
Evaluation and the Transformational Imperative – An Introduction to a Special Volume

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A decade into the UN's 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals, an agenda explicitly designed to catalyze transformational change, "transformation" has become something of a buzzword in the development lexicon. Yet with less than 5 years remaining on the agenda's timeline, the imperative to move beyond business-as-usual has never been more pressing. The converging crises of ecological breakdown, deepening inequality, political instability, and rapid technological disruption are accelerating faster than systems can adapt and maintain stability, giving rise to another buzzword in the industry: *the polycrisis*. The gap between the rhetoric of transformation and its practice remains, but the consequences of that gap have never been more severe for people, for ecosystems, and for the planet.

It is in this context that evaluation—a field uniquely positioned at the intersection of evidence, learning, and action—finds itself called to account. That accountability extends beyond discrete interventions and their funders to the larger human and natural systems in which those interventions are designed and delivered, and to the just and regenerative futures that hang in the balance. Yet if evaluation is to contribute meaningfully to the transformational imperative, it must first reckon with itself: its assumptions, its methods, its relationships to power, and perhaps most fundamentally, the values, mindsets, and principles that give its practice direction and purpose.

This special issue of *JMDE* takes up that reckoning. It is addressed not only to evaluators but to the broader ecosystem in which evaluation operates, encompassing the commissioners, managers, funders, policymakers, educators, and communities who shape, use, and are shaped by evaluative practice. Transformational change is systemic by nature: It involves a diverse constellation of actors, sectors, and approaches, and no single perspective or profession can navigate it alone.

This issue grew out of the work of the International Evaluation Academy (IEAc, www.ieac.global). The IEAc emerged from the 2019 Prague Conference and its declaration, which called for an academy dedicated to strengthening evaluation worldwide to address environmental and equity challenges. The IEAc mission states,

We volunteer to contribute to the transformation, influence and professionalization of scientific evaluation practices to address economic, social, and environmental sustainability challenges (facing the world). We use ... partnerships with diverse

sectors of society to build, learn, share, and use a credible body of knowledge about ... systems and interventions aimed at building the resilience and sustainability of the world. (IEAc, n.d.)

In 2023 thinking first arose around developing a map of the future of how evaluation could contribute to addressing the polycrisis. In 2024, the IEAc initiated a Three Horizons Evaluation Initiative (3H) foresight process to map a picture of the current situation (Horizon 1), the transformational future for the field (Horizon 3) and how we might get there (Horizon 2), directly informing this special issue (see Ofir et al., this issue).

We also write with humility about the nature of transformation itself. Change at this scale unfolds nonlinearly, sometimes slowly accumulating across years or decades before reaching a critical threshold, sometimes toppling overnight when the right conditions converge at a tipping point, whether social or ecological. This issue is offered in that spirit: not as a definitive guide, but as a contribution to a collective, ongoing emergent journey.

The sections that follow introduce the conceptual foundations of the issue, describe our process for selecting authors and curating articles, introduce the 14 articles, synthesize emerging lessons across them, and reflect on where this work is heading.

Grounding the Conversation: Key Concepts and Definitions

At the heart of our collective global predicament lies the polycrisis, a condition in which multiple crises interact in compounding and mutually reinforcing ways, generating systemic risks and uncertainty that far surpass the impact of any single crisis in isolation. It marks an era defined by the increasing frequency and magnitude of converging disruptions that overwhelm institutions, systems, and processes built to address challenges one at a time.

We are bombarded daily with science, news, and indicators of the escalating polycrisis, and there is no shortage of literature and reporting to draw upon. Two recent and particularly striking examples underscore the ecological and human scale. The Stockholm Resilience Centre's 2025 Planetary Health Check (Sakschewski et al., 2025) reveals that seven of nine planetary boundaries—the environmental thresholds within which humanity can safely operate—have now been breached, with ocean acidification joining climate

change, biosphere integrity, land system change, freshwater use, biogeochemical flows, and novel entities in the danger zone. Meanwhile, Oxfam International (2025) data shows that the richest 1% now own nearly 44% of global wealth, while the poorest half of humanity—over 4 billion people—hold just 0.52%. The twin realities of the physical breaking of our planet's life-support systems and the moral breaking of our social fabric are not separate crises. They are deeply entangled, and they define the terrain in which evaluation must now operate.

