>461</td>
<td></td>
<td>33% increase in course participants between 2015-2017, with 34% pass rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Evaluating Humanitarian Action</td>
<td>2302</td>
<td>2806</td>
<td>3138</td>
<td></td>
<td>27% increase in course participants between 2015-2017, with 25% pass rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curso introductorio de evaluación para América Latina y el Caribe</td>
<td>1290</td>
<td>1890</td>
<td>2118</td>
<td>2192</td>
<td>41% increase in course participants between 2015-2017, with 22% pass rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>курс «Введение в оценку программ и проектов социальной направленности»</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>414</td>
<td>439</td>
<td>447</td>
<td>21% increase in course participants between 2015-2017, with 44% pass rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>دورة تعليمية باللغة العربية حول تقييم التنمية</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>453</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>57% increase in course participants between 2015-2017, with 23% pass rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customized Introductory Course on Development Evaluation</td>
<td>1175</td>
<td>1876</td>
<td>2163</td>
<td>2282</td>
<td>49% increase in course participants between 2015-2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Management Practices

3.1 Overall assessment

Overall, and taking into account the necessarily brief opportunity to undertake a full assessment, we have found that EvalPartners functioning and general structure seems excellent. This of course does not mean that improvement cannot be made. The structure and organisation of EvalPartners is evolving with its growth, which we view as a strength.

EP has now moved well beyond its initial start-up stage. For example, it has an organisational structure, a secretariat, and a coordinator. It has demonstrated sound financial management. EP has procedures for directly funding projects itself, including procedures for requesting and reviewing proposals, disbursing funds in accordance with progress, and receiving final reports, along with a results framework for its funded projects. The audit reports that we have reviewed are all clean.

Contrary to when EvalPartners was initially established, when its funding was channelled through UNICEF, funders are now able to provide funds directly to EvalPartners (via IOCE which functions as the EP secretariat). As we have noted, EP is still evolving, and at the time of preparing this report, it is considering a proposed new governance structure. But, again, we view changes as a sign of a healthy, responsive, and self-reflective organisation.

We note that EvalPartners is a voluntary organisation and what it and its members can be expected to do should be realistic and fair. Voluntary organisations, such as EvalPartners with minimal staffing, are different from large formal organisations with employees. This may make them seem less structured and more organic or “messy” in nature. This can present some challenges for example:

- Volunteers can come and go and what they are able to contribute can vary from one moment to the next, and unlike employees, there are no repercussions for non-performance.
- It can be challenging to expect volunteers to keep track of all the details of what they have done, in addition to actually completing activities.

But a fluid structure can also present many advantages, such as an ability to be flexible and as need be to respond very quickly to changing circumstances and opportunities, and also a high level of energy and commitment. Indeed, the EvalPartners partnership model has the potential to combine the best of voluntary organisations such as VOPEs (through IOCE) with contribution of formal organisations, such as UN agencies and governments.

3.2 EPMG self-assessment questionnaire

To better understand the functioning of the EPMG itself, we sent a self-assessment questionnaire on management practices to 30 members of the EPMG. 23 responses were provided (75% response rate) to 15 closed-ended questions and three optional open-ended questions. Questions covered the following general areas:

- Section 1: Planning and results orientation
- Section 2: Financial management and Accountability
- Section 3: Individual Members and Institutional Partnerships
- Section 4: Key strengths and areas for improvement

Annex 5 presents detailed results of the findings from this self-assessment which, except regarding partnerships as discussed in Section 4.2 below, did not identify any major problems. We note, however, that there was a high degree of variability and lack of consensus among EPMG members regarding most considerations explored in the questionnaire, although generally slanted towards the positive.

---

14 It is beyond the scope of this stocktaking exercise, and in any case premature, to review how well this governance structure is working, as well as related considerations (such as size/composition of the EPMG).
We are not sure about the reason for this variability, although we observe that the questionnaire was sent to all current members of the EPMG, including new members. It is possible that use by respondents of the mid-point category may reflect lack of knowledge or uncertainty among EPMG members. It was beyond the scope of the stocktaking exercise to explore reasons for this apparent mix of perspectives, which would have required follow up with individual EPMG members.

We do feel that the lack of consensus should be explored by the Executive Committee and by the EPMG itself, and as need be, in the planned 2019 evaluation. This might also explore the potential value of an introductory/refresher briefing for EPMG members, such as on topics explored in the questionnaire.

