

7.2 | Session B2: Citizen engagement to strengthen National Evaluation Systems

Moderator

- ♦ **Juan Carlos Sanz**, Evaluator, Focelac+ Project, DEval

Panellists

- ♦ **Carolina Zúñiga Zamora**, Evaluation Unit, Ministry of National Planning and Economic Policy, Costa Rica
- ♦ **Mónica Ballescá**, Director General, Planning and Participatory Evaluation, Evalúa Jalisco, México
- ♦ **Luis Ángel Guamán**, Undersecretary of Evaluation, National Planning Secretariat, Ecuador
- ♦ **Nataly Salas**, Evaluator, Focelac+ Project, DEval
- ♦ **Xiaoling Zhang**, Associate Evaluation Specialist, IEO UNDP

How can the inclusion of stakeholders - including CSOs, academia and the private sector - contribute to the strengthening NES to build more robust and sustainable evaluation systems and approaches?



- ♦ **NES require the meaningful engagement of many different stakeholders.** It is important to identify which groups are part of the system, and clearly define every role. To promote engagement at national level, both political will and participatory decision-making processes are essential.
- ♦ **Without adequate funding, NES could fail.** Linking NES and ministries of planning and finance can help to bridge the funding gap.
- ♦ **National evaluation platforms provide a conducive space for interaction and the coordination of all involved actors.** Examples from Costa Rica and Ecuador highlight that engagement of civil society - both virtually and in-person - was critical to the success and ownership of evaluations.

- ♦ Strong NES should be **agile and able to adapt to emerging situations** such as COVID-19, which disrupted most NES. The engagement of civil society, academia, private sector and other key stakeholders can ensure flexibility, agility and broader usability of evaluation.
- ♦ **Integration of NES within national and subnational governance and digital transformation processes is critical.** E-governance promotes accountability and citizen inclusion, where citizens have access, but also entails the review of policies and procedures. When evaluating e-governance systems, NES need to take into consideration the digital divide and its impact on populations with access challenges.
- ♦ Some evaluation approaches, like **participatory evaluation, can achieve the commitment of stakeholders by sharing decisions related to the evaluation process.** Participatory evaluation requires adequate time and funding and must be well communicated. Digital governance can promote open government and facilitate citizen participation in the decision-making process.
- ♦ **Communicating evaluation findings is critical.** Having the evaluation report is half of the work, the other half is communicating the evaluation findings and recommendations and engaging decision-makers and political partners to ensure funding allocations and follow-up actions. Failure to communicate findings in a practical way can hinder the implementation of recommendations.



Conclusion

The meaningful engagement of citizens, civil society, academia, private sectors and national partners in the evaluation process, with clearly defined roles, including in decision-making, is critical for the usability and ownership of evaluations and strengthening NES. It ensures the required political buy-in and ownership, helps integrate and institutionalize NES in the national planning and budgeting processes and contributes to their sustainability. Embedding NES in national and subnational governance systems promotes accountability and citizen inclusion, where citizens not only have access, but also contribute to the review of policies and procedures. When evaluating e-governance systems, NES need to take into consideration the digital divide and its impact on populations with access challenges.

QUOTE



“National monitoring and evaluation systems should take into consideration the advancements and trends in e-governance and develop adequate approaches and processes to integrate them. Digitalized M&E systems - which are part of the e-governance architecture of a country - can facilitate the access, inclusion and participation of stakeholders in NES”.

— **Xiaoling Zhang**, Associate Evaluation Specialist, IEO UNDP

Watch the session



Video recording of the Session B2:

[NEC 2022 | Stream B2 - Participación ciudadana para fortalecer sistemas nacionales de evaluación - YouTube](#)