By “transformational imperative,” we refer to the urgent necessity to pursue deep, systemic change in response to the polycrisis. It is both a moral and a practical call: to confront structural injustices and planetary degradation by reimagining and transforming systems toward more just, equitable, regenerative, and resilient futures.

Central to this issue is the concept of *transformational change*, understood here as “a deep and fundamental change in a system's form, function or process” (CIF, 2021, p. 6). Such change entails enduring shifts that reconfigure political, social, economic, ecological, and technological

systems, creating new structures, values, norms, relationships, and ways of operating. As Waddock and colleagues (2020, p. 84) put it, “transformation is less like a transition from one place to another and more like the metamorphosis of a caterpillar into a butterfly: a complete reinvention of form.”

Transformational change is usefully distinguished from *incremental change*—improvements in performance within an existing system—and *reformist change*—modifications that enhance the current system without fundamentally altering it. Transformational change, by contrast, goes beyond improving or adjusting what already exists. Indeed, incremental and reformist change can contribute to transformation—for example, the capacity development of people to interrogate and address their challenges according to context can lay vital groundwork for deeper systemic change. But transformation itself is a fundamental shift to an entirely new system: new structures, values, norms, relationships, and ways of operating. It is not about doing the same things better or even doing better things; it is about reimagining the unknowable and doing things radically differently (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Three Levels of Change



Importantly, transformational change is not inherently positive, and its consequences can differ across time and for different stakeholder groups. South Africa's transition from apartheid brought democracy to the majority while disrupting the political power of the white minority, a transformation that was simultaneously emancipatory and destabilizing, depending on one's vantage point. The history of the Montreal Protocol offers a different kind of example: The identification of the ozone hole over Antarctica in the mid-1980s (a negative ecological tipping point) catalyzed a landmark global policy response that has phased out 98% of ozone-depleting substances compared to 1990 levels, set the ozone layer on a

measurable path to recovery, and is projected to save an estimated 2 million lives annually from skin cancer by 2030 (UNEP, 2019). Here, an ecological crisis became the tipping point for transformational social and political action.

These examples remind us that transformation, when it comes, tends to be unmistakable. People know it when they see it. They also remind us that the pathway toward transformation is rarely linear, and that evaluation can play a distinctive role informing and contributing to that pathway, tracking signals of change, surfacing unintended consequences, demonstrating different ways of knowing and being in the world, and helping actors

navigate complexity toward just and regenerative futures.

From Concept to Publication: How We Approached the Issue

Work began on this special issue in January 2025. It built on the IEAc's existing relationship with *JMDE*, including a 2023 special issue on decolonizing evaluation, with an IEAc board member and co-editor of that special edition also serving among *JMDE*'s co-executive editors.

From the outset, the issue was conceived not as an end in itself, but as one contribution to a longer collective journey—an open invitation to evaluators, commissioners, funders, educators, policymakers, and communities to co-shape what comes next. This reflects the IEAc's conviction that understanding transformation requires embracing complexity and systems thinking, engaging multiple perspectives and diverse ways of knowing, and the humility to treat current insights as evolving rather than definitive.

Initial topics were identified by the editors in consultation with IEAc colleagues, then refined through the parallel IEAc Three Horizons Evaluation Initiative (3H) foresight process reimagining evaluation's potential contribution toward just and regenerative futures. The 3H maps provided a practical organizing structure for the issue, and articles were proposed that drew out emerging areas of work. The first article in this issue (Ofir et al.) provides a full account of its application and what emerged.

