Conference Report: Monitoring and Evaluation for Responsible Innovation

A conference on taking responsibility in M&E for systemic change
19-20 March, the Netherlands

Cecile Kusters, Irene Guijt, Nicky Buizer, Jan Brouwers, Marlene Roefs, Simone van Vugt, Seerp Wigboldus

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Conference Report: Monitoring and Evaluation for Responsible Innovation

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1 Centre for Development Innovation, Wageningen University and Research centre
2 Learning by Design

Centre for Development Innovation
Wageningen, August 2015

Report CDI-15-103
This report presents the key highlights and contributions from the conference ‘Monitoring and Evaluation for Responsible Innovation’ that was held on 19-20 March 2015 in Wageningen, the Netherlands. This conference was part of the International Year of Evaluation, and is the eighth annual ‘M&E on the Cutting Edge’ conference. These events are organised by Centre for Development Innovation, Wageningen University and Research centre and Learning by Design. The conference focused on how monitoring and evaluation efforts can support the kind of transformative and responsible innovation needed to tackle critical questions for society.

Keywords: conference, evaluation, innovation, monitoring, responsible.
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Preface

This report summarises the outline and outputs of the conference ‘Monitoring and Evaluation for Responsible Innovation’, which took place on March 19-20, 2014.

This conference is part of the annual CDI series ‘M&E on the Cutting Edge’. These annual events are organised by the Centre for Development Innovation and Learning by Design, in collaboration with partners. So far, the following events have been organised:

- **2015 ‘M&E for Responsible Innovation’** with Prof. Dr. Phil Macnaghten and Dr. Irene Guijt; Wageningen, 19-20 March 2015 [http://tinyurl.com/o3oucnz](http://tinyurl.com/o3oucnz)
- **2013 ‘Impact evaluation: taking stock and moving ahead’** with Dr. Elliot Stern and Dr. Irene Guijt; Wageningen, 25-26 March 2013; [http://tinyurl.com/pkpgb6](http://tinyurl.com/pkpgb6)
- **2012 ‘Expert seminar on Developmental Evaluation’** and ‘Global hot issues on the M&E agenda’ with Dr Michael Quinn Patton; Wageningen, 22-23 March 2012; [http://tinyurl.com/nbw29ub](http://tinyurl.com/nbw29ub)

Other innovation dialogues on complexity: [http://portals.wi.wur.nl/navigatingcomplexity/](http://portals.wi.wur.nl/navigatingcomplexity/)

The funding support provided by CDI, Hivos, ICCO, Oxfam Novib, and NWO Wotro made this conference possible. We are deeply grateful for their support.

We are also grateful to the external keynote speaker Dr. Phil Macnaghten, whose input helped us shape our own keynote contributions. Together, the stimulating ideas, experiences and concepts helped frame the conference thought-provoking discussions.

We are grateful to all the contributors for their willingness and courage to openly share their experiences and concepts. Our thanks go to:

- Irene Guijt (Learning by Design), Cecile Kusters (WUR/CDI), and Phil Macnaghten (WUR/Knowledge Technology and Innovation) for the **keynote speeches**
- Mirjam Bakker (KIT), Brian Belcher (CIFOR), Lucie Blok (KIT), Julien Colomer (IUCN), Bethany Davies (Clear Horizon), Yvonne Es (Oxfam Novib), Karine Godthelp (Context, international cooperation), Willeminijn de Iongh (Oxfam Novib), Eric Koper (International Institute of Tropical Agriculture), Fredrik Korfker (consultant), Augustin Kouévi (University of Abomey – Calavi), Elsa de Morais Sarmento (ADB), Marlene Roefs (WUR/CDI), Lieke Ruijmschoot (Fair, Green and Global Alliance), Fons van der Velden (Context, international cooperation), Simone van Vugt (WUR/CDI), and Monique van Zijl (Oxfam Novib) for their presentations on **key themes**
- Jan Bade (Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Behavioural Insight Team), Hilde Bras (WUR/Sociology), Steff Deprez (VECO), Irene Guijt (Learning by Design), Fredrik Korfker (consultant), Nico Mensink (FMO), Joanna Monaghan (Comic Relief), Marlene Roefs (WUR/CDI), Ruurd Ruben (WUR/LEI), Elsa de Morais Sarmento (ADB), Guy Sharrock (Catholic Relief Services), Hans Slegtenhorst (Carnegie Consult), and Simone van Vugt (WUR/CDI) for leading and paneling the **thematic roundtables**
- Sylvia Bergh (ISS), Kees Biekart (ISS), Claudia Maldonado Trujillo (CLEAR Centre for Latin America), Barbara van Mierlo (WUR), Gabriela Pérez-Yarahuán (CLEAR Centre for Latin America), Guy Sharrock (Catholic Relief Services), Magda Stepanyan (Risk Society), Seerp Wigboldus (WUR/CDI), and Fred Zaal (KIT) for the **cases on core themes**
• Jindra Cekan (Cekan Consulting LLC), Karel Chambille (Hivos), Steff Deprez (VECO), Peter Huisman (Oxfam Novib), Caroline Huyghe (VECO), Astrid Molenveld (PGI KU-Leuven), Anne Oudes (Oxfam Novib), Valerie Pattyn (PGI KU-Leuven), Harish Poovaiah (Public Affairs Centre), and Md. Mokhlesur Rahman (Practical Action) for giving the methodological workshops.

We appreciate the session facilitation by: Sylvester Dickson Baguma (NARO, Uganda; PhD candidate Loughborough University, UK); Jan Brouwers (CDI); Caroline Desalos (CDI); Irene Guijt (Learning by Design); Cecile Kusters (CDI); Marlene Roefs (CDI); Simone van Vugt (CDI); and Seerp Wigboldus (CDI).

Many thanks to the documenters of the conference process: Nicky Buizer (CDI); Lucie van Schendel; Yunia Nalweyiso (Wageningen University student); and Bram Peters (Wageningen University student).

Furthermore, we would like to thank Tessa Steenbergen for the video production that brought the energy of the conference to those who could not attend, Marjet van Veelen for the heart-warming photographs, CDI staff for essential logistic support, and Jarinka Heijink for final editing support.

The conference participants were inspired by the conference topic, and contributed to lively presentations and discussions.

We hope that this conference report and related conference products\(^1\) will further stimulate monitoring and evaluation practice that supports responsible choices for our future.

Wageningen, the Netherlands

September 2015

**The conference organisers**

Cecile Kusters, Centre for Development Innovation (CDI), Wageningen University and Research centre
Irene Guijt, Learning by Design

In collaboration with:
Jan Brouwers, CDI
Nicky Buizer, CDI
Marlene Roefs, CDI
Simone van Vugt, CDI
Seerp Wigboldus, CDI

\(^1\) Available here: [http://tinyurl.com/o3oucnz](http://tinyurl.com/o3oucnz)
List of abbreviations and acronyms

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADB</td>
<td>African Development Bank</td>
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<td>CDI</td>
<td>Centre for Development Innovation</td>
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<tr>
<td>CIFOR</td>
<td>Center for International Forestry Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>CLEAR</td>
<td>Centre for Latin America</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSR</td>
<td>Corporate Social Responsibility</td>
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<tr>
<td>DFID</td>
<td>Department for International Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECG</td>
<td>Evaluation Cooperation Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>FGG</td>
<td>Fair, Green and Global</td>
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<tr>
<td>FMO</td>
<td>Nederlandse Financierings-Maatschappij voor Ontwikkelingslanden</td>
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<tr>
<td>IITA</td>
<td>International Institute of Tropical Agriculture</td>
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<td>IUCN</td>
<td>International Union for Conservation of Nature</td>
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<tr>
<td>KIT</td>
<td>Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen/Royal Tropical Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>LEI</td>
<td>Landbouw Economisch Instituut</td>
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<tr>
<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>Monitoring &amp; Evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>MDB</td>
<td>Multilateral Development Bank</td>
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<tr>
<td>MDG</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goal</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEL</td>
<td>Monitoring, Evaluation &amp; Learning</td>
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<td>MSP</td>
<td>Multi Stakeholder Partnership</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organisation</td>
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<td>OM</td>
<td>Outcome Mapping</td>
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<td>PGI KU-Leuven</td>
<td>Public Governance Institute KU-Leuven</td>
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<tr>
<td>PPP</td>
<td>Public-Private Partnership</td>
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<tr>
<td>QCA</td>
<td>Qualitative Comparative Analysis</td>
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<td>RI</td>
<td>Responsible Innovation</td>
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<td>RRI</td>
<td>Responsible Research and Innovation</td>
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<td>SME</td>
<td>Small and medium-sized enterprises</td>
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<td>VECO</td>
<td>VredesEilanden Country Office</td>
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<td>WUR</td>
<td>Wageningen University and Research centre</td>
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Summary

This report presents the key discussions held during the conference ‘Monitoring and Evaluation for Responsible Innovation’. This conference took place on 19 and 20 March, 2015 in the Netherlands and was organised by Centre for Development Innovation, Wageningen University and Research centre and Learning by Design. As an official participant in the International Year of Evaluation (2015), this conference theme also coincided with the end of the Millennium Development Goals and the start of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Expectations of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) are expanding and shifting, away from oftentimes assessing goal achievement to asking if the goals themselves can be considered responsible and how we can become more aware and critical of unexpected effects. Triggered in part by the undeniably urgent social and environmental crises, this shift asks of those involved in M&E to be clear which questions must be asked, what competencies are needed to do this, which conversations with who matter, and who is accountable for transformative innovation. The concept of ‘responsible innovation’ was used to focus the conference theme, to inspire participants to consider how to contribute (more) responsibly to a sustainable and equitable future.

