

EvalFest 2018

Voice, visibility and value

7- 9 February, 2018, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi, India

EvalFest 2018 is a three-day event that aims to contribute to build a culture of evaluation through advocacy, sharing knowledge about best practices, approaches and evaluation methods that are participatory, contextual, replicable and adaptable.

Evaluation Community of India (ECOI):

India was the first country to celebrate International Year of Evaluation in January 2015 and was honored by receiving the Eval Torch in the country. Out of this week-long celebrations emerged the need for a professional body of evaluators and other stakeholders in the developmental process that promotes evaluation standards; helps in sharing the existing state of knowledge, research outcomes and best practices in development evaluation, plays an advocacy role in furthering the role of quality evaluations in enhancing development results; nurtures growth of evaluation capabilities; and contributes to the evolution of an evaluation culture in the country. In response to this demand, the Evaluation Community of India (ECOI) was established in October 2015. The motto of the community is 'Share and Learn'. In its one and a half year's journey, ECOI has achieved various milestones like bringing out News Letters, participation in various global, regional and national forums and conferences, organizing workshops, constituting action groups and so on. ECOI is presently managed by a team of nine core group members: Shubh Kumar-Range; R.S. Goyal; Rituu B. Nanda; Aniruddha Brahmachari, BVLN Rao, Alok Srivastava, Nabesh Bohidar, Rashmi Agrawal and Rajib Nandi.

ECOI is now planning to organize EvalFest in February 2018 in collaboration with various partners like 3ie, ISST, CMS and many others. 3ie (**International Initiative for Impact Evaluation**) is an international NGO promoting evidence-informed development policies and programmes. It is a global leader in funding and producing high-quality evidence of what works, for whom, how, why and at what cost in international development and believes that better and policy-relevant evidence will make development more effective and improve people's lives. ISST (**Institute of Social Studies Trust**) is a non-governmental research organization based in New Delhi. ISST's overall aim is research for social change with a focus on livelihood, work and well-being of vulnerable communities from a gender perspective. ISST attempts to bridge the gaps between research, action and policy debates with objectives of promoting social justice and equality for the underprivileged. CMS (**Centre for Media Studies**) is an

independent, not-for profit organisation dedicated to multi-disciplinary research driven initiatives that enable policy makers to take informed decisions on development and social change to improve quality of life.

Why an EvalFest?

Evaluation is integral to development. It provides evidence of how, why and for whom research initiatives and development programmes succeed or fall short of their objectives. Evaluations examine results as well as processes, and help us better understand how they contribute to solving development problems. It is widely recognised that evidence can improve an ongoing project, strengthen the planning of new initiatives, and refine programming and policies. It is well established that development programmes and policies are more successful when they are designed and implemented in inclusive and participatory ways.

Government of India has unfolded a new vision and mission for development and in this process unveiled several programmes. Some of the major initiatives are for financial inclusion (Jan Dhan Yojana), for skill development (Skill India), for promoting indigenous enterprise and production (Make in India), and for elimination of open defecation (Swacchh Bharat Mission). The priority of the Government is ‘Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas’ so that no one is left behind. Special attention is given to vulnerable populations, women and girls, differently abled, and socially and economically deprived people to reduce their inequality and marginalisation. These initiatives are in tune with the globally adopted SDGs. Evaluations with focus on equity and gender equality will play an important role in ensuring that these initiatives lead to the intended results.

It is important to build a culture of evaluation in the country so that all stakeholders like policymakers, program managers, evaluation practitioners, non-governmental organisations, academia and most importantly the community accept evaluation as a means to evidence-informed decision making and information dissemination. Convening these stakeholders will help build common understanding of the importance of evaluation, how it is done and its usefulness for learning and making improvements by sharing knowledge and perspectives. EvalFest 2018, a three-day event in Delhi, is being conceptualised as a step in the direction to co-produce knowledge and build partnerships with various stakeholders to ensure that evaluation and evidence use are cornerstones in how India works towards achieving SDGs focussing upon engaging stakeholders, inclusiveness and innovation.

