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GLOCAL EVALUATION WEEK 2026

Evaluation, Evidence, and Trust in the Age of AI

June 1-5, 2026



Evaluation in Times of Uncertainty

We gather for **Glocal Evaluation Week 2026** at a time of profound uncertainty. Across the globe, political volatility is testing the foundations of evidence-based governance. Funding for evaluation faces growing pressures. The politicization of data and science threatens the legitimacy of evidence itself. Public trust in institutions —and in the facts they present—continues to erode.

At the same time, **artificial intelligence (AI)** is transforming how information is created, analyzed, and consumed. AI-generated content is now produced at an unprecedented scale, making it harder to distinguish credible evidence from fabrication. The same tools that promise to enhance evaluative practice could also accelerate the erosion of trust in its findings, while AI's promise of instant, comprehensive answers may raise uncomfortable questions about whether rigorous evaluation is still needed at all.

Our answer is unequivocal: rigorous evaluation is more essential, not less. When political decision-making becomes volatile, evaluation provides stability, accountability, and a crucial check against arbitrary power. When resources become constrained, it helps guide smarter choices about where to invest. When public discourse grows polarized, evaluation offers the common ground that only credible, independent evidence can provide. The question is not whether evaluation is needed, but **how the field can be strengthened to remain resilient, relevant, and trusted—and how we ensure that AI serves evaluation's purpose rather than undermines it.**

This is the challenge Glocal Evaluation Week 2026 invites the global evaluation community to take up together.

The Central Question

How should the evaluation profession respond to AI —embracing its potential while safeguarding trust?

Navigating this moment requires both integrity—ensuring that ethical standards, methodological rigor, and human judgment remain central to evaluation practice—and intentionality—making deliberate choices about which tools to adopt, when, why and with what safeguards. It is not about resisting change or chasing novelty, but about adapting wisely in service of evaluation's fundamental purpose: generating credible evidence to inform better decisions.

A Framework for the Conversation

To support structured dialogue, the **Global Evaluation Initiative (GEI)** offers a conceptual framework that organizes thinking about AI in evaluation around three complementary perspectives:

Evidence needs 1

What new types of questions, data, and contexts does AI enable us to address? How do AI applications align with different stages of the program/policy cycle—from understanding problems, to designing interventions, to monitoring and assessing outcomes?

Workflow enhancements 2

Where can AI genuinely improve how we work—addressing bottlenecks in data collection, reducing manual processing burdens, enabling pattern recognition at scale, or improving how we communicate findings? And where might apparent efficiencies create new problems or compromise quality?

Capability development 3

What skills, knowledge, and ethical frameworks do evaluators and evaluation institutions need to work responsibly with AI—including the critical judgment to **know when not to use it?**

This framework, detailed in GEI's draft working paper "Navigating AI and Digitalization in M&E", is offered as a starting point—to be enriched, challenged, and refined through the collective insights shared during Glocal Evaluation Week 2026.



Conference Sub-Themes

Glocal 2026 invites contributions organized around four sub-themes. These are intended to catalyze dialogue, not constrain it. Event organizers are welcome to propose sessions on any monitoring and evaluation (M&E) topic, including methods, capacity development, evidence use, or other areas of evaluation practice.

1

The Changing Landscape

How is AI reshaping the evaluation field—and how is evaluation's role evolving in a world where evidence itself is contested?

This sub-theme invites contributions that map the terrain: examining how different evaluation traditions, methodological approaches, and institutional contexts are responding to technological and political change, and what these patterns suggest about where the field is heading.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What does AI mean for evaluation as a way of knowing?
- How are commissioners, practitioners, policy makers and affected communities experiencing these shifts?
- What challenges and opportunities arise for the future of evaluation?
- What can evaluation learn from how other fields are navigating similar challenges?

2

Practical applications of AI in Evaluation

Which applications of AI add real value in evaluation —and under what conditions?

This sub-theme explores the practical ways AI expands evaluation capabilities—enabling new questions, accessing novel data sources, working in challenging contexts, and improving processes from data collection through to dissemination. Participants will share experiences with innovative applications and workflow enhancements, examining what genuinely improves evaluation quality and efficiency versus what creates new problems or compromises rigor.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- How does AI add clear value in evaluation? Which problems does it actually solve, for whom, and under what conditions? And where do apparent gains fall short of expectations?
- What strategic approaches are organizations using to integrate AI, and what results are they seeing?

3

Ethics, Standards, and Human Judgment

What principles, practices, and safeguards should guide AI use in evaluation?

In an environment where trust in evidence is fragile, the integrity of evaluation practice is paramount. This sub-theme addresses the normative dimensions: identifying and mitigating algorithmic bias, ensuring transparency and accountability, protecting privacy and data rights, and preserving the irreplaceable role of human expertise in contextual understanding, stakeholder engagement, and evaluative reasoning.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- How should professional standards evolve?
- What competencies do evaluators need to use AI responsibly—and to recognize when it shouldn't be used?
- What institutional frameworks or approaches support responsible practice?
- How do we maintain evaluation's independence and credibility in an AI-augmented world?

4

AI for Complex Global Challenges

How can AI-enhanced evaluative practice better serve efforts to address the world's most pressing and complex problems?

Climate change, systemic inequality, and fragility share characteristics that make them particularly challenging to evaluation: long time horizons, complex causality, politically sensitive contexts, and populations whose voices are often marginalized in evidence-generating processes. These are also domains where the stakes of getting AI wrong—perpetuating bias, missing context, or enabling surveillance—are especially high.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- Can AI help us evaluate interventions in complex systems and contexts?
- How might AI-enhanced methods better surface marginalized perspectives or detect patterns invisible to traditional approaches—and what risks does this create?
- What does responsible AI use look like when working in fragile, sensitive, or politically contested contexts?

