



## **Youth in Evaluation Forum 2026**

**Centering youth leadership in shaping the future of evaluation**

**19-21 May 2026 | Online**

Concept note

## 1. Background

The [Youth in Evaluation](#) initiative, launched in 2022, has been a key focus of the [Eval4Action campaign](#) co-led by the UNFPA Independent Evaluation Office, EvalYouth Global Network, Global Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation (GPFE) and the International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation (IOCE). It aligns with the United Nations Secretary-General's call for stronger youth engagement in decision making, as articulated in Our Common Agenda's [Policy Brief on Meaningful Youth Engagement in Policy-Making and Decision-Making Processes](#).

The Youth in Evaluation initiative urges the global evaluation community to commit and take action towards long-term, sustainable and meaningful engagement of youth and young and emerging evaluators. The initiative is driven by a strategic framework that begins with the Youth in Evaluation Manifesto, which secures high-level commitment and sets the stage for advancing the Youth in Evaluation standards. These standards are put into practice through the mobilization of dedicated action weeks and the scaling of best practices led by a global network of Youth in Evaluation champions. Overall, the initiative provides an opportunity to make evaluation and wider development programmes responsive to the needs and demands of young people.

The inaugural [Youth in Evaluation week](#) was held in 2023, followed by the second edition in 2024, which introduced the [Youth in Evaluation champion awards](#) to recognize exemplary practices on youth engagement in evaluation. These digital convenings have consistently attracted hundreds of participants, advancing evaluation discourse and practice. In 2025, the [Summit for the Future of Evaluation](#) marked the first in-person gathering of the campaign, co-created and co-organized with youth, where the [second Youth in Evaluation champion awards](#) took place. Focusing on two critical tracks: meaningful engagement of youth in evaluation and ethical AI use in evaluation, the Summit explored how the synergy of youth and AI integration can act as catalysts for transformative change in evaluation.

A key outcome of the Summit was the launch of the [Eval4Action 2.0 Strategy](#), a forward-looking roadmap designed to deepen youth engagement in evaluation and

cultivate thought leadership on the future of evaluation. This renewed strategic direction aims to solidify the role of evaluation as a critical driver of informed, sustainable, and inclusive development, ensuring its continued relevance and agility in a rapidly changing world. Under this renewed strategy, initiatives such as the Future of Evaluation dialogues were introduced, linked to major international observances throughout the year. These monthly dialogues have become an important platform for knowledge exchange and have positioned Eval4Action as a thought leader in global evaluation conversations. Moreover, the Youth in Evaluation initiative ensures that young people are integrated into every level of Eval4Action 2.0, including active participation in these global dialogues.

## **2. Youth in Evaluation Forum 2026**

Building on the legacy of Eval4Action's successful digital engagements in recent years, the Youth in Evaluation Forum 2026 is a three-day global digital convening designed as an inclusive platform where voices of young people are not only heard but actively influence how evaluation responds to today's evolving development environment. Bringing together young, emerging and experienced evaluators, regional partners, VOPEs (Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation), and global stakeholders, the Forum will celebrate Youth in Evaluation champions and advance dialogue on the Future of Evaluation from the perspective of young and senior evaluators. The Forum will begin with a global inauguration led by Eval4Action, followed by two days of regionally-led events organized by regional and national partners.

### **2.1 Recognition of Youth in Evaluation champions**

The Youth in Evaluation champion awards celebrate organizations across sectors that have demonstrated significant action in meaningfully engaging young people in the field of evaluation. The champion awards are based on self-reported progress against the Youth in Evaluation standards, launched in 2023, which provide practical guidance and pathways for organizations of all types to initiate and advance the meaningful engagement of youth in evaluation. Each year, the EvalYouth Global Network undertakes an independent review of the self-reported submissions and identifies the champions.

The Youth in Evaluation champions 2026 will be officially announced during the global inauguration on 19 May. Announcements will be further amplified through digital and social media platforms. In addition, selected champions will participate in the global inauguration of the Forum as panelists to feature their best practices in engaging youth in evaluation.

## **2.2 Global inauguration**

On 19 May, the Youth in Evaluation Forum 2026 will commence with a global inauguration designed to elevate youth voices and showcase the transformative work of Youth in Evaluation champions. This opening session sets the stage for three days of dialogue and the regional events.

