IPDET
Community Building
Strategy process, idea creation and prototype testing

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1. Introduction

Since its beginning in 2001, more than 4,000 individuals with different backgrounds participated in the Independent Program for Development Evaluation Training (IPDET), bringing together knowledge from all over the world, different kinds of organizations and job positions. These alumni form the IPDET community, a space for mutual learning and a sense of belonging.

In order to strengthen the IPDET community and to contribute to the further development of the field of evaluation, we as IPDET feel the responsibility to utilize these assets to achieve an added value for those participating in our activities and in the long run for the international evaluation community.

To achieve this goal, the IPDET team formed a special working group in 2021 to develop a Community Building Strategy. The here presented paper gives an overview of the process, followed by insights into currently implemented offers as well as further ideas from the ideation process to be further developed and implemented in 2022-2023.

2. Background: The IPDET program and its community

IPDET is an executive training program that aims to provide decision makers, managers and practitioners with the tools that are required to commission, manage, and evaluate policies, programs, and projects at the local, national, regional, and global levels as well as use those evaluations for decision-making. IPDET sets a great focus on practice and provides a diversified approach for audiences from various organizations and sectors who play different roles in the evaluation process. This is unique in the evaluation training sector and gives the participants differentiated perspectives on evaluation and connects individuals worldwide.

The program is a collaborative effort between three partners: The Center for Continuing Education (ZUW) at the University of Bern, Switzerland, the Center for Evaluation (CEval) in Saarbrücken, Germany, and the Independent Evaluation Group of the World Bank (IEG). This partnership brings longstanding roots in development evaluation and training as well as strong faculty with on-the-ground experience.

Since 2020, IPDET is proud partner of the Global Evaluation Initiative (GEI) and receives funds especially for scholarships and Global Outreach activities from GEI funding partners. GEI is an inclusive global partnership committed to developing country-owned, sustainable monitoring and evaluation (M&E) frameworks and capacities to promote the use of evidence in public decision-making, enhance accountability, and achieve better results.
Based on IPDET’s Evaluation Capacity Development Strategy, IPDET consists of three different streams of capacity building activities, which are framed by overarching community building activities (see also Figure 1):

1. **On-Site Program** | Bern, Switzerland | Fundamentals of evaluation are taught during the one-week IPDET Core Course, followed by consolidation and specialized level workshops. Furthermore, due to its onsite character, it is a highly important networking point for the IPDET Community, and forms therefore the heart of the IPDET program.

2. **Online Workshops** | Adapting to the constrains of the Covid-19 pandemic IPDET developed an online program stream in 2020. Each workshop is conducted throughout one week and covers a specialized evaluation topic. The online workshops combine virtual face-to-face teaching and groupwork. To support the delivery of the online workshops IPDET developed an eLearning platform (see also below). The eLearning platform provides participants with the relevant workshop material, and gives them the opportunity to connect with instructors and other participants. In order to guarantee an adequate transfer of workshop content developed for onsite training into a digital format, the instructors, facilitators and IPDET team members were trained in eDidactics methods by recognized experts.

3. **Global Outreach Event Series** | Since 2021 IPDET is expanding its activities across the globe, guided by its IPDET’s Global Outreach Strategy, ensuring that trainings and guidance can better be tailored to the needs of specific audiences in different regions. The activities are both, demand and supply driven and target decision makers and practitioners in national governments, civil society and development organizations, parliamentarians and their scientific staff, trainers for evaluation, and young and emerging evaluators.

4. **Community Building** | Regarding the strengthening and connecting the community, IPDET offers events and technical tools. Events are an annual virtual Kick-Off and Closing Event, in which the program year are presented and reviewed. Social Events with different kinds of activities e.g., a marketplace to share projects complete these. More details on the different kinds of Social Events are explained further below. Technical tools are the IPDET Listserv and the IPDET eLearning platform. The Listserv is an informative way for alumni to reach out to other alumni. It is mostly used to spread information about job assignments, job offerings and gain feedback on questions on evaluation issues. The eLearning platform is part of the IPDET webpage and was mainly developed for the delivery of the onsite and online program to share documents with participants like slides, and literature, as well as to integrate interactive elements like videos or quizzes for better learning. Additionally, the eLearning platform serves as an area for interaction and is used for communication purposes during the IPDET workshops with chats and forums. This eases the exchange between instructors, the participants and the IPDET staff.
3. Methodology and Strategy Process: Strengthening the IPDET Community

