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CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF
AFRICAN EVALUATION EXCELLENCE

United Nations Conference Center

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia



Ethiopian
Evaluation
Association (EEVA)

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS OF THE 25th ANNIVERSARY OF THE AFRICAN EVALUATION ASSOCIATION (AfrEA)

7 July 2025



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List of Acronyms

2IE	l'Initiative Ivoirienne pour l'Evaluation
ACBF	African Capacity Building Foundation
AEJ	African Evaluation Journal
AfrEA	African Evaluation Association
ASE	Africa School of Evaluation
AU	African Union
BDEAC	Banque de Développement des Etats de l'Afrique Centrale
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CESAG	Centre Africain d'Etudes Supérieures en Gestion
CLEAR-AA	Centre for Learning on Evaluation and Results for Anglophone Africa
CLEAR-FA	Centre for Learning on Evaluation and Results for Francophone Africa
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DBSA	Development Bank of Southern Africa
DEval	German Institute for Development Evaluation
DPME	Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
EBID	ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ECD	Evaluation Capacity Development
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EEVA	Ethiopian Evaluation Association
ENAP	École Nationale d'administration Publique
EPRADI	Evaluation Platform for African Development Institutions
ESA	Eastern and Southern Africa
ESARO	Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office
EvalNet	Network on Development Evaluation
FCFA	Future Climate for Africa
GEI	Global Evaluation Initiative
IDEV	Independent Development Evaluation
IEAc	International Evaluation Academy
IEO	Independent Evaluation Office
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFI	International Financial Institutions
INCE	National Evaluation Capacities Index
IOE	Independent Office of Evaluation
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAE	Made in Africa Evaluation
MEL	Monitoring Evaluation and Learning
MESA	Monitoring and Evaluation Systems Analysis
NDB	New Development Bank
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
PIFED	Programme International de Formation en Évaluation du Développement
REDENACI	Réseau des Diplômés de l'École Nationale d'Administration
RFE	Réseau Francophone de l'Evaluation
SAMEA	South African Monitoring & Evaluation Association
SAPSC	South African Public Service Commission
SenEval	Senegal Evaluation Association
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
STYIP	Second Ten Year Implementation Plan
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VOPE	Voluntary Organization for Professional Evaluation
WFP	World Food Programme
YEE	Young and Emerging Evaluators



Dr. Miché OUEDRAOGO
President, AfrEA

FORWARD – FROM DR. MICHÉ OUEDRAOGO, AFREA PRESIDENT

As we mark the 25th Anniversary of the African Evaluation Association (AfrEA), I extend my deepest gratitude to each and every one of you who contributed to making this celebration a resounding success. Over the past quarter-century, AfrEA has grown from a visionary idea into a vibrant, pan-African movement that champions evidence-informed decision-making, accountability, and learning across our continent. This milestone is not just a reflection of our past achievements, but a testament to the collective resilience, innovation, and unwavering commitment of our members, partners, and friends who have walked this journey with us.

This commemorative report captures the rich tapestry of insights, debates, and collaborative outcomes that defined our anniversary celebrations in Addis Ababa. Within these pages, you will find highlights of our diverse sessions, including the launch of the “Handbook on Made in Africa Evaluation,” the ceremonial handing over of the Evaluation Torch to the next generation, and the forging of new partnerships and initiatives such as the African School of Evaluation (ASE). The report details our focused discussions on youth and women’s inclusion, the professionalization of evaluation, digital transformation, and the decolonization of methodologies—each theme underscoring our shared resolve to localize and elevate evaluation practice for Africa, by Africa, and with Africa.

Looking ahead, this report serves as both a record and a roadmap. It documents the actionable recommendations, strategic commitments—including the Addis Ababa Declaration of 2025—and the immediate next steps agreed upon by our community. Whether you are a policymaker, practitioner, emerging evaluator, or partner, I invite you to draw inspiration from the stories, lessons, and aspirations contained within. Together, we will continue to build on AfrEA’s legacy, advancing evaluation excellence to drive sustainable development and self-determination for all Africans. Thank you for being part of this historic celebration and for your ongoing dedication to our shared mission.

FORWARD – FROM DEREJE MAMO TSEGAYE, EEVA PRESIDENT

Celebrating 25 Years of Excellence in Evaluation for Africa’s Development.

On this momentous occasion of the Africa Evaluation Association’s (AfrEA) 25th Anniversary, we reflect on a quarter-century of pioneering leadership, transformative evaluation practices, and unwavering commitment to evidence-informed decision-making across the African continent. Since its inception, AfrEA has served as the cornerstone of the evaluation movement in Africa, fostering a culture of accountability, learning, and sustainable development through robust evaluation frameworks.

This Conference Proceedings Report captures the rich insights, groundbreaking discussions, and visionary ideas shared during our landmark anniversary celebrations. Under the theme “Celebrating 25 Years of Excellence in Africa-Rooted Evaluation: Building a Stronger Future Together”. Scholars, practitioners, policymakers, and development partners came together to reimagine the future of evaluation in Africa strengthening its role in shaping policies, empowering communities, and driving equitable progress.

As we celebrate this milestone, we honor the resilience, innovation, and collaborative spirit that have defined AfrEA’s journey. The legacy of the past 25 years inspires us to boldly advance evaluation excellence, ensuring that it remains a powerful tool for Africa’s growth and self-determination.

Together, we look forward to the next chapter evaluation by Africa, for Africa, and with Africa.



Dereje Mamo TSEGAYE
President, Ethiopia
Evaluation Association

FORWARD – FROM THE JOINT LEAD RAPPORTEURS

We extend our deepest gratitude to the Executive Boards of AfrEA and EEvA for entrusting us with the responsibility of serving as Co-Lead Rapporteurs for the 25th Anniversary Celebration. Your confidence in our abilities was both an honour and a profound motivation, enabling us to approach this mandate with dedication and a commitment to excellence. The vision and leadership provided by both Boards set a clear direction for the event, fostering an environment where collaboration, learning, and innovation flourished at every stage of the proceedings.

Our sincere appreciation also goes to the Anniversary Planning Committee and the Programmes Committees, whose meticulous planning, tireless coordination, and unwavering support were instrumental in the seamless execution of this milestone event. Your strategic foresight, attention to detail, and inclusive approach ensured that all voices were heard and that the Anniversary celebration reflected the diversity and dynamism of Africa's evaluation community. The success of the event is a testament to your collective commitment and the spirit of teamwork that guided every aspect of the celebration.

Finally, we wish to thank all the Rapporteurs for their exemplary work in documenting the sessions throughout the event. Your professionalism, accuracy, and dedication to capturing the substance and nuance of each discussion ensured that the rich knowledge generated during the Anniversary celebration will be preserved and shared widely. The quality and comprehensiveness of your Rapporteur Notes have provided a solid foundation for this final report and will serve as a valuable resource for the entire AfrEA community as we look to the future.

In this report, readers will find a rich capture of the major themes and actionable insights that emerged from the anniversary proceedings. The document highlights the central focus on youth and women's inclusion, the advancement of Afrocentric evaluation methodologies, and the strengthening of partnerships and professionalization within the sector. We hope this report will serve as both a record of our shared achievements and a roadmap for the future of evaluation in Africa. Thank you once again to all who made this celebration a success—your dedication and collaboration continue to inspire and drive the AfrEA mission forward.

Thank you all.

Dr. Awuor PONGE
**Vice-President, AfrEA
& Co-Lead Rapporteur**

Dr. Zerihun BERHANE
**Vice-President, EEvA
& Co-Lead Rapporteur**

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REPRESENTATIVE



FATIMATA WOPA GAYE
WEST AFRICA
REPRESENTATIVE



MOSES MASHINGAIDZE
SOUTHERN AFRICA
REPRESENTATIVE



ALPHONSE BOYOGUENO
CENTRAL AFRICA
REPRESENTATIVE

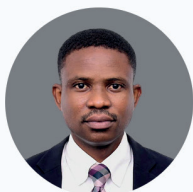


MARK MULOBI
YEE REPRESENTATIVE
ANGLOPHONE



SATURNIN ZOÉTYANDÉ
YEE REPRESENTATIVE
FRANCOPHONE

THE AFREA SECRETARIAT



CARLOS KOMLA AKLIGO
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



SUSAN ASARE
ACCOUNTS AND
ADMINISTRATIVE
MANAGER



CALEB AYONG
COMMUNICATION
SPECIALIST



CAROL ADOASI
ADMINISTRATIVE
ASSISTANT (NATIONAL
SERVICE PERSONNEL)



STEPHANIE ABBEY
ADMINISTRATIVE
ASSISTANT (NATIONAL
SERVICE PERSONNEL)



**NII ADOTEI BADDOO
EMMANUEL**
PROJECT MANAGER



ALIOU KAYIRA DIALLO
OPERATION MANAGER

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

When you return home, tell your loved ones what you have witnessed in Addis Ababa. Tell them that there is a generation of African evaluators who are standing with DIGNITY and PRIDE and taking their place on the world stage. Tell them that there is HOPE for Africa, that Africa has a bright future, and even more than that, that the FUTURE is Africa

This Executive Summary of the AfrEA 25th Anniversary Celebration Report provides a concise yet comprehensive overview of the conference's key proceedings, participation statistics, major themes, actionable insights, and the most significant decisions and recommendations. It highlights the diversity of sessions, workshops, and participant demographics, as well as the central focus on advancing evidence-based decision-making, strengthening evaluation capacity – especially among youth and women – and fostering regional and cross-sectoral collaboration in line with the African Union's Agenda 2063.

This summary distills the top trends discussed, such as the push for inclusive and Afrocentric evaluation methodologies, the integration of digital tools, and the importance of partnerships and professionalization within the field. It also addresses noteworthy debates, networking outcomes, and the immediate next steps agreed upon by stakeholders. The Executive Summary is important as it quickly orient the reader to the report's scope and strategic outcomes, serving as a roadmap for policymakers, practitioners, and partners to understand the event's impact and the future direction of evaluation in Africa.

The main issues discussed at the AfrEA 25th Anniversary Celebration include the following:

01

Celebrating AfrEA's Legacy and Setting a Forward-Looking Agenda

The 25th Anniversary of the African Evaluation Association (AfrEA), held at UNECA in Addis Ababa, marked a significant milestone in African evaluation. The conference celebrated AfrEA's achievements in advancing evidence-based decision-making, capacity building, and fostering regional collaboration. Central themes included reflecting on AfrEA's legacy, promoting inclusive evaluation—especially for youth and women—and aligning efforts with the African Union's Agenda 2063. The event underscored AfrEA's pivotal role as a pan-African platform for knowledge exchange and innovation in monitoring and evaluation (M&E).

02

Youth and Women's Inclusion in Evaluation

A recurring issue was the prioritization of youth and women in evaluation systems. With youth comprising 54% and women 22% of EEVA's membership, the founding of the Young and Emerging Evaluators (YEE) Network in 2024 was celebrated. The upcoming African School of Evaluation, set for launch in November 2025, was highlighted as a cornerstone for professionalizing African evaluators. Challenges identified included limited mentorship, funding, and legal frameworks for youth inclusion, but the consensus was on expanding structured mentorship, professional standards, and youth-led approaches to nurture the next generation of evaluators.

03

Integration of Evaluation in Development Agendas

Speakers emphasized the necessity of robust M&E systems to track progress toward Agenda 2063's ambitious goals, such as achieving middle-income status for all AU member states and promoting African values. Ethiopia's digitized and institutionalized evaluation system was showcased as a model. The conference stressed that effective evaluation is critical for timely data collection, policy reform, and ensuring inclusive, evidence-driven development.

04

Made in Africa Evaluation (MAE) and Decolonizing Methodologies

A major strand focused on the "Made in Africa Evaluation" movement, advocating for methodologies rooted in African philosophies like Ubuntu and indigenous knowledge. The launch of the "Handbook on Made in Africa Evaluation" was a highlight, with calls to move beyond Eurocentric models and randomized control trials (RCTs) toward people-centered, contextually relevant approaches. The session called for universities to foster critical thinking and for evaluation to be a tool of empowerment and self-determination for African communities.

05

Strengthening National and Regional Evaluation Systems

Sessions across all African regions revealed both progress and persistent challenges in building robust, inclusive evaluation systems. While countries like Morocco have institutionalized M&E with strong youth pathways, others like Mauritania lag behind. Common challenges included scarce funding, lack of practical opportunities for young evaluators, language barriers, and insufficient legal frameworks. Recommendations focused on localizing evaluation practices, harmonizing standards, and leveraging technology for wider participation.

06

Partnerships, Collaboration, and Networking

The conference highlighted the importance of partnerships—among governments, development partners, academia, and civil society—in strengthening evaluation capacity. Notable was the emphasis on co-creation with development partners, regional development banks, and voluntary organizations for professional evaluation (VOPEs). Collaborative outcomes included new initiatives, knowledge exchange platforms, and a call for harmonized evaluation frameworks across the continent.

07

Professionalization, Certification, and Capacity Building

Professionalization and certification of evaluators were identified as urgent needs. The lack of formal accreditation undermines the credibility and effectiveness of M&E. Capacity-building initiatives, integration of M&E into university curricula, and structured mentorship were recommended to bridge the gap between theoretical training and practical experience, particularly for young and emerging evaluators.

08

Innovation, Technology, and Digital Transformation

The integration of digital tools and artificial intelligence in M&E was widely discussed. Ethiopia's digital M&E system was cited as a best practice. The conference called for the adoption of AI and modern evaluation methodologies to enhance data analysis, improve efficiency, and support evidence-based policy reforms. However, concerns about the digital divide and equitable access—especially for rural and marginalized populations—were also raised.

09

Cross-Cutting Issues: Inclusion, Gender, and Climate Change

Sessions consistently addressed the need for evaluations to be inclusive, gender-sensitive, and responsive to climate challenges. The importance of engaging youth, women, and marginalized groups in all stages of evaluation was emphasized. Gender-transformative and climate-resilient evaluation frameworks were recommended to ensure that development efforts are equitable and sustainable.

10

AfrEA and African Evaluation's Role in addressing the Polycrisis

Several speakers highlighted the polycrisis as the global context within which Africa has to develop, and therefore foster evaluation, over the next decade. The many interconnected, cascading global crises – from climate change to accelerating inequality, from environmental destruction to geopolitical tensions, from increasing poverty to intensifying wars and conflicts – will all in some way influence how evaluation is perceived, financed, done and used. Calls were made for AfrEA to help lead and inspire the African evaluation community to advance theory and practice in this space in support of both African and global priorities.

Key Recommendations and the Way Forward

The conference concluded with actionable recommendations: expand structured mentorship and professional development, localize evaluation standards, invest in digital transformation, and foster intergenerational knowledge transfer. AfrEA was urged to lead in harmonizing evaluation practices, promoting Afrocentric methodologies, and advocating for sustainable funding. AfrEA must also be at the forefront to help lead and inspire the African evaluation community to advance theory and practice in this space in support of both African and global priorities, including the polycrisis. The Addis Ababa Declaration of 2025 encapsulated these commitments, positioning AfrEA for continued leadership in shaping Africa's evaluation landscape and supporting a people-driven Agenda 2063.

1. HIGHLIGHTS – PARTICIPATION, INSIGHTS & IMPACT



1.1 Participation and Engagement Statistics

1.1.1 TOTAL NUMBER OF SESSIONS



7

High-Level
Plenary Sessions
with International
Speakers



14

Parallel and
Thematic
Sessions on
Evaluation



70

Speakers and
Panelists, Including
Emerging Evaluators



24

Young and
Emerging Evaluator
Rapporteurs



05

Excellence Award
to Outstanding
Professionals



11

Former
Presidents
Awarded



1.2 KEY TAKEAWAYS AND INSIGHTS

1.2.1 MAJOR THEMES OR TRENDS DISCUSSED



1.2.2 TOP 5 KEY TAKEAWAYS

Youth and Women's Inclusion is Central

- Prioritising the meaningful inclusion of youth and women in evaluation systems, celebrating the launch of the Young and Emerging Evaluators (YEE) Network and planning for the African School of Evaluation.
- Structured mentorship, professional standards, and youth-led approaches were identified as crucial for nurturing the next generation of evaluators.

Made in Africa Evaluation (MAE) and Decolonization

- A strong call to advance the Made in Africa Evaluation movement by rooting methodologies in African philosophies like Ubuntu and indigenous knowledge.
- The launch of the "Handbook on Made in Africa Evaluation" marked a key step in moving beyond Eurocentric models toward contextually relevant, people-centered evaluation practices.

Strengthening National and Regional Evaluation Systems

- There is uneven progress across African regions in institutionalizing robust, inclusive evaluation systems.
- Successes in countries like Morocco contrast with persistent challenges elsewhere, including limited funding, lack of practical opportunities for young evaluators, and insufficient legal frameworks.

Professionalization and Capacity Building are Urgent Needs

- The lack of formal accreditation and professional pathways undermines the credibility and effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation.
- The conference highlighted the need for certification, integration of M&E into university curricula, and more structured mentorship and practical experience, especially for young evaluators.

Digital Transformation and Innovation Must Be Inclusive

- Adoption of digital tools and artificial intelligence in evaluation was widely discussed, with Ethiopia's digital M&E system cited as a best practice. However, concerns remain about the digital divide and equitable access, especially for rural and marginalized populations.
- Investment in digital transformation must ensure inclusivity and support evidence-based policy reforms.

1.2.3 TOP 5 KEY ACTIONABLE INSIGHTS

1. Expand structured mentorship and professional development opportunities for young and emerging evaluators to bridge the gap between training and practical experience.
2. Localise evaluation standards and methodologies by integrating African philosophies, indigenous knowledge, and context-specific approaches into national and regional evaluation systems.
3. Invest in digital transformation and innovative technologies for monitoring and evaluation, ensuring equitable access and capacity-building for marginalized groups.
4. Foster partnerships and collaborative networks among governments, development partners, academia, and civil society to strengthen evaluation capacity and harmonize practices across the continent.
5. Prioritize the professionalization and certification of evaluators through formal accreditation, integration of M&E into university curricula, and the establishment of sustainable funding mechanisms.

1.2.4 NOTEWORTHY DEBATES, DIFFERING OPINIONS, OR CONTROVERSIES RAISED

Three noteworthy debates, differing opinions, or controversies were raised at the AfREA 25th Anniversary Celebration.

The tension between Eurocentric evaluation models and the push for Made in Africa Evaluation (MAE):

There was a strong debate about moving away from imported, Western-centric methodologies like randomized control trials towards evaluation approaches rooted in African philosophies, indigenous knowledge, and people-centered practices, with some questioning whether global standards can be reconciled with local realities.

Challenges of youth and women's genuine inclusion versus tokenism:

Participants debated whether current efforts to include youth and women in evaluation are substantive or merely symbolic, with calls for more meaningful roles, structured mentorship, and leadership opportunities rather than relegating young people and women to peripheral or "learner" positions.

Balancing digital transformation and equity:

While the adoption of digital tools and artificial intelligence in evaluation was widely promoted, concerns were raised about the digital divide, particularly regarding access for rural and marginalized populations, and whether rapid digitalization risks excluding those without adequate resources or connectivity.

1.3 NETWORKING AND COLLABORATION

1.3.1 NOTABLE NETWORKING EVENTS OR COLLABORATIVE OUTCOMES

Youth Engagement Breakfast Hosted by Mastercard Foundation:

A dedicated Youth Engagement Breakfast provided a platform for young and emerging evaluators to network, share experiences, and connect with senior professionals and partners, reinforcing inter-generational collaboration.

Handing Over of the Evaluation Torch:

The ceremonial handing over of the Evaluation Torch from established leaders to the next generation of young and emerging evaluators symbolized the transfer of leadership and commitment to sustaining African-rooted evaluation practices.

Launch of the “Handbook on Made in Africa Evaluation”:

A high-profile collaborative event brought together AfrEA, academic leaders, and the Mastercard Foundation to launch this landmark publication, fostering partnerships for the promotion and operationalization of Afrocentric evaluation methodologies across the continent.

Welcoming Dinner with Cultural Dances and Entertainment:

The official welcoming dinner, hosted by the Ministry of Planning and Development of Ethiopia, combined cultural exchange with networking, allowing participants from diverse backgrounds to build relationships in an informal and inclusive setting.

The AfrEA Awards Ceremony Celebration and Recognition of Excellence:

This provided a platform to honour outstanding contributions to African evaluation, foster new partnerships, and celebrate collaborative achievements across the continent.

1.3.2 NUMBER OF NEW PARTNERSHIPS OR INITIATIVES LAUNCHED



Launch of the Young and Emerging Evaluators (YEE) Network: AfrEA celebrated the establishment of the YEE Network in 2024 to champion youth engagement and capacity building in evaluation across Africa.



Announcement of the African School of Evaluation (ASE): AfrEA introduced plans to launch the African School of Evaluation in November 2025, aiming to professionalize and certify African evaluators.



Publication of the “Handbook on Made in Africa Evaluation”: The launch of this landmark book consolidates Afrocentric evaluation methodologies and provides a practical resource for the field.



Expansion of the Twende Mbele Partnership: Twende Mbele, a collaborative initiative to strengthen national evaluation systems, announced the inclusion of new member countries such as Tanzania, Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire, and Senegal.



Strategic VOPE Collaboration with the Canadian Evaluation Society (CES): AfrEA and the Canadian Evaluation Society launched a joint initiative to promote Afrocentric evaluation excellence and global knowledge exchange through Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs).



AfrEA's strategic collaboration with the African Union (AU): This was formalised through the Addis Ababa Declaration of 2025, which commits both parties to advancing evidence-based, inclusive, and Afrocentric evaluation practices aligned with Agenda 2063 to drive sustainable development and accountability across the continent.

1.4 DECISIONS, ACTIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1.4.1 KEY DECISIONS MADE DURING THE ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

(a) Establishment of the African School of Evaluation (ASE):

AfrEA resolved to launch the African School of Evaluation in November 2025 to professionalize and certify African evaluators, with a focus on youth and women's inclusion.

(b) Adoption of the Addis Ababa Declaration 2025:

The conference concluded with the formal adoption of the Addis Ababa Declaration, which encapsulates commitments to inclusive, Afrocentric, and evidence-based evaluation practices across Africa.

(c) Expansion of Structured Mentorship and Youth Engagement:

It was decided to expand structured mentorship programs and professional development pathways for young and emerging evaluators, including the strengthening of the Young and Emerging Evaluators (YEE) Network.

(d) Endorsement of the "Handbook on Made in Africa Evaluation":

AfrEA endorsed and launched the Handbook on Made in Africa Evaluation, committing to its widespread dissemination and integration into evaluation training and practice.

(e) Strengthening Partnerships and Regional Collaboration:

The celebration resulted in the decision to deepen partnerships with governments, development partners, academia, and regional evaluation networks to harmonize standards, promote capacity building, and advance the Made in Africa Evaluation agenda continent-wide.

1.4.2 OUTSTANDING ISSUES AND ASSIGNED RESPONSIBILITIES



Issue 1: Limited mentorship and practical opportunities for Young and Emerging Evaluators

Assigned Responsibility: AfrEA and national evaluation associations are tasked with expanding structured mentorship programs, internships, and professional pathways to bridge the gap between training and hands-on experience.



Issue 2: Lack of harmonized evaluation standards and accreditation across African countries

Assigned Responsibility: AfrEA is responsible for leading the development and implementation of localized, Afrocentric evaluation standards and certification systems in collaboration with regional and national bodies.



Issue 3: Insufficient funding and legal frameworks to support inclusive evaluation systems

Assigned Responsibility: National governments and ministries, in partnership with AfrEA, are assigned to mobilize resources, enact supportive M&E legislation, and ensure sustainable financing for evaluation networks and capacity building.



Issue 4: Digital divide and inequitable access to technology for evaluation activities

Assigned Responsibility: Governments, in partnership with development partners and AfrEA, are responsible for investing in digital transformation, expanding access to digital tools, and building capacity among marginalized and rural populations to ensure inclusive participation in evaluation processes.