Author selection for the proposed articles was guided by a deliberate commitment to diversity across geographies, generations, cultures, and roles. Author teams brought together policymakers, practitioners, commissioners, evidence users, academics, grassroots activists, and those involved in evaluation capacity development, drawing upon multiple ways of knowing shaped by diverse evaluative contexts. Writing collectively was itself a principle: Most articles involved multiple coauthors reflecting different perspectives. The selection process varied across articles but consistently aimed for inclusivity. These diverse author teams also served as a basis for thinking through core elements of future work of the academy emerging from the 3H process.

The editorial process itself reflected the values and commitments the IEAc sought to operationalize through this issue. Before author teams came on board, the editors invested significant time designing the criteria for the issue, ensuring alignment with the transformational

imperative and the Academy's core values. These were then used to inform author selection. Once articles were underway, each editor engaged directly and developmentally with their assigned author teams, providing first-cut reviews, guidance on framing and argumentation, and iterative support during the writing process. Throughout, the emphasis was on collective learning and revision—first between authors and editors, and then extended to peer reviewers—treating the entire editorial journey as a shared process of sense-making and refinement rather than a gatekeeping exercise.

This commitment to constructive, values-driven engagement carried through to the peer review process itself, which was non-anonymous, encouraging open communication between reviewers and authors. External reviewers were identified with attention to relevant expertise and diversity. The process was intentionally developmental and dialogic rather than purely evaluative.

Recognizing the growing role of AI in scholarly work, and in the absence of an existing *JMDE* policy, the editorial team developed explicit contributor guidance about the use of AI. We distinguished three categories—content-shaping (mandatory disclosure), supportive (optional disclosure), and incidental (no disclosure required)—with authors encouraged to include a brief statement in their methodology section where relevant. This reflects our commitment to transparency, ethical integrity, and collective learning as the field navigates this evolving frontier.

Introducing the Articles

The 14 articles in this issue span a wide range of perspectives, contexts, and methodological orientations—yet together they form a coherent whole, each contributing a distinct piece to the larger puzzle of what it means for evaluation to rise to the transformational imperative. They range from the conceptual to the applied, from the global to the deeply local, and from the introspective to the outward-facing. Some propose new frameworks; others offer practice-based reflections, empirical cases, or provocative arguments. What unites them is a shared conviction that evaluation as currently practiced is not yet fit for the moment—and a

collective commitment to imagining and enacting what a more transformational evaluation might look like.

Rather than summarize each article exhaustively, the table below offers a structured orientation, a snapshot of each contribution's focus, authorship, and core argument. Readers are encouraged to move through them not as a sequence to be completed but as a constellation to be explored, returning to individual articles as their own questions and contexts demand. The sections that follow draw threads across the contributions, surfacing the cross-cutting lessons and unresolved tensions that give the issue its collective significance.

Table 1. Articles at a Glance

Article & Focus	Authors	Contribution to this Issue
"Where Next for Evaluation? Navigating the Polycrisis Through Three Horizons" <i>Foresight</i>	Ofir, Kendrick, Goldman, Ferretti, Norins, Sithole, Belzer, Chaplowe, Diwakar, Kalugampitiya, Lareza, Verveld-Nguyen, & Zaveri	Uses the Three Horizons framework to map what is holding evaluation back, articulate an aspirational vision for the field, and chart four practical transition pathways toward a regenerative, epistemically just world. Drawing on survey responses and input from participants across the globe, it serves as both the conceptual anchor and generative foundation for the issue as a whole.
"Rethinking Evaluation Competencies for the Transformational Imperative" <i>Competencies</i>	Chaplowe, Morkel, de la Garza, Buckton, Ferretti, Nandi, & Zaveri	Identifies a competency gap in existing frameworks and proposes eleven competencies—spanning values alignment, eco-justice, futures orientation, and digital stewardship—that orient evaluation toward transformational change work. These extend beyond evaluators to commissioners, managers, users, and educators, and are situated within a broader 3Cs framework of competencies, capacities, and capabilities.
"Revisiting Evaluation as a Science" <i>Epistemology</i>	Magro & Parsons	Argues that evaluation cannot meaningfully contribute to the transformational imperative without a fundamental epistemological shift—from conventional Western science toward emergent systems sciences grounded in interdependence, recursiveness, and complexity. Without this reorientation, evaluation risks remaining a technical instrument inadequate to the scale and nature of the polycrisis. Proposes Theory U as a practical tool for transforming evaluators' mindsets and unlocking new possibilities for how evaluation generates knowledge in service of systemic change.

