

# EVENT REPORT

## NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING

 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> March 2021







# **Event Report**

## **National Conference on Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning**

**18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> March 2021**



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# A. Background and overview of the conference

## About the Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office (DMEO)

**The Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office (DMEO)**, attached to National Institution of Transforming India (NITI Aayog), is the apex monitoring and evaluation (M&E) office in the country, with a mandate to enable evidence-based policy making and support the government reach their envisioned goals through M&E of policies and programs. Since its inception in 2015, the office has been working towards facilitating rigorous, data-driven, citizen-centric, and outcomes-driven program management and policymaking, to improve governance.

DMEO's mandate currently involves; (i) monitoring progress and efficacy of strategic and long-term policy and program frameworks and initiatives to help innovative improvements, including necessary mid-course corrections; and (ii) actively monitoring and evaluating the implementation of programs and initiatives, including the identification of the needed resources so as to strengthen the probability of success and scope of delivery. DMEO has advisory role across the Ministries and Departments of the Union Government and is one of the few institutions within the government to provide a cross- and inter-ministerial perspective. Its mandate also expands to technical advisory to States, under NITI Aayog's mandate of cooperative and competitive federalism.

- ▶▶ **DMEO's vision** is to be an institution recognized for its technical competence and credibility in the field of monitoring and evaluation by helping government institutions to improve and sustain their development outcomes.
- ▶▶ **DMEO's mission** is to institutionalize application and use of monitoring and evaluation at all levels of government policy and programs and help improve their efficiency, effectiveness, equity, sustainability, and achievement of results.

## Context to the National Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Conference

The concept of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) evolved to serve the primary objectives of accountability, efficiency, effectiveness and learning for course correction of development interventions. It is a continuous assessment of progress towards achieving intended results and the information collected thereby is processed and analyzed to allow real time evidence driven decision-making. While on one hand the Governments and organizations around the world are faced with challenges such as limited resources, on the other hand they are required to be more responsive to the demands of the stakeholders, good governance, accountability, transparency, effectiveness, and delivery of tangible outcomes. M&E capabilities in India are fragmented and in a nascent stage, plagued by lack of systemization and low awareness of M&E.

**Thus, there is a need to leverage existing capacities to build a holistic M&E approach and develop a culture of evidence-based decision making.**

## Objectives of the Conference

DMEO, NITI Aayog in its efforts to strengthen the Monitoring and Evaluation ecosystem in India organized a national conference to bring together key stakeholders in the M&E ecosystem to dwell upon and discuss the need for a systematic and scientific M&E culture and share strategies, methodologies, innovations, experiments, challenges and relevant best practices adopted in India and across the world, in order to facilitate in achieving the following goals:

- » Catalyze the acceptability, ownership, and culture of M&E at all levels.
- » Enhance synergy between various stakeholders.
- » Understand the issues and challenges.
- » Share national and international experiences and identify best practices that can be adopted and adapted by the other stakeholders.
- » Explore emergent innovative approaches and applications of cutting-edge technologies in the domain of M&E.

## Themes of the Conference

The key theme of the Conference was **“Institutionalizing M&E practices for sustainable impact”**. Over the course of two days, discussions and deliberations explored aspects related to:

- » Demand for evidence and translating results into action and impact.
- » Experience and best practices from institutionalizing outcome-based monitoring.
- » Data governance to improve the quality of evidence generated.
- » Building institutional and resource capabilities in Government for demand generation and implementation of M&E systems.
- » Innovative and alternative methodologies/approaches to M&E.
- » Emergent and cutting-edge technologies in the domain for M&E.
- » Adapting evaluative approaches to a post COVID-19 world.

## Speakers and Sessions

For the above-mentioned sessions distinguished speakers were invited from multilateral organizations, international organizations, think-tanks, academia, central ministries and state governments, training institutes, research agencies and civil society organizations. Details of session-wise speakers and the session plans for the 2-day conference are provided in **Annexures 1 and 2 respectively**. The conference was held at New Delhi and in a virtual mode.

## Participants

The participants comprised of evaluators, policymakers, international development and aid organizations, academic/research institutions (academia, students, research fellows etc.), think-tanks, non-governmental and civil society organizations (in M&E space), consulting firms, etc.

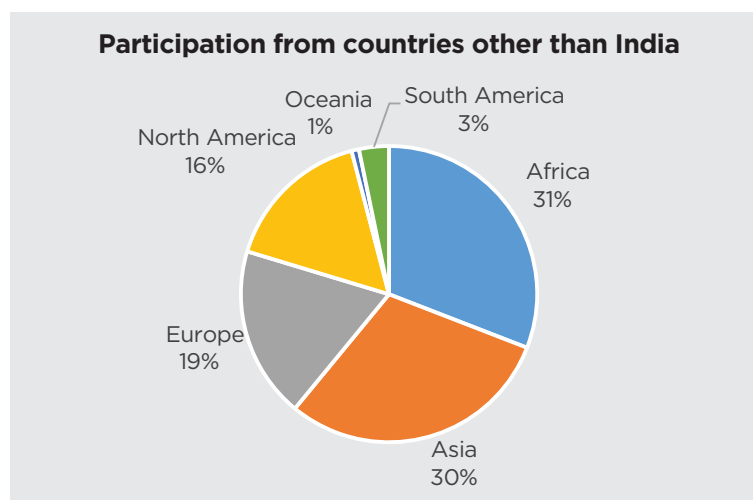


## B. Event Outcomes

The outcomes emerging from the two-day National Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Conference held on 18<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> March 2021 met three broad goals, namely outreach, effectiveness and systems building, details of which are given below:

### Outreach:

- ▶ **1028 unique registrations** were received for the 10 sessions of the conference coming from 47 countries. 88% of the registrations were from India, with the remaining 22% i.e. 123 registrants joining in from countries across the globe.

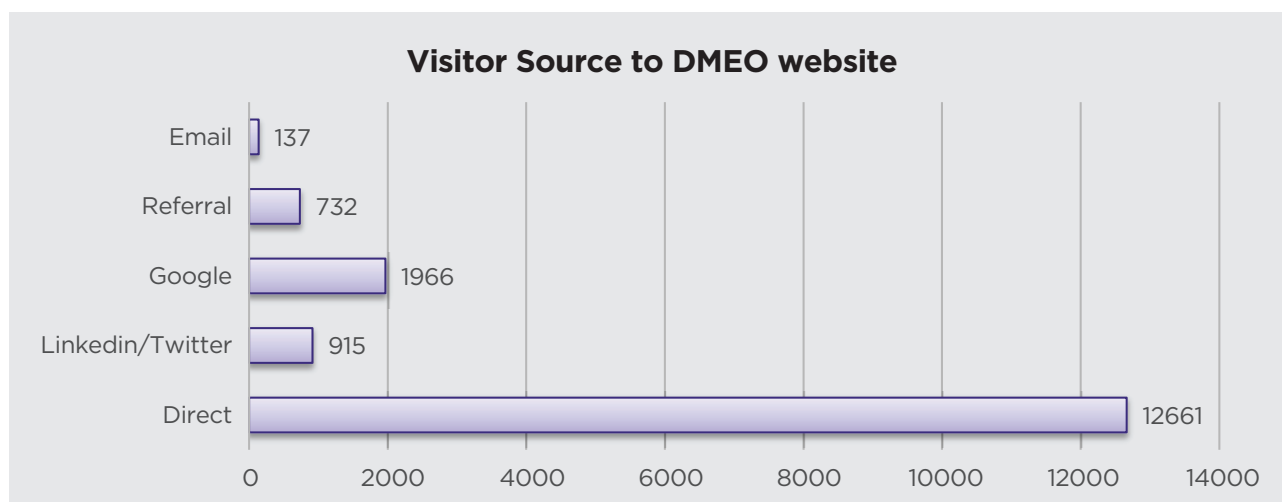


- ▶ Also, through these ten sessions, DMEO reached out to nearly **473 unique attendees**<sup>1</sup>.
- ▶ DMEO also saw a website traffic peak of 3000 users on the first day of the event i.e., 18th March, 2021.



- ▶ The outreach activities conducted through emails and on various social media handles- Twitter, LinkedIn and DMEO's website., also contributed significantly to the participation.

<sup>1</sup> Based on data for 5 sessions



## Engagement with Key Stakeholders

- ▶▶ During these two days DMEO engaged with 35 different organizations with details as shown below:

- ◉ **9 partner organizations –**

*Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, JPAL, UNICEF, WFP, valuation Community of India, 3IE, Indian School of Public Policy, Indian School of Business Mohali, Indian Institute of Management-Bangalore.*

- ◉ **15 non partner organisations–**

*World Bank, Centre for Policy Research, National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, IDInsight, JEEViKA – Bihar, Bandhan, Co-Impact, Young Lives India, Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network, Tata trusts, Omidyar Network India, UN Pulse Lab, EvalYouth –Asia, UNFPA, Asia Pacific Evaluation Association and Sri Lanka Evaluation Association.*

- ◉ **4 Central government Ministries/Departments / Institutions:**

*Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Department of Food and Public Distribution, National Institute of Disaster Management.*

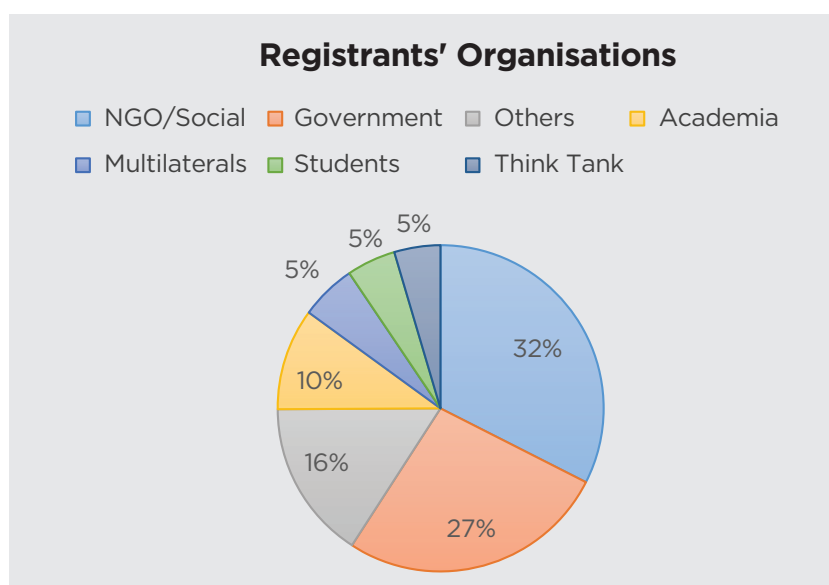
- ◉ **5 State Governments and associated bodies:**

*State Government of Karnataka, State Government of Tamil Nadu, State Government of Meghalaya, State Government of Uttar Pradesh, State Government of Haryana, Swarna Jayanti Haryana Institute for Fiscal Management-Haryana, Atal Bihari Vajpayee Institute of Good Governance and Policy Analysis (AIGGPA)-Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh Agency for Information Technology.*

- ◉ **2 Independent experts:**

*Ex Chief Statistician of India, Former Prof. & Chairperson at the Centre for Public Policy & Governance, Tata Institute for Social Sciences*

- ▶▶ The registrations also reflected participation from a diverse set of stakeholders across the Government, NGOs, Multilaterals and Academia.



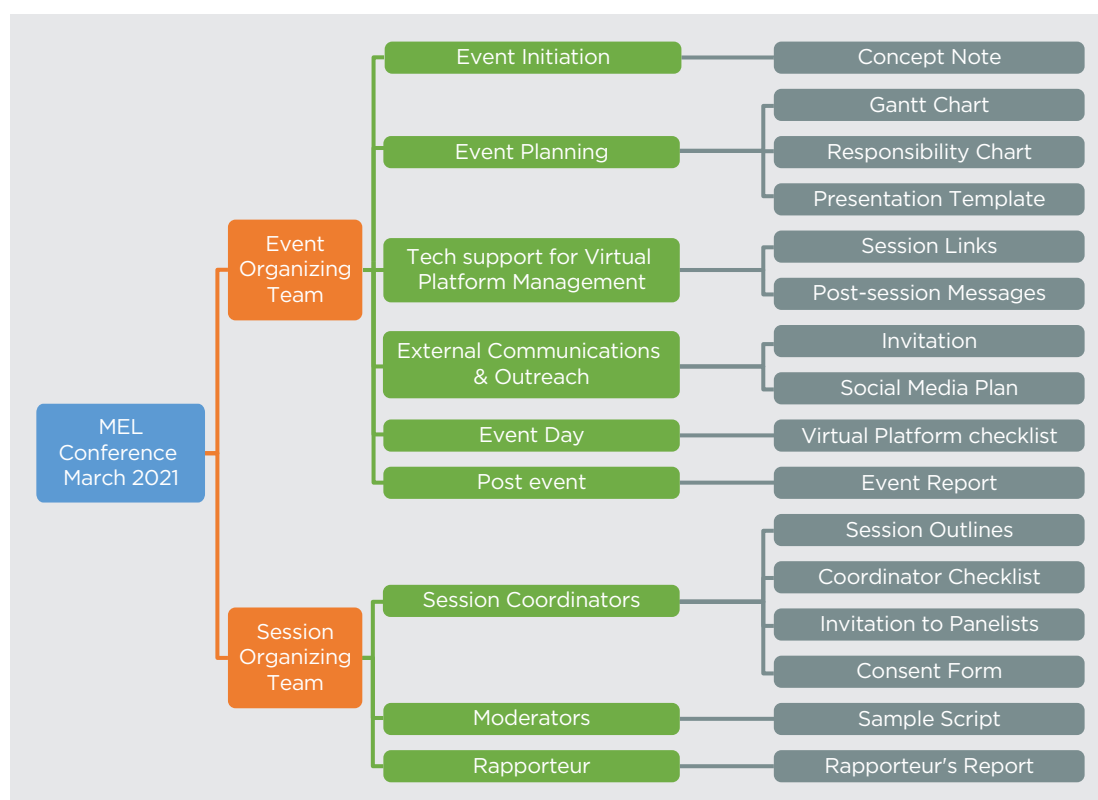
## Systems Building and Institutionalization

- For the MEL conference, the Partnerships team at DMEO initiated the preparations and the following major steps were undertaken involving the larger DMEO team:
  - Preparing a concept note for the event by listing down details on objectives and broad themes of the conference, proposed dates, platform to be used, audience to be catered, proposed speakers, session themes after eliciting inputs through internal DMEO team and Partner organisations.
  - Thereafter, list of tasks/activities were identified along with key milestones to be achieved till event date and people responsible for this task. A Gantt chart was prepared by mapping them with timelines and which came to be of great use to review progress. Accordingly, a responsibility chart was prepared and all details were shared with the larger team.
  - At this stage following teams within the organisation were identified and allocated responsibilities:

Team	Responsibility
Overall event managers/ coordinators	Overall planning, coordination, logistics and review of each session
Technology coordinators	Webinar management and any other technology support required
Invitation coordinators	Managing invitee list, sending invitations, post event feedback forms and any other correspondence.
Website & social media coordinators	Managing design of creatives, promotions as per social media plan.
Session coordinators	Managing granular details of each session within the event.
Rapporteurs	Managing documentation of each of the session within the event.

- Review meetings were held with each of the sub teams every alternate day to assess progress and quickly resolve issues.

- One week prior to the event a conference room was booked which served as a control room for testing the technology set up and dry runs with all concerned stakeholders of the 10 sessions, viz. session moderators, panellists, session coordinators and rapporteurs from DMEQ.
- Conference rooms were booked with audio visual set up for the 2 days of the conference.
- Preparation of event report including proceedings and feedback from attendees.



- As this was the first M&E conference ever conducted by DMEQ, a handbook on events has been prepared which mentions in detail about the key processes, templates and learnings from the conference. This handbook would be helpful for organizing similar virtual events in the future.
- Key insights emerging from the deliberations during the Conference have been summarized in subsequent sections of this report. These have also been utilized to refine the draft Strategy paper for DMEQ.

# Session Outcomes: Learnings

## SESSION 1: ROLE OF M&E IN INSTITUTIONALIZING EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY MAKING

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### Summary of remarks/presentations by the panel

#### *Dr. Sekhar Bonu, Director General, DMEQ, NITI Aayog*

Governments around the world are faced with the pressures of providing more and better services under tight fiscal environments and limited resources, especially considering emerging challenges in a post pandemic world. This requires our policies and public programs to be efficient, equitable, and effective in achieving desired results within the intended timeline. Monitoring and Evaluation systems aim at building evidence-based policies and programs that are smarter, more impactful, and reduce inequities.

This panel discussion brings together key experts from the government, civil society, academic/research, and development landscape to discuss and deliberate on five themes:

- ▶▶ M&E and its interlinkages to effective and equitable policy and programs.
- ▶▶ Role of M&E in creating sustainable impact & equity, given the context & experience of COVID-19.
- ▶▶ India's efforts in institutionalizing evidence-based policy making.
- ▶▶ The present status of M&E in government across key sectors, the ground realities, and the opportunities for further strengthening.
- ▶▶ Provide recommendations for a national vision where robust M&E can help strengthen evidence-based policy making.

#### *Dr. Yamini Aiyar, President and Chief Executive, Centre for Policy Research*

M&E ecosystem has built up/matured over the past couple of decades and its importance and relevance is firmly embedded in the grammar of administration in India. A few notable steps in this journey have been:

- ▶▶ Embedded M&E systems within programs/scheme/policy implementation which is exemplified by the presence of MIS across programs and data capturing at the grassroots level.
- ▶▶ There is a recognition for concurrent evaluation at national and sub-national levels as necessity for good implementation.

- ▶ Recognized the importance of independent evaluations and experimenting and exploring setting up of institutional structures for the same.

Challenges faced in converting nascent phase of embedding M&E into a robust system:

- ▶ **Close integration of administrative reforms and M&E:** The culture of implementation often confuses and conflates accounting and accountability. Break the governance barrier to ensure that the culture of accountability shifts within the system. Process of M&E is not to be viewed as an accounting exercise/ checklist exercise that needs to be gamed as there are a lot of things riding on it. It needs to evolve into a learning exercise to improve policy making because accountability is about quality of outcome and not about quality of accounting for an output.
- ▶ **Ecosystem of research:** Creating a pipeline of talent by preparing the universities to generate highly skilled talent/professionals indigenously cater to the need for highly sophisticated skill sets that are needed at many levels. of the M&E process. Currently there is a flux of students trained from international universities into India to conduct evaluations as Indian ecosystem is limited in its capacity to produce this talent pool and needs more work and regular & engaged dialogue between DMEO/govt and those in the evaluation ecosystem. Statistical institutions in India have been world class and thus there is a lot of scope for developing the training ecosystem.
- ▶ **Openness to stakeholder engagement in the ecosystem of evaluation:** Allowing space for deliberation across the sectors and involving a wide range of actors/ stakeholders in the process of evaluation facilitates bringing their understanding of the implementation process from the grassroots to collectively create a body of knowledge about how schemes get implemented on the ground and how to achieve the intended outcomes.