Conference sessions focused on three conference questions:

1. How can M&E responsibly support the management and governance of innovation processes towards a sustainable and equitable future?
2. How can M&E contribute to deeper reflexivity and transparent decision-making?
3. What are the prerequisites for taking responsibility for systemic change in terms of:
   - M&E professionals’ roles and responsibilities; values and principles; competencies
   - M&E process design, focus and approach; and
   - Institutional changes needed to support M&E for responsible innovation

The conference report offers brief abstracts of each session. All the conference written and visual products can be found here: http://tinyurl.com/o3oucnz

During the final plenary session, the following collective insights emerged. The responses indicated a need for a more integrated approach to M&E, with a stronger systems perspective: linking programme management with monitoring and evaluation. Participants expressed a need for more focus on a sustainable future, for integration of (responsible) inquiry of the future and scenarios, and for systems and evaluations that focus on internal learning.

Conference participants encouraged M&E professionals to be more flexible and adaptive, and to act as learners rather than seek to be the expert. Such professionals can help by considering the future instead of only looking over their shoulders at the past.

In terms of the process, participants called for integrating monitoring with evaluation, from the onset of any initiative with the theory of change as an important starting point. M&E for responsible innovation needs to focus on questions that are critical for the future, such as related to sustainability, scaling up, and potential scenarios. Such forms of M&E consider not just accountability needs, but also internal learning so that responsible decisions can be made for the future.

Linking and learning does not only need to take place for findings, but also during the M&E process. This should not be just an external affair that is contracted out, but be invested in as important for stakeholders involved in a development initiative. There is a need for more engagement of

"We need to think through how M&E can help us to make responsible choices for our future.”

stakeholders, including citizens in these M&E processes, so that learning and collective sense making can take place, which in turn can support more responsible choices for the future.

Such changes require institutional support. M&E needs to be better understood in terms of its potential support to governance of development initiatives and responsible decision-making needed for a more sustainable future. Lessons from (monitoring and) evaluations need to be linked and a system’s perspective is needed for linking knowledge generated from different sources and processes so that decisions are made by looking at the issues from a more holistic perspective.
1 About the conference and the report

1.1 Why the conference

Expectations about monitoring and evaluation are expanding and shifting away from oftentimes assessing goal achievement to asking if the goals themselves can be considered responsible and how those involved in M&E can become more aware and critical of unexpected effects. Triggered in part by the undeniably urgent social and environmental crises, this shift asks of those involved in monitoring and evaluation to be clear which questions must be asked, what competencies are needed to do this, which conversations with who matter, and who is accountable for transformative innovation. The concept of responsible innovation can help inspire those engaged in M&E to contribute responsibly to a sustainable and equitable future.

Against this background, the annual ‘M&E on the Cutting Edge’ event was held on ‘Monitoring and Evaluation for Responsible Innovation’ from 19-20 March 2015, in Wageningen, the Netherlands. The year 2015 is significant in two ways: by being declared as the International Year of Evaluation, and being the transition year of Millennium Development Goals to Sustainable Development Goals. The conference is one of the many that are organised in 2015 in honour of the International Year of Evaluation. For this event the evaluation torch was welcomed to the Netherlands.

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"... we are ...undermining our well-being along with nature’s ability to provide for us. We need to fundamentally transform the way we produce, consume and live. We need to green our economy and the transition needs to start today."

Bruyninckx, 2014

**Urgency of Responsible Innovation**

Collective responsibility is needed to advance on critical and urgent issues that affect inequality and the sustainability of our planet. Inequality is rising rapidly: ‘The world is more unequal today than at any point since World War II’ (UNDP, 2013). 162 million young children are chronically malnourished and in developing regions 1 in 5 people still live in extreme poverty (United Nations, 2014). Planetary boundaries are being exceeded at alarming and accelerating rates.

Meanwhile, a new landscape of development is emerging (MacPherson, 2014) in which old funding flows and relationships are being superseded by novel ways of engaging and financing, for example through foundations, prizes, crowd funding, new insurance products and social impact bonds.

These issues in this new landscape require collective action in innovation. "Innovation becomes an imperative when problems are getting worse, when systems are not working, or when institutions reflect past rather than present problems” (Mulgan et al., 2007, p.9). These challenges highlight the need to act faster and with greater focus on all fronts. Great investments are being made in transformative innovations of all kinds.

Innovation can express itself in new relationships, like more accountable governance with budget transparency and citizen engagement through initiatives such as ‘Making All Voices Count’ and Twaweza. New partnerships between multinational corporations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), such as Mars and smallholder-focused VECO, are rethinking cocoa production relations. Swiss Re and Oxfam America collaborate in Bangladesh to develop novel programmes and products, with farmers paying flood insurance premiums by investing their own labour in local climate adaptation measures. In Colombia, innovation is institutional through territorial development programmes embedded in ongoing peace negotiations. Entire organisations, such as Ashoka and Acumen, are devoted to identifying and investing in leading social entrepreneurs that ‘go where markets have failed and aid has fallen short’ (Acumen, n.d.).

Responsible innovation offers a powerful perspective to encourage explicit concern for (ethical) acceptability, sustainability and societal desirability of the innovation process, and its intended and unintended products. Mainly known within the European science and technology context, the concept of responsible innovation offers values, principles and approaches for transformations in international development that further equity and sustainability.  

**Implications for Monitoring and Evaluation**

“It is now up to the evaluation community to show whether evaluation can be part of the effort to save humanity or if evaluation only can make the journey to its doom marginally better.”

Mickwitz, 2014

Our monitoring and evaluation efforts can support the kind of transformative and responsible innovation needed to address critical questions for society.

To support systemic change, monitoring and evaluation for innovation asks more of the evaluation profession than of monitoring and evaluation of innovation. How do we – as commissioners and implementers of M&E processes – support a shared responsibility for systemic changes? What evidence would we need to be confident that efforts are contributing to systemic transformation? What does evidence of successful responsible innovation look like? Who can be held accountable for these changes, whether positive or negative?

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5 More information on responsible (research and) innovation: [https://goo.gl/DgWqnJ](https://goo.gl/DgWqnJ)
Core questions that conference participants discussed in keynote presentations, case clinics, roundtable discussions, and methodological workshops to deepen their work, included:

- How can M&E responsibly support the management and governance of innovation processes towards a sustainable and equitable future?
- How can M&E contribute to deeper reflexivity and transparent decision-making?
- What are the prerequisites for taking responsibility for systemic change in terms of:
  - M&E professional's roles & responsibilities; values and principles; competencies
  - M&E process design, focus and approach
  - Institutional changes needed to support M&E for responsible innovation

1.2 About the programme and the report

The conference was created through rich and diverse sessions offered by the 107 participants from Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe and Latin America. A list of the participants can be found in Appendix 1. Cecile Kusters, the conference coordinator from CDI, opened the conference. Two keynote speeches by Professor Dr. Phil Macnaghten, who defined and illustrated the core concept of responsible innovation, and the challenge for monitoring and evaluation. Dr. Irene Guijt expanded on the M&E challenge, linking responsible innovation to responsible monitoring and evaluation. Subsequent sessions touched on key topics, including institutional evolution; shifting mindsets and cultures in complicated partnership based systems; lobby and advocacy, and the specific case of when existing M&E approaches prove inadequate. Roundtable discussions were held on innovations in M&E of private sector development interventions; behavioural insights in M&E for responsible innovation; and collective sense making to navigate diverse values and needs. Day 2 saw participants dive deeper into the topics of reflexive capacity; evaluation consultants as change agents; issues of scale; and risk and innovation. Methodological workshops gave participants inspiration of new possibilities. All these contributions were based on a formal review process. The conference concluded with a plenary session to generate key insights.