Article & Focus	Authors	Contribution to this Issue
“Reframing Evaluation: Complexity, Systems, and Transformation” <i>Systems thinking</i>	Askar, Schmidt-Abbey, Lucaciu, Augustyn, Chaplowe, Dhingra, Goldman, Gupta, Morell, Wehipeihana, & Matheson	Offers a practical heuristic framework for embedding systems thinking across the full evaluation lifecycle—a reorientation the authors argue is essential if evaluation is to engage meaningfully with the complex adaptive systems in which transformational change unfolds. Through three real-world cases—humanitarian energy, Indigenous community health, and municipal development—it demonstrates that systems-informed evaluation is less a specialist method than a fundamental practice stance, requiring shared ownership, ongoing learning, and a willingness to hold complexity rather than reduce it.
“Evaluating for Transformational Responses: Climate Change, Ecosystem Degradation, and Social Inequality” <i>Climate & ecosystems</i>	Nanthikesan, Davidson, & Uitto	Addresses the risk of “transformation-washing” by distilling what genuine transformational change looks like in climate and environmental contexts, and identifying where current evaluation frameworks fall short. Introduces a nexus approach integrating human wellbeing, ecosystem restoration, and social equity, with practical rubric methods to assess whether interventions represent real systemic shifts or are business-as-usual rebranded.
“Futures, Feedback, and Flexibility: Reimagining Public Sector Management and Evaluation in the Time of Polycrisis” <i>Governance</i>	Goldman, Cairney, Carden, Dias, Dillon, Ferrari, & Morgan	Examines how evaluative practice can better support public management under conditions of deep uncertainty and cascading crisis, drawing on cases from South Africa, Brazil, the United Kingdom, and the City of Cape Town. Argues for a range of evaluative practices that are co-produced and embedded across management and governance and futures-oriented rather than retrospective and compliance-driven, repositioning evaluation as a core capability for adaptive governance.
“Foresight Insight for the Transformational Imperative: Toward a Futures-Oriented Evaluation Practice” <i>Transformative foresight</i>	Lichty, Fenio, Waibochi, & Kamunya	Positions transformative foresight—including trauma-transformative, queer, and Indigenous foresight approaches—as a paradigmatic shift rather than a technical addition, and argues that conventional evaluation’s retrospective, short-horizon logic is epistemologically incompatible with the long-term systemic transformation the polycrisis demands. Drawing on cases from Kenya and New Zealand, demonstrates how futures-oriented evaluation can actively cocreate regenerative possibilities, heal historical trauma, and equip the field to engage with the open, uncertain futures that the transformational imperative requires.