### ***Mr. Sunil Kumar, Secretary, Ministry of Panchayati Raj***

The Ministry of Panchayati Digital framework which covers the entire gamut of works done by over 2.5 lakh gram panchayats including planning, resource mapping, work execution, geotagging of works, accounting, payments and social & online audit and also, some information is available in the public domain. As a feedback loop, the gaps identified through the Mission Antyodaya survey conducted in collaboration with M/o Rural development are made available to the Gram Sabha when they are formulating the Gram Panchayat Development Plan. Around 1.80 lakh panchayats are making payments through PFMS. There is further scope for progress and expanding the engagement with various. Focus needs to shift from process to outcomes and to enable this the challenge is to put in place a robust data architecture. This needs convergence between all internal and external stakeholders. The overarching goals (like SDGs) need to be adopted at the grassroots level and the data needs to be generated at the gram panchayat level and aggregated thereafter.

### ***Mr. Pravin Srivastava, Ex-Secretary and Chief Statistician of India, Government of India***

The essential Ingredients for effective M&E systems include:

- ▶ Institutional commitment and active engagement of stakeholders.

- ▶▶ Rationalizing and optimizing data flows along with setting up of necessary standards/policy for access and dissemination.
- ▶▶ Dedicated human resource systems with clear roles and responsibilities.
- ▶▶ ICT infrastructure and systems to create dynamic and quick analytical inputs.

The key factors that are necessary to creating a successful and sustainable M&E Program include demand, use, champions within the system, commitment, proactively identifying resources, accountability, building technical capabilities and infrastructure to both supply and use M&E information, oversight, value and ethical standards.

The aspects of Data Privacy & Confidentiality, Data Shareability need to be streamlined. Going forward a clearing house for information collection may be required along with a Chief Data Steward to optimize data collection process and reduce respondent burden/fatigue by avoiding duplication.

### ***Dr. Gonzalo Hernández Licona, Director, Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network***

Evidence and resource-based policy making needs an enabling environment like a democratic system of governance that ensures the alignment of objective of using evidence to improve the lives of the citizen. There are various sources and types of evidence that are being produced which have to be used regularly as an important input towards decision and policy making. Investment in building data systems and technical capacities and scientific provisioning of resources are important. For evaluations to be successful, the engagement of all stakeholders, communication, capacity building and trust between all stakeholders are essential. As India has many of these elements, India is well placed to develop a robust evidence-based decision-making system.

### ***Mr. M. Hari Menon, Country Director, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation***

The important principles for utilizing evidence for programmatic decision making from an aspirational lens are as follows:

- ▶▶ Understanding the current state through evidence to define the starting point and the path ahead.
- ▶▶ Create evidence-based feedback loops to foster continuous learning and adaptation in dynamic and complex environment.
- ▶▶ Taking a systems approach with an integrative pathway rather than siloed approach.
- ▶▶ Sharpen the focus on equity and inclusion.

Creating platforms and opportunities to increase the demand for data in addition to augmenting the supply of data is essential. Rather using M&E to understand the consequences of interventions and use the learning to bring improvement and not to confer rewards or use punitively. Make data generation less onerous by reducing duplicity across and stakeholder and take an assimilative approach. Utilizing evidence towards setting up feedback loops for implementers and to hypothesize and revalidate program impact pathways taking complexities into cognizance to inform diffusion and replication into other geographies. Prevent isomorphic mimicry without considering the varying context. Embracing and analyzing failures is important to maximize the use of limited resources.

## Summary of Audience Question and Answers (Q&A)

- ▶▶ Institutional, political, and technical elements need to be balanced and include incentives structures to promote and make evaluations sustainable.
- ▶▶ Institutional mechanism to promote greater data sharing between various government departments and external stakeholders with adequate privacy and regulatory mechanisms.
- ▶▶ Building trust through triangulation of data and disseminate the analysis back to the data generators and stakeholders at the grassroots level in addition to the decision makers.
- ▶▶ Ownership of M&E data amongst stakeholders to foster learning and improvement needs to be balanced with the independence of conducting evaluations.

## Summary of key insights/takeaways from the session

- ▶▶ Building incorporative space for M&E at all levels of the government
- ▶▶ Shifting the discourse on accountability towards collectively working towards the outcome through evidence-based learning.
- ▶▶ Address the crucial issue of trust.
- ▶▶ Greater transparency in data collection systems.
- ▶▶ Improving data availability in the public domain.
- ▶▶ Segregating the large set of M&E data into relevant information based on the specific need of the stakeholder and making them available to them including putting adequate information in the public domain.
- ▶▶ Bridging the relevance of information and the process of collection of data.
- ▶▶ Promoting and facilitating collaborative discourse among stakeholders at all levels to build constructive solutions through consensus.



## SESSION 2: MONITORING OUTCOMES FOR REALIZING SDGS

### Summary of remarks/presentations by the panel

**Mr. Anand Trivedi** welcomed the participants to the session on “Monitoring Outcomes for realizing SDGs” and introduced the panelists to the audience. He also spoke about the evolution of outcome monitoring since its inception and about steps being taken to ensure outcome monitoring becomes an integral part of government functioning.

In his introductory remarks, **Mr. Shyam S Dubey** spoke about his experiences regarding outcomes monitoring while working at the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs. He informed that from 2014-15, funds allocated for urban development had increased drastically and various activities undertaken in mission mode to ensure systematic and planned urbanization. He also informed that the focus of Government interventions has shifted from input monitoring to output assessment, which is built into program design at inception to achieve the 3Es (Efficiency, Economy and Effectiveness) of public expenditure and ensuring achievement of service delivery benchmarks. He highlighted the need for regular, institutionalized outcome monitoring for ensuring quality of Government expenditure, and spoke about his experiences in institutionalizing the same while at DIPP. He also spoke about the scope of utilizing the PFMS as a tool for outcome monitoring, while capturing both financial and physical progress by implementing agencies. He suggested that outcome achievements could be linked to release of funds to program divisions. He also informed that outcome monitoring and release of funds was being made an implicit part of the Jal Jeevan Mission (Urban).

**Mr. Sampath Kumar** spoke about the State Capability Enhancement Framework (SCEP) which has been developed by the Government of Meghalaya to ensure a systemic approach for ensure outcome achievement. The five pillars of the SCEP comprise of adaptive leadership, data, responsive systems, performance monitoring and innovations. He also spoke about the use of the SCEP as a tool which helped in reduction of the Maternal Mortality Rate in Meghalaya through the MOTHER program.

In his introductory remarks, **Dr. Pinaki Chakraborty** spoke about the need to localize the global SDG goals to the Indian context, and the need for a robust indicator framework to transform these goals into achievable outcomes. He suggested that technology could be leveraged to track SDG achievements at the household level and above. He also spoke about the need for sectoral outcomes to ensure multi-dimensionality of Government expenditure is accounted for. He also suggested that equity should be central to scheme design to ensure ‘no one is left behind’ along with the need for provision of flexibility in scheme guidelines at the local level to make Government expenditure more outcome oriented.

**Ms. Shrayana Bhattacharya** highlighted that India’s social protection system is larger and more fragmented than comparable federal middle-income countries, and that focus was required on the ‘new poor’ affected because of the COVID pandemic and therefore in need of social protection. She also spoke about the need for social protection systems to evolve in accordance with changing societal conditions. She highlighted that India has approximately 390 DBT schemes spread across 20-line Ministries/ Departments and there is, therefore, a significant need to ensure synergies between such schemes. In absence of such synergies and coordinating bodies, it is difficult to measure outcomes achieved through social protection

schemes. She further stated that outcomes monitoring should be linked to fiscal and physical delivery mechanisms.

**Mr. Ronald Abraham** spoke about his experiences in designing a data system for the Aspirational Districts Program of NITI Aayog. He highlighted the lack of capacities at the State and lower levels for implementing Government schemes at the last mile, and also highlighted the need for flexibility at the State level for designing programs to achieve the SDG goals. He also spoke about the need to design sectoral and multi-dimensional outcomes and creating lines of responsibility and transparent data measurement system for tracking such outcomes. He also spoke about the need for capacity building initiatives at the State and lower levels, with involvement of development partners, wherever required. He also suggested that administrative data needs to be more accurate and should be used as an alternate to survey data, with necessary data verification and validation systems.

## Summary of Audience Q&A

- ▶▶ For implementation of schemes, frontline workers need to be communicated about the problem, let them connect with the problem and find solutions to address the problem. Thus, we can connect them with outcomes and the SDGs. With this iterative approach, ownership is happening which is a key thing. Decentralization of the leadership at different levels has been promoted. Frontline workers would actually own up and see like they are much more responsible to address the problem. This type of framework i.e., Instilling leadership and motivation along with quality data, would help us to achieve our goal.
- ▶▶ Significant achievements have been made by rationalization of schemes as multiple schemes, with similar objectives were run, so they have been brought down by a great extent. But mostly there are 5 – 7 schemes that constitute almost 90 per cent of the CSS allocation. So, there is still scope for rationalization so that we have few schemes driven through certain outcome-based indicators which are a national priority and, has Pan India impact, and achieve them in a time bound manner. In State/local schemes also rationalization, is absolutely critical. Once you rationalize, convert and have few focused schemes, it will better to monitor and also have time bound impact on investment output and outcome.

## Summary of key insights/takeaways from the session

- ▶▶ There is a need for institutionalizing outcome monitoring, for which the DMEO, the Department of Expenditure and line Ministries/ Departments have to work in close coordination.
- ▶▶ There is a critical role to be played by States/UTs for ensuring outcome monitoring.
- ▶▶ There is a need to link public expenditure to SDG achievements.
- ▶▶ Government schemes should be aligned to SDG goals right at inception.
- ▶▶ There is a need for a sectoral view of social protection schemes.
- ▶▶ Monitoring systems for outcomes should be incorporated at the scheme design stage itself.

- ▶▶ There is a need for convergence in functioning between various line Ministries/ Departments to ensure effective outcomes monitoring.
- ▶▶ Focus for convergence should start from the district level to ensure integration of efforts.
- ▶▶ There is a need to improve quality of administrative data and make such data easily available to citizens.
- ▶▶ There is also a need to standardize data reporting and publication standards to ensure collaboration between concerned Ministries/ Departments.
- ▶▶ Data systems should be robust enough to reduce transaction time and cost for citizens.

## SESSION 3: EVIDENCE WHEN IT MATTERS MOST: NEAR-REAL TIME MONITORING OF FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION DURING CRISIS SITUATIONS

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### Summary of remarks/presentations by the panel

#### *Opening remarks*

The theme of the discussion was to discuss remote monitoring of Food Security and Nutrition for improved results, with only 10 years remaining to achieve the SDGs. Two persisting rates of undernutrition for critical age groups in vulnerable communities and other challenges in Food Security and Nutrition are particularly worrisome for all stakeholders. At the same time, several parts in India remain vulnerable to disasters and crises. Starting from the recent COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring food, water and shelter are crucial to the disaster relief measures. So, this session would try to answer four questions-what are the current challenges and opportunities to strengthen Food Security and Nutrition monitoring, both in the normal settings and during a crisis? Second, how do we leverage new and emerging technologies and tools to help the government track effectiveness of the Food Security and Nutrition Programs? Third, what are the pathways for evidence to result in effective decision making and maximizing returns from the public expenditure in food security? And lastly, what are some of the solutions that we can test today to support the government in achieving zero hunger? What are the best practices emerging from India and other countries? There is a need to strengthen the Food Security and Nutrition monitoring system, which will enable the government to track critical information and provide timely support to vulnerable communities and individuals who needed the most.

#### *Mr. Sudhanshu Pandey, Secretary, Department of Food and Public Distribution*

The presentation focused on National Food Security Act (NFSA) 2013 and Technology Innovations to track Food Security System.

By 2016, all states adopted the NFSA Act. Under this, bottom 67% of the population – up to 75% in Rural Areas and 50% in Urban areas, reaching approximately 80 crore beneficiaries, have been covered. During the pandemic (April – November 2020), a total of 350 LMT of subsidized food grains was allocated under NFSA to States/UTs for regular supply of entitlements for all beneficiaries. Through the biometrically authenticated distribution, Aadhar seeding of PDS beneficiaries, and automation of Fair Price Shops, it is ensured that food is rightly targeted to people. Technology has been leveraged for real time monitoring through Anna Vitran Portal. Similarly, national helplines have been flouted where beneficiaries may register their complaints. This also ensures maintenance of a very efficient supply chain throughout India. End-to-end computerization, from procurement to distribution, has been taking place. Distribution has been completed and now computerization of procurement has been taking place. Four states have completed it where procurement has been authenticated either using the fingerprint or using the iris scan. Seamless distribution of food going is getting transferred from the state warehouse to the central warehouse through the Depot Online System (DoS) and National Dashboard of DoS. The way forward is: development of advance early warning systems for crisis management; timely availability of real-time data; integration of national and state information/data systems; technology driven initiatives; decentralized civil society organizations to work with

policy makers in partnership; capacity building; and participation of all stakeholders including citizens via digital tools and platforms.

### ***Major General Manoj Kumar Bindal, Executive Director, National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM)***

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development puts forward a transformational vision which is recognizing that our world is changing, bringing the new challenges that must be overcome if we want to live in a world without hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition. While the economy has become increasingly interconnected and globalized, many countries however, have not witnessed sustained growth as part of this new change in the economies. The world has seen significant progress in reducing hunger over the last 15 years. Yet nearly 793 million people worldwide still lack access on a regular basis to adequate amounts of dietary energy. The food insecurity experience scale (FIES) provides a very new and improved measure of food insecurity focusing on the access to food. The SDG two nutrition indicators only include unspecific outcome measures such as child height for age for stunting, and child weight for height for wasting and overweight. Indicators of micronutrient deficiencies, minerals and vitamins typically measured by biochemical tests or physical manifestations, are not considered worldwide. So, there is a need to promote innovative ways of data collection, including tablets and mobile phones, particularly in remote and inaccessible areas and improve collaboration among agencies.

### ***Mr. Nicolas Bidault, Senior Regional RAM officer, WFP Regional office of Asia and the Pacific***

This session was focused on the importance of technology, decision support systems, and high-quality data. The demand for real time information is becoming important for the government, but also for . However, in case of food security and nutrition we tend to rely on only partial information from the supply side while missing on the demand side information. Large scale surveys may be representative at the national or at the provincial level, but more granular information is not available when we need it and where we need it (e.g., hotspots). So, there is a need to shift to a more real time information from the demand side i.e., from the household level. We need to link such as food expenditure of the households and coping strategies with shocks and economics better. We have to move to post-food distribution monitoring. For example, one can look at the post distribution such as how distribution was done in kind or cash; how the beneficiaries have used that or the efficiency of that using mobile technology. In the context of India one can rely on existing technology, mobile ownership, data centres, etc. There is easy integration with existing platforms. However, there are potential challenges in the context of India. For example, language is being one of them. Data call centers need to be adapted to it. Sometimes mobile ownership does not match with the targeted categories of the people. Additionally, the added layer of challenge that exists to reach the women participants for which a good level of coordination is required.

### ***Ms. Yumiko Kanemitsu, Regional Evaluation Officer, WFP***

This session was about the real time evaluation and learning systems. Real time revelation is a timely and rapid and interactive peer review over the fast-evolving humanitarian operations. It has broad objectives to capture the effectiveness and impact of the response and to ensure that the findings are used for the immediate and organizational operational change. Real time evaluation can reinforce the link between the operations, the evaluation, and policy formulation.

It is directly involved in the emergency planning process and is engaged in sustained dialogue with the emergency staff in the field and headquarters. It is very critical for continuous impact learning. It is important to enhance data efficiency by using remote data, digital tools, such as Tableau to get real time impact measurement. It is important to build the capacity of the field level staff through training for a real time evaluation learning system. Organization needs to develop their own set of skills, and capabilities and assistance, for instance, where and how to collect the data and the emergency context, and which monitoring and evaluation methods are appropriate, and how to combine the short-term focus and with more long-term sustainable change. It is time to conceptualize the M&E system we need and create more space for dialogue and learning. Stakeholders' involvement, citizen participation, and listening to vulnerable people is a key aspect.

## Summary of Audience Q&A

- ▶▶ Real time tracking of the supply chain is happening at every level- at the storage, transportation, and distribution. Almost 75% distribution of the food grains is happening through biometrically authenticated systems. On the demand side, households level monitoring and evaluation on a real time basis, India needs to work with partners. On the supply side most of the information is available on the public portals such as on the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Corporation of India, etc. Most of the warehouses are online. There is an online application on the Google Play Store 'Mera Ration' (My Food Grain). This app enables Indian citizens to access the Public Distribution System benefits information anywhere in India.
- ▶▶ On demand side, food insecurity information is available publicly on the WFP portal global hunger monitoring system that tracks and predicts hunger in near real-time.
- ▶▶ There should be more Sentinel surveillance of the vulnerable houses in the food security and nutrition area as it is cost effective and gives adequate information.
- ▶▶ To improve the dietary diversification, one of the government's responses to COVID was to distribute pulses and oil seeds through the PDS to NFSA beneficiaries as well as to the state ration card holders.
- ▶▶ To derive all sets of indicators for frontline monitoring systems and framework, one can refer to WHO, UNICEF, FAO, WFP, etc.

## Summary of key insights/takeaways from the session

Technology is a big aspect and it is necessary in doing such kind of work (food security and nutrition monitoring). India is massive and complex with a large and diverse population. Food security and nutrition monitoring is going to be more complex as food security is multi-dimensional. India has the largest food security safety net program in the world that covers the basic needs of a lot of people. There is a lot of supply side information but there is a lack of demand side information. There are multiple systems in India and a lot of information is coming but it is not integrated and harmonized. So, there is a need to link the information to understand the situation better. So, the system should be strengthened, should talk to each other, and come up with the integrated and clear picture. Then, one should also look at the results – are we doing good, achieving the desired results, making a difference. Thus, real time evaluation becomes very important and links the two needs that are created through humanitarian crises or emergencies.

