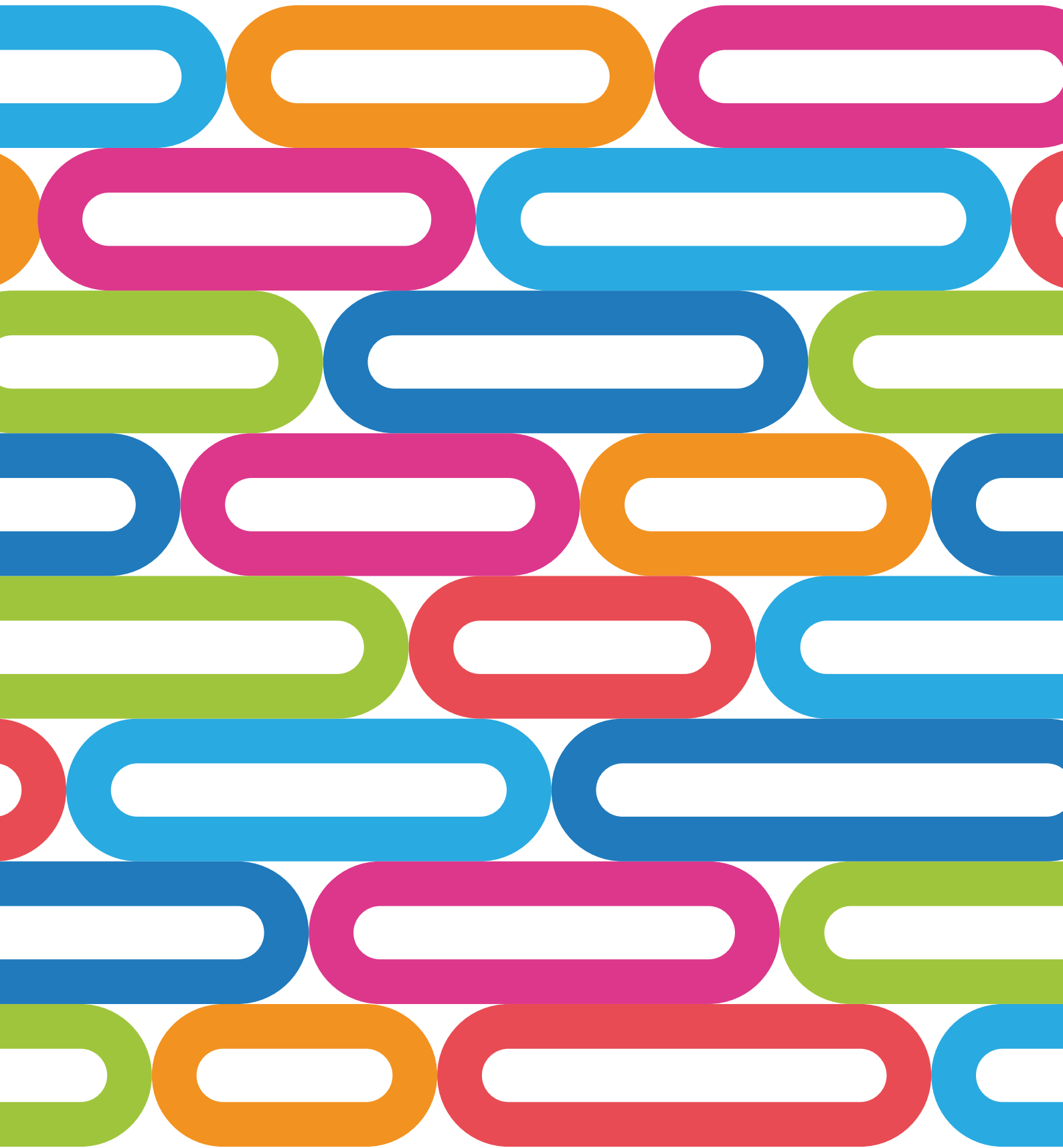


GEI 2.0 Strategy (FY2026-30)



January 2026



Contents

Acknowledgments	3
Executive Summary	4
1. Introduction	5
1.1 Context	6
1.2 Problem Statement	6
1.3 Scope and Objective	6
1.4 Vision and Mission	7
1.5 Strategic priorities	7
2. Strategic Approach	8
2.1 Theory of Change.....	9
2.2 Focus Areas	12
2.3 Cross-cutting Themes	13
3. Delivery Model	14
3.1 Global Team.....	15
3.2 Centers for Learning on Evaluation and Results (CLEAR)	16
3.3 International Program for Development Evaluation Training (IPDET)	17
3.4 École Nationale d'Administration Publique (ENAP)	17
3.5 Other partners	17
4. Financing and Business Model	18
4.1 GEI Funding Sources	19
4.2 Resource Mobilization Strategy	19
4.3 Grant-making model for country engagement.....	20
5. Governance Structure	22
5.1 Partnership Council	23
5.2 Global Team.....	23
5.3 Implementation Committee	23
5.4 ECD Recipients Consultation Group	23
Annex 1: Strategy Development Process and Analytic Inputs	25
Annex 2: Contribution analysis approach	34
Annex 3: Menu of services	37

Acknowledgments

The GEI 2.0 strategy was developed under the guidance and supervision of Douglas Glandon (Task Team Leader), with co-leadership by Janis Grychowski (UNDP). The first phase – data gathering, analysis and drafting – was overseen by Lily Chu and Isabelle Mercier (UNDP) with additional guidance from Dugan Fraser (former GEI Program Manager). The second phase – strategy refinement and writing – was completed under the overall direction of Jos Vaessen (Head of GEI). The team members who contributed to the process (in alphabetical order) are: Anahit Aghumian, Arjun Kaushik, Graham Holliday, Guilherme Lima, Fabio Pittaluga, Ketevan Nozadze, Luca Padovani, Megan Cooke, Patrizia Cocca, Rosetti Rivera, Sonya Rakotonirina. The GEI gratefully acknowledges the time and thoughtful input provided through key informant interviews and focus group discussions, and thanks representatives of GEI implementing and financing partners for their valuable insights and feedback on the strategy.

The findings, interpretations, and conclusions expressed in this strategy do not necessarily reflect the views of the organizations of the World Bank Group, their respective Boards of Executive Directors, or the governments they represent.

Executive Summary

Public officials are operating in an increasingly complex decision-making environment marked by fiscal constraints, geopolitical tensions, and mounting climate risks. At the same time, digitalization and advances in artificial intelligence (AI) are transforming how evidence is generated and used, creating both opportunities as well as risks. Yet many governments lack the institutional systems, skilled monitoring and evaluation (M&E) practitioners, and enabling environments needed to produce and apply high-quality, policy-relevant evaluative evidence in decision-making. This gap undermines governance effectiveness precisely when evidence-informed policies matter most. Meanwhile, the evaluation field itself faces fragmentation, with inconsistent standards and insufficient coordination, limiting its collective ability to support country-level capacity needs.

The Global Evaluation Initiative (GEI) is a global network of institutions and experts dedicated to meeting this need by strengthening evaluation capacities in developing countries. GEI makes evaluative evidence central to public sector decision-making by partnering with governments to strengthen national M&E systems and advancing evaluation practice globally and regionally, thereby improving governance and public sector effectiveness.

In its fourth year of operation (2024), GEI commissioned an independent external evaluation to assess its achievements, identify what has worked well and what has not, and explore ways to strengthen the initiative. The evaluation found substantial achievements—particularly in developing M&E capacity at the country level—while identifying key opportunities for improvement. This strategy for FY2026–30 (GEI 2.0) responds to the evaluation’s findings and recommendations, supplemented by an internal stocktaking, rapid evidence review, and actor landscape analysis.

The GEI 2.0 strategy is anchored in two overarching strategic priorities:

1. **Sharpen GEI’s comparative advantage through four focus areas:** 1) Convening, brokering, and providing knowledge as a public good on evaluation and M&E systems and practices; 2) establishing a network of excellence in M&E training and professional development; 3) catalyzing sustained country engagements through the Centers for Learning on Evaluation and Results (CLEARs); and 4) building strategic partnerships that leverage GEI’s unique position within the World Bank Group (WBG).
2. **Strengthen GEI’s business model and financial sustainability.** With the Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF) projected to deplete within two to three years, GEI will diversify its resource base by pursuing MDTF replenishment from existing and new financing partners, mobilizing project-based funding, and securing additional resources through (and within) the World Bank Group.