3.3 Comparisons to the EP 2014 evaluation

We mapped the strengths of EPMG found in the evaluation of 2014 to the strengths identified by the self-assessment used by this stocktaking exercise. We found that five strengths of EPMG have remained since its creation in 2012, including:

- Inclusiveness, equality and democracy
- Trust
- Meaningful participation which enables goal achievement
- Goal agreement
- Internal leadership

A weakness the 2014 evaluation had identified was lack of accommodation of linguistic diversity and funding for translation. We note that significant strides have been made to improve this, in particular among the networks and projects.

3.4 Other considerations

Taking into account the overall positive picture regarding EvalPartners functioning, we still can identify a few areas that might warrant some additional attention from the EPMG. The recommendations made below are seen as key as they were also suggested in the Evaluation of 2014.

- Shift from thinking about outputs/process asks to maximising efforts on achieving outcomes in line with the strategic goal of Agenda 2020.
- Improve the communication system across EPMG and between networks regarding both key decisions and activities.
- Clarify the role and responsibilities of EPMG and new members, which might be in the form of guidelines rather than rigid descriptions.
- Explore means, if possible, of reducing the workload of the Executive Committee.

We observe that in our contacts with EPMG members, we found limited awareness of the projects that EP has or is currently supporting, let alone what the projects have done or accomplished, or learnings and implications for EP and for the evaluation community more broadly. Nevertheless, almost 60% of EPMG members indicated on the self-assessment that they feel they have enough information about network activities and projects.
As EvalPartners grows we recommend attention is paid to knowledge management and learning. This could include the following:

- The networks nominate a volunteer to write a short periodic (quarterly) report identifying: a) recent/new activities b) outcomes of previous activities, and c) learnings.
- The EPMG identifying someone who can act as grant manager for the projects, who can conduct mid-term and end-of-project consultations, with the twin objectives of identifying the need for additional support and identifying learnings that might be of interest to others.
- It is our understanding that under the new governance structure there will be a designated knowledge management unit who can also assist the EPMG with promoting their activities at a global and individual level; and for the flagship programs.
- Information arising from sources such as the above can be presented in EvalPartners newsletters, to help increase awareness among EPMG members, other partners, and within the wider evaluation community.

### 3.5 Networks

Arguably the biggest change in EP’s structure has been the creation of the five networks at the Kathmandu forum in 2015. As we have discussed above, we consider networks a very effective organisational model for EP, and the work and accomplishments of the networks to date has been impressive. Nevertheless, some EPMG members have raised some questions about the networks, and in particular how they are coordinated. For example, some sample comments are:

"There is a potential risk that EvalPartners might lose relevance as networks grow and gain in visibility. This can be sorted out with a good plan."

"We need to be more coordinated across the network plans and this needs an actual coordinator function."

"There is a recent increase in tension between networks. [This] may be personalities but should not be allowed to flare."

We are impressed by the initiatives and energy of people engaged by the networks, again working on a volunteer basis, who have “gone for it.” We cannot recommend restricting or overly controlling the autonomy of the networks that appears to represent a key strength. True, as some have observed, there may be some danger of silos, but with increased opportunities for greater cross fertilisation and collaboration among the networks and with the EPMG. We observe that this seems to be starting to happen. To give but a couple of examples:

- EvalGender+ held a joint event with EvalYouth at the Mexico conference in 2017.
- EvalGender+ provided funding for a south-south project (Case Study 6) with a requirement that the project liaise with other networks in this case EvalYouth and EvalIndigenous.
- The GPFE has been liaising with VOPEs at the country level and with EVALSDGs regarding regional consultations.
4. Programming Strategy

4.1 SOAR analysis

Following is a SOAR\textsuperscript{15} chart, summarising some strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and possible results of EP. The items included in this chart are based upon what we have observed and heard during the course of the stocktaking exercise. We suggest that this chart be used as a starting point for developing or strengthening the programming strategy for 2018 onwards. Some items included here might be questioned; certainly, others could be added. But we feel that this can represent a useful tool to aid in EP strategic planning.

\begin{itemize}
  \item What is EvalPartners doing really well?
    EvalPartners accesses senior level people in evaluation who share their expertise, knowledge of the sector and needs of the evaluation community. This has meant that EvalPartners is at the forefront of emerging issues in the evaluation world e.g. by addressing needs of parliamentarians, youth, gender, SDGs and Indigenous people.
    EvalPartners has a strong profile, strategic intent and high degree of alignment between members and areas of focus.
    EvalPartners has mobilised and strengthened the parliamentarians movement in evaluation - a new typology of people.

