



2017 UNEG Evaluation Practice Exchange (EPE)
Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world
Concept Note

Date: 15-19 May, 2017

EPE Committee: UN Women, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNFPA, IFAD, HABITAT, UNDP, UNODC, IAEA

Location: UNOV conference rooms, Vienna, Austria

Host agencies: Vienna-based evaluation offices, led by UNODC

Introduction

The 2017 Evaluation Week will take place in Vienna between 15th and 19th May, 2017. The event is organized with the support of the Vienna-based UNEG member organizations.¹

The Evaluation Week provides a unique forum for UNEG members to get together once a year, face-to-face, to share and exchange latest activities, best practices and lessons and knowledge in evaluation. It is also an important business platform, where the Group’s strategy and work plans are discussed with a view to setting the course for the upcoming year.

Table 1. Tentative schedule of events

	Monday 15 th	Tuesday 16 th	Wed 17 th	Thursday 18 th	Friday 19 th
Morning (AM)	EPE	EPE	AGM		
Afternoon (PM)	EPE	High-Level			

The outcomes of the EPE sessions are expected to inform the AGM and feed into the 2017 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF).

Main theme of 2017 Evaluation Week and EPE: “Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world”

The High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) is convened every year under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council. The HLPF serves as the central platform for following-up and reviewing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).² The main topic of the 2017 UNEG Evaluation Week is **“Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world,”** the same theme addressed by the fifth HLPF, which will take place in July 2017. The

¹ Currently, there are four UNEG member agencies based in Vienna (and no observers): IAEA, UNIDO, UNODC, and CTBTO.

² <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf>.

discussions at the UNEG Evaluation Week are expected to contribute to the HLPF, which is annually participated by UNEG member agencies.

As planned for the next HLPF, the 2017 Evaluation Practice Exchange will focus on the following seven SDGs:

- Goal 1 - End poverty in all its forms everywhere (No Poverty)
- Goal 2 - End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture (Zero Hunger)
- Goal 3 - Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages (Good Health and Well-Being)
- Goal 5 - Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls (Gender Equality);
- Goal 9 - Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure)
- Goal 14 - Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development (Life Below Water)
- Goal 17 Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development) (Partnerships for the Goals).

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.

Approach

This year's EPE main theme is **"Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world"**. It will focus on the evaluation of seven SDGs of the 2017 HLPF and will be structured under the three streams:

- No one left behind: evaluating vulnerable and marginalized groups;
- Evaluating transformational change;
- National evaluation capacity.

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, which are part of EPE Committee, will lead and organize different streams and select presentations proposed by other UNEG members. The proposed presentations and group work will have to make connection to **both: one or more of seven HLPF SDGs and the topic of the stream**. This approach is intended to bring an element of flexibility, creativity, and different organizational perspectives to the sessions.

The EPE aims to encourage learning between UNEG members through exchanges of their evaluation practice through presentations and working groups. To this end, the organizers would like to promote an emphasis on group work and discussions during the EPE sessions. Even for participants who are not submitting a presentation, please come prepared to share your organization's evaluation practice in the small group discussions!

Stream 1 No one left behind: The challenges/implications evaluating vulnerable and marginalized groups

Lead Agencies: UNFPA, UN Women

Leaving no one behind is a fundamental principle of the new Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) agenda. Not only are there specific goals on ‘ending poverty, in all its forms, everywhere’, and ‘reducing inequality’, but tackling marginalisation and responding to the needs of all vulnerable groups are central to the SDGs. The Declaration states that nobody’s ‘race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, disability or other status’ should bar them from achieving their potential and their fair share in progress (UN, 2015).

This session will focus on evaluations of programmes and policies that target vulnerable and marginalized groups. Generally speaking, vulnerable and marginalized groups (VMGs) are communities that experience a higher risk of poverty and social exclusion. VMGs may include, but are not limited to: women, children (adolescent girls in particular), indigenous people, ethnic minorities, internally displaced persons, migrant workers, sex workers, persons living with HIV, persons with disabilities, and elderly persons. Vulnerability will also be defined as the degree to which a population, individual or organization is unable to anticipate, cope with, resist and recover from the impacts conflict, crisis, disasters, emergencies.³

Key Objectives:

- To share experience and knowledge, among evaluation practitioners, of key approaches and methodologies used in evaluations targeting vulnerable or marginalized groups.
- To discuss the implications and challenges of involving VMGs in the design, conduct, and dissemination of evaluations.
- To explore opportunities and challenges in involving VMGs in evaluation in the context of current events related to crisis, conflict and migration (e.g. Syrian crisis).