Together, these strategic priorities—enabled by a strengthened delivery model that leverages partners’ diverse expertise and networks to enhance quality and efficiency—position GEI to deepen its catalytic impact on evaluation capacity development while ensuring long-term viability.

1.

Introduction



1. Introduction

1.1 Context

The World Bank Group's Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) has a long-standing track record and strong reputation in evaluation capacity development globally. Since 2000, IEG's evaluation capacity development (ECD) program has supported institutions and practitioners across the developing world, through dedicated learning products and studies; the International Program for Development Evaluation Training (IPDET), established in the early 2000s; the CLEAR centers, launched in the early 2010s; and other initiatives and partnerships.

In 2020, IEG in collaboration with its partners,¹ founded GEI. Since then, the context for evaluation capacity development has changed significantly. Governments face mounting fiscal pressures, geopolitical uncertainty, and climate risks that demand agile, evidence-informed decision-making. Within governments, public officials at multiple levels are responsible for interpreting, generating, and using evaluative evidence to inform policy choices. Strengthening both institutional systems and individual capacities to produce and apply credible evaluative evidence is increasingly essential to allocate resources effectively, strengthen accountability, and maintain public trust. At the same time, digitalization and AI are transforming how evidence is produced and used, creating opportunities to improve efficiency and access, but also new risks of bias, opacity and misuse. Meanwhile, global governance and cooperation are under strain, weakening collective action, just as cross-border challenges grow more complex.

1.2 Problem Statement

Despite growing recognition of the importance of evidence-informed policy making, many governments still lack the institutional systems, skilled M&E practitioners,² and enabling environments needed to consistently generate and use high-quality, policy-relevant evidence. This capacity gap undermines governance effectiveness, accountability, and optimal resource allocation—precisely when evidence matters most. Country and regional differences in M&E system design, implementation, and institutionalization—as well as their positioning within public administration and the roles of actors beyond government—shape what is feasible and how support should be targeted.

At the same time, the evaluation field faces persistent structural challenges. Fragmented approaches, inconsistent standards, and insufficient coordination among actors lead to duplication and gaps in guidance. Many M&E practitioners often lack access to high-quality learning resources and structured professional pathways to develop and maintain competencies aligned with evolving practice needs.

1.3 Scope and Objective

Against this backdrop, evaluation capacity development (ECD) refers to the deliberate, sustained effort to strengthen individuals, organizations and the broader enabling environment to produce and use high-quality evaluation for learning, accountability and decision-making. Because evaluation sits at the nexus of monitoring, research, and oversight, ECD both enhances and draws from monitoring data, applies methodological rigor within institutional decision-making processes, and supports independent oversight.

GEI pursues ECD through the lens of M&E systems strengthening, with the objective “to improve monitoring

¹ GEI partners are Germany, Finland, Netherlands, France, Switzerland, Canada, Denmark, Portugal, UNDP, IFAD, UNICEF, and IADB. Sweden was one of the founding partners but withdrew from the MDTF in 2023.

² GEI uses ‘M&E practitioners’ to refer to professionals responsible for monitoring and/or evaluation functions, with particular emphasis on those whose work directly supports evaluation or contributes to evaluative thinking and practice.

and evaluation frameworks, capacity, and use in supported developing countries for improved evidence-informed policy making.³ GEI's approach, therefore, also addresses the broader institutional architecture, political economy, and network of actors in which M&E functions operate. Within this broad domain, GEI maintains a strategic focus on evaluation when engaging with M&E systems, ensuring its support strengthens evaluation capabilities and/or evaluative thinking and practice.

In its fourth year of implementation (2024), GEI commissioned an independent external evaluation to take stock of progress, assess results, and draw lessons to inform the next phase of the initiative. The evaluation found substantial achievements—particularly in developing M&E capacity at the country level—while identifying key opportunities for improvement. Drawing on the evaluation's findings—complemented by an internal stocktaking, rapid evidence review, actor landscape analysis and consultations with GEI partners (see Annex 1)—the GEI 2.0 strategy refines both its approach to achieving this objective and how this objective is situated within the broader evaluation capacity development and governance agenda. A central refinement is positioning M&E systems strengthening as essential to accountable, responsive public institutions and good governance. This strategy also deepens GEI's networked approach, drawing on partners' diverse expertise through coordinated delivery and joint knowledge production to enhance quality, efficiency, and impact.

1.4 Vision and Mission

Vision: GEI envisions a world in which public institutions consistently use credible evaluative evidence—about what works, for whom, and under what conditions—to inform policy making, planning, and program implementation, thereby enhancing good governance and public sector effectiveness.

Mission: GEI's mission is to make evaluative evidence central to public sector decision-making. Through its unique networked model, GEI works at two mutually reinforcing levels: 1) partnering with governments to strengthen national M&E systems; and 2) advancing evaluation practice globally and regionally by co-producing knowledge and building a cadre of evaluators and M&E practitioners across government, civil society, academia and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

1.5 Strategic priorities

GEI's FY2026–30 strategy is organized around two overarching strategic priorities:

1. Sharpen GEI's comparative advantage (Section 2)
2. Strengthen GEI's business model and financial sustainability (Section 4)

³ See GEI MDTF Administrative Agreement.

2.

Strategic Approach



2. Strategic Approach

This section presents GEI's strategic approach to achieving its vision and mission, which operationalizes GEI's first overarching strategic priority: **sharpening GEI's comparative advantage**. It outlines the theory of change, focus areas, and cross-cutting themes that guide implementation.

2.1 Theory of Change

GEI's theory of change is built around three interrelated elements: the development outcome it seeks to influence, the programmatic outcomes that contribute to this goal, and the program model through which these outcomes are achieved.

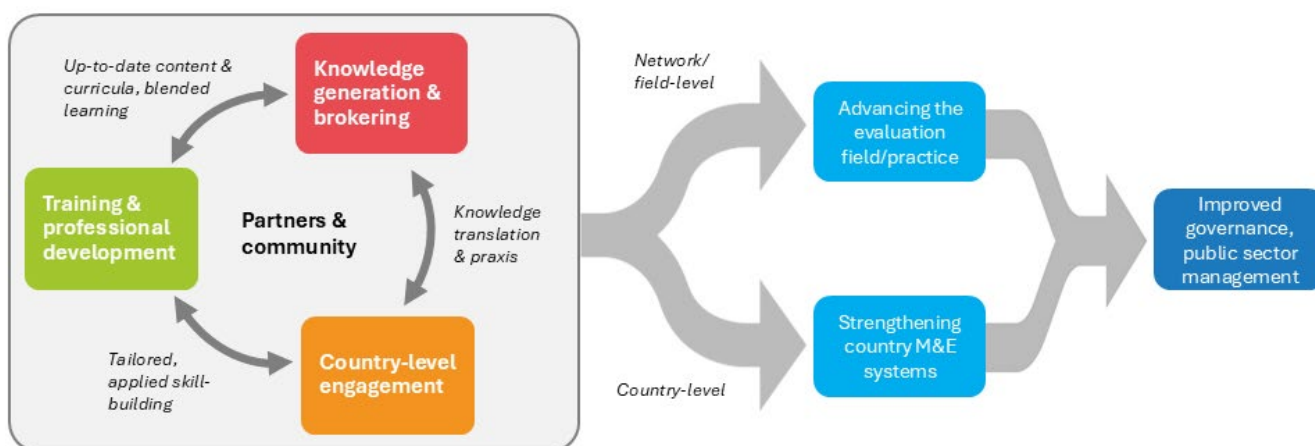
This theory of change recognizes that the contextual factors enabling M&E systems strengthening vary widely across countries. Political economy dynamics, institutional capacity, and the presence of complementary investments and actors differ substantially and evolve over time. These factors shape what is achievable and inform GEI's strategic choices about where and how to engage.

2.1.1 Development outcome

GEI's work is oriented toward a long-term development outcome that extends beyond the initiative's direct programmatic scope: **improved governance and public sector management**. Specifically, GEI seeks to contribute to trusted, resilient⁴ accountability mechanisms and more adaptive, learning-oriented decision-making processes within public institutions (see the dark blue box in figure 1).

When policy making is grounded in evaluative evidence, governments can foster a stable and predictable policy environment—one that attracts greater public and private investment and supports more efficient allocation of scarce resources. Embedding evidence-informed learning as a routine practice can accelerate progress toward national development priorities, the Sustainable Development Goals, and the post-2030 agenda.

