#Eval4Action

youth in evaluation

be a champion!

Standards for enhancing meaningful engagement of youth in evaluation

Governments

2023

Decade of
EVALUATION
for action

#Eval4Action

Contents

Foreword

With the world population at 8 billion, harnessing demographic shifts is critical to accelerating the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and responding to global crises such as the climate emergency. To achieve an inclusive and sustainable world, it is crucial that we create opportunities and spaces in all spheres, including evaluation, for the increasing youth population. The United Nations Secretary-General's Our Common Agenda highlights the importance of intergenerational collaboration to address the complex issues we face today.

The Eval4Action campaign – co-led by the UNFPA Evaluation Office, EvalYouth Global Network and the Global Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation – launched the Youth in Evaluation initiative at a celebratory event in May 2022. At this event, the Executive Director of UNFPA, Dr Natalia Kanem, released a manifesto on meaningful engagement of youth in evaluation. This occasion brought together various evaluation partners, young and emerging evaluators, other members of the global evaluation community, and youth at large to celebrate and commit to enhanced youth engagement in evaluation.

The Youth in Evaluation manifesto, published in six languages, has been adopted widely, including by governments, international agencies, Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs), academia, youth organizations, the private sector and non-governmental organizations. The governments of Argentina, Costa Rica, Ecuador, India, Kenya, Nigeria and Uganda have endorsed the manifesto. In addition, the ILO Evaluation Office, UNDP Independent Evaluation Office, UNFPA Evaluation Office, World Bank Independent Evaluation Group, Independent Evaluation Department of the Asian Development Bank, Independent Development Evaluation at the African Development Bank, and the Centers for Learning on Evaluations and Results (CLEAR) for Anglophone Africa, Francophone Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and South Asia have also adopted the manifesto.

Building on this global momentum, the Eval4Action campaign and its partners initiated the development of standards to enhance meaningful youth engagement in evaluation. Given the unique contexts of stakeholders, specific standards have been developed for six stakeholder groups: academia, governments, international organizations, the private sector, VOPEs and youth organizations. All six standards are available here.

These standards aim to enhance the accountability and promote the effective engagement of youth in evaluation, thereby fulfilling the commitment outlined in the manifesto. These standards provide practical guidance and pathways for organizations of all types to achieve meaningful youth engagement in evaluation. The standards were launched at the Youth in Evaluation Week (April 2023) and made publicly available.

Regardless of whether an organization has signed the manifesto, we encourage all interested organizations to use the standards to strengthen their capacity to engage youth in all phases of evaluation. If you have questions regarding the use of the standards, please write to us at contact@eval4action.org.

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1. Background

i. What is the Youth in Evaluation initiative?

The United Nations Secretary-General's Our Common Agenda emphasizes the urgency of intergenerational solidarity in all areas as a key solution for the complex global challenges facing the world today. In this context, Eval4Action launched the Youth in Evaluation initiative in May 2022, calling upon the global evaluation community to commit to concrete action towards long-term, sustainable and meaningful engagement of young and emerging evaluators (YEEs), and youth at large, in evaluation by signing and implementing a manifesto.

The manifesto on meaningful engagement of youth in evaluation has so far been adopted by over 600 organizations and individuals (as of March 2023). By adopting the manifesto, the organizations and individuals commit to undertake strategic and concerted efforts to build the capacities of YEEs and to engage youth and YEEs meaningfully in all stages of evaluation.

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Sign the Youth in Evaluation manifesto!

Arabic **|** English **|** French **|** Russian **|** Spanish **|** Swahili

List of manifesto adoptees

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ii. In what ways can the standards enhance youth engagement in evaluation?

The Youth in Evaluation initiative has mobilized a wide range of stakeholders, including academia, governments, international organizations, public institutions, the private sector, Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs) and youth organizations, to adopt the manifesto to enhance youth engagement in evaluation. For real change to be achieved, the commitments in the manifesto must be translated into practice. To support stakeholders in identifying and implementing actions most suited to their context, specific standards have been developed for academia, governments, international organizations, the private sector, VOPEs and youth organizations. These standards serve as a tool for self-accountability and for initiating and improving practice for enhancing meaningful engagement of youth in evaluation. While the standards offer

a range of actions to advance youth engagement in evaluation, stakeholders are not limited to these actions and can undertake additional measures as well.

