

Evaluation
Practice
Exchange
2015



UNEG
United Nations Evaluation Group

2015 UNEG Evaluation Practice Exchange (EPE) Report on Process and Feedback

Introduction

This report details the process and lessons learned by the 2015 EPE Management Group in planning, organizing and facilitating the 2015 EPE which took place in New York in March 2015. Its purpose is to assist future EPE organizers by outlining the steps taken to prepare for the event and sharing some lessons learned.

This report is in two parts. The first part outlines the process in chronological order. The second part shares lessons learned which are informed by a) reflections of the organizers, b) results of an online survey that was distributed to all EPE participants, and c) feedback from participants that was solicited during the closing session. In the Annexes are copies of material that will be useful to future organizers, including the complete results of the survey which can be found in Annex 1.

Process of EPE 2015

An Executive Committee for Evaluation Week which was made up of several UNEG agencies based in New York and the UN Secretariat determined the AGM would run from March 9 – March 12 and that the EPE would run from the afternoon of March 11 – March 13, 2015. UNICEF volunteered to lead the event and later GEF agreed to co-chair.

1. Concept Note (September 2014)

The first step was preparing the concept note for the event (please see Annex 2). The concept note outlined:

- a) the purpose of the EPE: to i) facilitate learning and exchange of experiences amongst UNEG members, ii) improve the credibility and utility of UN evaluations and iii) contribute to the advancement of the evaluation function in the UN system.
- b) the governance of the EPE: UNICEF, which would take overall leadership and coordination, would be assisted by a Management Group responsible for determining the EPE's content, including its focus, themes and priorities, key deliverables as well as providing guidance on logistics, including communication, facilitation and organization.
- c) the approach to be taken: The 2015 EPE took “decentralized approach” to the planning and delivery of the EPE sessions. This meant that UNEG agencies would select topics for sessions they are most interested in and take the lead in planning and managing the sessions. The decentralized approach was adopted after it was identified as a best practice in the 2013 EPE.

2. Formation of the Management Group (October 2014)

The concept note was then shared with all UNEG Heads (please see Annex 3 for details) along with a request for volunteers to form part of the Management Group. The 2015 EPE

Management Group included members from agencies both inside and outside of New York. For a list agencies and individuals that formed the Management Group, please see Annex 4.

3. Identifying sessions themes (October –December 2014)

All UNEG agencies were invited to submit ideas for sessions they would either a) be willing to lead or b) thought would be interesting and relevant for UNEG members. The management group then assessed all session topics proposed against criteria to identify which topics would be most appropriate for UNEG. The criteria included:

- A topic has a strong sponsor/lead agency/cies
- A topic is popular or of wide interest
- An innovative way/approach of delivering the session e.g. poster/market place
- A topic is relevant to UNEG/UN and those of high relevance will be given priority
- Topics which could be mainstreamed within other broader topics

The topics were then ranked by the Management Group and a list of the top twelve session themes sent to all UNEG Heads. By December 2014 agencies were asked to confirm that **they were willing to lead the sessions they had expressed interest in.**

4. Support for Session Leaders (ongoing)

Each agency leading a session decided the format and content of the session and identified who would present and/or facilitate parts of the session. Session leaders were encouraged to use innovative approaches and create plenty of opportunities for participants to share experiences. A guidance note about preparing a session was circulated. Please see Annex 5. Session leaders were responsible for liaising with other agencies in developing the programme.

To ensure that the preparations were on track, the Management Group asked session leaders to

- i) Prepare a concept note about their session
- ii) Complete a session outline template (Annex 6)

The template (please see Annex XX) asked session leaders to list the objectives and delivery method of their session as well as the logistical details such as preferred room set up and equipment needed.

5. Preparing the Agenda (December 2014 – January 2015)

Based on the information received from session leaders the Management Group drafted the final agenda. The majority of sessions were run in parallel and were of varying lengths, running from 1 hour to 3 hours, depending on the session. This was then shared with UNEG Heads and later with all UNEG members. Please see the agenda in Annex 7.

6. Logistics (December 2014 – March 2015)

To support logistical planning, the EPE Management Group relied heavily on the UNEG Secretariat and on administrative and managerial support of UNICEF.

The Secretariat was responsible for

- *Maintaining the UNEG website* with details of the EPE. The agenda and all concept notes were shared on the UNEG website.
- *A logistic package* with information on airport, transportation, hotels, etc.
- *Video Recording*. Most EPE sessions were recorded and made available on the EPE website.
- *The registration process*

UNICEF administrative and managerial support was responsible for:

- Overall coordination
- *USB Keys*: All documentation related to the EPE including presentations and background reading was made available on USB keys which was distributed to all EPE participants.
- *Rooms*: UNICEF booked several sized rooms for the session with a large plenary room and easy access to an open space for coffee breaks.
- *Security*: UNICEF security was able to either prepare passes beforehand or on the morning of the EPE. New York based staff were asked to get their passes encoded in advance to help eliminate long lines during the security process and this worked really well.
- *Cocktail*: A cocktail reception courtesy of UNICEF was provided following the event as part of ensuring participants had enough time for networking.

7. Reporting (March & April 2015)

UNICEF staff sent an online survey the week following the EPE (please see Annex 1) which was used to inform this lessons learned paper. A second report is focused on the content of the sessions.

Lessons Learned

General Feedback

Overall the EPE was well rated participants through the survey: 79% of participants rated the organisation of the EPE Seminar positively and 84% of participants found opportunity for exchange of ideas good or very good. The feedback from the closing session was also generally positive. Participants found the event ‘relevant and effective’

Organization of Evaluation Week

The 2015 EPE differed from previous years in that it was held after the AGM and overlapped with it by two half days. Both the live feedback and the survey definitively concluded this arrangement should not be repeated. It meant that the EPE suffered from poor attendance for the first two days. Also, participants felt the discussions at the EPE should feed into the AGM, not the reverse.

Decentralized Approach

The decentralized approach for identifying and delivering topics meant that UNEG members were able to choose the topics that were of most interest to them. This meant UNEG members were more engaged in the event and it resulted in diverse and relevant topics. According to the survey 85% of participants rated relevance of topics positively. Delegating the content of the sessions to UNEG members reduced the burden on the Management Group.