The global inauguration will spotlight youth leadership and innovation in evaluation, amplify diverse perspectives across regions, and highlight inspiring examples of meaningful youth engagement in evaluation practice and systems. Through high-level reflections and interactive elements, the global inauguration will catalyze action, strengthen global solidarity, and position young evaluators as key actors in shaping the future of evaluation.

## **2.3 Regional events**

The regional events will be organized by Eval4Action's regional partners on 20 and 21 May, in collaboration with interested national partners, including VOPEs, youth networks, academic institutions, and other evaluation stakeholders. All regional convenings are intended to stimulate context-specific dialogue and generate actionable commitments to Youth in Evaluation from stakeholders across the region.

Expected outputs of the regional events include the identification of regional priorities for engaging youth in evaluation, commitments or calls to action on Youth in Evaluation, and ideas and entry points for cross-regional collaboration on youth participation in evaluation beyond the Forum. These outputs will contribute to **regional evaluation strategies led by regional VOPEs**, ensuring that local perspectives and youth voices inform ongoing and future regional and national initiatives.

The regional events will be designed and delivered in innovative, inclusive, and context-responsive ways that align with regional priorities and audience needs. One or a combination of the following themes will be considered for regional events:

- Youth-led and participatory evaluation
- Youth-led innovation in evaluation
- Youth-led digital transformation in evaluation
- Youth and indigenous evaluation
- Evaluation for advancing equity, gender equality, and social justice
- Youth engagement in national evaluation systems
- Evaluation in humanitarian and fragile contexts
- Youth in human rights-based evaluation
- Career pathways and professionalization of evaluation
- Peer mentorship and reverse mentorship

To encourage creativity and meaningful engagement, regional events will be interactive with innovative event formats such as:

- Skills labs or masterclasses
- Youth-led case study presentations
- VOPE–youth exchange dialogues
- Mentorship cafés or career clinics
- Co-creation labs focused on designing youth-responsive evaluation approaches
- Fail Fair, a safe space for seasoned and young evaluators to discuss unsuccessful youth engagement initiatives and extract lessons learned
- Fishbowl discussions on provocative topics
- Policy Lab where young evaluators, VOPEs and government representations co-draft youth inclusion guidelines for national evaluation policies

A total of **seven regional events** will be organized, covering the following regions: Asia and the Pacific, Middle East and North Africa, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Africa, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and North America. Regional partners interested in convening a regional event are required to submit an [Expression of Interest](#) (EoI) by **21 March 2026**. The EoI should outline the proposed focus, format, partners, and the organizing team for the event. A **Guide for Organizers** is available as part of the EoI form.

### **3. Coordination and participation**

The Youth in Evaluation Forum 2026 provides a collaborative space for over 170 Eval4Action partners to drive the youth in evaluation agenda. Partners can take an active role in the Forum through several pathways:

- **Leading and organizing:** Hosting or co-organizing regional events in collaboration with other partners to ensure localized impact.
- **Contributing expertise:** Contributing as speakers at global or regional sessions to share insights and best practices.
- **Mobilizing participation:** Promoting the Forum to their own memberships and networks to ensure broad and diverse attendance.
- **Advocacy and awareness:** Amplifying the Forum's message through social media and digital content.
- **Sustaining efforts:** Supporting post-event actions and advocacy by contributing to the implementation of regional evaluation strategies.

### **4. Progress markers**

The following progress markers will be used to measure the success of the mobilization efforts and the delivery of the Forum and its regional events:

- **Partner engagement** – At least 2 partners per region actively engage in organizing regional events.

*Data source for reporting:* summary reports of regional events

- **Inclusivity and diversity** – Over 70% of participants using Zoom live caption language feature confirm that this tool enabled their meaningful participation in the discussions.

*Data source for reporting:* Zoom survey for participants of global and regional events

- **Knowledge generation and skill development** – Over 50% of participants report gaining new knowledge or professional skills through the events.

*Data source for reporting:* Zoom survey for participants of global and regional events

- **Youth interest** – Over 50% of youth participants confirm that their interest in evaluation was increased as a result of participation in the Forum.

*Data source for reporting:* Zoom survey for participants of global and regional events

- **Stakeholder commitment** – Youth in Evaluation manifesto receives over 200 signups.

*Data source for reporting:* Manifesto sign-up listing

Reach out to [contact@eval4action.org](mailto:contact@eval4action.org) to engage with the Forum.