



International Organisation for Cooperation in Evaluation
 Organisation internationale de coopération en évaluation
 Organización Internacional para la Cooperación en Evaluación

Newsletter

From the President's Desk

It is with a sense of humility and honour that I write this first message as the current President of IOCE. The past President Oumoul Ba Tall and the other Board members tirelessly pursued the mission of IOCE despite many obstacles. While placing on record my appreciation of their persistent efforts and results achieved, with the rest of the Board members I would endeavour to build on their achievements and move further ahead.

At its last meeting, the IOCE Board reflected on the way forward and noted several areas for consolidation and action. Making the value of IOCE to the membership more concrete and explicit was identified a priority. In support of this a greater focus needs to be placed on results that could be articulated in measurable terms. For this, facilitating structures need to be built by joining hands with leaders of other organisations and proactively engaging evaluation associations and networks in the dialogues of the day. We will endeavour to do this.

The discussions during the last AGM and the agreed upon work plan reflect the thinking and the needs of the members who participated. We will, with the support of our experienced and insightful members and advisors, find effective ways to implement the work plan. Above all we would seek participation and feed-back of members so that their expectations are met. I would urge you to proactively interact with the Board through the Eva-Leaders Forum and other means to help IOCE serve its members effectively.

We would like this newsletter to serve the purpose of an effective communication channel among members. I encourage all members to use it for sharing information and as a discussion forum on current issues as well as a medium for advocacy of your own pursuits in promoting policies and practice in evaluation.

Soma De Silva
 President



Highlights of IOCE 2010 AGM

IOCE, following its tradition, held the 2010 Annual General Meeting (AGM) in two phases: a live 90 minute webinar hosted by UNICEF followed by a week-long online discussion forum via e-mail. A recording of the webinar held on 15 December is available at

<http://tinyurl.com/IOCE-AGMrecording>.

Highlights included the annual report by President Oumoul Ba Tall and the financial report by Treasurer Jim Rugh, both posted on the IOCE website at www.IOCE.net.

On December 16th the second phase of the AGM via e-mail opened with a posting from President Oumoul Ba Tall who presented the discussion topics:

- Professionalization of evaluators
- IOCE agenda on Impact Evaluation
- Promoting partnerships among evaluation associations and international partners
- IOCE value added to its membership
- Strategies to counter resource limitations
- Facilitating better communication
- IOCE governance model
- Other topics introduced by participants

1. Professionalization Of Evaluators

Moderator: Jean Serge Quesnel

The AGM agreed that a mapping of evaluation associations should be carried out giving information on their missions and roles, policies, norms, standards, ethics, competency profiles, professional designation initiatives and capacity development. The purpose of the exercise is to facilitate members' access to information and communication. Two end products will be generated – documentation of the 2011 situation and a descriptive analyses of each of the above elements.

2. IOCE Agenda On Impact Evaluation

Moderator: Burt Perrin

NONIE (the Network of Networks on Impact Evaluation) last year issued a "Guidance" document that did not consider a number of perspectives raised by IOCE and its members

While the Guidance has many strong points, IOCE has identified various limitations. IOCE's initial plan was to prepare an addendum to the NONIE Guidance document. However, IOCE Board would now prepare an "opinion piece".

The need was identified for IOCE to continue to engage in international discussions on impact evaluation to ensure that an inclusive approach is put forward and recognized. IOCE intends to take part at the next NONIE conference in March.

3. Promoting Partnerships Among Evaluation Associations

Moderator: Jim Rugh

A four phase strategy was proposed.

1. Maintain an inventory of organizations.
2. Collect profiles of these groups.
3. Encourage inter-organization collaboration.
4. Promote capacity building globally.

The discussion identified the need for more forums to fill gaps arising from language preference etc. The database maintained by IOCE could help partnership building. The question of how IOCE could promote mutually beneficial goals remains to be addressed.

4. IOCE And Other International Partners

Moderator: Burt Perrin

IOCE engagement with other international bodies is to provide leadership in evaluation worldwide. Yet, issues such as resource implications, coordination of responses, desirability and acceptability of IOCE's responses, demonstrating the value added are key considerations on which IOCE responses lie.

This item was agreed as an appropriate role for IOCE and of benefit to members. Suggestions were made of organizations that IOCE could potentially engage with, recognising that relationships are of different types from being one off to continuing partnerships, and a set of criteria for engagement.