1.4.3 IMMEDIATE NEXT STEPS OR RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1

Finalise and operationalise the African School of Evaluation by November 2025 to accelerate professionalisation and certification of African evaluators, with a focus on structured mentorship and practical training for youth and women.

2

Lead the harmonisation and localisation of evaluation standards and methodologies by promoting Afrocentric, context-specific approaches and disseminating the newly launched “Handbook on Made in Africa Evaluation” across national and regional platforms.

3

Expand digital transformation initiatives by investing in inclusive digital M&E systems, addressing the digital divide, and ensuring equitable access for marginalized and rural populations.

4

Strengthen and formalize partnerships with governments, development partners, academia, and VOPEs to support sustainable funding, capacity building, and intergenerational knowledge transfer in evaluation across Africa.

DAY 1 : MONDAY, 16 JUNE 2025

2. OPENING DOORS – LEGACY, INCLUSION AND NEW HORIZONS

Between 08:00 – 09:00, Breakfast and Registration and a Youth Engagement Breakfast. This was hosted by The Mastercard Foundation.

2.1. Inaugural Session – Setting the Stage: Vision and Voices

This Session was hosted by: AfrEA and EEvA.

Theme: Celebrating 25 years of African evaluation excellence:
Diagnosing the Current Context and the Importance of AfrEA in the
African Development Context

Venue: UNECA Conference Hall

Speakers: _____



- EEvA President – Dereje Mamo TSEGAYE
- AfrEA President – Dr. Miché OUEDRAOGO
- Chief Guest: Her Excellency Dr. Fitsum Assefa ADELA, Minister of Planning and Development (MOPD), Ethiopia

Special Address: _____

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| • Mrs. Karen Rot-MÜNSTERMANN, Evaluator General, Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV), African Development Bank (AfDB) | • Jörg FAUST, Director DEval & Chair of EvalNet/OECD | • His Excellency Hon. Luc Joseph OKIO, Minister Delegate to the Prime Minister, responsible for State Reform, Republic of Congo |
| • Stephen ALOO, Senior Director, Impact Strategy, Analytics and Evaluation, Mastercard Foundation | • Abdrahamane DICKO, Director of Programs and Impact, African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) | • Botho Kebabonye BAYENDI, Director Strategic Planning and Delivery – African Union Commission |
| • Ashwani K. MUTHOO, Director General, Independent Evaluation Office (IEO), New Development Bank (NDB) | • Dugan Ian FRASER, Program Manager, Global Evaluation Initiative (GEI) / World Bank | |

Session Chair: Prof. Zenda OFIR, 2nd AfrEA President

2.1.1 SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

The inaugural session of AfrEA's 25th Anniversary celebrations focused on commemorating the organization's legacy in advancing evaluation excellence across Africa, while also setting a forward-looking agenda. The session's objectives included reflecting on AfrEA's achievements, promoting evidence-based decision-making, strengthening evaluation capacity—especially among youth and women – and fostering regional collaboration in alignment with the African Union's Agenda 2063.

The event brought together a diverse panel of speakers who highlighted AfrEA's pivotal role as a pan-African platform for knowledge exchange, innovation, and capacity building in the field of monitoring and evaluation.

A central theme was the prioritization of youth and women's participation in evaluation. Speakers such as Dereje Mamo Tsegaye and Dr. Miché Ouedraogo underscored the importance of inclusive evaluation practices, noting that youth represent 54% and women 22% of EEVA's membership. The founding of the Young and Emerging Evaluators (YEE) Network in 2024 was celebrated as a milestone, with calls for increased investment in mentorship and professionalization initiatives. The planned African School of Evaluation, set to launch in November 2025, was highlighted as a key step towards establishing a professional identity for African evaluators and supporting the next generation of practitioners.

Another major focus was the integration of evaluation into national and continental development agendas. Speakers emphasized the

need for robust monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems to track progress towards Agenda 2063's "Moonshots," such as achieving middle-income status for all AU member states, promoting African values, and empowering citizens. Ethiopia's experience, as presented by Dr. Fitsun Assefa Adela, showcased the institutionalization and digitization of evaluation within government, supporting the implementation of national development plans and voluntary reviews. The session stressed that effective evaluation systems are crucial for timely data collection, policy reform, and ensuring that development efforts are inclusive and evidence-driven.

The session also addressed strategic innovation areas and challenges facing the evaluation sector in Africa. There was a strong call to affirm

"Wisdom is like a baobab tree; no one individual can embrace it."

— Dr. Miché Ouedraogo

African identity in evaluation methodologies, develop "Made in Africa Evaluation" approaches, and leverage new technologies such as Artificial Intelligence to enhance M&E systems. Speakers highlighted

the need to balance local knowledge with international standards, navigate misinformation in politically polarized environments, and ensure that data ownership benefits the communities from which it originates. The importance of partnerships—both within Africa and with global organizations—was repeatedly emphasized as essential for sustainable development and mutual learning.

The session reinforced AfrEA's commitment to a people-driven Agenda 2063 and its leadership in shaping Africa's evaluation landscape. Key recommendations included expanding mentorship for emerging evaluators, strengthening national evaluation systems, translating evaluation findings into actionable policy reforms, and fostering greater youth and

women participation. The discussions reflected optimism about AfrEA's impact over the past 25 years and its continued relevance in driving evidence-based, inclusive, and African-centered development across the continent.

2.1.2 KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

1. Dereje Mamo TSEGAYE, EEVA President

Dereje Mamo Tsegaye emphasised the Ethiopian Evaluation Association's (EEVA) achievements, particularly its strong focus on women (22% of membership) and youth (54%) participation in evaluation. He highlighted EEVA's commitment to inclusive evaluation practices, capacity building, advocacy, and partnerships as critical to sustainable development. Tsegaye called for reflection on AfrEA's legacy and a recommitment

to Africa-centered evaluation, positioning Ethiopia as a hub of evaluation excellence.

"EEVA's mission is to serve as a centre of excellence in African evaluation by fostering knowledge generation, capacity building, and advocacy to support Ethiopia's socio-economic transformation. We are also proud to announce that our partnerships with MoPD, UNICEF, CSOs, Universities, and AfrEA have been instrumental in professionalizing evaluation and fostering an evidence-based culture in Ethiopia."

– Dereje Mamo TSEGAYE.



Photo 1: The High Panel Session during the Opening Ceremony

2. Dr. Miché OUEDRAOGO, AfrEA President

Dr. Miché Ouedraogo celebrated the founding of the Young and Emerging Evaluators (YEE) Network in 2024 and underscored AfrEA's pivotal role in fostering youth and women's inclusion. He announced the upcoming launch of the African School of Evaluation and discussed

the professionalization of evaluation through initiatives like INCE and VOPES. Ouedraogo advocated for leveraging artificial intelligence in monitoring and evaluation, stressed the need to move from dialogue to implementation, and prioritized investment in YEEs while affirming African identity in evaluation.

"In 2014, we founded the AfrEA Young and Emerging Evaluators (YEE) Network, which continues to nurture Africa's future evaluation leaders. I am personally a product of this initiative, having grown from a YEE into the President of AfrEA. This commitment is manifest in the high numbers of YEEs present here today, not only as listeners, but actively playing critical leadership roles in this event organization and also in their various organizations."

— Dr. Miché OUEDRAOGO.

2.1.3 SPECIAL ADDRESS SPEAKERS

1. Botho Kebabonye BAYENDI

Botho Kebabonye Bayendi outlined Africa's 2024–2033 development agenda, focusing on responsive public institutions, peaceful conflict resolution, and cultural values. He discussed the African Union's Agenda 2063 "Moonshots," emphasizing the need for rigorous evaluation to track progress, digital transformation, and evidence-based strategies. Bayendi called for integration with continental initiatives, actionable policy reforms based on evaluation findings, and youth inclusion in all development processes.

"There is need to translate evaluation findings into actionable policy reforms."

— Botho Kebabonye BAYENDI.

3. Hon. Luc Joseph OKIO

Hon. Luc Joseph Okio highlighted AfrEA's essential role in youth capacity building and the importance of supporting young evaluators continent-wide. He emphasized the value of contextualized evaluation approaches and called for ongoing collaboration across Africa to strengthen evaluation systems, positioning youth empowerment as a continental priority.

2. Dr. Fitsun Assefa ADELA

Dr. Fitsun Assefa Adela showcased the centrality of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) in Ethiopian policy, highlighting institutionalized evaluation in the national development plan and digitized M&E systems. He stressed collaboration with EEVA and AfrEA, the empowerment of civil society, and the role of evaluation in giving voice to citizens, promoting inclusion, and improving service delivery.

"Evaluation gives voice to citizens, promotes inclusion and improves service delivery."

— Dr. Fitsun Assefa ADELA.

3. Stephen Onuonga ALOO

Stephen Onuonga Aloo advocated for a “Made in Africa Evaluation” approach that incorporates youth and technology. He emphasized the importance of community-centered evaluation, African ownership of data, and ensuring that evaluation processes and outcomes serve the communities from which data originates.

“Made in Africa Evaluation is not just a methodology – it is a movement to ensure that Africa’s development is guided by evidence generated for, by, and with Africans.”

– Stephen Onuonga ALOO.

4. Mrs. Karen Rot-MÜNSTERMANN

Mrs. Karen Rat-Munsturmann addressed the challenges of misinformation and political polarization, positioning evaluation as a tool for transparency and accountability. She underscored the need for impartiality, learning from the past, and maintaining evaluation integrity in politically charged environments.

5. Jörg FAUST

Jorg Faust stressed AfrEA’s importance for technical and ethical robustness in evaluation. He advocated for a balance between locally led evaluation and global evaluation systems and called for enhanced collaboration with international networks like EVALNET to ensure both contextual relevance and adherence to international standards.

6. Dugan FRASER

Dugan Ian Fraser stressed the vital role of evidence in policymaking, commending AfrEA’s leadership and the Global Evaluation Initiative’s (GEI) support in strengthening evaluation systems across Africa. He urged



Photo 2: Stephen Aloo, Senior Director, Mastercard Foundation

evaluators to ask tougher questions, embrace technology and prioritize evidence use to improve governance, reduce inequality and enhance public services. Highlighting Africa's youth potential and democratic aspirations, he emphasised that evaluation must evolve. He praised AfrEA's role in professionalising evaluation and called for a future where evidence drives decisions, insisting that unused evidence is wasteful and evaluators must ensure its meaningful application.

Dugan attributed AfrEA's success to strong, visionary leadership and strategic partnerships that are responsive to Africa's evolving context. Looking forward, Dugan calls for the evaluation community to embrace technological advancements, ask tougher questions about program effectiveness, and prioritise the use of evidence in decision-making.

"Evidence that isn't being used, shouldn't be produced. We have to be ruthless about this. We need to become stewards of evidence. Ensuring that studies don't sit on shelves, but actually inform decisions, shape budgets and improve lives."

– Dugan FRASER.

7. Dr. Manas PURI

Dr. Manas Puri promoted customized evaluation designs, strong partnerships (such as with SAMEA), and building a culture of evaluation that reflects local realities. He emphasised the importance of partnership-driven and context-sensitive approaches to evaluation success.

8. Abdrahamane DICKO

Abdrahamane Dicko celebrated ACBF's long-standing partnership with AfrEA, emphasizing capacity development as a core mission. He advocated for positioning evaluation as a cornerstone of development, institutional

capacity building, and learning from past experiences to inform adaptive strategies for the future.

2.1.4 KEY ISSUES AND THEMES

The session identified several cross-cutting issues and themes. Capacity building emerged as a top priority, with calls to expand mentorship for emerging evaluators, strengthen national evaluation systems, and invest in young and emerging evaluators (YEEs). Strategic innovation was highlighted through the affirmation of African identity in evaluation, leveraging artificial intelligence, and the development of contextualized, "Made in Africa" methodologies. Implementation and policy reform were underscored by the need to translate evaluation findings into actionable reforms, navigate misinformation, balance local and global standards, and ensure community ownership of data. Youth and inclusion were central, with a strong focus on increasing youth and women's participation and empowering citizens through inclusive evaluation processes.

2.1.5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The session concluded with a strong consensus on the need to expand mentorship programs, strengthen the implementation of national evaluation systems, and enhance evidence-based decision-making. Participants recommended developing African-centered evaluation approaches and fostering greater youth and women participation. The session reinforced AfrEA's commitment to a people-driven Agenda 2063 and optimism for its future leadership in African evaluation. The emphasis on youth engagement, African-centered methodologies, and evidence-based policy positions AfrEA for continued relevance and influence in Africa's development trajectory.

DAY 1 : MONDAY, 16 JUNE 2025

2.2. Presidential Council and Youth Engagement Strands

These parallel sessions ran between 11:00 – 12:30 and was hosted by the Mastercard Foundation. Each session had a session chair and assisting Young and Emerging Evaluator in the spirit of AfrEA and the Mastercard Foundation on Walking the Talk in mentoring the YEEs in becoming not only the leaders of tomorrow, but of today.

SESSION: CO-CREATION WORKSHOP WITH THE PRESIDENTIAL COUNCIL, YOUNG PEOPLE AND NATIONAL EVALUATION ECOSYSTEM ACTORS.

Theme: Strengthening National Evaluation Systems on the African Continent: What Strategies and Synergies for Action for Ethical and Equitable Inclusion of Young People?

Session Chair: Matthew LUBUULWA, the Former President of Uganda Evaluation Association (UEA) represented Vicent SSENYONDO, Regional Representative, Eastern Africa.

Assisting YEE : _____



- Aimee RUBIBI (YEE from Rwanda)
- Rapporteur:
- Fentahun Bikale KEBEDE & Peres Akinyi OCHIENG'

2.2.1 EASTERN AFRICA – UNECA AFRICA HALL

The co-creation workshop with the Eastern Africa Regional VOPEs focused on strengthening national evaluation systems in East Africa, with a particular emphasis on the ethical and equitable inclusion of young people. Key actors identified in the regional evaluation ecosystem include government ministries (especially those responsible for planning and finance), national monitoring and evaluation units, NGOs and CSOs, academia and research institutions, national statistics offices, development partners, and community beneficiaries. These stakeholders play distinct roles, from policy-making and data provision to capacity building, advocacy, and direct engagement with evaluation processes.

Current initiatives to enhance youth engagement in evaluation systems involve capacity-building programs, mentorship and coaching opportunities, integration of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) into university curricula, and partnerships across sectors. Regional efforts such as the Made in Africa Evaluation initiative, peer learning through regional networks, and the formation of the African School of Evaluation were highlighted as innovative steps forward. However, significant weaknesses persist, including limited practical opportunities for youth mentorship and internships, inadequate funding, lack of legal frameworks supporting youth inclusion, dormant youth networks, language barriers, and the absence of standardized evaluation criteria and professional accreditation in many countries.

“A stronger, inclusive, and locally grounded evaluation ecosystem requires legal frameworks, structured mentorship, professional standards, and sustained investment in youth engagement and capacity development.”

– Vicent SSENYONDO, Regional Representative, Eastern Africa.

To address these challenges, the workshop proposed several strategies: localizing evaluation approaches to reflect African contexts, strengthening collaboration and information sharing among stakeholders, institutionalizing evaluation standards and integrating M&E into educational curricula, establishing accreditation and certification systems for evaluators, and expanding structured mentorship and hands-on learning opportunities for young and emerging evaluators. Additional recommendations included leveraging technology and alternative media for dissemination, enacting supportive M&E laws, and promoting youth-led approaches to nurture and skill the next generation of evaluators. The overall consensus was that building a robust, inclusive, and sustainable evaluation ecosystem in East Africa requires legal frameworks, professional standards, investment in youth capacity, and ongoing collaboration among all actors. “Emphasise youth led approaches to nurture and skill youths.”

2.2.2 WESTERN AFRICA – UNECA CONFERENCE ROOM 3

- Session Chair: Fatimata A. Wopa Gaye DIAW, Regional Representatives, Western Africa
- Assisting YEE: Madeleine BROU (YEE from Cote d'Ivoire)
- Rapporteur: Tewodros Yosef GEBREYESUS

The session focused on promoting the meaningful inclusion of young evaluators in Africa's evaluation landscape. The main objectives were to identify systemic barriers hindering youth participation, assess current opportunities for their engagement, and recommend strategic initiatives to enhance their capacity, leadership, and long-term involvement. The session emphasized the need to move beyond symbolic gestures and ensure that young people are not only learners but also co-leaders within evaluation systems, advocating for their integration into governance structures and decision-making roles.

"We must not see young people only as learners. Include them in governance structures not just in capacity building."

— Representative from Burkina Faso's national evaluation network.

Key themes included the persistent gap between training and practical experience for young evaluators, with participants highlighting the abundance of capacity-building initiatives but a shortage of real-world evaluation opportunities. The session called for systematic mentorship pipelines, structured apprenticeships, and professional pathways that transition youth from theoretical learning to hands-on practice. The Senegalese PSC7 program was cited as a promising model, offering a 12-month trajectory from training to professional evaluation, and AfrEA was urged to champion similar systematic transitions across the continent.

"It took me three years before anyone called me an evaluator. Before that, I was always 'the data collector'."

— Etienne, Réseau Guinéen de Suivi-Évaluation.



Photo 3: Western Africa VOPs during the Presidential Council Break-out Deliberations

Gender-sensitive inclusion was another critical topic, with female youth evaluators sharing experiences of harassment and exclusion, particularly in leadership roles. The session underscored the need for mentorship from senior women, safer workspaces, and gender-sensitive supervision to address the unique challenges faced by young women in the field. Additionally, there was a strong call for youth to be recognized as designers and implementers of evaluation studies, not merely as subjects or beneficiaries, and for their active participation in shaping emerging paradigms such as Indigenous and Made in Africa Evaluation.

“As a young woman, being underestimated is constant. But it becomes worse when you try to lead a team.”

— Bré Hassana MARIAM, Senegal.

The discussion also mapped out the diverse ecosystem actors essential for supporting youth engagement, including national evaluation networks, civil society organizations, regional development banks, universities, and national statistics institutes. Emerging themes such as climate change adaptation and localization were highlighted as new frontiers for youth involvement. The session concluded with a call to institutions to offer meaningful roles, credit young evaluators in reports, and institutionalize residency programs. Proposed solutions included establishing an African School of Evaluation, regional bootcamps, mentorship-driven graduate programs, and supportive internship models, all aimed at embedding youth as central actors in the future of African evaluation.

2.2.3 CENTRAL AFRICA – UNECA CONFERENCE ROOM 4

- Session Chair: Alphonse BOYOGUENO, Regional Representative, Central Africa/ YEE, TBD
- Assisting YEE: Blanche Edwige NGUETTA (YEE from Côte d'Ivoire)
- Rapporteurs: Yordanos Tesfaye KEBEDE and Alphonse BOYOGUENO

The Rapporteur Notes were provided by the Chairman of the Session, Alphonse Boyogueno, who is also the Regional Representative for Central Africa at the AfrEA Board. This session discussions focused on the challenges and strategies related to strengthening national evaluation systems in Central African countries, specifically Chad, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Congo, and Cameroon. The main theme centers on fostering ethical and equitable inclusion of young evaluators within these systems, highlighting the need for improved collaboration and action synergies across the region.

A significant challenge identified is the lack of financial resources to effectively support national evaluation networks. The document calls for greater state involvement in providing necessary funding, as the current financial burden, particularly the high annual membership contribution to AfrEA (500,000 FCFA), is seen as prohibitive. It is suggested that this fee be revised downward to redirect resources toward training young and emerging evaluators (YEE).

“There is the need for States to provide the means to support national evaluation networks in order to finance the training of the YEE.” — Alphonse BOYOGUENO.

Another major issue discussed is the scarcity of reliable administrative data at the country level, which hampers the ability to conduct thorough and accurate assessments. This gap in data availability limits the effectiveness of evaluation activities and undermines evidence-based decision-making within national systems.

Generally, the session advocated for strategic reforms, including financial adjustments and increased state support, to empower evaluation networks. It also emphasizes the importance of investing in the next generation of evaluators and improving data systems to ensure that national evaluation efforts are both ethical and inclusive, ultimately strengthening governance and accountability in Central Africa.

2.2.4 NORTHERN AFRICA – UNECA CONFERENCE ROOM 5

- Session Chair: Jamdane JAMAL (President of AME), represented Rachid ESSEDIK, Regional Representative Northern Africa
- Assisting YEE: Taiss YASSMINE (YEE from Morocco)
- Rapporteur: Yenus Ibrahim AYALEW

The session focused on strategies and synergies for strengthening national evaluation systems in Northern Africa, with a particular emphasis on the ethical and equitable inclusion of young people. The session aimed to assess the current state of evaluation practices, the roles of various actors, and opportunities for youth engagement in the region.

Key presentations highlighted contrasting national contexts. In Morocco, the Moroccan Evaluation Association has played a pivotal role in institutionalizing monitoring and evaluation (M&E) practices, collaborating with public sector bodies, UN organizations, and private entities. The Moroccan parliament has prioritized evaluation, with dedicated departments in each ministry. Importantly, there are structured pathways for young and emerging evaluators, such as internships and partnerships with organizations like EvalYouth, to become involved in evaluation processes.

“The Moroccan Evaluation Association has been supporting students in development, monitoring and evaluation related studies to practice in the form of internship and apprenticeships within organizations and partners like EvalYouth.”

— Ramdane JAMAL, Président de l'Association Marocaine de l'Evaluation

Conversely, the situation in Mauritania was described as more challenging. Although there is a national plan for evaluation in the public sector, actual practice is limited and has regressed over time.

“There is limited practice of Evaluation in Mauritania, even though there is a national plan to conduct Evaluation in the public sector.”

— Oumoul Khayri Ba-TALL (4th AfrEA President)

Most evaluation activities are conducted by international organizations, with little indigenous capacity or national system development. This has resulted in a lack of opportunities for young people and a weak evaluation culture within the country.

The session concluded that while progress has been made in countries like Morocco, significant gaps remain in others such as Mauritania. It underscored the importance of multi-stakeholder collaboration – including government, private sector, academia, and youth platforms—to build resilient and inclusive evaluation ecosystems. The need for sustainable frameworks, advocacy for indigenous evaluation practices, and knowledge-sharing across countries was emphasized as crucial for advancing youth inclusion and strengthening national evaluation systems.

Recommendations from this session included supporting Mauritania in reinitiating its evaluation practice with technical assistance from regional partners, fostering collaboration between national and continental evaluation associations, and facilitating workshops to replicate successful models like Morocco's. The session called for ongoing advocacy and capacity-building to ensure that evaluation systems across Northern Africa are both robust and inclusive, particularly for young and emerging evaluators.

2.2.5 SOUTHERN AFRICA – UNECA CONFERENCE ROOM 6

- Session Chair: John Tembo NJOVU (Former AfrEA Treasurer) represented Moses MASHINGAIDZE, Regional Representative, Southern Africa.
- Assisting YEE: Baraka Leonard MFILINGE (YEE from Tanzania)
- Rapporteur: Netsanet Tiruayehu WORKINEH

The session focused on exploring strategies to build inclusive, ethical, and sustainable national evaluation systems in Africa, with a particular emphasis on the equitable involvement of young people. The objectives included identifying key actors within the evaluation ecosystem, assessing current youth-focused initiatives, and formulating strategic actions to promote ethical and inclusive monitoring and evaluation (M&E) practices across the continent.

A central discussion point was the identification of the main actors in national evaluation systems. These actors include government institutions at all levels, academic institutions, civil society organizations, national and continental evaluation associations, international organizations such as UN agencies and bilateral donors, and private sector consultants. The session highlighted the collaborative roles these groups play in shaping and implementing evaluation systems, with particular attention to their influence on policy, capacity building, and technical support.

The session underscored the importance of including young and emerging evaluators (YEEs) in national evaluation efforts. It was agreed that higher education institutions and professional associations are crucial in nurturing new evaluators, while youth-focused capacity development initiatives are essential for the sustainability of evaluation systems. Strategies such as mentorship frameworks, youth quotas in evaluations, and youth-inclusive governance in evaluation organizations were discussed as

ways to enhance the meaningful participation of young people.