**IPDET Community Building – what and why** | Community Building is the *active creation and maintenance* of a community. Community represents a collective resource, where members (users) connect and have feelings of belonging, it is a place of self-help and helping others (cf. Gilchrist, 2009). Community members share ideas and values (cf. Rovai, 2002). An investigation into Community Building among distance-learning university students found that the key elements of community were “mutual interdependence among members, sense of belonging, connectedness, spirit, trust, interactivity, common expectations, shared values and goals, and overlapping histories among members” (Rovai, 2002, p. 209). Communities go beyond geographical boundaries and are based around their work or interest (cf. Gilchrist, 2009). One type of a community, as outlined by Wenger et al. (2002), are the Communities of Practice (CoP). In CoP, members join due to interest to work with each other and deepen their knowledge. This means that the members may not work together regularly, but value the joint practice which goes beyond the bounding due to the evaluation relation. Due to this value, members make time and other resources available. Members further appreciate that they are understood by the other members thanks to the shared, and sometimes specific, knowledge. They can easily talk about it without the need to further explain the topic.

We as IPDET define our community as a community of practice, which is connected due to their participating in, cooperating, or working with IPDET as well as their overall interest in evaluation.

**The Process of developing a strategy and measures** | Based on this understanding and to further strengthen its community as well as to derive relevant measures, the IPDET working group engaged in a joint process guided by the Design Thinking Expert Marlene Hennicke.

**Design Thinking** was developed by Larry Leifer, David Kelley and Terry Winograd at the Stanford University and it is a mindset for creative problem solving (cf. Lewrick et al., 2021). Goal is to bring together expertise and point of views on a concrete question or problem to create innovative market opportunities (cf. Lewrick et al., 2021; Vianna et al., 2014).

Kerguenne et al. (2017) postulate key points of the Design Thinking Method: *User-centeredness* is the first point in finding solutions to questions and problems (cf. Kerguenne et al., 2017; Lewrick et al., 2021). It starts with the exploration of user needs instead of economic aspects and implementation options. The users are the inspiration for developing solution options. Second Kerguenne et al. (2017) mention the *multidisciplinary*. The more extensive needs and problems in their diversity are taken into account, the more successful the innovation. Different expertise

![Figure 2: Phases of the Design Thinking Process](image-url)
and perspectives increase the practicability of the approaches. As a last point they summarize as "learning to move forward" an iterative approach (Kerguenne et al., 2017). Trying out and failing are part of the process and enable an approach in which one remains capable of acting.

The design thinking process (DTP) was divided into five phases (Figure 2), which are explained in more detail in the following sections:

**Phase 1: Problem Definition** | In the first phase, the IPDET working group defined the central points of interest for strengthening the IPDET community and made assumptions about the needs of the target groups to develop a general framework for the community building process. The team came to the conclusions, that the **IPDET Community consists of several actors**, namely IPDET alumni (former participants of IPDET offers), as well as individuals with an interest in evaluation, IPDET instructors and further evaluation experts and organizations engaged in evaluation and associations, etc. For the further steps of the DTP the IPDET team, however, focused on the **IPDET alumni as the special point of interest only**, as they are the main users of the potential community offers.

For this, exemplary users (personas) were defined, which are examples of groups with their characteristics, wishes and pain points regarding the IPDET Community. Key assumptions by the IPDET team were that the **IPDET alumni want to expand their know-how, seek for recognition, meet people and be part of a community** (see Figure 4 in the Appendix 6.1).

**Phase 2: Getting to know the target group** | The second phase was about finding out which of the problem definitions and assumptions made by the IPDET team during the first phase were actually correct. Therefore, interviews with 12 IPDET alumni and a group interview with the IPDET Advisory Board were conducted. The 12 alumni were chosen randomly. A mixture of different years of evaluation experience, work organization and an equal gender distribution were taken into account. The interviews were not intended to reflect the entire group of IPDET alumni, but rather to receive specific reports and feedback during the process. See the interview guide in the Appendix 6.2.

In sum, the feedback showed that the **IPDET alumni wish for a place to connect, where they can exchange knowledge, information, and material**. There should be a possibility to easily exchange experiences especially those which are not usually recorded in other ways, e.g., everyday solutions within the evaluation work. **The community should fulfil ways of connection as well as having a place of belonging and a we-feeling.** Regarding the format, the majority prefers face-to-face meetings. For more insights see also Figure 5 in the Appendix 6.3.

