#Eval4Action

youth in
evaluation
be a champion!

Standards for enhancing meaningful engagement of youth in evaluation

Youth organizations

2024-2025

Decade of
EVALUATION
for action

#Eval4Action

Contents

Foreword

With the world population at 8 billion, harnessing demographic shifts is critical to accelerating the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and responding to global crises including the climate emergency. To achieve an inclusive and sustainable world, it is crucial that we create opportunities and spaces for youth participation in all spheres, including evaluation. The outcome of the Summit of the Future, the "Pact for the Future", including the Declaration for Future Generations and the Global Digital Compact, increasingly highlight the importance of youth participation at decision making as critical to advance multilateralism for the achievement of the SDGs.

Aligned to this vision, the Eval4Action campaign – co-led by the UNFPA Independent Evaluation Office, EvalYouth Global Network and the Global Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation, are leading a flagship initiative, Youth in Evaluation, launched in 2022. At this launch, the Executive Director of UNFPA, Dr Natalia Kanem, released a manifesto on meaningful engagement of youth in evaluation that has been globally well received. In 2024, there are about 1200 commitments to the manifesto, including from over 200 organizations.

Building on this global momentum, the Eval4Action campaign and its partners initiated the development of standards to enhance meaningful youth engagement in evaluation. Given the unique contexts of stakeholders, specific standards have been developed for six stakeholder groups: academia, governments, international organizations, the private sector, VOPEs/EvalYouth chapters and youth organizations. All six standards are available here.

These standards aim to enhance accountability and promote the effective engagement of youth in evaluation, thereby fulfilling the commitment outlined in the manifesto. These standards provide practical guidance and pathways for organizations of all types to achieve meaningful youth engagement in evaluation. The standards were launched at the Youth in Evaluation week (April 2023). In the first round of self-reporting on the standards in March 2024, 45 organizations assessed themselves on the six dimensions of the standards. Youth in Evaluation champions were selected based on the self-assessments and recognized at the second Youth in Evaluation week (July 2024).

The growing momentum and widespread adoption of these standards is incredibly encouraging. We're particularly excited that organizations are not only self-reporting on the standards, but actively using them to boost youth engagement practices

worldwide. This demonstrates the value of the standards as both a practical guide and an inspirational resource for those seeking to initiate or enhance their work in this vital area.

Regardless of whether an organization has signed the manifesto, we encourage all interested organizations to use the standards to strengthen their capacity to engage youth in all phases of evaluation. If you have questions regarding the use of the standards, please write to us at contact@eval4action.org.

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1. Background

i. What is the Youth in Evaluation initiative?

The United Nations Secretary-General's Our Common Agenda emphasizes the urgency of intergenerational solidarity in all areas as a key solution for the complex global challenges facing the world today. Building on this, the Summit of the Future's outcome, the "Pact for the Future," encompassing the Declaration for Future Generations and the Global Digital Compact, recognizes young people as crucial partners in decision-making. Their engagement is essential for strengthening multilateralism and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In this context, Eval4Action's Youth in Evaluation initiative calls upon the global evaluation community to commit to concrete action towards long-term, sustainable and meaningful engagement of young and emerging evaluators (YEEs), and youth at large, in evaluation by signing and implementing a manifesto.

The Youth in Evaluation manifesto, published in six languages, has been adopted widely, including by governments, international agencies, Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs), academia, youth organizations, the private sector and non-governmental organizations. The governments of Costa Rica, India, Kenya and Malawi have endorsed the manifesto. In addition, the ILO Evaluation Office, UNDP Independent Evaluation Office, UNESCO Evaluation Office, UNICEF Evaluation Office, UNFPA Independent Evaluation Office, World Bank Independent Evaluation Group, World Food Program Evaluation Office, Independent Evaluation Department of the Asian Development Bank, Independent Development Evaluation at the African Development Bank, and the Centers for Learning on Evaluations and Results (CLEAR) for Anglophone Africa, Francophone Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and South Asia have also adopted the manifesto. By adopting the manifesto, the organizations and individuals commit to undertake strategic and concerted efforts to build the capacities of YEEs and to engage youth and YEEs meaningfully in all stages of evaluation.

