

A Proposal for an International Organisation for Co-operation in Evaluation [IOCE]

Context

The proposal [*See Appendix 1 for details of the evolution and origins of this proposal*], is made in the context of increased globalisation of evaluation as international organisations and agencies, national governments and regional collaborative enterprises commission evaluators to undertake work inside and across national boundaries. There has been a corresponding growth of evaluation societies, networks and associations working in diverse and culturally disparate circumstances. The experience and support available to these collectivities differs widely. This proposal to initiate the IOCE grows out of these diverse needs and from a recognition that contact between societies will strengthen the global community of evaluation practice.

This proposal is in three sections. The first section is a statement of the purposes of the IOCE. The second contains proposals for the organisational principles on which the IOCE should be organised. The third suggests some categories of core activities such a co-operative framework might wish to promote..

Purposes

The framework for international cooperation exists to :

- Establish an international consensus on the legitimacy and credibility of evaluation as part of civic responsibility and participation.
- Strengthen the institutional position of evaluation societies generally and particularly those in vulnerable political environments.
- Increase the systematic utilization of evaluation internationally and support evaluation societies in evaluation utilization in national and local policy decision making.
- Build capacity through the provision of opportunities for reciprocal learning amongst established and newly formed or emergent evaluation societies.
- Support evaluation societies to strengthen and promote evaluation culture in organisational, professional, community and national and regional development

- Develop general principles, procedures, ethics and codes of conduct for evaluation and commissioning practice
- Encourage and support the development of new evaluation societies and networks
- Explore and procure resources for co-operative activities, for the development of existing societies with a particular focus on the development of emerging societies and for the international promotion of evaluation.
- Provide a forum for the exchange of good practice in evaluation theory and practice and develop new evaluation knowledge through cooperative research and other activities
- Increase and support cultural specificity in evaluation design and practice by encouraging pilot approaches in diverse cultural settings
- and building cultural continuity between language traditions

Organisational Principles

The detailed organisational form of the IOCE will evolve through practice. These organisational principles are intended as a basis for development on which potential members of the IOCE can agree.

- All members should endorse formally the IOCE framework's purposes and principles
- The IOCE will be completely independent of the sectoral interests of any single evaluation association/society, country, region or any national or international agency.
- Membership would be open to all formally constituted bodies or networks engaged in evaluation. The notion of *formal* used here is liberal and would refer to a body which had written terms of reference [if only rudimentary] and had a membership. It would not be open to individuals.
- Individuals who were in the process of starting a society would be very actively encouraged to approach members of the IOCE to gain support which would lead to membership once their new societies are established.
- Governance of the IOCE would be via an Assembly which would meet bi-annually and which would approve policy, constitutional and procedural matters. The **Assembly** will be open to representatives from all participating organisations.

- As an intermediate step, each participating member organisation will nominate an individual to participate in an **Organising Committee** of the IOCE which will undertake the organisation of activities on behalf of the participating members and report to the Assembly. In the longer term the Organising Committee will be a smaller group [10 persons] nominated by the main regions with individual societies represented on a rotational basis [two years].
- The IOCE framework will not have a secretariat or administrative centre. Members of the Organising Committee will provide administrative support on the basis of project/task teams drawn from and initiated by the membership. It may be possible to have standing items on national society agendas to include in Assembly programmes
- In principle, all participating bodies should contribute to the running costs and activities in the IOCE but varying needs and capacities would not preclude participation. A principle of inclusion would apply which means that non attendance at face to face meetings will not be understood as non-participation.
- The organisation of the IOCE would be governed by a principle of low cost resourcing and would be financed by a mixed economy of sponsorship and member subscriptions. The framework would allow for differential subscription levels depending on circumstances (possibly in-kind). The membership of the framework would co-operate in search of funds, e.g. from donor agencies, for members with low resource opportunities
- In principle, members will be responsible for the costs incurred by membership. However, every effort will be made to offset costs e.g. from sponsorship and other support, in an equitable manner.
- The main role of the Organising Committee will be to act as a postbox i.e. information exchange, maintaining databases, supporting newly formed societies and to organize Assembly meetings. Wherever possible electronic means will be used for conferencing, listserving, archiving etc. to reduce costs.

Activities

This section outlines a range of core activities which will further the purposes of the IOCE. The activities are arranged in order to reflect the growth of maturity of the IOCE. Programme 1 activities concern communication and co-operative activities and Programme 2 contains more ambitious or complex activities. Appendix 2 provides more detailed suggestions under each category.