Design of the Agenda

The majority of sessions were run in parallel to cover as many topics as possible. Only 37% of participants rated the opportunity to choose from parallel sessions 'good'. Nearly half of participants found it average, and a significant 21% rated it poorly. This is the only question on the survey which received responses as 'very poor'. Future EPEs might consider more a mix of parallel and plenary sessions.

The length of time varied for sessions, depending on the theme. The majority of sessions were 90 minutes in length although some were 1 hour and some 3 hours. This flexible approach was well received: 89% of participants rated time allocation positively.

World Café & Other Innovative Delivery Methods

The Management Group decided to dedicate one entire morning to a World Café format, in which several small discussions about various themes would run simultaneously. For more information about the World Café method please see Annex 8 for a concept note that was shared with all session leaders for the World Café. Overall, participants rated World Café sessions very highly. 97% found the usefulness and presentations good or very good, while 100% rated time allocated positively.

The Management Group emphasized innovative delivery methods to all session leaders. The EPE 2015 included several sessions delivered as 'talk shows' or 'press conferences'. Participants who shared their feedback at the closing session appreciated the innovative delivery methods.

Suggestions for future EPEs

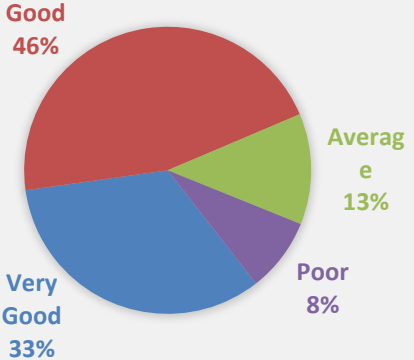
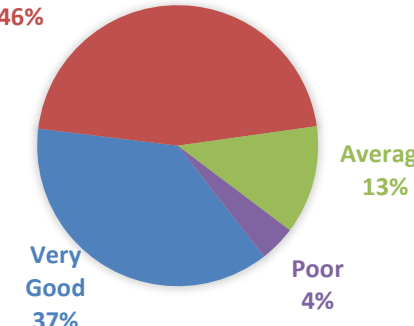
Survey takers were asked what could have been done better and to comment on ideas to share with future organizers. As outlined above the majority of respondents indicated the EPE should precede the AGM and there should be no overlap.

As part of the real-time feedback during the closing session, one participant suggested EPE should become a more regular practice, not just once a year. Another suggested that UNEG should consider regional EPEs.

Finally, it was suggested that the participation of government partners would be very useful 'to get their thoughts and perspectives' and future EPEs could consider including a professional training session.

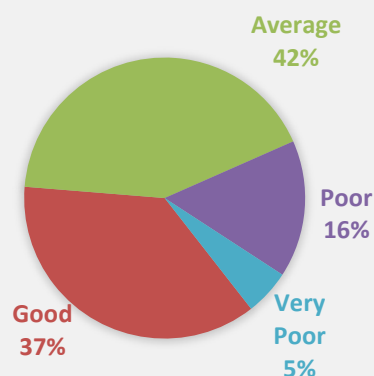
Annexes to accompany Report on Process and Lessons Learned

Annex 1. Survey Questions and Results

Finding	Survey Question and Results										
<p>79% of participants rated the organisation of the EPE Seminar positively.</p>	<p>How would you rate the organisation and running of the EPE with regard to overall organisation of the EPE Seminar?</p>  <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Rating</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Good</td> <td>46%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Very Good</td> <td>33%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Average</td> <td>13%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Poor</td> <td>8%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Rating	Percentage	Good	46%	Very Good	33%	Average	13%	Poor	8%
Rating	Percentage										
Good	46%										
Very Good	33%										
Average	13%										
Poor	8%										
<p>83% of participants found ease of registration good or very good.</p>	<p>How would you rate the organisation and running of the EPE with regard to ease of registration/prioritization?</p>  <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Rating</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Good</td> <td>46%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Very Good</td> <td>37%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Average</td> <td>13%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Poor</td> <td>4%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Rating	Percentage	Good	46%	Very Good	37%	Average	13%	Poor	4%
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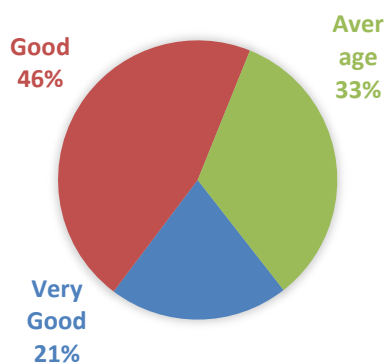
Only 37% of participants found the opportunity to choose from parallel sessions good. Nearly half of participants found it average, and a significant 21% rated it poorly. This is the only question that received a "Very Poor" response.

How would you rate the organisation and running of the EPE with regard to opportunity to attend and choose from parallel sessions?



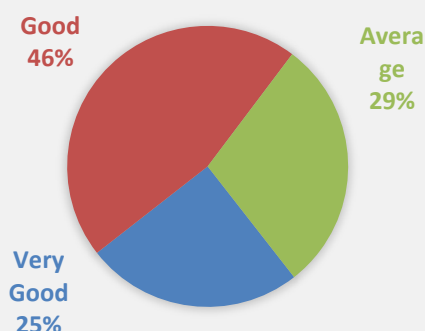
2/3 of participants rated availability of the program prior to the EPE positively, while the remaining 1/3 rated the usefulness average.

How would you rate the organisation and running of the EPE with regard to availability of the program prior to EPE?



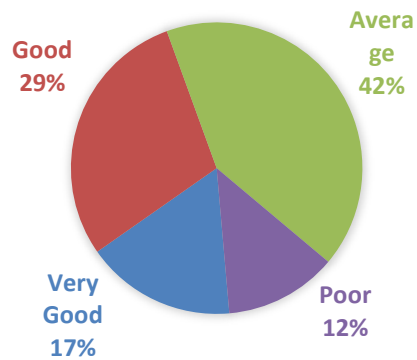
71% of participants rated provision of useful information positively.

How would you rate the organisation and running of the EPE with regard to provision of useful information?