  \item What are the best possible opportunities for EvalPartners?
    Clarify the best possible future relationship between EP and IOCE. IOCE needs to be recognised and nurtured. EvalPartners should have a clearer demarcation from IOCE activities and resources. The proposed new governance structure may address considerations such as this.
    Work on engaging with other potential partners in linking with academia, foundations, think tanks, the private sector and the impact investment community in addition to the UN, other multilateral organisations, OECD/DAC/Evaluation Network, national governments, and possibly with other sectors.

  \item What is EvalPartners preferred future?
    Short term: Re-engage with the UN to ensure that EvalPartners future draws on the collective partnership of VOPES, the UN and parliamentarians as envisaged at the time of its creation.
    Have a clear governance structure, management processes and steady stream of funding.
    Long term: Play an integral role in enabling evaluation to attain a higher profile, embedded evaluation in national systems, and embedding evaluative thinking across a range of processes.
    One suggestion by a key informant was that EP might launch 3 or 4 more networks, managing this growth in a coherent manner. These might include:
    \begin{itemize}
      \item EvalSustainability – looking at natural resources, climate change, etc.
      \item EvalCities – looking at how metropolises evaluate their contribution to SDGs.
      \item EvalHumanitarian – creating a formal partnership with ALNAP and create a recognised thematic approach for evaluating humanitarian work.
    \end{itemize}

  \item What does EvalPartners most want to be known for?
    EvalPartners wants to be the first point of entry into the (Eval)world.
    EvalPartners wants to be known as a credible advocacy movement raising awareness of evaluation and the value of evaluation in and beyond the sector.
    EvalPartners wants to be known for stimulating greater momentum promoting evaluation demand and capacity, engaging VOPES and evaluators, globally.
    The mutual benefits of formal institutions and governments working in partnership with representatives of civil society, bringing out the best of each sector.
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{15} SOAR (strengths, opportunities, aspirations, results) is similar to the perhaps more common SWOT chart. It is based upon appreciative inquiry thinking, and rather than potentially getting distracted with the inevitable weaknesses, it focuses instead on what is working well and on what else could be done to further strengthen outcomes, and how energy can be harnessed to bring these about.
4.2 EvalPartners partnerships: Its main strength – but also an area of vulnerability

“Partnership” represents a key part of the name “EvalPartners”, and as we have been told, is inherent in its DNA. EPMG members seem to agree about the importance of partnerships, for example:

“A key feature of EvalPartners from the beginning has been the focus on (a) alliances and partnerships between evaluation associations (VOPEs), while engaging with (b) national governments (including donor agencies) and with (c) multilateral organizations, notably key UN development agencies.”

When EP was originally formed, it consisted of a partnership between VOPEs (via IOCE) and the UN. While the UN continues to be seen as an essential partner, more recently there have also been partnerships at many different levels, for example:

- The EP website lists some 40 partners who support the movement, many of whom were identified, at least in principle, shortly after inception of EvalPartners. Bringing together this array of partners is an accomplishment in itself, along with benefits following from this, such as the UN General Assembly Resolution highlighting evaluation capacity building for the achievement of development results, that is unlikely to have come about without a show of support from so many different sectors.
- Parliamentarians now represent an important partner of EvalPartners. As we have already indicated, this represents a key accomplishment in its own right.
- As we have indicated, EP networks, in addition to the GPFE, also work extensively in partnership with many others, such as with International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) of the World Bank, MasterCard Foundation and UN Women. Some of the P2P and Innovation Challenge projects have also partnered with academia, UN agencies, national governments, and with other civil society organisations.

The situation with the UN, a key partner in EP together with IOCE, is somewhat complex. Until recently, the two EPMG co-chairs consisted of a representative from IOCE and one from the UN, more recently appointed by the UNEG. However, at present the UN co-chair position remains unfilled. Nevertheless, the UN system as a whole is still engaged in various ways with EP, for example:

- Four members of the current EPMG are staff persons within three different UN agencies who have taken on leadership roles within EvalGender+, EVALSDGs and GPFE.
- UNICEF continues to provide secretariat support to the GPFE and co-chairs EVALSDGs since its inception.
- UN Women has been working together with EvalGender+ and providing financial support.
- The IOCE President participated in the UNEG Evaluation week held in May 2018, as at previous UNEG meetings, which provided an opportunity for discussions with UNEG counterparts regarding their relationship with EP.
- An IOCE Vice President who sits on the EPMG was invited to take part in the UNEG “Becoming Fit to Evaluate in the SDG Era: Exchanges on Professionalization” Round Table Meeting in Rome in May 2018.
- UNFPA, in partnership with UN Volunteers and EvalYouth, initiated a United Nations Volunteer M&E Program with five other UN Agencies allowing for paid work at UN agencies with Young Emerging Evaluators.