About Glocal Evaluation Week

Glocal Evaluation Week is an annual knowledge-sharing event connecting a global community across sectors and regions to discuss evaluation. Each year, thousands of participants from around the world attend in-person and virtual events to exchange insights on a wide range of M&E topics. By fostering discussions on M&E, Glocal inspires and strengthens a worldwide movement of individuals and organizations committed to using evidence-based practices to improve lives. Since 2019, Glocal has hosted thousands of events across six continents and is now recognized as one of the world's largest M&E knowledge-sharing initiatives. The 2025 edition on the theme of Evaluation for a Better Future: Environmental Sustainability, Inclusion, and Peace engaged more than 16,000 registered participants.

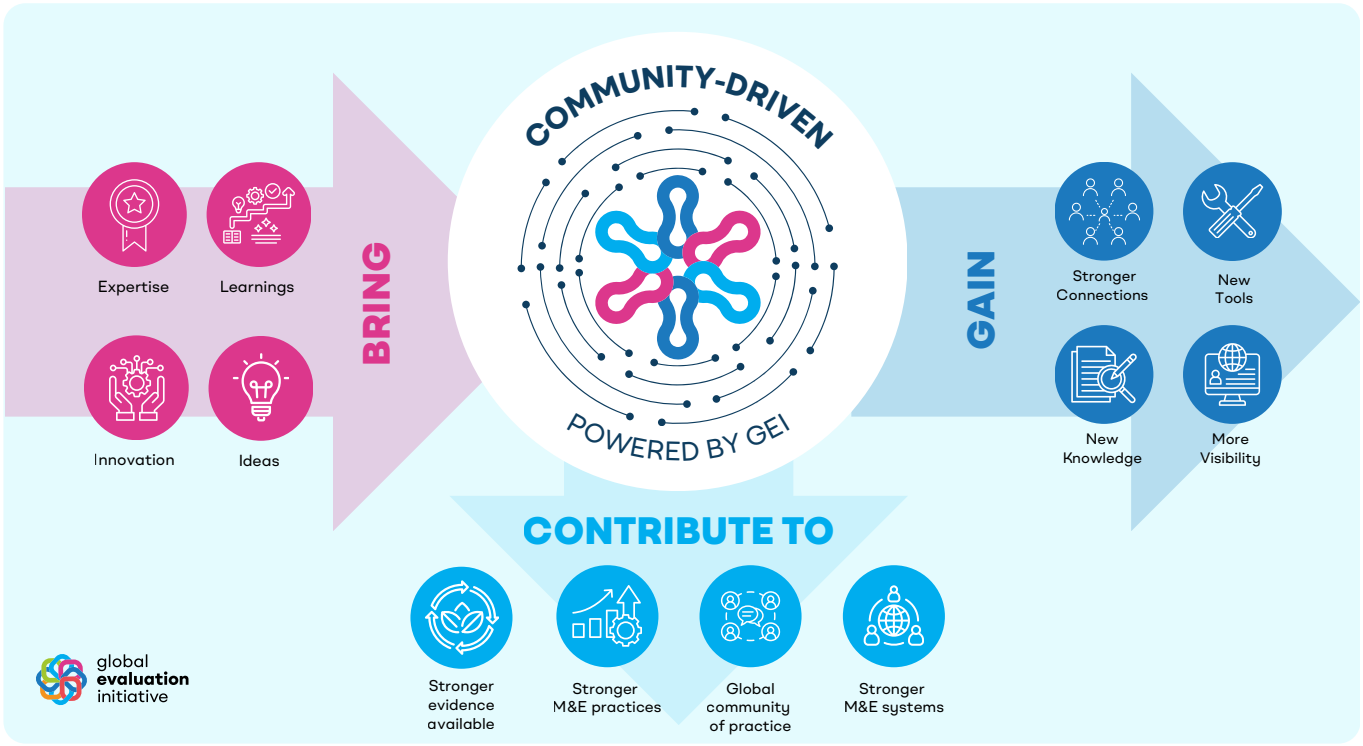
Participants and event organizers include international organizations, national and subnational M&E bodies, government entities at various levels, decision-makers, evaluation commissioners, voluntary organizations for professional evaluation, academics, researchers, and students—all connecting to share, learn, and collaborate. By participating, attendees not only gain knowledge and connections but actively contribute to building the evaluation field itself.

Glocal Evaluation Week 2026 is convened by the **Global Evaluation Initiative**, a network dedicated to strengthening national M&E systems and promoting evidence use in governance and policy making. Glocal is implemented jointly with the **Centers for Learning on Evaluation and Results (CLEARs)**, GEI's implementing partners, which play a pivotal role in supporting Glocal events in regions.

Glocal Evaluation Week and BetterEvaluation are community-driven platforms catalyzing evaluation capacity development worldwide.

Your participation strengthens the global evaluation community.





How to Participate

Glocal 2026 will take place during the week of June 1–5.
The call for proposals will open for one month starting on February 26, 2026.

Session formats can include presentations, roundtables or panel discussions, trainings, workshops, and more. Glocal 2026 organizers are welcome to host in-person, virtual, or hybrid events.

Event proposals should be **uploaded in English, Spanish, French, or Portuguese** at www.glocalevalweek.org following the guidelines provided on the platform.

Organizers will receive confirmation that their event has been accepted by **April 30, 2026**, at the latest.

Open call: While this year's theme focuses on AI in evaluation, event organizers are welcome to propose sessions on any M&E topic. The themes above are intended to inspire and organize—not limit—contributions.



Join us in June 2026 as we explore how to adapt evaluation practice wisely—enhancing our capacity while preserving what makes evaluation valuable.



For more information:
www.glocalevalweek.org | GEI@worldbank.org