## SESSION 4: PROMOTING EVALUATIONS IN ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS

### Summary of remarks/presentations by the panel

#### ***Dr. Arnab Mukherji, Professor, IIM-B***

The focus and structure involved in thinking about evaluations is quite rigid, hard and has several requirements. Most such assessments in ideal situations should start before the launch of the program. Translation should be done as to who is doing what so that it would help in triggering cause and effect translation. Thoughts need to be given around on 'how' of setting up a cause-and-effect relationship. This could be inclusive of following a path that ensures that an intervention is able to achieve its intended goal. Large evaluations also require a significant amount of Human Resource Competencies for conducting good quality of interviews, data collections, documentation, assessment to capture the richness that a policy intends to achieve. The same also requires large financial footprint to get such a huge task done. Engagements, learning and suggestions from evaluations should be taken as attempt to improve the scheme implementation. In a general practice, it is often seen that academic institutions are engaged in evaluation of an intervention post its implementation with an intent of seeking appreciation. However, this also happens to be a place which has a room for creative engagement and through setting the right context, the impacts that can be achieved can be very fruitful. Hence, during implementation, the engagement of academia or any third party can help in providing supportive supervision in scheme implementation and help better achieve the intended outcomes.

#### ***Dr. B. Venkatesh Kumar, Former Chairperson & Prof., Centre for Public Policy, TISS***

The importance of evaluations in academic institutions has not been recognized in India as much as it dominated by other institutions over the world. Given the programs and policies that are now being implemented in the country, there is a need to have a more serious engagement among scholars and academicians to ensure that Monitoring and Evaluation is embedded in the core of the Indian Academia. However, in the Indian context there are very few academic institutions which really focus on core M&E. Having rigorous knowledge and understanding of M&E is an indispensable precondition for setting up the right tone of M&E in Indian academia. It is also important to bridge the gap between institutions operating at rural/semi urban level to the institutions operating in metropolitans and to work in a hub and spoke model. If one really wants a good evaluation study, then he/she should give it good amount of financial amount, human resources, and time. Further training of scholars and leveraging technology plays very crucial role in strengthening M&E in field of Indian academia.

#### ***Dr. Subhashish Gandopadhyay, Research Director, IDF and Dream, ISP***

In continuation with what has been communicated previously, it is undeniable that the academic institutions need to ensure greater engagement in M&E. Further, learning Indian Economics is a process of learning through practice. This requires being updated with facts, data, and current scenario of economy. It is here that the problems related to lack of participation of academic intuitions in M&E occur, evaluation as a process does not happens where there are students, it happens in the institutions which has people with expertise in M&E. Further, once M&E becomes



an integral part of the academia, and it becomes part of the general culture then gathering trained human resource for conducting a quick study over a short duration of time would not be a constraint for getting an evaluation done.

It is also the responsibility of the academic institutes to seek the attention of the government departments toward monitoring evaluation and to explore the ways for collaboration with academic institutes. It is also important to note that there is a huge scope for the academic institutes operating at State level to collaborate with the government and seek projects related to evaluations in several fields. This could also lead to be a way for synthesizing the local knowledge, local issues and local solutions that can be brought in at the State and District Level improving delivery of the scheme as well as its ownership both at the bottom and the top.

***Dr. Anitha Govindaraj, Advisor, AIGGPA, Bhopal***

Somewhere, academia, think tanks, institutes and governments are all working in silos and there is a need to bridge the gap between all these. The bridge needs to be effective in nature fueling the idea of evidence-based decision making. Currently we are in a world of huge databases, IT Systems being developed for several schemes for which data is publicly available. Now that all these systems are in place, there is a need to focus on good quality data collection, its reporting, and its aggregation so that the data could become reliable. There is a need for integration of M&E in the scheme design and to standardize the M&E Framework for all the schemes being implemented in the country.

Thought should also be given in collaboration between institutions working on M&E and other academic institutions aspiring to progress through their work on M&E. Based on the convergence of the two with the State governments, the research could be conducted, evidence could be collected and the findings could be arrived at which could help in bridging the gap in the schemes of the government. The idea behind this is getting projects from the government, and implementing it in collaboration between academic institutes and an institute with expertise in M&E.

***Dr. Sanjeev Sridharan, Country Lead, Learning Systems & Systems Evaluation, BMGF***

It is not true to say that the west has great models of M&E in academia. One must look both at the south and the north, across countries, to understand the larger picture for building capacities of systems. Universally, there are not any universities that one can turn to seek support in M&E rather it is people from whom support can be sought in this field. There is a comparative advantage for what a firm can bring, what an institute can bring and academia can bring, however the critical question is not what they bring, it is what is there that is useful on the ground, and what is useful for the policy makers. While exploring the future of academia in evaluation, it is important to lead while being cognizant of some important questions in Evaluation i.e., related to issues of dynamics, issues of inequities. Instead the future of M&E should not be donor led, it should be based on the best practices where two individual parties have come together to work and have done wonders.



## Summary of Audience Q&A

**Role of M&E in academia and its facilitation:** In the field of academia, completion of a course in itself is a time bound activity for e.g. a degree of masters or P.H.D, however on the other hand in the government system, the expectation of having an evaluation study done is for a very short period of time. The rationale behind this is to take quick evaluations and make interventions based on the recommendations received. Otherwise, if the evaluation is conducted for a long period of time, then there is a possibility that the facts or the nature of impact of the scheme varies over time. Hence, here there is also a huge scope for the educational institutes to build capacities to be able to conduct quick studies as per the demand in the market.

**Literature of evaluation and its relationship with economics:** A division lies between the policy space, practice space and implementation space. There is a need to change our value systems and adopt a system where the policy makers and funders are brought more closer to the field realities so that the monitoring mechanism could be developed more practically to strengthen the scheme implementation.

**Culturing professionals into M&E:** There is a need to have annual/ quarterly evaluation contests based on cracking an evaluation puzzle. This will help in creating a value system and in bringing people together to work and innovate on M&E. Further, these competitions should not be conducted in conference halls or training institutes, rather these should be conducted at community level. So that in the name of capacity building, exposures can also be made to the ground realities and live problems could be given and the recommendations for the same can be sought.

## Summary of key insights/takeaways from the session

- ▶▶ While thinking on different kinds of evaluation strategies, which are multi-sectoral, multi-strategy focus on both long term as well as short term, where local academic institutions and their students can also be engaged.
- ▶▶ There is a need to expose the students to the communities to sensitize them with the realities which the people in those communities are facing. This support with their eventual training in policy making and data sciences will help them analyze the bigger picture. Exposure to the field being primary of all in this regard.
- ▶▶ M&E should be made a part of the policy framework of a scheme and there should also be a scope of engaging academic institutions for supporting the same.
- ▶▶ There is a need to bring value to the M&E and for that having an annual M&E fest or related activity can be organized where people from different sectors can come along and compete with each other to crack an evaluation puzzle. This would not only be an activity-based learning engagement but it would also help in making people aware on the role on M&E in micro as well as in macro spaces.

## SESSION 5: WHAT DOES IT TAKE FROM EVIDENCE AND IMPLEMENTATION LENS?

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### Summary of remarks/presentations by the panel

#### *Opening remarks*

The need for designing social protection system resilient to poor shocks for the extremely poor was highlighted while explaining the Ultra Poor Graduation Program first introduced by BRAC – The Borgen Project in Bangladesh targeting the poorest of the poor. This program used community and wealth ranking for targeting the ultra-poor. As part of the program, the extreme poor are provided an injection of capital through asset transfer –enterprise and training to provide a sustainable form of business. Randomized Control Trials have supported the positive outcomes of the study and indicated that the savings and consumption of the treatment group improved over long term. In India, it was initiated by Bandhan Co in Bihar and the adoption is also taking place in Rajasthan, Jharkhand, and Odisha.

#### *Mr. Colin Andrews, World Bank:*

Common belief is that macroeconomic growth will ensure improvement in the economic lives of the extreme poor. However, it may not necessarily hold true and the central question must be of uplifting people from the extreme poverty/poverty trap and understanding the opportunities available for them. Three potentials for scale – developing National frameworks and state strategies for extreme poor: The global landscape of implementers, assessed over 200 programs, is equally divided between NGOs and government organizations, but 95% of beneficiaries come under government programs, thus emphasizing the reach of government programs over NGO initiatives. Secondly, the focus of most interventions are big push multidimensional ideas, however, there is a need to upscale programs for the most vulnerable. Thirdly, keeping political economy in mind is important – different target groups from evaluators and from a government's point of view.

Evidence is important to drive the program and comes mostly from the NGO side and not at scale programs. Evidence suggests collaborative approach of different initiatives together leads to better outcomes. Evidence mapping indicates costs are highest in-cash transfer programs. This is contrary to the belief that comprehensive programs like SJY would be more costly.

#### *Mr. Balamurugan D., Bihar, IAS, Chief Executive Officer, Bihar Rural Livelihoods Promotion Society:*

JEEViKA (SRLM and implements NRLM) in Bihar started in 2006 with World Bank funding– 12.13 million women mobilized into approximately 1 million SHGs. JEEViKA aims to build the capacity of the community to increase engagement. This platform can be used for providing benefits for multiple programs. SJY – Ultra Poor Graduation model was launched in 2018- targeting 100,000 ultra- poor households out of poverty. Using 9 indicators to measure if the families are graduating from the Ultra poor status, which include asset growth, food security, saving rate, child immunization, secure house, water and sanitation, among others. Reports from the field, indicate over 5000 families have graduated. The graduation approach was catalyzed using existing structures of JEEViKA.

Critical needs are required to scale up and M&E needs are necessary for course correction. Need for dedicated and competent human resource, and have a structure of state level, district level as well as ground level functionaries. Feedback mechanism should be ensured. Also, good partners to enable for implementation and funding. Detailed guidelines and IEC materials are essential to ensure consistency of knowledge about the program. A digital infrastructure and a functional MIS are necessary for real time data gathering mechanism. Process evaluation is also important for scaling up, to get feedback on quality of implementation. Course correction is extremely important. One must believe in the system and the program and eventually impacts will show.

***Ms. Doris King, Associate Director, Co-Impact***

Introduced Co-Impact which supports long term funding to system- change initiatives in education, health, and economic opportunities. It supports partners to remain outcome-focused to drive changes on the ground and in the system and to place gender at the core and find strategic coherence among organizations. Learnings and interactions with women under the SJY program, indicate that the program has enabled them to provide nutrition for children, medicine for the old family members and speak for their community members and plan for the future of their children, indicating women are adopting a role of agency and not just beneficiary. These benefits have also drawn the attention of the policy makers who want to scale it up. The adoption and adaptation lead to increased safety nets. The idea of graduation approach is only possible because of firstly the political and government will and backing to leverage the mass public system and infrastructure and secondly. technical implementation by research partners to navigate the program on the ground and finally commitment to get to the root cause of the problem and learning and adaptation which is possible through robust systems of monitoring and evaluation.

For the suggesting evaluation systems that can be adopted from the beginning for scaling up, starting point should be to find out what the system needs, what it aims to achieve, and the support required. An understanding of the questions and challenges of policymakers and providing the expertise needed. Listening to the people the program is targeting is also critical. JEEViKA a great way to provide agency and resources. The key is to specify the aim from the start and determine the long-term outcomes (10 years hence, etc.).

***Shri Debasish Ray Choudhuri, Director-THP (Targeting Hardcore Poor), Bandhan Konnagar***

Before inception, Bandhan leveraged learnings from Bandhan microfinance institutions- it was observed some women don't participate and the community limits their participation. In 2006, both JPAL and Bandhan started together on the big push program/Graduation of Ultra Poor in Murshidabad, West Bengal and realized certain groups are marginalized. Bandhan is scaling up the program in the last 10 years, in 2010, as 10,000 families were targeted and now approximately 125,000 families. Evidence has been generated from RCTs from JPAL as well as impact evaluations by consulting companies like Deloitte, KPMG, etc., indicating evidence of asset growth and graduating families not falling back into the poverty trap. Thus, there is a need for scaling up to other parts of the country but challenging for one NGO. In 2014, Bandhan tried to partner with NBFCs and MFIs but didn't move very far and then it collaborated with international NGOs in West Bengal, Assam, and Bihar. Meanwhile, it also targeted government stakeholders as government would be the right platform. Demonstration models from Odisha

and Bihar were presented to governments. Rajasthan and Jharkhand governments also took it up. Bihar government took it up in association with the World Bank. At present Bandhan provides technical assistance through trainings, implementation, and M&E. Also, building capacities and strengthening the community organizations.

### Summary of Audience Q&A

- ▶▶ In order to ensure that people don't fall back to the poverty trap, the model is sustainable as it is a community driven program.
- ▶▶ A reference of case studies was provided for M&E in SEI report, including Jeevika and the Sahel, which go into more detail on M&E and lessons around leveraging existing data systems, ensuring feedback loops and some careful discussion on the prioritization of different indicators (especially on gender). <https://www.peiglobal.org/state-of-economic-inclusion-report-2021>.

### Summary of key insights/takeaways from the session

There is pessimism on NGO programs and constraints on how these can be undertaken by the government, but this program is an ideal example of governments, NGOs, funding multilaterals and researchers working together to reach the extreme poor. This is only possible if governments accept that certain marginal groups remain and finds motivation to drive such programs to ensure inclusivity. Evidence based policymaking can become a reality through partnerships.

## SESSION 6: BUILDING ROBUST M&E SYSTEMS: AN INDIAN STATES PERSPECTIVE

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### Summary of remarks/presentation by the panel

#### Opening remarks

State governments are at the forefront of controlling COVID-19 and also will play an extremely important role in post COVID-19 scenario for the revival of the economy and regaining momentum towards achieving sustainable development goals. As a result of COVID-19, there is much to be done to catch up with the lost time and the process and this has to be done in a fiscally constraint context. It is very important to be smarter and more agile in the allocation of the budgets, ensure best outcome out of public expenditure and use various tools available with the government to muster all the resources towards achieving state and national development priorities and SDGs. The most effective way to achieve this is to have robust monitoring and evaluation systems to provide evidence for fine-tuning budgets and ensure use of other tools with government to achieve maximum development tax towards achieving SDGs and other development priorities.

Ensuring outcome that contributes towards achieving SDGs and state development agendas is paramount and the hierarchy of outcome needs to be well established and checked while lot of work has been done at the scheme level. There is a need to consolidate scheme level outcome to intermediary outcomes at the ministry and department level and further consolidate the ministry/department level outcome to state and national level outcome. Now, some work is required to consider and use other tools in budgeting the government in SDGs, rules, laws and regulations, and enablers like technology. Generating high quality data for generating outputs and outcomes on real time will be very essential. One can consider data into two blocks based on who generates data i.e., public and private and including type of data like administrative, transactional and survey data. Each of this needs special and specific efforts. State governments need to focus on how best they can use data from all these 4 boxes in designing programs and policies.

The government generated administrative data which is largely helpful in tracking outputs has a quality issue and lot of work needs to be done in improving the quality of the administrative data that is generated and also using it to have deeper analysis for better insights. The government generated survey data is very limited and wherever it is done, there is huge amount of time-lag between collection and reporting. So, we need to use the technology to reduce the gap and try to make it as quick as possible. Most of the outcomes that can be tracked through survey data. This is the major weakness in our M&E tracking system. The government also needs to use exhaustive data that is generated by private sector, both transactional and survey for which different arrangements need to be made including data philanthropy. There is a need for linkages between vision, need & terms of budget framework and scale the budget allocation.

The finance and planning department has to develop compacts with departments. There is a need for regularly tracking outcomes through surveys and linking those findings to performance-based budget allocation. This also needed to introduce Output-Outcome Monitoring Framework (OOMF) and use of IT should be promoted to improve the quality of administrative data. The

knowledge of state governments and their best practices need to be disseminated across the whole ecosystem to boost and strengthen the M&E ecosystem.

***Mr. TVSN Prasad, Additional Chief Secretary, Finance & Planning, Government of Haryana***

For strengthening the M&E ecosystem, we have collaborated with UNDP and set up Swarn Jayanti Institute of Fiscal Management along with the SDG coordination centre. The basic idea is to develop ways to link various expenditure incurred in the state, in various programs etc. to the SDGs. To achieve this goal, we have started the exercise of mapping. This exercise is not limited to an academic exercise. This report has been tabled in the state assembly to institutionalize this exercise. We have been tracking the outputs and outcomes and sensitizing the lawmakers in this regard. We also are looking forward to NITI Aayog helping us to improve the system through Information Technology (IT).

***Dr. Shalini Rajneesh, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary, Planning Program Monitoring and Statistics Department, Govt. of Karnataka, and President of Governing Body of Karnataka Evaluation Authority.***

Karnataka was one of the first states to bring in evaluation machinery as an independent authority since 2000. Initially, it was decided to evaluate every scheme more than 1 crore, but it was not taking up due to the large number of schemes. In budget 2022-21, Hon'ble CM announced that every scheme more than Rs. 100 crores will be evaluated by KEA and continuation will be done based on the evaluation. Without evaluation, no continuation would be allowed. Planning department does the monitoring of all the schemes and if the performance of the schemes is not found adequate in terms of grievance and other relevant things then KEA will take up those schemes for evaluation on suo-moto basis. In general, the specific department's requests to the KEA for the evaluation of the scheme and based on their request evaluation of the schemes are taken up. Right from the beginning, the ownership of the department is set, and ToR is prepared jointly by the concerned department and KEA. The entire process is very transparent. Everything will be uploaded on the website including the recommendations and the action taken up. For the next 10 years, we have set the target for every department and accordingly, indicators for all the departments in the document mission 2030.

***Ms. Jayashree Raghunandan, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary, Department of Planning & Development, Govt of Tamil Nadu.***

The entire focus would be on Building M&E systems and perspective. To create a demand for evidence is important for policy making, data governance, innovation, and best practices. To promote M&E, TN has taken up 4 institutions i.e. Data analytics unit was set up in 2015-16., the economic and statistics department which did the panel survey, shift from PAPI to CAPI for survey and have collaboration with MIDS and J-PAL, the directorate of evaluation and applied research was set up in 1974. They also shifted from PAPI to CAPI and the SDG unit in which TN has the state SDG framework at the district and village level. The demand for evidence and evidence to policy making is boosted by these 4 institutions. The willing states should be collaborated on priority basis as different states are in different stage in terms of maturity of M&E systems.

## Summary of Audience Q&A

- ▶▶ Independence of KEA: Karnataka has very strong evaluation department in the planning department itself. The model is evolved in such a way which facilitates transparency in the system and the independent authority is away from the biases and carries out its work in an impartial way. The empanelment process itself is very robust and scientific. Therefore, it can be said that the independence of authority is helping in the strengthening of M&E systems in the state.
- ▶▶ Setting up of Accountability given the diverse work of SDG: The working groups are across departments. The working group in itself is not adequate. We set up an SDG unit in every department. The outcome of the department is mapped with the SDG. In this way, departments are looking at the performance of SDG. Therefore, modifying their work to achieve the SDGs. The working group needs a lot of feeding from the respective department SDG units.
- ▶▶ Emerging technology and collaboration with agencies like J-PAL: When the emerging technology starts working when adopted by each department and the cross cutting is the demand for the emerging technology. The collaboration with agencies like J-PAL is not scalable as it is just for the studies whereas if the collaboration is for setting up systems, then it can be scalable.