5. IOCE Value Added To Its Membership

Moderator: Francois Dumaine

The discussion raised the question of value added by IOCE for its members. It was agreed that IOCE need to be clear about what the practical and moral advantages of being a member of IOCE are; continue to support nascent evaluation networks; continue to share information and ideas; undertake translations; liaise among organisations; proactively search for members' needs; assess what other international organisations are giving to their members in order to provide different benefits.

7. Strategies To Overcome Resource Limitations

Moderator: Issaka Traore

The Board requested views on strategies that IOCE could implement to i) increase individual membership ii) increase institutional membership iii) expand IOCE human resource base and iv) use its potential in the global community of evaluators. The discussion proposed that i) IOCE identify reasons why some associations are not members and proactively facilitate their involvement. ii) to overcome the human resources limitations, for the member association to appoint someone to implement a specific task if the official representative has time constraints. ii) to overcome financial resource limitations develop new strategies.

8. Facilitating Better Communication

Moderator: Soma De Silva

This topic was discussed only briefly. The Newsletter that was started would continue as one medium of communication and other channels including the EvaLeaders listserv would be explored.

9. IOCE Governance Model

Moderator: Frankie Jordan

The moderator provided an overview of the IOCE governance model: an 11 member volunteer Board of Trustees from which a 4 member Executive Committee is selected, and limited administrative support through The Willow Group in Ottawa, Canada. Several issues were identified for discussion:

- Implementing a succession plan to ensure corporate memory and progress towards IOCE's goals.
- Assessing the required support services and identifying the best ways to obtain them.
- Operationalizing the IOCE 2011 Work Plan and examining the 2010 Financial Report, both posted on the IOCE website.

During the AGM there were no member comments on the current governance model of IOCE.

10. Other topics introduced by participants

Several members commented that these topics required more discussion time than could be allocated during the AGM. The Board responded by inviting members to post their thoughts on the IOCE-EvaLeaders@YahooGroups.com discussion forum for continued discussion. questions and provide comments.

President Oumoul Ba Tall closed the virtual AGM on December 22nd, thanking all participants and committing IOCE and the incoming Board to consider all their ideas.

For more information on the AGM visit www.IOCE.net.



IOCE Board members Recognized

AEA awards Alva and Gunnar Myrdal Practice Award to Jim Rugh

We are proud of the achievements of two of our Board members who received recognition for their outstanding contributions to the field of evaluation.

The American Evaluation Association at its 2010 annual conference in San Antonio honoured IOCE Treasurer (now Vice President) Jim Rugh with AEA's Alva and Gunnar Myrdal Practice Award.

The chair of AEA's Awards Committee Tarek Azzam highlighted that "Among the many factors recognized were his two decades of sustained service to the American Evaluation Association and to our field; his exceptional leadership in developing guidelines for helping communities to become more involved in evaluation; for developing evaluation capacity through his practice and for encouraging transparency and stakeholder involvement in his work,"

Michael Quinn Patton paid a glowing tribute to Jim: "As evaluation methodologists and model-builders have immersed themselves in academic debates, I've seen Jim quietly but forcefully make an observation or offer a comment that moved the discussion back to the issue of how evaluation would actually contribute to improving the lives of people in need. This has been his constant, unwavering commitment. It is the basis of this work on and passion about RealWorld Evaluation."

EES awards honorary life time membership to Burt Perrin

Burt Perrin, past VP of IOCE and Secretary of EES, was awarded an honorary life time membership in EES in recognition of his outstanding contribution to EES and to evaluation. The preface to the motion that was unanimously endorsed by the EES Board appreciated Burt's tireless contribution to the development of EES and evolution of evaluation in Europe and globally: 'He has selflessly and

continuously given of his time, intelligence, insights, vast knowledge and considerable experience to further our Society and the quality of evaluation theory and practise. He embodies many of the ideals evaluation aspires to."

Congratulations Jim! Congratulations Burt! IOCE is proud of both of you.



News of IOCE Members

European Evaluation Society International Conference

The EES international conference held in Prague in October last year brought together over 700 participants providing an excellent opportunity for learning and networking.

IOCE would like to thank the organizers for affording the opportunity to advocate for its work as well as for the space provided for a face to face Board meeting to be held.

A Chinese Evaluation Network was formed in late 2010. The purpose of the Network is to provide a forum for evaluators in China to support one another and promote further development of evaluation in China. About 25 professionals from the academia, government and private sector, have joined the Network. The Network held its first meeting on January 3, 2011. For more information about the Chinese Evaluation Network, please contact Laura Pan Luo at luopan@hotmail.com.