Programme 1

- *Information and personnel exchanges*
- *International Working Groups/parties*
- *Developing communication mechanisms for discussion, information and collaboration*
- *Developing and supporting training and professional development opportunities*
- *Funding and resource procurement for national and international cooperation*

Programme 2

- *Long term strengthening activities*
- *Political or advocacy functions*
- *Professional co-operation*

Murray Saunders *Oct 2000*

On behalf of the Eval Pres. Drafting Committee

Appendix 1

A meeting in Barbados on February 18-20th was co-ordinated by Craig Russon and Arnold Love with the support of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. Its genesis was in the EVALTALK listserv discussion on internationalism in Evaluation which led to a panel discussion at the November 1998 AEA Conference. At this conference, some Presidents of National Societies and other interested parties discussed their various ideas and positions on the development of some kind of international forum in which national societies might co-operate. These positions were diverse and were published as an Occasional Paper of the Evaluation Centre at Western Michigan University edited by Craig Russon and Arnold Love.

The views expressed in these papers, as well as those of the following list of participants have been taken into account in this proposal. The meeting asked a drafting committee to reflect the tone and content of the discussions and draft first some notes and second a proposal for the formation of a framework for co-operation. The members of the drafting committee are

Murray Saunders
Aru Rasappan
Penny Hawkins
Donna Mertens
James Mugaju
Soma de Silva

Meeting Participants

Jean-Rene' Bibeau	CES [Canadian Evaluation Society] <i>not present</i>
David Nevo	IAPE [Israeli Association for Program Evaluation]
Christina Nirup	SFE [La Societe Francaise de l'Evaluacion]
Elliot Stern	EES [European Evaluation Society]
Mahesh Patel	AES [African Evaluation Society: Kenyan Branch]
Ada Ocampo	PREVAL [Alleviation Projects in Latin America and the Caribbean]
Sophie de Caen	UNCDF [United Nations Capital Development Fund] <i>observer</i>
Nicoletta Stame	AIV [Associazione Italiana de Valutazione]
Aru Rasappan	MES [Malaysian Evaluation Society]

Penny Hawkins
Xinia Picado

Farley Brathwaite

James Mugaju
Donna Mertens
Murray Saunders
Society]

Paul Morgan

Soma de Silva

AES [Australasian Evaluation Society]
ACE [Asociacion Centroamericana de
Evaluacion]

UofWI [University of West Indies]
observer

RRSE [Reseau Ruandais de Suivi]

AEA [American Evaluation Society]

UKES [United Kingdom Evaluation

CDB [The Carribean Development
Bank] *observer*

SLEvA [Sri Lankan Evaluation Association]

Appendix 2

Activities

This list of activities is arranged into Programme 1 and Programme 2 lists. The programmes are distinguished by their complexity but they may be developed in parallel.

Programme 1

Information and personnel exchanges

- Bibliographies-access to materials
- Virtual library of evaluation materials «repository»
- Coordinate conference schedule - disseminate a conference schedule (inform people)
- Publicity - outreach
- Database of evaluation practitioners
- A newsletter - current news- web sites/conference updates (electronic)
- Convert relevant materials to electronic format. Translate selected materials
- Place to post travel plans for personal interactions/help
- Access to existing databases of skills (consultancy expertise)
- Active web site for organization
- Exchange of practitioners/theoreticians
- Case studies/good practice
- Exchange of instructors/students/mentors. Disseminate information on educational opportunities
- Disseminate information on educational opportunities
- Disseminate information on job and career opportunities

Forming International Working Groups.Parties

- Working group on legal issues (copyrights)
- Ethical questions working group
- Topical International Groups - subject decided bottom up.

Developing communication mechanisms for discussion, information and collaboration

- Electronic exchange (modality not activity)
- List server
- Strands available at national conferences for international/cross-cultural issues.

Developing and supporting training and professional development

- Capacity building/training seminars

- Support to develop training programs for evaluators.
- Electronic conference - thematic discussion

Funding and resource procurement for national and international co-operation

- Procure and provide access to stipends (grants) for graduate students to research international evaluation
- Seek funding and sponsorship opportunities for members' activities

Programme 2

Long term strengthening activities

- «Good practice» code developed at national level (standards)
- Reciprocal membership agreements
- Supporting the formation of new associations.
- Promote bilateral/multilateral partnership

Political or advocacy functions

- Representative function – in international and national fora
- Advocacy - NGOs/funding bodies promote evaluation with policy making bodies
- Activities to assist with legitimizing national organizations via request for support.

Professional co-operation

- Joint projects/research activities
- Joint publications
- Peer review process