This resource includes standards and an assessment guide for government organizations to advance meaningful engagement of youth in evaluation. The standards for academia, international organizations, the private sector, VOPEs and youth organizations are available [here](#).

iii. How were the standards developed?

The standards to enhance meaningful youth engagement in evaluation were co-created through intergenerational and participatory dialogues with six stakeholder groups: academia, governments, international organizations, the private sector, VOPEs and youth organizations. For each stakeholder group, a task force was established following self-nominations from across the world. The six task forces co-created the standards for their stakeholder group, following a highly inclusive process, through a series of consultative meetings from September 2022 to March 2023. In addition, the consultations served as an advocacy mechanism and networking platform for each stakeholder group.

iv. What do the standards contain?

The standards for each stakeholder group cover six dimensions:

Dimension	Definition
1. Leadership and accountability	Leadership in the organization is committed to youth in evaluation.
2. Practice	The organization's evaluation guidelines and tools include youth participation in all evaluation phases, focusing on the diversity of youth.
3. Advocacy and capacity development	National governments and local partners are mobilized to meaningfully engage youth in evaluation.
4. Knowledge management and communication	The value of engaging youth in evaluation through communications and knowledge management is promoted.
5. Human resources	Access of young professionals to the evaluation labour market is facilitated.

6. Financial resources	Necessary resources are allocated to support meaningful engagement of youth in evaluation in the annual budget.

In each of the six dimensions, the standards are organized into four categories:

1. **Minimum requirement**

2. **Approaching minimum requirement**

3. **Meeting minimum requirement**

4. **Exceeding minimum requirement**

Section v contains guidance on rating each of the dimensions and overall assessment of the implementation of the standards for academia.

v. How should the standards be used?

a. Generating internal support to implement the standards

Strong leadership, accountability and a comprehensive understanding of the standards are critical for the implementation of the standards in an organization. A government organization, division or work unit can spearhead the implementation of the standards. In this regard, the following two steps are proposed:

1. **Create organizational buy-in for the standard**. Leadership commitment to youth in evaluation is a prerequisite to implementing the standards. Government organizations interested in applying the standards in their operations should organize a meeting with key members and colleagues to raise awareness of the importance of enhancing youth engagement in evaluation and the role of standards in facilitating this. In addition, this is an opportunity to consult the team on how to implement the standards in the organization with active contributions from all units/colleagues.

2. **Appoint a committee or focal point/s for coordination**. The focal point/s or committee should ensure that the organization takes the necessary steps in implementing, monitoring and reporting progress related to the standards. While the focal point/s or committee focus on overall coordination, the implementation of the standards is the responsibility of the entire government organization/division/work unit. The focal point/s or committee should also ensure that the implementation of the standards is incorporated into the organizational work plan, with clear roles and responsibilities.

b. Assessing and monitoring the uptake of the standards

Self-assessment and monitoring are key elements in the implementation of the standards and can help inform a government organization's actions to enhance youth engagement in evaluation. Self-assessment and monitoring tools can be used to:

- Assess which requirements are already being met or practiced

- Identify gaps in meetings requirements

- Plan for meeting the remaining requirements.

The outcomes of the assessment can be presented to a wider audience in the organization for review and analysis and can be used for planning. The results can be shared in the organization's annual report and can also be used for awareness raising within the organization.

Government organizations are requested to share the outcomes of their self-assessment with the Eval4Action campaign coordinator annually by 31 March each year, by writing to contact@eval4action.org. The information will help Eval4Action to analyze and report on the number of (anonymized) organizations that are approaching, meeting and exceeding the requirements, identify which requirements are most challenging to meet and provide guidance on how to accelerate the implementation of the standards. In addition, Eval4Action can support the sharing of best practices in using and assessing the standards.

