The Inaugural Assembly of the International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation:
The Realization of a Utopian Dream

by
Craig Russon
W. K. Kellogg Foundation

and
Arnold Love
Independent Consultant

July 31, 2003

Abstract

This article gives the history of the International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation (IOCE), provides current information about regional and national evaluation organizations, presents issues confronting those organizations, and describes the processes of setting up the IOCE (e.g., ratification of provisional constitution, election of interim board).

**The Inaugural Assembly of the International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation:
The Realization of a Utopian Dream**

*In plucking the fruit of memory
one runs the risk of spoiling its bloom*
—Joseph Conrad

On March 28-30, 2003, the inaugural assembly of the International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation (IOCE) was held in Lima, Peru. The event was hosted by the Programme for Strengthening the Regional Capacity for Evaluation of Rural Poverty Alleviation Projects in Latin America and the Caribbean (PREVAL). It was attended by 40 leaders from 26 regional and national evaluation organizations from around the world. (Appendix A contains the list of registered participants and their organizational affiliations.) After a brief history of the effort to create the IOCE, a detailed account of the inaugural assembly will be presented.

History

The effort to create the IOCE dates back to the 1995 American Evaluation Association- and Canadian Evaluation Society-sponsored international conference in Vancouver, British Columbia. The theme of the conference was "Evaluation for a New Century—A Global Perspective." Delegates from 50 countries attended the event, and many came away thinking about evaluation in new ways. A couple of years later, a discussion took place on the EVALTALK listserv regarding the international nature of the profession. One of the principal issues discussed was the creation of a federation of national evaluation organizations.

As a result of that discussion, the International & Cross-Cultural Evaluation Topical Interest Group (I&CCE) convened a panel of six regional and national evaluation organization presidents. The Presidents Panel was a plenary session at the 1998 annual meeting of the American Evaluation Association (Russon & Love, 1999). The purpose of the panel was to discuss the creation of a "world-wide community of evaluators." One outcome of the panel was the decision to move ahead slowly with this project. A proposal was developed, and funding was obtained from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF) to take the next step (Russon & Russon, 2000).

On February 18-20, 1999, a residency meeting was held in Barbados, West Indies, to discuss the issues associated with creating this worldwide community (Mertens & Russon, 2000). The meeting was attended by the leaders of 15 regional and national evaluation organizations from around the world. Also in attendance were observers from WKKF, the University of the West Indies, the Caribbean Development Bank, and the U.N. Capital Development Fund. Through intense negotiations, the group identified the purposes, organizational principles, and activities that would underpin the worldwide community. A drafting committee that represented the diverse nature of the group was selected to develop a charter for what would come to be called the International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation (IOCE).\

It took nearly a year for the charter to be endorsed by all of the organizations that were represented at the Barbados meeting. Then the charter was presented to the rest of the regional and national evaluation organizations from around the world. With the support of the worldwide community of evaluators, a second proposal was developed and additional funding was obtained from WKKF. Members of the drafting committee met on March, 8-10, 2002, in the

Dominican Republic and formed an organizing group to plan the inaugural assembly of the IOCE. Among the principal issues that the organizing group discussed during the meeting were participation, format, agenda, advanced processes, location, and secretariat.

March 28, 2003

The inaugural assembly took place in the conference center of Las Americas Hotel in Miraflores, Lima, Peru, South America. Prior to the beginning of the event, the main salon bustled with activity. Presenters loaded their presentations onto the main computer and tested the video projector. Technology consultants tested the audio system that would provide simultaneous translation into three languages—English, French, and Spanish. Soon the activity ceased and the inaugural assembly was brought to order by Ada Ocampo, Coordinator of PREVAL. She welcomed the delegates on behalf of the IOCE organizing group and the Evaluation Network of Peru. She also recognized the presence of delegates from evaluation organizations in Peru and Colombia that had formed within the past year. This was one of the outcomes that the organizing group had hoped to achieve by planning the inaugural assembly in Latin America.

Next, Marco Segone of the Brazilian Monitoring and Evaluation Network and Penny Hawkins of the Australasian Evaluation Society bade the participants welcome in French and English, respectively. Segone welcomed the participants to the assembly on behalf of the Brazilian Network and all of the Francophone evaluation societies worldwide. He noted that this meeting provided the opportunity for the Francophone evaluation societies to meet together for the first time and to influence the development of evaluation on an international level. In particular, the IOCE inaugural assembly allowed delegates from developing countries that have difficult political situations to come together and express themselves freely. Hawkins thanked PREVAL and stated that it was a privilege to attend this historic event and see the IOCE become a reality. She said that she looked forward to getting to know the other delegates better and developing strong links that could be used in the future to move the organization forward.

Murray Saunders of the U.K. Evaluation Society provided the rationale for the IOCE and background on how the organizing group had done its work. He also outlined the expected outcomes for the inaugural assembly. The IOCE was needed for several reasons: (1) because of the growth in evaluation worldwide. Saunders attributed this growth, in part, to a challenge to the burden of judgment made on social policy areas away from the professional ethic of providers and experts to external and internal people who can create a 'disinterested' evidence base; (2) the increased demand for evaluation by international agencies in all sectors; (3) more cross-national evaluative activity at the individual and institutional levels (or in other words, increased supply of evaluation); (4) the emerging interest in looking in a focused way at the impact of cross-national resource allocation; and (5) the widespread interest concerning evaluation quality and standards and the more subtle issues of appropriateness and capacity.

Saunders discussed the assumptions that had guided the work of the organizing group: (1) inclusivity is necessary in order to build a broad base of activity; (2) cross-national connections can encourage the growth of organizations and promote positive values; (3) dialogue leads to shared understanding of important issues such as ethics, standards, and the use of evaluation; (4) evaluation can support socially responsible interventions by governments; and (5) it is important to encourage growth of capacity within and between sectoral, regional, and linguistic groups.

Next, Saunders made a few remarks about the organizing group's work. The group received a mandate at the Barbados meeting to be an enabling group for human resources and ideas. Because the group members were widely dispersed and could not afford to meet, they relied upon online technology. Early on, work had been divided into three categories: venue, program, and finance. As time went on, the division of labor became less defined. Different people provided leadership at different times. Everyone made critical contributions at various points of development. The organizing group made key decisions through negotiation and consensus.

The outcomes envisioned by the organizing group included (1) provisional endorsement of a constitution with formal ratification coming within a reasonable time; (2) ideas and plans for the distinctive focus of the IOCE; (3) production of an enabling frame that was open, responsive, and flexible; and (4) a new leadership structure to which the organizing group could transfer responsibility.

Following Saunders, Nancy Porteous of the Canadian Evaluation Society spoke about the format of the inaugural assembly. The effort to accommodate all who had expressed interest in participating in the assembly was a reflection of the inclusive approach that was taken. There were many different roles; some delegates were presenting, some were session chairs, and some were recording for the archive. Responsibilities for the session chairs and rapporteurs had been distributed earlier. Presenters and rapporteurs were to post their materials to the online discussion system so that interested individuals could refer to them. (In addition, a video archive of the assembly was being prepared.) A group photo would be taken the following day at noon. Name tags and binders were prepared for each participant.

To end the welcomes and introductions, Mahesh Patel, an observer from UNICEF, led the delegates in a moment of silence for the suffering caused by the war in Iraq. This was followed by a rousing rendition of the evaluation song (sung to the tune of *The Lion King*). This was a song that had been sung during the inaugural conference of the African Evaluation Association for which Patel was co-convener. Finally, Patel instructed the delegates to pair up, interview their partners, and then briefly introduce them to the other delegates.

History and Overview

The following session of the conference was a history and overview of the IOCE presented by two inaugural assembly facilitators, Arnold Love and Craig Russon. The presenters began with a pictorial history of key events in the effort to create the IOCE (Love & Russon, 2000). Then they stated the vision of the IOCE, which is "to promote cooperation between national and regional evaluation societies, associations, and networks." They noted that while much of the IOCE's work would be "virtual," there also would be regional meetings, training events, joint projects, and occasional conferences. IOCE's mission is

> to legitimate and strengthen evaluation societies, associations or networks so that they can better contribute to good governance and strengthen civil society. It will build evaluation capacity, develop evaluation principles and procedures, encourage the development of new evaluation societies and associations or networks, undertake educational activities that will increase public awareness of evaluation, and seek to secure resources for co-operative activity. It will be a forum for the exchange of useful and high quality methods, theories, and effective practice in evaluation.