Figure 1: GEI Theory of change



⁴ Resilience refers to the capacity of M&E systems and accountability mechanisms to function effectively through political transitions, fiscal constraints, and institutional change. GEI contributes to building this resilience through its work to strengthen enabling conditions (including legislation, regulations and policies) and through sustained engagement with selected partners.

2.1.2 Programmatic outcomes

GEI pursues this development outcome through two mutually reinforcing programmatic outcomes (see the light blue boxes in figure 1). Together, these reflect GEI's distinctive niche and value add as a bridge between direct country-level engagement and a networked approach at regional and global levels: country partners receive M&E systems support drawing on regional and global networks and expertise, while on-the-ground practice generates insights that advance the field.

PROGRAMMATIC OUTCOME 1: National M&E systems and practices are strengthened in selected countries by:

- **Strengthening demand** through legislation, policy, incentives, and improved commissioning and budgeting practices;
- **Improving supply** by enhancing M&E frameworks, guidelines and protocols; data collection and quality assurance; skills and availability (inside and outside government); institutional processes, and dedicated funding; and
- **Deepening the culture and use** of evaluative evidence, including its uptake in policy, planning, and budget decisions.

PROGRAMMATIC OUTCOME 2: The evaluation field and practice are advanced at the regional and global levels by:

- **Increasing the value and legitimacy** of evaluative evidence among policy makers and practitioners;
- **Improving and aligning standards, competencies and professional development opportunities** for evaluators and M&E practitioners, with a stronger user-oriented focus;
- **Ensuring the availability and accessibility** of guidance on appropriate evaluative approaches and methods for diverse evidence needs and contexts; and
- **Fostering greater coherence and coordination** across the field through shared frameworks and language on good practices, while respecting methodological diversity.

2.1.3 Program model

GEI pursues these outcomes through a program model that combines three integrated and mutually reinforcing pillars with a diverse network of partners and communities (see the left of figure 1).

Pillar 1: Knowledge generation and brokering build a shared foundation for the evaluation field and broader M&E community. This pillar helps establish common frameworks, language, and standards that reflect current good practice. It also promotes cross-context learning by curating practice-based insights and convening actors so lessons can move quickly between regions and institutions.

Pillar 2: Training and professional development convert shared knowledge into practical capabilities. This pillar translates frameworks, standards and technical guidance into competencies, pedagogies and learning pathways for evaluators, evaluation managers, commissioners, and M&E practitioners. Training opportunities help those who produce and use evaluative evidence to apply good practices in their own contexts, ultimately strengthening institutional capacity for evidence-informed decision-making.

Pillar 3: Country-level engagements embed knowledge and capabilities within government M&E systems so that the supply, demand, and use of evaluative evidence grow in contextually appropriate ways. This pillar tailors system-strengthening objectives to local priorities and institutional contexts—drawing on jointly conducted needs assessments with government counterparts or existing country diagnostics and plans—while leveraging regional expertise and peer learning.

Partners and community enable and amplify these pillars. GEI's primary role is catalytic—convening actors, coordinating efforts, and co-producing public goods—rather than delivering all activities directly. This approach extends GEI's reach and impact while creating distinctive value for other actors.

Partners are organizations that implement GEI-funded activities or collaborate formally with GEI on programmatic work. These include the CLEAR centers, IPDET, École Nationale d'Administration Publique (ENAP), government counterparts in focal countries, donors who contribute to the GEI Trust Fund, and other partners.

- **Country partners (clients)** receive tailored and collaborative analytical and advisory support from the CLEAR centers that draws on regional expertise, international standards, and peer country experience. A government-owned M&E systems roadmap anchors alignment among development partners and guides sustained efforts to strengthen M&E systems.
- **Financing partners (donors)** have an opportunity—through contributions to the GEI Multi-Donor Trust Fund—to invest in a catalytic platform that strengthens country M&E systems while advancing the broader evaluation field. These contributions also give partners a voice in shaping GEI's strategic direction and in leveraging collective action that individual investments cannot achieve.
- **Implementing partners** gain access to Trust Fund financing for core M&E systems-strengthening work; join a global network that amplifies their reach, legitimacy, and convening power; get opportunities to shape the evaluation field through co-producing knowledge products and training standards; and connect to potential funders and collaborators.
- **The World Bank Group (WBG)** enhances the effectiveness of GEI at the country level by leveraging WBG's convening power to bring together relevant ECD actors, expertise in public sector management and data, and access to financial resources.
- **Multilateral, bilateral, and NGOs⁵ active in the ECD space** play an essential role in supporting the work of implementing partners at the national level. By pooling of resources at the country level, GEI operates as a catalyst to provide countries a comprehensive package of assistance that builds on each institution's strengths. GEI also convenes other organizations active in the ECD space at regional and global levels through learning and knowledge sharing events.

The **broader community of M&E practitioners** includes evaluation professionals, civil society organizations, academia, and practitioners who engage with GEI's platforms, training, and knowledge products. While these actors may not have formal partnership arrangements with GEI, they are essential in advancing evaluation practices and strengthening M&E systems globally.

GEI serves the broader community by providing open-access platforms and opportunities to share knowledge and build capacity collectively.

This includes:

- **Guidance, tools and resources** on evaluation practice and M&E systems strengthening, accessible through GEI's knowledge platform BetterEvaluation.org, which features content created by GEI and contributed by individuals and organizations across the field;
- **Training and professional development** opportunities for evaluators and M&E practitioners;
- **Knowledge sharing** from country-level work through publications and convenings; and
- **Peer learning and exchange opportunities** through regional and global events such as Glocal Evaluation Week.

⁵ Including VoPEs, foundations, and civil society organizations; engagement with these actors varies by country based on which are present, shared interests, and opportunities for collaboration.

2.2 Focus Areas

GEI operationalizes its theory of change through four focus areas that leverage the initiative's comparative advantages, aimed at creating value beyond GEI's portfolio. Each focus area contains several lines of action for FY2026–30.⁶

FOCUS AREA 1: Convening, brokering and providing knowledge as a global public good on evaluation and M&E systems and practices (maps to 'Knowledge generation & brokering' in figure 1)

GEI will create, curate, synthesize, and share practical, high-quality guidance so practitioners and policy makers can find, adapt, and apply approaches to their specific needs.

Lines of action:

- 1.1 Revamp BetterEvaluation into an AI-enabled, user-friendly knowledge hub that helps users quickly find relevant, high-value resources and complete specific tasks.
- 1.2 Publish and curate practical guidance on key themes, including AI and digitalization, climate, and the environment.
- 1.3 Sustain and enhance Glocal Evaluation Week as a global platform for awareness raising, knowledge sharing, and dissemination on priority themes and practice.
- 1.4 Design and validate a set of standardized M&E system indicators and a rapid assessment toolkit for countries, and issue periodic "State of M&E Systems" syntheses based on country assessments as capacity and funding allow.

FOCUS AREA 2: Establishing a network of excellence in M&E training and professional development (maps to 'Training and professional development' in figure 1)

GEI will integrate the training offerings of IPDET, ENAP, and the CLEAR centers into a unified, network-wide training strategy with defined quality standards, modern pedagogy, and regionally and locally tailored delivery. This strategy will link learning directly to country M&E systems strengthening and governance agendas.

Lines of action:

- 2.1 Build a network-wide training strategy with a shared curricula and learning pathways mapped to the GEI competency framework; explore certification and accreditation options.
- 2.2 Maintain and enhance IPDET as the global flagship supporting GEI's network-wide training strategy; pilot regional deliveries; enhance engagement with IPDET alumni community.

FOCUS AREA 3: Catalyzing selective and sustained country-level engagements through the CLEAR centers (maps to 'Country-level engagement' in figure 1)

GEI will support implementing partners in delivering tailored packages—diagnostics, policy and planning support, training, and other technical advisory services—aligned with country priorities and windows of opportunity. GEI will prioritize strengthening enabling conditions, including legislation, policies, and institutional norms, and sustained engagement with selected partners, recognizing that both contribute to building resilient national M&E systems. This includes work supporting GEI's cross-cutting themes (Section 2.3).

Lines of action:

- 3.1 Update and implement eligibility and selection criteria for GEI program countries.
- 3.2 Enhance synergies between GEI's pillars in country support packages.
- 3.3 Support implementing partners' transition to a hybrid funding model, strengthening their organizational sustainability and expanding their reach through diversified funding sources.

⁶ The proposed lines of action for the GEI 2.0 strategy align with those included in the Administration Agreement signed by financing partners to the GEI Multi-Donor Trust Fund.