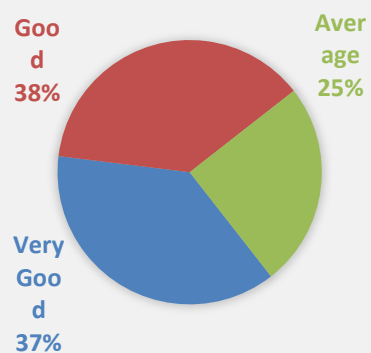
Less than half of participants rated venue positively, and a significant 12% rated it poorly.

How would you rate the organisation and running of the EPE with regard to venue (room, facilities, etc.)?



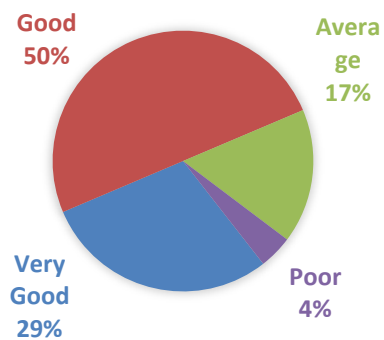
85% of participants rated relevance of topics positively.

How would you rate the organisation and running of the EPE with regard to relevance of thematic topics?



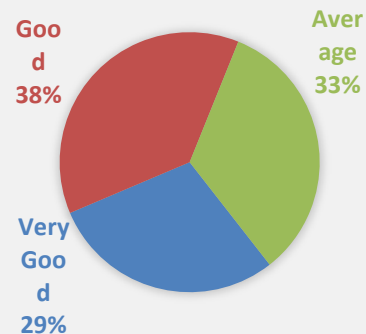
79% of participants rated time allocation positively.

How would you rate the organisation and running of the EPE with regard to time allocated to each session?



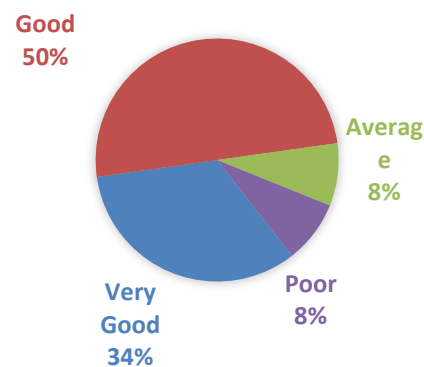
2/3 of participants rated choice of experts positively while the remaining 1/3 rated it average.

How would you rate the organisation and running of the EPE with regard to choice of evaluation speakers/experts?



84% of participants found opportunity for exchange of ideas good or very good.

How would you rate the organisation and running of the EPE with regard to opportunity for exchange of ideas with colleagues?



What more could have been done and/or what could have been done better?

- Some way of assessing possible interest ahead of time
- Be more innovative on the topics discussed. Plus avoid having AGM and EPE at the same time: it is important that Heads of Unit participate
- The overlap of AGM and EPE did not allow full participation and focus. It should not be repeated in future UNEG week.
- Better quality control of presentations by session chairs
- More communication with people submitting proposals for sessions from session organizers
- Less overlap of sessions; more presence of non UN evaluation experts and practitioners
- Less sessions running in parallel, more external speakers
- The main limitations were to do with the agenda which had to fit in with the AGM and the high level event.
- During the first two days of the EPE the presentations and high level meetings were running parallel. I guess - the people that are in leadership position have nothing to share or nothing to learn from the EPE. It also contributed to a smaller attendance to several of the interesting sessions. This should change.

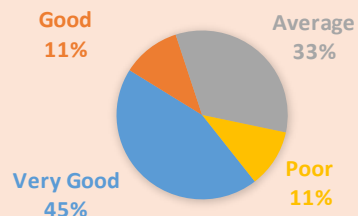
- Cater thematic topics relevant for smaller organisations with specialised mandates, including those that do not have a very direct link to development. The thematic topics should also have substance (discuss actual evaluations and their results and methods) and not focus only on process or policy (there were very few of the former). Have more informal sessions to enhance participation (e.g. World Cafe method) as it is frustrating that only a limited number of participants dominate in the conversations, others should have a chance too.
- Allowing field, government expert to present EPE

Do you have any other comments on the EPE that could be shared with the UNEG AGM, or considered in future planning? (duration, format, possible themes for next year, etc)

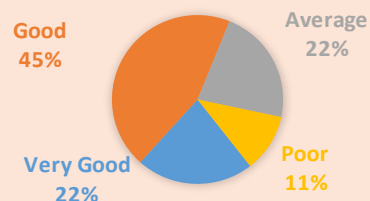
- Do not have parallel session - the attendance can be very minimal and a bit hit or miss
- Move the EPE to when it was before (before the AGM)
- Please revert to the regular approach of the EPE followed by the AGM
- More focus on what doesn't work ("failure fair" etc.)
- I would have it separate from AGM so that UNEG heads can participate in both events.
- Overlap with AGM business meeting was not a good idea
- The overlap between AGM and EPE is not a great thing. It prevented Heads from participating in the beginning of EPE.
- The EPE should have come first and been afforded a higher priority in the evaluation week agenda
- Nurture the socializing part so have a reception at the beginning, middle and end of the UNEG, including some social events even if its outside the "standard" e.g. actual marathon run, or sightseeing or boat cruise or whatever that will facilitate for members to actually get to know each other better (although the seniors know each other well and have exclusive working meetings outside UNEG sessions, those that are in their mid-careers do not). Increase more opportunities to have more fun throughout the week. Anyway, the organizers behind the scene were excellent and deserve a clap for a job well done, it was probably not easy for them to do this work and they have done it really well. A big thanks to them.
- Select few topics and allow enough time for discussions, and less parallel sessions.
- less themes and more time for discussion

Why innovation matters for sustainable development (WIPO, UNICEF)

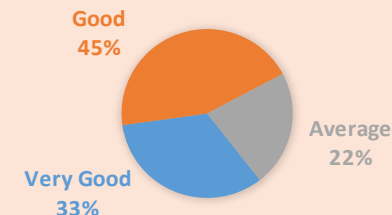
Overall relevance and usefulness of the session



Presentation and organization of the session



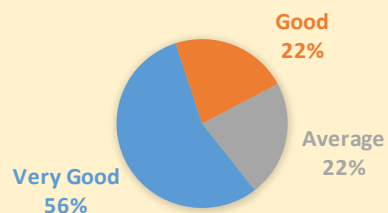
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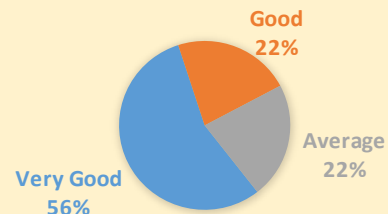
Just over half (56%) of participants rated the Why Innovation Matters session's usefulness positively, while slightly more (67%) found the presentation good or very good. 78% rated the time allocated positively.