The key principles on which the IOCE was founded include these:

- The IOCE will be completely independent of the interests of any single evaluation association/society, country, region or any national or international agency.
- Membership will be open to all formally constituted bodies or networks engaged in evaluation, but not to individuals.
- In principle, all participating bodies should contribute to the running costs and activities in the IOCE, but varying needs and capacities would not preclude participation.
- A principle of inclusion applies: nonattendance at face-to-face meetings will not be understood as nonparticipation.
- The organization of the IOCE will be governed by a principle of low cost resourcing.
- The IOCE will be financed by a mixed economy of sponsorship and member subscriptions.
- To reduce costs, the IOCE will use electronic means such as electronic mailing lists, discussion forums, and electronic archiving of key files.

National Associations and Networks

Following a break, a series of case histories on the development of national associations and networks was presented. The first presenters were Marco Segone of the Brazilian Monitoring and Evaluation Network and Jean-Charles Rouge of the Niger Monitoring and Evaluation Network. The presenters explained that UNICEF'S role was to build evaluation capacity in developing countries by supplying the funds to create evaluation networks quickly. Building evaluation networks was very important in Africa and other parts of the world. Next, they explained the Monitoring and Evaluation Capacity Development (M&ECD) conceptual framework that has been jointly developed by UNICEF and UNDP and used to create evaluation networks in two very different countries: Niger and Brazil. The framework contains the following elements:

- establishing effective **processes** (functions, roles, responsibilities, tasks) for identifying problems or issues, and formulating and realizing goals
- carried out by appropriate **actors** (individual and collective)
- organized in effective **structures** for accountability, management, and collective voice
- who have the **motivation, knowledge, skills, and resources** to perform effectively
- supported in doing so by **"rules"** or **norms** (formal and informal, economic, social, political) that exist within organizations (public, private, civil society), in social groups and across society

The M&ECD was first applied by Segone to create the Niger Monitoring and Evaluation Network (ReNSE) in 1999. ReNSE adopted a process by which all members make major decisions by consensus. A coordination committee is democratically elected every two years by the membership. To assure motivation, knowledge, skills, and resources, the coordination committee seeks broad representation by different stakeholder groups. Regarding rules and norms, the network has adopted the following shared values: emphasis on usage of local capacities, country-led and owned, and shared understanding about the nature of evaluation. ReNSE's focus on technical issues, light organizational structure, and transparent process have helped make it one of the most active developing country evaluation organizations.

Next, Carmen Vélez presented a case study of the Spanish Evaluation Society (SEE). She spoke of the growing importance that evaluation of public policies is acquiring in Spain. Planners and managers are increasingly using evaluation as a tool for achieving more efficient public spending. Evaluation is also helping government comply with legal and timeliness requirements as well as transparency of process. A wave of evaluation is cofinanced through structural funds.

Vélez gave a brief explanation about the development and evolution of evaluation in Spain. Despite recent progress, there is still a gap between Spain and Anglo countries. She noted problems in design and implementation of evaluation and the scarce use of results. Evaluation is being used more as a system of financial and administrative control than as a service system for planners and managers. Evaluation is more descriptive than judgmental. It is being used as an instrument to generate descriptions of what has already been done rather than as an improvement tool for planning and decision making.

Finally, Vélez discussed the development process of SEE. A forum of 16 academics recognized the necessity of working to promote investigation, research, and exchange experiences. This forum eventually evolved into SEE, whose main goal is to contribute to the development of an *evaluation culture* in Spain. This is the necessary base to use evaluation as the best existing tool for the effectiveness and efficient design and implementation of public policies. The Society will support and try to improve the scientific research and the diffusion of methods and practices. The intention is to create a vehicle to facilitate the interdisciplinary and interprofessional exchange of experiences with other Spanish and European associations and groups.

Since its inception, the society has sponsored or hosted three major events: an organizing meeting, the fifth European Evaluation Society conference in Seville, and a meeting in Barcelona on the political evaluation of local programs. SEE will hold its second national conference in Cadiz in November 2003. The theme will be theoretical and methodological challenges in program evaluation. SEE faces challenges in putting work teams in place through the Internet and expanding to other sectors besides economic development.

Next, Barbara Rosenstein presented a case study of the Israeli Association for Program Evaluation (IAPE). Evaluators in Israel held an initial meeting in July 1998 to see if there was a need for such an association. The response was overwhelming from evaluators all over Israel who felt isolated and in need of recognition and networking. A committee was immediately formed, and an inaugural conference was held in December 1998. Since then, IAPE has become an accepted feature of the evaluation and programming landscape in Israel.

IAPE is a formal association of individual members with a voluntary executive committee and chair who are elected every two years. The association has no external funding; it is supported entirely by membership dues. Members come from many disciplines including formal and informal education, social programs, and health care. Few have received formal training in evaluation because there are not many formal training programs.

IAPE activities include annual conferences, biannual newsletter in Hebrew, Web site in Hebrew and English, and 2-4 workshops a year targeted by experience and topic. Challenges that IAPE faces include achieving a sustainable membership, not overburdening its volunteer leadership, and maintaining its current level of activities. To confront the challenge of fund-raising, IAPE has begun a new campaign. It is inviting foundations and NGOs to pay a higher institutional fee and receive workshops to help build their evaluation capacity. During its short history, IAPE has

5

achieved some outstanding accomplishments including a raised awareness of evaluation in Israel among program developers and stakeholders alike, dissemination of current trends in evaluation, increased networking among members, the creation of a community of evaluators, and greater emphasis on participation in international events.

Following Rosenstein's presentation, the delegates engaged in discussing the morning's case studies. Discussion focused on budgetary matters. Informal networks oftentimes enter into strategic alliances and are able to pass along operating costs to supporting institutions. It was suggested that such strategic alliances might eventually evolve into institutionalized support. Some questioned whether accepting this kind of support compromised the independence of evaluation organizations. Delegates recognized that acceptance of sponsorship may come with strings attached. Others noted the paradox that if funds are used to attend international meetings, then adequate funds will not be available to develop the networks that are invited to participate in the international meetings.

It was recognized that evaluation organizations in countries with low annual per capita income could not rely on membership fees and so must rely on strategic alliances. However, these evaluation organizations often can obtain support from development agencies. Those in rich countries can support themselves through membership fees. It is evaluation organizations in middle income countries, such as Israel and Malaysia, that are in a predicament. They are affluent enough that they cannot obtain development agency funding, but poor enough that they cannot rely on support from their memberships.

The delegates representing the European Evaluation Society noted the difficulty in raising funds to support the participation of more national evaluation organizations from Europe in the IOCE inaugural assembly. There are many low-resource evaluation organizations in countries with high per capita income. Toward the end of the discussion, there seemed to be some general agreement on the necessity of diversity of funding sources. It would be good to have membership fees and strategic alliances.

The case study presentations continued following lunch in nearby restaurants. Carlos Salazar and Emma Rotondo presented on the Peru Network for Monitoring and Evaluation. Salazar noted Peru's ancient tradition of organizing that was handed down from the Incas. A modern version of this tradition is networks. Networks offer a number of synergistic advantages such as a way of working together, availability of resources, access to information, opportunities to share experiences, generation of new political interventions, and formation of collective vision. Networks are flexible, and this is conducive to building consensus. More than anything, networks seek to have an impact on our lives—to change reality. Of course, networks may also have some disadvantages. If they are closed, that may inhibit the introduction of new ideas and the network may become static. And external influences may co-opt networks from their original intent.

Emma Rotondo spoke specifically about the experience of the Peru Network for Monitoring and Evaluation. In August 2002, 15 professional evaluators met to form the PNM&E. The network is currently in a construction phase. Meetings and a workshop had been held to help determine a vision and mission for the network. The vision for PNM&E is to develop an inclusive network, recognized nationally and internationally, with shared principles and values, that promotes the development of an evaluation culture throughout the country. The mission is to create a national network to promote evaluation capacity throughout the country, offering opportunities for members to exchange information and experience in order to contribute to the socioeconomic development of the country. In addition, PNM&E is drawing up action plans to

6

make the vision a reality. Short-term objectives include recruitment of new members, a national seminar, ethical evaluation standards, and the development of operating procedures (meetings, Web page).