Innovations and quality assurance mechanisms were also discussed, with South Africa's approach serving as a detailed example. The country employs steering committees, technical working groups, and peer reviewers to oversee and ensure the quality of evaluations. A shift toward proactive quality assurance frameworks, rather than post-hoc assessments, was noted as a positive development. Additionally, the session highlighted the growing role of regional support bodies like CLEAR Anglophone Africa and the African Evaluation Journal in strengthening M&E infrastructure, supporting higher education institutions, and facilitating knowledge exchange.

The session concluded with several key recommendations: formalizing youth inclusion strategies within evaluation policies and programs, enhancing collaboration between national and regional platforms, strengthening evaluation societies to advocate for high-quality and inclusive systems, promoting continuous quality assurance, and leveraging journals and conferences for sharing best practices. The importance of engaging parliamentarians as key users of evaluation findings was also emphasized, alongside the value of cross-regional learning enabled by platforms like the African Evaluation Journal.

DAY 1 : MONDAY, 16 JUNE 2025

2.3. Plenary Session – Feedback on Presidential Council Sessions

This session run from 12:30 – 13:15 Hrs and was hosted by AfrEA.

Theme: Sharing of Feedback in Plenary

Venue: UNECA Africa Hall

Session Chair: Dr. Awuor PONGE, Vice-President, AfrEA.

Rapporteurs: Betelhem Ketema TULU and Mahlet Mehari ABRHA

2.3.1 DR. AWUOR PONGE, VICE-PRESIDENT, AFREA

The Plenary Session on Feedback from the Presidential Council Sessions was chaired by Dr. Awuor Ponge, the Vice-President of AfrEA. The session provided a continent-wide overview of the progress and persistent challenges in strengthening national evaluation systems and promoting the inclusion of young and emerging evaluators. Regional representatives highlighted both strengths and gaps, while making suggestions on how to address the gaps and challenges.

Eastern Africa showcased strong partnerships and an active Young and Emerging Evaluators (YEE) network but noted limited mentorship opportunities and language barriers. Western Africa emphasised the need to move youth from passive roles to active participation in governance and evaluation, while also addressing gender-specific challenges. Northern Africa pointed out the fragility of support structures for young evaluators, and Central Africa stressed the importance of integrating monitoring and evaluation (M&E) across sectors despite resource constraints. Southern Africa celebrated sectoral progress but raised concerns about the exclusion of less-educated youth and indigenous populations, as well as the dominance of certain languages in evaluation discourse.

Throughout the session, Dr. Awuor Ponge repeatedly underscored the role of the Presidential Council and Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs) as central to capacity development in Africa.

“A stronger, inclusive, and locally grounded evaluation ecosystem requires legal frameworks, structured mentorship, professional standards, and sustained investment in youth engagement and capacity development.”

– Dr. Awuor PONGE.

This perspective reinforced the consensus that VOPEs and the Presidential Council must lead in harmonizing standards, fostering mentorship, and ensuring that evaluation systems are accessible, equitable, and responsive to the continent's diverse realities.

2.3.2 EASTERN AFRICA – MR. MATTHEW LUBUULWA

The Eastern Africa session, chaired by Mr. Matthew Lubulwa (Former President of Uganda Evaluation Association), highlighted the region's strengths, such as existing partnerships and collaborations, regional programs for Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs) to learn from each other, and an established Young and Emerging Evaluators (YEE) network. However, weaknesses included limited mentorship and internship opportunities for YEEs, inadequate funding for youth programs linked to Agenda 2063, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and National Development Plans (NDPs), as well as language barriers and a lack of evaluation standards in most countries. Current initiatives to address these issues involve capacity building, the Made in Africa evaluation initiative, youth mentoring, internships, and the establishment of the African School of Evaluation. Strategic recommendations included adopting accreditation and certification for evaluators, localizing evaluation practices, enacting monitoring and evaluation (M&E) legislation, and utilizing alternative media to enhance youth participation.

2.3.3 WESTERN AFRICA – DIAW FATIMATA GAYE

In Western Africa, the Session Chair, Diaw Fatimata Gaye, the Western Africa Regional Representative, emphasized the importance of key stakeholders such as national associations, government bodies, civil society organizations, technical and financial partners, training institutes, and think tanks. The main challenges identified were the perception of youth as mere subjects of study rather than active participants, barriers

to entry for youth, insufficient capacity-building opportunities, and specific challenges faced by young women, including intimidation. Strategies suggested to address these issues included involving youth in decision-making and policy formulation, creating learning platforms, and enabling youth to develop their own programs. Mrs. Fatimata underscored that inclusion and equity are essential to ensure meaningful youth engagement in evaluation processes.

2.3.4 NORTHERN AFRICA – JAMDANE JAMAL

The Northern Africa session, presented by the Session Chair, Jamdane Jamal, President of the Morocco Evaluation Association, pointed out the fragility of the Francophone network for young innovative evaluators as a significant weakness. Another major challenge is the considerable experience required in the field, which many young people lack, creating barriers to their effective participation. The session did not elaborate extensively on strengths or ongoing initiatives but highlighted the need for stronger support structures and opportunities for young evaluators to gain practical experience and build their capacities over time.

2.3.5 CENTRAL AFRICA – ALPHONSE BOYOGUENO

Central Africa's session, led by regional representative Alphonse Boyogueno, included participants from Congo, Chad, Cameroon, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Main actors in evaluation were identified as sectoral ministries, parliaments, the African Evaluation Association, and statistical agencies. Strengths included the integration of M&E in all sectors and support from development partners such as UNICEF. However, challenges remain, including insufficient resources, high costs of conducting evaluations, limited use of standardized methodologies, and weak stakeholder dialogue. Proposed strategies for ethical and equitable youth engagement





Photo 4: Dr. Ponge leading a Plenary Session on Feedback from Presidential Council

included establishing operational systems for practical learning, leveraging new technologies, structured mentorship programs through universities, and motivating senior evaluators to guide young professionals.

2.3.6 SOUTHERN AFRICA – JOHN TEMBO NJOVU

The Southern Africa session, presented by a former AfrEA Treasurer, John Tembo Njovu, noted significant development in the M&E sector and celebrated progress made, as evidenced by the AfrEA anniversary event. However, concerns were raised about the focus on highly educated youth, which risks excluding those without formal qualifications, as well as the lack of inclusion of indigenous populations.

“Usually it’s talked about young people who have high education and qualification. But, what about those who don’t have the capacity or the qualification? Most of the people we are supposed to serve are being left out. The indigenous people, are not being included.”

– John Tembo NJOVU.

The session also discussed the Made in Africa evaluation initiative, emphasizing that evaluation should serve all people, not just the privileged. Challenges with technology were highlighted, particularly regarding access for rural populations, and language barriers were noted, with many being left out due to the dominance of English and French, neglecting other languages such as Portuguese and those spoken in North Africa.

DAY 1 : MONDAY, 16 JUNE 2025

2.4. Young and Emerging Evaluators in Africa

14:00 – 15:30, Hosted by: Mastercard Foundation and UNFPA

Theme: Perspectives from Change Makers with AfrEA Heritage.

Venue:

UNECA Plenary Hall [TBD]

Speakers: _____



1. Noumonvi Kossigan MAWUENA (Togo)
2. Aimee RUBIBI (Rwanda)
3. Hilina YALEM (Ethiopia)
4. Mark MULOBI, Africa YEE (A)
5. Special Address: Ana Erika Lareza, EvalYouth Global

Session Chairs: Marco SEGONE, Director of Independent Evaluation Office (IEO), UNFPA.

Rapporteurs: Tsion Mokonen HAILU and Azeb Haileselassie GEBRESELASSIE

This session focused on youth engagement in the evaluation field, highlighting organizational strategies, shifts needed for youth inclusion, and advice for young evaluators. This session was chaired by Marco Segone.

Session objectives and themes included: _____

- Explored perspectives from changemakers within the AfrEA heritage, focusing on:
- Meaningful youth engagement
- Digital tools and innovation
- Bringing new voices and facilitating learning sessions
- Strengthening youth leadership within AfrEA
- Cross-country learning opportunities

2.4.1 MARCO SEGONE, DIRECTOR, IEO – UNFPA, CHAIR OF SESSION

Marco Segone (Director of Independent Evaluation Office (IEO), UNFPA), highlighted the significant role that major organizations – including the Mastercard Foundation, UNFPA, WFP, UNICEF, OHCHR, IFAD, and private sector actors like Clone House – play in creating spaces for young evaluators. He emphasized the “learn by doing” strategy as a core approach, advocating for practical experience and volunteering as essential entry points for youth. Marco also underscored the importance of passion and belief in one’s work, stating that volunteering is a powerful way for young evaluators to build networks, gain experience, and grow professionally. He pointed out ongoing challenges such as limited access to opportunities, the need for stronger mentorship, and the lack of visibility for youth in the evaluation field.

“You need a passion to do it–believing in what you do. Volunteering is the best way to enter and grow in the field of evaluation.”

— Marco SEGONE.

2.4.2 AIMEE RUBIBI, YEE FROM RWANDA

Aimee Rubibi (a YEE from Rwanda) focused on the need for systemic shifts to engage youth more meaningfully in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems. She advocated for culturally relevant evaluation approaches, capacity building, practical mentorship, and

youth-led evidence generation. Aimee called for pan-African collaboration and urged AfrEA to partner with other networks to amplify youth voices. Drawing from her own experience as a young evaluator, she stressed the importance of practical experience, proactive career planning, self-awareness, and finding mentors, while noting that young people are inspired by effective leadership.

2.4.3 HILINA YALEM, YEE FROM ETHIOPIA

Hilina Yalem (a YEE from Ethiopia) described AfrEA’s pivotal role as an umbrella organization for African evaluation associations, highlighting its efforts to mobilize and empower youth evaluators. She recommended that AfrEA continue partnering with other organizations and prioritize inclusive, interactive learning sessions. Hilina advised young evaluators to be proactive, work closely with professionals, value their networks, and bring forward bold ideas that accommodate and elevate youth participation in the field.

2.4.4 NOUMONVI KOSSIGAN MAWUENA, YEE FROM TOGO

Noumonvi Kossigan Mawuena (a YEE from Togo) drew attention to the opportunities provided by the FAO, particularly in the area of climate change innovation. He emphasized the value of volunteering as a key source of experience and learning for young evaluators. Noumonvi encouraged organizations to create more evaluation opportunities specifically tailored for youth, reinforcing the idea that practical engagement is crucial for professional growth.



Photo 5: The AfrEA YEEs receiving the Evaluation Torch from the EvalYouth President

2.4.5 MARK NZIOKA MULUBI, YEE REPRESENTATIVE AT THE AFREA BOARD

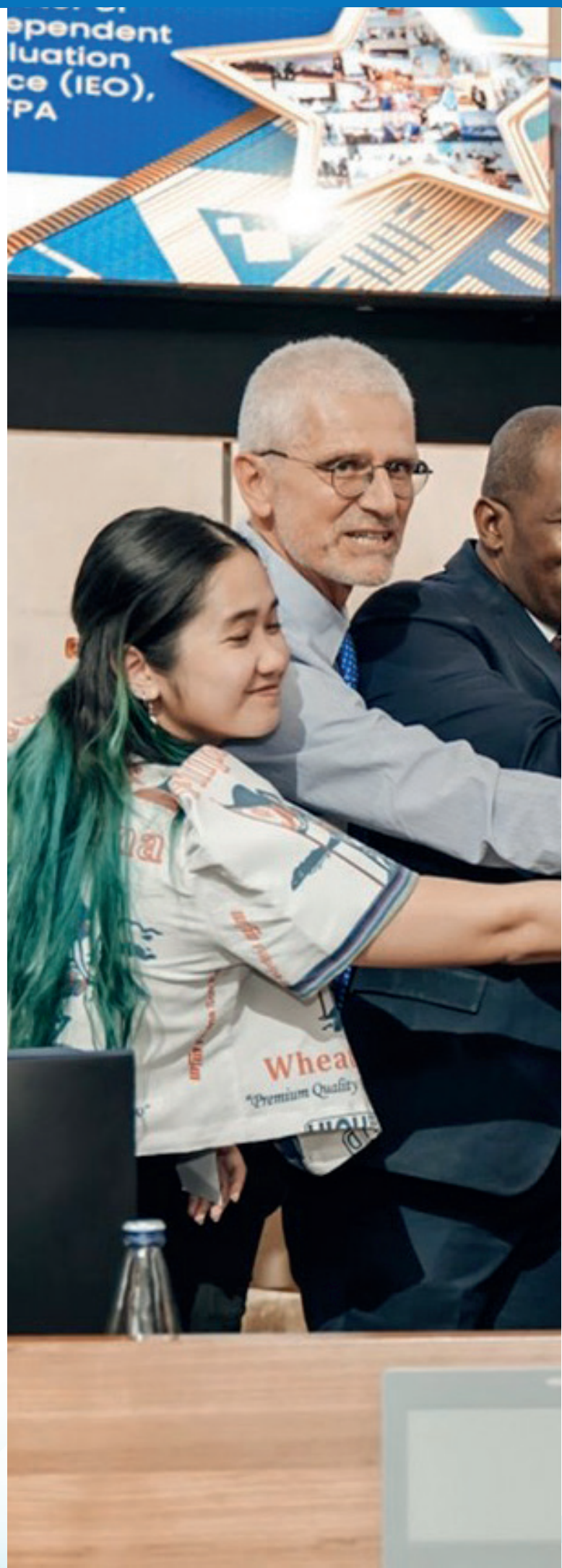
Mark Nzioka Mulubi (the YEE Representative at the AfrEA Board and Co-Chair of the AfrEA YEEs) advised young evaluators to cooperate with seasoned professionals, follow their passion, and actively seek volunteer opportunities, noting that the evaluation ecosystem is supportive and ready to help those who show initiative.

2.4.6 ANA ERIKA LAREZA, CHAIRPERSON OF THE EVALYOUTH GLOBAL

Ana Erika Lareza, the Chairperson of the EvalYouth Global Network, stressed on the importance of mentorship, acknowledging that no single mentor can provide everything but that diverse guidance is invaluable. She described volunteering as low risk but high in responsibility, and called on institutions to help youth become change makers by investing in their competency development and providing meaningful opportunities for growth in the evaluation sector.

2.4.7 HANDING OVER OF THE EVALUATION TORCH

This session also witnessed the Handing over of the Evaluation Torch and Celebration of Youth in Evaluation in Shaping the Future of Evaluation. This was handed over by Marco Segone and Ana Erica Larenza to AfrEA President Dr. Miché Ouedraogo, in the presence of other African Young and Emerging Evaluators (YEEs). The handing over of the Evaluation torch at the AfrEA 2025 Anniversary Celebrations symbolized the transfer of responsibility, inspiration, and leadership from established evaluators to the next generation of young and emerging evaluators in Africa. This act represented a commitment to sustaining the legacy of African-rooted evaluation, fostering continuity, and empowering youth to play a central role in shaping the future of evaluation on the continent.





The session emphasised the critical importance of youth engagement in the evaluation field, highlighting that young evaluators are essential for the sector's growth and innovation in Africa. Key recommendations included expanding volunteering opportunities as strategic entry points for young professionals, fostering cross-country learning exchanges within the AfrEA community, and investing in digital platforms and innovative tools to support youth participation and networking. The session also called for increased recognition and visibility of young evaluators' contributions and the organization of regional, youth-led learning sessions. These steps are seen as vital for nurturing the next generation of evaluators and ensuring the continued excellence and relevance of African evaluation practices.

Photo 6: The Handing over of the Evaluation Torch to AfrEA Leadersip and the YEEs

DAY 1 : MONDAY, 16 JUNE 2025

2.5. Launch of the Book “Handbook on Made in Africa Evaluation”

The Launch of the book “Handbook on Made in Africa Evaluation” was hosted by the Mastercard Foundation, between 1600 – 1700 at the UNECA Africa Hall.

The Speakers during this launch event were:



1. Dr. Miché OUEDRAOGO, President of AfrEA
2. Prof. Bagele CHILISA, University of Botswana
3. Dr. Mjiba FREHIWOT, Editor-in-Chief of the African Evaluation Journal
4. Prof. Zenda OFIR, 2nd AfrEA President
5. Adeline SIBANDA, Senior Director, Programs Impact Support & Advisory, Mastercard Foundation.

Session Chair: Dr. Mark Anthony ABRAHAMS, Founding Editor-in-Chief of the African Evaluation Journal (AEJ)

Rapporteurs : Anna Elsie LUYIGGO and Ian Egunza KIDIGA



Photo 8: Mrs. Neo Thamae GARIBA (holding the Book) celebrating the Book Launch

The plenary session for the launch of the “Handbook on Made in Africa Evaluation” brought together leading voices in African evaluation to reflect on the journey of the Made in Africa Evaluation (MAE) movement and the significance of consolidating its principles in a dedicated handbook. The session opened with the objective of officially launching the Handbook, reflecting on the evolution of African-rooted evaluation philosophies, and highlighting the importance of contextualized African evaluation knowledge. Key themes included reclaiming African philosophies, establishing African-rooted standards, critiquing Eurocentrism and randomized control trials (RCTs), and recognizing the collaborative effort behind the publication.

The Handbook was recognised as a landmark tool for supporting evidence generation rooted in African knowledge and philosophies. The session emphasized the importance of collaboration, historical understanding, and indigenous perspectives, with a call to continue building Africa-owned and Africa-led evaluation systems. Recommendations included promoting widespread distribution and application of the Handbook, encouraging the use of African epistemologies in evaluation training, mobilizing resources for translation and dissemination, and hosting national dialogues for the domestication and operationalisation of the Handbook.

2.5.1 DR. MARK ANTHONY ABRAHAMS, FOUNDING EDITOR, AFRICAN EVALUATION JOURNAL (AEJ)

Dr. Mark Anthony ABRAHAMS (Founding Editor-in-Chief of the African Evaluation Journal) as the Session chair, began by referencing precolonial African systems of governance and policy, arguing that evaluation must be defined through African nuances to truly benefit the continent. He emphasized the need to contextualize evaluation within African traditions and policy processes, suggesting that the Handbook would play a vital role in enhancing communication and practice within the field. He described the Made in Africa Evaluation as timely and necessary, reinforcing the call for its continued development as a transformative tool.

2.5.2 DR. MICHÉ OUEDRAOGO, PRESIDENT OF AFREA

Dr. Miché OUEDRAOGO (AfrEA President) focused on the need to rework research and evaluation curricula to better serve African learners, noting the challenge posed by a lack of African citation sources—a gap the Handbook aims to fill. She highlighted the Handbook's provision of clear definitions, African values, and practical case studies, while acknowledging the support of the Mastercard Foundation in publishing the first volume. Dr. Ouedraogo also addressed challenges in championing the Handbook, including age-based skepticism and the underutilization of evaluation data, and noted the alignment of the Handbook with AfrEA's 2024–2028 Strategic Plan.

2.5.3 DR. ZENDA OFIR, 2ND AFREA PRESIDENT

Dr. Zenda OFIR described the origins of Made in Africa Evaluation – spurred by the insufficient use of the first Africa-tailored African Evaluation Guidelines developed in 2002, and the ‘tsunami’ of RCTs promoted in Africa by elite organisations in the Global North that felt very far away from the empowering evaluation Africa needed. Together with Dr. Sulley Gariba they initiated the “Make Evaluation Our Own” day-long session at the 4th. AfrEA Conference in Niger in 2007, organised by then AfrEA President Oumoul Khayri Ba-Tall.

AfrEA became fully engaged after the African Thought Leaders’ Forum on Evaluation for Development at the Bellagio Centre in 2012. She stressed the need for African contributions to evaluation theory and practice, for intellectual rigor, for the use of the new African Evaluation Principles, and for the blending of the best of global with the best of African evaluation.

“Evaluation practice, including in Africa, has to reflect this polycrisis era, and we are globally still very far from that. If we build capacities based on ‘old thinking’ divorced from the issues raised by the polycrisis it will make evaluation irrelevant, and soon.”

– Dr. Zenda OFIR

2.5.4 PROF. BAGELE CHILISA, UNIVERSITY OF BOTSWANA

Prof. Bagele CHILISA, a pioneer of MAE, questioned the foundations of evaluation in Africa and the relevance of its underlying philosophies. She

argued that global models, informed by Western branches of evaluation, were not contextually relevant for Africa. Prof. Chilisa introduced a new “Context, Needs, and Priority Branch” of evaluation, anchored in African history and culture, and called for practices rooted in African stories, values, and customs. She reviewed various branches of evaluation literature and stressed the need for frameworks that position Africa globally in defining knowledge.

2.5.5 DR. MJIBA FREHIWOT, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF THE AFRICAN EVALUATION JOURNAL (AEJ)

Dr. Mjiba FREHIWOT reflected on how African histories have shaped the development of MAE, providing an overview of the Handbook’s chapters and posing critical questions about decolonizing and indigenizing African evaluation.

“African people must manage their knowledge production.”

– Dr. Mjiba FREHIWOT.

She highlighted the epistemologies of context, promoted the use of Swahili proverbs to explain African evaluation practices, and emphasized that evaluation is part of African culture. Dr. Frehiwot described the Handbook as a tool to help funders reference African citations and philosophies, with case studies from Uganda and South Africa illustrating contextual practices. She explained the Handbook’s three key sections: Introduction (the genesis and meaning of MAE), Epistemology (frameworks and tools), and Theory (African-authored methodologies).

2.5.6 ADELINE SIBANDA, MASTERCARD FOUNDATION

Adeline SIBANDA described the Handbook as a collective, practice-based effort, affirming the value of African knowledge in reshaping global evaluation norms. She congratulated Dr. Miché and the AfrEA Board on the publication, appreciated the contributors and supporters, and shared optimism for the Handbook’s role in spreading knowledge and inspiration. Sibanda also highlighted the need for continued partnership and broad dissemination across the continent.

2.5.7 MRS. NEO THAMAE GARIBA AT THE CELEBRATION OF THE BOOK LAUNCH

At the official launch of the “Handbook on Made in Africa Evaluation”, the presence of Neo Thamae Gariba, wife of the late Dr. Sulley Adisa Bamidele Gariba (AfrEA’s 5th. President), was both moving and deeply symbolic. As she held the book that embodies the vision and philosophy her husband championed, Neo Thamae Gariba stood as a living bridge between his enduring legacy and the future of African-led evaluation. Her participation honoured Dr. Gariba’s foundational role in the Made in Africa Evaluation movement, while also highlighting the personal commitment and partnership that underpinned his life’s work. Her presence lent a powerful sense of continuity and inspiration to the event, reminding all attendees of the human stories and sacrifices behind the movement, and reinforcing the significance of community and family in sustaining transformative leadership.

DAY 1 : MONDAY, 16 JUNE 2025

2.6. Welcoming Dinner – Cultural Dances and Entertainment

19:00 – 21:30 Hosted by: Ministry of Planning and Development, Ethiopia

Venue: 2000 Habesha Cultural Restaurant, Addis Ababa

Speakers : _____



1. EEVA President – Dereje Mamo TSEGAYE
2. AfrEA President – Dr. Miché OUEDRAOGO
3. Keynote Speaker – Subarna MATHES, Deputy Director, Office of Strategy and Learning, Ford Foundation

Facilitators : _____

- Tsigereda BEKELE, Former President, Ethiopia Evaluation Association (EEVA)
- Carlos Komla AKLIGO, AfrEA Executive Director

Rapporteurs : Carol Alexandra ADOASI and Stephanie ABBEY



The Welcoming Dinner, held in the evening of June 16, 2025, at the 2000 Habesha Bole Cultural Centre, marked the opening of the AfrEA 2025 Anniversary Celebrations. The session was organized by the Ethiopian Minister of Planning and Development and aimed to greet participants, encourage cultural exchange, and promote collaboration and networking among attendees.



