KEYNOTE PRESENTATION
“Partnerships to Advance Supply, Demand and Use of Evaluation”

Michele Tarsilla. Ph.D.
Regional Evaluation Advisor - UNICEF Regional Office for West and Central Africa (WCARO)
Email: mtarsilla@unicef.org - Twitter: MiEval_TuEval
« Without Unity, There is NO Future »

(Minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma - Keynote September 6, 2018)

The Same is True in The Evaluation Field
PART 1: SET THE STAGE FOR THE DISCUSSION
KEY DEFINITIONS

• PARTNERSHIPS
KEY DEFINITIONS

PARTNERSHIPS

• A relationship created through an expressed (formal) or implied commitment
• Between two or more parties who:
  - Join together to achieve common goal
  - Combine their assets to accomplish the goal
• Partners may retain their authority and, while they are committed to their individual mission, understand their partners’ mission
KEY DEFINITIONS

- SUPPLY AND DEMAND: The Segmentation of the Evaluation Arena
  - Conceptual Simplification but low focus on quality
KEY DEFINITIONS

• SUPPLY AND DEMAND: The Systemic Perspective
PARTNERSHIPS evolve, often in a non-linear unpredictable manner.
PART 2: OPERATIONALIZATION OF PARTNERSHIPS
PARTNERSHIPS:

• WITH WHOM To Engage?
• HOW To Engage?
• WHY To Engage?
PARTNERSHIPS: WITH WHOM To Engage?
BUT WAIT, SHOULD WE NOT BE ASKING Ourselves FIRST WHY WE ARE PartnerING?
PARTNERSHIPS: WHY To Engage?

- THE RELEVANCE OF PURPOSE & VALUES IN PARTNERSHIPS
PARTNERSHIPS: WITH WHOM To Engage?
FIRST, Understand your Country’s EVALUATION ECO-SYSTEM
THEN, Pick your Partners Carefully enhancing DIVERSITY and EQUITY as much as possible

MIXING TRADITIONAL & NON-TRADITIONAL PARTNERS IS CRITICAL

Donors
Civil society
VOPEs (phased support)
Governments, President’s Offices, Parliaments
Academia
UN Agencies
Scientific Journals (better if open sources)
Publishing companies
Online CoP and other online initiatives providing alternative professional development opportunities
Foundations
Private sector

COULD YOU THINK OF OTHERS?
PARTNERSHIPS: HOW To Engage?
DEFINE YOUR PARTNERSHIP LEVEL

- Global (EvalPartners; IOCE; etc…)
- Regional (APNODE, AfrEA)
- Mix Global+Regional (CLEAR SA and FA)
- Mix Global + National (UN Agencies + Governments in UNDAF)
- North-South (e.g. RFE)
- South-South (Twende/Mbele )
DEFINE THE TYPE OF PARTNERSHIP TO SET UP

Business Partnerships; Strategic Alliances; Public-private partnerships; Tri-sector or Cross sector partnerships; Mandated partnerships; Enacted Partnerships; Community partnerships; Negotiated partnerships; Local partnerships; Locally led partnerships; Participatory international partnerships; Non-participatory international partnerships; Nascent partnerships; R&D (research and development) partnerships; Production partnerships; Transactional partnerships; Integrative partnerships
PART 3: OPPORTUNITIES AND RISKS
• GOOD PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLES

• BOUNDARY-CROSSING PARTNERSHIPS
• LEARNING PARTNERSHIPS

• THE USE OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES
RISK OF PARTNERSHIPS

- Frequent Turnover of coordinators
- Personalization of processes/structures
- Flattening of the discourse, domination of one party over others, more so if the entity prevaricating over the others is from the North
- Tokenism "we partner therefore I fund you";
- Risk to choose some partners over others: The community is small and feelings could be hurt;
- Heavy management
- Lack of Terms of References
RISK OF PARTNERSHIPS

- Not reaching the expected beneficiaries in countries (see Principle of equity and gender equality)
- Limited vision or failure to inspire
- Lack of clear purpose or inconsistent understanding of purpose
- Competition between partners for the lead or domination by one partner
- Key stakeholders missing from the partnership
- Lack of commitment and unwilling participants
RISK OF PARTNERSHIPS

- Differences in philosophies or work styles
- Inadequate understanding of roles and responsibilities
- Hidden agendas
- Failure to communicate
- Lack of evaluation or monitoring systems
- Financial and time commitments outweigh potential benefits
THE INFLUENCE OF EVALUATION NATIONAL POLICIES

- A boost or a cosmetic initiative?
- What about Evaluation Strategies rather than Evaluation Policy?
PART 4: KEY CONCLUSIONS AND TAKE-AWAY MESSAGES
1. There are at least 50 shades of partnerships: each of them entails different purposes, values, objectives and results. Try to define your partnership from the onset.

2. Evaluation is not a product but a political and relational process (partnerships are inherent to evaluations). As such, evaluation partnerships tend to evolve over time: be open to embrace change.

3. The Evaluation Supply & Demand binary paradigm is a bit reductive to capture the complexity of establishing and sustaining evaluation partnerships.
4. Partnerships need to adapt to the changing needs and interests of the parties involved. However, a consensus ought to be established on “non-negotiable” values and rules of conduct.

5. Learning does not always occur naturally within partnership. More “intentional” strategies are needed to enhance learning amongst partners.

6. Getting out of one’s organization comfort zone within the scope of evaluation partnership is key to reaching larger audiences and acting upon the messy reality in which we live.

7. Partnerships are not an end; they are just a tool to promote great good.
Contact

Michele Tarsilla. Ph.D.
Regional Evaluation Advisor
UNICEF Regional Office for West and
Central Africa (WCARO) - Dakar

Email: mtarsilla@unicef.org

Twitter: MiEval_TuEval