From the view of the Advisory Board members, it can be summarized, that they see reasons to participate in IPDET activities and the IPDET community in staying up to date with IPDET and evaluation information, get the knowhow to implement and explain evaluation and to exchange with and meet peers. Based on these results, the IPDET team created "How might we...?"-questions to set a focus for the further phases.
Phase 3: Ideation | During phase three, the IPDET working group created ideas to solve the “How might we...?”-questions, to focus on the IPDET alumni needs, which had been discovered during the interviews. **The most important questions were "How might we help the user to exchange information / experiences and to put what they have learned into practice?" and "How might we make the IPDET community tangible for users?".** To develop these ideas, the IPDET team wrote down all already existing ideas and own experiences, as well as looking for similar offers to solve parts of the “How might we”-questions. Similarities to third-party offers are therefore possible but not intended.

The developed ideas were then presented to the same alumni, who beforehand participated in the interviews in phase 2 (see the Interview Guide in the Appendix 6.4). The goal was to get direct feedback of which ideas suit the real needs of the alumni best and why.

**Furthermore, a short survey was carried out to get insights of the potential use of the ideas from the IPDET alumni (see the Survey in the Appendix 6.5, and the results in the Appendix 6.6).** To get an even broader insight into the IPDET community, this survey was sent out to all alumni via the IPDET Listserv. In this survey the main characteristics of the ideas were presented, and the potential usage could be rated with a five-tier scale. 86 alumni participated in the survey. Based on the results of the second round of interviews and the survey, a pre-selection of the developed ideas took place, regarding their best rating by the alumni and their best fit for the alumni needs.

Phase 4: Prototyping | In phase four, according to the pre-selection in phase three, the IPDET team made a prioritization of the ideas (see Figure 6 in the Appendix 6.7). Prototypes and corresponding test options were created for the four most prioritized ideas (see Figure 7 in the Appendix 6.8). In this process, the features, pain relievers and gain creators (features, that create an additional gain) were investigated. Subsequently, a business model canvas with information like resources and implementation structures was considered. A business model canvas within the design thinking process covers initial thoughts about deliver value, create value, and capture value. It is a first consideration of these values, to check on the feasibility in designing the prototypes.

Phase 5: Testing | In phase five – which is still underway – feedback on the prototypes will be gained to improve them and to decide which of these prototypes will be an integral part of the future annual IPDET program planning. This phase is individual for each prototype and can go through several levels.
4. Ideas, Prototypes, and their current status

In the following the ideas and already developed prototypes, as mentioned above in chapter 3, are shown in detail. Furthermore, the description of the prototype testing and the gained feedback are summarized.

4.1 Initial Ideas

“EvalBook” or Community Platform | The idea would be a social platform with a chat function. Based on the data individuals provide during the platform registration process (e.g. field of work, employer, region, contact data), registered persons could be visualized on a virtual globe. The platform is intended to be used to find each other based on these given data. To get in contact, such a platform could be expanded to include video and voice chat functions, also distinguished by different (topic related) groups. Content wise, there could be a wiki for best practice solutions and knowledge. Special topics could be practiced, e.g. through quizzes. A further modification could be a swap exchange for documents and support.

Promise/Benefit: Connect with other alumni
Reason why: Enhance the evaluation network | Gain support
Format: Social (media) platform, with participant search option | Knowledge-hub
Alumni Feedback: They liked the idea that they can easily connect and exchange knowledge. It has been noted, that by looking on similar platforms where evaluators already are connecting with each other, the IPDET platform needs specific advantages, which are not provided by other organizations. One interviewee suggested to create links between all other platforms instead of creating another one. Interviewees also would like to exchange ideas with others on various topics without having to log in every time. Such a platform, it was suggested, could also be used to test or implement other small activities such as games and themed evenings. Various contact information can be given voluntarily, finding each other helps to connect to others who e.g., are working on similar projects. Ideally, this platform would also be available as an app for mobile devices, which would make access even easier and more active. It was commented that IPDET may have to create specific content so that the alumni can get in touch with each other and are motivated. This can be achieved by personal stories, a blog or information. It would have to be something specific and interesting for the alumni to see benefits in the platform. In the quantitative survey the idea to make use of a platform to “exchange, not only material and information, but also job assignments and tenders” (49%) and “connecting with other evaluation experts based on place of work, employer / organization, or region” (55%) are particularly in demand. Connecting with peers by using a forum or voice chat is also popular (30%).
“Hackathon” or “Think Tanks” | This idea follows the goal to bring together alumni and further individuals of interest to jointly work on a currently relevant evaluation topic. In a variation, the alumni derive the questions and problems directly from their practice. IPDET would provide the place and space (e.g., in form of a platform) to exchange the ideas to work on and solve the topic and to enable peer-to-peer learning. Expert webinars could be offered as an additional offer to guide the process. If there are several groups working on the same topic, joint webinars could be offered in which these participants present their data and solution approaches in order to generate new ideas for further working. Local working groups in the form of face-to-face are conceivable. To ensure, that results are actively used later on, cooperation with organizations is desirable.

