

International Engagement Strategy of the American Evaluation Association (AEA)

Developed and submitted by the AEA International Working Group

Updated: June 2016

Purpose of the Document

The purpose of the AEA's International Engagement Strategy is to operationalize the AEA's policies related to international engagement, and outline goals, processes, standards that the AEA will use in its international engagement. This strategy will reflect and incorporate the ideals and values found in the following AEA documents and statements:

- AEA Mission, Vision and Values
- AEA's Road Map for Better Evaluation
- AEA's Guiding Principles
- AEA's Ends Goals Statements

The AEA's strong interest in international engagement is certain. The AEA has a large international membership (17% of all members are based internationally) and attendance in its conferences; it is a founding and paying member of the IOCE, and later funded the International Listening Project to understand more deeply the interests of its membership for international engagement.

With the establishment of EvalPartners, an IOCE-United Nations international initiative to promote partnership in international evaluation, the AEA joined EvalPartners for the new, exciting opportunities to get involved internationally, as well as opportunities to promote the involvement of local affiliates. For the purposes of this document, any reference to government is meant to include state, national, international and tribal.

Through the AEA's international engagement, we aim to build on past successes and involvement including:

- Leverage international evaluation networks: We have been active in the EvalPartners Enabling Environment Task Force to coordinate with international actions to promote evaluation including passing the UN Resolution for building national evaluation capacities and the declaration and celebration of 2015 as the International Year of Evaluation. We now wish to be an active participant in promoting the goals of the Global Evaluation Agenda 2016-2020 and

connect with those goals through current and future activities (as mapped out in the workplan in Appendix A.) We will be an active participant in the EvalPartner subgroups including EvalSDG, EvalGender, EvalIndigenous, EvalYouth, and the group working on professionalization of evaluation, as well as the IOCE Board of Trustees through identified representatives. AEA will work with the OECD/DAC, international banks and other international organizations as appropriate on goals of mutual interest that further the role of evaluation internationally. (End Goal Connection: 2.A.B.C.)

- Leverage international evaluation policy discussions: We aim to develop coalitions that provide strength in numbers for reaching international and US policy makers to enhance evaluation and promote its commissioning and use in public policy. This aim supports the AEA Article 2.1 of the ratified policies on “Influencing of Evaluation Policy” as a major priority. This work would also explore the possibilities for how evaluation policy is encouraged, developed, and pursued in other countries. This work is in line with the work of the Evaluation Policy Task Force (EPTF), which was established in 2007 to enhance AEA's ability to identify and influence policies that have a broad effect on evaluation practice and to establish a framework and procedures for accomplishing this objective. (Ends Goal Connection 4)
- Strengthen and learn from evaluation associations overseas: As the oldest VOPE, the AEA has significant “intellectual capital” to contribute to other organizations. When asked, we can provide mentorship and lessons learned on how to establish and manage evaluation associations, and how to run conferences. We wish to align our contributions with the EvalPartners Institutional Development Task Force. (Ends Goal Connections: 1.E)
- Raise the profile of evaluation in the United States and internationally: We wish to raise the profile of evaluation with the U.S. Government (especially for those international evaluation discussions) and our U.S. based foundations with international presence, as well as other international funders. We wish to promote evaluation through the traditional media and social media channels, reach out to new types of organizations, and translate the contribution of evaluation to new partners and potential clients of evaluation. We wish to exchange information with other international organizations by sending representatives to international conferences or leverage AEA's geographical proximity to other international organizations in the DC area. (Ends Goal Connection: 3.A, B. C. D. F. G. H.)
- Enrich AEA members' evaluation practice: We wish to assist AEA members through engagement with international evaluators both as members of the AEA, and through collaborations under EvalPartners or other international initiatives, engaging in meaningful conversations and learning about many topics including evaluation methods, evaluation policy and professionalization of evaluation. We would like to see these new exchanges and learning reflected in the AJE, and the NDE Journals. (Ends Goal Connection: 1. A. B.C.D.E)
- Promote evaluation as a desirable career internationally: We wish both to encourage more young people to study evaluation throughout the world, and also to increase the supply of trained evaluators who manage evaluation according to the AEA's evaluation principles. (Ends Goal Connection: 3.L)

Time Frame:

This strategy reflects work during the next two fiscal years – FY2017 and FY2018. AEA’s fiscal years begin on July 1 and end June 30. The continuation of the \$20,000 budgeted for FY2017 is intended to support the IPP partnership initiative and some travel support as begun in the International Year of Evaluation. However, as staff begins to phase-in implementation, this plan will drive future budgeting alignment.

