Evaluation Conclave 2020 – First Announcement

Making Evaluation Matter: Innovations and Partnerships

12-14 September, 2020; DHAKA, BANGLADESH

Innovations and partnerships in evaluations are critical to address the complex socio-environmental issues we all face. Also, the inter-connectedness and inter-dependence of the SDGs have challenged the evaluation community to move away from silo-like project evaluations to address how projects and programmes impact people, the environment and other sectors in planned and unexpected ways. To do so, we need evaluation approaches and methodologies that address such complex interactions. Although technocratic approaches to evaluation are important to bring rigour and evidence to the evaluation, the complex and diverse peoples and contexts we work in South Asia demands that we address not only ‘what works’ but also whether the project or programme has led to equitable social change. In one of the most populous regions of the world with various social cleavages such as caste, class, gender, ethnicity and others it is imperative to have innovative evaluation approaches that address this intersectionality and enable us to understand how various population groups are differently affected by programmes and projects. By doing so, we address the most vulnerable and assess who is left behind and why.

We also acknowledge that social change is political and needs to be locally led requiring, genuine participation and collaborative processes with diverse stakeholders to ensure sustainable and equitable solutions. We need to make our evaluations accessible and usable to make decisions. How do we do so with the populations we work with, decision-makers, civil society and diverse stakeholders? What evaluation approaches and methods are accessible, efficient and meaningful? What approaches do we need to democratize evaluation and ensure genuine participation of all stakeholders? What are our options for collaborative evaluation and what are the challenges in practice? What is the role of local wisdom in evaluation practice – local knowledge, philosophies and realities and how can it address people’s contextual and cultural realities? What lessons can we learn from both North-South and South-South collaborations and contribute to global evaluation theory and practice?

Gender and equity are cross-cutting themes across all evaluations especially in South Asia where the gender and equity gap is historical and must address cultural, social and gender norms. How can evaluations go beyond the mere disaggregation of data by gender and address social transformation across generations? How can we involve men and boys in the discourse for gender fairness and social justice? What are some of the approaches, methods and tools that have been particularly useful in the region and what have we learned from experience? How do gender-transformative or feminist approaches intertwine with other evaluation approaches and what are the challenges in using them? What capacities do evaluators need to be change agents and to use evidence for transformative decision-making across various stakeholders at household, community, market, state, and supra-state?

At the Evaluation Conclave 2020, we explore how evaluation theory and practice can address these challenges through innovation and collaborative processes. Innovation in evaluation could be new ways of bringing together existing tools and methods, or the use of new processes such as big data and social media or using techniques and tools adapted from other disciplines and sectors. We are
also interested in understanding how evaluators are interpreting their role – their competencies, values and ethics in doing evaluations. How can we make evaluation more transparent, credible and accountable to all stakeholders? We look forward to learning from evaluation practitioners, commissioners of evaluation, academicians and decision-makers about how innovation and collaborative processes have and can enhance the value of evaluation in promoting equity and social change.

**Evaluation Conclaves**

The Community of Evaluators, South Asia is a consortium of evaluators from South Asia working together to strengthen the field of evaluation. It is South Asia’s largest network of Evaluators, and a platform for Evaluators to interact and engage with one another. It provides opportunities for knowledge building and sharing, capacity development, networking, advocacy, and developing protocols and standards for evaluation in South Asia. Its flagship event is the biennial Evaluation Conclave, held in collaboration with national evaluation organisations and the Government agency mandated with evaluation functions. Conclaves are primarily aimed at capacity development of evaluators and learning and exchange of information for evaluation field building. The Evaluation Conclave 2020 will be the fifth Conclave; the first was held in India (2010), second (2013) and third (2015) in Nepal, and the fourth in Bhutan (2017). The Conclaves 2015 and 2017 attracted 327 and 234 participants, respectively, from around the world. Notably, these were opportunities for developing the capacity of national evaluators.

**Evaluation Conclave 2020**

The Evaluation Conclave, 2020 is scheduled to be held in Dhaka, Bangladesh, where the government is committed to uplift the socio-economic condition of people, particularly the vulnerable, leaving no one behind. Bangladesh is aspiring to be a developed country by 2041 and the development partners are shouldering to achieve this noble aim. Evaluation culture, in this context, is highly significant, in the Government, non-governmental and private sectors. Bangladesh has a vibrant Non-Government sectors and partnerships with international development community. Evaluation Conclave 2020 will provide unique opportunity for Bangladesh evaluators and policy makers, in particular young and emerging evaluators to participate, learn and share experiences with others from the region and from the evaluation community across the globe.

**When?**

The Community of Evaluators – South Asia (CoE-SA) is pleased to announce the 5th Evaluation Conclave (Conclave 2020) to be held at the Inter Continental Hotel, Dhaka, Bangladesh from 12-14 September, 2020 (both days inclusive). Conclave 2020 will be a collaborative Event of CoE – SA, the Ministry of Planning of the Government of Bangladesh, and the Bangladesh Evaluation Society.

**Themes/Strands**

Conclave 2020 will focus largely on innovations and partnerships with a view to demonstrate the importance of evaluations in development. Conclave 2020 will be a forum for government, civil society, donors, private sector, and the evaluation fora to deliberate on a number of fronts, such as:

- Use of context-specific innovative methods and tools in evaluations
• Fostering governance, accountability, credibility and transparency through evidence-based evaluations;
• Gender, equity and leaving no one behind
• Environmental sustainability and community participation
• Poverty reduction in changing scenarios
• Partnership and collaborations in evaluation

Conclave 2020 format

The Conclave 2020 will take the following format:

• **12 September, 2020**: Pre-Conclave skills development workshops;
• **13 and 14 September, 2020**: Conclave [Panels, keynote speeches, roundtables].

Sponsorship

The event offers sponsors and partners an opportunity to support the Conclave 2020 in a number of ways:

• Sponsoring a skills development workshop, including providing resource persons;
• Sponsoring a Panel discussion with speakers;
• Bursaries to support participation of emerging and/or professional evaluators who lack finances to attend the Conclave although able to contribute in training workshops and panel discussions (including airfare, accommodation and registration fees);
• Defraying the cost of participation of keynote speakers;
• General sponsorship towards the conduct of the Conclave

Further details

This is a preliminary notification, and further details will appear soon in the website <communityofevaluators.org>.

In the meantime, you are most welcome to contact Dr Ranjith Mahindapala, Executive Director, CoE SA by email <conclavecoe2015@gmail.com> for any enquiries.

Ver: 6 February 2020


**Community of Evaluators - South Asia (CoE-SA)**

The Community of Evaluators – South Asia is a consortium of evaluators from South Asia working together to strengthen the field of evaluation.

The member countries are: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka; however, membership is open to other nationals as well. Currently there are over 125 members in this network.

It is South Asia’s largest network of Evaluators, and a platform for Evaluators to interact and engage with one another. CoE –SA provides opportunities for knowledge sharing, capacity development, networking, advocacy, developing protocols and standards for evaluation in South Asia.

---

**Bangladesh Evaluation Society (BES)**

Bangladesh Evaluation Society is a national forum for evaluation practitioners, commissioners and policy makers and promoting the knowledge and practices of evaluation for evidence informed decision making in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh Evaluation Society members are working across the government, NGOs, private sector and international development organizations, sharing knowledge, networking with similar organizations and building capacity for evaluation in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh Evaluation Society is ready to host the 5th South Asian Evaluation Conclave 2020 in Dhaka and joins hands especially with CoE-SA, Ministry of Planning, Government of Bangladesh and network with the international evaluation community.

Email: <evaluationsocietybd@gmail.com>