

## CONCEPT NOTE 18 April 2019

**Award competition initiated by the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD, supported by the Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) of the World Bank Group and hosted and managed by the International Development Evaluation Association IDEAS**

### **“Evaluating development interventions for Transformational Change”**

#### **Short title:**

#### **“Transformational Change Award”**

#### **I. Background info**

1. **What:** A biennial award competition for evaluations of development interventions that promote or result in transformational change. The award relates to evaluative work that is directly and explicitly linked to the sustainable development goals (SDGs).
2. **When:** Every 2 years, for 10 years. The first award competition will take place at the IDEAS Global Assembly in October 2019.
3. **Budget:** The award is generously supported by the IOE and IEG. Entry fees may be considered in the future, pending an interim assessment (see paragraphs 25 and 38).
4. **Target:** Evaluators or evaluation teams from or commissioned by multilateral- and bilateral organizations, not for profit organizations (NGOs, foundations), academic institutions, the private sector and Government departments, from all over the world. To avoid conflict of interest, the IDEAS Board, IEG and IOE staff will not be able to participate.
5. **What will be awarded:** The evaluation, not the intervention, through the evaluator or evaluation team responsible for the evaluation.
6. **Goal:** Create an incentive for conducting evaluations that promote or report on transformational change and contribute to the achievement of the sustainable development goals (SDGs).
7. **Objectives:**
  - To award and recognize successful evaluations and their evaluators;
  - To enhance awareness and understanding among different stakeholder groups (evaluators, commissioners, decision makers, operational staff, the general public) of the discipline of evaluation and its role in generating knowledge for learning and accountability;

- To make evaluators aware of each other's contribution, build on previous experiences and develop best practices regarding transformational change evaluations;
  - To garner support for transformational change for the SDGs from a wider society;
- and
- To increase the visibility of IOE/IFAD, IEG/World Bank Group and IDEAS and create a buzz towards IDEAS Global Assemblies.

## II. Incentives to organize an award competition

8. **New opportunities and contacts** – An awards competition provides great potential for networking, establishing partnerships and for new evaluation opportunities.
9. **The role of evaluation** – An award will raise the profile of the discipline of evaluation and its role in the accountability and learning processes.
10. **Visibility for IOE/IFAD, IEG/World Bank Group and IDEAS** – An awards competition will provide exposure to IEG and IOE during the IDEAS Global Assembly, but it will also generate Internet buzz, media coverage, shares, likes and discussions on social networks.
11. **Promotion of good evaluation work and learning** – It will provide insight into international evaluative trends and will promote learning on how transformational change takes shape and can be promoted.
12. **Good cause** – By organizing this event, IOE, IEG and IDEAS will raise awareness on transformational change and contribute to the achievement of the SDGs.

## III. Incentives to participate in an award competition

13. **Prestige and recognition** – a win or nomination can have great impact on the growth of the evaluators involved in the evaluation: having work and efforts recognized and acknowledged by experts will help gain further recognition in the profession.
14. **Credibility** – by publicly recognizing excellence the award contributes to establishing good practices in evaluations for transformational change and thus increases the credibility of evaluations that follow these practices.
15. **Publicity** – the acknowledgement and benefits that come with awards is good PR, especially if the awards are aligned with a good cause.
16. **Increased assignments** – award winners enjoy peer recognition and an enhanced chance of landing assignments compared to their competitors.
17. **Partnership building** – winning or even participating in an awards competition boosts team morale and creates a good atmosphere to establish new partnerships and collaborations.
18. **Good cause** – the winning evaluations will lead to the identification and further replication of good practices in evaluation and thus support transformational change towards the SDGs.

## IV. How to make it work

19. **Award Steering Committee.** An award Steering Committee will be appointed to provide overseeing and leadership, set up and organize the award competition

leading up to the IDEAS Global Assembly, set up and send out the call for entries, coordinate the whole process, engage and liaise with judges and potential participants and cover all necessary marketing activities, guiding the Award Secretariat in administering and supporting these activities. The Award Steering Committee will be appointed by IOE/IFAD, IEG/World Bank Group and IDEAS for a first period of four years. The communication offices of IEG and IOE will support the dissemination efforts of the Secretariat.

20. **IDEAS support.** The IDEAS Award Secretariat will provide support in administering the award competition. In the first year this will include one-time website development and the creation of a library of transformational change evaluations, accessible through the website. Furthermore, the Secretariat of the Award will organise and facilitate the judging process, as well as organise and manage the award ceremony at the Global Assembly on the direction of the Steering Committee. For the budget see section V.
21. **Judging panel.** A judging panel will be set up by the Steering Committee to review the submissions and select the award recipients. Competition awards usually have five or more judges (as long as it is an uneven number), with a good gender balance and international representation. In order to organize a competition that matters, they should be well known evaluation experts with knowledge of the SDGs and transformational change, so that their expertise matters among both the participants and the public. They must exhibit authority, expertise, popularity and recognition. Even better if they are 'influencers' or 'trendsetters' for transformational change.
22. The Steering Committee will decide at what stage the judging panel will be announced, to minimize the possibility of participants contacting them during the process. If it is decided to involve them from the start, exposure could be provided, inter alia, on the website, through various (social) media publications, interviews and the award competition.
23. There should be no **conflict of interest** between the judges and the participants and that they will receive proper terms of reference.
24. **Partners and sponsors.** While the partnership for the Award remains with the three organisations, sponsors for award events are welcome.
25. **Participation fee.** A participation fee could be considered in the future, depending on the visibility and recognition of the award in the evaluation community. A decision would be made on the basis of the interim assessment (see paragraph 38).
26. **Broad timelines.** An awards competition can be broken into 4 main stages:
  - Call for entries (registration);
  - End of submissions and reviewing of entries;
  - Nominations;
  - Competition and winner's announcement (will take place during the IDEAS Global Assembly).
27. The Steering Committee should aim for a **6-month period** for the whole process. The process should entail:
  - 1) submission of dossiers;
  - 2) selection of eligible dossiers (through the lens of transformational engagement)
  - 3) assessment of the dossiers and selection of award winners; and
  - 4) announcement of winners and award ceremony.