James Milner presented a case study of the Malawi Network of Evaluators (MNE). In 1979, UNICEF-Malawi supported the creation of the Center for Social Research to help evaluate the agency's programs. In 1999, following the African Evaluation Association's inaugural conference, UNICEF asked the center to chair the formation of a national evaluation group. Eight evaluators from the university and the national statistics office responded to the invitation to attend an organizational meeting. The group agreed to form the initial network and that the Center should serve as the secretariat. Following are the objectives of the organization:

1. Opportunity to present papers at meetings, workshops, and seminars
2. Forum to discuss research methods
3. Promote participatory and gender sensitive evaluation agendas and methods
4. A hookup with networks in other areas and regions
5. Create a database of evaluators
6. Provide training sessions

In August 2002, a second meeting was held to discuss the African evaluation guidelines. In November 2002, the network realized that it needed to improve its publicity. Plans included a formal launch of the network, development of a Web site, and television and radio promotion. A week before the inaugural assembly, MNE held its formal launch. The main topics of discussion were revision of the initial terms of reference, membership issues, and clarification of the network's benefits.

Finally, Consuelo Ballesteros and Daniel Gomez presented a case study on the Colombian Network for Monitoring and Evaluation. Ballesteros focused on the meeting that took place in 2002 to organize the network. The event was attended by representatives from ten universities, NGOs, government agencies, and PREVAL (the regional evaluation organization in Latin America). The purpose of the gathering was to reflect upon the evaluation of development projects and programs in Colombia. The methodology that was used took into account the diverse experiences of each organization with respect to the systems and processes of evaluation over innovation, methodology, and political environment. The result of the meeting was that the participants shared their experiences and, through dialogue, began to accumulate and aggregate the impacts that they achieved. With support from PREVAL, the network is in the process of publishing the proceedings from the meeting. They are also making preparations for a second meeting to continue the dialogue.

Gomez spoke about the motivations of the organizations that participated in the network's first meeting. Citing the examples of reconstruction in the Paten province and the public hospital in Bogotá, Gomez emphasized that evaluation gives beneficiaries a voice in the way programs are implemented. In addition, evaluation helps make transparent the manner in which government agencies manage public resources. Finally, evaluation helps government agencies account for how their promises correspond with their actions. These functions increase the credibility that government agencies have among the communities they serve. Gomez concluded by reflecting on the role of academia in the evaluation process. According to him, academia is becoming increasingly involved in the process of helping government agencies incorporate evaluation into their programs. However, academia has a higher obligation to the public to ask the hard questions. Gomez cited the example of a consortium of universities that was evaluating a national housing program. There were no problems until the consortium started asking how the

7

resources were being used to benefit the poor. It became clear that there were discrepancies. The government agency informed the consortium that it had not been hired for this purpose, and soon the source of government support was lost.

Following Ballesteros and Gomez's presentations, the delegates engaged in a discussion of the afternoon's case studies. The focus of the discussion was on clarifying the perception that the Peruvian network was one of individuals and the Colombian network was one of organizations. According to the organizers, the Colombian network is very interested in incorporating the experience of organizations. However, this still requires the participation of individuals who represent collective interests. The Peruvian network has a somewhat different orientation. It is a network of individuals who bring with them their institutional affiliations. The focus on individuals is to avoid the institutional constraints of quotas and issues of participation.

Regional Evaluation Associations

Following a break, the session on the development and role of regional evaluation associations began. The first case study was presented by Zenda Ofir on the African Evaluation Association (AfrEA). AfrEA began in 1999 through the dedicated work of champions such as Mahesh Patel and Kate Spring. It is a coalition of 17 diverse national evaluation organizations. The association gained its credibility, not through formalizing its structure and drafting a constitution, but rather through what it has accomplished. AfrEA convened two major conferences in 1999 and in 2002, it has created a sharing community, and it has authored evaluation guidelines. AfrEA has a 4-person executive committee that is elected from among national leaders. The chair is linked to the conference venue. The executive committee is working toward establishing an advisory council for AfrEA constituted of the leaders of all national evaluation associations and networks in Africa.

According to Ofir, the success of AfrEA will be proportional to the value that it can add to its member organizations. She touched briefly on what AfrEA has done and what it can do in the future.

- Through its conferences, AfrEA developed a real community that did not exist before 1999.
- Sharing of information
- Partnering with UNIFEM to build gender evaluation capacity. Too difficult to partner with 17 individual national evaluation organizations. This can be a model for other similar initiatives.
- Web site redesigned to include up-to-date searchable databases, forums, etc. This provides a single portal to all of the member organizations and can be used as a template.
- Development of management capacity for the leaders of national evaluation organizations
- Promotion of research on African evaluations in order to contribute to the professional literature
- Advocacy for evaluation in countries and across borders. It pushes for equal partnership between south and north evaluators and teams based on justice and mutual respect.
- More efficient mobilization of resources because it can make a single appeal on behalf of the 17 member organizations

- The African Evaluation Guidelines are now published in *Evaluation & Program Planning*. In some ways, these are better than the Program Evaluation Standards because they take context into account.

Finally, Ofir stated that the IOCE can facilitate exposure to the international community that can stimulate development of AfrEA. It can provide input for standards and ethics. It can lead to mutually beneficial partnerships, understanding of new contexts, and network development.

Ada Ocampo and Gloria Vela presented a case study on the Programme for Strengthening the Regional Capacity for Evaluation of Rural Poverty Alleviation Projects in Latin America and the Caribbean (PREVAL). PREVAL is part of a larger poverty reduction funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development. PREVAL's mission is to build evaluation capacity in Latin America and the Caribbean. The assumption that underpins PREVAL is that evaluation is a tool that permits local actors and the excluded to use information to negotiate, interact, influence, and mobilize political action to improve local and regional situations.

PREVAL began in June 1997, bringing together individuals, organizations, and institutions with an interest in evaluation. It is a Spanish-speaking network with a diverse membership. More than anything, PREVAL's contribution has been the exchange of information and experiences that focus on monitoring and evaluation methodology. Because of its regional character and also because of funding, the primary means of exchanging information is the Internet. The network has successfully conducted two month-long electronic workshops. There is an electronic mailing list to which members post messages regarding training courses, books, jobs, and interesting articles. In addition, there is a useful Web site featuring an electronic library from which members can download evaluation resources.

The biggest challenge facing PREVAL is to better support the interest arising from groups of evaluators in Latin American countries to form networks, societies, and associations. At the present time, support is voluntary and sporadic. PREVAL wants to find a way to make the support more systematic. Such evaluation organizations are able to share the learnings that have been gained in the use of methodology that permit PREVAL to increasingly capitalize on knowledge at the people level.

Penny Hawkins presented a case study on the Australasian Evaluation Society (AES). In the 1960s, agriculture was the genesis of evaluation in Australia and New Zealand. In the 1970s, the education and health sectors, followed by social services, started doing evaluation. The 1980s saw a big thrust with public sector reform. In 1987, a significant event occurred: the Australian Commonwealth Departments began requiring public sector organizations to integrate evaluation into their corporate program management over a five-year cycle. Making evaluation mandatory stimulated the development of the evaluation industry in Australia. The high demand has led to capacity problems. It is not possible to meet the demand with current resources.

In 1982, a network of evaluators convened a conference in Melbourne. This led to a succession of conferences in 1984 and 1986. During the 1986 meeting, AES was incorporated and formalized as a society. The society aspires to lead evaluation theory and practice in Australasia. Its mission is to be the leading source of information, advice, contacts, and networking for evaluation. The aims that sit beneath the mission include (a) ethics and standards, (b) discussion forums, (c) education and training, (d) annual awards, and (e) advocacy for the use of quality evaluation. AES has a board of directors and several standing committees (including a new International Relations Committee) that are closely associated with

the aims of the society. Much of the activity in AES happens within its regional groups. These groups are autonomous and can draw upon a central pool of resources to fund their activities.

Challenges that confront AES include knowledge management. AES is searching for a formal way of capturing institutional knowledge from its 21-year history before it disappears. AES has also undertaken the difficult task of developing its own set of evaluation standards that are completely independent from those of other countries. The society is also developing a framework of evaluation competencies. Evaluation in the developing nations located within the geographical boundaries of Australia and New Zealand offers exciting opportunities to explore indigenous theories of evaluation. In the past, AES engaged in the open vs. barter entry system debate that is currently taking place in KenEA. (Barter entry means that entrance to the society is based upon candidates meeting a specified set of membership criteria.) AES elected to stay with open entry, and Hawkins didn't think that it has had any effect on the professionalism of the society or lowered standards in any way.