2. Standards for government organizations to meaningfully engage youth in evaluation

1. Leadership and accountability

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement
1.1 Commitment from public institution on youth in evaluation	1.1.1 Public institution declares commitment to meaningful engagement of youth in evaluation by signing the Youth in Evaluation manifesto	1.1.2 Public institution takes action to deliver on the commitment	1.1.3 Public institution reviews the commitment and report on its progress
1.2 Policy and regulations on engagement of youth in evaluation	1.2.1 The institutional evaluation policy or related provisions include meaningful engagement of youth in evaluation	1.2.2 Organizational strategy and plans reflect provisions of the institutional evaluation policy	1.2.3 Public institution operationalizes provisions regarding meaningful engagement of youth in evaluation

2. Practice

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement
2.1 Evaluation guidelines include youth participation	2.1.1 Public institution revises evaluation guidelines to include engagement of youth in the evaluations conducted by the institution	2.1.2 Evaluation guidelines that focus on youth engagement in evaluation are widely communicated to all stakeholders	2.1.3 Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) staff implement the guidelines pertaining to engagement of youth in evaluation

2.2 Youth from diverse groups are considered for evaluation opportunities	2.2.1 Evaluation designs incorporate diversity considerations to engage youth	2.2.2 Diverse youth participate in evaluations as informants	2.2.3 YEEs from diverse groups get the opportunity to be evaluation team members
2.3 Integration of YEEs in all phases of evaluations conducted by the public institution	2.3.1 The evaluation terms of reference (ToR) outline how YEEs will be included in the evaluation	2.3.2 YEEs participate in all phases of the evaluation, including evaluation design, data collection, stakeholder engagement, reporting, and dissemination and use of the evaluation	2.3.3 YEEs as co-evaluators participate in decision-making and co-lead all phases of the evaluation together with seniors

3. Advocacy and capacity development

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement
3.1 Advocacy for youth in evaluation	3.1.1 Public institution communicates the importance of youth in evaluation to political leadership, policymakers and legislators	3.1.2 Public institution disseminates evaluations that engage youth to political leadership, policymakers and legislators	3.1.3 Political leadership, policymakers and legislators make supportive statements on engaging youth in evaluation
3.2 Multi-stakeholder partnership for youth in evaluation	3.2.1 Public institution takes steps to establish multi-stakeholder partnerships, including with VOPEs, EvalYouth, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and development partners, to promote youth engagement in evaluation	3.2.2 Public institution establishes multi-stakeholder partnerships, including with VOPEs, EvalYouth, NGOs and development partners, to promote youth engagement in evaluation	3.2.3 The multi-stakeholder partners meet at least quarterly to advance youth engagement in evaluation

4. Knowledge management and communication

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement
4.1 Youth participation in evaluation findings	4.1.1 Youth are invited to events at which evaluation findings are presented by the public institution	4.1.2 When evaluation findings are presented by the public institution, youth can meaningfully contribute their voices	4.1.3 Public institution incorporates inputs received from youth in the finalization of evaluation findings
4.2 Youth participation in knowledge management	4.2.1 Public institution invites youth to evaluation-related events they organize, including conferences and dissemination workshops	4.2.2 Youth actively participate in evaluation knowledge sharing events	4.2.3 Youth take the lead in sharing knowledge at evaluation-related events
4.3 Communication and advocacy on topics related to youth in evaluation	4.3.1 Speeches on evaluation and youth engagement in evaluation are made in events held at the public institutions	4.3.2 Speeches on evaluation and youth engagement in evaluation are made at external events	4.3.3 The theme of youth in evaluation is included in conferences hosted by the public institution

5. Human resources

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement
5.1 Attracting youth to careers in evaluation	5.1.1 Public institution creates internship opportunities on evaluation-related tasks	5.1.2 Evaluation-related opportunities are disseminated to youth to encourage applications	5.1.3 At least 10% of evaluation staff in the evaluation office of the public institution are youth

| 5.2 Evaluation job opportunities for youth | 5.2.1 Public institution defines ToR for evaluation staff, including young professionals | 5.2.2 Public institution recruits young professionals into evaluation units | 5.2.3 Public institution designates a proportion of evaluation jobs specifically for youth |

6. Financial resources

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement
6.1 Financial provisions for hiring YEEs	6.1.1 The annual budget of the public institution includes provisions for hiring YEEs for evaluations	6.1.2 Public institution hires YEEs for evaluations	6.1.3 Teams of major evaluations include at least one YEE
6.2 Availability of resources for engaging youth in evaluation	6.2.1 Public institution makes funds available for engaging youth in evaluation	6.2.2 Evaluation-related scholarship opportunities provided for youth	6.2.3 At least two scholarships are provided annually for youth to engage in evaluations

3. Guide for assessing the implementation of the standards

This assessment guide explains how to assess the standards for government organizations.

i. Assessment categories

The standards for government organizations cover six dimensions, namely, leadership and accountability, practice, advocacy and capacity development, knowledge management and communication, human resources and financial resources.