**Promise/Benefit:** Efficient and goal-oriented work on specific topics

**Reason why:** Peer-to-peer learning | Knowledge gain | Competition

**Format:** Combination of webinars and group work

**Alumni Feedback:** Not much feedback has been given, only the assumption that deciding on a topic might be a problem. Would be good, thanks to the peer-learning and webinars, but the topics should be well chosen.

“Conference or Thematic exchange” and “Diversity” | IPDET would create different areas or rooms in an onsite setting under the umbrella of one topic to discuss, get best practice, work on case studies or watch knowledge videos. This would be a simple format, which gives space to exchange ideas on different topics. Tours through everyday work or the flow of work processes could also be displayed. Such conference meetings could take place regularly. Cozy corners could be created onsite where people can meet and exchange ideas. A virtual variation could be implemented using programs such as “gather.town” (https://www.gather.town/).

“Diversity” would be an addition to the idea of a thematic exchange with a focus on other, social topics. Under the heading of diversity, IPDET sees the chance to get in touch, satisfy curiosity and find common ground. In a casual setting, themed evenings would be organized on e.g., certain cultures or categories (food, clothing, music). Such meetings would combine sharing regional and cultural views of an evaluation topic / issue. In the context of diversity, culture, ecology and big world days (e.g., World Food Day, Pride Day), could be a topic and bring members together to be active. Statements, pictures, etc. by alumni could be shared online according to the topic / day.

**Promise/Benefit:** Connect and exchange on evaluation and other, social topics

**Reason why:** Peer-to-peer learning | Knowledge gain | Fun | Support

**Format:** Online gathering on a platform

**Alumni Feedback:** In particular, the fact that this takes place regularly on various topics and the type of participation can be flexibly chosen was well received: “there is space to talk to people, exchange and learning”, “you know you have something in common, it is nice to connect”. Specific to the “diversity” addition, the interviewees mentioned that everyone benefits from these meetings. One can “share personal experiences” and become familiar with aspects from other cultures. People who cannot travel gain insights into a wide variety of cultures. Such evenings "could establish connection and you get to know each other". As a modified idea, poetry nights were suggested, at which poems could be presented in English and the participants’ native language. Another supplement was, that experts could also participate in discussion rounds. 49% of the 86 participants in the survey would like to use a thematic exchange and 27% would like to get to know different views on evaluation based on culture.
“M&E Clinic” | In this idea, IPDET would be a contact point for problems and questions around M&E topics, as well as the appropriate handling of new ideas and how to develop them further. If necessary, the support can go beyond the advice and represent a concrete accompaniment. This can be combined with a mentoring program. The mentoring can take place either 1:1 or in a mentoring group. Regionally, mentors could join entire departments or groups in organizations to support them.

Promise/Benefit: Expert support on individual M&E problems
Reason why: IPDET network with evaluation experts
Format: Individual and group support, e.g., mentoring, or advisory
Alumni Feedback: Individual support is seen as particularly positive, mainly as follow-up support for a workshop and 1:1 coaching, which would stand apart from other offers from organizations. The M&E clinic could be a unique selling point for IPDET. As modification idea it had been mentioned to create specific support for Young and Emerging Evaluators (YEE) with concrete contact persons. Regional mentoring is seen as less important. 49% of the 86 participants in the short survey would like to use the M&E Clinic in general.

“Deep dives” | IPDET offers space and tools to exchange ideas on specific questions / topics. This could be done in the context of round tables or supervision, without the necessity of experts. IPDET can advertise topics from which the alumni choose one and then prepares the day and the platform. Alternatively, alumni who would like to deal with a specific topic could get together and obtain tools and moderation from IPDET.

Promise/Benefit: Peer-to-peer learning and supervision
Reason why: IPDET network
Format: Online meetings
Alumni Feedback: It was mentioned that these groups and meetings are difficult to manage and less flexible. Supervision would be very welcome.

“Mini Series on Tools” | This idea would be a Mini Series on different tools e.g., the Geo-Enabling Initiative for Monitoring and Supervision (GEMS) or ‘How to handle big data?’, for different knowledge levels. First, a tool would be briefly presented, on this basis interested persons could register for a webinar. In the webinar, the tool and how it can be used would be explained in a practical way. There would be time for others to share previous experience with the tool and to raise questions.