UN-SWAP: Integrating gender equality and human rights in evaluation (UN Women)

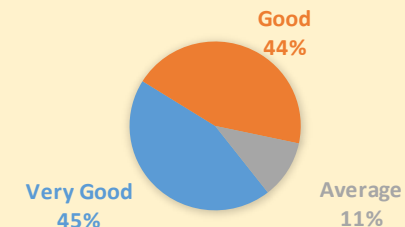
Overall relevance and usefulness of the session



Presentation and organization of the session



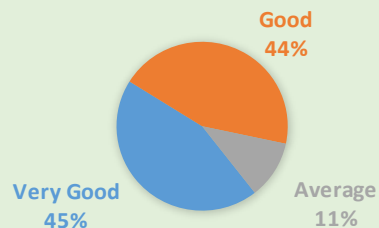
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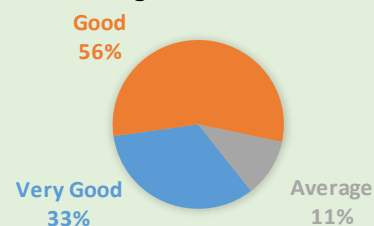
Over 2/3 of participants rated the UN-SWAP session's usefulness and presentation positively. 89% found the time allocated good or very good.

Performance Measurement in UN Organizations (GEF)

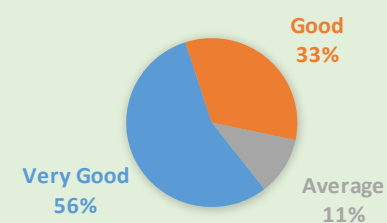
Overall relevance and usefulness of the session



Presentation and organization of the session



Time allocated to session



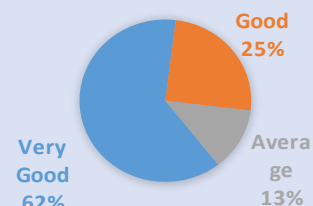
89% of participants rated the Performance Measurement session's usefulness, presentation, and time allocation good or very good.

Mixed Methods and Impact Evaluation in the Information Era (GEF, UNDP)

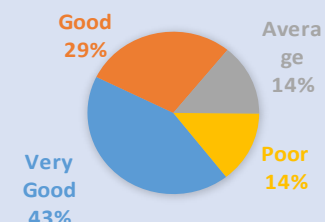
Overall relevance and usefulness of the session



Presentation and organization of the session



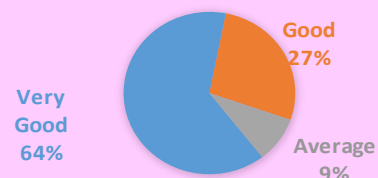
Time allocated to session



All participants rated the Mixed Methods session's usefulness as good or very good, and 87% rated the presentation positively. Much fewer participants (72%) found that the time allocated was good or very good, while 14% rated the time allocated average and 14% poor.

Innovations and Challenges in Designing and Managing Thematic Evaluations (UNCDF, UN Women & UNFPA)

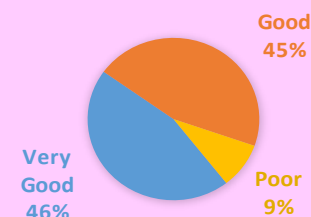
Overall relevance and usefulness of the session



Presentation and organization of the session



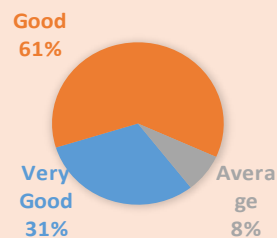
Time allocated to session



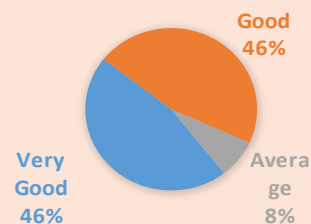
A perfect 100% of participants rated the presentation of Innovations and Challenges in Designing and Managing session as good and very good; while 91% of participants rated the usefulness and time allocation of this session positively, and only 9% found that time allocation is poor.

Communications and Knowledge Management (IFAD led)

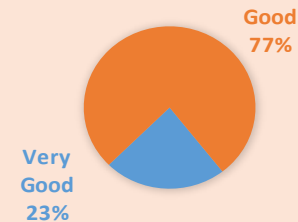
Overall relevance and usefulness of the session



Presentation and organization of the session



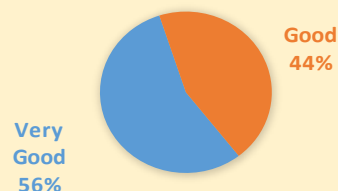
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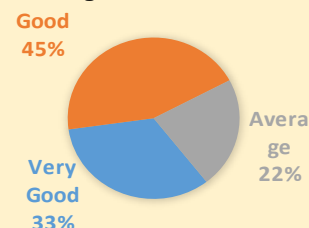
92% of participants rated the usefulness and presentation of the Communications and KM session positively, while all participants found the time allocated good or very good.

Strengthening Decentralized Functions (UNFPA, UN Women, WFP, UNDP & UNESCO)

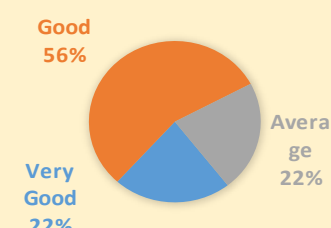
Overall relevance and usefulness of the session



Presentation and organization of the session



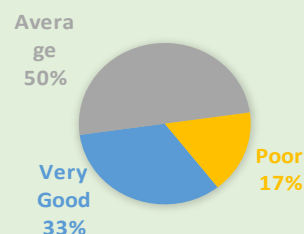
Time allocated to session



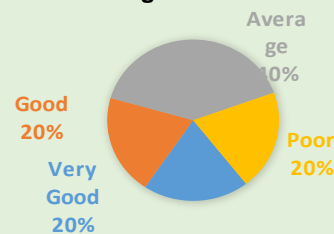
All participants found this session useful, and 78% of participants rated the Decentralized Function session's presentation and time allocated positively.