Next, Nino Saakashvili presented a case study on the International Program Evaluation Network (IPEN) of Russia and the Newly Independent States. Saakashvili clarified that she represented the Georgian chapter of IPEN. She indicated that evaluation in the region was at an earlier stage of development than in other parts of the world. She attributed this to the lack of evaluation culture in the former Soviet Union. After the fall of the Soviet Union, countries in the region began trying to build democracy. Evaluation is increasingly being recognized as part of the democracy building process. It has the potential to provide feedback on what was spent on programs, how it was spent, and the results. Saakashvili has found civil society more open than government to evaluation. Government officials, she said, have the mentality from old times. This clearly must change. IPEN chapters are trying to bring this change about by convening individuals and organizations that are interested in creating an evaluation culture. For instance, IPEN convened major evaluation conferences in Novosibirsk, Siberia, and Sochi. Such informal educational opportunities are essential because there are no academic places in the region where one can receive similar training. Saakashvili thanked the IOCE member organizations in advance for helping IPEN succeed.

Elliot Stern presented a case study on the European Evaluation Society (EES). EES finds itself in the midst of a huge political experiment called the European Union (EU). Inherent to the experiment is a tension between independent national sovereignty and pooled regional sovereignty. Several policy areas are driven at the European level even though member states are responsible for implementing the policy. Implementation has resulted in large programs such as structural adjustment funds and framework programs. These programs require that everything must be evaluated. This is one reason that evaluation has become an extremely important engine for change and development in the EU.

The net effect of these kinds of programs is to create an enormous demand for evaluation. In many countries, the demand is in excess of the supply. The EES and others have been trying to promote the supply side. A strategy that the EES uses to accomplish this goal is the promotion of national societies. One way they do it is by locating their conference where there is a new society. This raises the national profile of the new society because it attracts a wider European audience. Its strategies have apparently been very successful because when the EES was established in 1995, there was one national society in Europe; today there are twelve. The EES is quite active in trying to develop additional evaluation networks in eastern European countries.

According to Stern, the EES's administrative arrangements are quite conventional. Automatic vice president succession helps to ensure continuity over a 4-year period. The society has a multinational board with 12 members. The membership consists of about 400 individual members from across many fields and 12 institutional members. The secretariat is provided by the national audit office in a European country. At the present time, there is no constitutional relationship between the EES and the national societies. However, because most board members are active in their national societies, there is an informal relationship. Stern would like to make the link more formal in the future in order to leverage its collective influence.

Following Stern's presentation, the delegates discussed the afternoon's case studies. Some delegates voiced surprise that cultural diversity was a focus of international debate. They wondered how cultural and linguistic diversity could be integrated into a regional (or continental) vision of evaluation. A specific question was raised about the fact that the EES constitution identifies English as the language of use within the society. Stern responded by conceding that this policy inevitably creates disadvantages for the many evaluators in Europe for whom English is not the first language. EES has struggled with many ways of addressing the issue. One way was to hold conference sessions in languages other than English. These were discontinued because of extremely poor attendance. EES also investigated the possibility of simultaneous translation. However, translation into six different languages was not financially feasible. The EES board finally concluded that it would maintain English as the language of use, while trying to be sensitive to linguistic differences. For Stern, a broader issue is lack of multicultural diversity (rather than just lack of linguistic diversity). He expressed concern that Muslim, Hindu, and other powerful groups that are active in public life in Europe are not represented in the evaluation community.

Closing Remarks for Day 1

Craig Russon was scheduled to make the closing remarks for the day. He had planned to explore the activities that the IOCE might carry out to complement the work of the regional and national evaluation organizations. However, when he looked out over the delegates, many of whom had traveled across multiple time zones, he saw that there was no creative energy left in the room. Therefore, Russon moved that the inaugural assembly be adjourned until the reception later that evening. The delegate from the French Evaluation Society (SFE) was strongly opposed to the motion because he thought there was a large amount of work to conduct and limited time in which to do it. A vote was called, and the motion carried. Those who wanted to continue working were invited to remain in the conference center.

At 17:00 hours, a reception was held to give special recognition to the sponsors of the inaugural assembly and to provide a chance for delegates to meet with colleagues from their region and other parts of the world. The sponsors included the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the World Bank, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Department for International Development (DFID), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the American Evaluation Association (AEA), the Greengrants Fund, Programme for Strengthening the Regional Capacity for Evaluation of Rural Poverty Alleviation Projects in Latin America and the Caribbean (PREVAL), and Benoît Gauthier (IOCE Webmaster *extraordinaire*). A toast was proposed to each sponsor, and a certificate of appreciation was presented to those who were in attendance. Shortly after the certificates were distributed, two large, noisy peace marches protesting the US-led war in Iraq converged at the intersection outside of Las Americas Hotel. Delegates watched from a hotel balcony.

March 29, 2003

11

Expected Outcomes of IOCE

After an overview of the revised agenda and announcements, Murray Saunders and Penny Hawkins led the delegates in an exercise to (1) determine what the IOCE could contribute to regional and national evaluation organizations and (2) what regional and national evaluation organizations could contribute to the IOCE. To accomplish this, Saunders and Hawkins suggested that the delegates divide into five organic groups. One group would be based on French, one on Spanish, two on English, and one on the African region. The small groups were invited to report back five or six key points to the plenary. Then consensus on key messages that emerged from the small groups would be sought. Some delegates expressed concern over the diversity of the groups. In the end, four small groups were formed and delegates could join any group they chose.

After 45 minutes, the small groups reconvened. The group composed of delegates from the American Evaluation Association, Canadian Evaluation Society, United Kingdom Evaluation Society, and the International Program Evaluation Network reported first. They divided their expectations for the IOCE into two categories: internal and external. On the internal side, they expected skill development, team building, connections, and communication across national boundaries. It could promote diversity, facilitate learning, train leaders, and strategically develop evaluation organizations. On the external side, the IOCE could advocate for evaluation and give credibility to emerging societies. It could help evaluation organizations speak with a single, strong voice and articulate the value of evaluation to society. Ethics would transcend both the internal and external expectations. Group One thought that regional and national evaluation organizations can contribute four things to the IOCE: (1) passion, vision, and energy; (2) social capital (e.g., mentoring, exchanges, on-line support); (3) intellectual capital (e.g., ethical guidelines, standards); and (4) financial capital (e.g., dues, fund-raising).

The group composed of delegates from the European Evaluation Society, French Evaluation Society, and La Francophonie reported second. The group thought it was important to keep comments about expectations separate from those about contributions that organizations can make to the IOCE. The first expectation was to enhance the quality of the debate on two subjects: ethics and ways to do evaluation. The group thought that this debate would be enhanced by a multicultural dimension brought by the IOCE that does not exist at the moment. Furthermore, this group thought the IOCE offers a new avenue to help both governments and civil society discover the usefulness of evaluation. By sharing experiences, each association would be better able to develop models of evaluation. The IOCE would also increase the diversity of sources for learning. Usually, the focus is on the practice of evaluation in one country without looking at what is being done elsewhere. Instead of one or two models of evaluation, the IOCE could help expand the range of evaluation options that we have available.

The group composed of delegates from regional and national evaluation organizations in Africa and the Israeli Association for Program Evaluation reported third. These delegates debated whether it was better for their organizations to participate in the IOCE directly or to do it through their regional organization. Their expectation was for the IOCE to promote international networking, exchanges of literature and knowledge, and the development of institutions/-profession. It can help in the advocacy process on evaluation issues, especially the north-south dialogue on partnership. The IOCE can also be a forum for contextual practice and diversity. This group was also concerned with the criteria for participation and thought that it was important to spell this out.

The group composed of delegates from regional and national evaluation organizations in Latin America and Spain reported last. For this group, the concept of diversity was important. The IOCE should also promote the professionalization of evaluation by means of advocacy. This group desired that the IOCE serve as facilitator for international connections and exchanges among member organizations. It should also facilitate cultural debate in the form of technical exchanges to bring back experiences, methodology, and advances. In return, the Latin American delegates promised to create a regional Latin American organization modeled after PREVAL, strengthen existing national evaluation organizations, expand their numbers, and link to Spain. What this group did NOT want was a big bureaucracy and rigid hierarchical structures.

