The evaluation utility journey

Thank you chair - It’s great to join this panel discussion on the evaluation utility journey.

Let me briefly draw attention to one study on Evaluation utility: The survey of American Evaluation Association members, 68% reported that evaluation results were not used. Findings such as this suggest a greater need for evaluation results to make it off the bookshelf and into the hands of intended audiences to maximize utility to Maximize Development Impact. There are three key points that I'll be highlighting on how to translate the evaluation utility journey into greater fruitfulness.

1. Understanding the evaluation utility journey?
Evaluation utility journey refers to the relevance and timeliness of evaluation processes and findings to organizational learning, decision making, and accountability for results. In this regard, Utility journey can be enhanced throughout the evaluation process by reflecting on what to evaluate, when, how, with whom, and for what purposes. In this regard, from my experience and relevant good practices, the evaluation utility journey mapping is critical to understand better the process that helps the evaluators to learn more about their key intended audiences and the journey we take when we interact with the journey.

2. Where does it start/end?
The primary intended users of the evaluation must be clearly identified and personally engaged at the beginning of the evaluation process. The evaluator’s job is not to make decisions independently of the intended users, but rather to facilitate decision making amongst the people who will use the findings of the evaluation. Intended users are more likely to use evaluations if they understand and feel ownership of the evaluation process and findings and that they are more likely to understand and feel ownership if they've been actively involved. By actively involving primary intended users, the evaluator is preparing the groundwork for use.

3. What are the success factors? (four key points)
   - Why the evaluation? (Understanding the added value/value proposition /usefulness of this evaluation) - to this end, it’s important that evaluators should conduct a rapid assessment of the available evidence from past and recent evaluations; determine the knowledge gap which needs to be filled by the proposed evaluations; and the kinds of evaluation questions. How relevant, timely, rigorous and quality evaluation to the actual demand for evaluation?

   - Evaluation utility journey should be framed as co-creation of knowledge/evidence (between the evaluators and users) to maximize development impact and therefore, active engagement throughout the process (no surprises) is very important: Co-creation
utility journey creates a unique and continuous collaboration space characterized by shared ownership and enhance utility. It is most often used to engage with more diverse primary audiences toward better evaluation design than is typical under throughout the evaluation processes and procedures in the utility journey. It’s critical to engage stakeholders in a way that is culturally competent, inclusive, and collaborative while remaining objective and unbiased?

- **One size does not fit all**: Evaluation utility journey can take many shapes and therefore, we’ve to create more adaptable and flexible spaces in the evaluation utility journey by considering the organizational arrangements and in the contexts that are often changing rapidly and highly uncertain.

- **Effective dissemination of evaluation results**: There are many exciting new options for reporting the findings from evaluations. Making the right choices can increase the likelihood that they will know about the findings and understand what they mean and why they are important. It’s likely that a variety of different knowledge products and reporting processes will be needed throughout the evaluation period and after its formal completion. There are a number of strategies that can be embedded in organizational processes to ensure that the process of doing an evaluation (or having a evaluation done) does not end with reporting findings. Therefore, it’s very important to outline these strategies in a formal communication and dissemination plan that documents all of this – and update it as needed.