

THE ROYAL THAI GOVERNMENT *and*
THE INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OFFICE
OF UNDP *present*

Concept Note

**Blending Evaluation Principles with Development Practices to Change People's
Lives**

Organized jointly with

UNDP REGIONAL BUREAU FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC *and*
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT EVALUATION ASSOCIATION
(IDEAS)

as partners with
THE UNITED NATIONS EVALUATION GROUP (UNEG)



*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*

**NEC CONFERENCE 2015
in Bangkok, Thailand**

**4TH INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE ON
NATIONAL EVALUATION
CAPACITIES**

26-30 OCTOBER 2015
www.nec2015.net



Venue Bangkok, Thailand
Date: October 2015

Bangkok
Photo: Miguel Lleixa Mora

The 2015 NEC Conference concept and vision

The 4th NEC Conference (2015) to be held in Bangkok, 26-30 October, 2015, in partnership with the Royal Thai Government, will be a collaboration between IEO and the UNDP Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific, and jointly organized with the International Development Evaluation Association (IDEAS) Global Assembly 2015.

The year 2015, as declared and endorsed by the UN General Assembly, is the International Year of Evaluation, but is also the deadline by which countries were expected to have achieved the Millennium Development Goals. A new set of goals are being discussed and shall be called the Sustainable Development Goals with an agenda expected to go from 2016 - 2030. The evaluation community can make a significant contribution to countries, Governments and societies, by coming together to discuss priorities for a Global Evaluation Agenda that can help develop national evaluation capacities to evaluate sustainable development, or even to go beyond and also focus on evaluating sustainable human development,¹ by *blending evaluation principles and human development practices to help change people's lives*.

Thus, **“Blending Evaluation Principles with Human Development Practices to Change People’s Lives”** is the theme of the conference. Discussions will deliberate on future priorities for a Global Evaluation Agenda for 2016 - 2020 to help evaluate the new Sustainable Development Goals and the agenda 2016 - 2030.

Considering the importance of 2015 and the years to come for development, the 2015 NEC conference will bring together:

- (1) the evaluation principles from UNEG, and the IEO of UNDP and its evaluation policy;
- (2) the programme implementation capacity of UNDP global and regional bureaus and country offices;
- (3) the expertise of the evaluation community, in particular, IDEAS; and
- (4) the evaluation and development practice of Governments and various partners and donors.

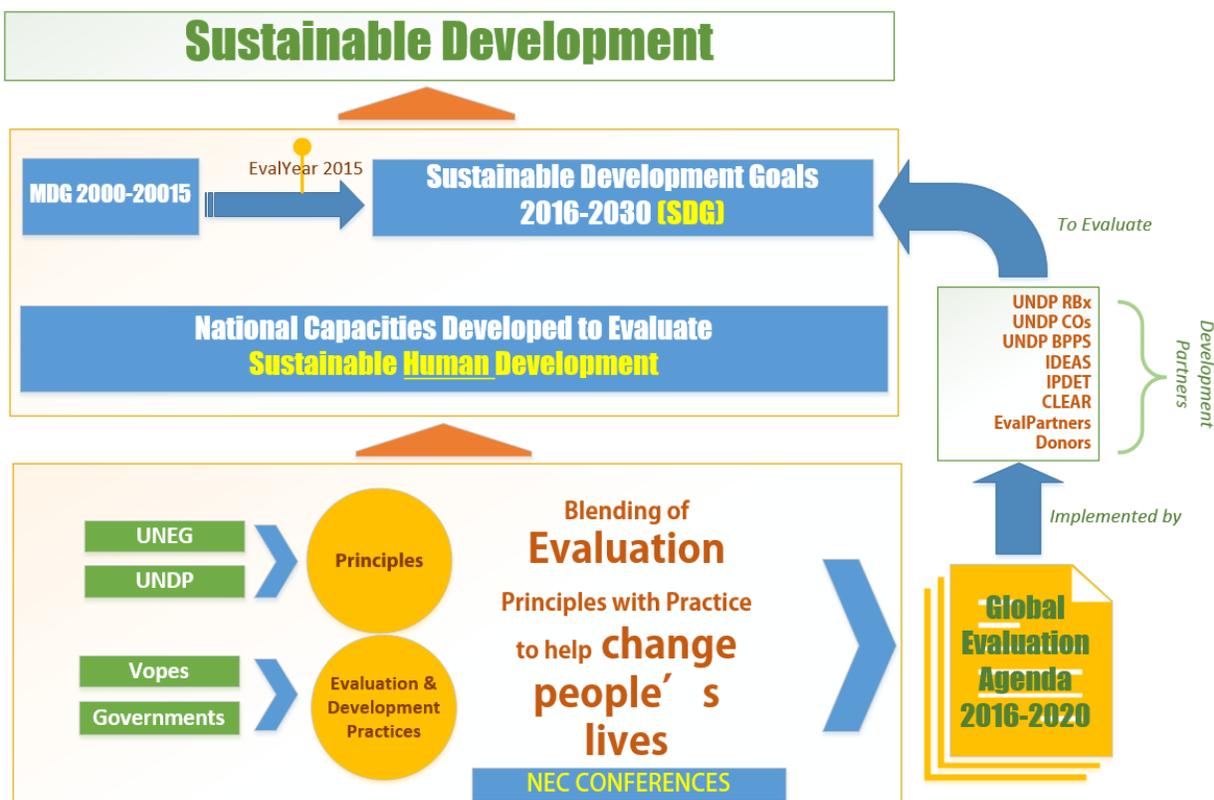
These different stakeholders will share knowledge and lessons and discuss the priorities for a global evaluation agenda to support sustainable and human development goals. NEC 2015 will go beyond the usual conference exchange and also connect countries and resource persons to engage in South-South cooperation for the implementation of commitments linked to national evaluation capacity development.