Sign the Youth in Evaluation manifesto!
Arabic | English | French | Russian | Spanish | Swahili
List of manifesto adoptees

ii. In what ways can the standards enhance youth engagement in evaluation?

The Youth in Evaluation initiative has mobilized a wide range of stakeholders, including academia, governments, international organizations, the private sector, Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs) and youth organizations, to adopt the manifesto to enhance youth engagement in evaluation. For real change to be achieved, the commitments in the manifesto must be translated into practice. To support stakeholders in identifying and implementing actions most suited to their context, specific standards have been developed for academia, governments, international organizations, the private sector, VOPEs and youth organizations. These standards serve as a tool for self-accountability and for initiating and improving practice for enhancing meaningful engagement of youth in evaluation. While the standards offer a range of actions to advance youth engagement in evaluation, stakeholders are not limited to these actions and can undertake additional measures as well.

This resource includes standards and an assessment guide for youth organizations to advance the meaningful engagement of youth in evaluation. Youth organizations in this context refer to local NGOs or non-profits that primarily work with and for young people through their programmes and services. The EvalYouth chapters, which are specifically focusing on young and emerging evaluators, are encouraged to use the standards available for VOPEs. The standards for academia, governments, international organizations, the private sector and VOPEs/EvalYouth chapters are available here.

iii. How were the standards developed?

The standards to enhance meaningful youth engagement in evaluation were co-created through intergenerational and participatory dialogues with six stakeholder groups: academia, governments, international organizations, the private sector, VOPEs and youth organizations. For each stakeholder group, a task force was established following self-nominations from across the world. The six task forces co-created the standards for their stakeholder group, following a highly inclusive process, through a series of consultative meetings from September 2022 to March 2023. In addition, the consultations served as an advocacy mechanism and networking platform for each stakeholder group. In 2024, the standards were updated based on the feedback received from the first round of self-reporting in 2023.

iv. What do the standards contain?

The standards for each stakeholder group cover six dimensions:

Dimension	Definition
1. Leadership and accountability	Leadership in the organization is committed to youth in evaluation.
2. Practice	The organization's evaluation guidelines and tools include youth participation in all evaluation phases, focusing on the diversity of youth.
3. Advocacy and capacity development	Governments and partners are mobilized to meaningfully engage youth in evaluation.
4. Knowledge management and communication	The value of engaging youth in evaluation through communications and knowledge management is promoted.
5. Human resources	Access of young professionals to the evaluation labour market is facilitated.
6. Financial resources	Necessary resources are allocated to support meaningful engagement of youth in evaluation in the annual budget.

In each of the six dimensions the standards are organized into four categories:

1. **Minimum requirement**
2. **Approaching minimum requirement**
3. **Meeting minimum requirement**
4. **Exceeding minimum requirement**

Section v contains guidance on rating each of the dimensions and overall assessment of the implementation of the standards for youth organizations.

v. How should the standards be used?

a. Generating internal support to implement the standards

Strong leadership, accountability and a comprehensive understanding of the standards are critical for the implementation of the standards in an organization. An organization, division or work unit can spearhead the implementation of the standards. In this regard, the following two steps are proposed:

1. Create organizational buy-in for the standard. Leadership commitment to youth in evaluation is a prerequisite to implementing the standards. Youth organizations interested in applying the standards in their operations should organize a meeting with key members and colleagues to raise awareness of the importance of enhancing youth engagement in evaluation and the role of standards in facilitating this. In addition, this is an opportunity to consult the team on how to implement the standards in the youth organization with active contributions from all units/colleagues.