In each of these six dimensions the standards are organized into four categories – minimum requirement, approaching minimum requirement, meeting minimum requirement, and exceeding minimum requirement – displaying a spectrum.

The minimum requirement describes what needs to be in place within the government organization to advance youth engagement in evaluation. "Approaching" the minimum requirement describes meeting the initial level of the requirement. "Meeting" the minimum requirement describes meeting the requirement to a greater degree than "approaching" the minimum requirement. "Exceeding" the minimum requirement describes meeting the requirement at an advanced level, and is the highest level expected, although government organizations are free to achieve levels beyond this.

ii. Rating the standards

A score for each dimension and category can be assigned, as per the tables ahead. If the government organization does not meet the criteria for "approaching", "meeting" or "exceeding" a minimum requirement, the minimum requirement is considered to be "missing" and the government organization scores 0 points on that dimension. If the government organization fulfills the criterion for "approaching" the minimum requirement, it scores 1 point. "Meeting" the minimum requirement results in a score of 2 points and "exceeding" the minimum requirement results in a score of 3 points. If a government organization fulfills the criteria for both "approaching" and "meeting" the minimum requirement, it scores 3 points (1 + 2 points). If all criteria are met, the government organization scores 6 points (1 + 2 + 3 points).

For example, in the leadership and accountability dimension, if the institutional evaluation policy includes engagement of youth in evaluation, the government

organization scores 1 point. If the organizational strategy and plans reflect provisions of the institutional evaluation policy, the government organization scores 2 points. If the government organization operationalizes the provisions, it scores 3 points. If the government organization has 1.2.1, 1.2.2 and 1.2.3 in place, it scores 6 points. The total number of points for each category and dimension should be recorded in the final column of each table.

iii. Rating tables for the standards for government organizations

Download the editable rating table here.

1. Leadership and accountability

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement	Total points
1.1 Commitment from public institution on youth in evaluation	1.1.1 Public institutions declare commitment to meaningful engagement of youth in evaluation by signing the Youth in Evaluation manifesto	1.1.2 Public institution takes action to deliver on the commitment	1.1.3 Public institution reviews the commitment and report on its progress	
0	1	2	3	
1.2 Policy and regulations on engagement of youth in evaluation	1.2.1 The institutional evaluation policy or related provisions include meaningful engagement of youth in evaluation	1.2.2 Organizational strategy and plans reflect provisions of the institutional evaluation policy	1.2.3 Public institution operationalizes provisions regarding meaningful engagement of youth in evaluation	
0	1	2	3	
Total points for leadership and accountability				

2. Practice

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement	Total points
2.1 Evaluation guidelines include youth participation	2.1.1 Public institution revises evaluation guidelines to include engagement of youth in the evaluations conducted by the institution	2.1.2 Evaluation guidelines that focus on youth engagement in evaluation are widely communicated to all stakeholders	2.1.3 Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) staff implement the guidelines pertaining to engagement of youth in evaluation	
0	1	2	3	
2.2 Youth from diverse groups are considered for evaluation opportunities	2.2.1 Evaluation designs incorporate diversity considerations to engage youth	2.2.2 Diverse youth participate in evaluations as informants	2.2.3 YEEs from diverse groups get the opportunity to be evaluation team members	
0	1	2	3	
2.3 Integration of YEEs in all phases of evaluations conducted by the public institution	2.3.1 The evaluation terms of reference (ToR) outline how YEEs will be included in the evaluation	2.3.2 YEEs participate in all phases of the evaluation, including evaluation design, data collection, stakeholder engagement, reporting, and dissemination and use of the evaluation	2.3.3 YEEs as co-evaluators participate in decision-making and co-lead all phases of the evaluation together with seniors	
0	1	2	3	
			Total points for practice	

3. Advocacy and capacity development

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement	Total points
3.1 Advocacy for youth in evaluation	3.1.1 Public institution communicates the importance of youth in evaluation to political leadership, policymakers and legislators	3.1.2 Public institution disseminates evaluations that engage youth to political leadership, policymakers and legislators	3.1.3 Political leadership, policymakers and legislators make supportive statements on engaging youth in evaluation	
0	1	2	3	
3.2 Multi-stakeholder partnership for youth in evaluation	3.2.1 Public institution takes steps to establish multi-stakeholder partnerships, including with VOPEs, EvalYouth, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and development partners, to promote youth engagement in evaluation	3.2.2 Public institution establishes multi-stakeholder partnerships, including with VOPEs, EvalYouth, NGOs and development partners, to promote youth engagement in evaluation	3.2.3 The multi-stakeholder partners meet at least quarterly to advance youth engagement in evaluation	
0	1	2	3	
			Total points for advocacy and capacity development	