FOCUS AREA 4: Building strategic partnerships that leverage GEI's unique position within the World Bank Group (maps to 'Partners & community' box in figure 1)

GEI will use its convening platforms, relationships and unique position within the WBG to identify synergies and opportunities for collaboration while reducing duplication of efforts.

Lines of action:

4.1 Build relationships and explore opportunities and partnership modalities with WBG operational units to reduce duplication and enhance coordination, reach and scale, catalytic impact, and sustainability.

4.2 Secure sustainable financing for GEI activities through the WBG (see Section 4.2).

2.3 Cross-cutting Themes

Two cross-cutting themes⁷—reflecting major shifts in the context for evaluation capacity development—inform GEI's work across all focus areas:

AI and digital innovation. These are fundamentally transforming how evidence is generated, analyzed, and used. These technologies present both opportunities—such as enhanced data capture, processing, pattern recognition, and accessibility—and risks, including bias, opacity and misuse. GEI will support building capacity to navigate this transformation responsibly.

Climate and the environment. Climate risks are intensifying globally, requiring governments to strengthen their ability to design, monitor and evaluate climate adaptation and mitigation interventions. At the same time, climate change increasingly influences the context and outcomes of development interventions across sectors. GEI will support country partners to strengthen their institutional capacity to evaluate climate interventions and integrate climate considerations into M&E systems and practices more broadly.

⁷ These themes were selected based on their potential for significant impact on M&E practice and GEI's comparative advantage. This does not preclude GEI support on other important themes (e.g., gender, social inclusion, others) based on partner priorities and needs.

3.

Delivery Model



3. Delivery Model

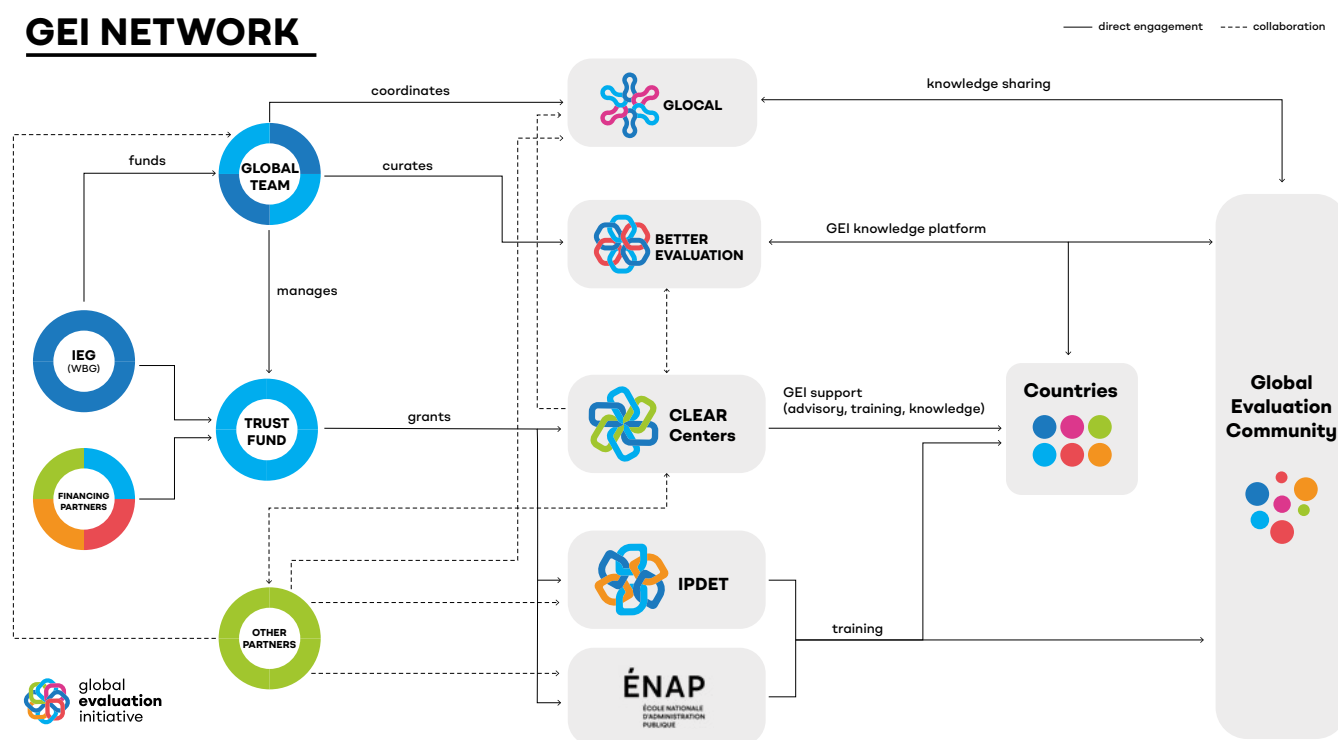
GEI operates as a global network of partners working together to achieve collective impact in evaluation capacity development. The core GEI team includes the Global Team, six regional CLEAR centers, IPDET, and ENAP—each bringing distinct strengths that enhance the initiative’s reach and value.

GEI 2.0 deepens this network model with increased emphasis on leveraging partners’ diverse networks, technical and contextual expertise, and convening power. Partners share expertise strategically across contexts, coordinate delivery, and co-produce knowledge to enhance quality and generate efficiencies in global, regional, and national-level activities.

Financing partners contribute to a Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF) housed within the Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) of the World Bank Group. As illustrated below, grants are provided to implementing partners to deliver various elements of the overall GEI program.

The following section outlines GEI’s key stakeholders and their respective roles and responsibilities in delivering the program.

Figure 2: GEI Network



3.1 Global Team

The Global Team fulfills six key functions essential to GEI’s success: (1) management of the Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF), grant-making and financial management; (2) network coordination; (3) resource mobilization; (4) knowledge production and brokering; (5) communications, convening, and engagement with the broader ECD community; and (6) M&E.

MDTF management, grant-making and financial management: Responsibility for the administration and management of the MDTF lies with the Global Team. This includes the management of Bank-Executed Trust Fund (BETF) activities, as well as the management of Recipient-Executed Trust Fund (RETF) activities (i.e. grants to implementing partners). The Global Team prepares and supervises grants to implementing partners and oversees grant processing arrangements, ensuring compliance with WBG policies and regulations in consultation with relevant WBG fiduciary units. The Global Team is responsible for the financial management, accounting, and reporting of the initiative. The Global Team also provides the Partnership Council with periodic progress reports and ensures the application of WBG policies and procedures for both BETF and RETF activities.

Network coordination: The backbone of the GEI Network is the Global Team. It coordinates across implementing partners through joint planning, regular convenings, and collaborative work on knowledge products and training initiatives. It facilitates partnerships and relationships, connecting implementing partners with other potential funders and implementers. The Global Team provides technical and administrative support to implementing partners, strengthening their organizational capacity, and expanding their reach.

Resource mobilization: This function oversees fundraising and the implementation of GEI's resource mobilization strategy to replenish the MDTF and diversify funding sources while maintaining strategic coherence (see Section 4). Activities include engaging with current and prospective financing partners, developing funding proposals, and exploring partnership opportunities with WBG operational units and other development actors. The team also facilitates direct connections between potential funders and implementing partners when direct engagement is more appropriate than MDTF contributions and provides capacity building support to implementing partners for their own resource mobilization efforts.

Knowledge production and brokering: The production and curation of knowledge as a global public good on evaluation and M&E systems generate new technical content in key areas and includes the management of the BetterEvaluation platform, co-created resources with contributors from across the ECD and global evaluation community.

Communications, convening and engagement with the broader ECD community: The Global Team leads communication efforts to raise awareness of evaluation practice and the work of the GEI Network, build community, disseminate M&E knowledge products across the evaluation field, and facilitate engagement with partners and stakeholders. Activities include the production of communication materials; ensuring editorial consistency and brand alignment across major outputs; managing digital channels such as the website, social media, newsletters, and multimedia; coordinating global in-person and online events, such as Global Evaluation Week. These efforts position GEI within the broader ECD landscape and strengthen connections with the global evaluation community.

Monitoring and evaluation: The GEI&US database is used by the Global Team to track work and progress across the GEI Network, and it supports M&E of GEI's programmatic outcomes. A contribution analysis approach is applied and integrated into routine reporting (see Annex 2) to support accountability, adaptive management, and learning. Guidance and technical support are provided to the CLEAR centers to integrate contribution analysis into their M&E processes. The team also serves as the focal point for external evaluations of the initiative.