Common Challenges, Uncommon Solutions: evaluating peacebuilding interventions (PBSO)

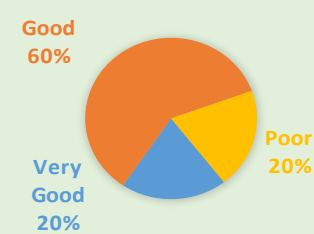
Overall relevance and usefulness of the session



Presentation and organization of the session



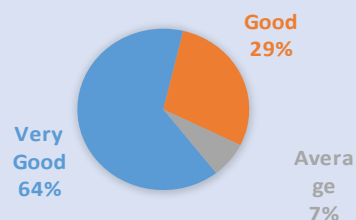
Time allocated to session



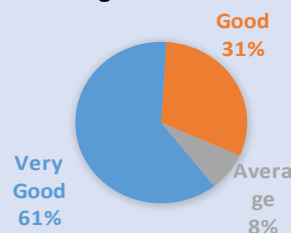
Half of participants found the Common Challenges session's usefulness average, and 17% found it poor. 40% of participants rated the presentation as good or very good, while an equal amount rated the presentation as average. 20% rated the presentation as poor. 80% of participants rated the time allocated positively, while the remaining 20% rated it poorly.

Evaluation in Humanitarian Settings - The 'new normal' for UN Evaluators? (WFP, ALNAP)

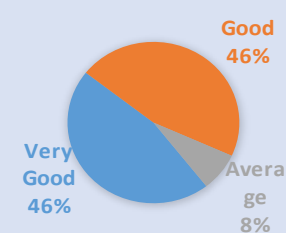
Overall relevance and usefulness of the session



Presentation and organization of the session



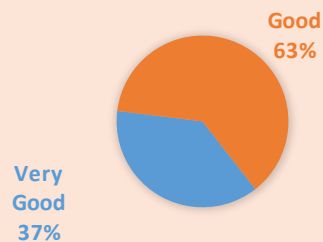
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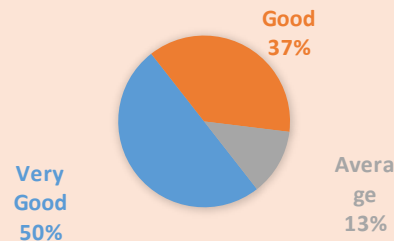
93% of participants rated the usefulness of the Humanitarian Settings session positively, and 92% rated the presentation and time allocated positively.

Professionalisation (ICAO, UNFPA)

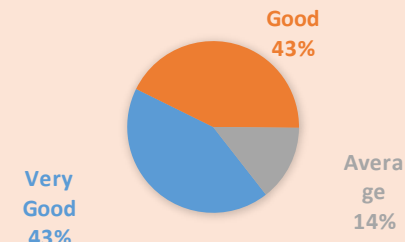
Overall relevance and usefulness of the session



Presentation and organization of the session



Time allocated to session



All participants rated the Professionalization session's usefulness good or very good, while about 86% rated the presentation and time allocated positively.

National Evaluation Capacity Development Support (UNDP, UN Women, UNIDO, UNICEF, GEF)

Overall relevance and usefulness of the session



Presentation and organization of the session



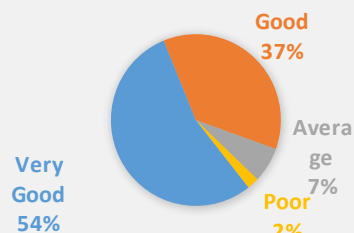
Time allocated to session



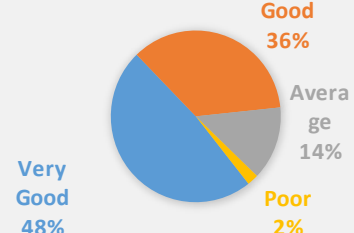
All participants rated the National Evaluation Capacity Development session's usefulness, presentation, and time allocated positively. 80% rated the usefulness and presentation very good.

Overall Thematic Sessions

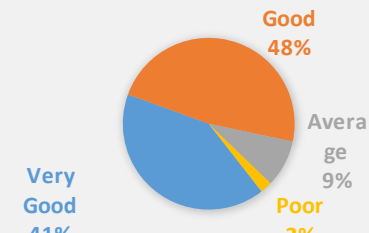
Overall relevance and usefulness of the session



Presentation and organization of the session



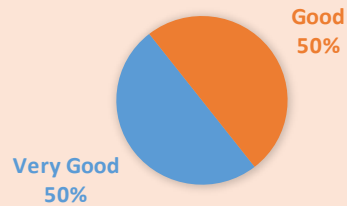
Time allocated to session



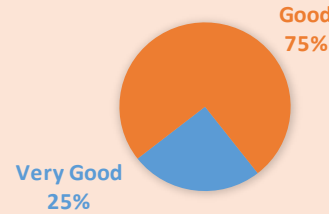
91% of participants rated the usefulness of thematic sessions positively, 84% rated presentations positively, and 89% rated time allocated positively. Only 2% of participants rated these three elements poorly.

Evaluating the MDG Achievement Fund: Measuring results and impact of UN joint programmes (MDG-F)

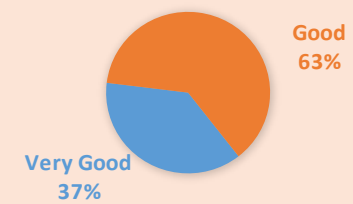
Overall relevance and usefulness of the session



Presentation and organization of the session



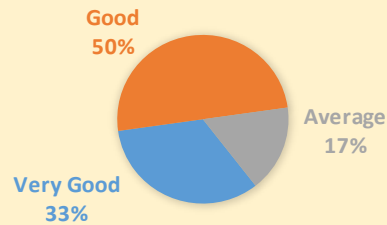
Time allocated to session



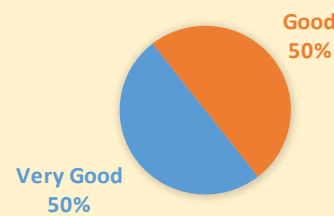
All participants found the MDG Achievement Fund session useful, well presented, and well timed.