4. Knowledge management and communication

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement	Total points
4.1 Youth participation in evaluation findings	4.1.1 Youth are invited to events at which evaluation findings are presented by the public institution	4.1.2 When evaluation findings are presented by the public institution, youth can meaningfully contribute their voices	4.1.3 Public institution incorporates inputs received from youth in the finalization of evaluation findings	
0	1	2	3	
4.2 Youth participation in knowledge management	4.2.1 Public institution invites youth to evaluation-related events they organize, including conferences and dissemination workshops	4.2.2 Youth actively participate in evaluation knowledge sharing events	4.2.3 Youth take the lead in sharing knowledge at evaluation-related events	
0	1	2	3	
4.3 Communication and advocacy on topics related to youth in evaluation	4.3.1 Speeches on evaluation and youth engagement in evaluation are made in events held at the public institution	4.3.2 Speeches on evaluation and youth engagement in evaluation are made at external events	4.3.3 The theme of youth in evaluation is included in conferences hosted by the public institution	
0	1	2	3	
Total points for knowledge management and communication				

5. Human resources

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement	Total points
5.1 Attracting youth to careers in evaluation	5.1.1 Public institution creates internship opportunities on evaluation-related tasks	5.1.2 Evaluation-related opportunities are disseminated to youth to encourage applications	5.1.3 At least 10% of evaluation staff in the evaluation office of the public institution are youth	
0	1	2	3	
5.2 Evaluation job opportunities for youth	5.2.1 Public institution defines ToR for evaluation staff, including young professionals	5.2.2 Public institution recruits young professionals into evaluation units	5.2.3 Public institution designates a proportion of evaluation jobs specifically for youth	
0	1	2	3	
			Total points for human resources	

6. Financial resources

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement	Total points
6.1 Financial provisions for hiring YEEs	6.1.1 The annual budget of the public institution includes provisions for hiring YEEs for evaluations	6.1.2 Public institution hires YEEs for evaluations	6.1.3 Teams of major evaluations include at least one YEE	
0	1	2	3	

6.2 Availability of resources for engaging youth in evaluation	6.2.1 Public institution make funds available for engaging youth in evaluation	6.2.2 Evaluation-related scholarship opportunities provided for youth	6.2.3 At least two scholarships are provided annually for youth to engage in evaluations	
0	1	2	3	
			Total points for financial resources	

iv. Overall performance of the government organization

Once the rating is determined for each dimension, the summary scores can be added to the below table to analyze the current status of the government organization in terms of meaningful engagement of youth in evaluation. This analysis will be helpful for the government organization to understand which dimensions are stronger and which need further attention, so that necessary actions can be planned.

#	Dimension	Score
1	Leadership and accountability	
2	Practice	
3	Advocacy and capacity development	
4	Knowledge management and communication	
5	Human resources	
6	Financial resources	
	Total	

The **overall performance** of the government organization can be determined using the categories below:

- Overall rating 0 to 21 – missing minimum requirement

- Overall rating 22 to 42 – approaching minimum requirement

- Overall rating from 43 to 63 – meeting minimum requirement

- Overall rating from 64 to 84 – exceeding minimum requirement

Once the overall performance has been determined, the government organization can make recommendations for future improvement, which can be addressed in the organization's strategic plan. The analysis and recommendations of the assessment can be included in the government organization's annual report and subsequent progress reports. Eval4Action recommends that the assessment is conducted annually by the organization.

v. Next steps and improvement plan

The leadership of the government organization can use the outcome of the assessment for decision-making. Based on the analysis and recommendations of the assessment, the leaders of the government organization can decide on the next steps and prepare an improvement plan that advances youth engagement in evaluation.

Please write to contact@eval4action.org to provide any feedback on the standards.

Annex: Intergenerational task force members

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vii. Ayadi Mishra, Local Pathways Fellow, 2022 Cohort, UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network – Youth Initiative, India

viii. Tahirah David, Representative, Caribbean Evaluators International

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