## Summary of key insights/takeaways from the session

- ▶▶ Independence of evaluation authority is very important and vital for strengthening the M&E ecosystem and institutionalizing the monitoring and evaluation within the system right from the inception of a program.
- ▶▶ The outcome of every department should be mapped to the SDG. Therefore, department can assess its own performance through improvement in the SDG indicators.
- ▶▶ The collaboration with agencies like J-PAL is critical and helpful.
- ▶▶ Data analytics requires a lot of capacity building. Therefore, manpower should be trained adequately, and handholding should be given to them.



## SESSION 7: LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND: HOW M&E CAN HELP ACHIEVE MORE EQUITABLE RESULTS IN THE WAKE OF COVID

### Summary of remarks/presentations by the panel

#### *Dr. Yasmin Ali Haque, Representative, UNICEF India Country Office*

To build a robust M&E ecosystem, it is crucial that the policy and development programs are relevant, coherent, effective, efficient, and ultimately impactful in a sustainable way. COVID-19 had exposed and further aggravated the vulnerabilities and inequalities. Hence, there is a greater need for monitoring & evaluation. Also, a systematic at scale and sustainable change to achieve results, especially in countries like India.

Discussion on the importance of M&E for the SDGs highlighted that SDGs focus on “leaving no one behind”. However, the required actions to meet the goals have not been advancing at the speed required. Hence, this is the decade to accelerate sustainable solutions and further calls for building more robust evaluation capabilities and evidence-based policies.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, UNICEF invested substantially in supporting M&E and evidence to understand its impact on children and adolescents’ lives across the world. In India, Community Based Monitoring (CBM) helped understand the most vulnerable population group’s socio-economic conditions to policymakers and implementation authorities. Some of the findings related to studying at home were that around 73 per cent of students were unable to study at home. It also found that majority of the students were relying on self-study rather than online classes for studying. Findings related to access to essential services for pregnant women during the pandemic revealed that as the lockdown eased, the access to facilities improved. The key learnings for UNICEF, from the findings, were that vulnerabilities change over time; thus, there is a need for a continuous M&E system. With the help of CBM, it was possible to reach the vulnerable; however, collecting data on sensitive topics like child marriage, etc., remains a challenge.

#### *Mr. Nand Kumarum, IAS, Chief Executive Officer, Madhya Pradesh Agency for Information Technology (MAPIT)*

Traditionally, there is a system of monitoring and evaluation where parameters help understand the scheme delivery and the progress made towards the desired objective over a period. However, during the COVID-19 pandemic, Government of Madhya Pradesh received the desired feedback within a week. The choice was between digital parameters and identifying proxy. For example, if people were trapped, they are not usually residents, like a villager trapped in Mumbai or Delhi and want to go back home but do not have money to travel to their villages. So, the government identified a proxy, in this case, the telecom department, as more than 40 thousand distress calls were received per day by the government. Through the caller’s night residence GPS location, the government identified the right people and helped them financially through Aadhaar. The COVID-19 pandemic introduced these non-conventional elements, and more proxies are coming, both digital and non-digital.

There are departmental databases with the MP government, and the government’s data centre collected these databases at a common location known as “Analytic Server”. The data centre at



real-time basis, connects to the data source, and prepares a data chunk. This data chunk helps create dashboards that further help monitor the schemes, like entitled beneficiaries, benefitted beneficiaries, delivery timelines, etc., on a real-time basis.

The Aatmanirbhar Madhya Pradesh portal, with the support of NITI Aayog, has further structured the system by defining Outcomes and align them with SDGs, Outputs, Activities and Sub-activities. This information is digitally available to implementation authorities and policymakers for review and other required actions. Further, the Govt. of Madhya Pradesh is also planning to take the framework to different departments' dashboards and portals.

The citizen database is available at the SAMAGRA portal developed by the MP govt. and is used by various departments to identify beneficiaries, scheme impact, etc., for some schemes like Mid-Day meal, among others. The government intends to take the available database into the public domain and design a system to link the user information with a more user-friendly top company's database.

### ***Dr. Renu Singh, Country Director, Young Lives India***

A considerable proportion of the population was struggling during the COVID-19 pandemic, making the already existing inequities even starker. These inequities made the need for reliable data and evidence even more essential to understand the experiences, etc., of the population and further develop solutions to counter these inequities. Over the years, research has been using technology, and Young Lives India does a longitudinal study that takes up tracking between the rounds. Hence, there was a need to resolve the data collection, data management, analytical frameworks, etc., to ensure optimum evaluation and research by reaching a suitable sample.

The Young Lives India longitudinal study is a four-country study and runs out of the University of Oxford. They follow three thousand children of most marginalized communities in each country, while sample collection in India is from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. The advantage of the organization was a well-established and latest sample last collected in December 2019. Further, the decision was to collect data through three phone surveys to understand the immediate, short, and medium-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The insights received were on schooling, loss of livelihood, child-care, employment levels, etc. It further revealed that by the third level of the survey, the employment levels were like pre-COVID times in February 2020. An attempt to collect data on sensitive issues like domestic violence, mental health issues, etc., were also made.

Uncertain situations forced innovations, adopting new methodologies, new alliances to go beyond existing samples, availability of contingency funds for researchers and, most important long-term investments in research. There is a definite need to institutionalize these lessons learnt.

### ***Dr. Gonzalo Hernández Licona, Director, Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network***

As highlighted before in the discussion, the COVID-19 pandemic has made development worse in economic growth, poverty and inequality, and increased disparities, post the pandemic for various groups in many areas like income, education, opportunities, etc. Monitoring, Evaluation and Evidence are essential now, especially to measure the situation of the vulnerable group. Measuring average has been a common practice as it is easier and cost-effective, but only measuring average shadows essential elements for the M&E system. As mentioned by other

speakers, we need to go beyond this and ensure no one is left behind. Some examples of evidence gathered around the COVID-19 pandemic are the OPHI vulnerability index performed by the oxford poverty and human development initiative, OPHI. COVID risk increases when households have much deprivation simultaneously; hence the vulnerability index was easier to develop based on the multidimensional poverty approaches. These elements are critical to addressing the risks of the population in different countries and regions within countries. In Mexico's case, Coneval produced maps where they put together municipalities by the poverty degree and COVID cases. They then generate data every 15 days and compare poverty pre-COVID and the changing cases of COVID. Further shared the data with the government for COVID response.

Leave no one behind is one of the most challenging and vital goals for the SDGs. Zie suggests three elements:

- ▶▶ Testing novel approaches to learning.
- ▶▶ Estimating the socio-economic impact of the pandemic.
- ▶▶ Understanding the effects of government policy responses on the pandemic.

There is a need for more elements where evidence is collected from communities, localities, and further alert government to prevent injustices. It is also essential to evaluate and monitor the vaccination process, heterogeneous impact on the population, and groups' segregation. It is vital for the government, agencies, and other stakeholders.

## Summary of Audience Q&A

- ▶▶ Balancing Scale and Vulnerability: In a diverse country like India, there is always a challenge to address an average person's needs and those who are different from the vulnerable groups, especially when vulnerable groups do not always design public policy. The requirement implies that we need to invest in more resources. We need to build a structure and an infrastructure to respond to crisis and pandemics like COVID-19 so, we can scale up to understand what works for the implementers and get valuable inputs. These are two reasons that, at times, we forget about diversity. The key element in the context of diversity is the Rights Approach.
- ▶▶ Role of Small sample surveys: There is an issue of lack of data related to migrants in India. Hence, various small sample studies were conducted during the pandemic to gather immediate problems. However, it is important to gather information at a larger scale to understand the current situation at the present stage.

## Summary of key insights/takeaways from the session

- ▶▶ There is a greater need for M&E, and we need to invest in new partnerships across stakeholders and financial investments.
- ▶▶ We need to set-up longer term and lasting mechanism to be better prepared either through longitudinal methods, tracking database of social sector beneficiaries, etc.
- ▶▶ Vulnerabilities change over time; thus, there is a need to have a continuous and sustainable M&E system to achieve results.

- ▶▶ There is a need to go beyond measuring average and proactively seek views, perspectives, and experiences of most vulnerable among others. We also need to disaggregate data across equity dimensions.
- ▶▶ We need to use different and creative tools, approaches to respond flexibly, be more agile in forecasting, modelling, and creating maps, then cross-checking the change over time.

## SESSION 8: EMERGING APPROACHES AND TECHNOLOGIES FOR EVIDENCE GENERATION

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### Summary of remarks/presentations by the panel

#### *Opening remarks*

We will talk about Monitoring systems. The emphasis will be on use of administrative data, MIS systems. There is a lack of trust on administrative data among researchers. When we come to evaluation part, we rely on survey data. However, surveys typically require more time and money. These critical constraints push the researchers to look for alternative forms of data. The need for newer data sources is particularly important now since we are living in fast-changing, critical times where we need to take important decisions such as where to mobilize health personnel, where to increase supply of ration etc., on a day-to-day basis. Newer data sources are being explored for evidence-based policy making, prescription and evaluations. The data forms have moved from alpha-numeric content of information to geo-spatial shape files, images, videos etc. The amount and frequency of generated data has also increased to humungous proportions. To analyse these new forms of data, emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning are also evolving at rapid pace.

#### *Mr. Sriganesh Lokanathan, Data Innovation & Policy Lead, UN Pulse Lab, Jakarta, Government of Indonesia*

Pulse Lab Jakarta is a joint initiative of UN and the Govt. of Indonesia and is a part of UN global Pulse Network. I'll talk about 2 things in my opening remarks. First, a solution that we developed for West Java provincial government. It is noteworthy that when we deal with new forms of data, these are not replacement of existing, traditional forms of data. Under this solution for Covid-19 response, we tried to predict case incidence and identify high-risk areas for the government. The key part of this was different overlays, comprising traditional data, new forms of data such as traffic information from Waze. The idea is to effectively bring administrative data and new forms of data together to enable decision makers on ground take informed decisions. In a way Covid-19 has given this opportunity to try and test mainstreaming of these newer data forms which typically have higher frequency than administrative datasets. There are 3 aspects to consider while trying to mainstream usage of these newer forms of data in government. First, raising awareness among the government decision makers so they may become informed, discerning consumers of these technologies. This aspect goes beyond just basic awareness so they can ask critical questions to assess the validity and quality of the insights generated through these techniques. The second is sustainable data partnerships. Many a times we start with a notion that we have complete control on data creation process. However, as soon as we start using data from other parties, we lose this control and understanding of data collection process. At this stage, having strong, sustainable linkages with these data partners is very important. Third aspect is capacity development. Here, not just big data experts and data scientists are needed. There is also a need of critical thinkers, interlocutors who can articulate problems from different domains and act as design scientists. For this purpose, targeted analytical partnerships may be developed.

***Ms. Poornima Dore, Head, Data Driven Governance, Tata Trusts***

When we look at data for policy making, granularity is very important aspect. TATA trusts work across development sector domains. However, data and information has emerged as an undercutting tool which helps in decision making across the stakeholders in the ecosystem. How does an MP decide which core activities should MPLAD fund go to? How does a DC decide, in which areas funds should be spent? This sort of planning works from the top at Union Budget level to granular level at the ground. We have developed a framework named DELTA (Data, Evaluation, Learning, Technology and Analysis) for bottom-up micro-planning. Here we collect field data by engaging people from that area on HH level (education, livelihood, sanitation etc.). Thereafter we match it with institutional parameters related to functioning of local Anganwadi, school, sub-centre etc. to paint a picture of the village. These technologies enabled surveys are triangulated with PRA tools to arrive at Requirement Shelf. Based on this requirement shelf and available budget with Gram Panchayat, a Village Development Plan is created. This approach has also been used by Maharashtra government and Aspirational Districts program of NITI Aayog. What should this data do for us- First, it should be able to aid responsive, needs-based planning. Further, ground-up data could be used with internationally accepted frameworks such as SDGs. We see capacity building as a crucial factor in this path. We have developed India's first capacity building course for City Data officers.

***Mr. Anand Trivedi, Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist, Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office, NITI Aayog***

In this context, there are 2 broad areas on which DMEO and NITI Aayog are already working. These aspects are, (a). To be able to understand what approaches are to be adopted from the ground and be able to mainstream these processes and practices (b) To benchmark these processes so the people can self-assess their innovations so eventually they also improve. In order to foster these decentralized innovations, three aspects of process flow need to be in place. These are, data generation, data exchange and data-use and dissemination. Once these innovations are out there and we recognize them, there has to be a way to de-contextualize them. Further, capacity building and appropriate policy measures should be put in place to upscale these innovations. DMEO is working in this area and actively trying to engage with suitable partners as well. We have also developed a benchmarking tool in Data Governance Quality Index toolkit to enable central and state governments assess their data preparedness and data maturity levels.

***Mr. Sayak Khatua, Evaluation Specialist-Transparency, Reproducibility, and Ethics at the International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie)***

What we are seeing now is evolution of 2 fields which are data science and impact evaluation. One and half a year back, we at 3ie decided to assess the state of play in this area. We went back and systemically searched the literature to studies which have used big data to measure, monitor and evaluate development outcomes or SDGs. What we found out was that most of the data were machine generated. Very few studies used process mediated or human generated data. Another important finding was that most of the studies were measurement studies, while very few studies were impact evaluations or systematic reviews. Overtime, satellite data was one of the most popular data sources. If we look at geographical distribution of the studies, US, China, and India have most of these studies. East Africa has very few studies. This highlights

inequality in using big data across geographies. To summarize, big data creates an opportunity for faster, cheaper and in some cases more robust evaluations. There are examples of conflict areas, difficult to reach terrains, humanitarian crisis areas and global pandemic afflicted areas where big data may be particularly useful.

***Mr. Varad Pande, Partner, Omidyar Network India***

This discussion is at a very timely stage and would act as a tailwind for monitoring, evaluation and learning ecosystem. I think before we jump in to see which technology or tool to use, we need to step back and think about measurement fit-for-purpose. The objective of study, the theory of change and the available budget should be looked into. Technology must be an enabler for the vision you have about your evaluation. Secondly, although there is a lot of energy around newer technologies such as big data, ML etc., there are several other low hanging fruits in terms of using existing data sources and tools. What NITI is doing through NDAP is one step towards this. ISB has also started a similar initiative. Further, there are low-tech ways to conduct evaluations for e.g. lean data survey. Imitator (more people adopting similar approach), more capital funding (after getting funding from us, whether grantee has been able to seek more funding from other investors) and contribution to policy change are three ways to identify whether a grantee is able to bring out change through its approach.

## **Summary of Audience Q&A**

***What are the factors hindering adoption of new data techniques and tools?***

**Sayak Khatua:** There are several challenges in adoption. First, these forms of data tend to exclude certain populations. In this way these datasets may be biased. Therefore, these big datasets are more useful when used in conjunction with other data sources and for triangulation purpose.

***How to tackle issue of data being non-representative of certain sections (data-poor) of society? How UN Pulse lab is trying to address this?***

**Sriganesh Lokanathan:** First, we need to understand that every dataset presents a slice of reality. It is almost never a whole. Once you know what slice of reality the data has what it does not have, we should try as much as possible to capture the missing information. However, from public policy point of view, this is also true that what gets measured gets done.

***How do you assess the firms for investment knowing it is difficult to measure impact/ outcome of interventions in short term periods? Further, in government's context, how can they incorporate outcome/ impact evaluation in their annual budgeting using big data/ modern techniques?***

**Varad Pande:** We measure direct impact and sector impact. Having sector impact/ systemic changes in the evaluation framework ensures long term orientation of investments. Further, from the investor's point of view, it is important to have the impact orientation from very beginning, and discussions should be there with investee about how the impact of interventions will be measured. Renewals of funding should be contingent upon achievement of milestones in the impact matrix. Lastly, the exit should also be planned in a way that the sustainability of the

intervention is ensured. We are setting up a system called exit-impact assessment, where we look whether we are setting up the firms on a path to continue long term sustainable impact.

***What can government do in terms of adopting emerging data and techniques in the light of India's commitment for SDGs and national development agenda?***

**Anand Trivedi:** There are 2 broad pathways in embedding emerging technologies in M&E of govt. programs. First, have these approaches incorporated in the design of the program itself. Secondly, while individual silos of programs have these M&E mechanisms, an effective data sharing policy should also be in place. Thereafter, enabling integrated use and cross agency prescriptive analytics may follow.

***Data standardization becomes critical with respect to the newer forms of data. How do you see these datasets (images/ videos/ geo-spatial data etc.) being amenable to granularity of monitoring SDGs at local level? Do you see any opportunities for these at local level?***

**Poornima Dore:** Data definitions are important in this aspect. There are tons of data points being collected at local level, however, everyone has different definition of what they are collecting. Therefore, reconciliation and insights generation at policy level becomes difficult due to different data definitions. Standardization of these definitions is a pre-requisite for any further data analysis and insights generation. Selected core indicators in each sector which are agreed upon (in definition, measurement approach) by stakeholders could be a start in this direction. A centralized plan needs to be there.

***There are 2 issues with newer datasets. First, absence of consent, and second, possibility of re-identification from anonymized datasets. How can we tackle these issues of data privacy and data security?***

**Poornima Dore:** I think consent has been abused a lot. Data privacy Act should be finalized and enacted as soon as possible so that all stakeholders have a clear map regarding what they need to do to ensure privacy of data. Privacy by design should be adopted and we have started doing that in projects we fund. Further, there should be an emphasis on building capacity around data security.

**Sayak Khatua:** Re-identification from the anonymized data sets are a challenge. One way to address the issue is to put-in processes and protocols before to pre-empt any such thing in future. However, from my experience, re-identification is very difficult. An ethics review board, in line with institutional review board in big data and emerging tech may also be adopted.

**Varad Pande:** First, we should accept that consent is broken. I think it can be done at 3 levels. First, at the level of businesses, what they can do differently. May be privacy by design needs to incorporate in practical ways. Secondly, at government and regulator side. Regulatory capacity may need to be enhanced. Finally, at the consumer's end. (example of a popular radio show where data privacy message was embedded in the story). The results of this approach are very promising.

**Anand Trivedi:** I think in government's context, it is important to balance out transparency and delivery of public good (example of PMAY-G where pics of houses built under the scheme



are available in public domain). A sensitization drive across the government machinery may need to be taken so that they adhere to data privacy related aspects of a program at the design stage itself. Data governance quality index has also incorporated data privacy as an index component. Sensitization of consumers/ beneficiaries with respect to providing data to government programs and data privacy in general is the need of hour.

