

## ABSTRACT SUBMISSION TEMPLATE

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Title of the abstract	Bridging the Gap: Inclusive Evaluation and Youth Engagement in Sustainable Development Evaluation System
Conference session	<input type="checkbox"/> Stream A. Responsive National Evaluation Systems <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stream B. Inclusive National Evaluation Systems <input type="checkbox"/> Stream C. Future Driven Systems and Approaches
Name(s), title(s) and institutional affiliation(s) of all other authors/contributors (if applicable)	<p>In addition to the affiliation with the Horizon Global Youth Development Programme, the following representatives support this NEC abstract:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cheng Wang - UNDP China</li> <li>• Haili Yuan - Imperial College London</li> <li>• Xiaomeng Kang - UNEP</li> </ul> <p>The two examples below involved over 20 students and early career professionals from diverse fields in affiliation with Horizon Programme.</p>
Preferred format:	<input type="checkbox"/> Formal presentation (maximum 10 minutes) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Participation in a panel discussion where the experience can be shared <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Participation in an interactive session where the example can be shared, without a formal presentation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____
I will need to apply for bursary support, if selected.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Language to be used for presentation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> French <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chinese

**Abstract Text (max. 500 words)**

Horizon Global Youth Development Programme is an initiative of the Institute for the Global Development of Tsinghua University, supported by the School of Social Sciences of Tsinghua University. As a leading youth organization in China, the programme engages students from diverse backgrounds to learn from experienced practitioners and tackle real-world development challenges, contributing to current and future global governance.

We are applying for the “Inclusive Evaluation System” stream of the NEC Conference to showcase our achievements and good practices in involving youth in subnational development related evaluations. Our work focuses on development zones, villages, and protected areas, connecting the next generation from academia and early career professionals to frontline development practice. This involvement embraces the SDGs in practice through field research and evaluations with local stakeholders, resulting in solid policy recommendations communicated directly to governors and policymakers.

Over the past six years, we have conducted more than 18 field missions with the participation of over 200 student/young researcher, firmly believing that our initiative bridges the gap for youth to become the next generation of development practitioners, innovators, and professional evaluators, thereby enhancing the inclusivity and responsiveness of the current and the future national evaluation systems.

One example is our research on the Xijiang Miao Nationality Village in Leishan County, Guizhou Province, a prominent tourist attraction renowned for its Miao ethnic culture, successful poverty alleviation, and sustainable tourism efforts. Our study analyzed the government's ticket bonus, stall lottery, and employment policies, assessing their impacts on villagers' incomes and those who have been left behind, and provided recommendations for improvements. Conversely, we place equal emphasis on lesser-known areas potentially impacted by major tourist attractions. We conducted other independent field missions to Miao villages within various protection zones (core, buffer, transition) of the Leigong Mountain National Reserve near Xijiang Village. The stark contrast between these villages' development models underscored their cultural assets for tourism while revealing conflicts between livelihoods and landscape preservation, including the construction of asphalt roads, land exploitation for agriculture, and associated deforestation. Through direct interviews with villagers, village chiefs, and government officials, our student researchers developed findings and innovative recommendations for county governors. For instance, we proposed creating specialized hiking trails to generate income for local villagers while minimizing environmental pressure, in collaboration with NGOs like the Shan Shui Conservation Center.

Another example of our extensive involvement of evaluation is with the "CREC International Eco-City" in Guiyang City, Guizhou Province, a significant investment by state-owned enterprises on lands severely affected by desertification. Our program engaged over 20 students in comprehensive desk research and a two-week field mission, focusing on six themes of research, innovation, and evaluation closely aligned with the SDGs. We approached our evaluation findings and recommendations with a creative mindset. In addition to comprehensive SDG assessments of the city's policy landscape and tourist market research surveys critical for the city's economy, we incorporated visual designs of postcards and communication business products to address the city's remoteness and lesser-known attractions as key follow-up actions.

Above are just two examples, and our evaluations offer recommendations and solutions not only from a policy perspective but also by leveraging and inspiring youth creativity to tackle real-life development challenges. We are excited to share and discuss with professionals at the NEC Conference of this innovative model of evaluation training, and we will continue to support our next generation of leaders and evaluators.