2. Appoint a committee or focal point/s for coordination. The focal point/s or committee should ensure that the youth organization takes the necessary steps in implementing, monitoring and reporting progress related to the standards. While the focal point/s or committee focus on overall coordination, the implementation of the standards is the responsibility of the entire organization/division/work unit. The focal point/s or committee should also ensure that the implementation of the standards is incorporated into the organizational work plan, with clear roles and responsibilities.

b. Assessing and monitoring the uptake of the standards

Self-assessment and monitoring are key elements in the implementation of the standards and can help inform a youth organization's actions to enhance youth engagement in evaluation. Self-assessment and monitoring tools can be used to:

- Assess which requirements are already being met or practiced
- Identify gaps in meetings requirements
- Plan for meeting the remaining requirements.

The outcomes of the assessment can be presented to a wider audience in the organization for review and analysis and can be used for planning. The results can be shared in the organization's annual report and can also be used for awareness raising within the organization.

Youth organizations are requested to share the outcomes of their self-assessment with the Eval4Action campaign coordinator annually by 31 January each year, by writing to contact@eval4action.org. The information will help Eval4Action to analyze and report on the number of (anonymized) organizations that are approaching, meeting and exceeding the requirements, identify which requirements are most challenging to meet and provide guidance on how to accelerate the implementation of the standards. In addition, Eval4Action can support the sharing of best practices in using and assessing the standards.

2. Standards for youth organizations to meaningfully engage youth in evaluation

1. Leadership and accountability

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement
1.1 Organizational policy on youth in evaluation	1.1.1 The youth organization decides to draft and implement a policy on youth in evaluation	1.1.2 The youth organization drafts a policy on youth in evaluation	1.1.3 The youth organization implements a policy on youth in evaluation
1.2 The leadership team of the organization supports youth in evaluation	1.2.1 The youth organization raises awareness of the importance of youth in evaluation among the leadership team	1.2.2 At least 30% of members of the leadership team have good knowledge on the importance of engaging youth in evaluation	1.2.3 The members of the leadership team actively support decisions to include youth in evaluation
1.3 Commitment on youth in evaluation	1.3.1 The youth organization declares its commitment to meaningful engage youth in evaluation by signing the Youth in Evaluation manifesto	1.3.2 The youth organization takes action to deliver on the commitment	1.3.3 The youth organization reports the progress on the commitment

2. Practice

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement
2.1 Creation of opportunities for youth	2.1.1 The youth organization creates opportunities for youth engagement in all phases of evaluation	2.1.2 Opportunities for youth to engage in all phases of evaluation are made widely available	2.1.3 Youth apply for opportunities and engage in evaluation phases
2.2 Guidelines for terms of reference (ToR)	2.2.1 Guidelines on including young evaluators in evaluation ToR are developed	2.2.2 Guidelines on including young evaluators in evaluation ToR are made widely available	2.2.3 The youth organization applies guidelines on including young evaluators in evaluation ToR
2.3 Competencies for young evaluation professionals in different roles in evaluation	2.3.1 The youth organization identifies/ adopts competencies for young evaluators in different roles in evaluation	2.3.2 The adopted competencies are made widely available for use within the youth organization and its evaluation unit/ function	2.3.3 The adopted competencies are used by the youth organization in hiring, capacity-building and the promotion of young professionals
2.4 Youth from diverse backgrounds are considered for evaluation opportunities	2.4.1 Evaluation designs consider diversity in youth engagement	2.4.2 Youth from diverse backgrounds participate in evaluations as informants	2.4.3 Youth from diverse backgrounds have the opportunity to be evaluation team members

3. Advocacy and capacity development

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement
3.1 Advocacy for youth participation in evaluation	3.1.1 The youth organization raises awareness among government and other organizations of the importance of youth in evaluation	3.1.2 The youth organization develops partnership agreements with public and private institutions to enhance engagement of youth in evaluation	3.1.3 Joint initiatives are undertaken by youth organization and collaborative partners for capacity-building in youth
3.2 Organizational capacity for mentoring youth	3.2.1 The youth organization identifies mentoring opportunities for youth in evaluation	3.2.2 Youth organizations promote internal and external mentoring opportunities for youth in evaluation	3.2.3 Youth organizations undertake the mentoring of youth in evaluation

