

Topic: Building the Evaluation Capacity Among Young and Emerging Evaluators (YEEs) for the SDGs Era in Asia Pacific Region

The Global Evaluation Agenda 2016-2020 endorsed by EvalPartners and other stakeholders emphasizes the importance of strengthening the enabling environment for evaluation, institutional capacities and individual capacities in promoting an evaluation culture.¹ EvalYouth Asia (EYA) partnered with the Asia Pacific Evaluation Association (APEA) and Parliamentarians Forum for Development Evaluation - South Asia (PFDE-SA) in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Global Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation (GPFE), and EvalYouth Global for the development of the Asia Pacific Regional Evaluation Strategy. Hence, the Asia Pacific Evaluation Regional Strategy initiated by APEA and other key stakeholders are working towards institutionalization and professionalization of evaluation. The Asia Pacific Regional Evaluation Strategy has eight themes and “Promoting Young and Emerging Evaluators” is one of the themes.

In the SDGs era, evaluations are becoming mandatory around the world. Currently in the Asia Pacific Region, there is a dearth of evaluation professionals and lack of awareness about the evaluation field among the wider general public, especially among the young. Even our Young and Emerging Evaluators (YEEs) have a lack of capacity building and professional development opportunities in the country. For example, for many years, there has always been a lack of career opportunities and lack of formal education opportunities in evaluation for YEEs in the Asia Pacific Region. YEEs in the Asia Pacific Region need to get guidance from the M&E professionals in order to start a career in the field of evaluation. Therefore, it’s imperative that we continuously engage and develop the capacities of YEEs in the country to promote evaluation and take forward the profession.

Hence, APEA is leading the way by conducting capacity development workshop, webinars, and professional development opportunities in collaboration with VOPEs, EvalYouth Chapters, academia, and Parliamentarians to promote evaluation culture, build capacities and competencies and engage YEEs in the profession for the SDGs era. Having parliamentarians support is crucial, ultimately, parliamentarians play a major role to use the evaluation results for evidence-based decision making in order to improve people’s lives in the country.

In March 2021, for the first time in the Asia Pacific Region, a Virtual Winter School was held for YEEs. The main purpose of the Winter School is to provide opportunity for YEEs in Asia Pacific to become competent, experienced and well-networked professionals who contribute to evaluation capacity at national, regional and international levels. The main outcomes of the

¹EvalAgenda 2020. Executive Summary: Global Evaluation Agenda 2016-2020. EvalPartners. Retrieved from <https://www.evalpartners.org/sites/default/files/documents/ExecutiveSummary.pdf>

Winter School are to enhancing the knowledge and skills of YEEs on evaluation and SDGs and enhancing the skills of YEEs in career development in M&E.²

This Winter School training for YEEs was also the first in the Asia Pacific Region to have a module on Career Development in Evaluation. The focus on the Career Development in Evaluation module was for YEEs to understand the importance of following methodical career development process, to understand how to get into the M&E career path, to understand career readiness competencies and essential competencies to become professional evaluators and to understand M&E Job Market, emerging jobs and trends.

Additionally, another focus on the Winter School, capacity building workshops, and webinars are to promote the use of evaluation to achieve sustainable development. During the SDGs sessions, the focus is for YEEs to learn about the importance of evaluation in the achieving of the SDGs, steps towards the evaluators achieving the SDGs, and evaluation of GHG emission reduction and that of other externalities (based on improved infrastructure, more efficient agricultural practices, less food losses, efficient energy use). Further, these capacity building workshops and webinars for YEEs focus on helping them understand the importance of conducting evaluations using sound evaluation theories, approaches, and methodologies.

The **objective of this panel** consisting of YEEs and a senior evaluator is to share experiences and lessons from Asia Pacific Region initiatives on the steps it has taken to engage and promote an evaluation culture that utilizes evaluation results in the sustainable development process. The knowledge of the evaluation community in the Asian Pacific context as it works to engage the YEEs can be used as an example for other regions to follow as communities around the world seek to professionalize the field of evaluation and to prepare the next generation of evaluators to take the evaluation profession forward as competent and ethical evaluators.

Profile of Moderator

Mr. Asela Kalugampitiya (Moderator): He is the President of both Asia Pacific Evaluation Association and Sri Lanka Evaluation Association. He has over 20 years of experience in the field of M&E and has worked for the United Nations and other international organizations as an M & E specialist. He is the Director at the Center for Evaluation, University of Sri Jayewardenepura.

Profile of Panelists

Mr. Randika De Mel: He is a Former Board Member of SLEVA, Co-Leader EvalYouth Sri Lanka and EvalYouth Asia; and he has worked in Africa, Asia and Americas on evaluation

² EYA and APEA (2021). Summary Report and Organizing Guide: Asia Pacific Virtual Winter School 2021 for Young and Emerging Evaluators (YEEs). Retrieved from <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vqa78cqKleVJ6HCHeFIYgDtUvIwZimo7/view>

projects. His research interests are rural livelihoods, gender, agriculture, and education; works with public sector, NGOs, and academia.

Ms. Ana Erika Lareza: She is a Co-Founder and Co-Leader of EvalYouth Asia.

Mr. Yatin Diwakar: He is a Co- Leader of EvalYouth Asia and EvalYouth India.

Duration

45 Minutes

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