Photo 9: Dr. Miché Ouedraogo, addressing Participants during the Welcome Dinner

During the Welcome Dinner, key speakers included Dr. Miché Ouedraogo, who welcomed participants and expressed gratitude for their involvement in the conference, Dereje Mamo, who delivered a welcoming speech, and Surbarna Mathes of the Ford Foundation, who both welcomed participants and reaffirmed ongoing support by the Ford Foundation for AfrEA's initiatives.

Surbarna Mathes, the Deputy Director in the Office of Strategy and Learning at the Ford Foundation welcomed participants to the event, setting a tone of inclusivity and appreciation for those attending the celebration. She affirmed the Ford Foundation's commitment to continue supporting AfrEA and its initiatives, highlighting the importance of sustained partnership and collaboration for advancing the organization's goals. Her remarks collectively emphasised the value of ongoing support, engagement, and community-building within the AfrEA network.



The AfrEA Welcome Dinner at the 2000 Habesha Cultural Restaurant showcased the rich cultural heritage of Ethiopia, offering attendees an authentic experience through traditional dancing and local cuisine. This setting fostered a sense of unity and connection, encouraging cultural exchange among participants from diverse backgrounds.



The hospitality and warmth of the event left a memorable impression; by incorporating Ethiopian traditions, the event highlighted the importance of hospitality and shared experiences, setting a warm and inclusive tone for the celebrations while promoting collaboration and networking within the AfrEA community.

Photo 10: The AfrEA Vice-President putting his best foot forward on the Dancehall

DAY 2: TUESDAY, 17 JUNE 2025

3. BUILDING BRIDGES – WISDOM, INNOVATION & PARTNERSHIPS

The first event of the day was breakfast and the continuation of registration between 0800 – 0900. This was hosted by AfrEA and EEVA.

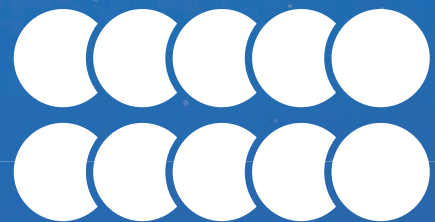
3.1 AfrEA Council of Elders Strand

Theme: AfrEA the Past and the Present: What does the Future hold for AfrEA?

Hosted by AfrEA

Venue: UNECA Conference Hall

Speakers: _____



1. Dr. Mahesh PATEL (1st AfrEA President)
2. Dr. Zenda OFIR (2nd AfrEA President)
3. Jean-Charles ROUGE (3rd AfrEA President)
4. Oumoul Khayri Ba-TALL (4th AfrEA President)
5. Dr. Florence ETTA (6th AfrEA President)
6. Ms. Nermine WALLY (7th AfrEA President)
7. Serge Eric Yakeu – DJIAM (8th AfrEA President)
8. Dr. Adam Suleiman (9th AfrEA President)
9. Adeline SIBANDA (10th AfrEA President)
10. Rosetti Nabbumba NAYENGA (11th AfrEA President)

Session Chair: Prof. Ian HOPWOOD, Former Representative of the UNICEF Office in Dakar and Honorary President of the Senegalese Evaluation Association (SenEval)

Rapporteur: Mark Nzioka MULOBI and Peres Akinyi OCHIENG’.

The session brought together past presidents and leaders of AfrEA to reflect on the organization’s evolution, its current challenges, and future directions for evaluation practice in Africa. The session provided a comprehensive reflection on AfrEA’s evolution, emphasizing innovation, inclusivity, and strategic collaboration as essential for the future of evaluation practice in Africa.

3.1.1 DR. MAHESH PATEL – AFREA 1ST. PRESIDENT

Dr. Mahesh Patel, AfREA's first president, opened with reflections on AfREA's foundational challenges and early achievements. He emphasised the importance of building evaluation capacity across Africa and the critical role of partnerships in organizational growth. Dr. Patel highlighted the need to establish credible evaluation systems in diverse contexts and called for increased resource mobilization to support capacity building. He also raised concerns about the balance between the influence of experienced elder evaluators and the need to promote young and emerging evaluators. To address this, he proposed initiatives such as youth essay prizes and greater financial support for activities led by young evaluators and national associations.

3.1.2 DR. ZENDA OFIR – AFREA 2ND PRESIDENT

Dr. Zenda Ofir, the second president, gave highlights of AfREA's evolution during her term, including ensuring that Africa's voice was heard in global forums, and organising the Third AfREA Conference in Cape Town with the South African Public Service Commission (SAPSC) represented by Dr. Indran Naidoo – the first joint effort with a government agency. She made a plea for African evaluation to reflect and help address the severe, urgent challenges posed by the polycrisis, noting that no country today can call themselves “developed” when their extractive economic practices have led to the destruction of societies and of nature; all societies now need to find new ways of thinking and working. African evaluation therefore has to contribute globally, and South-South Cooperation is particularly important in this regard. We also need to help make significant Agenda 2063 priorities such as the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) work in practice.

“If we evaluate and build capacities based on ‘old thinking’, ‘business as usual’, divorced from the issues raised by the polycrisis, it will make African evaluation irrelevant – and soon.”

– Dr. Zenda OFIR.

3.1.3 JEAN-CHARLES ROUGE – AFREA 3RD PRESIDENT

Jean-Charles Rouge, AfREA's third president, spoke about the foundational achievements during his tenure, including the development of African evaluation guidelines and frameworks. He emphasized the institutionalization of evaluation in African development and the importance of building partnerships with the international evaluation community. Rouge raised the need for standardized evaluation practices and a sustainable evaluation culture across the continent, underscoring that “process is important” in evaluation methodology.

“AfREA should lead a continental agenda on the ethical use of AI in evaluation, ensuring that AI is applied appropriately in “Made in Africa Evaluation.” AI tools built on non-African data, assumptions, and philosophies risk reinforcing bias and inequality. AfREA can co-develop solutions with a new range of partners to safeguard locally rooted, future-ready evaluation practices and make sure African contexts shape the technologies we use, not the other way around.”

– Jean-Charles ROUGE



Photo 11: A Session of the AfrEA Council of Elders

3.1.4 OUMOUL KHAYRI BA-TALL – AFREA 4TH PRESIDENT

Oumoul Khayri Ba-Tall, the fourth president, shared her journey from a non-elected member to a leadership position, focusing on planning frameworks, organizational development, and capacity building at the grassroots level. She stressed the importance of making evaluation accessible to broader African communities, promoting inclusive practices, and ensuring leadership development and succession planning within AfrEA.

3.1.5 NERMINE WALLY – AFREA 7TH PRESIDENT

Nermine Wally, the seventh president, discussed the organizational development of AfrEA, voluntary participation, and member engagement. She highlighted AfrEA's international character and the need for partnership building, as well as the challenges of mobilizing resources and expanding the organization's reach and impact.

3.1.6 SERGE ERIC YAKEU-DJAM – AFREA 8TH PRESIDENT

Serge Eric Yakeu-Djiam, the eighth president, presented a strategic roadmap for AfrEA's development, emphasising capacity building through partnerships and the need to address Africa's "polycrisis" – the convergence of climate, economic, political, and social challenges—through evaluation. He focused on strategic planning, crisis management, and organizational resilience, capturing the spirit of collective effort with the quote, "One hand can't bring firewood for cooking".

"Made in Africa Evaluation (MAE) is based on the standards of the African Evaluation Association (AfrEA), using localised methods or approaches with the aim of aligning the evaluation process with the lifestyle and needs of African people while also promoting African values."

– Serge Eric Yakeu-DJAM.

Serge Eric also led the congregation in paying tribute by recognising and acknowledging the AfrEA Big Wigs and colleagues who have since passed on. These included: Issaka Traore (Former Board Member from Burkina Faso), Marie Gervais (RFE and CES Canada), Bali H. Andriantseheno (MASSE, Madagascar), Samuel Braimah (First AfrEA's Executive Director, Ghana). He also gave emphasis on his contributions as the 8th AfrEA President in restructuring the AfrEA vision and core activities for example the effective strategic and operational plans, the first ever capacity building programme, the Peer-to-Peer (P2P) collaboration under small grants, strengthening National VOPEs which included inter alia: TanEA in Tanzania, ESK in Kenya, SenEval in Senegal, CaDEA in Cameroon, RenSe in Niger and RISE in Côte d'Ivoire. He also contributed to the extension of the number of VOPEs on the continent, such as the formation of the Chad Monitoring and Evaluation Association (RTSE), Rwanda Monitoring and Evaluation Association and the Ethiopian Evaluation Association (EEvA).

It was during his time, that saw the launch of the African Parliamentarian Network on Development Evaluation (APNODE) and the first edition of African Evaluation Journal (AEJ) in Yaounde in 2014 during the 7th. AfrEA Conference. He was also instrumental in the establishment of the AfrEA Office in Accra with the appointment of staff (Executive Director, Office Manager and an Office Attendant).

3.1.7 ADELINE SIBANDA – AFREA 10TH PRESIDENT

Adeline Sibanda, the tenth president, reflected on AfrEA's current and future challenges, balancing past achievements with future aspirations. She discussed the importance of strategic positioning, leadership continuity, and planning for sustainable organizational growth.

3.1.8 KEY CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

The past presidents of AfrEA addressed several key cross-cutting issues that are central to the evolution and sustainability of evaluation practice in Africa. A primary theme was the need for a strategic roadmap to guide the development of the evaluation field, with emphasis on strengthening institutional frameworks, governance, and decentralization to ensure that both the central AfrEA body and national associations are robust and mutually supportive. The presidents highlighted the importance of building organizational resilience to navigate Africa's ongoing "polycrisis"—the convergence of climate, economic, political, and social challenges—by fostering partnerships, enhancing resource mobilization, and supporting capacity building across diverse contexts. They also stressed the necessity of embracing digital transformation and integrating artificial intelligence (AI) into evaluation methodologies to keep pace with global trends and improve efficiency and impact.

Another significant cross-cutting issue was the call for greater youth engagement and intergenerational knowledge transfer within AfrEA and the broader evaluation community. The past presidents noted the growing prominence of elder evaluators and advocated for a balanced approach that actively promotes the participation and leadership of young and emerging evaluators, including through targeted prizes, mentorship, and financial support for youth-led initiatives. Inclusivity was also underscored, with speakers urging that evaluation practices be made accessible to grassroots communities and that leadership development and succession planning be prioritized. The presidents collectively emphasized the importance of sustainable

funding mechanisms, member engagement, and strategic partnerships with governments and international organizations as critical enablers for AfrEA's continued relevance and impact in shaping Africa's evaluation landscape.

3.1.9 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The main conclusions from the AfrEA Council of Elders session emphasized the necessity for AfrEA to strengthen its organizational structure, governance, and sustainability to effectively support evaluation practice across Africa. The past presidents agreed that AfrEA must play a central role in shaping the continent's evaluation landscape by developing a strategic roadmap, fostering institutional development, and ensuring effective decentralization so that national evaluation associations receive adequate support from the central body. The session highlighted the need for AfrEA to embrace digital transformation, particularly through the integration of artificial intelligence and modern evaluation methodologies, to remain relevant and responsive to emerging challenges. Additionally, the importance of building organizational resilience to navigate Africa's "polycrisis"—the convergence of climate, economic, political, and social challenges—was underscored, as was the need for sustainable funding mechanisms and enhanced member engagement.

The recommendations put forth by the speakers focused on actionable steps to ensure AfrEA's continued impact and relevance. These included prioritizing youth development and mentorship, expanding technical training and professional development opportunities, and promoting intergenerational knowledge transfer to balance the influence of elder evaluators with the active participation of young and emerging evaluators. The council also called for the integration of AI and digital tools in evaluation practice, the development of modern evaluation methodologies, and the strengthening of partnerships with governments, Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation (VoPE) networks, and international evaluation bodies. Concrete follow-up actions suggested included implementing the strategic roadmap, establishing working groups for AI integration, developing youth engagement initiatives, and creating a sustainable fundraising strategy to support both central and national-level activities.

DAY 2: TUESDAY, 17 JUNE 2025

3.2. The Made in Africa (MAE) Strand

This session ran from 10:20 – 11:30 Hrs. The Session was hosted by the Mastercard Foundation

Theme: Which Way Made in Africa Evaluation? The Strides that have been made in MAE and what the future holds.

Venue: UNECA Conference Centre, Africa Hall

Speakers: _____



1. Prof. Bagele CHILISA, University of Botswana
2. John Tembo NJOVU, EvalIndigenous Global Network, Africa
3. Dr. Mbah Patrick OKWEN, CEO of eBASE Africa
4. Dr. Almas Fortunatus MAZIGO, University of Dar-es-Salaam
5. YEE Representative: Okwen Chanice FRI

Session Chair: Stephen Onuonga ALOO, Senior Director, Impact Strategy, Analytics and Evaluation Mastercard Foundation.

Rapporteurs: Baraka Leonard MFILINGE and Asher Gebremedhin MEHARI

The discussion was anchored in the need to decolonise evaluation practices and root them in African philosophies, particularly Ubuntu, emphasizing interconnectedness, spirituality, and community agency.

“To build a stronger future together, we must invest in African capacity, celebrate our collective achievements, and ensure that no community is left behind in our pursuit of evidence-based development.”

– Stephen Onuonga ALOO, Mastercard Foundation.





3.2.1 PROF. BAGELE CHILISA

Prof. Bagele Chilisa opened by advocating for Ubuntu and spirituality as foundational to African evaluation, warning that current logframe models often fail to capture community realities. She highlighted the importance of aligning evaluation tools with local contexts and relationships, stressing that AfrEA must embody the values of “by the people, for the people.”

**“What we see is not what we report.
AfrEA must reflect the values of
Ubuntu - by the people, for the people.”**

– Prof. Bagele CHILISA.

3.2.2 MR. JOHN TEMBO NJOVU

Mr. John Tembo Njovu called for indigenous, bottom-up evaluation approaches, critiquing the dominance of Western methodologies and questioning accountability in evaluation processes with the provocative query: “Who is evaluating the evaluator?”

3.2.3 DR. MBAH PATRICK OKWEN

Dr. Mbah Patrick Okwen emphasized the need to move MAE from rhetoric to practice, drawing attention to the influence of AI and funding flows as power structures that Africans must control. He described MAE as a paradigm shift, not merely a technical adjustment.

**“Made in Africa is not just a tool – It is
a paradigm shift.”**

– Dr. Mbah Patrick OKWEN.

3.2.4 DR. ALMAS FORTUNATUS MAZIGO

Dr. Almas Fortunatus Mazigo challenged the alignment of MAE with global frameworks like the SDGs, instead urging a focus on Africa’s Agenda 2063 and the inclusion of African languages and philosophies in evaluation designs.



Photo 12: Participants of the Made in Africa (MAE) Strand

3.2.5 OKWEN CHANICE FRI

Okwen Chanice Fri advocated for evaluation methodologies grounded in community storytelling and emotional intelligence, insisting that success must be defined by communities rather than donors.

“Let’s move from extraction to co-creation in African evaluation.”

– Okwen Chanice FRI.

The panel’s discussion underscored that African evaluation should be people-centered, representing a shift in power, identity, and self-determination. There was consensus on the need for universities to foster critical thinkers and for evaluation processes to be decolonized at both methodological and governance levels. Integrating storytelling, case studies, and community reflections was highlighted as essential for meaningful evaluation.

Audience questions focused on the readiness of development partners to adopt indigenous approaches, the institutional role of African universities, and the foundational values for MAE, with Ubuntu and “African First” emerging as central themes. The session concluded that MAE is urgent and transformative, requiring AfrEA to audit its own governance, establish accredited indigenous evaluation programs, develop Afrocentric governance models, and advocate for culturally relevant funding. The unanimous value championed by all speakers was Ubuntu, reinforcing the call for evaluations that are truly African in spirit and practice.

3.2.6 KEY CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

Several cross-cutting issues emerged prominently across the speakers’ contributions during the “Made in Africa Strand” session. Foremost was the call for decolonizing evaluation practices by rooting them in African philosophies such as Ubuntu and emphasizing indigenous epistemologies. Speakers highlighted the inadequacy of imported logframes and Western-centric tools, advocating instead for evaluation approaches that are people-centered, contextually relevant, and reflective of African values, languages, and lived realities. The need for a paradigm shift was repeatedly stressed—not just a technical adjustment, but a transformation of power, identity, and governance in the evaluation ecosystem. This included the imperative to move from extractive methodologies to co-creation with communities, ensuring that success is defined by those most affected rather than external donors or agencies.

Another key cross-cutting issue was the systemic transformation required within institutions and funding structures to support the Made in Africa Evaluation (MAE) agenda. Speakers underscored the necessity for African universities to become hubs for critical thinking and indigenous knowledge production, rather than merely training practitioners in imported frameworks. There was a consensus on the urgency of developing Afrocentric governance models, accrediting indigenous evaluation programs, and advocating for culturally relevant, long-term funding. The session also raised critical questions about the readiness of development partners to embrace indigenous approaches and the ethical imperative for communities to have the right to evaluate their evaluators. Ultimately, Ubuntu and “African First” were championed as foundational values, with the session concluding that MAE is not optional but an urgent and transformative continental priority.

3.2.7 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The main conclusions from the session emphasized that the Made in Africa Evaluation (MAE) paradigm is not optional but an urgent and transformative necessity for the continent. The session concluded that MAE must move beyond technical adjustments to become a true paradigm shift rooted in African philosophies like Ubuntu, prioritizing people-centered, community-driven, and contextually relevant evaluation practices. It was agreed that AfrEA should lead by example, auditing its own governance structures to ensure alignment with indigenous principles and ethical standards that recognize the right of communities to evaluate their evaluators. The integration of both qualitative storytelling and quantitative tools, adapted to African realities, was highlighted as essential for meaningful evaluation outcomes.

The key recommendations included establishing accredited indigenous evaluation programs within African universities to foster critical thinking and local knowledge production. The session also called for the development of Afrocentric governance models for AfrEA and its structures, and for advocacy toward long-term, culturally relevant funding models to support MAE. Additionally, it was recommended to promote MAE as a continental paradigm rather than just a technical framework, integrate session reflections into the AfrEA 2025 Declaration, engage with funders to localize power and funding flows, and document African success stories in MAE to guide future implementation. The value of Ubuntu was unanimously championed by all speakers as the foundational principle for these efforts.

DAY 2: TUESDAY, 17 JUNE 2025

3.3. Working with the Governments and Development Partners

This was a session on Working with the Governments Development Assistance Organizations and Development Partners. The Session run from 1150 Hrs – 1320 Hrs.

Theme: Cooperation, collaboration, and localization: towards a new paradigm for development evaluation in Africa.

Venue : UNECA Conference Hall

Speakers : _____



1. Jörg FAUST, Director DEval & Chair EvalNet/OECD
2. Marco SEGONE, Director of Independent Evaluation Office (IEO), UNFPA
3. Xiaozhe ZHANG, Senior Professional, Independent Evaluation Office (IEO), New Development Bank (NDB)
4. Samer HACHEM, Director, Sector-Country-Project evaluations, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
5. Kai Brand-JACOBSEN, Senior Advisor, Independent Evaluation Department of Norwegian Development Cooperation
6. Ashely WAX, Regional Evaluation Advisor, UNICEF ESARO

Session Chair : Richard JONES, Deputy Director of Independent Evaluation Office (IEO), UNDP

Rapporteur: Tsion Mekonen HAILU and Anna Elsie LUYIGGO

The session brought together key speakers to discuss how international support for the Made in Africa Evaluation initiative can be strengthened through cooperation, localization, and African leadership in development evaluation. Speakers addressed the evolution of international support, the alignment of global actors with local evaluation needs, and the importance of national evaluation systems rooted in African contexts. The session revealed a strong consensus among development partners on the need to localize evaluation practices, empower African leadership, and adopt participatory, context-specific methodologies. Speakers called for greater investment in young evaluators, transparency, and the development of tools grounded in African knowledge, with AfrEA positioned to play a central role in standard-setting and coordination.



3.3.1 RICHARD JONES – UNDP

Richard Jones, as the Session chair, emphasised the necessity of collaboration between governments, development partners, and local stakeholders, positioning evaluation as a critical tool for managing and assessing development programs. He highlighted the growing demand for robust national evaluation systems to underpin evidence-based policymaking across Africa.

3.3.2 JÖRG FAUST – DEVAL & EVALNET/OECD

Jörg Faust questioned whether traditional OECD approaches remain suitable for Africa, stressing the need to empower African partners in evaluation cooperation. He pointed out that much of the evaluation discourse is still Eurocentric and called for localized partnerships that better reflect African priorities. Faust also

noted ongoing debates within EvalNet about localizing evaluation standards and practices and advocated for institutionalizing evaluation through initiatives like EvalYouth and strategic capacity building led by African organizations.

3.3.3 MARCO SEGONE – UNFPA

Marco Segone argued that cooperation in development evaluation is fundamentally about power dynamics and the willingness of multilateral organizations to share power, particularly with African youth. He called for a mindset shift towards intergenerational and multi-stakeholder engagement, emphasizing the importance of localization and youth inclusion. Segone highlighted that nearly 90% of UNFPA's African offices are led by African citizens and stressed the decentralization of evaluation functions to ensure local ownership and leadership.



3.3.4 XIAOZHE ZHANG – NEW DEVELOPMENT BANK (NDB)

Xiaozhe Zhang, representing the New Development Bank, underscored the need for international actors to support the NDB's integration into the African evaluation community. Zhang advocated for participatory approaches and tailored evaluation standards, prioritizing stakeholder inclusion and mobilizing resources to strengthen country-level evaluation portfolios.

3.3.5 SAMER HACHEM – EBRD

Samer Hachem from the EBRD explained that while the bank's engagement in Africa is still limited, there is a strong interest in expanding evaluation practices on the continent. He emphasized the importance of hiring local consultants, ensuring transparency in evaluation findings, and encouraging organizations like AfrEA to lead in disseminating results and promoting African evaluation expertise.

3.3.6 KAI BRAND-JACOBSEN – NORWEGIAN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION (NORAD)

Kai Brand-Jacobsen congratulated AfrEA on its leadership and addressed the implications of global crises for evaluation practices. He discussed Norway's evolving approach, calling for more participatory methodology development led by African practitioners. Brand-Jacobsen highlighted the challenges African evaluators face in accessing international assignments and stressed the need for practical, context-specific tools and diversified staffing in evaluation teams.

3.3.7 ASHLEY WAX – UNICEF, ESARO

Ashley Wax from UNICEF reflected on the organization's commitment to rethinking strategies and systems to benefit African youth and children. She emphasized the importance of evidence-based decision-making, system-level changes, and the creation of evaluation products that inform policy at national and international levels. Wax advocated for transitioning from headquarters-led to African-led evaluations and reinforcing local ownership and coordination with national governments.



Photo 13: Panelists at the Development Partners Session

3.3.8 KEY CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

Key cross-cutting issues discussed in this session included the urgent need for localization and ownership of evaluation processes in Africa, emphasizing the importance of national systems that reflect indigenous knowledge, local priorities, and accountability mechanisms. The session highlighted the necessity of shifting power dynamics within development evaluation, advocating for greater African leadership and youth inclusion, as well as the co-creation and innovation of evaluation methodologies. Intergenerational and multi-stakeholder cooperation emerged as essential, with speakers stressing participatory approaches and the decentralization of evaluation functions to ensure that evaluation practices are contextually relevant and sustainable. Additionally, the transparency of evaluation findings, investment in young and emerging evaluators, and the development of practical, context-specific tools were identified as critical to advancing effective and accountable evaluation systems across the continent.

3.3.9 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

The main conclusions from the session were that there is a clear and growing momentum among development partners to localize evaluation practices, decentralize authority, and elevate African leadership in the field of development evaluation. The session underscored the importance of participatory, context-specific, and inclusive methodologies, recognizing that robust national evaluation systems must reflect indigenous knowledge, local priorities, and accountability mechanisms. Speakers agreed that sharing power, particularly with young and emerging evaluators, is essential for sustainable progress, and that transparency in publishing evaluation results is critical for building trust and accountability among stakeholders.