**Sriganesh Lokanathan:** I think it is no longer just data protection, but cross border data flow is also part of the discourse. I think in the issue of choosing between transparency and privacy, there are no clear answers to how much access to data should be there. We can take an approach where whole data architecture/ structure is first updated to incorporate data privacy and transparency issues. This would stop the whole momentum. I think we need to go down to use case level and think for solutions there.

### **Closing remarks**

**Varad Pande:** I think we are at an important cusp at use of newer techniques in MEL. We should focus on fit-for-purpose. We should keep in mind that tech is an enabler. Tech should follow the purpose/ objectives and not the other way round.

**Sayak Khatua:** We need to think about inclusivity. Bringing in public-private partnerships while building these things. On the aspect of data poverty, there could be a global north and south divide that may creep up. There is a thought on to that. Most of the studies were conducted in institutions. And most of these institutions are present in global north. This points to the need of capacity building in other regions.

**Anand Trivedi:** It is extremely critical to start with low hanging fruits while embedding emerging tech into MEL. We must start with what is already available and leverage it the best. Further, government needs to facilitate cooperative federalism to build necessary capacity and alongside work on process measurement to see how it is working.

**Poornima Dore:** I would like to read the paper about Big Data use in studies and the Data Governance Quality Index toolkit. I think we should look deeper in transactional data (example of Digit). Bringing in emerging tech in MEL and addressing data privacy issues simultaneously is difficult to address (Example Smart city- City Data Officers).

**Sriganesh Lokanathan:** I think we should start with the use case. What problem is I am trying to solve? Thereafter, get into things like what data do I need, what data privacy issues I should address etc.

### **Summary of key insights/takeaways from the session**

To solve problems, we should start with the use case. We should strive for fit-for-purpose models rather than going after other things on which the available data can throw some light. Further, the programs and interventions should have data privacy and security built into them in the design stage itself. For all these to happen we need to build capacity across the government and private sector. Building strong partnerships is one way to go about this.



## SESSION 9: STRENGTHENING PATHWAYS FROM EVIDENCE TO ACTION

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### Summary of remarks/presentations by the panel

#### *Opening remarks*

The panel discussed the strengthening of pathways and evidence to support fact-based policy action. Introducing 3ie, the panel briefly discussed the work undertaken by the organization in promoting evidence-informed, equitable, inclusive and sustainable development. The 3ie supports generation and effective use of high-quality evidence to inform decision-making in low-and-middle-income countries. Decision makers can use research evidence to diagnose development problems, inform program design at any stage during the policy and implementation process. To improve the chances that this happens, 3ie is quick to clinically understand the factors that facilitate, or limit evidence informed decision-making.

#### *Ms. Kirthi Rao, Evidence Impact Specialist, 3ie*

Having accessible stock of knowledge and cumulative learning is extremely critical for evidence-informed decision-making. For evidence-informed decision-making, the cumulative learning needs to flow into actions. Evidence-informed decision-making is a process in which decision-makers consult the best available evidence in a systematic and transparent way to help, guide, agenda setting, policy development and revisions as well as in implementing decisions. For instance, evidence-informed decision-making helped the Gujarat Pollution Control Board to make changes in its audit scheme in 2015. Similarly, in Ghana, the evaluators found that the cash transfer is beneficial but too small and irregular. Decision-making is a complex process which involves problem, politics and policy streams.

#### *Mr. S. Krishnan, Additional Chief Secretary, Finance Department, Government of Tamil Nadu*

The resources are always constrained, and best results are expected from whatever the limited funds are available. It is difficult to wind down a large program even when the number such programs is very large. Therefore, we look for incremental changes/improvement overtime. It has become critical to have adequate policy input in terms of what works and what does not work and how best you do it based on evidence. Interface with the number of organizations, academic institutions outside government also helps this process a lot. In 2014, the Tamil Nadu government entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with J-PAL to do evidence-based policymaking. The process of dialogue with relevant stakeholders helped in tracking policies questions like what kind of program the state needs, what will work in our context and what will not.

#### *Dr. Suneeta Krishnan, India Country Lead, MEL, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation*

The Gates Foundation uses evidence across the strategic life cycle, such as, what is the team working for, in what timeframe certain goals can be achieved and how the team go about attempting to achieve those goals. Given our partnership with centre and state governments

on the range of highly complex problems, from tackling maternal and neonatal mortality to the financial empowerment of the most vulnerable population, our strategies are incomplete for how change can happen and pathways to impact are likely to have many twists and turns. Therefore, this is essential to use measurement, and evaluation for learning so that one can iterate how the impact is achieved and thereby adjust their approach to influence funding decisions. For building a learning culture, the attention is required to be paid on the process of how the evidence is generated, the quality of dialogue, participation, and collaboration among all stakeholders for shaping that culture.

***Mr. Samik Sundar Das, Senior Rural Development Specialist, World Bank***

Historically, it's been action to evidence but now it's shifting towards evidence to action and that is due to the good quality of evidence being generated. The fundamental questions of the evidence side are when and who is generating the evidence, how the evidence is generated, how the evidence is validated, how it is valued by key stakeholders and how it is put into actions in designing programs, and policies. When we go for evidence gathering the new areas of debate and perspective open-up which provide the opportunity to question the relevance of policies, program design, scheme, allocation, and the processes one follows. This strengthens the quality of learning and convertibility into actions and the whole process of learning and cumulative learning is driven out of the approach.

***Mr. Emmanuel Jimenez, Senior Research Fellow, 3ie***

The main ingredients of evaluation are to bring the government in the drivers' seat, to identify the champions of evidence and evaluations and to assess the motivation of the champions for accountability and transparency.

## **Summary of Audience Q&A**

**Improving the availability of data and evidence in India:** The availability of data and evidence is dependent on how the data framework is institutionalized in the system. It also depends on the engagement with the relevant stakeholders and engagement can be improved by signing agreements of various kinds with a number of national/international agencies. The second level of engagement needs to be created within this system like advisory committees, steering committees, coordination committees etc., which can assess the outcome coming out from the process or policy dialogue. Therefore, the outcome needs to be disseminated within the government and to promote an ecosystem where different stakeholders are effectively engaged for policy dialogue. The structure of institutional follow-up is important.

**Data Sharing protocol:** It can mainly be implemented keeping in mind the three things; a) Institutionalize the process for sharing data b) Ensure that more champions are brought into the process c) It does not put any one person in the government on too much risk. One thing which the government generally lacks is a collaborative style of working. One important thing, it will do is that people will collaborate agencies outside government but within the government. There are many positive things which can come from it, but institutionalizing is the most important thing.

**Enhancing data and evidence generation capacities of agencies:** India can be divided into different categories in terms of working with the champions and the way the engagement

process happens. Creating systems and building champions at the downstream is very important. The engagement with the downstream departments helps in augmenting their capacities by exposing them to strategic issues. The overall capacity of Monitoring and Evaluation is still aspiring to be better. These capacities are neither within the system nor outside the system.

### **Summary of key insights/takeaways from the session**

- ▶▶ To increase the engagement and collaboration with the institutions outside government to add on the M&E capacities within the system.
- ▶▶ To enhance capacities of downstream departments is critical for effective policy dialogues.
- ▶▶ To support the champions of M&E within the system and outside the system.

## SESSION 10: PROFESSIONALIZATION OF M&E TO ENHANCE INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES – OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

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### Summary of remarks/presentations by the panel

#### ***Dr. Rashmi Agrawal, Core group member, Evaluation Community of India (ECOI)***

The moderator welcomed all the experts and participants of this session and referred to the extensive discussions held on various facets of Monitoring & Evaluation and learning during the National M&E Conference. Referring to previous sessions which explored the means of strengthening the links between evidence generation and action, the moderator cited that one such link is the Quality of Evidence. Unless the evidence is of the highest level, any action based on evidence generated would fall short of expectation. The moderator gave way to the panellists for the last session, who would explore what constitutes the specialization in evaluation and how to promote characteristics of professionalism in the M&E ecosystem in the country.

#### ***Mr. Marco Segone, Director, UNFPA Evaluation Office***

The speaker highlighted the importance of M&E as a key element of good governance required to achieve the SDG agenda, as it makes clear as to what works, for whom does it work and under what circumstances does it work. For this, there is a need for a strong National Monitoring & Evaluation System. The focus is on building Institutional Capacity for M&E which relies on institutionalizing independence, credibility and utility of evaluation through systems and procedures, work programs and budgets to be able to implement the work program and institutional endorsement of evaluation standards in conduct of evaluation. This can be realized by making National Evaluation Policy (NEP). The NEP will make clear the rationale of the evaluation system, purpose and objectives of evaluation, principles that should guide evaluation, roles, and responsibilities of different stakeholders and what are the resources available. For implementation of a strong National Evaluation system, strong leadership, accountability mechanism, human and financial resources and institutional and individual capacities are very important. Key lessons from around the world for implementing country-led evaluation are that there should be control of national leadership over the evaluation process, integration of evaluation into national budget, working coherently within existing institutions, ensuring inclusiveness through multi stakeholders engagement plan and implementation of findings and recommendations of the evaluation.

#### ***Mr. Asela Kalugampitiya, President, Asia Pacific Evaluation Association***

The speaker discussed the need of evaluators with competencies to produce credible, reliable, and useful evaluation. Competent evaluators are needed for professionalization of evaluators. The United Nations (UN) has identified the strategic pillars for producing competent evaluators, which are access to education and training, dissemination of knowledge and good practices, ethics and standards, evaluation capabilities and competencies, recognition of knowledge, skills and experience and National Evaluation Association. Asia Pacific Evaluation Association (APEA) has developed Regional Evaluation Strategy having theme of professionalization of Evaluation whose outcome is competency framework for evaluators developed and used for professional

development and recruitment of evaluators. The competencies in evaluators enrich individual and collaborative practices, entrench a culture of evaluation, facilitate effective evaluation talent acquisition, drive competency-based training and codify learning use as a career guide for Young Emerging Evaluators (YEE's) so that there are good quality evaluators in future. APEA has identified six competency domains, 43 competencies and 208 indicative behaviours. The speaker also shared thoughts about essential process components for assessment of competencies like assessment process, assessment panel, assessment tools etc. The speaker also highlighted the role of various partners like universities, VOPE's etc. in enhancing demand, strengthening institutional systems and adopting standards and competencies.

### ***Ms. Ana Erica Lareza, Co-leader. Eval Youth Asia***

The speaker discussed about the Young and Emerging Evaluators (YEEs) who are under the age of 35 years, or new evaluators having less than 5 years' experience or recent university graduates interested in evaluations and their role in professionalization of evaluations. The major challenges that the YEEs face is the limited access to education to become evaluators. Hence YEEs are forced to go to other countries to get education which can be an expensive process. The opportunities for YEEs are limited in the Philippines and around as few people are aware of evaluation as a career. The speaker explained that to promote YEEs to become competent, experienced, and well networked professionals who contribute to evaluation capacity at national, regional and international level, a global network named as EvalYouth has been created. This promotes the inclusion of Youth and Young People (YYP) in evaluations conducted at the national, regional, and international level. The speaker noted that the EvalYouth Asia Chapter has been initiated in Delhi as of December 2019, which is an initiative to promote youth involvement in evaluation and to capacitate and empower Young and Emerging Evaluators (YEE) across the Asia Pacific region. To have a good evaluation network, five new chapters have been added namely Eval Youth Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, India, Bhutan, and Pakistan.

### ***Mr. Alok Srivastava, Director, CMS Social/Core group ECOI/Convenor IRIPE)***

At the outset, the speaker highlighted the four major challenges for professionalization of evaluation in such a vast and diverse country with a socio-culturally diverse population, no evaluation policy, multilingual population and federal structure. In the recent past, the government has made some initiatives towards professionalization of evaluation by way of having organized this conference by DMEQ, DMEQ signing Memorandum of Understanding with Professional/Academic/multilateral UN agencies, participation of parliamentarians in global/national forums on evaluation, etc. Focus is shifting from monitoring towards evaluations. Apart from the government initiatives for professionalization of evaluations, major things needed are policy legislation, academic courses on evaluation and institutionalizing evaluation in the organization and at individual-level. Besides government initiatives, ECOI, a voluntary organization has made small beginning in this direction by planning EvalFest in February, 2022, signing Statement of Intent with DMEQ, developed a draft National Evaluation Policy, partnering with UN agencies/Academia, and planning to create state chapters that go beyond Delhi, organizing short term courses on M&E for Delhi University, etc. The speaker also elaborated the way forward which contains legislative recognition of evaluation as profession, having national evaluation policy, starting academic courses at graduation and post-graduate level, ethical review of evaluation protocols be made mandatory like clinical research trials.

### **Dr. Sekhar Bonu, Director General, DMEQ, NITI Aayog**

In his closing remarks, DG, DMEQ thanked all the panellists, core partners and participants of this conference and the team at DMEQ who worked tirelessly to make this conference a success. The conference brought together the key stakeholders across the M&E ecosystem to discuss how far M&E has come. Topics like Building Culture of M&E, sharing best practices around the globe, and to institutionalize gold standard M&E practices would ensure institutionalization of M&E and help achieve sustainable impact. The conference hosted more than 50 panellists from central Govt., state Govt. and other international development agencies, which made the conference holistic and inclusive. With learning from the conference, DMEQ would tremendously benefit in finding strategy and work plan for the coming years.

### **Summary of Audience Q&A**

During the audience's question and answer session, four questions were asked, one each from all the four panellists. The first question was related to challenges faced by female evaluators, which was answered by Ms. Erica. The second question was related to right skill sets that an evaluator must have and what are the new evaluation approaches. The question was answered by Mr. Marco explaining the Technical Skill and Soft Skill as the two major skill sets for evaluators. Another question was whether we should have national policy for evaluation or there should be flexibility for the states to have their own policy. The question was answered by Mr. Srivastava said that there should be a National Evaluation Policy as an umbrella and under that we could have states adopting those policies specific to their states. The last question was addressed to Mr. Asela regarding the plan of developing evaluation capacities in Sri Lanka. He answered saying that they have developed material for this. Career guidance is also being given to YEEs, and the team also conducts training programs for evaluators.

### **Summary of Key insights/takeaways from the session**

The following are the key insights/takeaways:

- ▶▶ There should be National Evaluation Policy encompassing states/UTs.
- ▶▶ Need for legislative recognition of evaluation as profession.
- ▶▶ Promoting evaluation in academic institutions while emphasizing the enhancement of institutional capacities.
- ▶▶ Collaboration with civil society organizations and voluntary organizations to build capacity on M&E.
- ▶▶ Institutionalizing the M&E practices across the ecosystem.
- ▶▶ Integration of evaluation into the national budget.
- ▶▶ Strict implementation of findings and recommendations of the evaluation.
- ▶▶ Competencies in evaluators enrich individual and collaborative practices.

# D. Session Outcomes: Way forward for DMEO

## Role of M&E in institutionalizing evidence-based policy making

- ▶▶ Focus on capacity and capability of govt officials and stakeholders state community level understanding and tracking of inputs-outputs-outcomes.
- ▶▶ Active research into training and making it available in an easily assimilable form for various stakeholders within the ecosystem.
- ▶▶ Develop an evaluation and data policy.
- ▶▶ Working with various stakeholders and improving the evaluation culture.
- ▶▶ Developing strategic partnerships with various institutions.
- ▶▶ Empanelling quality agencies (based on QCBS standards).
- ▶▶ Explore a central or decentralized chief data steward to streamline, reduce duplication and promote sharing of data/information.
- ▶▶ Investment in data collection and analysis across all levels of the government and build partnerships with local institutions and resources.
- ▶▶ Building a framework to start approaching M&E as a learning tool.
- ▶▶ Engaging deeper with the university ecosystem to build the pipeline of M&E skill and talent is needed to further M&E in India in the longer term.

## Evidence when it matters most: Near-real time monitoring of food security and nutrition during crisis situations

- ▶▶ India has aspirational districts and NITI Aayog has done a lot to establish monitoring to motivate the leadership and improve the situation of the people of those districts across the country. One may also look at the other disadvantaged population groups, urban areas, etc., where we do not have much information. Such people are nearby but it's hard to find people sometimes in urban areas. The consensus is that information is useful, and one must do a lot and think about a lot. There is a need to link the demand side of the information to the supply side.

## Reaching scale: What does it take from evidence and implementation lens?

- ▶▶ The session highlighted the importance of planning and determining the outcomes at the very beginning of the program. It also emphasized the role of course correction and feedback mechanism for scaling up of programs. Thus, DMEO can undertake a key role in ensuring such systems are adopted at the national state, district and ground level. As a starting point DMEO, must disseminate knowledge regarding effective and efficient M&E systems.



## **Building robust M&E systems: An Indian States perspective**

- ▶▶ DMEO should tie up with the universities and research institutions for strengthening M&E and bringing in an academic perspective in policy making.
- ▶▶ DMEO should provide its platform for the dissemination of best practices of state governments across different ministries/departments.
- ▶▶ For data analytics, DMEO should provide the support for capacity building of manpower and provide handholding to states in setting up data analytics units.

## **Leave no one behind: How M&E can help achieve more equitable results in the wake of COVID**

- ▶▶ DMEO may look into investing more in partnerships to enhance its relationships with international and national M&E bodies.
- ▶▶ DMEO may build a database of the vulnerable population across Indian states and create long term relations through longitudinal studies.

## **Emerging approaches and technologies for evidence generation**

- ▶▶ DMEO should facilitate cooperative federalism in integrated use of available data in different silos.
- ▶▶ DMEO may look for the available capacity within the government ecosystem to effectively use emerging tech and address issues pertaining to data privacy and security.
- ▶▶ It is important for government to balance out transparency and delivery of public good DMEO may look deeper into this issue and come out with detailed problem formulation and suggested actions.

## **Strengthening pathways from evidence to action**

- ▶▶ To build M&E capacity within the government and outside the government through collaboration with the different institutions.
- ▶▶ To promote the culture of data sharing through setting up systems and to build confidence within the government for sharing data.
- ▶▶ To set up data analytical cells for data analysis and for looking at the data critically.
- ▶▶ To weed out the confidentiality issues while sharing data.

## **Professionalization of M&E to enhance Institutional Capacities: Opportunities and Challenges**

- ▶▶ DMEO being apex body in the field of M&E, should take a lead in framing National Evaluation Policy, and starting courses for evaluators at graduation and PG level so that the country could produce young evaluators. DMEO should partners with more and more Professional organizations/Academic Institutions for building a strong M&E system in India.