The structure of this report follows the conference programme. Brief introductions are provided for each of the contributions. At the end of every contribution, a link to the presentation is given. More detailed information on each topic, including background papers, presentations, videos and photos, can be found at http://tinyurl.com/o3oucnz.
2 Keynote speeches

2.1 Introduction

Cecile Kusters
Senior advisor (participatory) planning, monitoring and evaluation – Managing for impact at Centre for Development Innovation, Wageningen University and Research centre

Cecile Kusters, lead conference organiser, set the scene for the conference by highlighting its importance in light of the International Year of Evaluation, and by lighting the evaluation torch that is traversing the globe following key evaluation events. Cecile also indicated the importance of this conference in light of the sustainable development goals and that we need to look at the issues from a systems perspective.

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2.2 Responsible innovation and the challenge for monitoring and evaluation

Phil McNaghten
Chair in Technology and International Development, KTI at Wageningen University

Responsible innovation, international development and the challenge for evaluation

Professor Dr. Phil Macnaghten kicked off with a keynote speech about responsible innovation and the challenge for monitoring and evaluation, with a focus on the United Kingdom.

Responsible research and innovation (RRI) is a new and emerging concept that has significant implications for scientific governance and practice. It has emerged as a policy concept in Europe, chiefly because of past examples of ‘irresponsible’ innovation. These started with debates on nuclear technologies and then included subsequent ‘controversial’ technologies, such as agricultural biotechnology and nanotechnology.

Frameworks of RRI have now been developed with some clarity. Although there are modest differences between UK and European variants, the basic tenets are agreed. To innovate responsibly means to innovate with care to its fours constituent dimensions: anticipation, inclusion, reflexivity and responsiveness. One of the key tasks for M&E of RRI is how to develop systems of M&E that remain sensitive to its goals, but which keep the process open and flexible (i.e. that does not instrumentalise) the concept.

The UK RRI framework was successfully tested in relation to a controversial solar radiation management project to help decide whether or not to proceed with a test-bed (field trial) of a delivery system for injecting particulates into the upper atmosphere to counteract climate change.

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"M&E can support us in making responsible choices for the future."

"If we are to monitor and evaluate responsible research and innovation in a socially robust fashion, we need to engage with the issue within the terms of the debate as it is considered by an inclusive array of actors, including publics."

"C"
2.3 From responsible innovation to responsible M&E

Irene Guijt
Independent researcher and evaluator; Learning by Design

From responsible innovation to responsible monitoring and evaluation

Responsible innovation as a concept can offer M&E another framing of its core contribution. We should not only focus on M&E of innovation. How do we need to think about or do M&E differently for it to contribute to systemic change through innovation? Are we creating the right conditions for these issues to be considered more seriously?

Innovation is not neutral – it is about making the world fairer and more sustainable. So in order to think about how M&E can strengthen innovation, we need to ask ourselves what values are non-negotiable that we can use for judging the contribution of the innovation.

Innovation can be incremental, where it adds value to or complements what is, or the rare ‘eureka’ type of breakthrough, where the process takes a huge leap forward. In all cases we cannot be sure about the route and the risk that is involved, so there is increasing recognition of the need to ‘fail faster’ and accept iterative adaptation.

Four aspects of M&E need rethinking. First, responsible goals. M&E processes need to change the question from ‘did they do what they said they would do?’ and focus more on ‘where are we going if we continue on this path?’ This change should not just be economically, which often has our attention, but also ethically, socially, and environmentally. With a shift in question comes a shift in purpose: summative M&E focused to serve formative needs within shorter time frames.

Second, the M&E timeframe needs rethinking. Does innovation stop? If so, when? We cannot just say ‘and now it’s good, so we’re done.’ We need to invest in ongoing evaluative thinking ourselves instead of outsourcing such processes, or taking it off the shelf every now and then.

Third, we need to think about the unintended. If innovation for social change is about an unknown pathway by definition, then being alert to surprise and investing in understanding is critical. We need to be alert to ‘mismatch type surprise’ – to challenge not only assumptions, but also ‘unanticipated surprise’ that helps to stretch options and rethink what is needed next.

Last, the use of M&E. M&E for innovation requires a broader focus beyond only thinking in terms that are bound by money flows. What is the quality of the innovation process? What are the societal and environmental effects of innovation?

What would M&E that actively encourages and pursues responsible innovation (RI) look like? To do better at these four aspects, we do not need to start from scratch, but can mix and match existing tools and practices. The evaluation profession has many practices at its fingertips.

For example, theory of change processes to keep our eyes on responsible goals, participatory indicator development to track what matters to those people living with intended improvements and foresight studies with multiple scenarios to imagine innovation pathways and emerging futures based on different assumptions. How would life change for whom, and is that what we truly want? We can use feedback processes to listen deeply to people’s experiences. That way, we keep our finger on the pulse; asking, listening and thinking as an ongoing reflection. There are other useful practices. For example rubrics, to keep focused on what qualities the innovation must have; developmental evaluation, to nudge and steer the innovation process; impact evaluation in all its forms, to stay alert about assumptions of change; and participatory analysis, to enable all those in the system change to reflect, debate and act in sync.

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"The challenge of M&E for responsible innovation is not about tools and methods; it is about politics in organisation."

"Let’s move beyond innovation with data collection methods to look at approaches for collective sensemaking and seeking surprise."
3 Key themes

3.1 Institutional evaluation

Fredrik Korfker and Elsa de Morais Sarmento

Former Chief Evaluator, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD); and African Development Bank (ADB), respectively

Monitoring and evaluation in multilateral development banks. Is gathering lessons learned leading to institutional innovations?

Development assistance is about providing the foundation for learning, knowledge and innovation that constitutes the basis for long-term development. This is particularly so for Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) who mostly offer loan financing.

The Evaluation Cooperation Group (ECG) features 20 years of innovative processes. The goal of M&E is to learn as much as possible and close the information loop by channelling lessons learned back to project staff to improve project design, implementation and evaluation. Only by asking better questions, collecting better data, applying rigorous analysis and by innovating can MDBs improve the quality of the services and bring about the desired development impact. Lessons learned from specific programmes have proven to be relevant to understand the market failures in sector work.

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Marlene Roefs and Simone van Vugt

Centre for Development Innovation, Wageningen University and Research centre

Bridging stakes and converging focus - Are we doing M&E for responsible innovation in PPP context?

Marlene Roefs is a monitoring and evaluation specialist, and Simone van Vugt is both a multi stakeholder partnerships, and monitoring and evaluation specialist at the Centre for Development Innovation, Wageningen UR.

Shared costs or risk-taking in development and innovative initiatives though public-private partnerships (PPPs) is becoming common practice. Interests of the partners converge in terms of input, but often less strongly in terms of results, or innovative and responsible development. Building meaningful M&E systems in the PPP context requires bridging a development perspective with profit, economic and productivity indicators and approaches.
Experiences and insights with setting up M&E systems for and with PPPs were shared. Responsible Innovation was linked to the why, what, how, who, when, and for whom to M&E. Clarification was given on leverage points for better understanding and collective action. Working with power and dealing with conflict hold clearly true in designing responsible M&E systems in PPPs. Issues to consider relate to the seven principles of multi stakeholder partnerships (MSPs) are: embrace systemic change, transform institutions, work with power, deal with conflict, communicate effectively, promote collaborative leadership, and foster participatory learning (Brouwer et al., 2015). In order to come up with a collective M&E design in PPPs, following the principles of responsible innovation, and the MSP principles is crucial. Within this, the professional relationship with individuals is key.

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3.2 Shifting mind-sets and cultures in complicated partnership based systems

Bethany Davies, Julien Colomer, and Brian Belcher

Senior consultant at Clear Horizon; Monitoring and learning officer at IUCN; and professor at the Faculty of Social and Applied Sciences, Royal Roads University, and Senior Associate Scientist at CIFOR, respectively

Learning partnerships: current realities and future prospects

For M&E to play an effective role in delivering results, many unspoken assumptions need to be challenged. Honest conversations about implementation failure and genuine adaptive management, realistic performance expectations, and organisational weaknesses or capacity development needs have not been part of the traditional donor-recipient relationship. The positive experience of a Department for International Development (DFID) supported partnership project offers some insight into how appropriate M&E can act as an entry point to these conversations. From partners’ experience, we can take a few key lessons.