Elliot Stern synthesized several points from the small group reports. The first cluster dealt with how networks and societies are developed within some kind of social capital and ethical frameworks respecting regional and cultural diversity. The second cluster was that the IOCE could provide institutional support for innovation and new ideas. The third cluster was debates about the nature of evaluation itself. Fourth, there seemed to be general interest in advocating for evaluation. The fifth concerned the collective acquisition of resources in ways that cannot be undertaken by individuals alone. The sixth was the idea of improving the quality of evaluation by paying attention to ethics and some kind of monitoring function. The seventh and last cluster dealt with developing a flexible, open, nonbureaucratic, nonhierarchical organizational framework.

Priority Activities for IOCE

After a break, Marco Segone and Mahesh Patel led the delegates in an exercise in which they prioritized the preliminary list of activities in the *IOCE Briefing Bulletin*. It was cautioned that the activities should be prioritized on the basis of financial resources, human resources, and urgency. Once again, the delegates divided into small groups. After 45 minutes, the small groups reconvened. This time, the group composed of delegates from regional and national evaluation organizations in Africa and the Israeli Association for Program Evaluation (IAPE) reported first. This group's prioritized list of activities included improving the evaluation of international development through application of standards, coordinating programs to facilitate exchange between evaluation organizations from the north and south, establishing research networks on innovative themes, sharing information and ideas on evaluation, and advocating for evaluation with governments and civil society.

The Latin American group's prioritized list was divided into short- and medium-term activities. In addition, the activities were grouped into three components. The initiative component included activities such as ratification of the IOCE statutes, refining the function of the organization structure, and organizing work groups to deepen the declaration of philosophical principles. The capacity development component included activities such as information management and defining methods of participation in regional activities. The political component included activities such as promoting strategic alliances, positioning the IOCE in international forums, and strengthening north/south and south/south dialogue.

The Francophone group suggested ten priority tasks for the IOCE during the next two years. The first was to develop an IOCE Web site organized according to themes that will allow access to important sources of information on the international level. The second was to create a virtual international conference each year. The virtual conference would run over two weeks and focus on a specific theme. The third was to create a database that listed all the activities of each association. The fourth was to indicate on the IOCE Web site the trips that resource

evaluators plan to make as a way of facilitating opportunities for exchanges. The fifth was to develop information kits to promote the importance of evaluation to the public. The sixth, which was closely related, was to provide information kits to help evaluation societies in different parts of the world promote evaluation in their own environment. The seventh was to create an international calendar of events to promote evaluation. The eighth was to develop "virtual" newsletters that would inform people worldwide about evaluation. The ninth was to create links between the Web sites of each association, society, and network. The tenth and final task was to create a brochure that explained the IOCE clearly. The group thought that if the IOCE concept and its benefits are not clear, then the IOCE will not be able to attract money.

The AEA, CES, IPEN, and UKES gave higher priority to less difficult tasks that would lead to early successes and build enthusiasm for later activities. Their list included developing a communications plan, matching technical expertise with need, advocating for evaluation, degree programs, distance education, marketing the IOCE to internal audiences, and international job bank linking.

From the small group reports, Mahesh Patel and Zenda Ofir synthesized four or five points. In the absence of a program theory or logic model, Patel questioned the basis that the small groups used for prioritization. He also emphasized that the IOCE's added value would be greater if it concentrated on activities that the regional and national evaluation organizations were unable to do for themselves. He suggested that accountability could be promoted by assigning responsibility for carrying out an activity to specific individuals, committees, or groups. Ofir identified a number of common themes from the small group sessions for action by IOCE: (1) IOCE organizational systems need to be established by the end of the year. These have to make extensive use of technology to minimize cost. (2) An IOCE communication strategy is a priority and should include among others an interactive Web site that would facilitate IOCE management and share information, a newsletter, and a brochure. (3) Programs should be implemented to develop the use of evaluation standards, drawing on international experience and regional diversity; to share evaluation experiences and expertise, among others on issues around north-south and south-south interaction; to promote international research networks on innovative evaluation themes; to develop targeted skills; and to provide resources and tools useful for evaluation associations. (4) A strategy should be developed to advocate for evaluation at regional and international forums. (5) Strategic alliances should be developed to further IOCE goals.

Overview of Proposed Constitution and Nomination Process

After lunch, Nancy Porteous introduced the overview of the proposed constitution with a discussion of process. Final ratification of the constitution was extended from one to three months' time. This was seen as a trade-off between allowing enough time for ratification and not losing the momentum created during the inaugural assembly. Consensus was achieved that at some point during the inaugural assembly there would be a vote on whether or not to endorse the constitution in principle. Porteous yielded the floor to Arnold Love, who walked the delegates through the constitution at a high level.

Love directed the delegates' attention to the draft constitution, translated into English, French, and Spanish, which was contained in their packets. He promised to review the rationale for having a constitution, principles on which it would be based, and assumptions that underpinned the document. During the Barbados and Dominican Republic planning meetings, some participants expressed the view that they did NOT want a constitution because it might lead to a rigid and bureaucratic organizational structure. It was finally decided, however, that a

14

constitution was necessary in order to become incorporated as an international not-for-profit organization. Incorporation is important for two reasons: (1) it is a prerequisite for obtaining funding from donor agencies, and (2) it will enable the IOCE to manage its own affairs (heretofore, AEA had graciously agreed to serve as fiscal agent for funding).

The draft constitution was seen as an embodiment of the principles that were enunciated during the Barbados and Dominican Republic meetings. The IOCE would be independent from existing bodies, an organization of organizations, open to all bona fide regional and national evaluation organizations, governed by the principle of low cost, and financed by a combination of dues and fund-raising. Next, Love took the participants through a few of the draft constitution's key features. It was proposed that the organization be named the International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation (IOCE). Its mission would be to contribute to good governance and strengthen civil society, build evaluation capacity, develop principles and procedures, encourage the creation of new evaluation societies and networks, increase public awareness of evaluation, secure resources for cooperative activities, and create a forum for information exchange.

Three categories of membership were proposed: full membership for established evaluation organizations, associate memberships for emerging evaluation organizations, and official observer memberships. Only full members would have voting privileges—1 per organization. A general assembly would be held at least every 5 years and perhaps more frequently. The IOCE would have a board of trustees of between 10 and 14 members. From the trustees, an executive committee (president, two vice presidents, secretary-treasurer, and past president) would be elected. The secretariat could be located with the secretary-treasurer or some other location. In addition to the executive committee, a number of working committees would focus on various activity areas. English would be the primary working language, but official documents would also be distributed in French and Spanish. Member dues would be determined by the board of trustees.

Next, Nancy Porteous put forward the organizing group's proposal for nominating the IOCE Board of Trustees. Any delegate could nominate him-/herself or any other delegate to serve on the board. The organizing group would assemble the slate of candidates. Then each of the seven regions would select two trustees by either consensus or vote. After negotiation, the delegates decided to scrap the nominations process. Two things remained: determining the total number of members of the board and its composition and deciding the time and place where regions would make that decision.

Several delegates raised concerns about overrepresentation by some countries or regions. The argument was made that, although they are both comprised of many countries, Europe and Africa had only two seats each, whereas Australasia and North America represented only a few countries and yet they both had two seats. Four counterproposals were put forward taking trustees from some regions (e.g., Asia, Australasia, Russia/NIS) and giving them to other regions (e.g., Africa, Europe, Latin America, North America). The number of counterproposals seemed to almost paralyze the negotiations. It was only when the delegations from Africa and Latin America magnanimously gave up their requests for additional trustees that the way forward became clear. The number of proposals devolved into three: A, B, C. All three would reduce the number of trustees from Asia, Australasia, and Russia/NIS to one. Proposal A would give both Europe and North America three trustee positions each. Proposal B would give both Europe and North America two trustee positions each. Proposal C would give Europe three trustee positions and North America two. A secret vote was taken and Proposal A received 5 votes; B, 12 votes; and C, 7 votes. Therefore, the regional composition of the board of trustees

was Europe (2), North America (2), Latin America (2), Africa (2), Asia (1), Russia/NIS (1), Australasia (1). That evening, the delegates attended a dinner theater called Manos Morenas for an enjoyable meal and exhibition of Peruvian folk dances.

March 30, 2003

New or Potential Evaluation Networks

Sunday morning began with a presentation by Karen Odhiambo of Kenya Evaluation Association on the World Bank/UNDP-supported International Development Evaluation Association, or IDEAS. Odhiambo saw parallels in the way that IDEAS and the IOCE were being organized. The central focus of IDEAS is the development of evaluation capacity using a network of practitioners and institutions. The organization's work plan calls for biennial conferences and a Web site. This plan may be expanded as the types of collaborations and partnerships grow. Odhiambo presented the organizational structure of IDEAS including the president and ten board members from countries located all over the world.