Methodological aspects, challenges and opportunities for using an equity framework when conducting an evaluation (UNICEF)

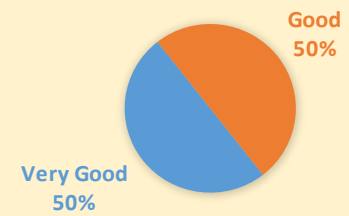
Overall relevance and usefulness of the session



Presentation and organization of the session



Time allocated to session



83% of participants found the Methodological aspects session useful, while 100% rated the presentation and time allocated positively.

Experiences using Outcome Harvesting and Most Significant Change (UNDP)

Overall relevance and usefulness of the session

Very Good
100%



Presentation and organization of the session

Very Good
100%



Time allocated to session

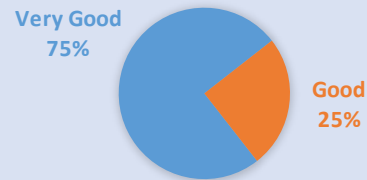
Very Good
100%



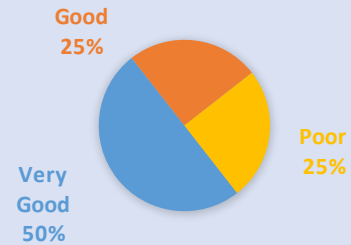
All participants rated the Outcome Harvesting and MSC session's usefulness, presentation, and time allocated very good!

Evaluating Standard Setting Work in the UN – a case of UNESCO – lessons learnt' (UNESCO)

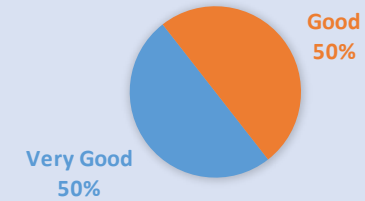
Overall relevance and usefulness of the session



Presentation and organization of the session



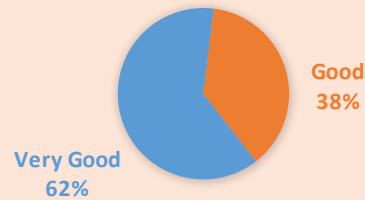
Time allocated to session



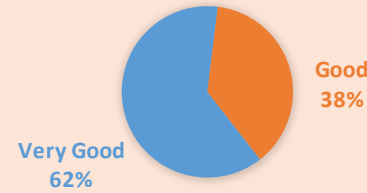
All participants rated the Evaluation Standard Setting session's usefulness and time allocated positively. 3/4 of participants rated the presentation good or very good.

Use of Evaluations (UNEG SO2 [UNRWA])

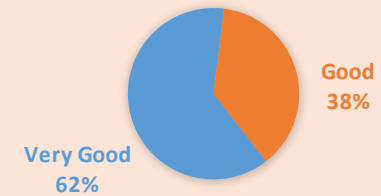
Overall relevance and usefulness of the session



Presentation and organization of the session



Time allocated to session



All participants rated the Use of Evaluations session's usefulness, presentation, and time allocated positively, with 2/3 rating the elements as very good.

Self-evaluation (UNCDF)

Overall relevance and usefulness of the session

Very Good
100%



Presentation and organization of the session



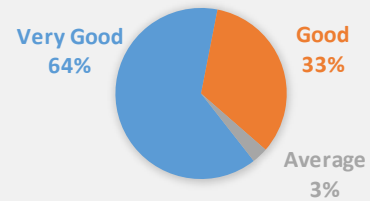
Time allocated to session



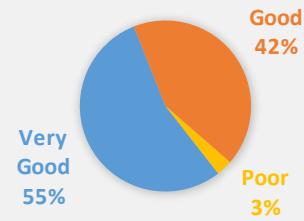
All participants found the Self-evaluation session very good in terms of usefulness. All participants rated this session's presentation and time allocated positively.

Overall World Café Sessions

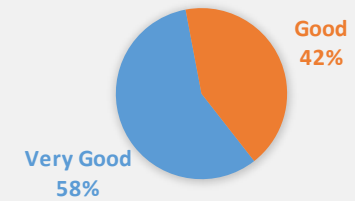
Overall relevance and usefulness of the session



Presentation and organization of the session



Time allocated to session



Overall, participants rated World Café sessions very highly. 97% found the usefulness and presentations good or very good, while 100% rated time allocated positively.

Annex 2. UNEG 2015 EPE Concept Note

2015 Evaluation Practice Exchange Concept Note

The United Nations Evaluation Group's Evaluation Practice Exchange (EPE) has taken place every year since 2007 alongside the group's Annual General Meeting. Previously a day and a half event, the 2015 EPE will take place over three days and run from March 11 to March 13, 2015. It will be held in New York and hosted by UNICEF at UNICEF House.

As 2015 is the Year of Evaluation, we aim to have an EPE event that takes opportunity of this, as well as an event that brings an element of flexibility, creativity and innovation to further enhance the learning and exchange of experiences among UNEG members.

Purpose

The EPE is an important opportunity for UNEG members to come together to share experience, knowledge and expertise related to evaluation approaches and methodologies. Its purpose is to a) facilitate learning and exchange of experiences amongst UNEG members, b) improve the credibility and utility of UN evaluations and c) contribute to the advancement of the evaluation function in the UN system.

Governance

As the 2015 EPE will be hosted by UNICEF, UNICEF staff will be responsible for overall leadership and coordination. They will be guided by the Management Group which will be composed of volunteers from other UNEG member agencies. The Management Group will be responsible for determining the EPE's content, including its focus, themes and priorities, key deliverables as well as providing guidance on logistics, including communication, facilitation and organization.

Approach

Based on best practice from previous years, the EPE will take a "decentralized approach" to the planning and delivery of the EPE sessions. This means that UNEG agencies will select topics for sessions they are most interested in and take the lead in planning and managing the sessions. This approach is intended to bring an element of flexibility, creativity, and different

organizational perspectives to the sessions, while reducing the administrative burden on the Management Group.

Innovation

This year the Management Group will try new strategies to host a more dynamic and inclusive EPE. This might include engaging a facilitator, using new techniques for managing sessions, inviting speakers from outside UNEG or webcasting the event. There will be opportunities to explore new approaches to evaluation such as using digital technology, data visualizations, infographics and new themes such as evaluation of innovation.