Plan for adaptation and encourage openness about challenges. After a year of implementation, the project had difficulty delivering on desired results. These limitations were reported, triggering performance management processes. The project design included a DFID-managed flexible, rapid response funding pool. These funds were used to develop an improved, project-wide M&E plan that made use of theory driven M&E approaches. The DFID program manager played an important role in establishing an open learning and accountability dialogue with partners.

Develop realistic performance expectations. A key limitation in the original project design and M&E approach was a desire to attribute long-term impacts to short-term localised interventions. Using theory of change, partners were able to identify short- and medium-term project outcomes within their sphere of influence, and to show how these were preconditions to achieving longer-term impacts. This revised performance system enabled partners to focus on the fundamentals of effective project design that had been overlooked when they were incentivised to plan for, monitor and report on results beyond their sphere of accountability.

Incentivise and support partner practice change. In addition to externally-facing results, the project’s revised performance management system explicit sought results relating to partner project cycle management (i.e. improved design processes, outcomes focused monitoring, gender responsiveness, etc.). The
project provided partners with the incentives, funding and on-call expertise to enhance their design, M&E and learning systems, skills and capacity. Partners invested in staff positions, capacity development and training, and the trial of new project design, audience identification, influence and knowledge uptake tracking approaches. The program built a collective commitment to strengthening systems and processes for more effective contributions to development outcomes.

Value and invest in inter-agency relationships and collective learning. By bringing together three partners to share common challenges and collaborate on joint solutions, the M&E system produced was more robust and lessons about effective design, M&E and learning practices had wider reach and influence. The experience of designing a joint, fit for purpose M&E system developed mutual understanding between different organisations, improved confidence in collective efforts and fostered a sense of a broader mission to strengthen design, M&E and learning practices in the sector.

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Eric Koper
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Results based monitoring and evaluation of systems innovation; case Humidtropics, a CGIAR research programme

M&E of formalized knowledge networks requires the interdependence of outcomes in more complex and generic impact pathways to be made more explicit. One of such networks is Humidtropics, a CGIAR research program on integrated systems in the humid tropics, which is led by IITA with 11 core partner organizations and embraces complexity.

This means that linear pathways should be replaced with more complex ones, where each indicator target can be positive or negatively influenced by more than one other indicator targets. For example, an income indicator target could be reduced if crop productivity would be lowered in favour of restoring degraded land.

Impact pathways often show a set of boxes that may reflect resources -> activities ->outputs -> outcomes -> impact with indicators and measurements for each box, but neglect the far more important M&E to clarify what happens in the connecting “arrows”. So while we do see the output, we don’t learn how we get there.

For example, a new variety (output) will often be used by a large number of farmers (outcome) without the realisation that to make this happen, social marketing activities and outputs may need to have been delivered as well. Most big changes are a sum of many small changes by multiple systems actors.

M&E is very new to international research organizations, because accountability was mainly through peer review. But now that there is an increasing demand for accountability to society, research organisations require a change in their mind-sets. The value donor investments add in relation to development impacts need to become much more transparent. It is no longer good enough to publish an article in a top-quality journal if the article doesn’t clarify what research outputs can be of use and are used by society to achieve development goals.

Instead of being treated as separate or standalone entities, M&E should be an integral part of management at all levels in organizations to ensure that all relevant data for learning and decision-making are being used.

3.3 Lobby and Advocacy

Lieke Ruijmschoot and Fons van der Velden
PME advisor at Fair, Green and Global Alliance; and director and senior consultant at Context, international cooperation, respectively

Using M&E of Lobby and Advocacy for Responsible Innovation

Working in Lobby and Advocacy adds an extra dimension to M&E for responsible innovation, because measuring progress in this type of work is complicated by a number of factors. Policy change is complex, dynamic, non-linear, beyond our control, continuous – and therefore it is challenging to plan and follow. However, this type of work is by its very nature focused on achieving social or environmental benefit (one of the principles of M&E for responsible innovation). Much-used methods, such as the Theory of Change, context and power analyses, have a strong focus on making societal impacts visible.

This brings us to a second principle of M&E for responsible innovation: the involvement of society. This is also a basic principle in all lobby and advocacy programmes; policy changes can only be achieved with active participation of the public. Involving stakeholders (staff, partner organisations, policy makers, journalists) in M&E of lobby programmes is challenging, but in the FGG’s experience, provides extremely valuable insights.

The organisation ‘context, international cooperation’ aims to assess social, ethical and environmental impacts, risks and opportunities. It has developed a process approach to evaluating lobby and advocacy, which has been fine-tuned for the mid-term evaluation of the FGG alliance. Rather than taking programme logic as a starting point, evaluating lobby and advocacy and using such evaluation for RI requires an approach that captures the complexities of policy-influencing processes. It is through an analysis of the ‘evaluandum’, tracing the process, reconstructing the theory of change, and assessing attribution or –more likely- contribution, until saturation (i.e. no new information comes up, also with triangulation) that patterns can be recognised, complexities can be captured and endogenous learning can take place.

In M&E for responsible innovation, there is the need for oversight mechanisms to signal risks and problems, and allow adequate response. In the monitoring of lobby and advocacy programmes, we have found that just gathering monitoring data is not enough to have a real grip on progress. Because of the complex nature of the change measured, numbers are not always meaningful. For that reason we have added the collection of narratives and sense-making sessions to our M&E process. Through those approaches we can signal risks, problems, and value major achievements. In practice, these products and processes are more useful for management of programmes and other uses, such as communication, than quantitative data collection.

Openness and transparency are key principles of M&E for responsible innovation, though it is a difficult one in the area of lobby and advocacy. Such programmes do not always lend themselves to full transparency, because advocacy strategies need to surprise policy makers and the public at times. Also, transparency may lead to heightened risks for human rights defenders around the world, who are often under threat. However, we do try to share lessons learned, results and approaches used in our work.

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Yvonne Es and Willemijn de Iongh
Monitoring, evaluation and learning advisor Oxfam; and Oxfam project coordinator Behind the Brands, respectively

Oxfam’s Behind the Brands Campaign: engaging companies, public and communities in moving towards a more just food system

In campaigning and advocacy, monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) is important to ensure that you improve your effectiveness for systemic and innovative social change, make the best use of scarce resources based on learning and stimulate an internal and external learning culture, with possibilities for cross fertilization and sharing of learnings.

MEL for Oxfam’s Behind the Brands Campaign is characterised by shared M&E responsibilities and vulnerability. Through systematically asking questions and documenting evidence, we can ensure rigour. Our expertise ranges from risk management to deeply inquisitive investigations. The public scorecard forces us to be diligent and deliver high quality campaign interventions.

MEL for campaigning and advocacy can be done at several levels of the process: effectiveness of campaigning, quality and strength of policy commitments and advocacy targets made by the campaign, and assessing the quality of compliance and implementation of the campaign and advocacy targets.

As a M&E person, your role within a project team, campaign or advocacy project is to excite your colleagues. Stimulate them to learn from their own campaigning, to be eager for both internal and external transparency and to be disciplined. You can help them make real-time sense of the data, raise critical questions and support communication on learnings.

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3.4 When existing M&E approaches prove inadequate

Lucie Blok and Mirjam Bakker
Epidemiologist, KIT Biomedical Research; and advisor, KIT HEALTH, respectively

A pragmatic approach to measuring, monitoring and evaluating interventions for improved tuberculosis case detection

Lucie Blok and Mirjam Bakker presented a M&E framework that provided new approaches to finding cases of tuberculosis (TB). It was developed to measure, monitor and evaluate over one hundred short-term projects in Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe. The framework captures both the process and impact, and has been used from the start of the project.

The M&E system was built to maximize capturing lessons during and after piloting innovations. In this way, innovative response can be adjusted along the road and lessons can be used to guide programme and policy change.

The framework is standardized to allow comparison across projects, yet flexible and adaptable to the specifics of each project. It is developed as an interactive tool for grantees evaluating their own projects, to allow them to adjust their process during the course of the project.

“Civil society is engaging the private sector to improve their policy and practice. But when companies drastically fail to meet their promises, we need civil society at large to hold companies to account.”