Evaluation Conclave in South Asia

The Evaluation Conclave organized by the Community of Evaluators (COE) held in New Delhi October last year was an unequivocal success. Nearly 250 participants attended the



A key note address at the Evaluation Conclave



Highlights of the IOCE Board Meeting in Prague

The IOCE Board met in Prague 8-9 October right after the EES conference. Since the terms of many representatives from associations around the world were coming to an end, the major item of business was to address the transition to new Board members and elect new officers.

The new members of the IOCE Board of Trustees are the following:

Elected for terms beginning in 2011:

Soma De Silva of Sri Lanka (representing Asia and continuing from 2010) as President

Jim Rugh of USA (during his extended year as AEA Representative and continuing from 2008) as Vice President

Nermine Wally of Egypt (AfrEA) as Secretary
Francois Dumaine of Canada (CES) as Treasurer.

Issaka Herman Traore (Burkina Faso/AfrEA)
Murray Sanders (UK/EES),
Lyuba Palyvoda (Ukraine/IPEN),
Marcia Paterno Joppert (Brazil/ReLAC).

Members continuing from the 2010 Board.

Sergio Martinic (Chile/ReLAC)
Scott Bayley (Australia/AES)

The Board observed a number of issues that require attention in the 2011 work plan. These included the need to bring about a greater results focus, enhance the value added by IOCE, consideration of a permanent operations manager, strengthen the links with regional and other networks, and improve the visibility of IOCE.

In the light of the above observations, the 2010 work plan was reviewed and suggestions were discussed for the 2011 workplan.

The Board also discussed arrangements for holding the 2010 AGM (see report at the top of this newsletter).

Much appreciation was expressed for the committed and excellent leadership provided in the past several years by Oumoul Ba Tall of Mauritania (President), Burt Perrin of France (VP) and Frankie Jordan (Secretary). The Board was happy to have Jean Quesnel join the meeting as a Senior Advisor.

Conclave benefiting from its key note addresses, panel discussions, professional development workshops, coffee shops and other well organized events.

IOCE is happy to have collaborated with the Evaluation Conclave through Jim Rugh and Soma De Silva co-facilitating a workshop on RealWorld Evaluation.

Congratulations to the organizers of the Evaluation Conclave.



Upcoming Events

The Australasian Evaluation Society 2011 Conference is announced. It will be held in Hilton Sydney from 29th August to 2 September 2011, starting with workshops on 29-30 August. This year's theme is Evaluation and Influence.

Registration, call for abstracts, and application for the conference are now open.

The American Evaluation Society will hold its 2011 Evaluation Conference from 2 to 5 November 2011 at Anaheim, California, USA.

This year's presidential theme is "Values and Valuing". Over 2500 delegates are expected to attend this 25th anniversary conference of AES.

The 3rd Sri Lanka Evaluation Association (SLEvA) International Conference is scheduled for 6-9 June 2011 in Colombo Sri Lanka. There will be professional development workshops on 5th and 6th. The conference theme is "Evaluation for policy and Action"

SLEvA invites abstracts of papers, workshops, panels and exhibitions.

For more information: www.sleva.lk

IOCE Board of Trustees Meet in Prague



What's Involved in “Rigorous Impact Evaluation”?

IOCE addresses the RCT controversy
Jim Rugh

Being a professional evaluator could be said to involve the art of appropriately combining and bridging the paradigms, skills and needs of researchers, investigative reporters, program managers, funders, community participants and the general public, among others. It is challenging to make convincing cases to a variety of such stakeholders as to whether or not, or how well, a program met its objectives, or even whether or not those objectives were relevant to improving the quality of life of the intended beneficiaries in a sustainable way. To attempt to conduct an impact evaluation of a program using only one pre-determined tool is to suffer from myopia, which is unfortunate. To prescribe to donors and senior managers of major agencies that there is a single preferred design and method for conducting all impact evaluations can and has had unfortunate consequences for all of those who are involved in the design, implementation and evaluation of international development programs.