Next, Jean-Louis Dethier presented his views about the implications of the IOCE for La Francophonie. For the most part, it is an opportunity to work in a common language and a shared history that encourages Francophone associations to work together and permits them to communicate directly without passing through another language. The inaugural assembly of the IOCE was the first international opportunity for Francophone associations and networks to be together. Francophone evaluation associations want to develop a network and discuss common issues, build the network together, and work together. They want to develop this network, not to close themselves off from other associations, but to open themselves up.

Jack Batho followed with his views about implications of the IOCE for La Francophonie. He began by saying that La Francophonie was the equivalent of the Commonwealth in English-speaking countries. There are 55 member countries, and 22 are in Africa. Of the 55 member countries, 30 have French as their official language. Except for Niger, none of the African Francophone countries were represented at the IOCE meeting in Lima. Batho noted that the know-how in the south needed to be identified and ways should be found for all members of the network to participate in international meetings. Full participation will allow Francophone evaluation associations to fulfill their belief in the importance of broad multicultural representation.

Next, Batho described the plan of action that the group had developed. In the following week, La Francophonie intended to implement a forum to allow its associations to communicate and plan meetings and activities that will take place in the second semester of 2004. Next, he gave examples of some collaborative projects already under way. Quebec and Lille are working together to evaluate water policy. A Franco-Belgian-Swiss group is developing indicators. Belgium and France are establishing contacts with the intention of building partnerships with the French-speaking countries in the south that will help facilitate the dialog between the south and the north.

Next, Donna Mertens of AEA presented on diversity. Mertens reaffirmed the importance of diversity and shared her belief that no culture has the right to impose its way of life upon any other. Within the context of the IOCE, the principle of diversity manifested itself through the selection of people in the organizing group, the preconference translation of materials, and the simultaneous translation during the conference. The principle can be refined by sharing our experiences with our struggles with diversity.

16

In this spirit, Mertens shared some of AEA's experience with the W.K. Kellogg Foundation-funded Building Diversity Initiative (BDI). The initiative had two goals: (1) to improve the quality and effectiveness of evaluation by increasing the number of racially and ethnically diverse evaluators in the evaluation profession and (2) to improve the capacity of all evaluators to work across cultures. The tasks that were undertaken included setting up an administrative structure, compiling a directory of evaluators of color and evaluators with cross-cultural experience, and conducting a survey of evaluation training programs. A planned Phase II of the initiative will address recommendations, including a review of *The Program Evaluation Standards* and AEA *Guiding Principles* for cultural appropriateness, an internship program for evaluators of color, a media campaign to raise awareness about evaluation as a career, and small business development for minority evaluators.

Following Mertens' presentation, the delegates engaged in a discussion of the morning's sessions. Part of the discussion was used to elaborate further on intent and purpose behind IDEAS. Then, the delegates attempted to extract lessons that could be learned from the IDEAS experience. One lesson learned was that IDEAS went to great lengths to avoid an overambitious work plan. Only those activities with a reasonable expectation of accomplishment were undertaken. Points of differentiation that could be used to position the IOCE vis-à-vis IDEAS were discussed. IDEAS focuses on the professional development of individuals. (However, a review of IDEAS promotional material suggests that it may have ambitions to be more.) The IOCE, on the other hand, is a loose coalition of regional and national evaluation organizations. The two approaches seek essentially the same goal, but go about it in different ways that reflect a widely disparate set of fundamental assumptions about human nature. Finally, there was some discussion about inviting IDEAS to form a part of the IOCE at some point in the future.

Ethics and Standards

After a break, Mahesh Patel, an observer from UNICEF presented on the African Evaluation Guidelines. The Guidelines, loosely based on The Program Evaluation Standards (Joint Committee, 1994), are a series of dialogues between the person commissioning the evaluation and the person undertaking the work. The dialogues can happen during one of three phases: contract negotiation, submission of first draft, or submission of final draft. Work on the Guidelines dates back to a 1998 workshop by Craig Russon in Nairobi on the use of The Program Evaluation Standards. The following year, Patel and Russon (1999) produced a draft version that was discussed in a plenary session of the AfrEA conference. Further discussions took place at the South African Development Bank Regional Workshop (Patel & Russon, 2000). These discussions led to the development of a conceptual consensus among AfrEA members. The Guidelines were recently published in the November 2002 issue of *Evaluation & Program Planning*. The foreword of the publication was signed by the directors of UNICEF and UNAIDS and, to a certain extent, can be viewed as an endorsement of the principle of applying quality-enhancing standards to programme evaluations. About one-third of the Guidelines have been modified—a process that continues to this day. Future modifications may try to incorporate OECD's Development Assistance Committee's criteria and operational issues that UNICEF would like to see addressed.

Next, Karen Odhiambo presented her dissertation research on evaluation standards. Odhiambo recounted some of her negative experiences with evaluation in Southern Africa. These experiences highlighted the need for quality improvement. One way of accomplishing this is through evaluation standards. Odhiambo pleaded for the delegates to consider how the IOCE

could help the situation. Discussion of the presentation dealt with two approaches that might be undertaken. Some delegates favored setting up external mechanisms to "police the system." Others, who rejected external intervention, thought the solution was to promote the internalization of evaluation standards through professional development. There seemed to be some agreement that consumer education would be beneficial. This would involve helping funders and governments apply standards to evaluation products they receive from consultants to ensure that they are of high quality (Russon, 2000).

Jean-Louis Dethier of the Wallonia Society for Evaluation (WSE) presented about the relationship between evaluation and democracy. In his introduction, he described Wallonia as a small French-speaking region of Belgium, created about 20 years ago. Although it comprises about half of the territory of Belgium, it is home to only about one-third of the population. The economic structure of Wallonia is not strong. It is comprised of primarily urban areas with high unemployment. There has been a gradual transfer of expertise, so that Wallonia is now working within a federation. In effect, it is operating like a state within a state.

Wallonia has used evaluation to question people from government, asking them what is good governance. This led to the creation of WSE in 2000. WSE's mission is to promote evaluation in Wallonia. The society holds yearly meetings, and the last one focused on the relationship between evaluation and future planning. Dethier explained the evaluation component of a project to plan the future of Wallonia. A participatory evaluation approach was used to follow up on the implementation of the project. In Phase II of the project, an Institute for Statistics and Forecasting was established.

Now that the government has created its statistics and forecasting office, the WSE must work on the ethics code about use of evaluation data. It also must help government and stakeholders see the difference between monitoring and evaluation. WSE, however, has a resources problem. Documents stating its mission are available in French and English on the WSE Web site. The current project is very important because evaluation allows communication between government and stakeholders.

Endorsement in Principle of IOCE Constitution

In the penultimate session of the inaugural assembly, Arnold Love presented the interim board of trustees. The interim board will have 18 months to put together the legal structure for the IOCE and to finalize plans for future directions. Trustees' names and the areas they represent are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. IOCE Interim Board of Trustees

Region	Name(s)	Alternate
Europe	Elliot Stern Jean-Louis Dethier	Carmen Velez
North America	Donna Mertens Nancy Porteous	
Latin America	Marco Segone Carlos Salazar	Gloria Vela
Africa	Zenda Ofir Girmay Haile	
Asia	Barbara Rosenstein (temporary)	

| Russia/NIS | Nino Saakashvili (temporary) | |
| Australasia | Penny Hawkins | |

Barbara Rosenstein agreed to consult with others from Asia to select the permanent interim trustee for Asia, as did Nino Saakashvili for Russia/NIS.

Several issues arose with regard to the interim board of trustees. It was pointed out that the term of office of several regional and national evaluation organization leaders will expire before the conclusion of the 18-month interim period. This prompted concerns about continuity of the effort. It was suggested that continuity may take precedence over rotation. Interim trustees for whom this was an issue were advised to negotiate with their organizations to see if they could continue on as interim trustees even after they left office. Several interim trustees acknowledged that they required approval from the boards of their home organizations before accepting the interim trustee positions.

The nominations of PREVAL and La Francophonie to be observer members led to a general discussion of the flexibility the board of trustees should have to draw upon outside expertise for information, energy, and support. It was suggested that the different roles that outside advisers could potentially play be recognized. In an expertise role, advisors could be invited to provide technical advice. A representation role would be invoked to compensate for future growth of regional and national evaluation organizations around the world. There is an observer role for nonvoting members of the board of trustees. Flexibility was deemed important; however, concern was expressed about unraveling the agreement that was reached the day before on the number of trustees.