Article & Focus	Authors	Contribution to this Issue
“Regenerative-Focused Evaluation: Centering Place in Evaluation Theory and Practice” <i>Regenerative-focused evaluation</i>	Boone, Chaplowe, Pauwels, & Kaiser	Introduces regenerative-focused evaluation, centering Place as a living, sentient participant rather than a geographic backdrop. Through the lenses of relational validity and relational accountability, argues that conventional place-based evaluation overlooks Place’s deep relational, historical, and ecological dimensions, and proposes Place-sourced practices as a path toward truth, healing, and regenerative futures. Doctoral research with Dakota Elders and community leaders in Mahkato/Mankato, Mni Sota / Minnesota, grounds this approach in Indigenous sovereignty and the wisdom of living systems, offering the issue’s most deeply situated model of evaluation rooted in reciprocal relationship with land.
“The People, Environment, Place, Space and Time Framework: Changing Mindsets and Building Futures” <i>Indigenous frameworks</i>	Chilisa, Molosiwa, Koloi-Keaikitse, Major, Koyabe, Gaotlhobogwe, & Pheko	Presents the PEPST framework (people, environment, place and space, and time) as a substantive alternative evaluative paradigm rooted in Ubuntu philosophy and Indigenous African paradigms—not merely a contextual adaptation of existing models, but a direct challenge to the Western ontological assumptions that have long dominated the evaluation field. Applying this framework to agricultural and entrepreneurship projects in Zambia, Malawi, and Uganda, demonstrates concretely what evaluation looks like when relationality, community voice, power, and intergenerational future orientation are centered rather than accommodated.
“Evaluation Through a Gender Lens: Foregrounding Global South Reflections and Experiences” <i>Gender</i>	Zaveri, Gupta, Sithole, Salinas Mulder, Chatterji, & Singh	Proposes a Global South decolonized framework for gender-transformative feminist evaluation organized around five interlocking domains: power dynamics, intersectionality, inclusion and representation, methodological approaches, and ethics. The framework is itself a transformational tool—designed not merely to evaluate gender equality but to actively disrupt the colonial epistemologies and Global North logics that evaluation has historically reproduced. Drawing on case studies from Latin America, South Asia, and the Middle East, offers practical vocabulary and concrete design principles for commissioners and evaluators committed to evaluation that advances structural change rather than reinforcing it.
“Multiple Voices, Shared Realities: Gendered Inequities in the Evaluation Profession” <i>Feminist professional reflexivity</i>	Podems, Zaveri, Negroustoueva, & Felcis	Turns the critical lens inward, using feminist narrative inquiry to examine how gendered power structures shape the evaluation profession itself. Makes a pointed contribution to the transformational imperative: A field that perpetuates patriarchal logic, silences women’s voices, and reproduces internal hierarchies cannot credibly claim to support systemic transformation elsewhere. Dismantling these structures within evaluation is not a separate agenda—it is a precondition for the field’s transformational integrity.

Article & Focus	Authors	Contribution to this Issue
“Measuring Collectivization Initiatives: Creating a Knowledge Base from Collective Voices” <i>Community-led practice</i>	Shipurkar, Narayanan, Manjutha, Ponnuchamy, Khan, & Joseph	Offers a practice-based reflection on evaluating collectivization under polycrisis conditions, drawn from sustained engagement with collectives across South Asia and Kenya. Contributes to the transformational imperative by demonstrating that evaluation conducted alongside communities, grounded in their own analytical voices, relational dynamics, and nonlinear trajectories of change, can surface dimensions of transformation that conventional frameworks are structurally unable to see. In doing so, points toward a practice of evaluation that is not only more inclusive but more epistemologically honest about what transformational change actually looks like from within.
“AI and Evaluation: Exploring Made in Africa Approaches for Transformational Practice” <i>Technology & decolonization</i>	Magodo-Matimba & Raftree	Examines how AI—one of the most consequential technological forces reshaping evaluation practice at this time—can be harnessed in ways that actively advance the transformational imperative rather than reproducing extractive or colonial patterns. By bringing Made in Africa Evaluation and Made in Africa AI into dialogue, argues that AI’s transformational potential for evaluation is only realizable when it centers African agency, languages, and epistemologies. Offers a model for how the field might engage emerging technologies not as neutral tools but as sites of political and epistemological choice.
“Rewiring the Evaluation Marketplace for a Changing World” <i>Field futures</i>	MacPherson, Kelly, & Kumar	Closes the issue with a frank and deliberately unsettling assessment of the evaluation field’s fitness for purpose in a rapidly reconfiguring global development system. As official development assistance gives way to investment models and new non-OECD donor configurations emerge, argues that the transformational imperative is not only an ethical challenge for evaluation but an existential one—the field must adapt radically or risk being bypassed entirely by the forces reshaping global development. It is a fitting provocation on which to close: The transformational imperative demands not only better evaluation but a fundamentally reimagined evaluation marketplace.

