





5.1 | Plenary 1: In an era of complexity and uncertainty, can we do without national systems?

Moderator

• Dugan Fraser, Programme Manager, Global Evaluation Initiative

Panellists

- Viviana Casco Molinas, Minister Executive Secretary, Technical Secretariat of Planning for Social and Economic Development, Paraguay
- Susan Sulu, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of National Planning and Development Coordination, Solomon Islands
- Luc Joseph Okio, Minister Delegate to the Prime Minister, in charge of State Reform, Republic of the Congo
- Zoran Dimitrovski, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Local Self-government, North Macedonia

How do we ensure National Evaluation Systems play a central role in responding to the pandemic and getting the SDGs back on track?



- Inclusive and participatory approaches should be prioritized to build strong and resilient NES. A multi-stakeholder approach that gathers private sector, civil society and academia is key to ensure resilient monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems. This approach ensures the ownership and sustainability of evaluation processes and results.
- Supportive legal and regulatory frameworks that create demand for national M&E systems, adequate data and capacity of public institutions are critical to track the progress towards national development goals and inform policy design and implementation and evidence-based decision-making.
- There is a need to embed M&E culture within public institutions and local governments.
 Since the pandemic affected all sectors, the mobilization of resources changed, therefore all sectors should be able to evaluate and monitor the use of those resources.
- The crisis of the pandemic proved that it is important that M&E systems are relevant and
 appropriate to the context, which is a complex process that deals with systems, institutions
 and people. We need to be sensitive about how these systems are built.
- A common practice is to embed M&E into national development plans, linked to Agenda 2030. But having evaluation plans does not guarantee political support for evaluation; politicians need to have the political will and capacity to acknowledge the critical role of evaluation in addressing national development priorities.
- Lack of resources human and financial impedes the successful establishment of NES
 in developing countries. There is a need to strengthen both human and technical capacity
 in all levels of public institutions.
- Demonstrating the added value of evaluation for informed, evidence-based policy- and decision-making and learning can help to mitigate political resistance to reforms and implementing M&E systems.
- National Evaluation Systems need to be appropriate and culturally-sensitive. They
 need to intersect with subnational and local systems, and respond to local context and
 country priorities.

Conclusion

To be resilient, national M&E systems need to be context-specific, culturally-sensitive and institutionalized within public institutions and national planning and budgeting processes. Establishing strong NES can take a long time, and needs continued and sustained efforts from governments, partners and all stakeholders.

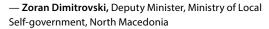
Quotes



"The biggest realization is that setting up a National Evaluation System is a complex and multidimensional process. We are dealing with systems, institutions and people. We need to be sensitive about how we approach building a country-wide system. There is a need to take a collaborative approach, and this can often take time and resources, but in the end, it helps to build ownership and ensures sustainability".

— **Susan Sulu,** Permanent Secretary, Ministry of National Planning and Development Coordination, Solomon Islands.

"You can make state-of-the-art systems and institutions that will address the issue of evaluation... but at the end it would be nothing if you don't have a political will to implement the evaluation practices and obeying the evaluation policy for better policies for citizens".







"There is a lot to learn, especially from others. I hope this will contribute to our understanding to improve the evaluation systems in my country."

— **Luc Joseph Okio**, Minister Delegate to the Prime Minister, in charge of State Reform, Republic of the Congo.

"As we look back at the pandemic, we need to ask ourselves, was the M&E system in the country resilient enough and bounced-back to respond to the changing context? Did people immediately turn back to the National Evaluation Systems for evidence that would inform decision-making?"

— Dugan Fraser, Programme Manager, Global Evaluation Initiative



Watch the session



Video recording of the Plenary 1:

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