---

16The newly appointed IOCE President, Adeline Sibanda, will become President of EvalPartners in January 2019, replacing its current President, Ziad Moussa.
An important finding of this stocktaking exercise is that EvalPartners needs to put more attention into strengthening its partnerships. Indeed, without this, the EP model might even be at risk. The EPMG management practices survey found that just a minority of members thought that there is clarity around what “partnership” with EvalPartners specifically entails (mean score of 2.7/5) or that all EvalPartners partners are sufficiently engaged with EP (mean score 2.8/5), although most agree that EvalPartners role both complements and fits with partner organizational priorities.

We see as an initial priority for EP to strengthen its relationship with the UN system. If UNEG is not currently in a position to reassume the EP co-chair role, we suggest that the EPMG identify someone else who could take on this role, perhaps on an interim basis, if at all possible someone within the UN system, although if need be, potentially this could be someone from a different sector. As suggested above, we acknowledge significant UN participation at the network level, but, in our view, insufficient participation at the EP strategic level.

Accordingly, we recommend that EPMG, and its Executive Committee, take a proactive approach to strengthening/reengaging partners, within the UN in particular but also with other sectors. We suggest that the Executive Committee appoint one person (this could be, but need not be, the President) to take the lead in this area. This does not mean that this person should do everything her/himself. Indeed, tasks, and in particular key contacts with current/potential partners, might be best distributed. EPMG members with appropriate contacts, including UN staff members currently working with EP, might be recruited to undertake outreach/follow-up. This should include EPMG members from UN agencies. As well, EP “friends” with appropriate connections (including perhaps previous EP leaders), might also be asked to help out. For example, we suggest that members of the UNEG Executive Committee be approached individually for their ideas about what a constructive relationship could look like. It would be helpful to articulate a strategy for strengthening partnerships, including identifying and prioritising contacts and identifying benefits to others that can come from partnering with EP in some way. In the absence of a UN co-chair, if this is done in consultation with current UN representatives to EP, current funding agencies and key stakeholders (parliamentarians, IIED etc) we believe this could provide important learning and generate new ideas.

We also suggest that the EPMG be proactive in engaging more extensively with other possible sectors. Those that have been suggested to us by key informants include: the charitable sector, bilateral donors, including the OECD/DAC Evaluation Network, CLEAR and IEG within the World Bank, other multilateral organisations, interested national governments, the impact investment community, the academic sector, and past/current/potential funders of EP.

In making the above recommendations, we take note of the following:

• The EPMG is currently revising its governance structure, which is intended to provide for greater involvement of partners. Thus, our recommendations may be seen as building upon this.

• There can be different meanings and degrees of partnerships. For example, partnership arrangements can be informal as well as formal (in the form of MOUs), ongoing or ad hoc, focused around discrete initiative or not, and encompass a variety of different roles. In our view, EP should be open to all forms of partnership.
5. Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

As this report has documented, EvalPartners, within its short lifespan, has achieved some impressive results, at different levels. To give but a few examples, it took a leadership role in mobilising support from many different sectors and from across the world in bringing about EvalYear 2015 and in helping to bring about the UN General Assembly Resolution in support of evaluation, the first time an entire year has been dedicated to a profession. This is something that only a movement such as EvalPartners, with a variety of partners, could bring about. Another noteworthy achievement is facilitation of the Global Parliamentarian’s Forum in Kathmandu, which has led to parliamentarians in many different countries seeing the value of evaluation, insisting upon national evaluation plans, use of evaluation, and even inclusion of evaluation in the constitution of at least two countries.

Arguably the biggest change in how EvalPartners operates is the creation of five networks, launched at the Global evaluation Forum in Kathmandu in 2015 during EvalYear. These networks are still in the early stages of operation, but all have engaged in a number of activities, engaging with other sectors and partners, and as the case studies suggest, starting to bring about some results as well. EvalPartners has funded a variety of Peer-to-Peer and Innovation Challenge projects. While documentation in general about project accomplishments is limited, at least in the documents that we were able to access, we explored four of these projects in somewhat more depth as case studies and as the report discusses, we were able to identify some impressive accomplishments.

From an organisational/management perspective, EvalPartners has now moved well beyond its initial start-up stage. For example, it has an organisational structure, a secretariat and coordinator. It has demonstrated sound financial management. The audit reports that we have reviewed are all clean. EvalPartners has procedures for directly funding projects itself, including procedures for requesting and reviewing proposals, disbursing funds in accordance with progress, and receiving final reports, along with a results framework for its funded projects. While EvalPartners structure has been evolving, we feel that this should be viewed as a strength of a responsive organisation.