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When monitoring and evaluating innovative projects, factors explaining failure are equally important to capture, document, and publish as reasons for success. A well-implemented project may not have the desired effect or impact if the assumptions were wrong. Or alternatively, the concept may have been right, but the implementation failed. It is important to understand why projects succeed, and how they can successfully be scaled up or replicated. In the sense of the word ‘responsible’, only those innovations that ‘proved’ successful and have known factors contributing to success can be scaled up or replicated.

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**Augustin Kouévi**

*Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning specialist; researcher and lecturer at Faculty of Agricultural Sciences (FSA), University of Abomey-Calavi (UAC), Benin*

**Evaluating in a context of repetitive discrepancy between espoused and in-use action theories: Lessons from the fishery area of Grand-Popo, Benin**

Through his presentation, dr. Ir. Augustin Kouévi provided some insight in the fishery context of Grand-Popo, Benin and the lessons that can be learned from this case. He researched Monitoring and Evaluating for responsible innovation in contexts of repetitive discrepancy between espoused and in-use action theories.

For effective interventions to occur, all partners, financial partners included, should commit themselves and work effectively for inclusive, transparent, responsive, and responsible planning, as well as implementation, monitoring and evaluation of interventions. Whether an intervention programme in developing countries is successful, depends on the commitment of financial partners and politicians.

In contexts where people show limitations in learning, double and triple loop learning are needed. Through M&E, such levels of learning can be targeted and improved. Especially in developing countries, this insight is important.

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4 Thematic roundtables

4.1 Innovations in M&E of private sector development interventions

Fredrik Korfker and Elsa de Morais Sarmento

Former Chief Evaluator, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD); and lecturer at the University of Aveiro and researcher at NOVAfrica (Nova Business School of Management and Economics, Portugal), respectively

Fredrik Korfker and Elsa de Morais Sarmento led the roundtable discussion on innovations in M&E, with Hans Slegtenhorst (Director Carnegie Consult), Nico Mensink (FMO) and Simone van Vugt (CDI) as panellists.

During this roundtable session, several points of interest were discussed. Multilateral development banks (MDBs), other IFIs and donors can no longer ignore the private sector as a key partner in development. Evaluators that evaluate private sector operations must be familiar with the private sector. International Financial Institutions who finance private sector operations in their performance evaluation, apply a double bottom line. One takes into account both financial and social performance of private sector projects. A sound evaluation system requires that evaluation is done in a fully independent way and that no reporting takes place to management but to the Board of Directors. Ex ante evaluation of private sector projects must be in line with the evaluation system applied ex post when independent evaluation takes place.

The private sector culture is very different from the culture that one experiences with the public sector and this has consequences for the way in which evaluation is conducted. Private sector evaluation is very much project based, and should be involved relatively early in the life of a project.

When there is too much deal orientation in the private sector, financing by operational staff can lead to mistakes during the preparation of projects. Eventually, this might be the reason that projects fail.

During evaluation of Investment Funds for small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) financing, it has been difficult to find the ultimate beneficiary reason why the ultimate success of SME financing is difficult to assess. In MDBs, SME financing seemed to benefit the medium sized companies rather than the small.

“We cannot have quality evaluations without monitoring. It’s there the start, baselines are essential. Monitoring feeds the evaluation process. Data collection is very useful if we can apply same criteria ex ante and ex post. And compare before and after and use this basic set of indicators. This requires that new indicators are developed for each project.”

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4.2 Behavioural insights in M&E for responsible innovation

Marlene Roefs

Senior monitoring and evaluation advisor at CDI, Wageningen University and Research centre

On the topic of behaviour insights, Dr. Marlene Roefs led a roundtable session with panellists Drs. Jan Bade (Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (IOB), Ministry of Foreign Affairs NL), Prof Dr. Hilde Bras (Sociology of Consumption and Households, Wageningen University and Research centre)
and Prof. Dr. Ruerd Ruben (research coordinator Food Security, Value Chains & Impact Assessment, Wageningen University and Research centre).

Within economics, psychology, and sociology, many theories have been developed and tested around human behaviour. These provide insight into how and why people differ in topics like risk-taking, cooperation, recycling, smoking, safe sex, or resistance to change. Strangely enough, one seldom finds explicit references to such insights within the typical Theories of Change that are being used in agriculture related development interventions. Especially when trying to promote responsible innovation, it seems important to take into account knowledge about factors that influence human behaviour. This was reason enough to ask ourselves how to use behavioural insights in M&E for responsible innovation.

A few key messages arose from the very well attended roundtable. There is a real need among Dutch policymakers, also in development cooperation, for evaluations that address causality better. This also allows them to learn, and to introduce more responsible changes in society. It was argued that theory-based evaluations should pay much more attention to determinants of individual and group behaviour and use insights from the social sciences.

Incorporating behavioural insights from the social sciences is very important in changing nutrition-related behaviour. Nutrition is strongly influenced by culture and social influences, such as religion and social learning, for example.

Using risk taking games in evaluations can tell us a lot about changes in people’s levels of risk aversion and willingness to invest. These are behavioural mechanisms that have an impact on acceptance of innovations and income improvements.

In order to support responsible innovation, behavioural insights are of great importance in promoting foresight in effects of innovations on people, profit and planet. Both in planning and reviewing agricultural interventions, behavioural insights should complement technical innovation knowledge.

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4.3 Collective sensemaking to navigate diverse values and needs

Irene Guijt

Independent researcher and evaluator; Learning by Design

The roundtable session on collective sensemaking was led by Irene Guijt, with Steff Deprez (VECO), Joanna Monaghan (Comic Relief) and Guy Sharrock (CRS) in the panel.

Collective sensemaking is a vital part of any M&E process. Together, meaning is given to data and emerging knowledge in order to be able to act on it. Sensemaking can take various forms and may occur at several moments during any M&E process or system. Not only is it about analysis, but also about collectively discussing and deciding on which questions matter and what processes would be optimal. It is present in design choices, in developing a Theory of Change, in analysing data, and translating that into implications for action.

The M&E field as a whole (commissioners, evaluators, organizations) does not invest enough in methodological sensemaking. It is often assumed to be the equivalent of number-crunching, and is outsourced to so-called ‘experts’ who are entrusted with ‘the data’.

"We, the people, are responsible for responsible innovation. M&E should focus on us and our behaviours."
When we look at interpreted information, how can we know if it originated from a robust sensemaking process? We need to be able to see evidence of inclusion of different perspectives, not consensus, in analysis. It manifests in the right questions asked at the right moments. It requires certain competences, a mindset shift in terms of what your ‘deliverables’ are. It is not just a process to get towards something, but also an end by itself. Insights and ideas for solutions can come up during that process of sense making.

Values are important in collective sensemaking, but only if the process is about generating collective ideas to make a positive contribution to society. What values are driving choices, perspectives, interpreting information? Are they shared or not?

It can be evident in organizational principles, such as ‘fostering responsibility’ (corporate social responsibility, CSR) which encourages staff to not only be implementers, but to take on responsibility for decisions, reflecting, and adapting. Sensemaking can occur, for example, by ensuring that women and men will be heard, creating feedback processes with local participants and responding to that feedback, investing in an organizational learning agenda and learning events, and by investing in and valuing monitoring for being a deeply reflective process.

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“We need to get people to engage with data. What are the implications of this at different levels? Every time data is collected and passed on, we need to encourage sensemaking, for example by each person a set of simple prompt questions to ask themselves.”

Guy Sharrock
5 Cases on core themes

5.1 Reflexive capacity

Barbara van Mierlo

Associate professor knowledge, technology and innovation at Wageningen UR, the Netherlands

The need for reflexive evaluation approaches in development

Reflexive evaluation is almost by definition a way to take responsibility in M&E for systemic change. But why are reflexive evaluation approaches needed in development? We can find the answer through Reflexive Monitoring in Action.

Within development cooperation, development issues are recognized more and more as complex problems that require new paths towards solving them. In addition to the commonly used two dimensions of complex problems, namely uncertainty and disagreement, we introduce a third dimension: systemic stability, which is stability provided by rules, relations and complementary technology.

This presentation reflected on how these three dimensions are addressed by development evaluation methodologies, and especially those introducing complexity. Inferring that this third dimension deserves more attention, we explored the characteristics of reflexive evaluation approaches that challenge systemic stability, and support processes of learning and institutional change. We concluded that reflexive evaluation approaches may well complement current system approaches in development evaluation practice and enhance taking responsibility.

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Guy Sharrock

Senior advisor for learning at Catholic Relief Services

From aid deliverer to reflective practitioner: strengthening evaluative thinking capacity

In the aid sector, a paradigm shift is taking place. Instead of a predominantly linear-based model of change, models are turning more dynamic, reflective and responsive. This shift provides an opportunity for all individuals engaged in development programming to view themselves not merely as ‘aid deliverers,’ but also as ‘reflective practitioners.’ Evaluative thinking is essential to reflective practice and should be included in processes.

