

“Tackling a Key 21st Century Evaluation Challenge”

Washington, D.C. – November 4-6, 2014

Concept Note

Context/Background

2008 marked a significant milestone in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of climate change policies and interventions as over 250 evaluation professionals met in Alexandria, Egypt for substantive discussions of best practices and experiences in the field of evaluation of climate change and development. The 2008 international conference, the first of its kind, was organized by the Global Environment Facility Evaluation Office (GEFEO) and the Bibliotheca Alexandrina with the involvement of several international donors and partners.

Since then, climate change has gained further prominence at the global level. At the 2009 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, developed countries pledged \$100 billion a year in climate finance by 2020, and an additional \$30 billion in fast-start funding (2010-2012). These pledges came with a strong international consensus that more of the funding should go to adaptation to climate. Changes in the programmatic priorities of several bilateral and multilateral development agencies reflect this shift, as well as the establishment of new funds and programs.

With the global community poised to see a legally binding global climate deal at COP21 in late 2015 in Paris and with climate change expected to feature prominent in the upcoming Sustainable Development Goals, there will be further attention on this topic. And by extension, further demands for results and evidence to show these investments are working.

With so many climate change mitigation and adaptation interventions taking place at different scales in different environmental and socio-economic contexts and geographical regions of the world, evaluators are confronted with new challenges. What are the different approaches suitable to evaluate the nexus between climate change interventions, which encompass a wide range of program and policy areas, and natural resources management? What are current best practices and what needs to be further developed? What lessons can we draw from evaluations so far, for policy, for interventions and for countries and communities? And how could these lessons be applied to related areas of policy and climate change interventions at the global, regional, national and local levels?

Objectives and Scope of the Conference

This conference aims to create space for evaluation professionals and a selected group of policy makers and practitioners from north and south to collectively explore how different methods and approaches to evaluate climate change, sustainable development and natural resources management have worked, and how they can be improved to address new and emerging issues. Secondly, participants shall seek to understand and identify innovative learning and knowledge sharing approaches that could lead to greater use of (emerging) evidence in climate change and sustainable development policies and interventions. In addition to serving as a platform for peer-exchange between participants from different disciplines and regions and providing evidence and inspiration for policy and action on the ground, the conference will seek to build the capacity of participants to commission, undertake and use evaluations.

The scope of the conference is on climate change, both mitigation and adaptation, and on the nexus between climate change and natural resources management. The conference will focus especially on how development can be made more sustainable through effective and sustainable natural resources management, at global, regional, national and local levels. Increasingly, policies and interventions aim to manage the dynamics between economic arrangements, societies and their interactions with natural resources, supporting the emergence of sustainable practices. There is emerging evidence that practices shift towards integrating mitigation efforts and adaptation interventions with efforts to achieve sustainable development through sustainable management of natural resources such as biodiversity, land, and water resources.

Specifically, the conference will have the following objectives:

- 1) To learn from recent efforts to evaluate the results and impact of policies and programs of climate change interventions, including in relationship to natural resource management and development.
- 2) To review and analyze new and emerging approaches and methods to evaluate climate change policies and interventions, especially in relationship to natural resources management, and to identify gaps and challenges for future work.
- 3) To identify innovative and emerging learning and knowledge sharing strategies to enhance the utility of climate change and natural resources management evaluations.
- 4) To provide additional support to strengthen capacity in developing countries to undertake evaluation of climate change interventions and natural resources management.

Main Outcomes

Two main outcomes to which the conference is expected to contribute:

1. Improved policies and interventions on climate change and natural resources management, especially in the South;
2. Strengthened evaluation capacity, especially in the South, to evaluate climate change and natural resources management.