What the Articles Tell Us: Emerging Insights Across the Issue

A clear narrative arc emerges across the contributions, with several interconnected lessons for transforming evaluation to meet the demands of the global polycrisis. The Three Horizons framework practically maps this transition, guiding the field from its current situation (Horizon 1)

toward the aspirational future (Horizon 3) through the adaptive pathway (Horizon 2; Ofir et al., this issue).

First, **epistemological transformation** is foundational. Magro and Parsons argue that conventional evaluation remains trapped in Western scientific tenets (objectivity, linear causality, reductionism) that are insufficient for addressing systemic crises. Multiple articles argue for replacing these with emergent systems science

foundations: recursiveness, nonlinearity, plural worlds, and the inseparability of observer and observed. This requires evaluators to drop claims of neutrality and instead make values explicit, positioning evaluation as an ethical practice for just and regenerative futures. It means focusing on creating conditions for change rather than measuring isolated outputs, changing values and mindsets, and treating nature/Place as a living, sentient participant in evaluation itself—the animating premise of Boone and colleagues’ regenerative-focused evaluation, grounded in relational validity and relational accountability to the people, communities, and living systems where evaluation is conducted.

Second, **power and decolonization** must move to center stage. Across the articles, a consistent finding is that evaluation systems reproduce colonial, neocolonial, and patriarchal hierarchies—prioritizing Global North¹ epistemologies, Northern-controlled destructive economic systems, extractive evaluation practices, and donor-driven accountability over national and community ownership. Zaveri and colleagues propose a decolonized framework organized around power, intersectionality, gender, equity, and ethics. Podems and colleagues reveal how gendered power hierarchies persist within evaluation professions themselves.

Third, transformative practice requires **shifting power to local actors**, centering **Indigenous and Global South knowledge systems** and addressing epistemic justice as core to evaluation design. Chilisa and colleagues’ PEPST framework, grounded in Ubuntu philosophy, centers people, environment, place and space, and time as key constructs—and gives examples of applying African worldviews and community participation as outcomes to measure. Magodo-Matimba and Raftree examine how AI risks digital colonialism, advocating for Made in Africa AI that centers African epistemologies. Boone and colleagues ground regenerative-focused evaluation in Dakota Elder and community knowledge, proposing Place-sourced practices—centering Indigenous sovereignty and the wisdom of living systems—as a path toward truth, healing, and reconciliation.

Fourth, **diverse evaluative practices must become embedded across organizational and policy cycles**, with an agile, anticipatory, learning approach (Goldman et al). Lichty and colleagues introduce transformative foresight (trauma-informed, queer, Indigenous) as a paradigmatic shift, not a technical add-on.

Fifth, **the evaluation marketplace requires radical restructuring**. MacPherson, Kelly, and Kumar analyze how concentrated demand, tied aid, and weak innovation incentives constrain transformation, proposing six action propositions including shifts toward investment models, new geopolitical actors (Gulf States, China), and localization which demand new alliances, competencies, and business models.

Sixth, **evaluation competencies must extend well beyond technical skills and well beyond those who conduct evaluation** to include those who commission, manage, use, and teach evaluation. Chaplowe and colleagues’ 11 competencies for the transformational imperative include emotional intelligence, localization and critical engagement with power, ethical digital stewardship, futures orientation, and political savvy. These emphasize that technical proficiency alone is no longer sufficient, and their 3Cs framework underscores that individual competencies are not enough without supportive institutional capacities and systemic capabilities.

Seventh, **measurement must be reimagined** to capture what conventional frameworks routinely miss (nonlinearity, intersectional change, relational shifts, and collective energy) while also guarding against regressive outcomes. Nanthikesan, Davidson, and Uitto make the case that human systems cannot be measured in isolation from the natural ecosystems and climate they depend on, offering rubric-based nexus approaches that assess these interactions together rather than apart. Shipurkar and colleagues complement this with a different kind of measurement challenge, documenting how collectives capture nonlinearity and relational shifts through metaphors like waves and chess—a direct challenge to conventional logframe thinking.