Annex 3. Letter to UNEG Heads

Dear colleagues,

At the recent meeting of the hosting committee for the UNEG Evaluation Week, to be held in New York in March next year, the UNEG Chair invited UNICEF to host the Evaluation Practice Exchange (EPE), now a well-established segment of the annual Evaluation Week. On behalf of UNICEF, I am pleased to accept this responsibility.

This message is to invite you or your nominee to join the Management Group to plan and manage the 2015 EPE. Please respond no later than Wednesday 1 October – kindly send all replies to Abigail Taylor Jones (ataylorjones@unicef.org) and Laura Olsen (lolsen@unicef.org).

Previous EPEs have taken place over 2 days or less. In 2015, it is proposed that the EPE will run for three days from March 11 to March 13, 2015. As you will recall, the EPE is intended to provide an opportunity to enhance learning and exchange of experiences amongst UNEG members. In 2015, the designated Year of Evaluation, the EPE should rise to the challenges of 2015 and feature creativity and innovation. Please find attached a brief concept note outlining the overall approach.

As a first step, we need to set up an inter-agency Management Group to lead the EPE preparations. The group will be responsible for determining the EPE's focus, priorities and key deliverables as well as practical matters including logistics, communication, scheduling and facilitation. As only a few months remain before the Evaluation Week, the EPE planning and preparations are likely to require fairly intensive liaison and prompt follow up action.

To streamline the preparations and maximize participation – and to lighten the burden on the Management Group! – we propose to follow a “decentralized approach” in which various agencies lead and coordinate sessions of their interest and choice, organized around several key themes. This was the approach adopted for the EPE in 2013, and it worked well.

I therefore write to invite you or your nominee to join the Management Group. If you or a colleague would like to join the Management Group, kindly inform Abigail Taylor Jones (ataylorjones@unicef.org) and Laura Olsen (lolsen@unicef.org) by 1 October.

At a later date, once the Management Group has been set up, we will be inviting contributions for themes and sessions.

We look forward to hearing from you!

With best regards

Colin

Colin Kirk
Director, Evaluation Office
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
3 United Nations Plaza, New York, New York 10017
Telephone: +1 917 265 4617
Mobile: +1 917 257 5559
Email: ckirk@unicef.org
Web: www.unicef.org/evaluation



Annex 4. Members of the 2015 EPE Management Group

Abigail Taylor Jones - UNICEF

Alexandra Chambel – UNFPA

Andrea Cook – UNFPA

Andrew Fyfe – UNCDF

Colin Kirk – UNICEF

Christa Lex – OIOS

Florencia Tateossian – UN Women

Juha Uitto- GEF

Julia Engelhardt – WIPO

Laura Olsen – UNICEF

Annex 5. EPE 2015 – Guidance note for session leaders

Session Content

It was agreed that in 2015 the EPE will take a decentralized approach to sessions. This means that once the session's theme has been selected, session leaders will have complete freedom to organize the session as they see fit. It is important to keep in mind the EPE sessions are not to replicate the AGM meaning they are not meant for reporting on UNEG's progress. Instead the EPE is a platform for sharing of experience, knowledge and expertise.

Session Methodology

The EPE Management Group encourages creative and innovative approaches to sessions. Group work and discussions are encouraged. For example, this might mean hosting a talk-show format or using a workshop style. If your session is taking the usual plenary format style, please remember to allocate enough time for discussion and sharing/exchange of ideas and information. We also ask that session leaders and presenters ensure there is time for feedback and a wrap up on each of their sessions.

The 'World Café' means several sessions will be running simultaneously and participants have the option to listen to all or some of the presentations.

External Speakers

Session leaders are encouraged to invite external presenters as part of their sessions, as the MG welcomes bringing in external expertise and experiences where appropriate, to ensure a broader exchange and learning process. Please note, however, that the EPE is not open to external participants. If you are having an external presenter/s as part of your session, please let the EPE MG know so they can be granted access to the building. All external visitors will need to present a photo ID on arrival.

Location

The EPE will take place in UNICEF House in Labouisse Hall located in the basement and Danny Kaye Centre located on the 1st floor, opposite the main lobby. The rooms will also be arranged in a format that will encourage learning, sharing and interaction in smaller groups amongst participants (in the form of a cabaret style). There may also be smaller rooms available for breakout sessions.

Supplies

You may need whiteboards, markers, paper, a projector and a microphone. Please consider what materials you will need to make your session run smoothly and indicate this on the session outline form.

Library

During the EPE there will be a designated space for material you wish to share with UNEG colleagues. If you have publications, brochures, posters or flyers that you would like to share with others, please bring these along with you or send them in advance to UNICEF House attn. Geeta Dey.

Reporting on your session

Please remember to appoint a rapporteur for your session to ensure you can report back on your session's discussion. We will also require a 2 to 3 page report of each session, which will feed into the final lessons learned report; the EPE MG has to present to the Secretariat.

Video Reporting

The EPE MG is considering using filming some parts of the sessions. Please let us know if you think video reporting could be useful to your session.

Questions

If you have any questions or need any clarification, please don't hesitate to contact Abigail Taylor Jones (ataylorjones@unicef.org) or Laura Olsen (lolsen@unicef.org).

Session Outlines & Concept Notes

We ask each session leader to complete a session outline using the template provided and return it to Abigail Taylor Jones (ataylorjones@unicef.org) or Laura Olsen (lolsen@unicef.org) by XXXX

Annex 6. EPE 2015 – Session Outline

We ask each session leader to complete the table below and return it to Abigail Taylor Jones (ataylorjones@unicef.org) or Laura Olsen (lolsen@unicef.org) by ***.