3.2 Centers for Learning on Evaluation and Results (CLEAR)

The CLEAR centers are regional hubs for evaluation capacity development, each hosted by a leading academic or policy institution with regional expertise and networks. There are six CLEAR centers currently operating under the GEI umbrella⁸. These are:

- ▶ CLEAR Anglophone Africa
- ▶ CLEAR Francophone Africa
- ▶ CLEAR Latin America and the Caribbean
- ▶ CLEAR Lusophone Africa and Brazil
- ▶ CLEAR Pakistan and Central Asia
- ▶ CLEAR South Asia

⁸ In the future, the GEI may establish other CLEAR centers to implement activities in regions that are not currently covered.

As GEI Trust Fund grantees, the CLEAR centers serve as trusted advisors to country governments in M&E systems strengthening, providing diagnostics, policy development support, planning assistance, and training. Operating as regional centers of excellence in M&E systems and evaluation, each contributing distinct strengths shaped by institutional context and experience, they leverage their institutional strengths and contexts to deliver tailored services and foster collaboration across the evaluation ecosystem. The centers convene practitioners at regional and country levels—delivering training and events, supporting other regional institutions, and brokering knowledge among government units, development partners, voluntary organizations of professional evaluators (VOPEs), and others. They also provide technical assistance and training aligned with GEI’s mission, including in non-GEI countries and in partnership with non-public sector actors.

3.3 International Program for Development Evaluation Training (IPDET)

IPDET is GEI’s flagship training program and is hosted at the University of Bern in Switzerland. IPDET is an executive training program that provides decision-makers, managers and practitioners with the tools and skills to commission, manage, and implement evaluations and use them for decision-making. As a GEI Trust Fund grantee—in collaboration with the Global Team, the CLEAR centers, and ENAP—IPDET shapes and implements GEI’s training approach, including setting standards, defining professional development pathways, and developing curricula, content, tools and guidelines. As a provider of services to other funders, IPDET also delivers tailored training packages aligned with GEI’s mission, including topics beyond GEI’s core offerings.

3.4 École Nationale d'Administration Publique (ENAP)

Hosted in Quebec, Canada, ENAP provides similar EOD services to the CLEAR centers. As a GEI Trust Fund grantee, ENAP delivers the programme international francophone en évaluation du développement (PIFED) in French and TAQYEEM in Arabic. In collaboration with the Global Team, the CLEAR centers, and IPDET, ENAP adapts content to regional contexts while maintaining alignment with GEI’s network-wide quality standards. As a provider of services to other funders, ENAP delivers technical assistance and training aligned with GEI’s mission, including in non-GEI countries and in partnership with non-public sector actors.

3.5 Other partners

Beyond the implementing partners, GEI engages with other organizations and entities to expand the reach and accessibility of GEI’s programmatic work based on their complementary expertise, regional presence and/or specialized capabilities. These may include NGOs, academic institutions, VOPEs, networks, foundations, regional and sub-regional multilateral development banks, bilateral development agencies, United Nations agencies, training providers, technical organizations, and others⁹.

⁹ Examples of the foregoing are ADB, AfDB, AfrEA, DEval, EvalYouth, IOCE, etc.

4.

Financing and Business Model



4. Financing and Business Model

This section presents GEI's financing and business model, which operationalizes GEI's second overarching strategic priority: **strengthening GEI's business model and financial sustainability**.

4.1 GEI Funding Sources

GEI operates as a hybrid multi-donor trust fund (MDTF) financing implementing partner-executed activities as well as World Bank Group-executed activities. The World Bank Group's Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) covers the direct and indirect costs of the team administering the MDTF (i.e. the Global Team), including staff, office space, equipment, travel and other overheads.

Financial contributions to the MDTF are provided by GEI's financing partners—donors committed to evaluation capacity development globally who also serve on the Partnership Council (see Section 5 'Governance Structure' for details). Host institutions of implementing partners provide significant in-kind contributions including administrative support, real estate, and some staff salaries. These contributions are channeled directly to implementing partners and do not enter the Trust Fund.

Over GEI's first five years (2020–2025), the MDTF received \$18.4 million in contributions, allocating an average of \$3.3 million annually in grants to implementing partners. However, contributions have declined in recent years due to fiscal constraints faced by financing partners. Without replenishment, the MDTF is projected to be depleted within two to three years (by FY2028–29) at current grant levels.

This financial outlook underscores the necessity of strengthening GEI's financial sustainability in the next phase, while also presenting an opportunity to leverage GEI's catalytic role to mobilize resources beyond the MDTF in support of the broader ECD agenda.

4.2 Resource Mobilization Strategy

To address this fiscal challenge while maintaining GEI's aspirational goals, GEI proposes a multi-pronged fundraising strategy for FY2026–30 that prioritizes replenishment of the MDTF and diversification of revenue sources. This strategy targets three main types of funding:

- 1) **MDTF core funding:** GEI will work to maintain contributions from existing financing partners and expand the donor base. This includes reaching out to new potential financing partners as well as engaging directly with existing financing partners' Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) branches. GEI targets an annual MDTF total contribution of approximately \$3.3 million to sustain core grant-making to implementing partners in line with the support provided during 2020–2025.
- 2) **Project-based funding:** Project-based financing from a variety of institutions will be leveraged to strengthen GEI's work in specific thematic and geographical areas of work. To maintain strategic coherence, GEI has established a "menu" of services aligned with the four focus areas that implementing partners can offer to external funders. This approach enables flexibility and responsiveness to funding opportunities while preserving the network's focus on M&E systems strengthening. Project-based funding may flow directly to implementing partners, through the MDTF, or support expanded Global Team activities.
- 3) **World Bank Group operational budgets:** Whenever possible, WBG operational budgets will be leveraged to strengthen training and country-level engagement activities in collaboration with WBG partners. In addition, GEI will actively engage with the WBG Board of Directors to explore opportunities for dedicated funding of concerted M&E capacity development initiatives in client countries.

4.3 Grant-making model for country-level engagement

GEI's grant-making to the CLEAR centers for country-level work will be structured around demand-driven, multi-year country engagements that ensure government ownership and strategic focus. This approach represents a refinement from GEI's first phase, with more structured packages of support aligned with country priorities and GEI's theory of change.

Selection process: Country selection is guided by five thematic considerations (to be developed and refined through line of action 3.1).

- › **Strategic alignment** of the proposed scope of work with GEI's strategy, theory of change, and areas of comparative advantage.
- › **Enabling environment**, including government counterpart commitment and champions, institutional readiness, alignment with reform opportunities, and impact potential.
- › **Established relationships**, including history of engagement between GEI implementing partners and government counterparts.
- › **Partner presence and interest**, including from World Bank Country Management Units or UN agency country offices. To the extent possible, GEI financing partners' priority countries and corresponding country presence will also be considered.
- › **Funding and resource potential**, including in-kind or financial contributions from government and other development partners to support and sustain the work.

GEI and CLEAR centers review and prioritize potential engagements using these considerations. Selected countries and proposed activities will be periodically presented to the Partnership Council for discussion and endorsement.

Grant structure: Multi-year grants to the CLEAR centers will be based on jointly defined country work programs developed in collaboration with government counterparts. Each work program will identify specific M&E system components to be strengthened and the expected outcomes. Grant sizes will reflect the scope of work and available resources.

Monitoring and adaptation: Grants implementation will follow WBG standards for project implementation support, and will include the preparation of yearly monitoring reports, supervision visits, as well as monitoring results indicators established during the grant design phase. GEI employs an adaptive management approach that enables timely responses to changing country contexts. The CLEAR centers—in coordination with the Global Team and within the scope of their grant agreement—have flexibility to adjust the level and scope of engagement for a given country based on evolving political conditions, emerging opportunities, and/or shifts in partner commitment.

4.4 Partnership approach to country-level engagement

GEI recognizes that strengthening national M&E systems requires coordinated efforts from multiple actors working within a coherent country-owned framework. GEI's engagement approach seeks opportunities for partnership and coordination at multiple stages.

A diagnostic assessment – using the MESA or other diagnostic tools – provides the foundation for this coordinated approach. These diagnostics inform the development of a country-owned M&E systems strengthening plan that articulates priorities, identifies capacity gaps, and establishes a roadmap for improvement. This plan serves as a common reference point that can be supported and implemented by GEI and other development partners, each contributing according to their comparative advantages.