Tactics that align with the Global 2020 agenda and support these initiatives can be found in the tactical alignment document located in Appendix A.

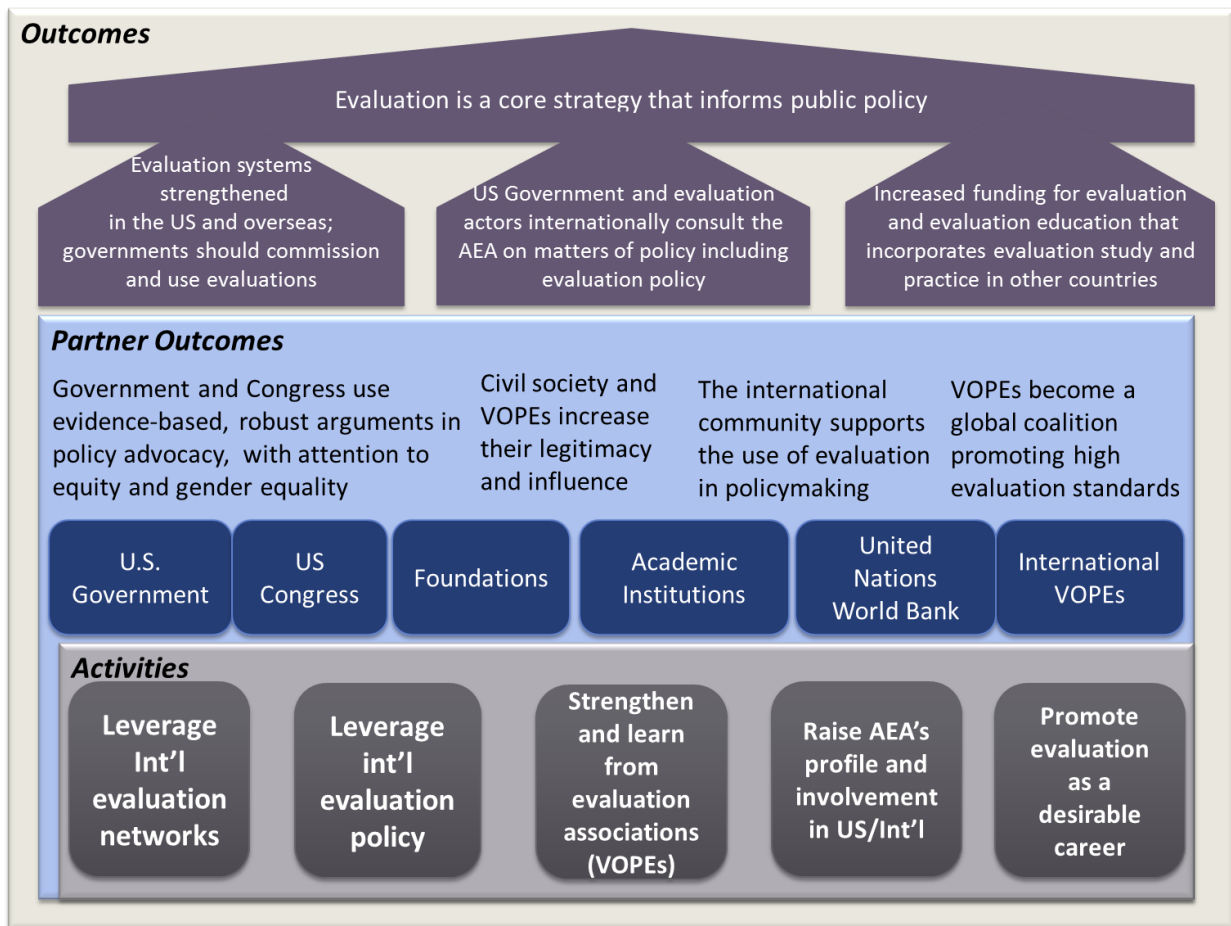


Figure 1 Theory of Change for the AEA's International Engagement Strategy

Appendix A:

Global 2020 Map to Tactics

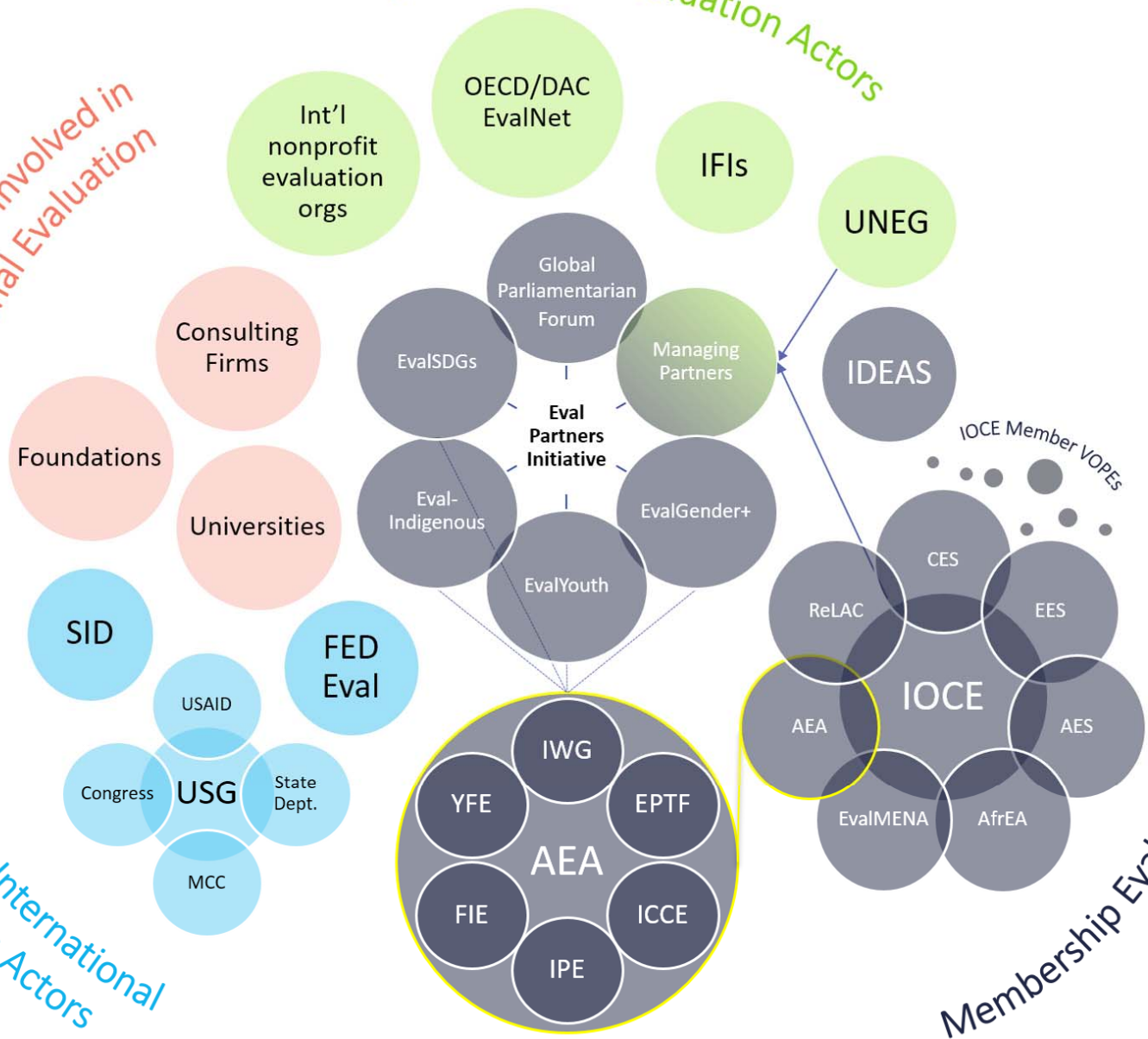
Drawing of International Landscape

Description of the development and input process

AEA Stakeholders Involved in International Evaluation

International Evaluation Actors

US-based International Evaluation Actors



- KEY:**
- AEA – American Evaluation Association
 - AES – Australasian Evaluation Society
 - AfrEA – African Evaluation Association
 - CES – Canadian Evaluation Society
 - DAC – Development Assistance Committee
 - EES – European Evaluation Society
 - EPEWG - Evaluation & Performance Effectiveness Working Group
 - EPTF – Evaluation Policy Task Force
 - EvalMENA – Middle East and North Africa Evaluators Network
 - FED Eval – Federal Evaluators – volunteer group
 - FIE – Feminist Issues in Evaluation
 - ICCE – International and Cross Cultural TIG
 - IDEAS – Intl. Development Evaluation Association
 - IFI – International Financial Institutions
 - IOCE – Intl. Org. for Cooperation in Evaluation
 - IPE – Indigenous Peoples in Evaluation
 - IWG – International Working Group
 - MCC – Millennium Challenge Corporation
 - OECD – Organization for Economic Cooperation & Development
 - ReLAC – Latin-American and Caribbean Monitoring, Evaluation and Systematization Network
 - VOPE – Volunteer Organizations for Professional Evaluation
 - UNEG – UN Evaluation Group
 - USAID – US Agency for International Development
 - USG – US Government
 - YFE – Youth Focused Evaluation

Thirteen (13) Ways AEA Will Support the Global Evaluation Agenda 2016-2020

AEA will work to strengthen the:	Within AEA and the United States	Within Other VOPEs and Other Countries
Enabling Environment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask the Evaluation Policy Task Force (EPTF) to identify 1-2 key gaps in federal legislation, regulations, or practices, then work to correct those gaps 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Find ways to learn systematically from other VOPEs around the world how they are strengthening their own enabling environments
Institutional Capacities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Work to strengthen the demand for evaluation within governments at all levels of government, the private sector, nonprofits, and foundations 4. Use Federal Executive Institute and other courses to train incoming federal-level political officers and SES candidates and leaders in evaluation 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Identify emerging VOPEs in other parts of the world, and use AEA, Local Affiliates, and/or TIGs to twin/mentor their development