Promise/Benefit: Short knowledge inputs, option to raise specific questions
Reason why: IPDET evaluation experts, work-related topics
Format: Short webinars with integration of Q&A
Alumni Feedback: This idea is seen as very practical, especially since more and more apps and tools come out. Their introduction and brief explanation would be helpful, especially if there is time to practice it and ask questions: “Practical learning takes most time, therefore, it would be useful to learn jointly.”

“Awards” as an appreciation idea | Changes and milestones that arise through IPDET offers could be celebrated and awarded regularly (e.g., quarterly) as successes. If they for example participate in the M&E Clinic and achieve a goal, which is also for great use for others, it can be awarded as ‘best practice’. With this, the awarded participant gets honored by the community. This could happen at the
end of the year: all alumni could choose a winner between the excellent implementations, perhaps in different categories.

**Promise/Benefit:** Appreciation of individuals  
**Reason why:** Be noticed by the community  
**Format:** Online awards, e.g., as graphic with announcement  
**Alumni Feedback:** Awards could show what worked well. 34% of the survey participants liked this idea.

**“Annual theme”** | All offers could be set up under a specific annual theme, for example one of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) ([https://sdgs.un.org/goals](https://sdgs.un.org/goals)).  
**Promise/Benefit:** Knowledge gain to an evaluation topic from different perspectives  
**Reason why:** Concentration on a specific evaluation topic  
**Format:** IPDET program year orientated on a specific topic  
**Alumni Feedback:** It had been pointed out, that it would be difficult to decide on a specific theme and this might limit the program. 34% of the participants in the short survey would like to see an annual themed IPDET program year.

**Make more use of “Social Media”** | Overall, more opportunities could be created for the alumni to be able to communicate themselves through IPDET. This could be done, for example, via an IPDET Instagram account with IPDET alumni stories, experience reports and event impressions. Evaluation content, such as papers and tool experiences, could be shared via the IPDET LinkedIn page and group. Alumni thus would have more reach for their findings and would be seen by IPDET and its alumni. Networking of individual alumni and the official social media accounts is currently not planned and postings from the alumni therefore are not seen. Regional groups are also conceivable. In any case, the process would be for alumni to send text, images and video material to share in a moderated manner (Instagram) or to send their published post to share (LinkedIn).  
**Promise/Benefit:** Get reach to share evaluation knowledge  
**Reason why:** IPDET is a well-known player in evaluation with high reputation and reach  
**Format:** Content sharing via IPDET social media accounts  
**Alumni Feedback:** With the reasoning that this is an innovative idea, it was well perceived by the interviewees. They mentioned, that it ensures good stories are recorded and people get engaged. A re-engagement 2-3 months after an event or webinar is also given as a reason for potential use. The high level of moderation required by IPDET and the need for appropriate contribution from alumni need to be taken into account. Suggestions were given here that weekly topics on which material can be sent to IPDET in advance counteracts this. In addition, instructors could share videos. In the survey this idea is less requested, only 15% of the 86 participants would make use of this idea.

**“Gamification and Games”** | Games not only include game evenings and gamification, but likewise simulations. This means including small elements between or during the informative offers (workshops, webinars) to get in touch and have fun together, as well as simulations for joint processing of topics and their further development. Small and large competitions and challenges, quizzes, exit games and other puzzles are conceivable.  
**Promise/Benefit:** Enhance evaluation knowledge and connect  
**Reason why:** Combination of fun and learning strengthens the learning  
**Format:** Ice-breaker | Gamification | Quizzes | Challenges
Alumni Feedback: This was seen as innovative and interesting, because learning and knowledge can be applied with fun. It was noted that there is potentially a lot of effort involved in designing well-thought-out games. Around 30% of the participants in the short quantitative survey would like to see Games as IPDET Community offering.

**Tokens |** By participating in Community Building offers or supporting / mentoring others, so-called tokens could be collected, which in turn enable access to other IPDET offers. These could be exclusive events or documents.

**Promise/Benefit:** Gain appreciation which can also be used to get access to IPDET offers

**Reason why:** With participating in IPDET offers one can gain the possibility to get access to other offers, which normally need to be paid

**Format:** Virtual tokens

Alumni Feedback: The idea of Tokens raises many questions: “How to assign this token? What can you get? How many tokens are needed? How many tokens do I receive for joining an activity?”, but were also seen as a motivator for participating in activities. This idea was appreciated by 27% within the quantitative survey.

