

International Perspectives on Evaluation

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Editor's Introduction

Over the past year, the Board of Directors of the American Evaluation Association (AEA) has been discussing ways in which AEA can strengthen its relationships and build collaborative partnerships within the international evaluation community as well as increase AEA members' awareness of and capacity to engage issues that shape evaluation internationally. At its February 2013 meeting, the Board formalized these discussions by setting a priority for 2013–2014 on furtherance of the evaluation profession within the international arena. As a modest contribution to that effort, *American Journal of Evaluation* invited several evaluators with extensive experience in conducting and managing evaluations in settings outside of North America to comment briefly on an issue that each felt was of major importance to the global evaluation community.

Marco Segone is responsible for the Decentralized Evaluation Function as well as the National Evaluation Capacity Development portfolios at the United Nations Children's Fund Evaluation Office. He is a cochair of the United Nations Evaluation Group Taskforce on National Evaluation Capacities; former vice president of the International Organisation for Cooperation in Evaluation (IOCE) and currently a cochair of EvalPartners (see <http://mymande.org/evalpartners/the-international-evaluation-partnership-initiatives>).

Natalia Kosheleva is an evaluation consultant at Process Consulting Company, Moscow, Russia. She is a chairperson of the International Programme Evaluation Network that covers the region of newly independent states that once was the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. She is currently an IOCE president and cochair of EvalPartners.

Indran Naidoo is the director of the United Nations Development Programme Evaluation Office. He previously served as a Deputy-Director General, Monitoring and Evaluation, Office of the Public Service Commission, Pretoria, South Africa. He is a visiting faculty member at the International Program for Development Evaluation Training and a former board member of the International Development Evaluation Association and the South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association.

Fred Carden is the senior research governance specialist at RTI International and the lead technical advisor on the Knowledge Sector Initiative, a 15-year project funded by the Australian Agency for International Development to strengthen public policy research and research institutions in Indonesia. Prior to joining RTI International, he was the Director of Evaluation at the International Development Research Centre in Canada.

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Kate McKegg is an independent evaluation consultant based in New Zealand. Her company, The Knowledge Institute Ltd., is a member of a professional network—the Kinnect Group. She is a founding member and former convener for the Aotearoa New Zealand Evaluation Association (ANZEA) and a member of the ANZEA Evaluator Competency Working Group.

Zenda Ofir, an international development evaluation specialist, has worked in more than 40 countries in Africa and Asia for more than 30 major national, bilateral, and multilateral clients. She is a former president of the African Evaluation Association, former vice president of the IOCE, and former board member of AEA. She has served on multiple boards and committees, and regularly advises major national, regional, and multilateral organizations and programs on evaluation policy, strategy, and methodology.

Koichi Miyoshi is the president of the Institute for Community Design, a community capacity development organization, and a professor in the Graduate School of Asia Pacific Studies at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University in Japan. Dr. Miyoshi is the vice president of the Japan Evaluation Society and an editor in chief of the *Japanese Journal of Evaluation Studies*. He worked for the Japan International Cooperation Agency for more than 25 years. His research fields cover community capacity and rural development, policy and program evaluation, and international cooperation policy.

The concerns expressed in the commentaries that follow are broad and systemic; the tone of the commentaries is passionate and urgent. The responses are rich in suggestion and informed by the particular vantage point each respondent has in the international evaluation community. Not surprisingly, the relationship between evaluation and “development” figures prominently in every commentary, but in different ways—developing international evaluation capacity, developing the evaluation capacity of civil society, evaluation for development, and evaluation as potential means to develop and promote democratic principles.

EvalPartners: Facilitating the Development of a New Model of Voluntary Organization for Professional Evaluation to Support the Development of National Evaluation Capacities

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Abstract

In many less developed democracies Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs) face the challenges of low demand for evaluation and the resulting low economic capacity of national evaluation communities. The VOPE model that evolved in well-developed democracies is not

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