4. Knowledge management and communication

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement
4.1 Creation of a knowledge sharing platform[1]	4.1.1 A user-friendly and accessible platform is created by the youth organization for and with young people to discuss and share knowledge, skills, best practices and lessons learned in evaluation	4.1.2 The youth organization mobilizes the participation of youth in the knowledge sharing platform	4.1.3 Youth engage with the platform to exchange knowledge and promote peer learning and sustain its usage over time
4.2 Access to communication and knowledge management tools[2]	4.2.1 The youth organization develops communication and knowledge management tools for youth to share their knowledge and experience	4.2.2 Youth have the opportunity to use the developed communication and knowledge management tools through an onboarding process	4.2.3 The youth organization engages youth in peer learning through networking, learning fora, social media, websites and other media

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[1] This refers to a dedicated space, which can be online (e.g., a social media group, online repository, or forum) or offline (e.g., regular meetings, workshops), designed for young people to connect, share evaluation experiences, learn from each other, and access valuable resources. Offline knowledge management platforms provide opportunities for in-person interaction and learning, which can be particularly valuable for networking and building relationships.

[2] This can include tools such as dedicated internal online forums (Slack, Whatsapp group etc), a dedicated shared drive to store resources, content creation software for video editing, designing, podcasting among others.

5. Human resources

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement
5.1 Hiring young professionals in evaluation roles	5.1.1 The youth organization's human resources policy includes a focus on integration of young professionals into evaluation roles	5.1.2 The youth organization actively hires young professionals in evaluation roles	5.1.3 At least 25% of evaluation roles in the youth organization are set aside for young professionals [3]
5.2 Promoting internship opportunities	5.2.1 The youth organization supports other organizations to introduce internship programmes on evaluation for youth (university students, new graduates, etc.)	5.2.2 The youth organization partners with other organizations to provide internships	5.2.3 The youth organization integrates youth interns into their evaluation teams based on their performance in the internship programme
5.3 Reaching out to youth for evaluation-related jobs	5.3.1 The youth organization collaborates with other networks to reach out to young professionals about evaluation jobs	5.3.2 The youth organization actively searches for candidates for evaluation jobs through other networks	5.3.3 Young professionals are hired for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) positions by the youth organization

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[3] Young evaluation professionals are defined as under 35 years of age and with less than 5 years of experience in evaluation.

6. Financial resources

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement
6.1 Resource mobilization for youth in evaluation	6.1.1 The youth organization seeks funding from potential donors, such as philanthropic organizations, for youth in evaluation	6.1.2 The youth organization actively approaches potential donors with proposals for funding the participation of youth in evaluation	6.1.3 A regular funding stream is established for youth in evaluation
6.2 Financial allocation for youth in evaluation	6.2.1 The youth organization's policy includes financial allocation for youth in evaluation	6.2.2 The youth organization allocates a percentage (recommendation: 7%) of their budget towards capacity-building for youth in M&E	6.2.3 The youth organization sustains its financial allocation for capacity building for youth in evaluation for at least 2 consecutive years

3. Guide for assessing the implementation of the standards

This assessment guide explains how to assess the standards for youth organizations.

i. Assessment categories

The standards for youth organizations cover six dimensions, namely, leadership and accountability, practice, advocacy and capacity development, knowledge management and communication, human resources and financial resources.

In each of these six dimensions the standards are organized into four categories – minimum requirement, approaching minimum requirement, meeting minimum requirement, and exceeding minimum requirement – displaying a spectrum.