Key recommendations included the need to fully localize evaluation functions by ensuring authority, staffing, and funding are placed in African hands, and to invest in young and emerging evaluators (YEEs) beyond training, supporting their leadership and regional visibility. The session also called for the development of contextual tools grounded in African knowledge and practices, strengthening AfrEA's role in setting standards and coordinating efforts, and encouraging donors to be transparent and form genuine partnerships with national systems. These steps were seen as vital for advancing the Made in Africa Evaluation agenda and ensuring that evaluation practices genuinely serve African development needs.

DAY 2: TUESDAY, 17 JUNE 2025

4. DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS AND ECOSYSTEM PLAYERS

4.1. Strand 1 – Strengthening Evaluation Capacity in English Speaking Africa

Between 14:30 – 16:00, we had this Session hosted by: CLEAR – AA and Twende Mbele on the Theme: Strengthening Evaluation Capacity in English Speaking Africa: Pathways to Better Governance and Development Outcomes.

Venue : Africa Hall

Speakers: _____



1. Dr. Thina NZO, Programme Manager Twende Mbele
2. Ms Thokozile MOIAIWA, Chief Director – Department of Planning Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME)
3. Sakina MWINYIMKU, Prime Minister's Office, Tanzania
4. Mr. Vincent SSENYONDO, AfrEA Eastern Africa Regional Representative
5. Timothy LUBANGA, Prime Minister's Office, Tanzania

Session Chair: Dr. Takunda CHIRAU, Deputy Director CLEAR Anglophone Africa (CLEAR – AA)

Rapporteur: Azeb Haileselassie GEBRESELAASSIE and Ian Egunza KIDIGA.

The session brought together leading figures from African government, academia, and development organizations to discuss the advancement of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems across the continent. Organized by CLEAR-AA and Twende Mbele, the panel aimed to showcase successful M&E capacity-building initiatives, highlight the role of partnerships in strengthening national evaluation systems, discuss strategies for institutionalizing M&E in governance, and address the professionalization and certification needs of evaluators. Participants included representatives from South Africa, Uganda, Tanzania, and other African countries, with a focus on sharing experiences, challenges, and actionable recommendations for the future.

4.1.1 DR. THINA NZO, TWEDE MBELE

Dr. Thina Nzo opened the session by outlining the origins and impact of Twende Mbele, a network established in 2016 to support the institutionalization of M&E in African governments. She emphasized the importance of decentralizing M&E to sub-national levels and involving communities, especially women and youth, in development planning. Dr. Nzo highlighted Twende Mbele's efforts in developing policy frameworks, evaluation guidelines, and capacity-building programs, as well as fostering peer learning among member countries. She noted that the network is expanding to include new members such as Tanzania, Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire, and Senegal, and stressed the need for centralized data systems and participatory approaches to ensure inclusive development.

4.1.2 SAKINA MWINYIMKU, PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE, TANZANIA

Sakina Mwinyimku shared Tanzania's experience in building structured M&E systems through stakeholder engagement and partnerships, particularly with CLEAR-AA. She discussed how Tanzania's approach empowers youth as M&E champions and prioritizes gender budgeting analysis to ensure equitable government spending. Mwinyimku underlined the importance of organizing data for decision-making and integrating data into centralized systems, while also maintaining the independence of M&E units, which report directly to sector CEOs. She advocated for empowering parliament as an oversight body to strengthen accountability.

4.1.3 MS. THOKOZILE MOIAIWA, DPME SOUTH AFRICA

Ms. Thokozile Moiaiwa provided insights into South Africa's M&E journey, describing the establishment of the national M&E department in 2010 and the development of a comprehensive system comprising evaluation, performance

monitoring, and data systems. She noted that South Africa has conducted over 80 evaluations, which are publicly available and have influenced policy decisions and service delivery. Moiaiwa highlighted the annual revision of the national evaluation plan, the creation of M&E units across sectors, and the collaboration with universities to offer M&E courses. She also discussed the role of the Voluntary Organization for Professional Evaluation (VOPE) in promoting professional standards and technical skills among local evaluators and described the use of steering committees to ensure the independence of evaluations.

4.1.4 MR. VICENT SSENKYONDO, AFREA EASTERN AFRICA REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE

Mr. Vicent Ssenkyondo addressed the challenges and progress of evaluation in Uganda, focusing on issues of certification and capacity building. He emphasized the need for professionalization in the field, pointing out that the lack of formal certification undermines the effectiveness and credibility of M&E. Ssenkyondo has led capacity-building efforts for over 7,000 young and emerging evaluators, fostering synergies between professional organizations and academia. He stressed that strong evaluation capacity is essential for evidence-based governance and that professional bodies for evaluators are crucial for maintaining standards and accountability.

4.1.5 TIMOTHY LUBANGA, PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE, UGANDA

Timothy Lubanga elaborated on Uganda's government-led programs to build M&E capacity and the integration of evaluation into public management frameworks. He described the establishment of management committees within Twende Mbele, the hybrid approach to internal evaluations, and the integration of evaluation requirements into public finance laws. Lubanga highlighted partnerships with organizations such as UNICEF, UNDP, and local

NGOs, and noted that evaluation findings have led to the restructuring of national programs and improved resource allocation. He underscored the importance of institutionalizing M&E in public service and maintaining strong collaborations with universities for capacity development.

4.1.6 KEY CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

The key cross-cutting issues addressed by the speakers centered on the need for strong partnerships and collaboration among governments, development partners, academia, and local communities to strengthen national monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems. Speakers consistently highlighted the importance of capacity building at both institutional and individual levels, emphasizing the professionalization and certification of evaluators to ensure quality and credibility. Data integration and the establishment of centralized data repositories were identified as crucial for informed decision-making and overcoming data fragmentation. Decentralization of M&E, with a focus on participatory, bottom-up approaches that involve communities, women, and youth, was stressed as essential for inclusive development and effective policy-making. Additionally, the independence of M&E units, the integration of M&E into public finance and management laws, and the ongoing challenge of securing political will and sustainable resources were recurrent themes, all underscoring the collective effort required to institutionalize and mainstream M&E for transparency, accountability, and better governance across Africa.

4.1.7 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The session concluded that strengthening monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems in Africa hinges on expanding and deepening partnerships among governments, regional networks, development partners, academia, and local NGOs, as these collaborations have proven essential for building robust M&E ecosystems

and supporting capacity-building initiatives. Institutionalizing M&E was identified as a top priority, with recommendations for countries to develop or revise national evaluation policy frameworks, establish dedicated M&E units across all government sectors, and embed M&E requirements within public finance and management laws to ensure accountability and improve policy-making. The speakers also stressed the need for investing in structured capacity-building programs at both individual and institutional levels, particularly targeting young and emerging evaluators, and emphasized the importance of professional certification to enhance the credibility and effectiveness of the evaluation profession.

Another major conclusion was the critical need to address data fragmentation by developing centralized data repository systems, which would facilitate better access to information and support evidence-based decision-making. The session also highlighted the value of participatory, bottom-up approaches that actively involve communities, women, and youth in the evaluation process, ensuring that development initiatives are inclusive and responsive to local needs. Despite notable progress, persistent challenges such as ensuring the independence of M&E units, securing political will, and maintaining sustainable resources were acknowledged, with a call for ongoing collective effort to overcome these barriers. The session recommended continued expansion of peer learning platforms, the inclusion of new countries in regional networks like Twende Mbele, and ongoing knowledge sharing to sustain momentum and foster a culture of learning, accountability, and transparency in governance across Africa.

DAY 2: TUESDAY, 17 JUNE 2025

4.2. Strand 2 – Capacity Development in Evaluation in French-Speaking Africa

Theme: Capacity Development in Evaluation in French-Speaking Africa: Impact and Prospects

This Session was hosted by The Réseau Francophone de l'Évaluation (RFE) and CLEAR-FA. It took place between 1430 – 1550.

Venue: Break-out Room 2

Speakers: _____



1. Roger Angouono-MOKE, Representative of the RFE, Executive Secretary of the Congolese Evaluation Association, Advisor on Reform Evaluation to the Minister Delegate to the Prime Minister, responsible for State Reform (Republic of Congo)
2. Nassibou BASSONGUI, Representative of CLEAR Francophone Africa (CLEAR-FA), Researcher in Public Policy Evaluation.
3. Samuel KOUAKOU, President of the Ivorian Initiative for Evaluation (2IEval)
4. Louise PICARD, PIFED (Programme International de Formation en Évaluation du Développement), École Nationale d'administration Publique (ENAP), Quebec
5. Justine Francine Betou ADA, The Centre Africain d'Études Supérieures en Gestion (CESAG) / CLEAR FA

Session Chair: Prof. Ian HOPWOOD, Honorary President of SenEval (Senegal) and former Chief of Evaluation at UNICEF.

Rapporteur: Justine Francine Betou ADA, CESAG / CLEAR FA

This session organized by RFE (Réseau Francophone de l'Évaluation) and CLEAR FA, brought together key stakeholders, including evaluation professionals, government representatives, and emerging evaluators, with the objective of assessing the impact of capacity-building initiatives in evaluation across Francophone Africa. The workshop aimed to explore new strategies for sustainable capacity development, particularly emphasizing the inclusion and advancement of emerging evaluators within the region.

4.2.1 PROF. IAN HOPWOOD, HONORARY PRESIDENT OF SENEVAL (SENEGAL)

This session was chaired by Prof. Ian Hopwood, the Honorary President of SenEval (Senegal) and former Chief of Evaluation at UNICEF. In his opening remarks to the session, he noted that past Evaluation Capacity Development (ECD) efforts are to be applauded, but the scanty evaluation evidence suggests the impact has been limited due primarily to a focus on short term training to strengthen individual capacities, often in insufficient numbers and with inadequate post-training support. To respond to the scale and immediacy of the need, it is imperative to radically revise ECD policies and to adopt sustainable and flexible long term capacity development programmes, focusing on institutional and organizational systems, including the promotion of postgraduate evaluation training and research in African universities. Prof. Hopwood reiterated that as there is no predictable linear pathway for successful ECD, flexibility is important to rapidly seize opportunities when they arise, and to adapt strategies to meet the demand of leaders and policy makers, as well as the civil society.

“It is equally important that ECD policies and programmes are based on national capacity assessments that take account of the diversity of knowledge systems and evaluation related capacities that exist in all countries but often go unrecognised as they do not conform to the technocratic models and definitions that guide much of current assessment work.”

– Prof. Ian HOPWOOD.

4.2.2 ROGER ANGUONO-MOKE, RFE

Roger Anguono-Moke opened the session by detailing the institutionalization process of evaluation in Congo. He highlighted the significance of conducting a national diagnostic (MESA) in 2022 to assess the country's evaluation capacities, which led to the establishment of a collaborative framework among government entities. Anguono-Moke stressed that capacity development must be systemic, not limited to individual training, and that overcoming siloed communication within government was crucial for progress. He underscored that such institutionalization is a gradual, participatory process, requiring patience and sustained advocacy.

4.2.3 NASSIBOU BASSONGUI, CLEAR FA

Nassibou BASSONGUI discussed the evolution of the CLEAR project, initially focused on individual capacity building but shifting towards organizational and institutional strengthening since 2019. He emphasized the importance of partnerships with governments, VOPEs, and regional networks, as well as the need to rethink cooperation models by mobilizing endogenous resources and redefining traditional donor roles. Bassongui noted persistent challenges such as weak political demand, high government turnover, poor coordination, and insufficient legal and financial support for evaluation. He advocated for more structured, long-term approaches, including integrating evaluation training into national universities and engaging more stable government officials for sustainability.

4.2.4 SAMUEL KADJO ALAIN KOUAKOU, PRESIDENT, 2IE COTE D'IVOIRE

Samuel KOUAKOU presented the dynamic work of 2IEval, focusing on activities like flash evaluations, webinars, and the “Prix Évaluation d’Or,” which has become a motivational tool for emerging evaluators. He highlighted the “Prix Évaluation d’Or,” the training of 300 emerging evaluators in collaboration with UNICEF and the Réseau des Diplômés de l’École Nationale d’Administration (REDENACI). In addition, he demonstrated how 2IEval participated in the drafting of a law on policy evaluation in Côte d’Ivoire. He highlighted the growing involvement of national institutions and the African diaspora in capacity-building efforts. Kouakou responded to questions about institutionalizing the award, confirming that efforts are underway to make it a model for other African countries, thus further motivating young evaluators and promoting sustainability.

4.2.5 LOUISE PICARD, PIFED

Louise PICARD spoke about the PIFED program, which supports organizational rather than individual training in evaluation. He noted the structural support provided to African institutions and the contribution of PIFED to the development of university-based evaluation programs. Picard pointed out that short-term training is insufficient without accompanying support, and that funding and accessibility remain significant barriers, especially for professionals outside institutional frameworks.

4.2.6 JUSTINE FRANCINE BETOU ADA, CESAG / CLEAR FA

Justine Francine Betou Ada shared her personal journey as an emerging evaluator, underscoring the vital role of mentorship, networking, and resilience in overcoming barriers to entry in the evaluation field. She highlighted the lack of structured mentorship programs in some national associations and the challenges posed by linguistic and regional divides between Francophone and Anglophone Africa. Justine called for greater trust in young evaluators and the need for organizations to actively support their integration and professional growth.

4.2.7 KEY CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

The key cross-cutting issues addressed by the speakers centered on the urgent need for systemic and sustainable capacity development in evaluation across Francophone Africa, moving beyond short-term, individual training towards institutional and organizational strengthening. All speakers highlighted persistent challenges such as weak political demand for evaluation, high turnover among government officials, insufficient coordination among stakeholders, and limited resources—both human and financial—which hinder the institutionalization and effectiveness of evaluation systems. The lack of structured mentorship and support for emerging evaluators, as well as barriers to entry such as incomplete scholarships and limited access to opportunities, were also emphasized as recurring obstacles.

The speakers underscored the importance of fostering collaboration among governments, VOPEs, universities, and international partners, integrating diaspora expertise, and promoting local ownership and leadership in evaluation initiatives. Addressing linguistic and regional divides, especially between Francophone and Anglophone Africa, and advocating for greater production of French-language evaluation resources, were also identified as essential for inclusive and impactful capacity development.

4.2.8 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The main conclusions from the session on capacity development in evaluation in French-speaking Africa emphasized that sustainable progress requires a shift from short-term, individual-focused training to systemic, organizational, and institutional strengthening. The speakers agreed that effective capacity building hinges on conducting national diagnostics to guide targeted interventions, fostering collaboration among diverse government entities, and establishing stable, long-term partnerships with universities, VOPEs, and regional networks. Persistent barriers such as weak political demand, high turnover in government, insufficient coordination, and limited resources were identified as ongoing challenges, underscoring the need for greater institutional anchoring and legal frameworks to support evaluation systems.

The session's recommendations called for a multi-pronged approach: integrating diaspora expertise into mentoring and technical support for emerging evaluators, supporting research units in African universities, and institutionalizing impactful initiatives like the "Évaluation d'Or" award across the region. Additional actions included advocating for reduced training costs and more comprehensive scholarships, creating structured mentorship programs within VOPEs, promoting local certification and accreditation, and expanding the production of French-language evaluation resources. The participants also urged the creation of digital platforms for young evaluators, strengthening South-South partnerships, and encouraging governments to actively support and fund capacity development for emerging evaluators, ensuring that future efforts are inclusive, sustainable, and contextually relevant.

DAY 2: TUESDAY, 17 JUNE 2025

4.3. Strand 3 – Strategic Stakeholder Engagement by UNICEF

This session ran from 14:30 – 15:50 and was Hosted by UNICEF.

Theme: Unlocking Evaluation Potential – Strategic Stakeholder Engagement by UNICEF

Venue: Break-out Room 3

Speakers: _____



1. Mr. Tegegn HAILU, Ministry of Planning and Development
2. Dr. Zerihun BERHANE, Vice President, Ethiopian Evaluation Association
3. Ashely WAX, Regional Evaluation Advisor, UNICEF ESARO

Session Chair: His Excellency, Mr. Bereket FESEHATSION – State Minister, Ministry of Planning and Development, Ethiopia

Facilitator: Dr. Mussarrat YOUSSEF, Evaluation Manager, UNICEF Ethiopia
Rapporteurs: Betelhem Ketema TULU and Makaita SHUMBA

4.3.1 DR. MUSSARRAT YOUSSEF, EVALUATION MANAGER, UNICEF ETHIOPIA

Dr. Mussarrat Youssuf from UNICEF Ethiopia opened the panel discussion by underscoring the imperative need for strategic collaboration and meaningful engagement among key stakeholders for meaningful and impactful evaluation policies, systems and activities. She explained that the session offered a unique platform for Ethiopia by bringing together key actors in Ethiopia's Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) landscape, including government officials, professional associations such as the Ethiopian Evaluation Association (EEvA), academic institutions, development partners, and young and emerging evaluators (YEEs) and other young representatives.

The main objective of this session was to explore Ethiopia's progress, challenges, and opportunities in institutionalizing M&E, with a particular focus on the importance of strategic stakeholder engagement in advancing learning, accountability, and evidence-based decision-making. Dr. Youssuf emphasized that the session's focus to highlight achievements, identify gaps, and propose strategies for enhancing stakeholder engagement for evaluations in Ethiopia and invited the following presenters.

4.3.2 MR. TEGENE HAILU, MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT, ETHIOPIA

Mr. Hailu outlined Ethiopia's journey from fragmented M&E systems to a more harmonised, results-based, and digitally supported framework through his discussion on the draft national M&E policy the Ministry of Planning and Development is developing in collaboration with key stakeholders. He highlighted historical challenges such as lack of effective demand for M&E, insufficient skilled professionals, weak institutional structures, and minimal engagement of non-state actors. Since 2018, reforms have included the introduction of Results-Based Management, establishment of a Digital Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation System (DPMES), and development of clear performance indicators. Achievements include increased digitalization, objective performance measurement, and greater use of evaluation reports for accountability.

Mr. Hailu emphasised the need for robust legal frameworks, expanded human capacity development, and the rollout of digital systems to sub-national levels. He stressed that government commitment and strategic partnerships are essential for sustaining progress and noted the importance of addressing cross-cutting issues like youth, women, and climate in evaluations with ambitions for the new national M&E policy.



Photo 14: H.E. Mr. Bereket FESEHATSION addressing participants at the UNICEF Event

4.3.3 DR. ZERIHUN BERHANE – VICE PRESIDENT, ETHIOPIAN EVALUATION ASSOCIATION (EEVA)

Dr. Berhane focused on the importance of inclusive, participatory, and strategically driven evaluation processes. He credited partnerships – especially with UNICEF – for shaping EEVA's vision, strengthening capacities, and expanding reach. Dr. Berhane highlighted EEVA's achievements, including the learning and networking events, capacity building, conducting national evaluation capacity assessments, developing standards and SOPs, and establishing an Institutional Review Board. Looking forward, he outlined plans to increase membership, diversify funding, expand regional chapters, and actively contribute to national evaluation policy development. Dr. Berhane also emphasized the importance of engaging young people in evaluations and strengthening collaboration with government and development partners.

4.3.4 ASHLEY WAX – UNICEF, ESARO

Ashley Wax underscored the centrality of strategic stakeholder engagement in enhancing accountability, learning, and adaptive governance. She explained that inclusive and participatory evaluation processes increase the relevance, ownership, and use of findings. Ms. Wax described UNICEF's multi-level approach, which includes engagement throughout the evaluation cycle, knowledge brokering, and the establishment of Evaluation Reference Groups to foster local ownership and influence policy.

She highlighted the empowerment of youth through Youth Advisory Groups, which contribute to tool design, validation, and dissemination of

findings. Ms. Wax advocated for partnerships with universities to develop evaluation curricula and stressed the need for capacity development and professionalization of the evaluation field. She concluded that stakeholder engagement is vital for meaningful participation, transparency, and the overall effectiveness of evaluations.

4.3.5 KEY CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

The key cross-cutting issues addressed by the speakers during the session on strategic stakeholder engagement in Ethiopia's evaluation landscape centred on inclusivity, youth engagement, gender, and climate considerations. Mr. Tegene Hailu highlighted that despite significant progress in institutionalizing monitoring and evaluation (M&E), cross-cutting issues such as youth, women, and climate change remain insufficiently covered in evaluations. He emphasized the need for the new M&E policy to address these gaps by ensuring that evaluations are transparent, accountable, and inclusive of diverse stakeholders, including non-state actors. This approach is critical to align evaluation efforts with Ethiopia's broader development goals and to ensure that marginalized groups are represented in decision-making processes. Dr. Zerihun Berhane and Ashley Wax further reinforced the importance of inclusivity and participation across all stages of the evaluation cycle.



Dr. Berhane stressed that evaluations must be inclusive and participatory, engaging government institutions, academia, development partners, and communities, with a particular focus on youth involvement to build capacity and foster learning. Ashley Wax elaborated on UNICEF's multi-level approach to stakeholder engagement, highlighting youth advisory groups that empower young people to contribute to evaluation design, validation, and dissemination. Both speakers underscored that addressing cross-cutting issues such as gender equality, youth participation, and climate resilience is essential for evaluations to be relevant, ethical, and impactful. They also pointed to the need for strategic partnerships and capacity development to professionalize evaluation and embed these cross-cutting themes systematically.

4.3.6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The main conclusions from the session on "Unlocking Evaluation Potential – Strategic Stakeholder Engagement by UNICEF" emphasised that effective and inclusive stakeholder engagement is vital for strengthening Ethiopia's monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems. The session chair H.E. Mr. Bereket FESEHATSION referenced to Ethiopia's efforts to build a fertile

national platform for state and non-state actors to build a scientific evaluation culture that can meaningfully support the country's current stride towards development.

Responding to questions raised by the YEEs, H.E. Mr. FESEHATSION, also assured that the national M&E policy will be designed in a way that the insights of academia, non-state actors and young evaluators are included to shape an effective policy. This is demonstrated through Ethiopia's participation in the Voluntary National Review (VNR) for SDGs three times as well as the preparation of the national M&E policy with effective participation of stakeholders from areas of public, private, humanitarian, academic, and developmental sectors.

At the end, emphasising on the theme of the panel discussion, the session facilitator Dr. Mussarrat Youssuf spoke on UNICEF's commitment to strategic stakeholder engagement grounded in the evaluation principle of shared evaluation accountability. Local ownership is a key aim of UNICEF's evaluation strategy, and this is achieved through meaningful stakeholder engagement and capacity-building.

The key recommendations arising from the session included: the need to systematically involve stakeholders throughout the evaluation process to ensure ownership and utilization of findings, promoting youth participation through targeted capacity building, internships, and mentorship programs; involving influential policymakers and academics to increase buy-in and impact; and prioritizing national evaluation capacity development through curriculum co-creation with universities and professional associations. The session also recommended expanding digital M&E systems to sub-national levels and strengthening legal frameworks and institutional capacity, with a focus on addressing cross-cutting issues such as gender, youth, and climate within evaluations.



Photo 15: Participants at the Strategic Stakeholder Engagement by UNICEF

DAY 2: TUESDAY, 17 JUNE 2025

4.4. Strand 4 – Contribution of African Regional Development Banks

This session run from 1430 – 1550Hrs and was hosted by BOAD and EPRADI.

Theme: Contribution of African regional development banks to strengthening regional and national evaluation systems

Venue : Break-out Room 4

Speakers : _____



1. Ms. Edeshri MOODLEY, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer at the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA)
2. Ms. Euody MOGASWA, Project Monitoring Coordinator for DBSA-financed projects
3. Mr. Maximilien GBETHOLANCY, Director of the Internal Audit and Operations, Evaluation Department at the ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID)
4. Mr. Laurent Blaise TAGO, General Coordinator of Services and Director of Retrospective Evaluation at the Development Bank of Central African States (BDEAC).