**In sum |** The most popular developed ideas among alumni were the themed evenings, including those on diversity, as well as the possibility of simple exchange and engagement on a (mobile) platform. Further, the ideas of a Mini Series and an M&E clinic, as well as the usage of social media to share alumni stories, were requested.

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**4.2 Developed Prototypes and their Testing**

Based on the ideas and the feedback received in phase 3, prototypes were created. Therefore, some ideas previously presented (chapter 4.1) have merged or have been developed to the prototypes below. The prototypes are to be tested and implemented within the years 2021-2023. The first two prototypes (CoSMOS and Meeting Monday; explanation below) are implemented and will be subjected to an intensive test phase in the spring of 2022. Within this phase they will be optimized and afterwards implemented as regular activities. The other two prototypes (M&E Clinic and Mini Series – Tools; explanation below) need further research before they will be tested starting in late 2022.

**IPDET CoSMOS |** The ‘IPDET Community Server – Memorable Online Society’ is a platform with the goal to bring IPDET alumni and other individuals together. It is a place to meet, learn and exchange. It offers the opportunity to join different channels with voice, text and video chat. Each channel has its own topic, therefore, the members can meet for casual as well as evaluation-work related needs. The platform has been created using Discord.

**How we test it:** To first test the IPDET “CoSMOS” five participants from previous interviews were invited to each join for up to 30 minutes and explore the IPDET CoSMOS with one IPDET team member.
As next step in Spring and Summer 2022 the IPDET “CoSMOS” and “Meeting Monday” go through a long-term test. In detail, this means that IPDET Meeting Mondays will be conducted over a long period, and detailed feedback will be requested. Furthermore, the overall interest in this offer can be monitored by the number of participants joining and using the CoSMOS.

**Promise/Benefit:** We-feeling, possibility to connect with other alumni

**Reason why:** Connecting all alumni with each other

**Format:** Online platform via internet browser or app with different channels, option for voice-/text-/video-chat, option to upload documents, option for polls

**Alumni Feedback:** The general impression of the alumni was, that it is easy to use and that it would be useful for on-site and Mini Series. It “will lead alumni to get in touch” and stay in touch after a workshop, thanks to the easy way of connection. It was further mentioned that the screen sharing, and video options are very helpful. They would all use the IPDET “CoSMOS” as mobile app. One participant said that it might be helpful to have a short introduction video, for those who have no experience with a platform like Discord.

**IPDET Meeting Monday** | The ‘Meeting Monday’ is a regular themed meeting. The topics have a wide range throughout the evaluation field, as well as social related topics. Core element is that IPDET provides the meeting topic with an overall agenda and activities, but no (knowledge) input. Therefore, the topics can be explored by the participants. They bring their own experiences, ideas, and thoughts.

The activities on a Meeting Monday can be discussion rounds, material exchange or games. As well as the IPDET CoSMOS the Meeting Mondays are delivered on Discord. For this reason, there are different channels as well. Every Meeting Monday has a similar agenda: At first all members meet in one channel for a meet and greet as well as a meeting introduction. Afterwards the members can split up for the different activities. At the end all members meet again for a spotlight session, wrap up and feedback round.

**How we test it:** For the first testing of the “Meeting Monday” alumni were invited via the IPDET Listserv. Over the time of the one-hour meeting nine alumni participated and exchanged about the topic “Reduce Food Waste”. To gain feedback, the participants were asked afterwards to answer a short survey with questions about the usability, the format and future use with a scaling from 1 – ‘strongly disagree’ to 4 – ‘strongly agree’ (see the survey in the Appendix 6.9). As mentioned before, there will be a long-term test in 2022. Regarding the IPDET Meeting Monday especially feedback on the scheduled time, the execution and future topics will be requested.