28. **Scoring system.** The most popular scoring system for competitions is the 10-point scale. Apart from scoring the entries on a scoring sheet, judges will also need to leave comments and feedback regarding their decisions.
29. **The assessment process and criteria** should be clear, understandable and transparent.
30. **Award categories.** Category names and description should be simple and recognizable to attract entries. Participants will have to be able to: (i) easily identify their category for entry; and (ii) see the value in winning that category. Participants are allowed to send multiple entries for multiple categories. There will be three award categories:
  - 1) **Credibility:** Credibility is grounded on independence, impartiality and a rigorous methodology. Key elements of credibility include transparent evaluation processes, strength of the evidence base, inclusive approaches involving relevant stakeholders and robust quality assurance;
  - 2) **Innovation:** The novelty and originality of the scope and/or conceptual approach of the evaluation;
  - 3) **Influence:** The (potential) contribution of the evaluation to transformational change towards the SDGs.
31. Possible **selection criteria** (to be further developed by the Steering Committee):
  - Design;
  - Process;
  - Presentation;
  - Outreach / dissemination
32. **The award.** The winner of each category will receive a money award (amounts to be decided) and will be invited to write a chapter in the IDEAS publication after the Global Assembly. Second and third runners-up will receive either a trophy or certificate. The Steering Committee is to further discuss if an overall winner should be chosen from the three categories.
33. **Non-winning evaluations.** All participating evaluations would be made accessible through the electronic library to be created and this library would be promoted as a source of information to help the evaluators behind these reports know they have contributed to transformational change and the greater good; and may inspire others. Such exposure is important in the development sector and could be deemed just as important as the idea of a (financial) award or broader recognition.
34. IDEAS will host a **library of evaluations for transformational change** – accessible through their website. This library is available for study, for inspiration and will highlight the category winners and, if applicable, the overall winner.
35. **Marketing and media coverage.** Awards are meant to be seen, competitions announced far and wide, and potential participants targeted and reached. We should use as many media sources and social networks as possible; create a dedicated event web page (which could have its own domain linked through the IOE, IEG and IDEAS websites and could also be a subpage of the IDEAS webpage); a blog with topic know-how and insights into organizing the awards; and interviews with judges and contestants, if they agree. The communication functions of IOE, IEG and IDEAS should discuss and develop a communication strategy to make sure the awards are announced and disseminated appropriately.

36. **Data protection.** Although entries may be shared for the award competition's marketing, the data of the participating evaluations should be protected and stored safely.
37. **The award ceremony during the IDEAS Global Assembly.** The award ceremony will take place during an appropriate plenary event, such as a gala dinner or reception, and representatives of the host country or host institution will be asked to hand over the awards. For the 2019 Global Assembly IDEAS proposes that this would take place during the cocktail reception hosted by the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Minister of Foreign Affairs will be invited to hand over the awards at the cocktail reception.
38. **Evaluation.** After two or three award periods, an interim assessment will be conducted which will inform future directions of the award project as well as the institutional commitments of IOE/IFAD, IEG/World Bank Group and IDEAS.

## V. Budget

39. **Initial budget.** For setting up the award Steering Committee and Secretariat and the development of the website, the following initial and on-time budget is foreseen:
  - 1) IDEAS Secretariat support: USD 3.000,00: providing support to the Steering Committee, arranging for documentation, arranging for the Judging Panel, etc.
  - 2) Website development: USD 5.000,00, including the creating of the electronic library
  - 3) Meetings of the Steering Committee will be organized virtually Physical meetings may be organized in the framework of existing evaluation conferences or meetings.
  - 4) The Awards Ceremony at the Global Assembly: US\$ 4,000.
  - 5) Overall initial costs of IDEAS would thus be US\$ 12,000.
  - 6) The first Award would have a total prize money of US\$ 15,000. The Steering Committee will decide how the prize money will be transferred to winners.
40. **Biennial budget** in the years following 2019 would be:
  - 1) IDEAS Secretarial support to the Steering Committee and Judging Panel, including upkeep of the website, library and outreach efforts: US\$ 10,000 for two years
  - 2) Award ceremony at IDEAS Global Assembly: US\$ 5,000 (depending on where and how the event takes place)
  - 3) Award prize money: US\$ 15,000.
  - 4) Overall costs through IDEAS: US\$ 14,000 (for two years)
  - 5) Overall costs per two years: US\$ 30,000