

8.3 | Session C3: Environmental sustainability

Moderator

- ♦ **Patricia Rogers**, Footprint Evaluation Initiative and founder of Better Evaluation platform

Panellists

- ♦ **Andy Rowe**, ARCeconomics and Footprint Evaluation
- ♦ **Joana Varela**, Career advisor, Ministry of Finance and Blue Economy Plan, São Tomé and Príncipe
- ♦ **Elaf Zeinalabdieen**, M&E Officer, Sudanese Environment Conservation Society



How do we move from evaluating environmental interventions to ensuring environmental sustainability considerations are included across evaluations?

- ♦ **Addressing sustainability in all evaluations is critical for all evaluation types and not only for environmental interventions.** We know that evaluations do not usually consider the effects of interventions on natural systems, and yet these can be significant and usually negative. Therefore, evaluation that does not consider environmental implications might find positive results on economic or other activities that address human issues, but ignore damage to natural systems that will eventually affect people. The focus of the work we do on development has to include the environment, and should consider the human-natural systems nexus from design stages to mitigate any such unintended or unintentional impacts. Sustainability-aware evaluation and evaluative activity can minimize net harm to natural systems and avoid the plundering of natural systems.
- ♦ **Coordination and inclusion are key to understand the relationship between human and natural systems.** All institutions representing the people, government and other stakeholders should be included to ensure that programme and project implementation and evaluation achieve results that benefit natural and human systems. The participation of all stakeholders in the monitoring and evaluation of interventions such as land and water management projects is critical to enhance their effectiveness, ownership and sustainability. It helps to improve equitable access to water and better land use planning and management. Tools like the KOBO toolbox, which was used in the Sudan Climate Change Adaptation Project, can help in collecting grassroots data using mobile phones and user satisfaction surveys.

- ◆ **Evaluations play an important role in addressing climate change**, especially in vulnerable small countries including Small Island developing States. National Evaluation Systems can help to address gaps in regulatory frameworks, coordinate national efforts between line ministries and bring stakeholders from government and civil society to identify specific actions required in the short, medium and long term. Such collaborative approaches in evaluation can have huge effects on the use of evaluation and the improvement of results.
- ◆ **Capacity strengthening is needed for evaluation teams**, and evaluation users, including professional development and preparing policy briefs for decision-makers. Guidance and other resources from the Footprint Evaluation Initiative can support the design, planning and management of monitoring and evaluation that includes environmental sustainability.

Conclusion

The interrelatedness of human and natural systems must be considered for all interventions so that monitoring and evaluation no longer contributes to worsening sustainability. This requires projects and development interventions to include a strong consideration of their possible environmental impacts from design to completion. Monitoring of impacts on the environment, intended and unintended, will need an all-of-society approach, ensuring all stakeholders are involved. Finally, all evaluations need to integrate an assessment of the environmental impact of programmes throughout their work.

Quote



“Environmental sustainability is not only the responsibility of the environmental sector.”

— **Elaf Zeinalabdieen**, M&E Officer, Sudanese Environment Conservation Society

Watch the session



Video recording of the Session C3:
[NEC 2022 | Stream C3 - Environmental Sustainability - YouTube](#)