Certainly more impact evaluations need to be conducted. And they need to assess not only changes in the target population but also the counterfactual. But we also need to expand the elements of evaluation that need to be a part of 'rigorous' impact evaluation. These go beyond randomly assigning subjects into treatment and control groups, then (typically) just measuring

fairly direct cause-effect correlations of quantifiable short-term outcome indicators within a relatively simple blueprint logic model, on the assumption that once tested 'best practice' recipes can subsequently be replicated in a mechanical way elsewhere, under different conditions. In the real world most situations and programs are complicated, multi-faceted in terms of actors, interventions and evolving conditions. Rigorous impact evaluation should include (but is not limited to): 1) thorough consultation with and involvement of a variety of stakeholders, 2) articulating a comprehensive logic model, 3) getting agreement on desirable 'impact level' goals and indicators, 4) adapting evaluation design as well as data collection and analysis methodologies to respond to the questions being asked, 5) adequately monitoring and documenting the process throughout the life of the program being evaluated, 6) using a variety of methods to triangulate evidence being collected, 7) estimating the potential sustainability of whatever changes have been observed, 8) communicating the findings in useful ways to different audiences, etc. (The point is that the list of what's required for 'rigorous' impact evaluation goes way beyond simply randomization.)

To address these concerns IOCE will be collecting and making available on its website links to websites and reference materials that contribute to a more holistic perspective on impact evaluation. Readers of this newsletter are invited to send suggestions for additions to that collection to ioce@earthlink.net.

To get started, some of the sites we are already aware of include the following (search for “impact evaluation” within these) :

- www.povertyactionlab.org, www.cgdev.org,
- www.worldbank.org/ieg/nonie/,
- www.3ieimpact.org,
- web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPI/CS, www.ifad.org/evaluation/,
- http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docger/evaluation/evalsed/sourcebooks/method_tech_niques/index_en.htm,
- <http://aidwatchers.com/2010/12/is-it-ok-to-do-randomized-experiments-on-people-nyc-edition>,
- <http://knol.google.com/k/impact-evaluation-when-it-should-and-should-not-be-used#>,
- <http://betterevaluation.org/> (more to come) ...



Network of Evaluation Societies in Europe

Murray Saunders

In Europe over the last ten years the evaluation community has become more aware of the way evaluation cultures vary considerably from country to country. There is diversity on the demand side, whether evaluation is actually sought and built into civic society. In some countries it is done routinely, in others demand is – apart from mandatory evaluation of EU-funded programs – nearly nonexistent. The evaluation of EU-funded projects and programs was an eminent driver for evaluation capacity building until recently.

When the European Evaluation Society (EES) was founded in 1992 no national evaluation societies or networks existed. The primary goal of the EES was to promote theory, practice and utilization of high quality evaluation especially, but not exclusively, within the European countries. “This goal is obtained by bringing together academics and practitioners from all over Europe and from any professional sector, thus creating a forum where all participants can benefit from the co-operation and bridge building.” The EES has by now around 400 individual members and 20 institutional Members.

Today 18 societies and networks can be identified in Europe. Sharing of experiences and practices as well as organizing training on national level were the main drivers for the establishment of national societies. In some cases the EES has helped national societies, especially at their beginning. The EU - as the main protagonist in evaluation in Europe- has significantly fostered the development of evaluation capacity and knowledge building in Europe which linked both national governmental persons and agencies.

At the EES Conference in Berlin (2004) a first session with the presidents of national societies took place. In 2008 some evaluation societies in Europe expressed their strong interest in exchange and the SFE initiated in cooperation with the EES a gathering within their pre-conference program on the 2nd of July 2008 in Strasbourg. This meeting was followed by a further meeting in Lisbon in October 2008 at the EES international conference at which the broad approach and structure of a network of evaluation societies in Europe was developed. Further meetings in Muenster in Germany and Prague in 2010 developed the idea and established a programme of activity. The structure that emerged placed the EES as a core

partner with one other European society or network as a partner for a two year term. To date these partners have been the SFE (The French Evaluation Society), DeGEval (The German Evaluation Society). The next partner will be the Italian Evaluation Association.

Regional networks of this kind form a natural connection with a global network like the IOCE. It should be a strategic priority that we work closely with them to maximise the reach and effect of our work.



IOCE Database of Evaluation Associations grows

The number of organizations of professional evaluators on the IOCE database (see the IOCE website) continues to grow! We now know of 93 formal associations/societies or informal networks in 77 countries, plus 21 regional or international organizations, bringing the total count to 114. Though we only have membership numbers from 39 organizations, they report a total of over 17,000 individual members. While we recognize that many evaluators are members of more than one organization, so there is some duplication in that count, the fact that we do not have membership numbers from 75 groups makes us guess that the total number of persons considering themselves professional evaluators is even higher than 17,000.



For information about IOCE visit
www.IOCE.net