¹ The terms “Global South” and “Global North” are used here as broadly recognized conventions. “Global South” refers broadly to countries and communities in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Oceania that have historically been marginalized in global economic and political systems; “Global North” refers broadly to the wealthier, industrialized countries of Europe, North America, and

beyond that have historically dominated those systems. We acknowledge that both terms are imperfect: they flatten enormous diversity across and within regions, carry their own geopolitical assumptions, and do not map neatly onto geographic boundaries. They are used here as shorthand rather than as precise or uncontested descriptors.

Where This Is Going (Next Steps)

In June 2024, findings from the IEAc's 3H initiative informed the new version of the Global Evaluation Agenda 2.0.² In July 2025, the 3H work was launched with the convening partners of the GEA, four continental evaluation associations (ReLAC, AfrEA, EES, and APEA), IDEAS, and the EvalforEarth community of practice. Since July 2025, this collective work is moving forward, with the IEAc and IOCE serving as co-stewards. As identified in Ofir and colleagues' article in this issue, four priority work areas are being pursued:

1. **Developing shared understanding** and commitment to evaluation and the transformational imperative through a series of webinars, a focused strand at the European Evaluation Society's 2026 conference, the AfrEA 2026 conference, and beyond. This will also involve innovative methods of communicating, with three main levels of communication:
 - Sharing the potential impact of the polycrisis and the need for change
 - Sharing how evaluation can change (as per Horizon 2), and building understanding, commitment, and will amongst partners and individuals to take the agenda forward
 - The types of transformational initiatives which can take the agenda forward
2. **Identifying and prioritizing transformational initiatives on which to build.** A set of 10 qualities of transformational initiatives have been developed (see Ofir et al.) and will be applied to identify transformational initiatives already happening in the field which have the potential to advance toward Horizon 3 and not be captured by Horizon 1—as, for example, carbon offsets and ESG have been captured to maintain the life of Horizon 1 in the climate field.
3. **Building partnerships with and influencing power holders,** including governments, UN agencies, multilateral development banks, social movements, and philanthropies, to build a learning agenda focused on the polycrisis rather than accountability for isolated projects.

4. **Taking forward transformational initiatives,** building on both existing and new initiatives in action-learning partnerships around core areas in the Horizon 2 map.

As we move forward, it is important to bring coherence to the transformational work already underway and build hope that the destructive trajectory we are on may in fact expose the death throes of the current system, and that transformational change is possible. Evaluation has a role to play here as a potentially transformative process in itself (evaluation as transformation) as well as helping to build the evidence and support the use of evidence around transformational regeneration (evaluation *for* transformation; Ofir et al., this issue). We all share responsibility for examining how our values and mindsets can shift to affirm and sustain life, and how we might live in the world more regeneratively. Yet individual transformation alone is not enough; collective action is needed to hold accountable those who profit from the exploitation of human and natural systems, and to transform the structures that enable and reward that exploitation. This is a time for reckoning, both personal and collective. As Martin Luther King, Jr., reminds,

Every man must decide whether he will walk in the light of creative altruism or in the darkness of destructive selfishness. (King, 1963, p. 88)

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² The Global Evaluation Agenda 2.0 is a multi-stakeholder initiative convened by EvalPartners, EvalYouth, EvalGender+, EvalIndigenous, the International Organisation for Cooperation in Evaluation (IOCE), International Development Evaluation

Association (IDEAS), regional VOPEs, and EvalforEarth setting out shared priorities to strengthen national evaluation capacities and systems worldwide in pursuit of evidence-informed, equitable development.

Lewis, Takaaki Miyaguchi, Thokozile Molaiwa, Ranjani Murthy, Indran Naidoo, Pradeep Narayan, Ada Ocampo, Zenda Ofir, Beverly Parsons, Michael Quinn Patton, Donna Podems, Tobias Polak, Stephen Porter, Tony Roberts, Pablo Rodriguez-Bilella, Marlene Roefs, Patricia Rogers, Jessica Romo, Liz Ruedy, Neha Sharma, Sue Soal, Matteah Spencer Reppart, Rob van den Berg, Nan Wehipeihana, Vanesa Weyrauch, and Lauren Wildschut.

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