We also observe that EP is a voluntary organisation, indeed largely composed of networks that themselves are voluntary in nature. This means that EP’s manner of operating will be inherently “messier” than that of formal institutions whose work is undertaken by paid staff. Nevertheless, this also brings major benefits, including many thousands of hours of unpaid work and considerable commitment and energy that comes from people who are engaged because of their interest. Voluntary organisations such as EvalPartners also perhaps can be more flexible and responsive to emerging needs and opportunities than may be possible for large formal institutions.

Despite a generally encouraging picture, this stocktaking exercise has also identified some areas where some attention might be warranted. We can see opportunity for a still somewhat greater focus on results, particularly at the network and project levels, where there still sometimes seems to be more focus on activities and outputs than on results expected to follow from these. For example, despite the request on the project final report form for information on outcomes, usually only activity or perhaps output information was provided.

One suggestion was that EvalPartners might be in contact with the projects at a mid-point, and perhaps arrange for webinar presentations at their conclusion. This could help serve to emphasise the importance of a results orientation, to help motivate volunteers – and at the same time, help EPMG members become more aware of what projects are accomplishing.

Finally, as we have discussed above, “partnerships” has been described as part of EP’s DNA, and it forms an integral part of its name. Partnerships can take on a variety of forms and degree of intensity and can be formal or
largely informal in nature. Many of EP’s accomplishments could only have come about through partnerships of different sectors and engagement of people from all parts of the world. Many of the networks are working with a variety of partners.

Nevertheless, we see opportunities for EvalPartners to (re)engage with potential partners, with priority to the UN, highlighting what partners can gain from being part of the EvalPartners movement in some way. Indeed, we feel that without more attention to future partnerships, the future of EP could well be fragile.

5.2 Recommendations

To the EPMG

• EvalPartners volunteers and partners should take time to celebrate EP’s many accomplishments since it was founded some five years ago, recognising what a group of dedicated volunteers can bring about. EP should give some reflection to how this energy and engagement can be sustained.

• As a matter of priority, the EPMG and its Executive Committee should be proactive in (re)engaging with current and potential new partners, with priority to the UN. The text in Section 4.2 provides more specific suggestions for how this might be approached. **We consider the need for such action the most important finding arising from this stocktaking exercise.**

• EvalPartners, while acknowledging its success in raising funds to support its current activities, should begin to explore future funding options so that its focus does not need to shift from implementation of activities when the current cycle of funding terminates.

• Consider ways of maximising the value of projects, for example:
  - Engage with projects at a mid-point, to provide encouragement and support to project volunteers and also to get a better understanding of expected progress.
  - Consider webinars showcasing accomplishments of projects, as well as to increase awareness among EPMG members about what projects are doing.
  - Explore ways of extracting, and sharing, key findings, themes, and learnings from projects. These should inform future requests for proposals for projects so that learnings about what has worked well, or not, can be taken into consideration in future projects.
  - Identify ways of enhancing the way project information is currently stored, tracked, and could be made more accessible, to facilitate easier access to information about projects.

• Given their encouraging start, keep an eye on the networks, sharing experiences and accomplishments as well as learnings that might be of value to others, and as need be how any necessary support could be provided, including increased links across networks.

• Explore reasons for an apparent lack of consensus or uncertainty among EPMG members on many of the items of the self-assessment questionnaire regarding management practices, and as need be take steps to build a better and shared understanding.

• Examine EP’s strategic vision, including the need for refinements, as well as ideas about moving beyond Agenda 2020.

For the planned 2019 evaluation

It is beyond the scope of this stocktaking exercise to do more than that to provide some ideas, such as the following, arising from our exercise, that the forthcoming EP evaluation might explore in more depth. Clearly, prior to commissioning this evaluation, EPMG will need to identify priorities for this evaluation, and to develop an appropriate terms of reference.

• Examine how effective EP has been in engaging and expanding its partnership arrangements, such as recommended in this stocktaking report.
• Take an in-depth look at the networks, in particular to identify outcomes and accomplishments arising from their activities and outputs, but potentially also considering the extent of coordination and cross fertilisation among the networks and with other partners, as well as consistency with EvalAgenda 2020 and EPMG's strategic priorities.
• Undertake a more in-depth study of outcomes arising from a broader range of projects than was possible in this stocktaking exercise, as well as identifying how EP engages and supports the projects it funds and how learnings from projects are shared and disseminated.
• Examine how well the EPMG revised governance structure has been implemented.
• Review progress towards the EvalAgenda 2020, as well as implications for future strategic directions.