The minimum requirement describes what needs to be in place within the youth organization to advance youth engagement in evaluation. "Approaching" the minimum requirement describes meeting the initial level of the requirement. "Meeting" the minimum requirement describes meeting the requirement to a greater degree than "approaching" the minimum requirement. "Exceeding" the minimum requirement describes meeting the requirement at an advanced level, and is the highest level expected, although youth organizations are free to achieve levels beyond this.

ii. Rating the standards

A score for each dimension and category can be assigned, as per the tables ahead. If the youth organization does not meet the criteria for "approaching", "meeting" or "exceeding" a minimum requirement, the minimum requirement is considered to be "missing" and the youth organization scores 0 points on that dimension. If the youth organization fulfills the criterion for "approaching" the minimum requirement, it scores 1 point. "Meeting" the minimum requirement results in a score of 2 points and "exceeding" the minimum requirement results in a score of 3 points. If a youth organization fulfills the criteria for both "approaching" and "meeting" the minimum requirement, it scores 3 points (1 + 2 points). If all criteria are met, the youth organization scores 6 points (1 + 2 + 3 points).

For example, in the leadership and accountability dimension, if the organization raises awareness on evaluation among the leadership of the organization, it scores 1 point. If at least 30% of the leadership team has good knowledge on evaluation,

the organization scores 2 points. If the leadership team actively supports decisions on youth in evaluation, the organization scores 3 points. If the organization has 1.2.1, 1.2.2 and 1.2.3 in place, it scores 6 points. The total number of points for each category and dimension should be recorded in the final column of each table.

The organization can share documents that support their assessment efforts and facilitate the cross-fertilization of knowledge and the sharing of best practices.

iii. Rating tables for the standards for youth organizations

Download the assessment sheet here.

1. Leadership and accountability

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement	Total points
1.1 Organizational policy on youth in evaluation	1.1.1 The youth organization decides to draft and implement a policy on youth in evaluation	1.1.2 The youth organization drafts a policy on youth in evaluation	1.1.3 The youth organization implements a policy on youth in evaluation	
0	1	2	3	
1.2 The leadership team of the organization supports youth in evaluation	1.2.1 The youth organization raises awareness of the importance of youth in evaluation among the leadership team	1.2.2 At least 30% of members of the leadership team have good knowledge on the importance of engaging youth in evaluation	1.2.3 The members of the leadership team actively support decisions to include youth in evaluation	
0	1	2	3	
1.3 Commitment on youth in evaluation	1.3.1 The youth organization declares its commitment to meaningful engage youth in evaluation by signing the Youth in Evaluation manifesto	1.3.2 The youth organization takes action to deliver on the commitment	1.3.3 The youth organization reports the progress on the commitment	
0	1	2	3	
			Total points for leadership and accountability	

2. Practice

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement	Total points
2.1 Creation of opportunities for youth	2.1.1 The youth organization creates opportunities for youth engagement in all phases of evaluation	2.1.2 Opportunities for youth to engage in all phases of evaluation are made widely available	2.1.3 Youth apply for opportunities and engage in evaluation phases	
0	1	2	3	
2.2 Guidelines for terms of reference (ToR)	2.2.1 Guidelines on including young evaluators in evaluation ToR are developed	2.2.2 Guidelines on including young evaluators in evaluation ToR are made widely available	2.2.3 The youth organization applies guidelines on including young evaluators in evaluation ToR	
0	1	2	3	
2.3 Competencies for young evaluation professionals in different roles in evaluation	2.3.1 The youth organization identifies/ adopts competencies for young evaluators in different roles in evaluation	2.3.2 The adopted competencies are made widely available for use within the youth organization and its evaluation unit/ function	2.3.3 The adopted competencies are used by the youth organization in hiring, capacity-building and the promotion of young professionals	
0	1	2	3	
2.4 Youth from diverse backgrounds are considered for evaluation opportunities	2.4.1 Evaluation designs consider diversity in youth engagement	2.4.2 Youth from diverse backgrounds participate in evaluations as informants	2.4.3 Youth from diverse backgrounds have the opportunity to be evaluation team members	
0	1	2	3	
			Total points for practice	