Individual Capacities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Offer relevant international topics to be featured in AEA's e-studies programs 7. Expand in-person training opportunities beyond the conference and summer training institute, including online courses 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Waive the conference and workshop fees for any developing country evaluator awarded conference travel funds by EvalPartners 9. Solicit webinar speakers from outside the USA 10. Step up the marketing for the Silent Auction, including recruiting more corporate donations 11. Match the travel funds raised during the Silent Auction, doubling the number of evaluators from developing countries AEA supports 12. Offer access to AEA online services to selected evaluators outside the USA (price/promotion to be determined by management) 13. Offer relevant topics to be featured in AEA's e-studies programs (increase access by offering at different times to accommodate time zones)

Development Process for this strategy document

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AEA's International Working Group (IWG) developed two (2) different but highly related, documents. These documents are the products of approximately six (6) months' work by the IWG, not only on each of its regularly scheduled monthly conference calls, but also on additional calls and through Internet surveys of IWG members and others.

The first document is a revised and updated AEA International Engagement Strategy (IES) statement. The original IES was developed over two years ago (March 2014), and since global evaluation has been developing rapidly under various IOCE and EvalPartners initiatives, the original document was outdated. This new version is similar to the original, but it reflects the changes that have occurred in evaluation globally and the IWG's deeper understanding of those changes. As was true of the original document, this revised IES is directly grounded in AEA's Mission, Values, and Ends Goals.

The second document shows the IWG's recommended actions to support the Global Evaluation Agenda 2016-2020, commonly referred to as EvalAgenda2020. Through this document, the IWG recommends that AEA strengthen the enabling environment, institutional capacities, and individual capacities for evaluation, both within AEA and within other VOPEs. These 13 actions were winnowed from dozens of original ideas by a series of consultations and Internet surveys that included the IWG, the members of

the Evaluation Policy Task Force (EPTF), the leadership of the International and Cross-Cultural Evaluation (ICCE) TIG, and our AEA Management Team. Some of these actions reflect ways AEA is already supporting EvalAgenda2020, and other actions allow AEA to easily lend its support without a significant financial or resource burden.

The landscape document was prepared by several members of the IWG under the original inspiration of Cindy Clapp-Wincek and Hubert Paulmer. It became apparent that the international landscape is complex and interconnected in many ways. This landscape tool became imperative as the IWG analyzed the most appropriate and effective role for AEA in conjunction with other partners already in the field.