

6.3 | Session A3: National evaluation policies

Moderator

- ♦ **Megha Pradhan**, Director, Centre for Learning on Evaluation and Results (CLEAR South Asia)

Panellists

- ♦ **Aldwin Urbina**, Officer-in-Charge Director, National Economic and Development Authority - Monitoring and Evaluation Staff, Philippines
- ♦ **Esteban Tapella**, PETAS Programme Director, Universidad Nacional de San Juan, Argentina
- ♦ **Taona Chaparadza**, Chief Director Monitoring and Evaluation, Zimbabwe
- ♦ **N'Dia Youssouf**, Director of Control, Monitoring and Evaluation, Ministry of Planning and Development, Ivory Coast



Building robust evaluation policies for National Evaluation Systems: What hurdles lie ahead, and what battles need to be fought?

- ♦ **There is no single path to a national evaluation policy.** National evaluation policies are increasingly seen as a key ingredient to development strong National Evaluation Systems. However, there is no single pathway. A national evaluation policy can provide the framework for the development of other necessary elements of an effective NES. Or, a NES may be built incrementally, leading towards a policy. Engaging multiple actors – for example, the centre of government, parliament, supreme audit institutions, ministries of good governance or the equivalent, – helps lead to consensus on the content of the policy, as well as building an understanding of the role and benefits of evaluation, which facilitates policy implementation.
- ♦ **National evaluation policies can help institutionalize evaluation and its use.** A national evaluation policy can help govern the practice of evaluation by providing clear guiding principles and evaluation standards, setting forth evaluation criteria, defining evaluation competencies, mandating the creation of (monitoring and) evaluation units and functions, defining provisions for financing evaluation, and promoting the dissemination and use of evaluations.

- ♦ **Factors that support implementation of national evaluation policies include financial resources**, political will and development partner support to build the necessary individual and institutional capacities to commission, conduct and use evaluations. Even in the absence of an evaluation policy, legal frameworks – such as laws on public access to information - can support evaluation.
- ♦ **Challenges that remain include a weak culture of evaluation**, political polarization where there is heightened fear of exposing weaknesses to the opposition, fragmentation or lack of coordination between functions within the policy cycle, lack of financial resources, insufficient data, and insufficient capacity for evaluation within the public sector and civil society, and staff turnover.

Conclusion

National evaluation policies are important to provide an overall framework and direction for NES, but alone are not sufficient to institutionalize the commissioning, dissemination and use of evaluations. Fostering a culture of evaluation, financing for evaluations and building capacity to commission, conduct and use evaluations are fundamental components of a national evaluation policy.

Quote



“If an evaluation system is rigid and mechanistic, it will be pushed aside by arising changes in socioeconomic forces.”

— **Taona Chaparadza**, Chief Director Monitoring and Evaluation, Zimbabwe

Watch the session



Video recording of the Session A3:
[NEC 2022 | Stream A3 - National Evaluation Policies - YouTube](#)