Expected Outputs:

- 1) A briefing note as input into policy level climate change discussions with a focus on the linkage to natural resources management, noting emerging evidence and existing gaps, as well as how to further improve the evidence basis.
 - 2) Publication on best practice papers and studies that assembles and disseminates updated approaches and interventions, as well as natural resources management information. - Transaction Publishers has offered to publish the proceedings of the conference as they have done for the 2008 conference.
 - 3) Innovative learning and knowledge sharing strategies identified and disseminated, with a special focus on policy relevant evidence and inspiration for new strategies, policies and interventions.
 - 4) Evaluation capacity strengthened, especially in the South, through best practices shared among peers and through networking and collaboration opportunities identified during the conference.
- Existing networks and collaborations, like the global Community of Practice (CoP) on evaluating climate change and development (Climate-Eval) and regional communities such as SEA-Change CoP, will provide

follow-up to the conference through making conference proceedings available to the wider community of evaluators and policy makers and stakeholders.

Value-Added to Ongoing Processes

The global community is poised to see a new development architecture in 2015 prominently featuring climate change. At the same time there are on-going efforts towards “green growth”, towards sustainable management of natural resources, towards more equitable and sustainable development that increasingly are infused with critical thinking on how mitigation and adaptation influence and shape these efforts. Sustainable development issues are discussed in various fora and hopefully will lead to an international consensus on sustainable development goals, to be discussed in November 2014, and to be finalized in 2015. The expected post-2015 framework thus will face a variety of conceptual and methodological challenges in all areas including climate change. The 2014 conference should serve as a platform to initiate or take up past or current discussions related to indicators to measure climate change and sustainable development in view of aligning them to what emerges with the new sustainable development goals (SDGs) in 2015. Furthermore, the conference will provide an environmental/climate change perspective that will inform the international year of evaluation in 2015.

Participants

Unlike the 2008 Alexandria conference in which more than 250 evaluation and development professionals participated, the 2014 conference targets a smaller group of no more than 80 evaluation practitioners, with about 20 policy makers and development practitioners, from all over the world.

Funding

The GEF Independent Evaluation Office (GEF IEO) and Climate-Eval have ensured basic funding for the conference, through generous donations of Denmark, Germany and Sweden. More funding may be needed for special sessions that collaborators would propose, or for participants from developing countries who may need sponsorships to participate in the conference.

Partners in the Steering Committee of the Conference

- Climate-Eval Community of Practice
- Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
- Global Environment Facility Independent Evaluation Office (GEFIEO)
- Institute of Development Studies (IDS)
- Independent Evaluation Group of the World Bank (IEG)
- International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie)
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (DANIDA)
- SEA-Change Community of Practice
- State Secretariat for Economic Affairs and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation of Switzerland
- Swedish Development Corporation Agency (SIDA)
- UK Department for International Development (DFID)

Conference Format

The conference will run for three days with a mix of plenary and thematic sessions. A variety of sessions are foreseen to maximize opportunities for knowledge sharing, capacity development and networking among professionals:

- 1) Plenary sessions with keynote addresses and panels, to ensure interaction between all participants and involvement of participants in key issues.
- 2) Three parallel stream of work on: A) policy and program level evaluations; B) methodological challenges in adaptation, including resilience and natural resources management; C) methodological challenges in mitigation.
- 3) Special sessions on subjects like knowledge brokerage, methodological tools and approaches.
- 4) Meetings of representatives from professional associations, communities of practice and participants from regions.
- 5) An exhibition space to display creative and innovative posters, brochures and other promotional and knowledge materials. These stands which will serve as channels for exchanging knowledge and experiences will also create opportunities for direct communication and outreach in addition to the structured dialogue.

To enable participants and members of the public to actively participate in the debates and discussions, a webpage for the conference has been created on the Climate-Eval website. The webpage shall be used for/by various stakeholders for engagement and information exchange before, during and after the conference. There will be live streaming of proceedings of the conference to facilitate remote participation by interested stakeholders across the world.

Venue and Date Conference:

Washington D.C, November 4-6, 2014

Contact

Secretariat of the Conference

David Akana @ dakana@thegef.org

Tel: [202-458-9733](tel:202-458-9733)