3. Advocacy and capacity development

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement	Total points
3.1 Advocacy for youth participation in evaluation	3.1.1 The youth organization raises awareness among government and other organizations of the importance of youth in evaluation	3.1.2 The youth organization develops partnership agreements with public and private institutions to enhance engagement of youth in evaluation	3.1.3 Joint initiatives are undertaken by youth organizations and collaborative partners for capacity-building in youth	
0	1	2	3	
3.2 Organizational capacity for mentoring youth	3.2.1 The youth organization identifies mentoring opportunities for youth in evaluation	3.2.2 Youth organizations promote internal and external mentoring opportunities for youth in evaluation	3.2.3 Youth organizations undertake the mentoring of youth in evaluation	
0	1	2	3	
		Total points for advocacy and capacity development		

4. Knowledge management and communication

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement	Total points
4.1 Creation of a knowledge sharing platform	4.1.1 A user-friendly and accessible platform is created by the youth organization for and with young people to discuss and share knowledge, skills, best practices and lessons learned in evaluation	4.1.2 The youth organization mobilizes the participation of youth in the knowledge sharing platform	4.1.3 Youth engage with the platform to exchange knowledge and promote peer learning and sustain its usage over time	
0	1	2	3	
4.2 Access to communication and knowledge management tools	4.2.1 The youth organization develops communication and knowledge management tools for youth to share their knowledge and experience	4.2.2 Youth have the opportunity to use the developed communication and knowledge management tools through an onboarding process	4.2.3 The youth organization engages youth in peer learning through networking, learning fora, social media, websites and other media	
0	1	2	3	
Total points for knowledge management and communication				

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6. Financial resources

Minimum requirement	Approaching minimum requirement	Meeting minimum requirement	Exceeding minimum requirement	Total points
6.1 Resource mobilization for youth in evaluation	6.1.1 The youth organization seeks funding from potential donors, such as philanthropic organizations, for youth in evaluation	6.1.2 The youth organization actively approaches potential donors with proposals for funding the participation of youth in evaluation	6.1.3 A regular funding stream is established for youth in evaluation	
0	1	2	3	
6.2 Financial allocation for youth in evaluation	6.2.1 The youth organization's policy includes financial allocation for youth in evaluation	6.2.2 The youth organization allocates a percentage (recommendation: 7%) of their budget towards capacity-building for youth in M&E	6.2.3 The youth organization sustain its financial allocation for capacity building for youth in evaluation for atleast 2 consecutive years	
0	1	2	3	
			Total points for financial resources	

iii. Overall performance of the youth organization

Once the rating is determined for each dimension, the summary scores can be added to the below table to analyze the current status of the youth organization in terms of meaningful engagement of youth in evaluation. This analysis will be helpful for the youth organization to understand which dimensions are stronger and which need further attention, so that necessary actions can be planned.

#	Dimension	Score
1	Leadership and accountability	
2	Practice	
3	Advocacy and capacity development	
4	Knowledge management and communication	
5	Human resources	
6	Financial resources	
	Total	

The **overall performance** of the organization can be determined using the categories below:

- Overall rating 0 to 24 – missing minimum requirement
- Overall rating 25 to 48 – approaching minimum requirement
- Overall rating from 49 to 72 – meeting minimum requirement
- Overall rating from 73 to 96 – exceeding minimum requirement

Once the overall performance has been determined, the organization can make recommendations for future improvement, which can be addressed in the organization's strategic plan. The analysis and recommendations of the assessment can be included in the youth organization's annual report and subsequent progress reports. Eval4Action recommends that the assessment is conducted annually by the organization.

iv. Next steps and improvement plan

The leadership of the youth organization can use the outcome of the assessment for decision-making. Based on the analysis and recommendations of the assessment, the leaders of the youth organization can decide on the next steps and prepare an improvement plan that advances youth engagement in evaluation.

Please write to contact@eval4action.org to provide any feedback on the standards.