

Fifth Session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development

Side event Title: “Towards evidence-based SDGs and Agenda 2063 reporting: Strengthening National Evaluation Capacities for the Africa we Want”

Thursday, 18 April, 2019, 14:30-16:00

Co-organizers:

Evaluation Offices of the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), UNICEF, and UN Evaluation Group in partnership with the African Evaluation Association (AfrEA)

Speakers: Panelists from:

- Representatives of Member States that volunteered to report on VNRS before and in 2019
- UN and Pan African Organizations Evaluation Entities
- African Evaluation Association
- Representatives of National Statistical Offices
- Representatives of African Parliamentarians
- Representatives of EvalSDGs network

Thematic focus of the event

The main objective of the side event is to promote a cross sectoral regional dialogue on the importance of embedding evaluation thinking and practice in Agendas 2030 and 2063 as well as to agree on modalities for multi-stakeholder partnerships to reinforce capacities of African Member States for evidence-based Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs). Such evidence will help strengthen accountability and change by focusing on learning and innovative approaches for evidence based policy making. Failing to do so, at this relatively early stage of the SDGs reporting process, the SDG follow up reviews will be data-rich (when data exists) but weaker on integrated analysis required to understand the complexity and interconnectedness of the 2030 development goals in particular and specifically those being reviewed in 2019: SDG 4 (quality education), SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth), SDG 10 (reduced inequalities), SDG 13 (climate action), and SDG 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions) and the corresponding goals of Agenda 2063. The side event will build on positive lessons learnt from previous capacity building initiatives that have positively impacted the design of VNR processes. The event will provide an opportunity for a dialogue between planners from Ministry of Finance and Planning, Parliamentarians, Evaluators, National Statistical Offices, Private Sector and CSO representatives.

Expected Outcomes

The expected outcome of the side event is to raise awareness of policy makers and other stakeholders on the required evaluative methodologies to ensure that the SDGs and Agenda 2063 follow up and review processes take a long-term view and focus on identifying achievements (what is working, for whom and under what circumstances), as well as identifying challenges, gaps and factors crucial for continued improvement, thus underlining the importance of a review process that is informed by rigorous, evidence-based, country-level evaluations.

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