Collaboration with World Bank Country Management Units or UN agency country offices is particularly important for leveraging their convening power to bring together relevant stakeholders. These partnerships enable coordination of M&E capacity development activities across multiple actors, strengthen linkages between GEI's technical assistance and broader operational priorities, extend the reach and mainstreaming of evaluation capacity development work into operations more broadly, and help achieve greater scope and scale than GEI could accomplish independently.

Institutionalizing M&E systems requires sustained engagement spanning multiple years and political cycles, together with continuity of relationships with government counterparts. GEI maintains flexibility to adapt its level and type of support based on evolving political contexts, the presence of reform champions, windows of opportunity for change, and opportunities to complement or collaborate with other development actors.

While GEI currently focuses on specific regions through its CLEAR centers, new regions could be added pending resource availability and the presence and engagement of other evaluation capacity development actors who can contribute to a coordinated country-level approach.

5.

Governance Structure



5. Governance Structure

GEI's governance structure ensures strategic oversight, accountability to financing partners, and effective decision-making. The governance model is comprised of the Partnership Council, the Global Team, and the Implementation Committee, which work together to provide direction, ensure fiduciary responsibility, and maintain alignment with GEI's strategic goals.

5.1 Partnership Council

The Partnership Council (PC) serves as GEI's primary oversight and strategic advisory body. It is comprised of the WBG representatives and a representative from each financing partner contributing to the MDTF. The PC will be convened and chaired by the WBG. The key responsibilities of the PC include advising on GEI's strategic direction and risk management; reviewing and providing inputs to the annual work plan and indicative budget; providing strategic guidance on Trust Fund activities; and periodically reviewing key performance indicators.

As the key oversight body, the PC holds final responsibility for reviewing the financial management and results reports from the Global Team. Beyond governance, PC members contribute to GEI's broader impact by supporting complementarity between their bilateral relations in GEI focal countries and GEI's activities. PC members also share expertise and knowledge for dissemination through GEI's platforms. The PC meets annually, as convened by the WBG,¹⁰ and may do so in person or virtually.

5.2 Global Team

The Global Team manages and administers the MDTF in accordance with the provisions of the Administrative Agreements signed with each financing partner.

Planning and budgeting: The Global Team prepares the annual work plan and indicative budget of the Trust Fund for review and approval by the PC. This includes developing budget proposals and planning documents related to the allocation of GEI funds as endorsed by the PC.

Reporting and accountability: The Global Team holds primary reporting and fiduciary responsibilities for GEI. It is responsible for the financial management, accounting, and reporting of the initiative. The team prepares comprehensive annual reports for the PC covering GEI's activities, financial management, and progress toward strategic goals. It manages the internal results reporting system (GEI&US), which tracks key performance indicators and supports accountability to financing partners.

5.3 Implementation Committee

The Implementation Committee promotes coordination and knowledge exchange among implementing partners of the GEI Network. Comprised of representatives from implementing partners (CLEAR centers, IPDET, ENAP) and the Global Team, the Implementation Committee serves as a forum where implementation priorities, opportunities and challenges at country, regional, and global levels are identified and addressed collaboratively. The Implementation Committee is convened bi-annually.

5.4 ECD Recipients Consultation Group

GEI continuously consults ECD recipient country partners. The CLEAR centers maintain ongoing communication with government counterparts, providing regular opportunities for dialogue and feedback. To complement these ongoing exchanges, GEI organizes a bi-annual consultation with representatives of countries where it operates. This forum, which may be convened in connection with the National Evaluation Capacities (NEC) conferences or similar events, will provide structured opportunities for recipient countries to share experiences, provide feedback on GEI's support, and shape the initiative's direction. Depending on resource availability, the consultation can also be organized virtually.

¹⁰ Additional virtual meetings may be convened between annual meetings as needed.

Annexes



Annex 1: Strategy Development Process and Analytic Inputs

1. Strategy development process

1.1 Purpose

Revisit and refresh the GEI vision, mission, model, and approach for the next phase of the MDTF period to enhance impact and sustainability.

1.2 Overarching questions

The GEI 2.0 strategy update process focuses on answering four key questions:

- 1. What have we learned?** This involves critically assessing what has been learned from GEI operations and activities to date, including issues and needs that may have limited GEI's impact, scale, sustainability, etc., and identifying the implications for how GEI should adapt.
- 2. How has the landscape changed?** By examining what other organizations operating in the ECD space (and adjacent areas) are doing, GEI can identify its unique niche and value proposition, ensuring that its efforts are complementary and/or catalytic.
- 3. What does the literature say?** Taking stock of the current evidence base related to the various levels of GEI's theory of change and theory of action will help GEI allocate resources and design activities in ways that are most likely to maximize impact.
- 4. What is the right operating model?** This involves reviewing the current multi-donor trust fund model, financial outlook, and other considerations related to GEI's impact, scale, and sustainability.

1.3 Analytic inputs

The information to address the GEI 2.0 questions and to support the way forward were derived from four key analytic inputs, including:

1. External evaluation
2. Internal stocktaking
3. Rapid evidence review
4. Actor landscape analysis

1.3.1 Key questions mapped to analytic inputs

Key questions	Analytic inputs
1. What have we learned? 1.1. To what extent does GEI's current approach align with the Theory of Action/Change? Any changes needed?	External evaluation
1.1. How has GEI contributed to ECD (outputs and outcomes)? What is GEI's value add, including in reducing fragmentation in ECD?	External evaluation
1.2. What are the issues or needs affecting GEI's ability to achieve its objectives?	External evaluation Internal stock-taking
1.3. What are the strategic implications of these issues or needs for GEI going forward?	(same as above)
2. How has the landscape changed? 2.1. Which are the major actors currently operating in the ECD space (and adjacent areas)	Actor landscape analysis
2.2. What is and what should be GEI's unique niche and/or value proposition in the ECD space?	External evaluation Actor landscape analysis
2.3. How best can GEI contribute to and/or complement internal IEG and IEO efforts in ECD? What about WBG Operations?	Actor landscape analysis
3. What does the literature say? 3.1. What does the current extant theoretical and empirical literature say about: 3.1.1. Mechanisms through which country M&E ecosystems influence development outcomes (<i>country level</i>) 3.1.2. M&E systems strengthening approaches that improve the use of evaluative evidence (<i>decision-maker/unit level</i>) 3.1.3. Enablers and barriers to evaluative evidence informing specific policy and/or programmatic decisions (evaluation/decision-level) 3.1.4. Effective training and professional development approaches to enhance evaluator capabilities, performance, and career growth	Rapid evidence review
4. What's the right operating model? 4.1. To what extent is the current GEI funding and governance model appropriate for achieving and sustaining impact? Should alternatives be considered? 4.2. How can the sustainability of GEI's results be strengthened, both at country level and globally? 4.3. How can the GEI leverage its network and other stakeholders to achieve a lasting impact?	External evaluation Actor landscape analysis

1.3.2 Summary of methodological approaches by analytic input

Analytic input	Brief summary of methodological approach
External evaluation	The external evaluation sought to assess the achievements of GEI, identify likely outcomes, what has worked and what has not worked related to the Theory of Action and Theory of Change, and possibilities for strengthening GEI. The independent evaluation team employed two complementary processes: 1) theory-based analysis; 2) iterative and triangulation process. Both parts utilized Outcome Harvesting and investigated GEI's specific contributions. Data sources included GEI documents, a literature review, interviews with PC members, implementing and associate partners, the Global Team, virtual focus groups with CLEAR centers, a fieldwork visit to CLEAR Anglophone Africa and a survey of IPDET participants.
Internal stock-taking	The internal stock-taking sought to elicit information, experiences, and perspectives from within the Global Team and network about GEI's observed issues/needs, strengths/assets and other considerations that may have strategic implications in GEI's next phase. This component was implemented through a combination of GEI program document review and a series of structured, facilitated discussions in three parts: 1) Needs/issues workshop (Sept 2024); 2) Strengths/assets workshop (following the Appreciative Inquiry approach) (Dec 2024); 3) Three partner virtual "thinking sessions" (Jan 2025). Key points from the workshops were noted and collaboratively refined in shared working documents. Key points from the thinking sessions were noted in post-session Global Team debriefs.
Rapid evidence review	The rapid evidence review sought to take stock of the extant theoretical and empirical literature related to the various levels of GEI's theory of change and theory of action. This was designed as a set of twenty (20) scoping reviews following the approach of Peters et al. 2020 and implemented using a generative AI (genAI) augmented workflow. Each review addressed a specific conceptual level of GEI's nested theory of change (country, decision-maker/unit, evaluation/decision, individual) and a specific focal question (definition and conceptualization; theories of change; metrics; empirical evidence; enablers/barriers).
Actor landscape analysis	The actor landscape analysis sought to gather perspectives from key GEI stakeholders and ECD actors to ensure that its scope and priorities are responsive to the current landscape and take into account the roles, contributions and priorities of other actors. This activity involved 40+ semi-structured (recorded and transcribed) interviews key informant interviews with Partnership Council members, implementing partners, World Bank Group staff, and government counterparts; four focus group discussions with UNEG NECD working group members. Interviews and discussions centered on three main questions: 1) current needs and opportunities in the ECD space; 2) the major role, contribution and priorities of their organization; and 3) the potential implications for GEI. Key points from each interview related to each of these three central questions were compiled using a secure generative AI platform into individual stakeholder response summaries and spot checked against the original transcripts. Topline implications for the GEI 2.0 strategy were identified from the response summaries, with triangulation against interview notes and full transcripts.