Love next led the assembly in examining the draft IOCE constitution in more detail to identify areas for improvement. Rather than vote on the issues, it was agreed that the interim board of trustees would take the comments under advisement. The first issue debated was retaining the name International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation and the acronym IOCE. Some delegates expressed concern about the acronym implying an intergovernmental form. However, there was wide agreement that the IOCE has strong brand recognition and that the name and acronym should be retained for marketing purposes. In fact, PREVAL even decided to use the English acronym IOCE (instead of the Spanish equivalent OICE) in the materials that it prepared in advance of the inaugural assembly.

The second issue debated was the IOCE's mission and objectives. Discussion focused on the balance between the objectives of inclusivity and legitimization. Some delegates interpreted the latter objective to mean that an evaluation organization would not be viewed as legitimate without IOCE's endorsement. Members of the organizing group clarified that their intended meaning was not that the IOCE should legitimate evaluation organizations, but rather that it should legitimate evaluation. In some countries one can get arrested for doing evaluation. One objective of the IOCE should be to make the case that evaluation is a legitimate, right, and proper part of civic society.

While legitimating evaluation organizations may not have been the intended meaning, the IOCE may need to carry out such a function to a limited extent to protect against consultant groups in developing countries that have positioned themselves as national evaluation organizations in an attempt to gain more business. There seemed to be broad agreement that judgments about the legitimacy of a national evaluation organization should be made in consultation with regional

19

evaluation organizations. A set of criteria and mechanisms for making such judgments would be helpful.

A third issue that was debated was the membership categories. Three categories were proposed: full members, associate members, and observer members. Honorary membership was suggested as a possible fourth category as a way to recognize people's contributions and also to enhance the IOCE's visibility and credibility. It was recommended that the constitution better define the various membership categories, their defined membership dues, and what they can expect to receive from the IOCE in return. Two special cases of membership were identified. The first was "subnational" evaluation organizations such as Quebec and Wallonia. Some feared that their inclusion would open the door for AEA's state affiliates and the provincial organizations of CES and AES to seek admission to the IOCE. The second was countries in which more than one national evaluation organization existed (e.g., the U.S. has AEA and Division 13 of the American Educational Research Association). The criteria developed to recognize an evaluation network or group for inclusion in the IOCE should be sensitive to these special cases.

The working language(s) of the IOCE was the fourth issue debated. A precedent was set by translating all official documents and conducting the proceedings of the inaugural assembly in English, French, and Spanish. However, substantial costs were involved in the translation. One position put forward was that all documents should be circulated in English and that all evaluation organizations should have the right to translate them into their own working languages. This position appeared to receive support by delegates from evaluation organizations in countries where English, French, and Spanish were not the mother tongue. It was recognized that using English as the principal language provides unfair advantage to certain cultural groups. There was general agreement among the delegates that, to the extent possible, the IOCE should promote language diversity, but that the organization also has to be pragmatic when it comes to translation and its oftentimes high costs.

The fourth and last issue debated was the resources, including human, but especially fiscal. Love stated that the draft constitution contained an ambiguous statement to allow for dues at the discretion of the board of trustees. One position put forward was that everyone should pay something—perhaps using a sliding scale so that bigger, richer evaluation organizations would pay more. External funding would be sought to supplement the IOCE budget. It was pointed out that the assumption that all evaluation organizations in developed countries are big and rich is incorrect. In addition, the financial position of many varies from year to year depending on the success of their conference. Two ideas put forward to ease the financial burden on evaluation organizations were in-kind contributions (counting volunteer labor toward dues) and waivers, particularly for new groups.

A plea was heard from one of the delegates to give special consideration to informal networks in developing countries. These networks oftentimes do not have bank accounts and are not registered with the government. Therefore, dues are more problematic for them. At the same time, many of these networks are able to raise disproportionately more funds to attend meetings like the inaugural assembly than their counterparts in developed countries. This might provide creative opportunities to assess the dues. Another issue that was tacked on the end of the discussion of dues was the nomenclature for the IOCE executive committee. Some thought that the words *president, vice president*, etc. send the wrong type of message. Referring to leaders as *chair, vice chair*, etc. implies a less hierarchical, more responsive, less engendered organization.

Closing of the Assembly and Summary of Next Steps

At the closing session, Marco Segone briefly summarized the three-day IOCE inaugural assembly. On Friday, participants learned about the history and context of the IOCE and listened to case studies documenting national experiences with developing evaluation organizations. On Saturday, organizational issues, expected outcomes, and priority activities were discussed; and on Sunday, the future of the IOCE and next steps were debated. Segone then asked Zenda Ofir to review the next steps. Referring to a handout that had been distributed the day before, Ofir identified five next steps.

1. Develop IOCE organization systems
2. Put in place an IOCE communication strategy
3. Implement programmes around specific themes
4. Champion and promote evaluation in international forums
5. Enter into strategic alliances to further IOCE goals

Segone invited the organizing group to meet with the incoming board of trustees, after which the latter would hold its first meeting to develop a plan of action. He thanked Ada Ocampo and PREVAL, the Peru M&E Network, translators, the organizing group, and the participants. He stated that the IOCE was a utopian dream that had come true in a few short years. Finally, Segone introduced Ada Ocampo, Coordinator of PREVAL.

Ocampo stated that it was an honor for Latin America to be selected as the venue for the inaugural assembly of the IOCE. However, when she volunteered, she did not realize the enormity of the task. She and her organization had learned many strategic as well as operational and logistical lessons. For example, organizational demands were so great that she didn't have time to participate in the debates over content. PREVAL staff learned many lessons, made a few mistakes, and (jokingly) said that PREVAL wanted the opportunity to host another assembly so that it could show that it had learned its lessons well. Ocampo commented on the human side of the event. Delegates had come together, become friends, and this would help them work together in the future. After her remarks, the PREVAL staff distributed group photographs and a souvenir ceramic pot to each participant. Following Ocampo's remarks, Mahesh Patel led the assembly in the IOCE song, a variation of the evaluation song he led on Friday.

Strategic Issues

We, the authors, have been involved in the effort to organize the IOCE since the beginning. Now that an interim board of trustees has been elected, we see ourselves pulling back and letting this August body assume leadership for the organization. This gives us the freedom to offer independent critique and (unsolicited) advice. Therefore, the following is not a traditional qualitative analysis of the narrative description presented in the previous sections. Rather, we offer a strategic analysis of what we view as the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats confronting the organization.

Strengths. It is our view that the IOCE has a bold vision and a noble mission. This shared vision has drawn together a group of the most dynamic and charismatic leaders from regional and national evaluation organizations around the world. We have the sense that these leaders are bound by a common aspiration and deep commitment to create something that, ten years ago, few, if anyone, had dared to dream.

The diversity of the individuals and organizations participating in the IOCE is another source of strength. Each member organization brings unique talents and experiences that will enhance the IOCE's ability to achieve its mission and to benefit other member organizations. The simultaneous translation of materials and sessions into three languages was a breakthrough that sets a new precedent for promoting diversity.

The IOCE is a bottom-up organization, as opposed to one that is top-down. Its organizing has been democratic and not controlled or stage-managed by its founders. The founders tried to make the organizing process as transparent as possible by posting material online so that those not able to participate physically could participate virtually. Feedback that was received was integrated into the discussion. We believe that this respect for a democratic process has built a strong foundation of support for the IOCE.

Weaknesses. It is often the case that an organization's greatest strengths are also its greatest weaknesses. The IOCE is no exception. As a bottom-up organization, the IOCE does not have a wealthy patron to underwrite its expenses. The IOCE's financing, to date, has been somewhat ad hoc. The W.K. Kellogg Foundation provided core funding for the event. Some evaluation organizations in wealthy countries were able to pay their own way to the IOCE inaugural assembly. Many evaluation organizations in developing countries were able to obtain travel support from various funding sources.

However, evaluation organizations from several middle income countries could not pay their own way, yet were unable to qualify for aid. Unfortunately, this limited the participation of these organizations in the inaugural assembly. Unless a more equitable way of distributing resources is determined, this funding dilemma threatens to undermine truly inclusive and democratic participation in the IOCE.

