Session 13:

Strengthening National Evaluation Systems to Support the SDGs: Experiences from Asia-Pacific

Strengthening National Evaluation Systems and Capacities for the SDGs in Asia-Pacific: Lessons from a joint UNDP and UNICEF initiative

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1. **UNICEF/UNDP joint initiative on country-led evaluation in Asia-Pacific**

2. **Cross-country findings on evaluation and the SDGs**

3. **Recommendations to strengthen systems and capacities for SDG progress**

4. **Next steps for the UNICEF/UNDP initiative**

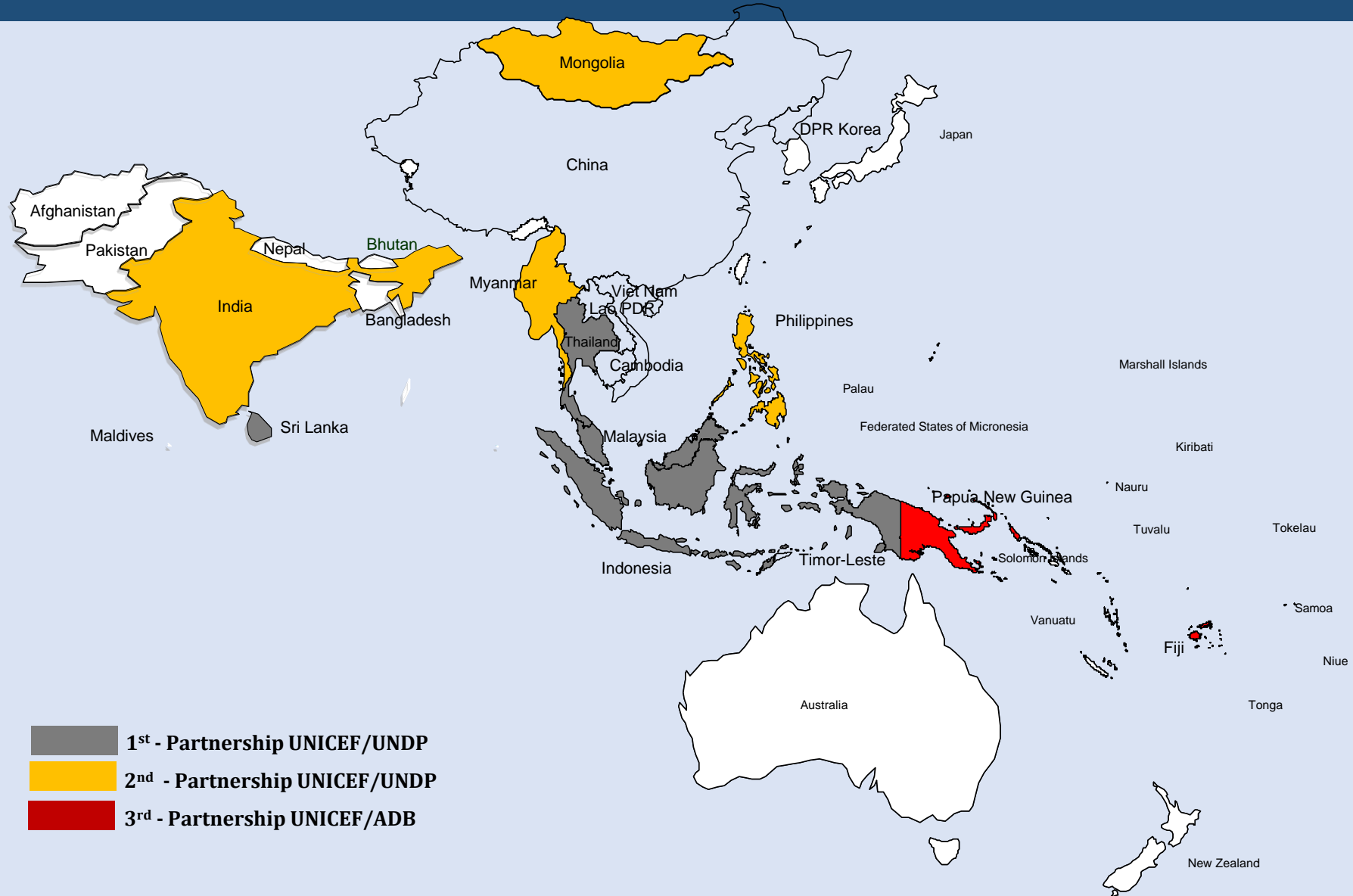# UNICEF/UNDP Asia-Pacific evaluation initiative

UNDP and UNICEF joint initiative since 2017 to strengthen the role of country-led evaluation to support the SDGs in Asia-Pacific.

➢ Maps NESs and capacities, alignment with 2030 Agenda principles, and linkages with national systems for SDG implementation.

➢ 7 case studies completed (Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam); 2 more underway (India and Myanmar) and others planned for 2020 (Fiji and PNG).