Session Chair : Damit Serge Didier AMANY, Manager, Project Retrospective Evaluation Department (DERP), West African Development Bank (BOAD).

Rapporteur: Madeleine BROU, AfREA YEE / EvalYouth

4.4.1 SESSION OVERVIEW

The session was organized by the West African Development Bank (BOAD) and EPRADI, with Madeleine Brou of Evalyouth Global Network serving as rapporteur. The main objective was to showcase the growing role of African regional development banks in institutionalizing evaluation practices, share experiences on monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems, foster collaboration between regional banks and national evaluation systems, and highlight both challenges and best practices in integrating evaluation into financial institutions. Participants included representatives from various regional banks, evaluation experts, and stakeholders interested in strengthening evaluation frameworks across Africa.

4.4.2 SESSION DISCUSSIONS

The session began with Edeshri Moodley and Euody Mogaswa from the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), who discussed the progressive integration of M&E systems within the bank's operational framework. They emphasized that evaluation tools are vital for enhancing transparency and accountability, and that DBSA is working to make evaluation a core component of decision-making. Moodley and Mogaswa highlighted the importance of building internal capacity to ensure sustainable evaluation systems, while also acknowledging the challenges of embedding an evaluation culture in institutions traditionally focused on financial outcomes.

Maximilien Gbetholancy introduced the BOAD initiative, established in 2014 to foster knowledge sharing among regional banks. He stressed the necessity of strengthening evaluation capacities in both established and newer sub-

regional banks and advocated for the creation of dedicated M&E units within each institution. Gbetholancy called for greater autonomy and capability for regional banks to conduct evaluations and highlighted the benefits of collaborating with multilateral development banks to leverage shared tools and frameworks. He also pointed out the lack of harmonization in evaluation approaches across the region and the need for a regional cooperation platform to address this gap. Gbetholancy underscored that evaluation supports learning and reinforces accountability, and that sharing experiences and lessons is essential for improved effectiveness.

During the Q&A segment, participants discussed funding models for sustaining M&E units, with some banks integrating evaluation costs into project budgets and others allocating internal operational funds. The speakers also addressed how regional banks can better align with national evaluation systems, suggesting joint evaluations, capacity-building programs, and harmonized frameworks as effective strategies.

4.4.3 KEY CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

The key cross-cutting issues addressed by the speakers centered on the institutionalization and harmonization of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems within African regional development banks. Both Edeshri Moodley and Euody Mogaswa from DBSA and Maximilien Gbetholancy emphasized the need for dedicated M&E units and the integration of evaluation practices as a core part of decision-making processes. They highlighted that evaluation tools are critical for enhancing transparency and accountability but also noted the significant challenge of embedding an evaluation culture in institutions traditionally focused on financial

outcomes. Strengthening internal capacity was identified as essential for sustaining these systems over time, ensuring that evaluation becomes an integral and sustainable part of institutional frameworks.

Another major cross-cutting issue was the lack of harmonization in evaluation methodologies and the need for greater collaboration both among regional banks and with national evaluation systems. The speakers underscored the importance of creating regional platforms for methodological exchange, sharing lessons learned, and aligning evaluation frameworks. Collaboration with multilateral development banks was also highlighted as a way to benefit from shared tools and frameworks. The session concluded with recommendations to promote participatory and results-based evaluations, encourage capacity-building, and explore the creation of a continental network of evaluation departments to foster ongoing cooperation and effectiveness in evaluation practices across Africa.

4.4.4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The main conclusions from the session emphasized that African regional development banks have a pivotal role in institutionalizing monitoring and evaluation (M&E) practices to strengthen both regional and national evaluation systems. The discussions highlighted the necessity for dedicated M&E units within banks, the importance of building internal capacity for sustainable evaluation, and the value of fostering a culture of transparency and accountability through systematic evaluation. The speakers agreed that evaluation is essential not only for learning and accountability but also for reinforcing the effectiveness of financial institutions in achieving development outcomes. They also acknowledged the persistent challenge of harmonizing evaluation methodologies across regions and the need for greater collaboration among regional and national evaluation actors.

Based on these conclusions, the session put forward several key recommendations. Participants called for the establishment of a regional platform to facilitate methodological harmonization and the exchange of good practices among African banks. They recommended promoting participatory and results-based evaluations that actively involve project stakeholders to ensure relevance and ownership. Strengthening internal capacity-building efforts for sustainable institutional M&E was also advised, alongside integrating these recommendations into the strategic plans of regional banks. Finally, the session encouraged exploring the creation of a continental network of evaluation departments within African banks to foster ongoing cooperation, knowledge sharing, and collective advancement in evaluation practices.

DAY 2: TUESDAY, 17 JUNE 2025

4.5. Strand 5 – Made in Africa Valued Globally

This session ran from 1430 – 1550 and was jointly organised by the Canadian Evaluation Society (CES) and the African Evaluation Association (AfrEA) and hosted by the Mastercard Foundation.

Theme : Made in Africa, Valued Globally: Strategic VOPE Collaboration to Advance Afrocentric Evaluation Excellence across Continents

Venue: Small Briefing Room

Session Chairs:

- Andrealisa BELZER, President-Elect, International Evaluation Academy (IEA) and Former President, Canadian Evaluation Society (CES) /
- Eddah Kanini KARIJO, Treasurer, African Evaluation Association (AfrEA)

Rapporteur: Hilina YALEM



4.5.1 SESSION OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

The session was chaired by Andrealisa Belzer, President-Elect, International Evaluation Academy (IEA) and Former President, Canadian Evaluation Society (CES). The primary objective was to explore how Afrocentric worldviews can shape evaluation practices, emphasising Ubuntu, relational values, and decolonial imperatives. The session aimed to interrogate the purpose of evaluation beyond data collection, focusing on justice, power dynamics, and the need for evaluation to contribute to humanity's synergy with life and epistemic sovereignty. Participants were encouraged to consider how evaluation frameworks rooted in African contexts could be recognized and valued globally.

4.5.2 KEY EMERGING ISSUES DISCUSSED

Several critical issues emerged during the discussions. Participants questioned the legitimacy and role of AfrEA, debating whether it is perceived as a strategic enabler or merely a conference convener. Concerns were raised about the visibility and inclusion of Francophone, Lusophone, and smaller country VOPEs, with some expressing feelings of marginalization. The session also highlighted the need for intentional youth inclusion and intergenerational leadership, as young evaluators often lack clear pathways for engagement and leadership within VOPEs. Collaboration across VOPEs and continents was identified as an untapped opportunity, with calls for mutual learning and the development of shared frameworks and standards, particularly in areas such as gender, human rights, and nature-positive evaluation.

4.5.3 PROFESSIONALISATION AND VISIBILITY OF VOPEs IN THE DIASPORA AND GLOBALLY

A strong interest was expressed in the professionalisation of evaluation in Africa, including the development of credentialing systems, evaluation education, and the institutionalization of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems. Participants called for the sharing of tools and frameworks developed under AfrEA and the provision of templates and support for emerging VOPEs. The session also recognized the significant role of the African diaspora – such as African-Canadian and African-American evaluators – who are practicing Afrocentric evaluation abroad and seeking deeper connections with AfrEA. This highlights the need for AfrEA to serve as a bridge between Africa and its global descendants, fostering solidarity, knowledge sharing, and reciprocal growth.

4.5.4 KEY CONCLUSIONS

The session concluded that there is a pressing need for AfrEA to move beyond advocacy and conference convening towards concrete action and implementation. Participants agreed that AfrEA's continental legitimacy must be rooted in its support for and reflection of the diversity of national VOPEs. There was consensus on the importance of mapping and profiling all VOPEs across Africa to foster collaboration and increase visibility, especially for underrepresented countries. The inclusion of youth and marginalized voices was emphasized as essential for the future of the evaluation profession, alongside the need for clear engagement structures and mentorship opportunities.

4.5.5 KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The session's key recommendations emphasise the need for AfrEA to strengthen its role as a facilitator of professionalisation, peer learning, and intercontinental partnerships among VOPEs. It is advised that AfrEA invest in robust systems and infrastructure, including the development of frameworks, credentialing processes, youth engagement pipelines, and effective communication platforms to scale the impact of Made in Africa evaluation. Mapping and profiling all VOPEs across Africa is recommended to foster informed collaboration and increase the visibility of underrepresented countries and groups.

The session also called for the codification and publication of tools and frameworks for Made in Africa Evaluation, ensuring these resources are accessible to all VOPEs and evaluators. Furthermore, empowering youth and marginalized voices by establishing clear pathways for engagement and leadership is seen as essential for the future of the profession. Finally, leveraging global platforms to elevate Afrocentric evaluation practices and foster solidarity and knowledge exchange with the diaspora and international partners is encouraged to ensure that African-rooted evaluation approaches are recognized and valued worldwide.

DAY 2: TUESDAY, 17 JUNE 2025

4.6. Strand 6: NDB-IFAD Joint Panel on International Financial Institutions

This session run from 14:30 – 15:50Hrs and was jointly hosted by the New Development Bank (NDB) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

Theme: Lessons Learned from Independent Evaluations of IFI-Financed Climate-Smart Development Projects.

Venue : Conference Room 6

Speakers : _____



1. Mr. Thabo RAKOLOTI, Acting Director General, South Africa Regional Office, NDB
2. Dr. Zenda OFIR, Member of the NDB High-Level Evaluation Advisory Committee, NDB
3. Mr. Manas PURI, Senior Professional, IEO, NDB
4. Dr. Kouessi Maximin KODJO, Lead Evaluator, IOE, IFAD
5. Ms. Sara KOUAKOU, Lead Portfolio Advisor, East and Southern Africa Division, IFAD

Session Chair : Dr. Indran NAIDOO, Director, IOE-IFAD, and Chair, Evaluation Cooperation Group (ECG) of the Multilateral Development Banks

Rapporteur : Yordanos Tesfaye KEBEDE

The session was organised by the New Development Bank (NDB) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the panel brought together experts, national representatives, and practitioners to reflect on key lessons from independent evaluations of climate-smart development projects across Africa. The session aimed to explore how evaluation evidence can inform national planning, climate resilience, and systemic transformation, with a particular focus on future-oriented, participatory, and inclusive evaluation methods.

4.6.1 DR. KOUESSI MAXIMIN KODJO, IOE – IFAD

Dr. Kouessi Maximin KODJO opened by stressing the need for national evaluation systems to shift from traditional results-based management to more anticipatory, future-oriented frameworks. He likened evaluation to a ‘navigation system’ that guides policymakers through uncertain futures and introduced the idea of transformative interventions—those that create feedback loops and systemic disruptions, ultimately driving long-term shifts in development systems.

4.6.2 MR. THABO RAKOLOTI, SOUTH AFRICA – NDB

Mr. Thabo RAKOLOTI discussed the challenges of aligning climate-smart infrastructure with broader development goals. He highlighted how evaluation findings have led to gender-responsive and youth-focused program adjustments, citing successful examples from Kenya’s Natural Resource Management Program and Ethiopia’s PARKS and GREEN LEGACY projects. These cases demonstrated how evaluation can directly inform and improve project design and outcomes.

4.6.3 MS. SARA KOUAKOU, ESA – IFAD

Ms. Sara KOUAKOU emphasized the positive impacts of integrating infrastructure and capacity building on food security, climate resilience, and water governance. She noted that evaluation findings have been crucial for restructuring ongoing projects and designing future initiatives that are both effective and adaptable, particularly in building resilient food systems that address both immediate and long-term needs.

4.6.4 MR. MANAS PURI, IEO – NDB

Mr. Manas PURI focused on the inherent complexity of evaluating cross-sectoral climate-smart projects. He advocated for the triangulation of evaluation data—including technical, qualitative, and community perception evidence—and shared an example from India, where climate modeling was essential for assessing long-term impacts of water infrastructure. He also highlighted the importance of partnerships with civil society and national statistics offices to access localized climate data.

4.6.5 DR. ZENDA OFIR, NDB

Dr. Zenda OFIR noted that both IFAD IEO and NDB IEO are well aware of the multiple evaluation designs methodologies that lend themselves to working from a systems- and complexity-informed perspective, essential for climate-smart development. A quick study revealed that IFAD IEO has a longer history of embedding systems thinking and NDB IEO has a somewhat stronger focus on digital technologies / AI. The challenge is where the MDBs fit in supporting national policy and evaluation systems. How can they inspire transformative learning and learning about transformation, as well as the new capacities needed for policy, strategy and portfolio design and evaluation that reflect a more “navigational” than “RBM” approach? Attention is needed to how AI will change everything, and also on the need for more anticipatory, futures-informed evaluation.

4.6.6 KEY CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

The session addressed several cross-cutting issues central to the effectiveness and sustainability of climate-smart development projects in Africa. One major theme was the necessity of adopting future-oriented and anticipatory evaluation frameworks. Speakers emphasized that evaluation systems must move beyond traditional results-based management to approaches that can guide policy and implementation through uncertain and rapidly changing environments. This included calls for the integration of systems thinking, transformative interventions, and the use of AI and participatory systems mapping to better understand and respond to complex development challenges. The triangulation of data—combining technical, qualitative, and perception-based evidence—was also highlighted as essential for capturing the multifaceted impacts of climate-smart projects and for informing adaptive management and policy learning.

Another key cross-cutting issue was the importance of inclusivity and gender-transformative approaches in both project design and evaluation. Speakers underscored the need to ensure that climate-smart initiatives address the needs of women, youth, and marginalized communities, and that evaluation findings are actively used to improve targeting, participation, and equity. The session also discussed the challenges of accessing reliable climate data, the necessity of building robust learning systems within organizations and at the national level, and the critical role of evaluations in shaping national strategies and development planning. Overall, the panel called for stronger partnerships, capacity building, and the embedding of evaluation use at all levels to drive systemic change and support sustainable, resilient development outcomes.

4.6.7 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The main conclusions from the session highlighted the pivotal role of independent evaluations in transforming the design, implementation, and sustainability of climate-smart development projects across Africa. Participants agreed that embedding future-oriented thinking and transformative criteria at all project stages is essential for meaningful impact. The session underscored the value of systems-based, inclusive, and data-triangulated approaches, emphasizing that evaluation evidence must be leveraged to inform national planning, climate resilience strategies, and systemic transformation. The discussions also revealed ongoing challenges, such as limited adoption of anticipatory evaluation methods, difficulties in accessing reliable climate data, and the need for stronger support for post-production and market integration, particularly for youth and marginalized groups.

Key recommendations from the session included promoting the use of future-oriented evaluation rubrics and foresight techniques, strengthening data partnerships and accessibility—especially for climate variables—and fostering robust learning systems within both national and organizational contexts. The speakers called for inclusive and gender-transformative approaches in evaluation frameworks and advocated for ongoing investment in capacity building, particularly in systems-informed evaluation and the use of AI tools. Additional action points involved encouraging the adoption of transformative evaluation frameworks in country strategies, expanding technical guidance on integrating systems mapping and AI, and ensuring the wide dissemination of evaluation findings to inform current and future programming.

DAY 2: TUESDAY, 17 JUNE 2025

4.7. Strand 7 – Country Capacity Needs Assessment in Evaluation and INCE

This session was held between 14:30 – 15:50Hrs and was hosted by DEval Germany, the WFP and the ACBF.

Venue : Large Briefing Room

Theme: Country Capacity Needs Assessment in Evaluation / Sharing on the INCE Project

Session Chair : Representative from ACBF / DEval Germany

Rapporteur : Baraka Leonard MFILINGE



4.7.1 SESSION OVERVIEW

The session explored critical strategies for enhancing national evaluation capacities across Africa. Participants underscored the importance of independent evaluations as transformative tools for climate-smart development projects. Discussions centered on embedding future-oriented and transformative criteria throughout all project stages to maximize their impact. The session emphasized the need for inclusive, systems-based approaches to evaluation, ensuring that evidence derived from evaluations informs national planning and systemic transformations to bolster climate resilience.

4.7.2 KEY CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

A recurring theme throughout the session was the importance of addressing existing challenges that hinder effective evaluation practices. These included limited adoption of anticipatory evaluation methods, difficulties in accessing reliable climate-related data, and insufficient support for market integration post-production. The participants also acknowledged the necessity of empowering marginalized groups, particularly youth, to play a more active role in development frameworks. These challenges framed the call for improved data accessibility and stronger regional and organizational support mechanisms.

4.7.3 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Key conclusions and recommendations from the session revolved around promoting future-oriented evaluation rubrics and foresight techniques to foster innovation in project design. Strengthening data partnerships emerged as a priority, with a focus on improving accessibility to climate variables vital for informed decision-making. The participants advocated for the integration of gender-transformative approaches and inclusive frameworks, ensuring equity and representation across all evaluation processes. Investments in capacity building took center stage, particularly in systems-informed evaluation and the utilization of emerging AI tools to enhance data analysis and interpretation.

Action points concluded with the importance of scaling transformative evaluation frameworks at the country level. Expanding technical guidance to integrate systems mapping and advanced AI methodologies was seen as pivotal for addressing complex development challenges. Participants also called for the dissemination of evaluation findings to inform current and future programming, contributing to sustained learning and development across national and organizational capacities. The session provided a roadmap for strengthening evaluation ecosystems, aligning efforts toward fostering sustainable development outcomes across Africa.

DAY 2: TUESDAY, 17 JUNE 2025

4.8. Plenary: Co-Creation with Development Partners and Ecosystem Players

This session was from 16:10 – 17:00 Hrs and was hosted by AfrEA.

THEME: Co-Creation with Development Partners and Ecosystem Players

Venue : UNECA Conference Hall

Session Chair : Eddah Kanini KARIJO, Treasurer, AfrEA

Rapporteurs : Tewodros Yosef GEBREYESUS and Netsanet Tiruayehu WORKINEH

This session brought together the Session Chairs from the break-out sessions on Co-Creation with Development Partners and Ecosystem Players. The presenters shared insights and lessons from their respective break-out sessions, each focusing on advancing evaluation capacity and systems across Africa. The session aimed to reflect on critical lessons learned and to propose forward-looking strategies for strengthening evaluation frameworks and fostering sustainable development outcomes.

4.8.1 EDDAH KANINI KARIJO, AFREA TREASURER

This session chaired by Eddah Kanini Karijo, the AfrEA Treasurer, convened a diverse group of stakeholders to reflect on lessons learned and chart a forward-looking strategy for strengthening evaluation capacity and systems across Africa. Session chairs from multiple break-out sessions shared insights on advancing national knowledge management, building coalitions among governments, academia, and civil society, and reinforcing the need for country-led yet coordinated evaluation efforts. The discussions highlighted that effective evaluation ecosystems require sustained investment, harmonised standards, and robust partnerships that bridge gaps between national priorities and regional or global best practices. The session emphasised the importance of inclusive, long-term approaches – mobilising the African diaspora, leveraging universities for policy and practice, and embedding evaluation as a tool for accountability and decision-making beyond academia.

Eddah as Session Chair, underscored the central role of AfrEA and its partners in fostering a collaborative and resilient evaluation landscape.

“To advance evaluation capacity and systems across Africa, we must centralize the Made in Africa paradigm, rethink and innovate our evaluation models, and promote local ownership.”

– Eddah Kanini KARIJO.

This perspective reinforced the consensus that co-creation, resource mobilisation, and continuous knowledge sharing are vital to embedding evaluation at the heart of Africa’s development agenda. Only through democratising processes, building team-based organization, and strategically mobilizing our collective capacity can we ensure evaluation remains a driving force for sustainable development and positive change on the continent



Photo 16: Plenary on Co-Creation with Development Partners

4.8.2 STRENGTHENING EVALUATION CAPACITY IN ENGLISH-SPEAKING AFRICA:

From the session: “Strengthening Evaluation Capacity in English-Speaking Africa: Pathways to Better Governance and Development”, the presenter emphasised the urgent need to initiate and reinforce national knowledge management systems and to build coalitions among diverse stakeholders. The discussion highlighted that effective evaluation must be country-led but supported by centralized coordination to harmonize efforts and organize institutional initiatives. The presenter stressed that capacity building is a long-term commitment requiring sustained investment and patience, rather than quick fixes.

4.8.3 CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN EVALUATION IN FRENCH-SPEAKING AFRICA

From the session: “Capacity Development in Evaluation in French-Speaking Africa: Impact and Prospects”, the Session Chair focused on the gradual process of building capacity at individual, institutional, and national levels. The presenter underscored the importance of mobilizing the African diaspora’s expertise and integrating it into continental evaluation efforts. The need for harmonized activities and collaborative follow-up mechanisms was also highlighted to ensure sustained progress.

4.8.4 UNLOCKING EVALUATION POTENTIAL: STRATEGIC STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT BY UNICEF

The presenter from UNICEF discussed the importance of mobilizing AfrEA and engaging young professionals to infuse fresh perspectives and drive transformation in evaluation practices. The session also called for institutionalizing and systematizing national evaluation processes to ensure consistency and accountability.

4.8.5 CONTRIBUTION OF AFRICAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT BANKS

From the session: “Contribution of African Regional Development Banks to Strengthening Regional and National Evaluation Systems”, this break-out session explored the critical role of universities and higher education institutions in reviewing, developing, and implementing evaluation policies. The presenter emphasized AfrEA’s role as a platform for sharing best practices and lessons learned across countries, fostering peer learning and mutual support.

4.8.6 MADE IN AFRICA, VALUED GLOBALLY: STRATEGIC VOPE COLLABORATION

From the session: “Made in Africa, Valued Globally: Strategic VOPE Collaboration to Advance Afrocentric Evaluation Excellence Across Continents”, the presenter advocated for adequate resource mobilization to reinforce capacity development initiatives and stressed that evaluation should be recognized beyond academia as a tool for accountability and decision-making. The session also highlighted the importance of long-term stakeholder engagement to embed an evaluation culture and ensure the relevance and use of findings.



Photo 17: AfrEA Leadership posing with the UNDP Deputy Director of the IEO

4.8.7 LESSONS LEARNED FROM INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS (IFIS)

Lessons Learned from Independent Evaluations of IFI-Financed Climate Smart Development Projects. This session emphasised collaborative learning over competition among stakeholders, creating opportunities to learn from each other and strengthen centralized efforts. The presenter also focused on the importance of engaging youth for transformational change and investing in local knowledge to make evaluations contextually relevant and impactful.

4.8.8 COUNTRY EXPERIENCES FROM PILOTING INCE IN AFRICA

This was presentation from the session: “Building National Evaluation Systems: Country Experiences from Piloting INCE in Africa and Insights from the African Capacity Building Foundation.” The Presenter highlighted the need for continuous support and professional development for individual evaluators to build a robust evaluation community. The discussion concluded that Africa possesses significant, yet underutilized, evaluation capacity at both individual and institutional levels. Harnessing this potential requires better organization, stronger coordination, and a renewed focus on inclusive, collaborative, and sustainable systems.

The session concluded with a call to centralize the “Made in Africa” paradigm, rethink and innovate evaluation models, promote local ownership, democratize processes, strengthen team-based organization, and strategically build and mobilize capacity across the continent.

DAY 2: TUESDAY, 17 JUNE 2025

4.9. AfrEA Awards Ceremony – Celebration and Recognition of Excellence

The Awards Dinner took place between 19:00 – 21:30 and was hosted by AfrEA.

DINNER : AfrEA Awards Ceremony Celebration and
Recognition of Excellence / Cutting the AfrEA@25 Cake

Venue : Sheraton Hotel Ballroom, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Facilitator : Matthew LUBUULWA, Former President, Uganda Evaluation Association
(UEA)

Facilitator : Diaw Fatimata GAYE, AfrEA West Africa representant

Rapporteurs : Fentahun Bikale KEBEDE and Aimee RUBIBI

4.9.1 AWARDS HIGHLIGHTS

The AfrEA@25 Celebration Gala, held on June 17, 2025, at the Sheraton Hotel Ballroom, brought together distinguished guests to honor the African Evaluation Association's 25 years of impact and excellence. The evening commenced with a warm welcome and registration, accompanied by light music that set a festive mood for the celebration. The session officially opened with the Ethiopian National Anthem and the AfrEA Anthem, performed live, followed by heartfelt welcoming remarks from the President of AfrEA, who emphasised the significance of the milestone and warmly greeted the attendees.