1.3 Process

The strategy development process took place between September 2024 and June 2025 and included the completion of the analytic inputs and a series of partner consultations, as summarized below:

Date	Strategy development steps
Sept 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch of external/independent evaluation of GEI • Internal stock take needs and issues workshop
Oct 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent evaluation inception report • Commencement of rapid evidence review
Dec 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation/discussion of GEI 2.0 strategy process with PC • Internal stock take strengths and assets workshop
Feb 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commencement of actor landscape analysis
Mar 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three virtual “thinking sessions” with GEI PC members and implementing partners • External evaluation preliminary findings report
Apr 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent evaluation recommendations co-creation workshop in Brussels • Completion of rapid evidence review • Completion of actor landscape analysis
May 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of independent evaluation final report
June 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation/discussion of initial GEI 2.0 direction with PC followed by three week written comment period
July 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GEI Global Team review and discussion of inputs, partner comments, and operational implications
Sept 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of draft GEI 2.0 strategy for FY2026–30 for review by Partnership Council members
Oct 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual PC member consultations
Nov 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual PC meeting to review/endorse GEI 2.0

Partner consultations:

- Individual partner interviews (Feb 13–Mar 31, 2025)
- Partner “thinking sessions” (Mar 24–26, 2025)
- Six consultations with GEI implementation partners (Oct 2024–Jun 2025)
- PC meetings (Dec 4, 2024, Rome; Jun 10, 2025, Brussels)
- Written comment period (June 10–27, 2025)
- Individual PC member consultations (Oct–Nov 2025)
- Partner meeting to confirm strategy (Nov 2025)

2. Key findings, recommendations, and implications

2.1 Summary of common potential implications for GEI across inputs

#	Implications for GEI	Internal stock take	Evidence review	Landscape analysis	External evaluation
1	Develop sustainable business model, improve funding stability for implementing partners				
2	Focus on GEI niche in country-level M&E systems strengthening				
3	Improve program coherence through coordinated packages of support for focal countries; consider strategic alignment of new activities to avoid splintering efforts				
4	Approach M&E systems strengthening as institutional reform (e.g., consider readiness, political economy, non-linear process, link to national priorities, agendas, etc.)				
5	Pivot away from the 'defragmentation' objective that relied on a pooled funding approach				
6	Update/refine the IPDET training model (new content, updated pedagogy, more access, greater tailoring, etc.)				
7	Enhance GEI's own MEL framework for accountability, adaptive management and learning				
8	Increase opportunities for technical engagement with Partnership Council				
9	Clarify the specific role(s)/function of the GEI network in achieving outcomes; tailor approaches by region				
10	Make CLEAR centers available to work with other ECD actors				
11	Make network building more of an explicit aim of events, training; deliberately leverage these relationships				
12	Enhance knowledge platform (BE), improve multi-lingual content and interface, broaden the user base, leverage it more deliberately to support GEI objectives				

2.2 External evaluation

2.2.1 Findings

#	Findings	Key points
1	GEI global objectives are relevant for a majority of the partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GEI played key role in raising ECD awareness globally and advancing importance of M&E systems • Systems approach at country level with focus on capabilities and long-term partnerships is widely supported • GEI recognized as credible global brand, with strong link to IEG/WBG and IEO/UNDP enhancing legitimacy
2	GEI contributed to refocusing the CLEAR centers' strategy toward a more relevant approach for strengthening national M&E system capacities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All CLEAR centers shifted after 2021 toward more focused strategy on strengthening M&E systems at country level • Being part of GEI brought increased global visibility and legitimacy to centers • Grant management can be time-consuming for CLEAR centers and funding uncertainty creates difficulty retaining quality staff
3	Substantial outcomes are identified at the country level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite challenges (political turnover, shifting priorities), CLEAR centers achieved significant outcomes • Outcomes include influence on national/subnational policies, improved stakeholder skills, increased interest in evaluation, and enhanced recognition of CLEAR expertise • Strengthening M&E capacities is complex and nonlinear, requiring sustained engagement
4	GEI is not sufficiently focused on its comparative advantage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GEI's ToC and ToA are ambitious; resource pooling has been limited and financing partner support has decreased • Coordination through shared work programs has only happened to limited degree; some partners reluctant to collaborate • Some partners think GEI lacks sufficient integration with broader governance capacity development efforts
5	IPDET is relevant at an individual level, but the evidence of its broader impact is limited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IPDET is globally recognized, high-quality program with strong evidence of enhancing individual capacity to conduct evaluations • Social and networking aspects highly appreciated by participants • Perception that training doesn't always align with realities of participants' home institutions, making implementation challenging
6	The alignment between IPDET's supply and demand in the Global South is limited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived imbalance between supply (training, capacity building) and demand (creating need for M&E among financing partners, governments, institutions) • Most participants already had network connections prior to IPDET; program encourages engagement through VOPEs • Content sometimes too theoretical with weak connection to real-world contexts in Global South

#	Findings	Key points
7	Limited but positive views on BetterEvaluation and NEC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BetterEvaluation valued as excellent knowledge source by those using it • Some users desire more material in languages other than English • Limited participation in NEC among respondents but positive views; perception of increased quality and usefulness from Turin 2022 to Beijing 2024
8	Mixed views on GEI's communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many partners consider raised awareness of M&E capacity development as main achievement • Overall assessment of communication strategy's effectiveness is mixed, especially regarding communication between GEI and partners • Several partners criticize focus on branding over supporting ECD program delivery and implementation
9	Governance is perceived as lacking transparency and cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant process perceived as too bureaucratic and inflexible given small size of GEI grants • Decision-making perceived as too top-down from IEG with insufficient transparency • Some partners suggest establishing board with Global South representation as alternative governance mechanism
10	GEI implementing partners do not constitute a coherent network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of coherence varies significantly; some have clear overview while others have limited awareness of counterparts' work • Most implementing partners call for more collaboration or cross-activities within the network • Global Team perceived as high quality, but some question whether focus is too much on communication/branding/funding rather than technical M&E aspects

2.2.2 Recommendations

#	Recommendations	Key points
1	Increase the focus on GEI's niche and comparative advantage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place greater focus on main development objective: strengthening M&E systems in developing countries for evidence-informed policymaking • Consider how different GEI initiatives (IPDET, NEC, BetterEvaluation, Glocal) can be more targeted to support country-level work • Reduce attention on coordination and fragmentation reduction; amend ToC and ToA to be more realistic based on experience
2	Rethink the best approach to evaluation training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transform IPDET into "center of excellence" for M&E training, developing high-quality modules and resources for CLEAR centers' regional/country-specific training • Further develop regional training programs (Kenya, Morocco) building on IPDET's alumni network with more local trainers • Offer training courses to development agencies, CSOs, and others with costs covered by participants

#	Recommendations	Key points
3	Develop a sustainable business model for GEI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update business model based on first phase experience and trends in bilateral donor funding; explore non-traditional financing partners and foundation funding • Provide multi-year grants to CLEAR centers instead of one-year grants to improve staff retention and credibility • Prioritize funding initiatives that cannot easily be funded by others; increase transparency on costs and allocation mechanisms
4	Revise the governance setup	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise governance to increase stakeholder participation (including country level) and transparency in decision-making • Consider establishing global board with representatives from country and regional levels; reconsider future of Advisory Board • Explore new ways to prepare and moderate meetings to foster engagement; provide space for implementation partners to jointly discuss overall strategy
5	Consider the role and composition of the Global Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify Global Team's intended contributions to GEI network in line with new priorities defined in strategy • Consider whether shift in focus requires different skillset within Global Team • Improve access to deeper M&E systems development expertise from "back offices" in IEG, IEO and other places

