

Good afternoon (and good morning for Ada and Linda), it is my pleasure to moderate this panel discussion with quite a long title “**Quo vadis evaluations? New vision for evaluation in turbulent and online times – cooperation for transformational change** (follow-up to Prague Declaration, 2019)”.

My name is Daniel Svoboda and I will do my best to introduce our distinguished panelists. While the first law of ecology is that “everything is linked to everything else”, the first law of humanity can be that “everybody is linked to everybody else”. I am proud on my links to four our panelists.

I am one of the founding members of the Czech Evaluation Society and, among others, I am teaching project management and evaluations at the Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences of the Czech University of Life Sciences. Our first guest and co-host at the same time is **Mr. Patrick Van Damme, Dean of this faculty**. He has more than 40 years of experience in development cooperation and in agricultural research. In our panel he can represent the academic sector and the national level.

I am also a member of the European Evaluation Society and our second guest is a **Vice-President of EES, Mr. Tom Ling**. He has over 25 years of experience in designing, managing and delivering evaluations, and over 20 years’ experience with research projects with the European Commission, Save the Children, UK government departments, the National Audit Office, the Health Foundation in the UK and many others. His multisectoral experience is a great background for promoting cooperation in evaluations at European level.

Since 2003, I am a member of IDEAS – International Development Evaluation Association, currently working as Coordinator and Head of Administration of IDEAS. It is my honor to introduce our third guest, **Mrs. Ada Ocampo**. Ada is a Peruvian sociologist, and she has worked in the United Nations System since 1990 with UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA and IFAD in different countries of North and Latin America, Africa and Asia. She retired from UNICEF in November 2020 and was elected as **President of IDEAS** in her first term of office until March 2023. She thus represents this unique global network of evaluators.

The last Global Assembly of IDEAS took place in Prague in 2019, jointly with the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference on Evaluating Environment and Development, hosted by the Independent Evaluation Office of the Global Environment Facility. The participants of the Global Assembly approved the Prague Declaration, originally initiated by the Czech Evaluation Society under a working title “Together for Change”. One of its commitments is to “*support the development of an international evaluation academy to advance professionalization and promote the interaction between science, research and evaluation to enrich our profession and our efforts to support evaluation capacity at all levels*”. In 2020, the International Evaluation Academy was born and we are now coordinating its babyhood.

Our fourth guest is **Linda Morra Imas. She is a co-founder of the International Evaluation Academy and serves as its President ad Interim**. Linda is also a co-founder of the International Program for Development Evaluation Training, IPDET, and served as its co-director and chief instructor for 17 years (and 11 years in its regional offering EPDET, organized in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, with support of the Czech Evaluation Society and the Slovak Evaluation Society). Linda was a Chief Evaluation Officer and Evaluation Capacity Building Adviser for the World Bank Group. Among her awards, she is honorary member of IDEAS. Linda is the best representative of a global movement of volunteers dedicated to evaluation influence, professionalism, and transformative impact.

Now, I would like to finally ask our panelists to briefly introduce their respective organizations and initiatives. Then we will open a discussion how we can cooperate for transformational change, bring new visions for evaluation in turbulent times, and support each other in advocacy for enhanced evaluation culture and better use of evaluations.

Quo vadis, Mr. Van Damme? How can your university contribute to better evaluations and to the changes we need?

Quo vadis, Mr. Ling? How can we cooperate in evaluation capacity development and advocacy for evidence-based decisions at European level?

Quo vadis, Ada Ocampo, what does IDEAS do for evaluation knowledge, capacity development and networking at global level?

Quo vadis, Linda Morra Imas? What are the roles of the International Evaluation Academy and how can we support and join its actions?