Also, we fear that the current allocation of voting rights (one vote per organization) may lead to the creation of regionally based voting blocks. It is possible that a voting block of small evaluation organizations could dominate large evaluation organizations that do not form part of a regional body. It may be necessary to move to a model such as that employed by the United Nations, where votes in the IOCE are determined, not only by status as the representative of a country or region, but also according to the number of members in the organization and the amount of dues that the organization pays. Alternatively, the IOCE may find it desirable to seek to make decisions by consensus, rather than by voting.

Opportunities. The inaugural assembly provided an opportunity to raise the discussion about important issues such as evaluation standards, ethics, evaluation capacity building, and advocacy to the international level. To achieve its full potential, we believe that formal incorporation of the IOCE as a separate entity is essential. In addition to being a prerequisite for obtaining funding from donor agencies, more importantly it will enable the IOCE to manage its own affairs and set an independent agenda for action on matters that are important for the world evaluation community.

Some regional and national evaluation organizations have viewed the International Development Evaluation Association (IDEAS), supported by the World Bank and UNDP, as a rival organization that is competing for the same pool of members. Rather than be threatened by IDEAS, or IDEAS threatened by the IOCE, we feel strongly that closer integration and cooperation between IDEAS and the IOCE will benefit both organizations. A closer relationship will benefit IDEAS by leading to greater acceptance by IOCE member organizations. Because IDEAS is an organization comprised of individual members, the IOCE may contribute to the

sustainability of IDEAS once the initial funding from the World Bank and UNDP ends. For its part, the IOCE may benefit by greater access to resources through a cooperative relationship with IDEAS.

Threats. From the start (Barbados meeting), the mission, purposes, and organizing principles for the IOCE have consistently received broad support. One danger that we perceive is that the IOCE may not remain true to its own organizing principles. For example, the *Briefing Bulletin* states that, "A principle of inclusion would apply which means that non attendance at face to face meetings will not be understood as non-participation." Yet, at the inaugural assembly, those regional and national evaluation organizations that were not represented or poorly represented (i.e., from middle income countries) appeared not to have the same voice as those that were well represented.

The *Briefing Bulletin* also touches on rotating representation in the IOCE leadership structures. It is our opinion that the need for continuity must be balanced with the need to regularly recruit new leaders onto the board of trustees and executive committee. We believe that this should somehow be addressed in the IOCE bylaws. One way of doing this might be to establish term limits or rotating chairs. We fear that if the IOCE is not true to its fundamental organizing principles, members will become disillusioned and drop out.

Lastly, we think the leaders of the IOCE must be able to produce benefits that are tangible to the members of the regional and national evaluation organizations. The IOCE leaders must clearly communicate the value of belonging to the IOCE so that there is no doubt in the minds of the members of regional and national evaluation organizations that the IOCE deserves their support and commitment. Therefore, communication within and between regional and national evaluation organizations is of great importance. It also will be necessary for the IOCE to develop exemplary communication strategies that encourage collaboration and exchanges that surmount language and cultural barriers.

> *There will come a time when you believe*
> *everything is finished; that will be the beginning*
> —Louis L'amore

References

Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation. (1994). *The program evaluation standards.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Love, A., & Russon, C. (2000). Building a worldwide evaluation community: past, present, and future. *Evaluation and Program Planning: An International Journal, 23*(4), 449-459.

Mertens, D., & Russon, C. (2000). A proposal for the International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation. *The American Journal of Evaluation, 21*(2), 275-284.

Patel, M., & Allen, K. (Eds.). (2002). UNICEF and UNAIDS evaluations of HIV/AIDS. *Evaluation and Program Planning: An International Journal, 25*(4).

Patel, M., & Russon, C. (1999, September). *Appropriateness of The Program Evaluation Standards for use in African cultures.* Paper presented at the inaugural meeting of the African Evaluation Association, Nairobi, Kenya.

Patel, M., & Russon, C. (2000). *Appropriateness of The Program Evaluation Standards for use in African cultures.* Monitoring and evaluation capacity development in Africa: Selected proceedings from a seminar and workshop organized by the Development Bank of Southern Africa, the African Development Bank, and the World Bank. Johannesburg, South Africa.

Russon, C. (Ed.). (2000). *The Program Evaluation Standards in international settings.* Occasional Papers Series # 17, Kalamazoo: Western Michigan University, The Evaluation Center.

Russon, C., & Love, A. (Eds.). (1999). *Creating a world-wide evaluation community.* Occasional Papers Series # 15. Kalamazoo: Western Michigan University, The Evaluation Center.

Russon, C., & Russon, K. (Eds.). (2000). *The annotated bibliography of international programme evaluation.* Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Notes

1. This article represents the views of the authors and not necessarily those of the International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation (IOCE), IOCE member organizations, or the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

2. The authors wish to acknowledge the invaluable contributions to this article made by Karen Russon, Robert Bundy, Jr., Rigoberto J. Rincones-Gómez, Liliana Rodríguez-Campos, and all of the IOCE inaugural assembly delegates.

Appendix A

Associations Participating in IOCE Inaugural Assembly (as of March 25)

Regional or National Evaluation Association	Official Representative(s)
African Evaluation Association	Zenda Ofir Girmay Haile
American Evaluation Association	Donna Mertens Richard Krueger
Australasian Evaluation Society	Penny Hawkins
Brazilian Monitoring and Evaluation Network	Rogério Renato Silva Marco Segone
Canadian Evaluation Society	Gwen Keith Nancy Porteous
Colombian Network for Monitoring and Evaluation (RED SIES)	Consuelo Ballesteros Daniel Gomez
Eritrean National Evaluation Association	Bissrat Ghebru Woldeyesus Elisa
European Evaluation Society	Elliot Stern
French Evaluation Society	Denys Baïlle
Ghana Evaluators Association	Charles Nornoo
Kenya Evaluation Association	Mburugu Nkanata Gitonga Karen Odhiambo
Israeli Association for Program Evaluation	Barbara Rosenstein
Italian Evaluation Association	Laura Tagle
Latin American and Caribbean Programme for Strengthening the Regional Capacity for Evaluation of Rural Poverty Alleviation Projects (PREVAL)	Ada Ocampo Gloria Vela
Malawi Network of Evaluators	James Milner
Nigerien Network for Monitoring and Evaluation	Jean-Charles Rouge
Quebec Society for Program Evaluation	Hélène Johnson
Perú Network for Monitoring and Evaluation	Emma Rotondo Carlos Salazar
Russian and the Independent States International Program Evaluation Network	Nino Saakashvili (Georgian Chapter)
South African Evaluation Network	Zenda Ofir
Spanish Evaluation Society	Carmen Vélez
United Kingdom Evaluation Society	Mark Bitel Murray Saunders
Wallonia Society for Evaluation (Belgium)	Jean-Louis Dethier
Zimbabwe Evaluation Society	Mufunani Tungu Kho

Facilitators
Craig Russon
Arnold Love

Observers
Agence Intergouvernementale de la Francophonie, Jack Batho
UNICEF New York Headquarters, Mahesh Patel

PAM is an international organization, an Observer at the General Assembly of the United Nations, with a specific international juridical status. The Assembly plays a fundamental role as the inter-parliamentary organization whose activities are firmly rooted as the instrument of parliamentary diplomacy also to support the work of other international bodies entrusted with the responsibility to foster security, stability and peace in the Euro-Mediterranean region. Over the years, PAM has established itself as the main actor of parliamentary diplomacy in the Euro-Mediterranean region, and its commitment to the founding principles and its Charter, is guaranteed by the continued support of all its member parliaments. The countries are actively cooperating within the framework of international organizations and the two countries are strategic partners. â€œIt is very important to improve the parliamentary dimension, and we find new forms of cooperation. That is really great for our states,â€ said the Chairman of the State Duma. Viacheslav Volodin and Talant Mamytov expressed their support for active cooperation between the relevant committees of the parliaments of the two countries. The meeting was held in Tehran. The Chairman of the State Duma is paying a visit to Iran on behalf of the President of the Russian... How is IEA organized? IEA's organizational structure consists of the following: o a chairperson, who is elected by the membership every three years; o a general assembly, which meets once a year to formally approve an agenda and debate procedural and technical issues that concern IEA's goals and professional development; o a six-member standing committee (two members are elected yearly on a rotating basis), which meets twice yearly with the chairperson and executive director to implement the decisions of the General Assembly; o a secretariat, located in The Hague, which carries out IEA's day-to-day activities.