Session Name	
Session Leader(s)	
Description of Session Methodology	
Session Objectives	
Additional Room Required (y/n)	
Supplies Needed (if any)	
External Speakers' Names (in any) and Affiliations	

Annex 7 2015 UNEG EPE Programme

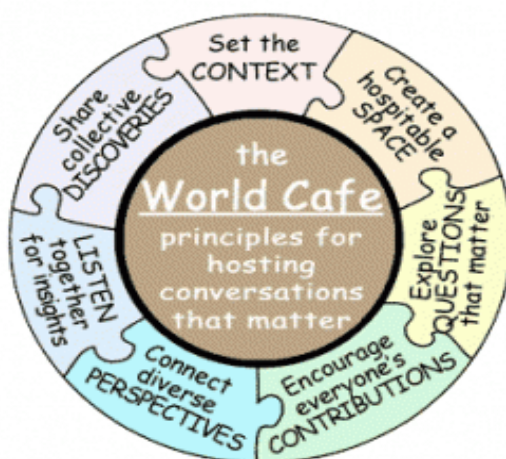
Date	Wednesday March 11								
Time	9am – 10.30am	10.30am – 11am	11am – 12.30pm	12.30 – 2pm	2pm – 3.30 pm		3.30pm – 4pm	4pm-5.30pm	After hours
Labouisse					Opening Remarks post-2015 & EvalYear (UNICEF & GEF) [30 mins]	Why innovation matters for sustainable development? (WIPO, UNICEF)	Coffee	Performance Measurement in UN Organizations (GEF)	Organizing Committee Self-paid dinner Location TBD
Danny Kaye						UN-SWAP: Integrating gender equality and human rights in evaluation (UN Women)		Mixed Methods and Impact Evaluation in the Information Era (GEF, UNDP)	
	Thursday March 12								
Labouisse	World Café 1. Evaluating the MDG Achievement Fund: Measuring results and impact of UN joint programmes (MDG-F) 2. Evaluating Standard Setting Work in the UN – a case of UNESCO – lessons learnt’ (UNESCO) 3. Methodological aspects, challenges and opportunities for using an equity framework when conducting an evaluation (UNICEF)	Coffee	World Café continued 1. Experiences using Outcome Harvesting and Most Significant Change (UNDP) 2. Use of Evaluations (UNRWA) 3. Self-evaluation (UNCDF)	Lunch	Innovations and Challenges in Designing and Managing Thematic Evaluations (UNCDF, UNFPA & UN Women)		Coffee	Communications and Knowledge Management (IFAD lead) (GEF & UNRWA support)	

Danny Kaye	Strengthening Decentralized Functions (UNFPA, UNESCO, UN Women, WFP, UNDP)		Strengthening Decentralized Functions (UNFPA, UNESCO, UN Women, UNDP, WFP)		Common Challenges, Uncommon Solutions: evaluating peacebuilding interventions (PBSO)			EPE Reception
Friday March 13								
Time	9am – 10.30am	10.30am – 11am	11am – 12.30pm	12.30 – 2pm	2pm – 3.30 pm	3.30pm – 4pm	4pm- 5.30pm	After hours
Labouisse	Evaluation in Humanitarian Settings - The 'new normal' for UN Evaluators? (WFP, ALNAP)	Coffee	Evaluation in Humanitarian Settings - The 'new normal' for UN Evaluators? continued (WFP, ALNAP)	Lunch	Feedback from AGM & Towards a post-2015 UNEG: What a UNEG "Fit for Purpose" Would Look Like (UNEG Chair & Incoming Chair)	Coffee	Panel on review of the EPE & Closing Remarks (30 minutes)	
15 th Floor Conference Room	Professionalization (ICAO & UNFPA)		National Evaluation Capacity Development Support (UNDP, UN Women, UNIDO, UNICEF)					

Annex 8. World Café Concept Note



2015 Evaluation Practice Exchange (EPE) World Café Concept Note



Brief Description – amended/adapted for the EPE

The World Café is a whole group interaction method focused on conversations. A Café Conversation is a creative process for leading collaborative dialogue, sharing knowledge and creating possibilities for action in groups of all sizes. The World Café methodology for hosting group dialogue emphasizes the power of simple conversation relevant to the themes/topics that will be presented. The environment is typically set up like a café, with People sitting around a table and holding a series of conversational rounds lasting from 20 to 45 minutes about one or more questions or topics. Table hosts welcome newcomers to their tables and share their stories, experiences or project results. The conversation continues, deepening as the round progresses. World café is used for sharing experiences, stories or project results in a relaxed, informal and creative atmosphere.

Methodology/format for the session

The World Café will be a platform for the EPE knowledge sharing exchange; for the sharing of experiences, stories or project results and the opportunity for participants to input, debate, raise questions and share their own experiences that will enhance our collective knowledge. When done properly, with the right balance of informality and structure, the World Café can be a very effective way of a workshop style event that produces rich and innovative output that can lead to action and change in our practice. The knowledge café leaders will lead their sessions in groups (set out in café-style format), with a space/format for displaying posters which would have been prepared in advance by the leaders of the topics for the world café session.

Each topic/theme:

1. Will have an area set up for each theme/topic, and the host of the topic will welcome participants as they arrive and will share the main ideas, themes, stories, experiences and/or project results. The host will also lead the table with some key questions relevant to the topic/theme they want some ideas/suggestions to answers to, encouraging participants to discuss, debate, share their own ideas, practices, successes, challenges, and ask questions in relation to the topic/theme. Or it could be discussing the challenges of a project/initiative, or the successes of a project/initiative, the lessons learned, what could have been done differently or what would be done differently, what worked and so on. It will be up to theme/topic session leaders to frame this for their specific topic.
2. Ideally the information would be delivered in the format of a poster, or other creative/innovative way such as infographics or storytelling, for example.
3. As participants move from topic/theme to another, the hosts are encouraged to welcome new participants, share as above, but also briefly share the main ideas coming from the previous conversations, and encourage new participants to link and connect ideas and build on each other's contributions, as well as the opportunity to ask their own set of questions. Note that participants will be moving from one theme to the next simultaneously, almost like a market fair/place. By providing opportunities for participants to move in several rounds of conversation, ideas, questions, and themes begin to link and connect.
4. After several rounds of conversation, initiate a period of sharing discoveries and insights in a whole group conversation. It is in these town meeting-style conversations that patterns can be identified, collective knowledge grows, and possibilities for action emerge. At the end of the conversations, a collective sharing of insights, learning will be shared to end the World Café session.

Tip and Lesson Learnt: think very carefully about your poster presentation, (with as much as creativity and innovation as possible), also think of how long you will present your topic, and the questions you will use to convene the cafe conversations. Like many interaction methods, the presentation/question is at the heart of the interaction. It has to be clear and it has to MATTER to the participants, because World Cafe is about "conversations that matter."