# Annexure I: Speaker Profiles

## SESSION 1: ROLE OF M&E IN INSTITUTIONALIZING EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY MAKING

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### ***Dr. Yamini Aiyar, President and Chief Executive, Centre for Policy Research***

Yamini Aiyar is the President and Chief Executive of the Centre for Policy Research. In 2008, she founded the Accountability Initiative at CPR, which is credited with pioneering one of India's largest expenditure tracking surveys for elementary education. Yamini's work sits at the intersection of research and policy practice. Her research interests span the fields of public finance, social policy, state capacity, federalism, governance, and the study of contemporary politics in India. She has published widely in academic publications and the popular press and writes regularly on current affairs and policy matters in mainstream Indian newspapers. Yamini serves on several government and international policy committees as well as boards of non-profits and think tanks. Her recent policy commitments include: Commissioner and Chair governance working group, Lancet Commission on Reimagining India's Health System; Member State Advisory Council, Government of Punjab, Member Technical Advisory Group, National Data and Analytics Platform, NITI Aayog. Yamini is an alumna of the London School of Economics, St. Edmunds College, Cambridge University and St. Stephen's College, Delhi University.

### ***Mr. Sunil Kumar, Secretary, Ministry of Panchayati Raj***

Shri Sunil Kumar is a 1987 batch IAS officer from UP Cadre. His Ministry was recently conferred the SKOCH Challenger Award under "Transparency in Governance" category for IT-led initiatives and transformational reforms leading to outcome-based performance improvement, better transparency and strengthening of the e-Governance in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) across the country. Prior to Panchayati Raj, he has held several key positions at the Central and State level administration.

### ***Mr. Pravin Srivastava, Ex-Secretary and Chief Statistician of India, Government of India***

Mr. Pravin is a 1983-batch Indian Statistical Service officer and has worked in the ministries of Statistics and Health in various positions, and briefly in the Union Public Service Commission, in his 35-year career. He has been a Secretary to the Indian Statistical Commission, popularly known as the Rangarajan Commission, which laid the foundation of the Modern Statistical System. The National Statistical Commission was set up in 2005 on its recommendations. He was part of the team that conceived the annual health surveys, which were later carried out by the census office. He also helped develop the health management information system (HMIS) of the ministry of health, back in the day. He was instrumental in launching a key project in the

labour ministry, the National Career Service, where all the employment exchanges and portals were linked to form a common portal.

***Dr. Gonzalo Hernández Licona, Director, Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network***

Dr Gonzalo Hernández Licona is now the Director of the Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network (MPPN-OPHI), where he coordinates 61 countries and 19 international institutions to advance and exchange ideas about implementing Multidimensional Poverty Indicators. He is also an expert for Country-Led evaluations working for UNICEF. He is Senior Research Fellow at the International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie); Research Associate at Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI); Member of the Board of Trustees at El Colegio de México. He was the Executive Secretary of the National Council for the Evaluation of Social Policy (CONEVAL) between 2005 and 2019, where he coordinated the evaluation of the social and the measurement of poverty at the national, state and municipality level. From 2020 to 2005 he was the General Director of Monitoring and Evaluation at the Ministry of Social Development. Between 1991 and 2002 he was a full-time professor at the Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México (ITAM); he is still a part-time professor at ITAM. He also was part of the 15 Independent Group of Scientists who wrote the 2019 Global Sustainable Development Report for the United Nations. Gonzalo has a Ph. D. in Economics from Oxford University, M. A. in Economics from the University of Essex, and a B. A. from ITAM.

***Mr. M. Hari Menon, Country Director, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation***

Mr. M Hari Menon leads the India Office of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. He oversees the foundation's work in South and South-East Asia. In this role as director of the India Office, Hari oversees managing the foundation's work areas in India, with an objective to improve conditions of family health, sanitation, digital financial inclusion, agriculture, and gender equality. He has led many complex portfolios in the foundation and has been successful in advancing the goals by engaging with governments, public and private partners, philanthropists, and non-governmental organizations. Prior to the India Country director role, he was leading the teams that focus on policy and advocacy and program communications for Global Health, Global Development, and Global Growth & Opportunity. Since 2017, he has also been overseeing the foundation's policy and government relations for South and South-East Asia. He also has experience in the consumer goods and information technology sectors with companies like Colgate Palmolive and Infosys Technologies. Hari holds a graduate degree in business management from XLRI School of Management, Jamshedpur, and a bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering from the College of Engineering & Technology, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi.

## SESSION 2: MONITORING OUTCOMES FOR REALIZING SDGS

### ***Mr. Shyam Sunder Dubey, ICAS Officer, Joint Secretary & Financial Advisor in the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA), Government of India***

Shri Dubey is B.Sc. (Biology), M.Sc. (Psychology), M.Phil. in Strategic affairs and national security as part of long-term training from National Defense College and holds Post Graduate Diploma in International Business from Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, New Delhi. He has around 30 years of rich, varied, and multi-disciplinary experience in the field of Public Financial management, Program/Project Management of managing Govt's welfare schemes, i.e., PDS, Accounting, Performance and Efficiency Audit of schemes, Budgeting, Public Expenditure Management and Procurement.

In the past, Shri Dubey served in various important position with different Ministries like Financial Adviser, Bank Note Press, Ministry of Finance, Deputy Secretary in Ministry of Food, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution, Head, Procurement and Logistics, UN World Food Program, Chief Controller of Accounts, Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion and also in Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

### ***Mr. Sampath Kumar, Principal Secretary to Health & Family Welfare Department, Government of Meghalaya***

He is also serving as Commissioner & Secretary to Program Implementation & Evaluation Department, CEO, Meghalaya Basin Development Authority, Principal Secretary to Social Welfare Department at Government of Meghalaya and Principal Secretary to Community & Rural Development Department. He was also the CEO of Rajiv Gandhi Mahila Vikas Pariyojana from 2007-14 where he played a key role in developing a rights-based poverty reduction and community empowerment model that is holistic, cost-effective, sustainable, and easily scalable. He has a pivotal role in the implementation of Meghalaya's Outcomes oriented Transformation in Health, nutrition, Education and Rural development Program or the MOTHER program across the state to collect and report key data on health, nutrition, education and rural development in real time. With more than fifteen years of leadership experience in the IAS, he has developed innovative models and lasting solutions for conflict-resolution, poverty reduction, women's empowerment, rural development, disaster relief and governance transparency measures. He holds a master's in public administration from Harvard University and BE in Electronics and Communications Engineering from Osmania University.

### ***Dr. Pinaki Chakraborty, Director, National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, New Delhi***

Prior to this, he was the Chief-Social Policy-UNICEF, and the Chief of Field Office-UNICEF Kerala and Tamil Nadu. Since 2008, he has been Professor at the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, New Delhi. He served as a Member, Advisory Council to the Fifteenth Finance Commission of India and Member-Secretary, Committee on Fiscal Statistics appointed by the National Statistical Commission in 2017. Chakraborty served as Economic Adviser to the 14th Finance Commission of India, heading the Economic Analysis and Technical Coordination Division of the Commission. He also served as a Member of the Third Union Territory Finance Commission, appointed by the Ministry of Home Affairs, and as a Consultant to the Eleventh Finance Commission of India.

Dr. Chakraborty has critical domain knowledge of the public finances of the national and state governments and has served on the advisory committees of various research institutions in India. He has also held short-term visiting appointments in the Department of Economics at the University of Ottawa and the University of Carleton, and at the Centre for Development Studies-affiliated to Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi, and taught Indian Public Finance course at the Indira Gandhi Institute for Development Research, Mumbai. He has also researched extensively on the decentralization and development of States in India. He has co-authored two books titled 'State Level Reforms, Growth, and Development in Indian States' published by the Oxford University Press, New York in 2014 and 'Social Sector in a Decentralized Economy: India in the Era of Globalization' published by Cambridge University Press. He publishes regularly on various national and international journals. He has an MPhil in Applied Economics and PhD in Economics from the Centre for Development Studies.

***Ms. Shrayana Bhattacharya, Senior Economist, World Bank's Social Protection and Labour unit for South Asia***

In her role, she leads the Bank's engagement with Ministry of Finance, Govt. of India, on social protection measures following COVID-19. She also leads a series of World Bank state level engagements to strengthen social protection benefits through projects and a knowledge partnership Mission. Prior to joining the World Bank, she has worked with the state government of Delhi on Mission Convergence – a program aimed at reforming the design and implementation of urban welfare programs in the city. Bhattacharya has worked with ILO, SEWA and Centre for Policy Research on a range of issues in the areas of urban bureaucracy and social protection, poverty measurement, impact evaluation of public programs, informality and functioning of urban labour markets. She completed her post-graduation in public administration and economics from Harvard University.

***Mr. Ronald Abraham, Founding Partner, IDinsight, New Delhi***

Ronald leads IDinsight's India office and is responsible for the organization's regional strategy, growth, impact, and financial stability. He also leads IDinsight's unit at NITI Aayog supporting the Aspirational Districts Program. He is passionate about using data to improve state capacity, especially to transform accountability processes and data-driven decision-making within governments.

Under his leadership, IDinsight India has embarked on over 30 analytical engagements in 15 states, spread across multiple sectors including agriculture, education, governance, health, nutrition, and social protection. Ronald has himself led several projects at IDinsight including the State of Aadhaar initiative and learning partnerships with the Governments of Bihar and Andhra Pradesh. He has also led projects supporting education foundations and non-profits in India, including Akanksha, Going to School, Pratham and STiR.

Previously, Ronald worked with Pratham on the Annual Status of Education Report (2006 and 2007) and as their lead for a statewide learning program with the Government of Punjab.

## SESSION3: EVIDENCE WHEN IT MATTERS MOST: REMOTE FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION MONITORING SOLUTIONS FOR IMPROVED RESULTS

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### ***Mr. Nicolas Bidault, Senior Regional RAM officer, WFP Regional office of Asia and the Pacific***

He manages the Research, Assessment and Monitoring agenda in the region for WFP. Prior to that, he was Deputy Global Coordinator (and Acting Global Coordinator) of the UN Network for SUN for Nutrition originally founded by WHO, UNICEF, WFP, FAO and later joined by IFAD. In this role, he worked closely with UN agencies, civil society organizations and research institutions on nutrition-related data issues and studies.

Prior to joining the UN Network for SUN, Nicolas Bidault was the Director of the Strategic Information department at the Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria based in Geneva, where he was responsible for evidence generation, analytics, and research. He has a long career in monitoring and data analytics in various UN agencies in Africa, Latin America, and Asia. Nicolas was also in 2010-2011 the Chief of the Monitoring unit at WFP based in Rome.

### ***Mr. Eric Kenefick, Deputy Country Director of the World Food Program, India***

Prior to his current appointment, Eric was the Senior Program Policy Officer for WFP Afghanistan, based in Kabul, from 2016-2019, as well as Senior Program Policy Officer for WFP Sudan in Khartoum, from 2011-2015. His work in both country offices involved leadership and design of strategic programs to address the food and nutrition needs of vulnerable households and individuals. Eric started his work with WFP in 1998 when he designed and led a joint food security and nutrition survey with WFP and UNICEF in Cambodia. He then was involved in vulnerability analysis and mapping (VAM) and M&E consultations in Bangladesh, Myanmar, and Nepal before joining the VAM unit in WFP Headquarters in 2002. He moved to the southern Africa Regional Bureau in 2005 and worked there for 6 years as Regional Head of VAM and M&E. Eric also has direct experience in evaluation, with UNICEF (nutrition and community development) and WHO (iron supplementation program) in Cambodia. Eric also spent a year in the Office of Evaluation in WFP Headquarters where he was mostly involved in managing a series of impact evaluations on blanket and supplementary feeding programs, working with 3iE.

### ***Ms. Yumiko Kanemitsu, Regional Evaluation Officer, WFP***

Yumiko Kanemitsu is the Regional Evaluation Officer for WFP Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific. She is a Professional evaluator with over 20 years of experience in evidence-based policy making, including Results-Based Management (RBM) for various socio-economic development areas for leading international institutions, particularly focusing on food security, human rights, and gender. Her focus includes building a harmonized multidisciplinary approach to development in all SDG areas.

### ***Major General Manoj Kumar Bindal, Executive Director, National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM)***

Major General M. K. Bindal is presently the Executive Director, National Institute of Disaster Management. He was commissioned into the Corps of Army Air Defense in December 1985.

During his more than three decades of service he has held important command and staff assignments. Having held all echelons of command within an Air Defense Regiment in diverse theatres, he commanded an Air Defense Regiment and an Air Defense Brigade in the Kashmir region against the backdrop of counter insurgency operations. He was General Officer Commanding of a sensitive Sub Area in the North East. He has been on the staff of a Mountain Brigade deployed in counter insurgency ops and in the High-Altitude area, an Armoured Division deployed in the plains, a Desert Corps and in a Corps HQ in High Altitude Areas. He has also been posted as Deputy Director General in Directorate of Army Air Defense where he was dealing with operations, Training, Air Defense Control & Reporting and Air Intelligence issues. Major General M. K. Bindal served as the Provost Marshall in the United Nations Mission in Mozambique where he was deeply involved in the liquidation of the mission. He has been the Director, Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping (CUNPK) New Delhi. For three years he was also the Secretary of the International Association of Peacekeeping Training Centres.

***Mr. Sudhanshu Pandey, Secretary, Department of Food and Public Distribution***

Mr. Sudhanshu Pandey currently serves as the Secretary, Department of Food and Public Distribution. He is a 1987 batch IAS officer of the Jammu and Kashmir cadre. Mr. Pandey has over three decades of experience in different senior positions in state and central governments, and the Indian embassy in Germany. He previously served as the Additional Secretary in the Department of Commerce.

In his present capacity, he deals with matters relating to food grain management in the country for the central pool stocks including procurement, storage and movement of wheat, rice & coarse grain for its further distribution through a network of Public Distribution System Outlets. He also deals with policy intervention for the sugar and edible oil industry in the country. Administration of National Food Security Act, 2013 is one of the major responsibilities.

He has been recipient of Governor's Medal, Chief Minister's Gold Medal, National Award by Akhil Bhartiya Vidvat Parishad, Varanasi & Government of India Commendation Certificates for his services in the Central and Provincial Government.



## SESSION4: PROMOTING EVALUATIONS IN ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS

### ***Dr. Shubhashis Gangopadhyay, Dean, Indian School of Public Policy (ISPP)***

He is the Founder and Research Director of the India Development Foundation. He is also the Professor of Emerging Market Finance, University of Groningen, Netherlands; and Visiting Professor at the Gothenburg School of Business, Economics and Law, Gothenburg University, Sweden. He began his career with the Indian Statistical Institute (ISI) as a Lecturer in 1983 and was promoted to a Professor in 1991. He has been a consultant to various ministries including Finance, Planning, Industry and Rural Development. Additionally, he has served on the board of the Industrial Reconstruction Bank of India (IRBI), as a member on the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Advisory Group on Bankruptcy Law and on the Bankruptcy Task Force of IPD (Initiative for Policy Dialogue), Columbia University.

### ***Dr. Arnab Mukherji is a Professor at the Center for Public Policy at IIM Bangalore.***

His work focuses on the economics of healthcare and governance. He holds honorary positions at the WORLD Policy Center at UCLA, the Development Economics Research Center at the University of Kent, and as a Commissioner for the Lancet Citizen's Commission on Reimagining India's Health System. His research has been published in international journals such as the American Journal of Public Health, BMJ, Journal of Health Economics, Economic Development and Cultural Change, Journal of Development Studies, and World Development. Arnab has a Ph.D. in Policy Analysis from the Pardee RAND Graduate School, a master's in economics from Jawaharlal Nehru University, and an undergraduate degree in economics from Delhi University. He has consulted with international organizations such as ADB, World Bank and several state governments on evaluating large government programs.

### ***Dr. B. Venkatesh Kumar, Ph.D., Professor and Chairperson at the Center for Governance and Public Policy at TISS***

He has authored the National Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Hub at TISS, and Guidelines issued by the Public Sector Enterprises for CSR. Kumar was a visiting Professor at the Graduate School of Education, University of Pennsylvania, and Rutgers University, and visiting Scholar at the University of California, Berkeley. He has also been a visiting fellow at the Centre for Advanced Study of India (CASI), University of Pennsylvania. He was the Course Director of the One-Week In-service Training for senior and mid-career IAS officers (policy leaders and civil servants) on "Social Policy and Governance" and has trained over 450 since 2011 under the aegis of the Government of India's Department of Personnel and Training. His most significant contribution in policy design, formulation, and implementation (2012-19) in advising and providing support to the Ministry of Human Resource Development's major policy initiative, higher education policy, National Mission on Higher Education. This flagship centrally sponsored program is a countrywide reform initiative to revive and resurrect the state higher education systems, especially the public universities and their affiliated college structures, and funded Rs.15,000 crore to support over 3,000 public-funded Universities and Colleges across India. He was also involved in the Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) Bill, which seeks to reform India's higher education regulatory framework besides several other higher education reforms (2015-19).

***Dr. Anitha Govindaraj, Advisor, Centre for NRM and Decentralized Governance and Atal Bihari Vajpayee Institute of Good Governance and Policy Analysis***

Dr. Govindaraj is an Agricultural economist, with more than 12 years of experience in teaching and action-oriented research, policy analysis, Monitoring and Evaluation in diverse fields such as Agriculture, Rural development, Natural resource management, Revenue and HR restructuring. Before joining AIGGPA, worked as state coordinator (M&E) with SFAC, GOI for the project on FPOs.

***Dr. Sanjeev Sridharan, Country Lead, Learning Systems and Systems Evaluation at the India Country Office of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.***

Sanjeev served as the Director of the Evaluation Centre for Complex Health Interventions at Li Ka Shing Knowledge Institute at St. Michaels Hospital and an Associate Professor at the Department of Health Policy, Management and Evaluation at the University of Toronto. Prior to his position at Toronto, he was the Head of the Evaluation Program and Senior Research Fellow at the Research Unit in Health, Behavior and Change at the University of Edinburgh. He is a former associate editor of the American Journal of Evaluation and is currently on the boards of the Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation, New Directions for Evaluation and the Journal of Evaluation and Program Planning. He is PhD from University of California and M.S from Purdue University.

***Dr. Ashwini Chhatre, Associate Professor of Public Policy and Executive Director, Bharti Institute of Public Policy, Indian School of Business***

He is an interdisciplinary scholar with research interests broadly centred on the dynamic cross-scale interactions between governance, economic development, and environmental protection. He has a background in Economics, graduate training in Political Science, and longstanding engagement with scholarship in Comparative Politics, Ecological Economics, Human Geography, Environmental Anthropology, Landscape Ecology, Environmental History, and Public Policy. Ashwini's main research interests lie in the study of the intersection of democracy with environment and development, with a more recent focus on climate change vulnerability and adaptation, and projects covering the entire spectrum from household-level to global analysis. Ashwini was the founding Editor-in-Chief of World Development Perspectives during 2016-19, served as the Senior Editor of Conservation Letters during 2009-2014, and his research has been published as one book and several articles in Science, PNAS, and other leading journals.