Format: World Café format – panel discussion followed by small group discussions. Total duration 3 hours.

Stream 2 Evaluating transformational change

Lead Agencies: IFAD, UN Habitat, UNIDO

The 2013 agenda for sustainable development is all about transformative change. In its preamble the Outcome Document calls for bold and transformative steps which are urgently needed to shift the world onto a sustainable and resilient path, and it includes a number of goals that are of a transformative nature. Transformative approaches aim to overcome the root causes of inequality and discrimination through promoting sustainable and far-reaching change.

At the moment there seems to be a lack of clarity on what “transformative change” in the context of the SDGs means. Yet, it will be of critical importance for evaluation to have a clear understanding on what the key dimensions and parameters are that define this type of change, commonly presumed to be of a “profound and radical” nature, and how they can be measured in the context of evaluations. The main

³ Environmental health in emergencies and disasters: a practical guide. (WHO, 2002)

aim of this session is to contribute to greater clarity and understanding among UNEG members on what the emphasis on *transformation* implies for evaluations under the Agenda 2030 and exchange practical evaluation examples that address the issue of *transformative change*.

Key Objectives:

- To clarify the concept of “transformative change” through sharing relevant case studies from recent evaluations;
- To identify examples of transformative change processes and how they are captured in evaluations in the context of specific SDGs; and
- To discuss possible approaches, but also the limitations of evaluating them.

Format: Short presentations on evaluation case studies followed by thematic group discussions covering different SDGs. Total duration 3 hours.

Stream 3 National Evaluation Capacity

Lead Agencies: UNICEF, UNDP, UNODC

The Agenda 2030 calls upon the United Nations system and other multilateral institutions to actively support countries, especially developing countries, to establish an effective participatory, transparent and integrated follow up and review framework to be informed by country-led evaluations and disaggregated data. In December 2014, the United Nations General Assembly approved a stand-alone resolution on evaluation entitled: “Capacity building for the evaluation of development activities at country level”. [Resolution 69/237](#) invites United Nations entities “to support, upon request, efforts to further strengthen the capacity of Member States for evaluation in accordance with their national policies and priorities”.

Against this backdrop, national evaluation capacity development support (NECD); and enhanced decentralized country-level evaluations have increasingly become an important area for UNEG’s engagement. In this vein, the EPE is an opportunity to take stock on what agencies have done, achieved and learned with regards to NECD, as well as identify opportunities for collaboration and synergy in the coming year. The session also intends to generate a debate around NECD in the frame of the Agenda 2030 and the resolution 69/237 cited above. By the end of the session, it is expected that the audience would have agreed on suggestions to inform UNEG’s future directions in terms of NECD.

Key Objectives:

- Raise awareness on the importance of NECD in the frame of the 2030 Agenda and the UN Resolution for Evaluation Capacity Building at the Country Level.
- Take stock of what each agency has done and achieved in terms of national evaluation capacity development especially at the enabling environment and institutional levels.
- Exchange experiences and lessons on NECD;
- Agree on suggestions to inform UNEG’s future directions on NECD in the frame of the 2030 Agenda and identify action points for collaboration on activities in the coming year.

Format: Brief presentations or World Café (depending on the number of experiences to be presented), followed by NECD debate, and final plenary for conclusions and action points. Total duration 3 hours.

Organization of Streams

The three streams will be organized as 3 hour sessions that will have three key elements: 1) panel of presentations/ discussion, 2) group work; 3) feedback to the plenary (see detailed description of three streams enclosed). The UNEG members will submit their expression of interest to present to the leads of the stream (see the presentation submission form). The leads of different sessions will select the presentations and prepare the agenda of the stream. In the EPE, the presenters might be asked to facilitate the group work of the stream where they will be presenting.

Draft Timeline

Date	Milestone
Week of January 31, 2017	Agencies submit expression of interest to participate in streams
Week of February 14, 2017	Streams leads to submit draft agendas for panel/workshops
Week of March 7, 2017	Final master agenda to be shared with UNEG Executive Committee