SESSION NUMBER & TITLE
Plenary 2: Evaluation Headlines Live
SESSION TAKE AWAY
With the pandemic response behind us, heads of independent evaluation, in this session, can opine on what they think are the main themes that they should focus on in the next five years. Beyond the panel discussion, this interaction can serve as a basis for future collaboration between the MDBs.
SUBTHEME
Inclusive partnership
ORGANIZATION/SPEAKERS
Marvin Taylor-Dormond, Managing Director, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB); **Veronique N. Salze-Lozac'h, Chief Evaluator,** European Bank for Reconstruction and Development **Ashwani Mutoo,** Director General, Independent Evaluation Office, New Development Bank (NDB); **Emmanuel Jimenez,** Director General, Independent Evaluation Department, Asian Development Bank
What is the one headline that you think we as evaluators ought to be considering over the next five years?
Veronique said that reflecting on the past, especially during times of crisis, we've learned that staying relevant and valuable requires us to be adaptable and flexible. As we look ahead, she strongly recommends that we maintain this adaptability in our methods and approaches. Also, ensure that we provide the necessary evidence and validation that our colleagues, clients, and communities require. **Ashwani** stated that focus should be on ensuring the timeliness of evaluations in both topic selection and delivery to make a real impact. **Marvin** stated that for evaluation to be consequential, it must be good for the future. It must be good for learning. It must adapt and operate in new technologies that are available there.
Real time evaluation and challenges associated with it?
Veronique mentioned that in real-time evaluation and market assessment, timing is critical. This presents a challenge in delivering timely findings for effective decision-making. Timing is both a challenge and an opportunity, and data collection, especially in real-time evaluation, remains a significant challenge. **Marvin** said that evaluation work must be consequential, adapting as needed. Recent experiences, like the crisis, taught us the value of flexibility. We've shifted from a long-term approach to embracing real-time evaluation to address emerging issues like SMEs. Constant adaptation ensures our contributions remain relevant and beneficial to the people we serve. Boards and teams benefit greatly from access to quality information. Real-time evaluation, like the case of their board member's transformation, highlights the value of being adaptable and responsive. It's a clear sign that their work has a meaningful impact, providing unique perspectives and driving positive change.

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Aswani mentioned that consequential evaluation is fundamental, and evaluators can make an impact not just through final reports but also by engaging stakeholders during the evaluation process. For instance, in a recent project evaluation, They identified the need for integrated monitoring systems in real-time and saw immediate action taken

How can we be consequential not just in terms of board awareness, but in terms of management behavior, and examples of that.

Veronique said that her example highlights the importance of timely evaluation in providing actionable information. When they presented real-time assessment results of the COVID-19 package in January 2020, the EBRD had already decided against a second package. To make the findings useful, they framed them strategically and provided suggestions to management. A board member asked for concrete recommendations during the meeting. They had to quickly adapt and work with management to transform suggestions into actionable recommendations. This demonstrates the value of agility and real-time evaluation in responding to evolving crises.

Marvin indicated that It's about seeing how their efforts lead to consequential outcomes. Whether it's the ADB acknowledging the vital role of our team's work, or the President's trust in our work during the vaccine crisis, these instances highlight the tangible effects of their contributions.

Manny said that this is information is helpful as it is a clear indicator that being consequential is demand for more evaluations.

Can we expect out of Evaluation unit? How can you be consequential? What were your analysis you entering this new world?

Ashwani said that the institution to be consequential there has to be a cultural learning, assessment of results accountability, impact driven organization.
Manny asked what do you see organizations? What is that culture like in terms of learning from the population? When evaluate evacuees get results? Are they receptive? What happens to them? If they get a bad evaluation? Are they supported or do they get clubbed over the head in your organization's reflections on this?
Veronique said that approach of evaluation is something that you need to nurture and think first it needs to be based on mutual respect and credibility of your work. learning process means that you have also a culture of operations and management being ready to learn the lessons.
Marvin mentioned that Balancing the demand for more evaluations with a genuine willingness to learn should not be seen as a trade-off and early learning is fundamental to evaluation work, alongside accountability.
Ashwani said that learning happens, not only during the evaluation, or at the end of evaluation, it also happens when you disseminate and engage. Management doesn't want to learn the lesson from independent evaluation but overtime they will react and build on what is being proposed.
Manny said it's important to build capacity not only on evaluators, but on users of evaluation on how to use that.

QUESTION AND ANSWER

1. Thoughts about agility and quality of leadership, evaluations themselves and the culture of our evaluation groups?
Veronique mentioned the importance of maintaining the quality of evaluations, even in rapid assessment situations. It emphasizes that while speed may be necessary, quality should not be compromised. It highlights the need to acknowledge limitations, prioritize robust methodology, and ensure the credibility of the evaluation work. She also added the significance of leadership support, particularly from institutional leaders, in promoting the value of evaluation and its integration into decision-making processes.

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Ashwani said that evaluation process is equally important as the evaluation report in the context itself. You need leadership when you're actually designing an evaluation. You also need leadership when you're engaging with stakeholders, different audiences at the grassroots level and administrative level at the policy level

Marvin said never compromise the quality. The work of an evaluator times on the quality of the work that you're doing. You're always going to have controversies as an evaluator, so be mindful, Be thorough in the quality of your work.

2. How to evaluate ourselves is evaluation, the science and or an art and the pros and cons of disclosure, auditors and integrity?

Marvin cite an example, they have the external assessment commissioned by the board around every five years and periodic surveys to see what the users, what areas of evaluation areas, board, staff etc.

Ashawni said that there shouldn't be a full disclosure of the evaluation analysis, evaluation findings, evaluation recommendations and ratings if you use them, as evaluators we protect the source of key informants. He added that when he said full disclosure, it was related to the core of the evaluation analysis, results and recommendations.

Veronique commented that evaluation is an art at the end, but it has to be based on scientific methodologies. It's important to have others on your team and then from outside, maybe what your blind spots are, or maybe giving you a different perspective on how you analyze the data

3. who should lead the evaluation process and who are the evaluators of the future and the role of the evaluation officers.

Marvin emphasize the avoidance of surprises by ensuring that evaluations, whether positive or negative, are communicated in advance. This transparency helps maintain trust within the organization. He also added to encourage individuals to engage in self-assessment as a tool for learning and improvement. He also added this final thought: “There is money that has been invested in the work that we do. Make it worth it. Have an impact in your organization, prepared for the new challenges that we have ahead. Climate change, poverty we continually striving forward. We have the city of crisis looming there being prepared for them. adopt your methods so that you continue to be influential in your organization's next wave.”

Veronique mentioned that the responsibility for leading the evaluation process is not about specific individuals but rather about following a set of principles and practices. She added that Influencing management involves ensuring that recommendations are not only well-documented with evidence but also clear and actionable. Her final message would be to trust evaluation as a means to bring up some changes and improvements and to make sure that the evaluation is used not as a tool but really as a tool with the intention to improve the impact.

Ashwani said that evaluation in the future should really be an activity which is embedded in all our processes that we learn collectively individually for improvement and transformation. He added, the future of evaluations should involve a greater role for the beneficiaries of projects and programs in conducting evaluations. This shift towards "self-evaluation" should be led by local stakeholders, with international organizations providing technical assistance and guidance as needed. In cases where international organizations conduct independent evaluations, local stakeholders should be engaged from the beginning in the design and review process to ensure transparency and input without compromising the analysis's independence.

SESSION COORDINATOR

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