## SESSION 5: REACHING SCALE: WHAT DOES IT TAKE FROM EVIDENCE AND IMPLEMENTATION LENS?

### ***Mr. Balamurugan D, Chief Executive Officer, Bihar Rural Livelihoods Promotion Society (JEEViKA)***

Balamurugan D. is an Indian Administrative Officer with over a decade of experience in the civil services of Indian National Government. A graduate in Agriculture Science and Agri-Management from Tamil Nadu Agriculture University, Coimbatore, he is currently the Chief Executive Officer of Bihar Rural Livelihoods Promotion Society (BRLPS) popularly known as JEEViKA, the flagship program for poverty alleviation in the State. He brings rich experience in governance and administration with his stints as District Magistrate in districts of Jehanabad, Gopalganj, Darbhanga, Gaya and Siwan. In his previous roles, he contributed immensely in the areas of digitizing the Social Pension Programs and community-led sanitation systems. Mr. Balamurugan is also the Commissioner, Self-Employment, Govt. of Bihar and leads the agenda of skill development in rural areas for gainful self-employment in rural Bihar.

### ***Mr. Debasish Ray Choudhuri, Director-THP (Targeting Hardcore Poor), Bandhan Konnagar***

Debasish Ray Choudhuri has about 35 years of combined experience in the corporate and development sectors. He has spent the last decade working as the Director of THP (Targeting Hardcore Poor) program in Bandhan Konnagar, Kolkata- a leading Pan-India development organization. He leads Bandhan's flagship development program of graduating ultra-poor families in collaboration with USAID/DIV, DFID/SIDBI, IFAD/Govt. of Jharkhand, World Bank/ Govt. of Rajasthan, Co-Impact/Govt. of Bihar, Ford Foundation, Michael & Susan Dell Foundation, and the corporate social responsibility divisions of several banking, FMCG and aviation organizations. He currently also looks after Bandhan's social enterprise unit dealing with renewable energy and artisanal products.

Prior to Bandhan, Debasish worked with various MNCs, start-ups, Government autonomous bodies, Not for Profits, and social enterprises, where he had been driving business operations, innovation & incubation, capacity building, "fair trade", and poverty alleviation programs- notable associations being with the National Innovation Foundation (under Department of Science & Technology, Govt. of India), EU Fair Trade projects, GIZ RE (renewable energy-access to finance) projects, Norway Min. of External Affairs Knowledge Exchange project. Debasish is a Postgraduate in Business Management with additional professional trainings in Foreign Trade, IT, Quality, Management and Social Practices. He has appeared at various national and international forums on innovation, fair trade, clean energy, and graduation approach towards poverty alleviation.

### ***Mr. Colin Andrews, Program Manager-Social Protection and Jobs Global Practice and Partnership for Economic Inclusion, World Bank***

Colin Andrews is a program manager in the World Bank's Social Protection and Jobs Global Practice. He has over 15 years of social protection experience in Africa and South Asia and in global policy. Colin leads the Partnership for Economic Inclusion, a multi-partner initiative to support the scale-up of national economic inclusion programs. Colin has managed lending

operations on safety nets and service delivery in Africa. He has published widely on social protection, economic inclusion, crisis response and financing. Previously, he worked for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the European Commission, and nongovernmental organizations. He received a master's degree in economics from Trinity College, Dublin.

***Ms. Doris King, Associate Director, Programs, Co-Impact***

As an Associate Director, Programs, Doris helps support program partners achieve system change outcomes, which involves close attention to removing gendered barriers, building winning coalitions, and strengthening organizational capabilities. She also facilitates overall team coordination, supporting VP Programs on planning and management, and fostering programmatic learning.

She brings to the role diverse experience from working internationally across the business, civic and intergovernmental sectors. Prior to joining Co-Impact, Doris previously built and co-led a fast growth refugee assistance community and co-founded a refugee empowerment social enterprise, supporting predominantly female displaced artisans in leveraging traditional skills to build new livelihoods. Working with the World Bank Group, she supported governments in building legal and regulatory frameworks and technical capacity to engage in tax exchange of information. As Policy Analyst at the OECD/Global Forum, she led expert peer reviews to assess jurisdictions' compliance with international exchange of information standards and contributed to shaping policy dialogue around its evolution. Doris began her career in the commercial sector, as a UK tax attorney, advising financial institutions and multinational corporations on a wide variety of cross-border, multi-million-dollar transactions. Doris received her BA (Hons) / MA in Politics, Philosophy and Economics from Oxford University and her LL.M in Public International Law from the London School of Economics, where she pursued her interest in the intersectionality of women's rights and public finance.

***Dr. Shagun Sabarwal, Director-Policy, Training, and Communication, CLEAR/J-PAL South Asia***

Shagun Sabarwal is Director of Policy, Training, and Communications at J-PAL South Asia, and Director of CLEAR South Asia. She leads J-PAL South Asia's engagements with governments, donors, and civil society organizations to initiate new research, disseminate policy lessons, and scale up evidence-based programs. As Director of CLEAR South Asia, she promotes the center's mission to strengthen the monitoring, evaluation, learning systems, and data use of decision-makers in the region through capacity building and advisory services. She provides technical and strategic direction to J-PAL South Asia's partnerships with state and central governments, including the Development Monitoring & Evaluation Office (DMEO) at NITI Aayog, the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), and the State Governments of Odisha, Tamil Nadu, and Punjab. She advances J-PAL South Asia's work as a catalyst for government scale-ups of evidence-based programs, and as a technical and knowledge partner for building monitoring and evaluation systems that ensure quality at scale. She is currently leading J-PAL South Asia's role as a knowledge partner to the Government of Bihar for the scale-up of the Graduation approach, and is a principal investigator for a process evaluation and a randomized evaluation on the adaptation of the Graduation approach by governments. Prior to joining J-PAL, Shagun was an Evaluation Specialist with 3ie and a Postdoctoral Fellow at Population Council. She completed her doctorate in public health from Harvard University.

## SESSION 6: BUILDING ROBUST M&E SYSTEMS: AN INDIAN STATES PERSPECTIVE

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***Dr. Shalini Rajneesh, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary, Planning Program Monitoring and Statistics Department, Govt. of Karnataka, and President of Governing Body of Karnataka Evaluation Authority.***

She is the woman topper of Indian Administrative Service (IAS) 1989 batch, and a gold medalist in Psychology, MBA from Australia, and PhD in Rural Development. She has penned 13 books, 8 in English and 5 in Kannada covering subjects like Management, Personality Development, Women Empowerment, IAS Coaching etc. Besides, she regularly writes articles and gives lectures/interviews in T.V., Radio, seminars, etc., to connect to people at large, on issues of public interest. She is recipient of 9 prestigious awards and was honored with D.Litt. by Karnataka Women's University Vijayapura. She is always engaged in bringing innovations in governance. She steered a revolutionary legislation i.e. Karnataka's Guarantee of Services to Citizens Act, 2011 popularly known as "Sakala" Project, which bagged the PRIME MINISTER'S Award for Excellence in Civil Services.

***Dr. Chaya Degaonkar, Chief Evaluation Officer, Karnataka Evaluation Authority, Planning Dept. Government of Karnataka.***

She has served as Professor and, Head, Dept of Economics and Women's Studies and Dean Faculty of Social Sciences, Gulbarga University, Gulbarga, Occupied various prestigious positions in academics and University administration. Visiting Professor- Osmania University, Hyderabad, SV University Tirupathi and Institute of Human Development New Delhi. Guided 16 Ph.Ds. and 30 M.Phil. students. Completed 17 International, National and State funded projects, published 5 books and 72 articles Served as a member of many National and State level Committees including member of the State Task Force on Gender Budgeting and Member advisory Committee for Gender Auditing Govt. of Karnataka and Member Hyderabad Karnataka Region Development Board, Preparation of State Human Development Reports and District Human Development Reports. Recipient of 4 prestigious awards. Active and regular participation in international and national seminars, conferences, and capacity building programs as keynote speaker, resource person and Discussant. Prepared a base report for Article 371J for Hyderabad Karnataka Region in Karnataka State along with Dr. Shalini Rajneesh. Brought in many quality enhancements reforms in Karnataka Evaluation Authority.

***Mr. TVSN Prasad, Additional Chief Secretary, Finance & Planning, Government of Haryana***

Mr. Prasad is an Edward S.Mason Fellow in public policy and management, and a John Kenneth Galbraith Scholar in infrastructure economics at Harvard Kennedy School of Government. He joined the Indian Administrative Service in 1988, serving in the Haryana Cadre. As an IAS officer, he served in many positions, such as Deputy Commissioner, Rohtak and Kurukshetra, founding Chairman and Managing Director, Andhra Pradesh Central Power Distribution Company, Chief Administrator, Haryana State Agricultural Marketing Board, and Principal Secretary, Haryana Food, Civil Supplies, and Consumer Affairs. During his career, he has been awarded Best District Collector for Efforts to make the District Achieve the Country Lowest Population Growth Rate

(1998). He has also been credited for turning around a loss-making electric utility into profit making entity in the States of Haryana and Andhra Pradesh.

During his stint at the World Bank, he has served as Senior Energy Specialist and Lead Infrastructure Coordinator in the Africa Division of the World Bank, leading power, oil and gas sector national economic policies, investments, and infrastructure expansion. He has many publications in his name, notably as Lead Author of the book “Monitoring Performance of Electric Utilities-Indicators and Benchmarking”, which was published by the World Bank in 2009. His efforts in the power and natural oil gas sector have been lauded by many experts in the African region, especially with respect to his work in distribution and generation.

***Mr. Amod Kumar, Principal Secretary (Planning), Govt of Uttar Pradesh***

Shri. Kumar graduated from IIT Kanpur and Harvard Kennedy School, and has over 25 years of administrative experience in Uttar Pradesh, the biggest state in India with a population of about 230 million. Shri Amod Kumar was the youngest recipient of Prime Minister’s Award for excellence in public administration in 2008 and has contributed significantly in the fields of Public Policy, e-Governance, Grievance Redressal, Education, Health and Family Welfare. Shri Amod travelled extensively and visited over 50 countries and now is instrumental in strengthening planning machinery in the state of Uttar Pradesh.

***Mr. Ravi Prakash Gupta, IAS, Director General, Swarna Jayanti Haryana Institute for Fiscal management, Finance and Planning Department Govt of Haryana.***

Before joining IAS, he worked with Govt. of NCT of Delhi at Various Capacities in Labour, Education and Technical Education Department. In IAS he worked in Chhattisgarh Govt. and Govt. of Haryana at various levels of Administration as Sub Divisional Magistrate, Additional Collector and Deputy Commissioner at field level. Worked in various departments as Director Medical Education, Archaeology, etc.

***Ms. Jayashree Raghunandan, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary, Department of Planning & Development, Govt of Tamil Nadu.***

Jayashree has worked on bringing SDGs into policy and development issues such as education, child protection, health, and women empowerment. Her forte is in program design and implementation with outcome focus, training, and people’s participation.

## SESSION 7: LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND: HOW M&E CAN HELP ACHIEVE MORE EQUITABLE RESULTS IN THE WAKE OF COVID

### ***Dr. Yasmin Ali Haque, Representative, UNICEF India Country Office***

Dr. Yasmin Ali Haque is UNICEF Representative to India since July 2017. With over 24 years of service in UNICEF, starting her career in Bangladesh, Yasmin has held leadership roles in the Office of Emergency Programs, South Sudan, Ghana, and Sri Lanka.

Dr. Haque's leadership and professional experience spans over a wide range of fields including policy analysis, strategic planning for women's & child rights, child-centric development programming and large-scale responses for children in humanitarian crisis. Yasmin is a strong believer in the power of collaborative action in accelerating results for children.

### ***Dr. Gonzalo Hernández Licona, Director, Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network***

Gonzalo Hernández Licona is now the Director of the Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network (MPPN-OPHI), where he coordinates 61 countries and 19 international institutions to advance and exchange ideas about implementing Multidimensional Poverty Indicators. He is also an expert for Country-Led evaluations working for UNICEF. He is Senior Research Fellow at the International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie); Research Associate at Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI); Member of the Board of Trustees at El Colegio de México. He was the Executive Secretary of the National Council for the Evaluation of Social Policy (CONEVAL) between 2005 and 2019, where he coordinated the evaluation of the social and the measurement of poverty at the national, state and municipality level. From 2020 to 2005 he was the General Director of Monitoring and Evaluation at the Ministry of Social Development. Between 1991 and 2002 he was a full-time professor at the Instituto TecnológicoAutónomo de México (ITAM); he is still a part-time professor at ITAM. He also was part of the 15 Independent Group of Scientists who wrote the 2019 Global Sustainable Development Report for the United Nations. Gonzalo has a Ph. D. in Economics from Oxford University, M. A. in Economics from the University of Essex, and a B. A. from ITAM.

### ***Dr. Renu Singh, Country Director, Young Lives India***

Over twenty-seven years of experience in policy analysis, evaluation, research and teacher education and professional development both in India and abroad. She is the founder of Young Lives India, Research to Policy Centre and is also the Country Director for Young Lives India, a longitudinal study on childhood poverty, University of Oxford. A trained educational psychologist, Montessorian and special educator, she conceptualized and set up the Centre for Early Childhood Development and Research, Jamia Millia Islamia as well as School of Rehabilitation Sciences in University of Delhi. She held the position of Director, School of Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Delhi and has been a member of the Senior Management Team of Save the Children, India. She has provided technical and strategic lead to an EU funded Technical Cooperation Fund to the MHRD entitled 'Exchange of International Best Practices Leading to Innovation in SSA', working with seven states (Gujarat, AP, Rajasthan, Orissa, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi and Jammu & Kashmir) from 2010-2013 and was the Lead Investigator of a USAID Project on Whole School Development from 2003-2007. She has led on various evaluations in India and South Asia including building capacity of NGO's to develop MIS and developed validated tools to monitor

and improve their interventions. Has the privilege of working as Governing Body Member of Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) for two terms and has been a member of several Joint Review Missions of Ministry of Human Resource Development. Her main research interests remain early childhood development, gender, and inclusion. She is a prolific writer and has over 100 publications to her credit.

***Mr. Nand Kumarum, IAS, Chief Executive Officer, Madhya Pradesh Agency for Information Technology (MAPIT)***

The Managing Director of Madhya Pradesh State Electronics Development Corporation, an undertaking of the Department of Science & Technology, Government of Madhya Pradesh, Shri Nand Kumarum, IAS was born on 19/01/1981. Shri Nand Kumarum is B. Tech in Petroleum Engineering. Shri Nand Kumarum is an officer with more than 13 years of experience in the Indian Administrative Service. He has served in various Districts in the capacity as Chief Executive Officer in Zila Panchayats, District Collector, Executive Director in State Agency for Public Services, Managing Director in M.P. Paschim Kshetra Vidyut Vitran Company [DISCOM] Indore, M.P. PoorvKshetra Vidyut Vitran Company [DISCOM], Jabalpur and Deputy Secretary in various Departments viz., Water Resources, Public Services Management, etc., and the Chief Minister's office. Besides being the Managing Director of M.P. State Electronics Development Corporation, he is also Chief Executive Officer of Madhya Pradesh Agency for Promotion of Information Technology [a registered society under the Department of Science & Technology], Managing Director of Bhopal Electronics Manufacturing Park Limited and Jabalpur Electronics Manufacturing Park Limited, Executive Director, State Agency for Public Services [SAPS], Department of Public Services Management and Mission Director, Integrated Social Security Mission [SAMAGRA], Department of Social Security Mission and Disabled Welfare, Government of Madhya Pradesh. He is also a Director in M/s. MP Online Limited [A Joint Venture Company between Government of Madhya Pradesh and M/s. Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)].



## SESSION-8: EMERGING APPROACHES AND TECHNOLOGIES FOR EVIDENCE GENERATION

### ***Mr. Sayak Khatua, Evaluation Specialist-Transparency, Reproducibility, and Ethics at the International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie)***

Sayak is an Evaluation Specialist, with over 5 years of experience as an evaluator with experience in managing impact evaluations, building capacity towards managing large sets of mixed methods data, and verifying computational reproducibility of conducted evaluations.

Sayak manages and serves as the technical lead for the various transparency, reproducibility, and ethics initiatives at 3ie. He currently manages impact evaluations across Nepal, Uganda, and Pakistan and provides advisory support to 3ie's work on evidence synthesis, Big data, and innovations in data for impact evaluation. He has worked on quality-assuring and managing projects across health, livelihoods, education, WASH, and so on. Sayak holds a Master's in Economics from, University of Calcutta, a second Master's in Economics from Portland State University.

### ***Mr. Sriganesh Lokanathan, Data Innovation & Policy Lead, UN Pulse Lab, Jakarta, Government of Indonesia.***

He is a practitioner and interlocutor at the nexus of data, algorithms, policy, and development across emerging Asia Pacific. Previously he co-established and led the internationally recognized multi-disciplinary research practice on big data and AI for development at LIRNEasia. His work involves the conceptualization and implementation of big data analyses and AI to support global development, understanding its implications on society, and mainstreaming its use for social good. He has served as an advisor to a variety of government ministries and also been part of government committees for mainstreaming the use of big data in developmental policy and official statistics. He has written widely and is a frequently invited international speaker on responsibly leveraging data and algorithms for development. He holds a bachelor's degree in Computer Science, from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and a master's degree in Public Policy from the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy of the National University of Singapore.

### ***Mr. Anand Trivedi, Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist, Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office, NITI Aayog***

Anand's work experience of more than 11 years spans across Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E), Technology and Data-driven governance areas. He has worked with Axis Bank, UNDP, Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. and has been an entrepreneur at Dexter Consultancy Pvt. Ltd and Schemopedia.com. His venture also won the NASSCOM National Social Innovation Foundation's best social innovation award. With a focus on M&E in the public policy space, his contributions cover Education, Skill Development, Agriculture, Livelihoods, Public Health and Rural Development sub-sectors in Social domain and Railways, Urban housing, and Irrigation in Infrastructure domain. At DMEO, Anand has played a critical role throughout the journey of institutionalizing the Output-Outcome Monitoring Framework (a part of Union Budget) right from its inception stage. He is currently working on developing the National Monitoring & Evaluation Policy and an M&E Performance Index. He holds an MBA in Marketing & Finance

from Management Development Institute, Gurgaon and an Engineering degree in Electronics and Communication from Gujarat University.