At all levels in the hierarchy, programme staff have a role to play in employing evaluative thinking skills to understand and learn what may cause unanticipated implementation ‘surprises’ before determining an appropriate management response. Building capacity in this area will enhance the likelihood of longer-term responsible innovation and project sustainability.

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5.2 Evaluation consultants as change agents

Fred Zaal  
*Senior advisor, KIT/SED (Sustainable Economic Development)*

**The consultant’s perspective: Approaches to evaluation and communication for innovation**

Development as a conscious activity is an illusion. We don’t know which way things will go. The best course of action is to try and use it as an experiment. For example, there is an increase of private-sector investors in rural agriculture development and value chains, mostly in Africa. What are these impact investors doing? Is it a profit-making exercise, business as usual, or do they have a social agenda? How do they learn? For NGOs, learning seems different than for the government-initiated sector. To accomplish a project, you need innovation, new thinking, energy, and trial-and-error. But there seems to be a gap between these sectors, as if there is no connection between the two. They don’t interact and the possibility for learning from each other is neglected.

"*When talking about private sector, words like competition and greed are not very conducive to trust. Mutual understanding of long-term goals will help to get stakeholders together.*"

Do we, as consultants, have a role to play? I think we have. Our role is to connect people and bring this to the sector. With an increasing number of private sector among our clients, a large part of our business is geared towards assessing the impact of the private sector on rural economy. Despite the local pressure, good results, reliable knowledge, and evidence are still needed.

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Sylvia Bergh  
*Senior Lecturer in Development Management and Governance, International Institute of Social Studies, Erasmus University Rotterdam*

**Can (evaluation) consultants be civic innovators? Exploring the shift from auditors to allies**

In their jointly authored paper, Sylvia Bergh and Kees Biekart (ISS) explore the shift from auditors to allies. The key question in their paper is: Under what conditions can (evaluation) consultants play a role in triggering civic innovation and progressive social change, despite the particularities and limitations brought about by the reality of Aidland in which they work?

How can M&E professionals take responsibility for systemic change? This is one of the core questions of the conference. In her presentation, Sylvia Bergh says we should study consultants as mediators, brokers and interlocutors as they mediate between local realities and global development realities.

There is a basic typology that distinguishes between mercenaries/auditors and missionaries/allies. Mercenaries and auditors mostly work for personal gain and self-interest. They are employed by big companies like KPMG, are preoccupied with results-based management and ticking boxes, and don’t have much commitment to development goals. There is a trend that donor agencies are packaging different tasks into big contracts, so that smaller consultancy firms find it hard to compete. Is that a problem? If we have auditors doing evaluations, is there scope for learning?

The second (ideal) type are the missionaries/allies – committed NGO workers who want to work with real people, get involved in collective learning processes, ally with the poor and are committed to sustainable change.

Based on a limited number of key informant interviews, we found that many consultants rolled into doing consultancies, e.g. to finance a writing hobby. Some found it difficult to be critical towards the donor organisations. Their main influence as ‘change agents’ is mainly possible outside the consultancy sphere, e.g. by doing voluntary work.

"*(Evaluation) consultants often play their role as ‘responsible innovators’ outside of their consultant roles. Yet without their experiences and incomes, they could not be doing so.*"
work for NGOs that can’t pay them as consultants. They can play a useful role as facilitators of group processes that get people thinking, instead of working as an inspector. Some have built up strategic long-term engagements through which they have earned the trust from the organisation, and then are invited for long-term forward-looking planning where they can have a bigger impact.

The paper concluded by refining the basic typology into one of reactive (invited) vs. proactive (instigator) consultants or modes. Consultants often conduct their most influential work outside of their consultant roles, yet without their experiences and incomes, they could not be doing so.

There is a methodological question of how we can know whether consultants have an influence other than by them telling us. Future research should also look more at “southern” consultants who may have more room for activism.

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5.3 Issues of scale

Gabriela Pérez-Yarahuán and Claudia Maldonado Trujillo
Research Coordinator; and General Coordinator at CLEAR Centre for Latin America, respectively

Evaluation in Latin America. Evaluation for transparency, accountability and democracy

Gabriela Pérez-Yarahuán and Claudia Maldonado Trujillo researched evaluation for transparency, accountability and democracy in Latin America. The research was promoted and supported by the CLEAR Centre for Latin America, which is a global initiative that aims at promoting evaluation capacity building and evaluation knowledge and dissemination.

Promoting responsible innovation through meaningful evaluation is a context-based social and political process. Experience in Latin American countries is helpful to show opportunities and challenges of building national evaluation systems that are aimed at improving accountability and increasing performance.

To strengthen national evaluation systems, at least four elements are very important: 1) explicit recognition and awareness by stakeholders of the need of evaluation; 2) a planning process of what is to be evaluated, enriched with stakeholders’ views, needs and perspectives; 3) clear, transparent and rigorous methodologies of evaluation; and 4) a real use of evidence that strengthens accountability and government performance.

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Seerp Wigboldus
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Evaluation for responsible innovation and responsible scaling

Even though a small-scale responsible innovation may work, it may no longer be considered good and responsible when it is scaled up across models, domains of change and geographical areas. However, this assumption is often made in plans for scaling up innovations.

First of all, an innovation may have intrinsic problems. As its application is scaled up, so is the problem. This happened for example with asbestos, DDT, and recently the neonicotinoids. While the innovation may be good in principle, successful scaling can become a problem when it is utilized by a large number of users, e.g. farmers. For example, in Ethiopia, ground water levels drop when too
many farmers start horticulture. In Bangladesh, treadle pumps extract so much ground water that the soil releases arsenic into the water.

To promote responsible innovation in scaling, anticipated scaling processes should be taken seriously from the design of innovations.

Creating a theory of change can help identify and adjust related assumptions, stakeholder roles, etc. How is scaling expected to happen? What value does it potentially have for society? What critical uncertainties about potential effects exist? M&E needs to help answer these and other questions ex-durante and ex-post to guide strategic management.

M&E processes do not only need to question whether scaling up happens effectively or not, but also whether this happens in a responsible way, both in terms of outputs and outcomes. Responsible processes are anticipatory, reflexive, inclusive, responsive and transparent about societal impact.

The above outlines various potential roles for M&E in responsible scaling of innovations. Currently, these are not commonly adopted, but they can support a wider responsible innovation framework and related efforts.

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### 5.4 Risk and innovation

**Magda Stepanyan**

*Founder & CEO at Risk Society (www риск-society.com)*

**Risk-informed M&E for responsible innovation development**

For this conference, Magda Stepanyan examined the subject risk-informed M&E for responsible innovation. As the founder and CEO of Risk Society, she is very involved with assessing potential risks.

Risks are socially constructed and, because of this, subjective. Effective innovation and sustainable development no longer depend on our ability to develop new products, applications, concepts and services. Instead, they depend on the choices we make after taking the impact of the alternatives into consideration.

Development cooperation is a combined effort of development partners to influence the risks of millions by creating opportunities and preserving those people from negative shocks. And yet, the importance of risk management is hardly ever expressed in development programming.

In the development sector, there is a deficit in risk governance. Also, development partners have limited knowledge and skills to effectively identify, assess, and respond to priority risks.

The system of M&E can provide the first entry point for risk management if it ceases being simply a tool for ‘inventarisation’ and instead a) introduces forward-looking perspective and greater anticipation awareness beyond the retrospective overview of what is achieved, thereby encouraging prospective learning; and b) introduces greater flexibility in development programming by embracing the domain of opportunities and creating a space in development planning to accommodate planning change.

"We don't have risks"

*Quote from an executive director of one of the largest Dutch NGOs.*

Development partners are facing a variety of dilemmas: flexibility vs. accountability, individual vs. collective risks, short-term benefits vs. long-term responsibility, etc. These dilemmas are especially relevant when cause-effect relationships of risk are disrupted in our globalized and highly
interdependent society. Such disruption occurs in various dimensions: across generations, geographic areas, sectors, institutions, thus creating a ‘butterfly effect’ that often escapes our attention.

Lastly, the choices we make as development partners are influenced by the ethical values we hold ourselves accountable for; both as individuals, and as organizations or societies as a whole. Whose risk are we influencing by making these choices? This consideration has to become a central part of the development ethics.