A highlight of the evening was the keynote reflection delivered by Mr. Stephen Aloo, representing the MasterCard Foundation. Mr. Aloo's address celebrated AfrEA's achievements over the past quarter-century, underscoring the association's pivotal role in advancing evaluation practices across Africa and its positive influence on development outcomes.

During the dinner and cultural entertainment segment, guests enjoyed a buffet meal while experiencing traditional Ethiopian music and dance, which fostered networking and cultural appreciation. The core of the event was the Recognition of Excellence Awards Ceremony, co-hosted by the MasterCard Foundation and the African Union. This segment honored individuals who have made outstanding contributions to AfrEA and the broader evaluation field. Each awardee, including all the past presidents and other distinguished contributors were introduced with a glowing tribute and given the opportunity to share a brief message of reflection and appreciation.

Additional tributes included a commemorative video chronicling AfrEA's journey, a display of photos of past presidents, and a collective moment of celebration with a toast and cake cutting led by AfrEA's past leaders. The MasterCard Foundation concluded the evening with a vote of thanks, recognizing the efforts of all participants and supporters. The event closed with a group photo, marking the occasion as a joyful and memorable milestone for AfrEA and its community.

4.9.2 POSTHUMOUS AWARD – DR. SULLEY ADISA BAMIDELE GARIBA

As the hallmark of the AfrEA@25 Anniversary Awards, the presence of Mrs. Neo Thamae Gariba, the wife of the late Dr. Sulley Adisa Bamidele Gariba, carried profound significance as she accepted the award honouring his husband as the 5th President of AfrEA and for his exemplary support and significant contributions to advancing the field of evaluation across Africa. Her representation not only paid tribute to Dr. Gariba's enduring legacy as a visionary leader and the inspiration behind the 'Made in Africa Evaluation' movement, but also underscored the personal and familial sacrifices behind his decades-long commitment to advancing evaluation excellence across Africa. Holding the award on his behalf, Neo Thamae Gariba embodied both the spirit of partnership that defined their life together and the collective gratitude of the evaluation community for Dr. Gariba's pioneering work, which continues to shape the field and inspire new generations.

4.9.3 AFREA EXCELLENCE AWARDEES – SUPPORT AND SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO AFREA CAUSE



- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| 1. Dr. Mahesh PATEL | 1st AfrEA President |
| 2. Dr. Zenda OFIR | 2nd AfrEA President |
| 3. Jean-Charles ROUGE | 3rd AfrEA President |
| 4. Oumoul Khayri Ba-TALL | 4th AfrEA President |
| 5. Dr. Sulley Adisa Bamidele GARIBA | 5th AfrEA President |
| 6. Dr. Florence ETTA | 6th AfrEA President |
| 7. Ms. Nermine WALLY | 7th AfrEA President |
| 8. Mr. Serge Eric Yakeu-DJAM | 8th AfrEA President |
| 9. Adam SULEIMAN | 9th AfrEA President |
| 10. Adeline SIBANDA | 10th AfrEA President |
| 11. Rosetti Nabbumba NAYENGA | 11th AfrEA President |

4.9.4 AFREA EXCELLENCE AWARDEES – CONTRIBUTION TO MADE IN AFRICA EVALUATION



Prof. Bagele CHILISA
Lecturer, University of Botswana

4.9.5 AFREA EXCELLENCE AWARDEES – CONTRIBUTION TO PUBLICATION OF AEJ



Dr. Mark Anthony ABRAHAMS
Founding Editor-in-Chief,
African Evaluation Journal



4.9.6 AFREA EXCELLENCE AWARDEES – CONTRIBUTION TO MENTORING YEES



Marco SEGONE

Director, UNFPA Independent Evaluation Office

4.9.7 AFREA EXCELLENCE AWARDEES – LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD



1. **Prof. Ian HOPWOOD**

Senior AfrEA Member

2. **Prof. Ian GOLDMAN**

Senior AfrEA Member



Photo 18: Awardees giving an appreciation to the AfrEA President

DAY 3: WEDNESDAY, 18 JUNE 2025

5. CONTINENTAL COMMITMENTS AND LEADERSHIP

On the third and final day of the Anniversary Celebrations, the participants had breakfast and registrations for late participants between 0800 – 0900 Hrs. Breakfast sponsored by AfrEA and EEVA.

5.1. The Africa Union High-Level Panel – Policy, Progress & Prospects

This session ran between 09:00 – 10:20Hrs and was hosted by the Africa Union (AU).

Venue: Africa Hall

Theme: Evidence for Agenda 2063 – State of Play and Perspectives

Speakers : _____



1. Botho Kebabonye BAYENDI, Director Strategic Planning and Delivery – African Union Commission
2. Abdrahamane DICKO, Director of Programs and Impact, African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF)
3. Dr. Indran A. NAIDOO, Director, Independent Office of Evaluation at IFAD.

Session Chair : Prof. Ian GOLDMAN, President, International Evaluation Academy (IEAc)

Rapporteurs :

- Mahlet Mehari ABRHA
- Baraka Leonard MFILINGE
- Aimee RUBIBI
- Yotam NKHATA

The session brought together four main speakers, each addressing critical issues in advancing Agenda 2063 through African-led evaluation, capacity development, and narrative transformation. They discussed how African-led evaluation can accelerate the continent's development agenda amid a rapidly shifting global context. Each main speaker addressed distinct but interlinked challenges and opportunities facing Africa's pursuit of Agenda 2063. The session covered how evaluation and African evaluation systems can contribute to achieving the Africa Union Agenda 2063 Second Ten Year Implementation Plan (STYIP) 2024-2033, supported by AfrEA using a Made in Africa approach, and how this will address the unfolding polycrisis.

5.1.1 PROF. IAN GOLDMAN

The session opened with Prof. Ian Goldman, President of the International Evaluation Academy (IEAc) outlining the unfolding polycrisis, with its climate, ecosystems, inequality and other dimensions, underlain by the continuing impacts of colonialism, patriarchy etc, expressed through mechanisms including the Western-dominated international economic order. He noted that unless values and mindsets change, we are headed for climate and ecosystems breakdown. So one of the questions to panelists was how they are planning for both mitigation of the longer-term impacts and adaptation to inevitable impacts over the next 50 years. This applies to the AU with Agenda 2063, agencies like the ACBF supporting MEL in Africa, and IFAD which undertakes a lot of its evaluations in Africa, and where 70% of the African population depend on agriculture. And agriculture is both a major contributor to climate and ecosystems breakdown, and very vulnerable to climate and ecosystem disasters.

“The AU, African governments and international agencies working in Africa must place the unfolding polycrisis at the centre of our planning, otherwise we risk huge disasters which will absorb all our funds and cause massive hardship and unrest. MEL must also factor this into our work, otherwise we support the destructive status quo.”

– Prof. Ian GOLDMAN.

Prof. Ian Goldman situated Africa’s development within a global ‘polycrisis’ – a convergence of climate breakdown, economic inequality, and

governance failures. He traced these crises to exploitative global systems rooted in colonialism, imperialism, and unsustainable economic models, predominantly designed by the Global North. Prof. Goldman argued that Africa must not rely on these failing models but instead pioneer regenerative systems that prioritize both people and the planet. He emphasized that evaluation should not merely be a tool for accountability, but a strategic compass for transformation, sovereignty, and resilience. For Africa to chart its own path, he called for contextually grounded, African-led evaluation frameworks that reclaim the continent’s narrative and support adaptive policymaking in the face of interlinked crises. “We have to chart our own way. The system developed by the Global North is failing the planet. Africa needs to take charge of its global narrative... to reflect the continent’s realities, aspirations, and priorities.” – Prof. Ian GOLDMAN.

5.1.2 MRS. BOTHO KEBABONYE BAYENDI

Mrs. Botho Kebabonye Bayendi, Director of Strategic Planning at the African Union Commission, reaffirmed Agenda 2063 as a bold, citizen-driven roadmap for a prosperous, integrated, and peaceful Africa. She highlighted the importance of reshaping Africa’s global and internal narrative by countering persistent stereotypes through intentional branding and data-driven storytelling. Mrs. Bayendi stressed the need to empower Africa’s youth – who make up over half the population – and to create leadership opportunities that reflect the continent’s diversity. Reviewing the first decade of Agenda 2063, she identified gaps in governance, mutual accountability, and efficiency, and called for a transformative “quantum leap” in the second decade.

“Africa must redefine its self-image to influence global perceptions. Africa’s demographic advantage (youth majority) requires tailored policies and leadership spaces.”

– Mrs. Botho Kebabonye BAYENDI.

She underscored the need for harmonized monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems that reflect African realities, avoid duplication with frameworks like the SDGs, and facilitate evidence-based implementation. Mrs. Bayendi also addressed challenges such as resource mobilization, illicit financial flows, and underreported successes, advocating for stronger alignment between national and continental plans and greater inclusivity in policy processes.

“Do we respect the diversity of our population? If we keep borrowing contexts from elsewhere, we lose our uniqueness. Wherever you are, you are an African brand. Your competence, friendliness, and tolerance must be measured and amplified. How can we preach free movement when Africans still need visas to travel within Africa?”

– Mrs. Botho Kebabonye BAYENDI.



Photo 19: Dr. Indran Naidoo making a Presentation at the AU High-Level Panel

5.1.3 MR. ABDRAHAMANE DICKO

Mr. Abdrahamane Dicko, Director of Programs and Impact at the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF), focused on the critical role of capacity development in realizing Agenda 2063. He identified institutional and technical capacity gaps – particularly in national M&E systems—as significant barriers to effective implementation. Mr. Dicko outlined ACBF’s contributions, including training, policy research, technical assistance, and institutional assessments aimed at strengthening national systems and professionalizing evaluation.

"M&E ensures shared responsibility – we must ask: Who is doing what? Where are resources going? Who is falling behind? Numbers don't lie. We need data dashboards to show what's working and what's not. We have a plethora of frameworks but no harmonization. Duplication is wasting our limited resources. Sensitization is key. We must create demand for data – Governments, CSOs, and parliaments must push for evidence."

– Mr. Abdrahamane DICKO.

He called for better coordination and harmonization of evaluation frameworks, warning that fragmented systems undermine efficiency and data use. Mr. Dicko announced an upcoming ACBF initiative to pilot AI integration in M&E reporting across ten member states, signaling a move toward digital innovation in evidence generation. He emphasized that robust, inclusive, and country-owned M&E systems are essential for accountability, stakeholder trust, and sustainable development outcomes.

5.1.4 DR. INDRAN A. NAIDOO

Dr. Indran A. Naidoo, Director of the Independent Office of Evaluation (IOE) at IFAD, presented the impact of evaluation on policy and programming across Africa. He highlighted IFAD's extensive work—over 264 evaluations—which has influenced climate resilience, gender equality, and agricultural transformation in multiple countries. Dr. Naidoo stressed that evaluation must serve as a driver of transformation, not just accountability, by amplifying African voices and ensuring that recommendations lead to tangible change.

"Evaluation moves us from sound and fury to light—replacing Afro-pessimism with Afro-optimism. The era of 'evaluation gurus' from the Global North is over. African voices bring context and competence. In Rwanda and Sudan, evaluations forced governments to confront barriers faced by women, youth, and people with disabilities. The polycrisis is here to stay. Evaluation must operate on multiple levels to navigate it."

– Dr. Indran A. NAIDOO.

Dr. Naidoo showcased examples where evaluation findings have informed government strategies and inclusive service delivery in countries such as Eswatini, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Malawi, Morocco, Niger, Rwanda, Sudan, Uganda and Zambia. Dr. Naidoo also underscored the growing cadre of African evaluators, whose practitioner expertise and contextual knowledge are reshaping the field and challenging the dominance of external "evaluation gurus." He called for more inclusive, participatory evaluation processes that capture community resilience and "silent losses," and advocated for harmonized frameworks and open data platforms to support Agenda 2063's ambitious goals.

5.1.5 KEY CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

Key cross-cutting issues identified in the session include the urgent need to decolonize evaluation and data systems, ensuring that African priorities, knowledge systems, and cultural contexts are at the center of monitoring and evaluation frameworks. The panel emphasized that current donor-driven and externally imposed models

are inadequate for Africa's unique challenges, particularly in the face of a global "polycrisis" marked by climate change, economic instability, and governance failures.

"SDGs suffered from poor integration into national plans and top-down learning; Agenda 2063 must prioritize local ownership and systematic evidence. Training institutions must align curricula with Agenda 2063 and involve civil society and youth groups."

– Mr. Abdrahamane DICKO.

There was a strong call for harmonizing national and continental monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems with Agenda 2063's ambitious goals, to avoid duplication and fragmentation. The speakers also highlighted the importance of leveraging Africa's demographic dividend by empowering youth and integrating their perspectives into policy and evaluation processes, as well as strengthening institutional and technical capacities at all levels to support evidence-based decision-making and adaptive governance.

5.1.6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In summary, this session underscored the urgency of developing integrated, climate-responsive, and African-owned evaluation systems that can navigate complex, interconnected challenges. The speakers collectively called for decolonizing data and metrics, empowering youth, harmonizing national and continental frameworks, and promoting open data and institutional coordination. They affirmed that evaluation must move beyond mere measurement to meaning—anchoring Africa's development in its own values, evidence, and voices as the continent advances toward the aspirations of Agenda 2063.

"Evaluations must engage all partners (governments, private sector, NGOs) to design future-oriented solutions, not just "do more" recommendations. Artificial Intelligence (AI) and local networks can help integrate grassroots perspectives into evaluations."

– Dr. Indran A. NAIDOO.

The recommendations arising from these discussions focus on several fronts. First, the development of integrated, climate-responsive evaluation systems that can track and adapt to the interconnected nature of social, economic, and environmental shocks was strongly advocated. Second, the panel called for the establishment of open data platforms and improved institutional coordination to facilitate data sharing, transparency, and resource efficiency across the continent. Third, investing in the capacity of African evaluators—particularly young and emerging professionals—was seen as critical for building sustainable and contextually relevant evaluation practices. Finally, embedding inclusivity, local ownership, and climate responsiveness in all evaluation frameworks was recommended, ensuring that the voices and lived realities of African communities are captured and reflected in both policy and practice as the continent advances toward the aspirations of Agenda 2063.

"The AU's domestication process will ensure policies align with local realities, including community priorities in disaster response. Evaluations must center local voices and focus on adaptation (not just mitigation) to address recurring disasters."

– Mrs. Botho Kebabonye BAYENDI.

DAY 3: WEDNESDAY, 18 JUNE 2025

5.2. The Africa Union High Level Strand – The Commitments

This Session was between 1040 – 1150Hrs and was hosted by the Africa Union (AU) and Mastercard Foundation.

Venue: Africa Hall

Thème: Commitment of African states to policy evaluation, use of evidence and strengthening of national evaluation systems

Speakers : _____



1. His Excellency Mr. Luc Joseph OKIO, Minister Delegate to the Prime Minister, responsible for State Reform, Republic of Congo
2. Mr. Abdoulaye GOUNOU (Benin)
3. Mr. Timothy LUBANGA (Uganda)
4. Hassina RAKOTOZAFIARISOA (Madagascar)

Session Chair: Mr. Solomon Tesfasilassie TEGEGNE, Partnership and Resource Mobilization Advisor at the Ministry of Finance, Ethiopia.

Rapporteurs: Hilina YALEM and Ian Egunza KIDIGA.

This session was chaired by Mr. Solomon Tesfasilassie TEGEGNE, Partnership and Resource Mobilization Advisor at the Ministry of Finance, Ethiopia. It comprised of a panel including country representatives from Benin, Uganda, Republic of Congo, and Madagascar, the session brought together policymakers, government officials, and evaluation experts to discuss the progress and challenges in institutionalizing monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems across Africa. The key objective was to share experiences and innovations in strengthening national evaluation frameworks, promote a culture of evidence-based policymaking, and highlight the need for adequate financing and capacity building for effective evaluation. The session featured presentations from H.E. Mr. Luc Joseph OKIO (Republic of Congo), Mr. Abdoulaye GOUNOU (Benin), Mr. Timothy LUBANGA (Uganda), and Hassina RAKOTOZAFIARISOA (Madagascar), each detailing their countries' approaches to embedding M&E in governance. Participants engaged in robust dialogue on legal and policy reforms, the importance of data-driven decision-making, and the ongoing shift towards more accountable and transparent public administration through evaluation.

5.2.1 H.E. MR. LUC JOSEPH OKIO (REPUBLIC OF CONGO)

H.E. Mr. Luc Joseph OKIO described several significant innovations in the Republic of Congo's evaluation ecosystem, including the establishment of a dedicated ministerial department for evaluation, the introduction of evidence-based budgeting in 2017, a law on performance in public action in 2019, and a 2024 law reforming the status of evaluation. He emphasized the use of the MESA report and a National Index to assess and improve national evaluation capacity, highlighting the importance of capacity building and promoting a culture of monitoring and evaluation within governance. Despite these legal and institutional advances, he noted that the culture of evaluation remains superficial in the administration, data-driven decision-making is fragile, and the lack of dedicated financing is a major barrier to sustaining evaluation efforts.

5.2.2 MR. ABDOULAYE GOUNOU (BENIN)

Mr. Abdoulaye GOUNOU outlined Benin's journey toward institutionalizing and operationalizing monitoring and evaluation (M&E) since a regime change in 2006, which began with a national diagnostic study and sector evaluations. He detailed operational and strategic changes, such as developing evaluation tools, establishing master's-level training curricula, creating a National Evaluation Council, and making evaluation compulsory for both central and local government bodies. GOUNOU stressed the need for strong political will, supportive regulatory and legal frameworks, and the promotion of both demand and supply for evaluation. However, he identified persistent challenges, including inadequate financing, low national ownership—especially at local levels—limited evaluation culture, and institutional instability.

5.2.3 MR. TIMOTHY LUBANGA (UGANDA)

Mr. Timothy LUBANGA explained that Uganda now prioritizes monitoring and evaluation at the highest levels, with a dedicated government body responsible for performance measurement and the recruitment of specialized officers. He highlighted the adoption of a national M&E policy and the integration of M&E with financial systems to reduce duplication and improve coordination. LUBANGA reported increased government funding and investments in M&E, with ongoing reforms to align evaluation practices with emerging issues such as artificial intelligence, climate change, and gender. He noted that evidence-based decision-making is now guiding project restructuring and resource allocation, leading to more effective implementation of national development plans.

5.2.4 HASSINA RAKOTOZAFIARISOA (MADAGASCAR)

Hassina Rakotozafiarisoa reported that Madagascar has prepared a public policy evaluation guide (2020) and designated "champion ministries" to mainstream evaluation across government. She emphasized the recent initiation of digitalization in public services to enhance evaluation and described annual performance contracts, capacity-building programs with partners, and triennial public accountability reports as operational steps taken. Rakotozafiarisoa also highlighted efforts to encourage youth engagement in evaluation and the development of a standardized evaluation guide with partners. Despite these advances, she cited high staff turnover in the administration as a persistent challenge, even with investments in individual capacity.

5.2.5 KEY CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

The session surfaced several cross-cutting issues central to advancing monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems across African states. A primary theme was the significance of institutionalizing M&E through robust legal and policy frameworks, which has enabled countries to embed evaluation practices within government structures and decision-making processes. However, all speakers highlighted persistent challenges, notably the chronic lack of dedicated financing for evaluation activities, which undermines the sustainability and effectiveness of M&E systems. Another recurring issue was the need to cultivate a genuine culture of evaluation – moving beyond compliance to foster true data-driven governance and accountability.

Capacity constraints, both at the institutional and individual levels, remain a barrier, with staff turnover and limited training hampering progress, particularly in subnational and local government contexts. The discussions also emphasized the importance of political will, cross-sectoral coordination, and the integration of M&E with financial and planning systems to ensure that evaluation evidence is systematically used for policy formulation and resource allocation. Lastly, the session underscored the need for greater citizen participation, localization of evaluation practices, and regional collaboration to share best practices and harmonize approaches across the continent.

5.2.6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This session demonstrated that while African countries have made commendable progress in establishing the foundations for effective M&E systems, significant gaps remain in ensuring their full operationalization and impact. Legal

and policy reforms, the creation of dedicated evaluation bodies, and the integration of M&E into national development planning are positive steps forward. However, these advances are often undermined by insufficient funding, limited capacity, and a superficial evaluation culture that does not yet permeate all levels of government or society. The experiences shared reinforced that strong political leadership, continuous capacity building, and a shift towards evidence-based policymaking are essential for sustaining momentum. Regional cooperation and peer learning, as seen through initiatives like Twende Mbele, have also proven valuable in accelerating progress and adapting successful models across different contexts.

To address these challenges, the session recommended that African governments prioritize the allocation of adequate and sustained financing for M&E activities, ensuring that evaluation is not sidelined in budgetary decisions. There is a need to invest in both institutional and individual capacity development, including specialized training, mentorship, and the establishment of clear career pathways for M&E professionals. Governments should deepen efforts to foster an authentic culture of evaluation by engaging political leaders, building critical mass among M&E champions, and promoting the use of evaluation findings in public discourse and decision-making.

Enhancing citizen participation, including the use of local languages and participatory evaluation methods, will help anchor M&E practices in local realities and ensure greater accountability. Finally, countries should continue to strengthen regional networks and platforms for sharing best practices, harmonizing standards, and co-developing solutions to common challenges in the evaluation ecosystem.

DAY 3: WEDNESDAY, 18 JUNE 2025

5.3. Conference Closing Session – Looking Ahead: Declarations & Farewell

The closing session of the Anniversary Celebrations was from 1150 – 1250. This Session was hosted by the Africa Union (AU) and AfrEA

Venue: Africa Hall

Special Address Speakers : _____



1. Dereje Mamo TSEGAYE, President, EEVA
2. Adeline SIBANDA, AfrEA 9th President, represented Stephen Aloo, Senior Director, Impact Strategy, Analytics and Evaluation Mastercard Foundation
3. His Excellency Mr. Luc Joseph OKIO, Minister Delegate to the Prime Minister, responsible for State Reform, Republic of Congo
4. Her Excellency Mrs. Tirumar ABATE State Minister, Ministry of Planning and Development (MOPD), Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE).
5. Special Address of AfrEA YEEs – Read the Declaration – Ms. Anna Elsie LUYIGGO (YEE from Uganda) and Mr. Noumonvi Kossigan MAWUENA (YEE from Togo).
6. AfrEA Resolution on Agenda 2063: Dr. Miché OUEDRAOGO, President, AfrEA
7. His Excellency Ambassador Souef Mohamed EL-AMINE, the Chief of Staff to the AUC Chairman, representing His Excellency Mahamoud Ali YOUSOUF, Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC)

Session Chair : Zerihun BERHANE, Vice-President, EEVA

Rapporteurs : Betelhem Ketema TULU and Makaita SHUMBA

The Closing Session was chaired by Dr. Zerihun BERHANE, Vice-President, EEVA and brought together high-level speakers to close the three-day event. The session featured key speakers such as Dereje Mamo TSEGAYE (President, Ethiopia Evaluation Association), Adeline SIBANDA (Senior Director, Mastercard Foundation and the 9th. President of AfrEA), His Excellency Ambassador Souef Mohamed EL-AMINE, Chief of Staff to the AUC Chairman, representing His Excellency Mahamoud Ali YOUSOUF, Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC), His Excellency Mr. Luc Joseph OKIO (Minister Delegate, Republic of Congo), and the AfrEA President, Dr. Miché OUEDRAOGO and a Special address by Her Excellency Mrs. Tirumar ABATE State Minister, Ministry of Planning and Development (MOPD), Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE).