2.3 Internal stocktake

Theme	Key points
Operational Coherence & Strategic Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities align with mission but business lines can be siloed • Breadth-depth trade-offs • Need for multi-year planning for country-level M&E systems strengthening • Clarify the value of the network in the theory of change
Opportunities to Enhance Training Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong IPDET brand; update curriculum, approach, and delivery model • Opportunity for more consistency in core content and delivery across GEI • Leverage CLEAR centers' expertise in specific areas to create network-wide content
Opportunities to Strengthen Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shift emphasis from outputs to country-level outcomes • Apply an evaluative approach to assess GEI's contribution • Continue enhancement of GEI&US
Unify and improve Knowledge Platforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance user experience and task orientation for BetterEvaluation, including through the use of gen AI • Use analytics to distill, share insights from Glocal Evaluation Week • Strengthen connections with non-evaluators (e.g., commissioners, policy makers)

2.4 Rapid evidence review

Theme	Key points
Dynamic Nature of M&E Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constantly evolving systems • Static snapshots miss long-term change • Requires longitudinal metrics • Demands adaptive measures
Multiple Pathways for Evidence Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence impact pathways <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Direct policy use - Mindset shifts - Engagement - Symbolic value - Advocacy leverage • Trust builders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Co-production - Knowledge brokering
Barriers to Evidence Uptake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited capacity & resources • Misuse & resistance • Complex policy environment • Institutional inertia • Electoral cycles disrupt uptake • Trust & hierarchy challenges
Critical Enablers for Effective Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational culture • Political will is decisive • Trust networks • Engaging users > publishing findings

2.5 Actor landscape analysis

Theme	Key points
Over-reliance on basic M&E training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training is often the 'go-to' starting activity • Training is the simplest activity to measure • Training alone is insufficient for strengthening systems
Relationship-Driven Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior leaders drive change and influence • Relationships of trust matter • Often dependent on individual champions • Engagement with GEI partners
Fragmented Technical Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many organizational actors but it is hard to find and access individual experts • Limited coordination across levels • Isolated individual efforts don't add up to systems change • Ad hoc engagement
Stakeholder Motivations for Evaluation Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Users seek political credibility, effective decisions, and reputation • Producers seek policy coverage, quality standards, compliance/accountability, and sustainability

Annex 2: Contribution analysis approach

1. Introduction

- Contribution analysis (CA) is an evaluation approach that examines how and to what extent an intervention plausibly contributes to observed changes in complex systems, relative to other influencing factors. It does so by formulating and testing contribution claims against a ToC through an iterative, evidence-seeking process, considering rival explanations and refining one or more “contribution stories” (Mayne 2001, 2006, 2008).
- Recent practice has adapted CA for adaptive management, sometimes referred to as CA4AM (Apgar, Hernandez, Ton 2020).
- GEI is a strong candidate for CA4AM for two reasons:
 - 1) GEI works across two interdependent outcome levels, both of which involve changes to systems with multiple actors and causal pathways (i.e., the same conditions Apgar et al describe as the appropriate use case for CA4AM):
 - a) strengthening national M&E systems in selected countries (supply, demand, use, and enabling environment);
 - b) advancing the global/regional evaluation field (e.g., framing/messaging, standards, guidance, coherence)
 - 2) GEI’s strategy calls for an adaptive management approach, with short learning cycles at the country level (e.g., following the Problem-Driven Iterative Adaptation approach), which creates natural decision points into which CA steps can be embedded.

2. Purpose

- As a core part of GEI’s MEL framework, CA is intended to serve three main purposes:
 - 1) Accountability and impact:** generate credible evidence of GEI’s contribution to country M&E system and field/practice level changes
 - 2) Adaptive management:** inform/guide the CLEAR centers’ approach to the country-level work
 - 3) Learning and knowledge sharing:** convert contribution findings into concise learning products to share within the network and broader ECD field

3. Methodological approach

3.1 Scope and units of analysis

- Country level: unit of analysis is country M&E system change. Contribution claims focus on the GEI’s hypothesized roles—primarily via CLEAR country engagement—in influencing M&E system changes targeted at the initiation stage of the country engagement (e.g., related to supply, demand, culture and use, and the enabling environment).
- Network/field level: The unit of analysis is the evaluation field or practice, with flexibility to focus on specific geographic regions or subsets of the field (e.g., related to M&E systems strengthening or training, as deemed relevant).

3.2 Key analytical steps

- GEI will apply Mayne's (2008) six key steps to CA (drawing from the Apgar et al 2020 guidance). These key steps include:
 - 1) Set out the cause-effect relationship(s) to investigate
 - 2) Develop/refine a theory of change and identify key assumptions
 - 3) Gather existing evidence
 - 4) Assemble and assess the contribution claim(s) and challenges to it
 - 5) Seek out additional evidence
 - 6) Revise and strengthen the contribution story
- These steps will be adapted and integrated into the existing work and reporting requirements and schedule of the CLEAR centers to minimize the additional effort required, with collaboration and technical support from the Global Team and other methods experts as needed.

3.3 Data sources

- For country-level analysis:
 - Annual update of the M&E systems diagnostic (e.g., mini-MESA)
 - Quarterly GEI&US indicators of work outputs for each country
 - Government partner, the CLEAR center and GEI program documents
 - Digital impact tracking tools (e.g., Overton)
 - Selected key informant interviews, e.g., two to three every six months
- For network/field level analysis:
 - Site, platform and event analytics (e.g., GEI website, BetterEvaluation, Glocal Evaluation Week)
 - Digital impact tracking tools (e.g., Overton)
 - Annual GEI partner/network survey
 - Selected key informant interviews

3.4 Sampling

- All GEI countries covered by existing GEI&US indicator reporting (inclusive of additional data elements and qualitative descriptions added to support CA)
- A subset of contribution claims (e.g., up to six total, one per region/CLEAR center) will be purposively selected for deeper-dive contribution analysis where learning potential is highest
- Up to three field/network-level contribution claims

4. Implementation

4.1 Roles and responsibilities

- GEI Global MEL unit: Create guidance, templates, etc. for the CLEAR centers. Integrate key additional data elements and qualitative notes within the GEI&US reporting system to support the CA process. Provide technical and facilitation support to the CLEAR centers to work through each step of the CA process (as integrated into existing GEI reporting requirements and workflows).

- CLEAR centers:
 - Directors and country focal point provide input on steps 1-2 for each GEI country they support (identification of key cause-effect relationship(s) to investigate and development/refinement of a working theory of change, key assumptions) and participate in periodic meetings (e.g., quarterly) for steps 4 and 6 (assemble and assess contribution claims; revise and strengthen the contribution story)
 - Designated M&E officer(s) compile data for GEI&US, plus additional data elements and evidence to support the CA process (steps 3, 5) and support all other steps
- External CA advisor(s): Pending funding availability, advisors will provide technical guidance, oversight, and targeted support throughout the process
- External evaluation team: Review, assess, and verify GEI's internal contribution claims and analytical approach as part of the independent evaluation

4.2 Outputs

- Initiation:
 - One to two page CA Note for each GEI country and for the network overall, including a description of cause-effect relationships to investigate and a working country-level theory of change (Mayne's steps 1-2)
- Quarterly:
 - Updates to CA Notes including summary of evidence gathered in the quarter and notes on relevance to contribution claim(s), additional evidence needed (Mayne's steps 3-5)
- Six-monthly:
 - Presentation and peer review of selected CA countries, contribution claims, and progress/status at Implementation Committee meeting (virtual or in person)
- Annual:
 - Brief CA-informed narrative (e.g., 'state-of-contribution' memo) for each country and for field/network level to be included as a section in annual reporting
 - (As relevant/ready) written learning outputs for external dissemination (e.g., a blog post, learning note, or peer-reviewed paper)

4.3 Quality assurance

- Peer review between the CLEAR centers (e.g., presenter/discussant pairs, followed by open discussion) at Implementation Committee meetings (virtual or in-person) or other appropriate venue.
- Ongoing support, review and feedback from the Global MEL Unit
- (Pending funding availability) guidance and/or review from external CA expert(s)

Annex 3: Menu of services

Country/regional level

- M&E diagnostics
- M&E systems strengthening planning
- Training
- Convening
- Relationship brokering

Network level

- Public goods development
- Training
- BetterEvaluation (use and contribution)
- Glocal Evaluation Week
- Convening



global
evaluation
initiative