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6 Methodological workshops

Caroline Huyghe and Steff Deprez
Advisor Planning Learning and Accountability at Vredeseilanden (VECO)

Using SenseMaker as a lightweight qualitative data collection method

Both Caroline Huyghe and Steff Deprez work at Vredeseilanden, a NGO that helps smallholder family farmers to successfully participate within sustainable value chains.

Vredeseilanden is testing and developing a generic framework that can be used to look at the relationships between farmers and buyers, looking at the principles of inclusiveness. A first version was developed in autumn 2014. So far it has been tested in several value chains (rice in Senegal, cocoa in Indonesia, coffee in Congo), and slightly adapted for improvements after each case. Upcoming in June is cocoa in Nicaragua.

They use SenseMaker to measure and understand the trading relationships between farmers, their organisations and buyers. How inclusive are business models in smallholder supply chains? How are relationships perceived by farmers? And how can progress be monitored? Based on recent experiences from farmers, SenseMaker allows users to improve insights and detect patterns in the complex reality of trading relationships.

How does it work? SenseMaker is based on the collection of a large amount of micro-narratives that are self-indexed by the storyteller. A prompting question triggers the respondent to share an experience or micro-narrative. The storyteller will then self-signify the story through a set of predetermined questions that are framed around the principles of inclusive business. This reveals additional layers of meaning to the experience shared in words. By letting the storyteller to interpret the story him- or herself, the ‘researcher’ bias is eliminated to a big extent.

The stories and the significations are entered in a SenseMaker database, which allows for further analysis. A visual pattern detection software (SenseMaker Explorer) allows for quick and in-depth detection of interesting, confirming or surprising patterns across the stories, based on the different signification questions – not through textual analysis! The revealed patterns indicate which corresponding stories might be interesting to read in order to gain more (qualitative) content information on the visual patterns.

The final step is to bring the patterns and story packs back to the farmers and the other chain actors to discuss patterns, gain new insights and stimulate (adapted) action to reduce undesirable and stimulate positive trends.

There are some important differences with conventional methods. The data is self-signified within a predetermined framework, SenseMaker reveals the world as experienced and interpreted by those involved, combines both qualitative and quantitative data, and is hard to manipulate, as questions are neutral and indirect.

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**Jindra Cekan**  
*Founder and President Valuing Voices at Cekan Consulting LLC*

**Who’s listening? Community-led post-project self-sustainability evaluation**

Responsible innovation is about self-sustainability of projects worldwide. This component is missing in our current programming, which ends at outcomes and occasionally impacts. We do not return after projects close to see what participants and local partners could self-sustain.

For international development to improve and be more sustainable, we must listen to our true clients, our participants. Currently, we do not return to 99% of the projects after the project is closed. Self-sustainability evaluation is the innovation, and for development to be ‘responsible’ and self-sustainable for communities, we must learn what they could self-sustain, do more of it, learn about unintended consequences and learn together to build country-led development.

The session helped realise that we do not only need to build a culture that evaluates the project to begin with, but also looks at how much changes after projects end. Donor priorities also change, which could make the evaluation of closed projects with different objectives more daunting. Also, reports would need to be archived in a way that they are findable to make comparisons. In short, many changes are needed before post-project sustainability evaluation will be more common.

Get in touch: [www.valuingvoices.com](http://www.valuingvoices.com) | [http://tinyurl.com/me-workshop2](http://tinyurl.com/me-workshop2)

**Harish Poovaiah**  
*Public Affairs Centre, Bangalore, India, and head of Citizen Action Support Group*

**Citizen monitoring and evaluation of roads in rural India – Learnings from an innovative pilot project**

The concept of citizen monitoring and evaluation is a phenomenon that is emerging in welfare programmes in India, such as education and health. But it is unheard of in infrastructure projects like roads.

Roads are lifelines of villages in India, but they are expensive. Each kilometre of PMGSY road costs close to US$ 0.1 Million. Even a little compromise on the quality and/or quantity in a road guarantees bad roads that don’t meet the needs of the people, as well as a huge loss of people’s money. Additionally, bad roads necessitate renovations, which adds even more expenses. It becomes a cycle of ‘convenient leakage’.

Building roads is a complicated engineering exercise, which makes it more difficult for a citizen to monitor its construction and evaluate after its completion. The pilot project simplified the complex engineering process of road construction to the understanding of the rural citizen, and developed suitable sets of simple tools and techniques to generate authentic evidence. This empowered citizens to monitor and evaluate with a specially developed tool kit and methodology.

Using a defined methodology, data was collected in 70 roads on specific parameters. They were plotted against contracted values signed between the government and the contractor. The data generated is scored for performance in percentages as either good roads, average roads or bad roads. Citizens with definite sets of data on their respective roads then used them for advocacy and help fix their roads, while aggregated scores provided the information on overall performance of the project to the

"M&E is a right for citizens. After the monitoring started, the effect of citizen engagement changed. All of a sudden, things started to improve."
government to monitor. The Indian Government has recognised the impact potential of this intervention and is piloting this in 70 roads in four provinces; the World Bank is piloting the concept in countries around the world.

Get in touch: mail.pacindia.org | www.pacindia.org | www.pmgsy.nic.in | http://tinyurl.com/me-workshop3

Md Mokhlesur Rahman

Monitoring, Evaluation and Impact Assessment unit at Practical Action – Bangladesh

Mobile phone based M&E for improving programme effectiveness: Issues of learning and concerns

As part of the Monitoring, Evaluation and Impact Assessment unit of Practical Action in Bangladesh, Mokhlesur Rahman aims to improve programme effectiveness through mobile-based M&E.

This innovation has several advantages over more common approaches. It provides real time data, thus the programme team can easily take a timely and appropriate decision which contributes to quality implementation of a programme. Through the techno-centric approach, there is less researcher’s bias, because enumerators cannot change the data after sending it to the server. It works very fast and reduces paper-based, manual work. Thus, it also reduces programme costs. Through GPS tracking and validating the findings with provided images, mobile-based M&E ensures all data is correctly collected. Through these benefits, long-lasting conflicts between programme vs. M&E can be reduced.

However, we need to ask ourselves if this is the kind of technology we want to promote in a society where surplus human resources are available and people are desperately looking for work.

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Karel Chambille, Valerie Pattyn and Astrid Molenveld

Evaluation Manager at Hivos; Researcher and Researcher at Public Governance Institute KU-Leuven, respectively

The potential for qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) in evaluation - theory and practice

M&E is continuously renewed. To get reliable data, a good sample size is desired. However, many intervention areas in international cooperation cannot be used for (quasi-) experimental impact evaluation designs for several reasons. One of these is having a limited number of cases. In these situations, Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) can be applied. It can be part of alternative impact evaluation designs for international development cooperation. Through QCA, analysis of multiple conjunctural causation is possible. This tool studies the causal effects of combinations of conditions where context is included, as opposed to single variable causation.

In short, QCA allows for an iterative and learning process between programme stakeholders and evaluators. At this moment, the application of QCA in evaluation is only just starting to develop, but shows to be very promising.

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“Mobile Technology is not a missing panacea for development, but it is an important tool to accelerate development impact.”

“QCA can be seen as a bridge between qualitative and quantitative methods.”
Peter Huisman and Anne Oudes
Project leader and researcher in World Citizens Panel, Oxfam Novib; respectively

Oxfam’s World Citizens Panel: impact evaluation involving key stakeholders to enhance learning

Peter Huisman and Anne Oudes highlighted the importance of involving key stakeholders in impact evaluation. Oxfam wants to responsibly measure the impact of its programmes through involvement of key stakeholders in the measurement. This is being done in two ways. Firstly, by asking both project participants and non-participants directly about changes they’ve perceived in their lives, thus collecting both qualitative and quantitative information. Secondly, by asking partner organisations to play an active role in data collection, data analysis and reflection.

In this process, the aim is to be accountable to project participants and donors about the work we do and results obtained; strengthen capacity of partner organisations to conduct impact measurement and to learn from it; learn how change happens in order to improve our programmes; and support evidence-based strategic and financial resources management.

During the workshop session, some key dilemmas were discussed. In data collection, staff of partner organisations and project participants are often involved. How can we ensure quality, reliability and independence? And when staff of partner organisations and Oxfam programme staff are involved in analysis and reflection, how can we enhance ownership and optimal use of the data?