Event concept

This event is conceptualised with the belief that every stakeholder involved with the process of development has something critical to bring to the field of evaluation. EvalFest provides the convening space to bring them together to have collective ideas.

The event is envisaged to be inclusive and participatory for a range of actors, from beneficiaries through to policymakers.

The point of intersection for these diverse actors is their interest and involvement in some or the other way in development process, monitoring and evaluation of development programmes. The three-day event will encourage flexible and interactive sessions, for example, talk show style panels, world cafés or fish bowls, along with a few keynotes where there would be time for discussion with the presenter. Alongside these types of sessions, EvalFest 2018 will provide space for and encourage innovative and interactive forms of information sharing, such as theatre and storytelling using drawing, photos or oral histories (**Visibility for all**) to focus on evaluation experiences from non-traditional voices in evaluation conferences (**Voice for all**). Possible themes will focus on the multiple types of values that evaluation can have and reduce misunderstanding and anxieties that people might have about it. (**How to Value evaluations by taking out fear of evaluation**)

Major Themes

- **Engaging community and other stakeholders in development and evaluation: Field building, innovation in process and utility orientation.**
- **Inclusion- social, economic, cultural and behavioural**
- **Innovations: New knowledge and practice**
- **Ethics and evaluations**
- **Road to SDGs: prioritization, building evaluation capabilities and evidence use**

EvalFest- The Process

- I. **Pre Fest Events**-Evalfest will be flexible in its approach and process. There will be pre-Fest events such as:
 - a. **Outreach to students**- prior to EvalFest visits will be made to some identified educational institutions for interactions with Faculty and students about how they perceive development M&E, how it is done and how they contribute to enhance the developmental results
 - b. **Outreach to community**- ECOI teams will visit some of the community groups to take their perception of evaluation and how could they be involved
 - c. **Outreach to cities other than Delhi**- Need based discussion workshops will be organised in various parts of the country collaborating with academic institutions and other players.

II. Main Event

Main event will take place from 7th Feb. to 9th Feb. 2018. The program on the first day will include inauguration and key note address with open forums for sharing knowledge. Pre- fest events outcomes will be a part of the main event on this day. Programs on 8th will be convened by various partner organisations in their respective organisations on above mentioned themes. On final day the outcomes and the takeaways from the event will be part of discussions and finalised. A detailed program will be formulated in consultation with various stakeholders.

III. Outreach to Media

Media is a strong pillar of development process. It can play a very active role in creating a culture of evaluation. Media needs to be sensitized about evidence based reporting and how to be a proactive player. For this purpose, meetings will be convened with both print and electronic media.

IV. Venue

The events on 7th and 9th February will take place at India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road New Delhi. The venues for event on 8th February will be decided by different partner organisations.

Expected outcomes from the event

1. Varied and interesting sessions will help participants learn by sharing information, experiences and perspectives from respective and diverse contexts.
2. Participants will be able to develop new and current knowledge in development and evaluation through interactions.
3. An opportunity to network with various stakeholders for future activities.
4. Identify good practices, approaches and techniques which are participatory, contextual, replicable and adaptable.
5. Assess general awareness about development and evaluations with equity and equality among various stakeholders.
6. A compendium of academic papers on evaluation.

Call for collaboration

This event is an opportunity to showcase the role of national and global organizations in evidence generation in support of policy debates and decisions in India. This event will also help sharing the experiences of various organizations involved in development and evaluation process in addressing evidence gaps. Please join hands together and contribute in whatever manner you wish to.

How can you contribute?

- By Sponsoring events and venue
- By sponsoring participants
- By sponsoring the edited volume to be launched during the event
- By organising pre-Fest events
- By developing Fest material- poster/ charts/ videos/ theatre/songs any other
- By proposing panels
- By presenting innovations
- By suggesting interesting mode of presentation
- By generating awareness about the event and bringing participants from varying fields

Please contactus for further information

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