Throughout the EvalYear, there will be over 40 evaluation events around the globe that will pass the EvalYear Torch from event to event symbolizing a global effort to promote evaluation. Each of these events will discuss priorities for a Global Evaluation Agenda. In Bangkok, the evaluation torch will be passed from the Brazilian Government, the host of the last NEC Conference, to the Royal Thai Government. During the conference, participants will take stock of the 18 NEC commitments agreed upon in NEC 2013 and advance the consultation around the Global Evaluation Agenda and deliberate on priorities. Together with the evaluation torch, the Royal Thai Government will hand the priorities for a Global Evaluation Agenda discussed in Bangkok, to the Government of Nepal, where the Global

¹ Sustainable Human Development, carries the nature of going beyond the original concept of human development, sustainable development or environmental or economic sustainability. Sustainable human development would focus on the development of human capabilities (capacities and abilities) and the development of conditions (enabling environments, legal frameworks, liberties).

Evaluation Agenda will be finalized and officially launched at the EvalYear EvalPartners Global Evaluation Week organized at the Parliament of Nepal in November 2015.

The scheme below tries to visually communicate the concept of the NEC Conference, described above:



In the last decade of effort to achieve the MDGs, there has been a move towards promoting legal frameworks for evaluation and additional investments in monitoring systems, all of which helps to connect people to policy makers, based on credible evidence. The new SDGs will require additional efforts to strengthen national evaluation capacities to evaluate the new global development agenda.

The conference, while tackling the progress made, will allow representatives of government to share their experiences with peers, and provide the opportunity to engage with experts in evaluation. Engagement will strengthen evaluation and public policy linkages and encourage national evaluation function towards contributing to the new global development agenda with a global evaluation agenda.

The participants will also discuss key issues, in different format sessions, among them:

- (1) Report on 18 NEC commitments from the last conference clustered in the four themes below:
 - Building and strengthening credible national data systems for results based monitoring, and evaluation of public policies and programmes to promote evaluation use through in-country and global advocacy;
 - Developments in national policy legal frameworks and their operationalization;
 - The role of parliamentarians in development national evaluation capacities; and
 - Addressing gender equity in evaluations of public policies and programmes.
- (2) Emerging key priorities for the Global Evaluation Agenda identified in online consultations so far:

- Strengthening an enabling environment for evaluation;
- Strengthening institutional capacities of VOPEs and civil societies;
- Strengthening individual evaluator capacity development; and
- Inter-linkages between enabling environment, institutional capacities and individual capacities.