Get in touch: www.worldcitizenspanel.com | Twitter: @wcp_impact | http://tinyurl.com/me-workshop6

Steff Deprez
VECO / Independent Consultant, Steward Outcome Mapping Learning Community

Using outcome mapping principles and concepts for responsible innovation

Outcome mapping (OM) can be used as full planning, monitoring and evaluation methodology to guide social change programmes. However, most M&E practitioners involved in development or innovation initiatives only ‘borrow’ and/or adapt particular OM elements, concepts and principles that are relevant for their particular context. Given the nature of sustainable innovation processes, there are several OM principles and concepts that are potentially relevant for managing sustainable innovation processes, either as stand-alone or combined ideas.

It is important to collectively formulate an accountability-free vision or higher level agenda in multi-actor settings. Key societal actors should be put central in the programme design and respective monitoring processes through actor-centeredness. Focus on outcomes as behaviour changes of actors and their interrelations with each other in the system. Be clear - and focus your monitoring - on changes that are situated in your direct sphere of influence in order to foster fast feedback loops, allow for adaptive action and unpack the ‘black-box’ of change processes. There is power in either guided or facilitated group assessments for data generation and collective sense-making. Also, concentrate on a deliberate shift of resources and energy from heavy planning and design processes, to purposeful, effective and learning-oriented monitoring processes.

Get in touch: www.outcomemapping.ca | http://tinyurl.com/me-workshop7

“To understand change and its impact well, we need to involve all key stakeholders in the measurement process.”

“We should make much more use of arising opportunities to make our interventions diagnostic in nature, and to view our actions for diagnosis as an integral part of our interventions.”
7 Collective key insights

During the final plenary session, conference participants were asked to take stock and think through what is needed for monitoring and evaluation to support responsible innovation. Three aspects need considering: 1) the roles and responsibilities, values and principles, competencies of M&E professionals; 2) process design, focus and approach; and 3) institutional changes needed to support M&E for responsible innovation.

Participants were asked to look at these issues and discuss in subgroups (see Table 1):

- What do we need to do more of (elevate)?
- What do we need to do less of (retire)?

Table 1
To contribute to responsible innovation, M&E needs to elevate or retire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elevate</th>
<th>Retire</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>M&amp;E professional’s roles and responsibilities, values and principles, competencies</strong></td>
<td><strong>M&amp;E process design, focus and approach</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• M&amp;E people need to do more learning and adaptation to become agents of change.</td>
<td>• Less falling in love with just one methodology Experts!</td>
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<td>• Open sharing of practitioners, such as sharing results and challenges with like-minded M&amp;E (conferences like this).</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Stronger emphasis on scenario analysis and improve capacity to respond and adapt en route.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Elevate learners, retire experts.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>M&amp;E process design, focus and approach</strong></td>
<td><strong>M&amp;E process design, focus and approach</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• More lightly in order to take off</td>
<td>• Less M&amp;E just for accountability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• More feedback loops</td>
<td>• Less outsourcing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• More use of lessons learned. Get reports out of drawers!</td>
<td>• ‘indicatorism’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• More in-house data collection, analysis and reporting as opposed to outsourcing</td>
<td>• Less data collection for the sake of data collection Auditing</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Draw more on engagement of stakeholders</td>
<td>• Reports and appendices</td>
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<td>• More citizen participation and listen more to their social desire.</td>
<td>• Theoretical</td>
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<tr>
<td>• More emphasis on the evaluation process. That is when change happens most→ process use!</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Seek more long-term change tracking (beyond project time frame)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Prioritise M&amp;E activities around what matters most</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Think through M&amp;E from the project development onwards – budget allocated. M&amp;E people proactively involved from the design stage</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Link M&amp;E to ToC</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Joint evaluations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Thinking what one needs to know to upscale</td>
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<tr>
<td>• More: ask participants what they want to evaluate</td>
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<tr>
<td>• More need for evaluation of responsible innovation in socio-political arena</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Collective sense making</td>
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</table>

6 The idea of retiring and elevating ideas was inspired by an AEA 2014 session by Dr. Michael Q. Patton, who in turn was inspired by the book 2014 Scientific Ideas ready for Retirement.
- More formative evaluation and iterative M&E at the same time

**Institutional changes needed to support M&E for responsible innovation**

- Contextualise M&E in terms of learning across: knowledge can come from different sources, evaluation needs to position itself in the broader set of learning
- Appreciating monitoring as important
- More focus for sustainability in our development plans. We need more institutional support for sustainability in our plans.
- More commitment to M&E for governance
- Broader tracking of systems, to see points for interventions. Not only map territory from the start but also continuously use systems analysis en route to keep link between interventions and wider context.
- Less seeing M&E as separate from programme implementation. Not only if ToC is achieved or checking assumptions, but more integrated
- Less separate evaluation activities
- Blaming and claiming

The responses indicated a need for a more integrated approach to M&E, with a stronger systems perspective: linking programme management with monitoring and evaluation. Participants expressed a need for more focus on a sustainable future, for integration of (responsible) inquiry of the future and scenarios, and for systems and evaluations that focus on internal learning.

Conference participants encouraged M&E professionals to be more flexible and adaptive, and to act as learners rather than seek to be the expert. Such professionals can help by considering the future instead of only looking over their shoulders at the past.

In terms of the process, participants called for integrating monitoring with evaluation, from the onset of any initiative with the theory of change as an important starting point. M&E for responsible innovation needs to focus on questions that are critical for the future, such as related to sustainability, scaling up, and potential scenarios. Such forms of M&E consider not just accountability needs, but also internal learning so that responsible decisions can be made for the future.

Linking and learning does not only need to take place for findings, but also during the M&E process. This should not be just an external affair that is contracted out, but be invested in as important for stakeholders involved in a development initiative. There is a need for more engagement of stakeholders, including citizens in these M&E processes, so that learning and collective sense making can take place, which in turn can support more responsible choices for the future.

Such changes require institutional support. M&E needs to be better understood in terms of its potential support to governance of development initiatives and responsible decision-making needed for a more sustainable future. Lessons from (monitoring and) evaluations need to be linked and a system’s perspective is needed for linking knowledge generated from different sources and processes so that decisions are made by looking at the issues from a more holistic perspective.
References


UNDP. (2013). Humanity Divided: Confronting Inequality in Developing Countries. New York: UNDP.

## Table 2

A list of participants, their country of origin and the organisation they work at.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country of origin</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
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<tr>
<td>AFGHANISTAN</td>
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<td>ARMENIA</td>
<td>Mrs Magda Stepanyan</td>
<td>Risk Society</td>
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<td>AUSTRALIA</td>
<td>Mrs Bethany Davies</td>
<td>Clear Horizon</td>
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<td>AUSTRIA</td>
<td>Mrs Maria Magdalena Heinrich</td>
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<td>BANGLADESH</td>
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<td>Mrs Caroline Huyghe</td>
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<td>Mrs Ize Ohunene Adava</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr Kazeem Adeayo</td>
<td>Society For Family Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs Patricia Ekpo</td>
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<td>Mr Shamim Haider</td>
<td>Rural Community Development Society (RCDS)</td>
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<td>POLAND</td>
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<td>Mrs Aleksandra Pawlik</td>
<td>Centre For Development Innovation Ur, Agricultural Tvet In Afghanistan</td>
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<td>Mr Joseph Mutware Seba</td>
<td>Office of the Prime Minister/PMD</td>
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<td>Wageningen University and Research centre</td>
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<td>UNITED KINGDOM</td>
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<td>Mr Antonio Capillo</td>
<td>Comic Relief</td>
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<td>Mrs Bridget Mary Dillon</td>
<td>European Commission</td>
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<td>Mrs Joanna Monaghan</td>
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<td>Mr Guy O'Grady Sharrock</td>
<td>Catholic Relief Services</td>
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The Centre for Development Innovation works on processes of innovation and change in the areas of food and nutrition security, adaptive agriculture, sustainable markets, ecosystem governance, and conflict, disaster and reconstruction. It is an interdisciplinary and internationally focused unit of Wageningen UR within the Social Sciences Group. Our work fosters collaboration between citizens, governments, businesses, NGOs, and the scientific community. Our worldwide network of partners and clients links with us to help facilitate innovation, create capacities for change and broker knowledge.

The mission of Wageningen UR (University & Research centre) is 'To explore the potential of nature to improve the quality of life'. Within Wageningen UR, nine specialised research institutes of the DLO Foundation have joined forces with Wageningen University to help answer the most important questions in the domain of healthy food and living environment. With approximately 30 locations, 6,000 members of staff and 9,000 students, Wageningen UR is one of the leading organisations in its domain worldwide. The integral approach to problems and the cooperation between the various disciplines are at the heart of the unique Wageningen Approach.