**Promise/Benefit:** Joint learning and fun

**Reason why:** Exchange knowledge with others on specific topics | Fun activities e.g., games, quizzes

**Format:** One-hour moderated online-meeting

**Alumni Feedback:** The usability was rated with a 3,4. Using Discord as platform for the Meeting Monday was also rated by 3,4. Regarding the implementation time for the Meeting Monday at 3 p.m. CET/CEST further feedback and possibly different times are needed, since it was rated with only 2,6 as a good time to join. All participants would like to join the “Meeting Monday” and also the IPDET “CoSMOS” in the future.
**IPDET M&E Clinic** | The IPDET M&E Clinic is the opportunity for the target group to raise questions and to gain support. These questions can be everyday evaluation problems or ideas. To raise the questions, a form needs to be filled out. At this moment it is planned to collect all requests over a period of 2-4 weeks. After this, the IPDET team reviews all submissions and selects the best possible support for each. The core offers of the IPDET M&E Clinic are two ways of support, one in a group setting and one in an individual setting. In both types the support will be given by an evaluation expert with knowledge to the raised question. For the group setting a cluster of submission with familiar topics is created and the so created groups are matched with a suitable expert by the IPDET team. These evaluation experts are known in the IPDET evaluation network, e.g. due to their previous work as an instructor. A benefit from this scenario is the joint learning and exchange. In the individual setting the person which submitted a question is matched with an expert. The advantage of this variation is that individual and confidential questions can be talked through and solved in a more protected surrounding. If both offers do not fit a submission, IPDET can refer to its other community activities, the IPDET Listserv and the IPDET workshops.

**How we test it:** The first round of testing IPDET as M&E Clinic was created as a presentation of two possible marketing flyers (see Figure 8 and Figure 9 in the Appendix 6.10) with key, but opposing, elements of a potential M&E Clinic. One version is about the group setting with a 1–2-month consulting and the other version as individual setting with a longer, variable consulting duration. Before presenting the two flyers to the interviewees, the IPDET team asked some general questions about past evaluation problems or questions they faced and how they solved it (e.g., if they did consult an expert). To gain the feedback, five alumni, who were interviewed already before, were invited. After some further research the next testing and a trial run will be conducted.

**Promise/Benefit:** Expert support | Group learning

**Reason why:** IPDET expert network, option to raise individual questions

**Format:** Online/ On-Site support in an individual or group setting

**Alumni Feedback:** Two interviewees preferred the group setting, because it allows peer-to-peer learning, with the option to create and share best-practices. One interviewee preferred the individual setting, with the reason, that even topic related similar questions might be handled quite different, regarding work sector. It was also mentioned that “If I have something new, I don’t want to be put in a box”, with which it was meant that individual consultation might be a better fit for some ideas or problems. The other two interviewees liked both versions: each would be perfect for another situation. In detail they liked about the individual setting, that it would be a good starting step for young evaluators and that it would be useful in the starting phase of a project, to think of good framework and designing process or digital monitoring. Both mentioned for the group setting, that organizations could come up with a question e.g., about how to build a M&E-System, what is currently important in countries of the Global South. Furthermore, at the end-phase of a project it would be interesting, because the know-how of topic or political context from the expert would be helpful. Meaning, it would be great to offer support by experts from different regions. Regarding the duration, a short period, often promptly when the question arises, is most requested. Further recommendations and questions from the interviewees, which need to be taken into account were: How would it be delivered; Everyone should be addressed (regarding place or type of work, evaluation experiences, etc.); it needs constant engagement. Development of standards within the service and the experts; strong documentation is needed to let everyone know what we are doing and why it is important.
IPDET Mini Series – Tools | IPDET offered a Mini Series on content related M&E topics in 2020. The new Mini Series would have a specific focus on tools, apps and software which are used in the evaluation field. The Mini Series – Tools are webinars that last for around 45 minutes, from those 25 minutes will be spent for information input and further 20 minutes for Q&A. The agenda of the webinars are similar, starting with the opening and an icebreaker, followed by the input. After the input there is time for questions and discussion before the webinar will close with a wrap-up. There can be different levels for each topic.

How we test it: To create and test the “Mini Series – Tools” IPDET first asked the alumni via social media and the IPDET Listserv about their scope of work, which tools they are currently using and about which tools/apps they would like to learn more in the future. This was to gain insights, which topics and advanced level the testing webinars could cover. Based on this feedback, IPDET team members created short information trailers for possible webinars. They can be used to test the general interest in this offer. The covered topics in these trailers are: ‘Handling data and create complex graphs’ with Excel by Matthias Edel, ‘Working with Canva to create Presentations’ by Vanessa Krieger, ‘Use SosciSurvey including PHP to create online surveys’ by Vanessa Krieger, and ‘Handling big data with R’ by Benedict Schneider. Next steps are to further develop and test them.

Promise/Benefit: Short informative content
Reason why: Different levels | Q&A and discussion option
Format: 45 minutes online-webinar about tools and apps

Figure 3: Flow chart with the IPDET Design Thinking Process from idea to final offer
5. Summary and Outlook

As mentioned in the IPDET ECD Strategy Paper, it is IPDETs mission to build a global, inclusive, and multi-disciplinary community committed to evaluative evidence improving development outcomes. IPDET creates space for people engaged in evaluation to come together to learn, exchange knowledge, and collaborate. A Community Building Strategy was developed to contribute to achieve this mission. In detail, IPDET wants to create activities, which connect individuals from around the world. These connections shall enhance their evaluation network and knowledge. The IPDET Community shall be a place of belonging, knowledge exchange and social bonding.