The new NEC Conference format

In the spirit of a global partnership for the International Year of Evaluation and a Global Evaluation Agenda, this year the IDEAS Global Assembly 2015 will run parallel with the NEC Conference 2015 in the same venue with the aligned theme: “*Evaluating Sustainable Development*”.

The parallel events in the same venue will allow for participants from both events to engage in joint pre-conference workshops and joint daily plenary sessions, keynote addresses and discussions to ensure participants benefit from the different audiences and perspectives.

The NEC Conference programme will be designed to both draw from the rich experience of national evaluation and policy entities, as well as other evaluation practitioners and experts from IDEAS and the UN. The conference will be designed to also provide options for all participants and space for engagement. It will be a forum to:

- Present and exchange lessons, experiences and perspectives in conducting and using evaluations and developing national evaluation capacities;
- Discuss the status of evaluation capacities in various countries;
- Elect priorities for a Global Evaluation Agenda to help sustainable and human development; and
- Promote cooperation among countries to strengthen national evaluation systems and practices.

Participants

The Fourth NEC Conference, similar to its precursors, is an event that is not only international in character, but will include participants from a range of institutions: from government, parliaments, development organisations, multi-lateral and bi-lateral organisations, and voluntary evaluation organisations. Participation in the conference will be by invitation only, but NEC and IDEAS participants will be able to take part in joint sessions without additional cost.

Considering that the primary focus of the conference is strengthening the evaluation systems and practices in UNDP programme countries, the participation will be largely from governments in developing countries. The participants will include representatives of national institutions responsible for conducting and commissioning evaluations, and policy makers who are users of evaluations. Measures will be taken to ensure there is adequate representation at the conference in terms of gender and diversity of countries and regions.

UNEG colleagues, UNDP senior management and selected capacity development, evaluation and governance experts will also be invited to attend and support the participation of Government officials and follow up of commitments after the conference.

A minimum of two and maximum of four participants from each country will be invited to attend the conference to ensure the sustainability of results and to engage a critical mass of actors to trigger changes at a country level. Furthermore, to enhance ownership and South-South cooperation in knowledge sharing

and capacity exchange, the participating countries will be encouraged to finance the participation of their representatives and/or representatives from other countries, if possible. IEO also strongly suggests that each participating country appoint/sponsor a female staff member to participate in the meetings or an independent evaluator from their country to participate in the conferences and workshops.

For participants seeking financial support, depending on availability of funds, IEO may finance the participation of one governmental official per country, for up to 70 countries. For those participants supported by IEO, travel costs (economy class) and a partial daily subsistence allowance for the days of the NEC conference will be financed. However, more optimal cost-sharing arrangements will be proposed on a case-by-case basis to ensure ownership and sustainability of the partnership.

To apply for financial support, candidates must present an abstract proposal about the theme of the conference, based on the experience of his/her country and its status in terms of national evaluation capacity development. Additionally, the candidate must have two of the four criteria listed below:

- (1) As an individual, have the potential to inform/influence change linked to national evaluation capacity in Government;
- (2) Critical mass of interest in evaluation in the country;
- (3) Government willing to co-finance participation costs, or the costs of another participant from the same or other country; or
- (4) Track record of conducting, using or commissioning evaluations.

All participants are required to pay a registration fee of USD 450 that must be covered by the participant's organization as a form of commitment, regardless of the participant receiving financial support from IEO.

Participants will also be encouraged to sign up for pre-conference workshops delivered jointly with IDEAS, for an additional charge. More information on pre-conference workshops, will be available on the conference website.

Conference partners

While other agencies will be approached for collaboration, the primary partners of the conference are the Royal Thai Government, UNDP Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific and IDEAS.

Supporting partners include United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), Asian Development Bank (ADB), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), EvalPartners, The Government of Finland, NORAD, UNEDAP, Thailand Evaluation Network (TEN), the International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3IE) and CLEAR

Contacts

Conference Coordinator

Ana Rosa Soares
Evaluation Advisor
Independent Evaluation Office (IEO/UNDP)
Email: ana.soares@undp.org

Media/ Press Queries

Sasha Jahic
Communications Analyst
Independent Evaluation Office (IEO/UNDP)
Email: sasha.jahic@undp.org

Logistical Information & Other matters

Email: nec.2015@undp.org