The main objectives of the session were to honor AfrEA's achievements and impact over the past 25 years, reflect on key insights from the celebrations, reaffirm a collective commitment to African-led evaluation and the "Made in Africa Evaluation" agenda, promote the adoption of African Evaluation Principles aligned with Agenda 2063 and the SDGs, encourage deeper engagement among national VOPEs and partners, recognize and motivate emerging leaders, foster a culture of evidence-based policymaking, and conclude the anniversary with unity and a renewed sense of purpose for the future of evaluation in Africa.

5.3.1 DR. ZERIHUN BERHANE

In his closing remarks, Dr. Zerihun Berhane, the session chair reflected on the symbolic importance of concluding the gathering in Africa Hall – a venue deeply rooted in the continent’s history and aspirations. He emphasized that this moment marked not only the celebration of AfrEA’s legacy but also a renewed commitment to the transformative role of evaluation in advancing Africa’s development, particularly in alignment with Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want.

He introduced a series of special addresses from influential leaders in evaluation, policy, and development, underscoring their role in shaping Africa’s future. He expressed gratitude to all speakers, delegates, youth representatives, partners, and organizers who contributed to the event’s success. He called on participants to carry forward the energy, insights, and collective spirit of the conference into their work, to continue unlocking the power of evaluation in building a better and more inclusive Africa.

5.3.2 DEREJE MAMO TSEGAYE

Dereje Mamo Tsegaye opened his closing remarks by expressing deep gratitude for the collective energy and commitment demonstrated during the three-day conference. He honored the legacy of evaluation in Africa, highlighting the importance of inclusivity by involving young evaluators and women leaders. Dereje emphasized Ethiopia’s commitment to strengthening partnerships and amplifying youth and gender inclusion in evaluation.

“At the start of our celebrations, I asked the participants to recommit to advancing Africa-rooted evaluation practices; empowering the next generation of evaluators, and strengthening

partnerships for sustainable development. As we come to the close of this celebration, and as we move into the next phase, let us carry forward the spirit of this gathering: Unity – in strengthening Africa’s evaluation ecosystem; Innovation – in championing homegrown methodologies; and Inclusivity – in empowering women, youth, and emerging evaluators.” – Dereje Mamo TSEGAYE.

Mr. Tsegaye outlined concrete steps, such as launching Ethiopia’s first evaluation standard and expanding the Ethical Review Board’s reach. His speech concluded with a call to action for leaders to turn evidence into policy, for partners to scale effective practices, and for young people to embrace the future of evaluation. He also acknowledged the contributions of various organizations and individuals, reflecting a tone of renewed commitment and optimism for the future of evaluation in Africa.



5.3.3 ADELINE SIBANDA

Adeline Sibanda, Senior Director, Program Impact Support and Advisory, Mastercard Foundation, reflected on the significance of the event, noting the high degree of engagement and a shared sense of accomplishment among participants. She highlighted the extensive networks built during the conference, which she described as foundations for future collaboration across countries and sectors. Sibanda praised AfrEA's progress over the past 25 years, particularly its dedication to promoting African-rooted evaluation practices and developing national systems. She encouraged continued progress and expressed gratitude to all participants, wishing AfrEA continued influence and transformation. Sibanda reaffirmed Mastercard Foundation's commitment to supporting African-led development through evaluation.

"The Made in Africa Evaluation promotes Africa-led and Africa-rooted evaluations. It champions that Africa's development should mainly be spearheaded by Africans using Afrocentric paradigms or worldviews and African philosophies, ways of knowing and working, and their interaction over time with the evolving African contexts."

– Adeline SIBANDA.



Photo 20: The High-level Panel at the Closing Event of AfrEA@25

5.3.4 SOUEF MOHAMED EL-AMINE

His Excellency Ambassador Souef Mohamed El-AMINE, the Chief of Staff to the AUC Chairman, representing His Excellency Mahamoud Ali YOUSSEF, Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC). Ambassador El-Amine emphasized evaluation's transformative power in achieving a prosperous and resilient Africa. They stressed the importance of evidence-based decision-making as central to effective governance and sustainable development. The representative noted Africa's shift from policy formulation to policy evaluation, marking a new phase focused on accountability, learning, and improved service delivery. Key points included the need to involve youth in evaluation processes and to engage parliamentarians in policy oversight and resource allocation. The representative encouraged African evaluators to bridge the gap between data and action, reinforcing the African Union's commitment to institutionalizing evaluation as a driver for transformation and inclusive, accountable governance.

"Evidence must drive Africa's future. Evaluators are the guardians of our development narrative - transforming data into insight, holding leaders accountable, and ensuring every intervention delivers real benefits for our people."

– H.E. Ambassador Souef Mohamed El-AMINE.

5.3.5 HIS EXCELLENCY MR. LUC JOSEPH OKIO

His Excellency Mr. Luc Joseph Okio, Minister Delegate to the Prime Minister, Republic of Congo, expressed gratitude to the Ethiopian government for hosting the event and highlighted the essential role of evaluation in governance. He urged African governments to make evaluation a core part of national development, emphasizing its necessity for improving public sector performance, promoting accountability, and ensuring policies meet citizens' needs. His remarks served as a reminder of the importance of institutionalizing evaluation within government structures to foster evidence-based reforms and sustainable development outcomes.

"African ownership of the evaluation process is important as the theory and practice of evaluation in African contexts has for a long time been externally driven. African values and worldviews need to guide and shape evaluation in African contexts."

– H.E. Mr. Luc Joseph OKIO.

5.3.6 DR. MICHÉ OUEDRAOGO, PRESIDENT, AFREA

AfrEA President Miché Ouedraogo, in his closing remarks at the 25th Anniversary celebrations, highlighted the remarkable growth and impact of AfrEA since its founding, noting its expansion to over 3,000 members and 40+ national VOPEs, as well as its partnerships with 14 development organizations and its multilingual, diverse community. He reflected on the conference's three-day journey: the first day honored AfrEA's legacy and fostered strategies for strengthening national evaluation systems and mentoring

5.3.7 H.E. MRS. TIRUMAR ABATE

young leaders; the second day focused on building partnerships, aligning evaluation with Africa's development priorities such as Agenda 2063 and the SDGs, and promoting innovative, context-relevant methodologies; the third day looked ahead to the future, advocating for the African Evaluation Principles and the "Made in Africa Evaluation" standard as a continental benchmark.

"As we close this historic celebration, let us carry forward the spirit of unity, innovation, and excellence that AfrEA embodies. Let us strengthen our networks, build new partnerships, and champion the role of evaluation in realizing the 'Africa We Want.' Together, we have achieved much in 25 years – but our greatest impact still lies ahead."

– Dr. Miché OUEDRAOGO, AfrEA President.

Dr. Ouedraogo stressed the importance of strengthening national evaluation ecosystems, professionalizing the evaluation field through capacity building and mentorship, and increasing demand for evaluation in policymaking to drive homegrown solutions to Africa's challenges. He also underscored the need for Africa-led evaluation, supported by digitalization and technological innovation, and called for unity, ongoing collaboration, and advocacy to achieve even greater impact in the years ahead. Ouedraogo concluded with an optimistic message that, while much has been accomplished in 25 years, the greatest impact of African-rooted evaluation is still to come.

Her Excellency Mrs. Tirumar Abate, State Minister at Ethiopia's Ministry of Planning and Development, highlighted Ethiopia's unwavering commitment to strengthening national evaluation systems and promoting a culture of evidence-based policymaking. She emphasized that robust monitoring and evaluation are now essential for ensuring transparency, accountability, and efficiency in public service, especially given limited resources and high expectations. Mrs. Abate underscored Ethiopia's ongoing investment in institutional capacity-building and the integration of evaluation frameworks into development policy cycles, aiming to institutionalize evaluation across government ministries and agencies.

"Evaluation is no longer a luxury. It is a necessity. In a time of limited resources and high public expectations, it helps prevent costly policy failures. We are institutionalizing M&E across government agencies to ensure informed, data-driven decisions and continuous improvement."

– H.E. Mrs. Tirumar ABATE

She also reaffirmed Ethiopia's dedication to the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, noting that these frameworks represent shared aspirations for a peaceful and prosperous Africa. Praising AfrEA for its alignment with these global and continental agendas, she expressed Ethiopia's readiness to support AfrEA through technical cooperation and partnerships, and celebrated the conference as a historic milestone for knowledge sharing and advancing evaluation practices across the continent.

5.3.8 KEY CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The closing session of the AfrEA 25th Anniversary Conference highlighted several cross-cutting issues central to the future of evaluation in Africa. Participants emphasized the importance of strengthening national evaluation ecosystems to ensure that evaluation becomes a core component of governance and development planning. There was a strong call for increasing the demand for evaluation in policymaking, moving beyond donor-driven accountability to promote homegrown, evidence-based solutions to Africa's challenges. Inclusivity was a recurring theme, with a focus on empowering youth and women, fostering mentorship, and building capacity among emerging evaluators.

The session also stressed the need for collaboration and knowledge sharing among national VOPEs, development partners, and policymakers, as well as the adoption of innovative, contextually relevant methodologies aligned with African priorities such as Agenda 2063 and the SDGs. Institutionalizing evaluation within government structures and engaging parliamentarians and other stakeholders were identified as critical for ensuring accountability, learning, and improved service delivery across the continent.

"As you depart, remember: You are the architects of Africa's evidence-based future. Ethiopia's doors remain open – for collaboration, for coffee, and for the next evaluation breakthrough. Let's meet again in 2030 – not just to celebrate AfrEA's 30th, but to celebrate the lives transformed by our work."

– Dereje Mamo TSEGAYE.

The session concluded with a sense of pride in AfrEA's achievements over the past 25 years and a renewed collective commitment to advancing African-led evaluation. Speakers and participants celebrated the progress made in building a vibrant, diverse, and impactful evaluation community, while recognizing the ongoing challenges and opportunities ahead. The closing remarks underscored that, while much has been accomplished, the journey toward embedding evaluation at the heart of Africa's development is ongoing. The session ended on an optimistic note, emphasizing unity, innovation, and the shared vision of realizing "The Africa We Want" through informed, inclusive, and accountable governance.

To sustain and build on the conference's momentum, participants recommended deepening partnerships among VOPEs, governments, and development partners to strengthen national evaluation systems. There was a call for greater investment in capacity building, mentorship, and professionalization of the evaluation field, particularly targeting youth and emerging leaders. Policymakers were urged to institutionalize evaluation within government structures and to create enabling environments for evidence-based decision-making. The adoption and promotion of African Evaluation Principles and the "Made in Africa Evaluation" standard were encouraged as benchmarks for quality and relevance. Finally, fostering a culture of collaboration, innovation, and continuous learning was recommended to ensure that evaluation remains a driving force for positive change and sustainable development across Africa.

“To all participants from all over the world, thank you for being with us, thank you for your rich contributions. When you return home, tell your loved ones what you have witnessed in Addis Ababa. Tell them that there is a generation of African evaluators who are standing with dignity and pride and taking their place on the world stage. Tell them that there is hope for Africa, that Africa has a bright future, and even more than that, that the future is Africa.”

– Dr. Miché OUEDRAOGO, AfrEA President.

5.3.9 THE ADDIS ABABA DECLARATION OF 2025

Two Young and Emerging Evaluators (YEEs) namely : Ms. Anna Elsie LUYIGGO (YEE from Uganda) and Mr. Noumonvi Kossigan MAWUENA (YEE from Togo) read The AfrEA – African Union Agenda 2063 Declaration. The full Declaration is available in the Appendix.

The Addis Ababa Declaration 2025, unanimously adopted at the 25th Anniversary of the African Evaluation Association (AfrEA), underscores the pivotal role of evaluation in achieving the African Union’s Agenda 2063. The declaration celebrates AfrEA’s evolution into a key platform for collaboration and knowledge sharing, recognizing its leadership in promoting African-led evaluation practices. It emphasizes the importance of integrating robust evaluation mechanisms into national, regional, and continental development frameworks, advocating for the adoption of African Evaluation Principles (AEP) and the “Made in Africa Evaluation” (MAE) approach, which align evaluation practices with indigenous knowledge and context-specific metrics.



Photo 21: Celebration of the Signing of the Addis Ababa Declaration

A central highlight of the declaration is the call for strengthening evaluation capacity across Africa. This includes investing in training programs, fostering partnerships with professional evaluation organizations and academic institutions, and establishing regional evaluation hubs to facilitate peer learning and technical support, particularly for under-resourced nations. The declaration further encourages the adoption of innovative technologies, such as artificial intelligence and data analytics, to improve the accuracy, timeliness, and accessibility of evaluation data. It advocates for the co-design of AI tools with African evaluators, ensuring these technologies are culturally relevant and support local languages.

The declaration also prioritises multi-stakeholder collaboration, inviting the African Union, development banks, civil society, and private sector actors to co-fund evaluation frameworks that align with the aspirations of Agenda 2063. It endorses the formation of a Continental Evaluation Consortium to coordinate cross-border evaluations and streamline efforts with AU organs and regional institutions. Equity and inclusion are highlighted as critical pillars, with commitments to amplify the participation and leadership of youth and women in evaluation processes, integrate gender-responsive methodologies, and prioritize evaluations of AU initiatives that address women's empowerment, digital inclusion, and conflict resolution.

Finally, the declaration calls for dedicated resource mobilization, urging African governments and international partners to allocate funding for evaluation systems and capacity-building. It reaffirms AfrEA's commitment to positioning evaluation as a cornerstone of Africa's development, ensuring that the continent's transformative journey is guided by evidence, accountability, and the collective aspirations of its people. The declaration concludes by mandating AfrEA and its partners to support evaluation processes at all levels, assessing the implementation of Agenda 2063's Ten Year Implementation Plans based on defined targets.

DAY 3: WEDNESDAY, 18 JUNE 2025

5.4. The Addis Ababa Excursion

After the closing ceremony and lunch, the participants were taken through the City of Addis Ababa Tour, specifically to the Historic Entoto Park, between 1400 – 1830Hrs. This event was hosted by the Ministry of Tourism, of the Federal Government of Ethiopia. The Entoto Park in Addis Ababa offered the Conference participants a unique blend of natural beauty, historical significance, and cultural immersion that make it an essential destination for visitors.

Nestled in the highlands, the park provides breathtaking panoramic views of the city and its surroundings, creating an ideal spot for serene reflection and photography. Rich with historical sites, including ancient churches and monuments, it allows travelers to delve into Ethiopia's profound heritage while exploring the lush greenery and well-maintained trails. A visit to Entoto Park is not only refreshing but also a gateway to understanding the historical and cultural depth of Addis Ababa and the nation as a whole.



6. APPENDICES



6.1 APPENDIX 1 : THE ADDIS ABABA DECLARATION



CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF
AFRICAN EVALUATION EXCELLENCE

CÉLÉBRER 25 ANS D'EXCELLENCE
DE L'ÉVALUATION AFRICAINE

AfrEA – African Union's Agenda 2063 Addis Ababa Declaration 2025

18 June 2025

**On Strengthening Evaluation to Realize the African Union's Agenda 2063
Adopted at the 25th Anniversary Celebrations, Addis Ababa, 18 June 2025**

PREAMBLE

- Recognizing the critical role of evaluation in fostering evidence-based decision-making, accountability, and sustainable development across Africa;
- Recalling the African Union's Agenda 2063 as Africa's strategic framework for inclusive growth, integration, and transformative development;
- Celebrating 25 years of AfrEA's leadership in advancing African-led evaluation excellence, and acknowledging the Association's evolution into a dynamic hub for collaboration, knowledge sharing, and capacity building;
- Appreciating the invaluable contributions made by all stakeholders and participants—governments, national, regional and continental evaluation associations, the African Union, development partners, civil society, academia, and the private sector—during the three days of celebration and co-creation, which have fostered collective reflection, innovation, and commitment to shaping the future of evaluation in Africa;
- Emphasizing that the active engagement of these diverse stakeholders throughout the anniversary events has strengthened partnerships, surfaced new ideas, and reaffirmed the shared vision of positioning evaluation at the heart of Africa's development agenda;
- Affirming that the spirit of co-creation and collaboration demonstrated during the AfrEA Anniversary celebrations sets a strong foundation for aligning evaluation systems with continental priorities and accelerating the realization of Agenda 2063 through implementation of the ten years plans as well as nation, regional and continental development plans.
- Acknowledging the instrumental role and space for AfrEA to drive connection and collaboration in the development evaluation practice on the continent by promoting

and advocating for the use of African Evaluation Principles and Standards as reflected in the “Made in Africa Evaluation” (MAE).

We, the participants present here at the Celebration of AfrEA’s Silver Jubilee, in Addis Ababa Ethiopia, resolve as follows:

1. INSTITUTIONALIZING EVALUATION IN NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND CONTINENTAL FRAMEWORKS

- We will support AU Member States to integrate robust evaluation mechanisms into national development plans, budgeting processes, and sectoral policies to track progress toward Agenda 2063 goals.
- We call for the adoption and use of the African Evaluation Principles (AEP) and the Made in Africa (MAE) approach, harmonised with indigenous knowledge systems, to ensure culturally relevant and context-specific metrics in the evaluation practice.

2. STRENGTHENING EVALUATION CAPACITY

- We recommend targeted investments in training programs, including partnerships with institutions like the national Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs) and academic institutions, to build a skilled workforce in monitoring and evaluation (M&E).
- Supports the creation of regional evaluation hubs to facilitate peer learning, knowledge sharing, and technical assistance for under-resourced nations.

3. LEVERAGING INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY

We encourage the adoption and promotion of new technology in evaluation including Artificial Intelligence (AI), and data analytics to enhance the timeliness, accuracy, and accessibility of evaluation data, drawing inspiration from other initiatives and innovation-driven approaches.

- We advocate for partnerships with tech ecosystems to develop open-source platforms for real-time tracking of Agenda 2063 Ten Year Implementation Plan Indicators. We further advocate for strategic partnership and alignment with data management structures within the national statistical institutions to promote standardized and harmonized processes.
- We call on partners to co-design Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools with African evaluators, ensuring models are trained on locally generated data, support major African languages and dialects, and embed cultural context in algorithmic logic.

4. FOSTERING MULTI-STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION

- We invite the AU, development banks, civil society, and private sector actors to co-fund evaluation frameworks that align with Agenda 2063's aspirations and ambitions, moonshots, particularly in critical sectors such as agricultural transformation, energy

security, regional integration, good governance, peace and security, education, universal healthcare, and climate resilience.

- We endorse the formation of a Continental Evaluation Consortium, chaired by AfrEA and/member VOPEs on a rotational basis, to coordinate cross-border evaluations and streamline evaluations with the AU organs and other relevant regional institutions.

5. PROMOTING EQUITY AND INCLUSION

- Recognizing the transformative potential of the youth in shaping the future of evaluation and the imperative to advance equity and inclusion within the profession, the AU and AfrEA hereby commit to prioritizing the inclusion and leadership of youth in evaluation practice as a critical driver for advancing equity, innovation, and the future of the profession in Africa.
- Recognizing the pivotal role of women in advancing equitable and inclusive development across Africa, the AU and AfrEA hereby affirm their commitment to ensuring that the perspectives, leadership, and voices of women are explicitly and distinctly articulated in all evaluation processes, policy dialogues, and programmatic interventions.
- The AU and AfrEA pledge to prioritize and amplify the participation of women and the youth at all levels of evaluation and decision-making, to address systemic barriers that limit their influence, and to integrate gender-responsive approaches that recognize and value the unique contributions of women in shaping Africa's development agenda.
- We mandate AfrEA and the AU to adopt gender-responsive and youth-inclusive evaluation methodologies to ensure marginalized voices inform policy decisions.
- We mandate AfrEA to prioritize evaluations of AU initiatives addressing women's empowerment, digital inclusion, and conflict resolution to advance equitable development.

6. RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

- We urge African national governments to allocate dedicated funding for evaluation systems.
- We appeal to continental and international partners to allocate dedicated funding for evaluation capacity-building and Agenda 2063-focused assessments.

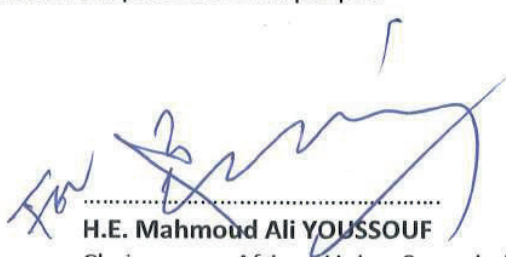
CONCLUSION

- This Resolution and Declaration reaffirms AfrEA's unwavering commitment to positioning evaluation as a cornerstone of Africa's development architecture. We commit to support evaluation processes at all levels – national, regional and continental by assessing implementation of Agenda 2063 Ten Year Implementation Plans based on the respective targets.

- AfrEA and its partners will ensure that Africa's transformative journey is guided by evidence, accountability, and the collective aspirations of its people.



Dr. Miché OUEDRAOGO
President, AfrEA



H.E. Mahmoud Ali YOUSSEF
Chairperson, African Union Commission,

Adopted unanimously on **18 June 2025**

African Evaluation Association (AfrEA)
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

6.2 APPENDIX 2 : THE RAPPORTEURS

No	Name of YEE	E-Mail 1	Country
1.	Dr. Awuor PONGE	awuorponge@gmail.com	KENYA
2.	Dr. Zerihun BERTHANE	zerihunb2006@gmail.com	ETHIOPIA
3.	Carlos Komla AKLIGO	cakligo@afrea.org	GHANA
4.	Tewelde Adhanom GEBREMARIAM	tadhanom@agoraconsulting-et.com	ETHIOPIA
5.	Emmanuel Nii Adotei BADDOD	ebaddod@afrea.org	GHANA
6.	Caleb Ifang AYONG	cayong@afrea.org	CAMEROON
7.	Aimee RUBIBI	aimeerubibi@gmail.com	RWANDA
8.	Anna Elsie LUYIGGO	annelsie26@gmail.com	UGANDA
9.	Asher Gebremedhin MEHARI	ashergmehari@gmail.com	ETHIOPIA
10.	Assana Mariam YABRE	assanamariamyabre@gmail.com	CÔTE D'IVOIRE
11.	Azeb Haileselassie GEBRESELESSIE	azebhailegebre@gmail.com	ETHIOPIA
12.	Baraka Leonard MFILINGE	mfilingebaraka1234@gmail.com	TANZANIA
13.	Betelhem Ketema TULU	betiketema50@gmail.com	ETHIOPIA
14.	Carol Alexandra ADOASI	cadoasi@afrea.org	GHANA
15.	Fentahun Bikale KEBEDE	fentahunbikale09@gmail.com	ETHIOPIA
16.	Hilina YALEM	yalemhilina@gmail.com	ETHIOPIA
17.	Ian Egunza KIDIGA	iankidiga@gmail.com	KENYA
18.	Justine Francine BETOU ADA	francine.betouada@cesag.edu.sn	SENEGAL
19.	Madeleine BROU	madeleinebroujob@gmail.com	CÔTE D'IVOIRE
20.	Mahlet Mehari ABRHA	mahlet.mehari@mu.edu.et	ETHIOPIA
21.	Makaita SHUMBA	muparem@gmail.com	ZIMBABWE
22.	Mark Nzioka MULOBI	mulobimark@gmail.com	KENYA
23.	Netsanet Tiruayehu WORKINEH	ntiruayehu@gmail.com	ETHIOPIA
24.	Peres Akinyi OCHIENG'	peresakinyi2017@gmail.com	KENYA
25.	Stephanie ABBEY	sabbey@afrea.org	GHANA
26.	Tewodros Yosef GEBREYESUS	tedyf28@gmail.com	ETHIOPIA
27.	Tsion Mekonen HAILU	tsionmekonen2019@gmail.com	ETHIOPIA
28.	Yenus Ibrahim AYALEW	yenusibrahim2178@gmail.com	ETHIOPIA
29.	Yordanos Tesfaye KEBEDE	yordanoszeny@gmail.com	ETHIOPIA
30.	Yotam NKHATA	yotam.nkhata@cigzambia.org	ZAMBIA



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