7.4 | Session B4:
What can we learn from sectoral evaluation systems?

Moderator
- **Fabrizio Felloni**, Deputy Director, Independent Office of Evaluation, IFAD

Panellists
- **Orifjan Namozov**, Deputy Director for Strategic Planning, Programming and Analysis. The International Strategic Centre for Agrifood Development under the Ministry of Agriculture of Uzbekistan

- **Sanjeev Sridharan**, Country Lead, Learning Systems and Systems Evaluation, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

- **Anastasia Aladysheva**, Independent Evaluation Unit, Green Climate Fund

- **Alok Mishra**, Director General, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Department of Food and Public Distribution, Press Information Bureau, Government of India

- **Shabnum Sarfraz**, Senior Advisor Social Sector and Development. Planning Commission, Government of Pakistan

Certain sectors (health, education and agriculture) have advanced further in building evaluation systems than cross-sector systems. What can we learn from these approaches?

- **Evaluation at the sectoral level needs to look at systems, not interventions.** In the health sector, a single intervention will not improve maternal health. The agrifood sector is similarly complex, with agriculture, food security and nutrition, climate change, conservation and biodiversity, water, energy, global turmoil and global logistics all impacting on results. This means that evaluation in the sector is also very complex, with implications for the capacity needed. There is a need to move beyond project evaluations to broader thinking at systems level, to create more collaborative spaces, rather than working in isolation on single evaluations.

- **Which should come first, a National Evaluation System or a sectoral evaluation system?** One panellist argued that it is essential to have a National Evaluation System, within which

a sectoral system can be situated, whereas a participant suggested that National Evaluation Systems are not gaining a lot of traction and it may be useful to develop sectoral evaluation systems that test out modalities for useful evaluations that inform management and policy, and then spread that to the State level. Another panellist suggested that the relation need not run one way or the other, but that one should be opportunistic.

- **There is a need for systems within systems,** that promote understanding of the whole story, from community to sectoral to national levels. This means that we need not just National Evaluation Systems, but national planning systems that link these levels.

- **Data is a critical foundation for monitoring and for evaluations.** Panellists from India and Pakistan illustrated the need for solid data and data management systems to support sectoral as well as national planning and monitoring, and provide a foundation for evaluation. The importance of presenting data in user-friendly formats for decision-makers was highlighted, as was the need to build compelling cases for investment in social sectors.

Conclusion

Systems are key. Single interventions and single evaluations of those interventions will not bring about sectoral-level change, as every development problem is complex and systemic responses are required. National, subnational and sectoral planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation systems need to be interlinked, and capacity-development of these systems needs to happen at multiple and not just individual levels.

Quotes

"*I think we have to be opportunistic. If there are lessons to be learned from the sectoral system, just be greedy just plagiarize them, and do as much as you can. There are pockets of great work in the sectors, and these have implications for National Evaluation Systems of any kind. You are dealing with such a complex system; it is uncreative to only look at National Evaluation Systems to learn about a National Evaluation System. We should take any lessons we can from sectoral work.*"

— **Sanjeev Sridharan**, Country Lead, Learning Systems and Systems Evaluation, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

"Resilience I think is an important thing and I think building the credibility and building data use and your technocratic skills to make compelling cases so that it becomes binding for the decision-makers and they cannot ignore it and we must never underestimate the ability that we hold in order to do so"

— **Shabnum Sarfraz,** Senior Advisor Social Sector and Development. Planning Commission, Government of Pakistan

Watch the session

Video recording of the Session B4:
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