***Mr. Varad Pandey, Partner, Omidyar Network India***

In his role as Investment Partner, Varad Pande leads strategy, impact, and new initiatives at Omidyar Network India. A social impact and public policy professional, Varad has held diverse roles across government, strategy, multilateral, investment organizations working on issues of economic development, social impact, and base-of-pyramid business models. Varad was Special Advisor to India's Minister for Rural Development and Environment & Forests, where he drove the agenda on sustainable livelihoods, sanitation, environment, and climate change. He was a member of the Government of India's Low Carbon Expert Group. He was Principal Advisor to Abhijit Banerjee on the UN secretary-general's Panel on the Post-2015 Agenda (Sustainable Development Goals) and was a Sherpa on the UN secretary-general's Global Sustainability Panel. He also led the establishment of the Prime Minister's Rural Development Fellowship, which connects India's youth with grassroots development. Varad holds an MPA in International Development (MPA/ID) from the Harvard Kennedy School, an MA in Economics from University of Cambridge, and a BA Honors in Economics from St Stephens College, Delhi.

***Ms. Poornima Dore, Head, Data Driven Governance, Tata Trusts***

Dr. Poornima Dore is an Economist and TAS management professional with deep experience in digital transformation as well as corporate and development finance. She currently heads Data Driven Governance at the Tata Trusts. In this role, she holds pan India charge of leveraging the power of data and digital tools for better SDG outcomes-across all focus districts and cities in India. Before this role, she has served on several Government Committees and Ministerial Working Groups, the most recent being on the National Consumption Expenditure Survey, and on Aspirational Districts of India. She has a PhD in Economics from IIT Bombay, an MBA from XLRI Jamshedpur and a bachelor's degree in Economics from Lady Sri Ram College.

***Mr. Venugopal Mothkoor, Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist, Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office, NITI Aayog***

Venugopal is an experienced researcher with over 10 years of experience in executing both quantitative and qualitative research projects. Venugopal has the experience of executing end-to-end research assignments: preparing research proposals, doing background research (literature review & stakeholder interviews), framing research hypothesis, coding survey (using ODK, CTO), training enumerators, performing data analysis and preparing impact report in various domains of agriculture, industrial and labour economics, sustainable income, climate change, smart cities and well-being. Venugopal can not only do coding, crunch big datasets but also compile impact reports. Venugopal also has experience of working with spatial and satellite datasets. He has worked with Oracle, UIDAI, Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology, Indian school of Business, National Institute of Rural Development and NESTA in the past. He holds an MPA (London School of Economics & National University of Singapore) and Bachelor's in Engineering (BITS Pilani).



## SESSION-9: STRENGTHENING PATHWAYS FROM EVIDENCE TO ACTION

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### ***Ms. Suneeta Krishnan, India Country Lead, MEL, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation***

Suneeta Krishnan is the India Country Lead, Measurement, Learning and Evaluation at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Her team is responsible for grant making to inform and evaluate the foundation's investments in support of India's health and development goals and to enhance the national evaluation ecosystem. Suneeta is a social epidemiologist with 20 years of experience conducting research and engaging policymakers on health and social equity in India. Earlier, she served as country director of Research Triangle Institute's Indian subsidiary and held faculty positions at the University of California San Francisco and Berkeley, the Indian Institute of Management Bangalore, the St. John's Research Institute, Bangalore and the James P Grant School of Public Health in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Suneeta has an AB in Biological Sciences from Barnard College and a PhD in Epidemiology and Biostatistics from the University of California, Berkeley. She is a recipient of the 2004 U.S. Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers.

### ***Mr. S. Krishnan, Additional Chief Secretary, Finance Department, Government of Tamil Nadu***

S. Krishnan is currently the Additional Chief Secretary, Finance and holds full additional charge as the Managing Director of the New Tirupur Area Development Corporation Limited. With a service record of more than 25 years, Mr. Krishnan served as the Senior Advisor in the Office of the Executive Director for India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Bhutan of the International Monetary Fund (Washington DC), representing the Government of India in the G20 Expert Groups on International Financial Architecture and Global Financial Safety Nets, and assisting in preparing the union budgets as well as the Tamil Nadu State Budgets. He holds a Bachelor of Arts (Honors) from St. Stephen's College, Delhi University and Master of Arts in Economics from Annamalai University.

### ***Ms. Marie Gaarder, Executive Director, 3ie***

Marie Gaarder is the Executive Director of 3ie, leading the organization's efforts to improve lives in low- and middle-income countries by supporting the generation and active use of high quality and relevant evidence to inform decision-making. Gaarder has over 20 years of experience managing operational and research projects with a development focus. Her prior positions include manager in the World Bank's Independent Evaluation Group, director of the evaluation department at the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, and senior social development economist at the Inter-American Development Bank.

### ***Mr. Emmanuel Jimenez, Senior Research Fellow, 3ie***

Emmanuel (Manny) Jimenez is an economist who is currently a non-resident Senior Research Fellow at 3ie. Most recently, after five years Manny stepped down as 3ie's executive director in January 2020. Prior to this, he spent several years at the World Bank Group where he provided technical expertise and strategic leadership in a number of research and operational positions

including as director of the bank's operational program in human development in its Asia regions from 2000-2012 and as director of public sector evaluations from 2012- 2014. Before joining the bank, Dr. Jimenez was on the economics faculty at the University of Western Ontario in London, Canada. He received his PhD from Brown University. Dr. Jimenez has published extensively in various fields in economic development, is the editor of the Journal of Development Effectiveness and former editor of the World Bank Research Observer.

***Ms. Kirthi Rao, Evidence Impact Specialist, 3ie***

Kirthi Rao is an Evidence Impact Specialist at 3ie. She is responsible for monitoring, analyzing, and reporting on the impact of evidence from 3ie-funded studies. She also contributes to 3ie's projects to improve tools and processes for strengthening evidence impact and its measurement. Prior to this, she worked with Collaborative Research and Development as a researcher on studies relating to inclusive education. Kirthi holds an MA in Urban Policy and Governance from Tata Institute of Social Sciences, a post-graduate diploma in print journalism from the Asian College of Journalism and a BA in Economics from the University of Delhi.

***Mr. Samik Sundar Das, Senior Rural Development Specialist, World Bank***

Samik Sundar Das is the senior rural development specialist at the World Bank. He is an experienced professional who has worked for around two decades with government line ministries, civil society organizations and private foundations in the areas of community-driven development, human resource development, community-based skilling, and micro-business promotion. He has contributed extensively towards the preparation and implementation of large-scale rural development programs. His current passion is to rejuvenate the intrinsic entrepreneurial zeal of women entrepreneurs and catalyze business ecosystem development for women-led enterprises. Voluntarily, he has been mentoring small enterprises for creating localized jobs in the suburbs of New Delhi. Academically, he has obtained two master's related to Development Studies from India and the USA. Currently, he is based in the Delhi office of the World Bank.

## SESSION-10: PROFESSIONALIZATION OF M&E TO ENHANCE INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

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### ***Mr. Marco Segone, Director, Evaluation Office of UNFPA***

He has 25 years of progressive and complementary work experience in Africa, Asia, Eastern and Central Europe, Latin America, and USA, working in Country Offices, Regional Offices and Headquarters. Marco has a proven track record in strengthening evaluation systems in the United Nations, as well as national evaluation systems, leveraging partnerships with Governments, Civil Society Organizations, UN entities, Multilateral Development Banks, Parliamentarians and Academia. Marco bridges the gap between policy makers and evaluators to ensure evaluation credibility and utility.

### ***Mr. Asela Kalugampitya, President, Asia Pacific Evaluation Association and Sri Lanka Evaluation Association***

He is a Sri Lankan lawyer who has been active in the M&E field for over 25 years. Asela has been instrumental in promotion of national evaluation policies & systems and engaging parliamentarians in evaluation globally. Asela was instrumental in launching the International Year of Evaluation 2015 and organizing the Global Evaluation Forum held at the parliament of Nepal and parliament of Kyrgyz Republic. He is the (honorary) Director- Center for Evaluation, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, and a member of the teaching faculty of the Post Graduate Diploma in Monitoring and Evaluation course run by the same university. Also, he is an Advisory Committee member of the International Program for Development Evaluation Training (IPDET).

### ***Ms. Ana Erika Lareza, Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist at Workland M&E Institute***

Ms. Erika is a young and emerging evaluator from the Philippines and has conducted evaluation and research particularly in the field of agriculture, disaster risk management and environmental sciences. She is also the coordinator of the Asia Pacific Evaluation Association and is the Co-founder and Co-leader of EvalYouth Asia and is the Vice-President of Philippine Evaluators for Development.

### ***Mr. Alok Srivastava, Founder and Core Group Member, ECOI***

He is an M&E expert with more than two and a half decades of experience. He holds double Masters, in Gender & Development Studies, and in Rural Development & Management. He is also an alumnus of International Program for Development Evaluation (IPDET). Alok is Director at Centre for Media Studies (CMS) and board member of different Institutional Review Boards on ethics and initiatives taken for Professionalization of Evaluation. Alok is a Resource Person on developing M&E Framework and has developed Poverty Index Tool, Media Credibility Assessment, Ethics Sensitivity Test, among others. Alok has been part of the national delegation to Bhutan and Bangladesh Governments on Government Performance Management. Alok writes, speaks, and mentors on M&E; public policies & services; ethics in research & evaluation and has contributed several research papers/articles in reputed journals and books.

***Dr. Rashmi Agrawal, Co-founder, and Co-leader of Evaluation Community of India***

She retired from NILERD as a Director in 2016. Dr. Agarwal has a Ph.D. in Psychology from Lucknow University, India. She is also an IPDET graduate from Carleton University, Canada. Dr. Rashmi has over 30 years of experience as a Trainer & Researcher in the field of M&E, Education, Employment & other Social issues.

# Annexure II:

## Session Plan for the conference

Schedule	Day 1 (18.03.2021)	Day2 (19.03.2021)
10:00 -11:30	<p><b>Inaugural Session 10:00 – 10:20</b></p> <p>Welcome Address: Dr Sekhar Bonu, Director General, DME0</p> <p>Inaugural address: Mr Amitabh Kant, Chief Executive Officer, NITI Aayog</p> <p><b>Plenary Session 10:20 – 11:30</b></p> <p><i>“Role of M&amp;E in Institutionalizing Evidence-based Policy Making”</i></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Dr Sekhar Bonu, Director General, DME0</p> <p><b>Panelists:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Ms Yamini Aiyar, President and Chief Executive, Centre for Policy Research</li> <li>♦ Shri Sunil Kumar, Secretary, Ministry of Panchayati Raj</li> <li>♦ Shri Pravin Srivastava, Former Chief Statistician of India and Secretary, Ministry of Statistics &amp; Programme Implementation</li> <li>♦ Dr Gonzalo Hernández Licona, Director, Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network</li> <li>♦ Shri M. Hari Menon, Country Director, Bill &amp; Melinda Gates Foundation</li> </ul>	<p><b>Plenary Session 10:00 – 11:30</b></p> <p><i>“Building robust M&amp;E systems: An Indian States perspective”</i></p> <p><b>Introduction:</b> Dr Sekhar Bonu, Director General, DME0</p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Mr Ashutosh Jain, Deputy Director General, DME0</p> <p><b>Panelists:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Karnataka <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Shalini Rajneesh, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary, Government of Karnataka</li> <li>• Dr. Chaya K Degaonkar, Chief Evaluation Officer, Karnataka Evaluation Authority, Government of Karnataka</li> </ul> </li> <li>♦ Tamil Nadu <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tmt Jayashree Raghunandan, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary, Government of Tamil Nadu</li> </ul> </li> <li>♦ Haryana <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shri TVSN Prasad, Additional Chief Secretary, Finance &amp; Planning, Govt of Haryana</li> <li>• Sh. Ravi Prakash Gupta, Director General, Swarna Jayanti Haryana Institute for Fiscal Management</li> </ul> </li> <li>♦ Uttar Pradesh <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shri Amod Kumar, Principal Secretary, Planning Department, Uttar Pradesh</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Schedule	Day 1 (18.03.2021)	Day2 (19.03.2021)
11:45- 13:00	<p>&lt;Sub Theme 2 &gt;</p> <p><i>“Monitoring Outcomes for realizing SDGs”</i></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> ShriAnand Trivedi, M&amp;E Specialist, DME0</p> <p><b>Panelists:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Shri Shyam S. Dubey, Joint Secretary &amp; Financial Adviser, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India</li> <li>♦ Shri Sampath Kumar, IAS, Principal Secretary, Programme Implementation &amp; Evaluation Department, Govt. of Meghalaya</li> <li>♦ Dr Pinaki Chakraborty, Director, National Institute of Public Finance and Policy</li> <li>♦ Ms Shrayana Bhattacharya, Senior Economist, World Bank</li> <li>♦ Mr. Ronald Abraham, Founding Partner, IDInsight</li> </ul>	<p>&lt;Sub Theme - 1,7 &gt;</p> <p><i>“Leave no one behind: How M&amp;E can help achieve more equitable results in the wake of COVID”</i></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b></p> <p>Dr Yasmin Ali Haque, Representative, UNICEF India Country Office</p> <p><b>Panelists:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Dr Gonzalo Hernández Licona, Director, Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network (MPPN)</li> <li>♦ Dr Renu Singh, Country Director, Young Lives India</li> <li>♦ Shri Nand Kumarum, IAS, Chief Executive Officer, Madhya Pradesh Agency for Information Technology (MAPIT)</li> </ul>
14:00-15:15	<p>&lt;Sub Theme -6,7 &gt;</p> <p><i>“Evidence when it matters most: Remote food security and nutrition monitoring solutions for improved results.”</i></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Mr Eric Kenefick, Deputy Country Director, WFP India CO</p> <p><b>Panelists:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Shri Sudhanshu Pandey, Secretary, Department of Food and Public Distribution, Government of India.</li> <li>♦ Major General Manoj Kumar Bindal, Executive Director, National Institute of Disaster Management, Government of India.</li> <li>♦ Mr. Nicolas Bidault, Senior Regional Programme Policy Officer, WFP Bangkok.</li> <li>♦ Ms. Yumiko Kanemitsu, Regional Evaluation Officer, WFP Bangkok.</li> </ul>	<p>&lt;Sub Theme 5 &amp; 6&gt;</p> <p><i>“Emerging approaches and technologies for evidence generation”</i></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Shri Venugopal Mothkoo, M&amp;E Specialist, DME0, NITI Aayog</p> <p><b>Panelists:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Shri SriganeshLokanathan, Data Innovation &amp; Policy Lead, UN Pulse Lab</li> <li>♦ Shri SayakKhatua, Evaluation Specialist – Research Transparency, Reproducibility &amp; Ethics (TRE), 3ie</li> <li>♦ Shri Varad Pande, Partner, Omidyar Network India</li> <li>♦ Dr Poornima Dore, Head, Data Driven Governance, Tata Trusts</li> <li>♦ Shri Anand Trivedi, M&amp;E Specialist, DME0, NITI Aayog</li> </ul>

Schedule	Day 1 (18.03.2021)	Day2 (19.03.2021)
15:30-16:45	<p>&lt;Sub Theme.-4 &gt;</p> <p><i>"Promoting evaluations in academic institutions"</i></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Dr Ashwini Chhatre, Associate Professor, Indian School of Business, Mohali</p> <p><b>Panelists:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Dr.ShubhashisGangopadhyay, Research Director, India Development Foundation and Dean, Indian School for Public Policy</li> <li>♦ Dr Sanjeev Sridharan, Country Lead-Learning Systems &amp; Systems Evaluation, Bill &amp; Melinda Gates Foundation</li> <li>♦ Dr. Arnab Mukherji, Professor, Indian Institute of Management Bangalore</li> <li>♦ Dr. B. Venkatesh Kumar, Former Prof. &amp; Chairperson at the Centre for Public Policy &amp; Governance, Tata Institute for Social Sciences</li> <li>♦ Dr.AnithaGovindaraj, Adviser, Atal Bihari Vajpayee Institute of Good Governance and Policy Analysis, Bhopal</li> </ul>	<p>&lt;Sub Theme No.-1 &gt;</p> <p><i>Strengthening pathways from evidence to action</i></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Ms Marie Gaarder, Executive Director, 3ie</p> <p><b>Panelists:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Ms Kirthi Rao, Evidence Impact Specialist, 3ie</li> <li>♦ Mr Emmanuel Jimenez, Senior Research Fellow, 3ie</li> <li>♦ Shri S. Krishnan, Additional Chief Secretary, Finance Department, Government of Tamil Nadu</li> <li>♦ Ms Suneeta Krishnan, India Country Lead, MEL, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation</li> <li>♦ Shri Samik Sundar Das, Senior Rural Development Specialist, World Bank</li> </ul>
17:00-18:15	<p>&lt;Sub Theme No. - 1,4 &gt;</p> <p><i>Reaching scale: What does it take from evidence and implementation lens?</i></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Dr ShagunSabarwal, Director-Policy, Training, and Communication, CLEAR/J-PAL South Asia</p> <p><b>Panelists:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Shri Balamurugan D., Chief Executive Officer, Bihar Rural Livelihoods Promotion Society (JEEViKA)</li> <li>♦ Shri Debasish Ray Choudhuri, Director-THP (Targeting Hardcore Poor), Bandhan Konnagar</li> <li>♦ Mr Colin Andrews, Program Manager-Social Protection and Jobs Global Practice and Partnership for Economic Inclusion, World Bank</li> <li>♦ Ms Doris King, Associate Director, Programs, Co-Impact</li> </ul>	<p>&lt;Sub Theme No. -4 &gt;</p> <p><i>Professionalization of M&amp;E to Enhance Institutional Capacity: Opportunities and Challenges</i></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Ms Rashmi Agarwal, co-Founder, ECOI</p> <p><b>Panelists:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Mr Marco Segone, Director, UNFPA EO, NYC</li> <li>♦ Mr AselaKalugampitiya, President, APEA, Colombo</li> <li>♦ Ms Ana Erika Loreza, Co-leader, EvalYouth Asia, Manila</li> <li>♦ Mr Alok Srivastava, Core Group Member, ECOI</li> <li>♦ Closing Remarks: Dr Sekhar Bonu, DG, DMEO</li> </ul>

## ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

The purpose of the Partnerships Toolkit for M&E Events is to document principles and procedures followed by the Partnerships Team at DMEQ, to create and maintain institutional memory. As a secondary goal, it is being shared in the public domain as reference documents for other government agencies as required.

## ABOUT DMEQ, NITI AAYOG

The Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office (DMEQ), attached to NITI Aayog, is the apex monitoring & evaluation (M&E) office in the country, with a mandate to drive evidence-based policy making through M&E of government policies and programmes. Since its inception in 2015, the Office aims to shift the discourse of public policy towards rigorous, data-driven, citizen-centric, and decentralized policymaking, to improve governance and facilitate the formation of a New India.

Visit us at [www.dmeo.gov.in](http://www.dmeo.gov.in)

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