➢ Synthesis report that aggregates common themes and lessons from across the region.
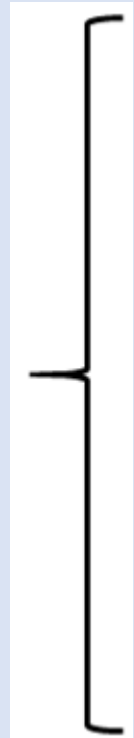
UNICEF/UNDP Asia-Pacific evaluation initiative: Purpose

➢ **To advance the use of country-led evaluation aligned with the principles of the 2030 Agenda.**
- Boost country ownership of evaluation.
- Enhance capacity for evidence-based policy making in the SDG era.

➢ **To help guide countries and actors within and outside the region.**
- Support governments to strengthen evaluation systems for the SDGs—including linkages with decision-making and resource allocation.
- Support DPs and civil society to identify opportunities for enhancing evaluation capacity for the SDGs.

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UNICEF/UNDP Asia-Pacific evaluation initiative: Conceptual framework

DIMENSIONS OF EVALUATION SYSTEMS

Enabling Environment

Institutional Capacity

Individual Capacity

➢ 2030 Agenda also emphasizes key principles
- Integration
- Inclusion
- Accountability
- Evidence

➢ Analyses NESs across these dimensions to see how they are adapting and to identify areas for strengthening.

Cross-country findings (1)

Enabling environment

1. Strong commitment to the 2030 Agenda and growing commitment to evaluation (in general and for the SDGs).

2. Citizen demand for participatory evaluation increasing but not always matched by government response.

3. Evaluative thinking and learning culture just emerging.

4. Dedicated financial resources for evaluation insufficient to support SDG needs.

5. Feedback loops to ensure the use of evaluation results to support the 2030 Agenda need strengthening.

Cross-country findings (2)

Institutional Capacity

1. Key NES institutional structures and mechanisms for the 2030 Agenda in place.

2. Harmonization and coordination of various NES efforts still limited.

3. Institutional capacity to produce high-quality, reliable, and disaggregated data for SDG evaluation important challenge.

4. Progress promoting equity-focused and gender-responsive (EFGR) practices and evaluations variable.

Individual Capacity

1. Capacity of personnel for evaluation for the SDGs uneven.

2. Opportunities for professional evaluation capacity development vary across and within countries (but increasing overall).

Annex: Selected country findings (1)

Indonesia	Malaysia	Mongolia	Philippines
Develop overarching policies to guide evaluation.	Operationalize the Malaysian Framework on Evaluation and Policy Standards (MyFEPS).	Clarify evaluation and other terminologies across government and among civil society and the public.	Develop national policy to evaluate the SDGs and endorse legislation for SDG evaluation system.
Strengthen feedback loops through tested and available social accountability tools.	Establish evaluative policy feedback loops for the SDGs through the SDGs Council.	Establish a national evaluation policy or law based on broad consultation among stakeholders.	Create the Evaluation Task Force to lead and coordinate SDG evaluation.
Develop short- to long-term capacity development plans.	Improve data sharing through a new knowledge platform.	Introduce EFGR evaluation in NES.	Formulate evaluation agenda and action plan for the SDGs; make evaluation part of the National Action Plan for SDG implementation.

Annex: Selected country findings (2)

Sri Lanka	Thailand	Vietnam
Develop and operationalize country-specific standards and guidelines for evaluation.	Facilitate wider stakeholder involvement in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and evaluation of progress.	Establish an overarching policy for development evaluation.
Introduce coordinated information management systems for communication flow, knowledge sharing, and accountability.	Establish an independent body under a senior, central government institution to ensure quality, coordination, and integration of findings.	Central agencies should take an oversight role and lead of NES.
Develop comprehensive strategy for evaluation capacity development at different levels.	Invest in developing professional evaluators by collaborating with higher education institutions, the Thai Evaluation Network, and international agencies.	Develop short- and long-term evaluation capacity development plans.

Moving forward:
Strengthening NESs to support the SDGs

1. Develop and implement overarching policies and guidelines for evaluation.

2. Strengthen alignment between principles and aspirations of the 2030 Agenda and role and practices of country-led evaluation.

Moving forward:
Strengthening NESs to support the SDGs

3. Improve horizontal and vertical harmonization and coordination of NES efforts.

4. Strengthen feedback loops to better promote use of evaluation findings to support SDG progress.

5. Strengthen institutional capacity to produce and share high-quality, complete, reliable, and disaggregated data to support evaluation for the 2030 Agenda.

6. Develop and implement tailored human resource development and training strategies that are equity-focused and gender-responsive.

7. Increase dedicated financial resources for evaluation to support SDGs evaluation needs.

UNICEF/UNDP joint initiative:
Next steps

➢ Policy brief with key cross-country lessons

➢ Regional synthesis report

➢ Additional case studies

➢ Explore partnerships for implementing recommendations

Thank you.