Concluding from this, IPDET started the Community Building process presented in this paper. The IPDET team collected first thoughts about which individuals are part of the IPDET Community and concluded that the focus should be laid on the IPDET alumni as target group for the community offers, as they are the main users of respective offers. Assumptions on their needs were made, followed by insights from IPDET alumni collected by interviews. The interview results showed that alumni primarily wish space to connect with each other, and exchange knowledge, expertise, and information. On this basis, the IPDET team collected, developed and presented several ideas on possible offers. The most popular ideas among alumni were the themed evenings, including those on diversity, as well as the possibility of simple exchange and engagement on a (mobile) platform. Further, the ideas of a Mini Series on Tools and an M&E Clinic, as well as the usage of social media to share alumni stories, were requested. For these favored ideas the IPDET team created the following prototypes:

**IPDET CoSMOS | IPDET Meeting Monday | IPDET M&E Clinic | IPDET Mini Series – Tools**

These prototypes fulfill the alumni needs within the IPDET Community in various ways and will be further developed and tested to eventually make them an integral part of the future IPDET program.

As structures of communities are constantly changing and evolving, furthermore, the Design Thinking Process is an iterative and continuously way of monitoring and developing offers. Therefore, IPDET will develop and adapt its Community Building offers in the future as needed.
6.1 Phase 1 – Assumptions and hypotheses by the IPDET team

Assumptions and hypotheses by the IPDET team

- Want to be part of IPDET / don't miss something
- Solve problems with peers / connect to peers
- Be part of a community / connection
- Learn from intercultural diversity
- Learn different perspectives
- Know-ledge enhancing
- Making my work better / getting to know other fields of work
- Fun / curiosity

Figure 4: Assumptions and hypotheses, DTP phase 1
6.2 Phase 2 – Interview Guide to get to know the wishes and needs of the IPDET alumni

Alumni Target Groups:

Motivation/ Pain Point

1. What do you like about IPDET?
2. What is the IPDET Community for you?
3. What does it mean to you to be part of the IPDET community?

On what occasion have you been accessing the IPDET Community – why and how?

4. What do you expect from being part of the IPDET community?
5. What purpose / needs can community building fulfill IPDET for you?
6. Why have you only participated in this workshop / offer not in others?

Formats

7. What role would you like to take on (active / interactive / passive)?
8. Would you like to be actively involved, and if yes how?
9. Do you want to provide your own content? That could be evaluation or work-related experience stories.

Activities

1. How much time do you want / can you invest?
2. Which formats do you find exciting (e.g. social media channels, platforms, events) for what?
3. Would you be willing to pay for the activities (e.g. short e-learning course or Q&A sessions with experts) and if so, how much?
4. Which advantages do you see in onsite activities and online compared to each other?
5. What would be important to you in the online area, like offerings or formats?

Alumni Target Group: Hackathon Participants

1. Why did you take part in the hackathon?
2. What did you particularly like about it / what didn't you?
3. What were the highlights / unexpected things?
4. Did you already use another offer from IPDET and why?
5. Why did you take part in the hackathon but not yet in other IPDET workshops?
6. Do you have specific wishes/demands that we could consider in our community building formats?

Target Group: Instructors

1. What could be your contribution to the Community Building process?
2. What are your ideas where IPDET could be a pioneer?
3. What use would that be for you? Do not understand
4. Can you imagine making a contribution to the topic of Community Building? If yes how?
5. Does the contribution have to be paid? Better: What do you expect in return for your contribution?
6. What use would such a community have for you?
**Role of IPDET**

7. What is IPDET for you? What role does IPDET play in your work?
8. Are Community Building measures interesting for you? If so, what exactly?
9. What is the competitive advantage of IPDET?
10. What formats do others do? Would there be something suitable for IPDET?
11. What is IPDET Standing for in the worldwide Evaluation Community? What are we good/ bad in?

**Target Group: Advisory Board**

**Role of IPDET**

1. What is IPDET for you? What role does IPDET play in your work?
2. Are Community Building measures interesting for you? If so, what exactly?
3. What is the competitive advantage of IPDET?
4. What formats do others do? Would there be something suitable for IPDET?
6.3 Phase 2 – Insights from IPDET alumni

Figure 5: Insights from the IPDET alumni, DTP phase 2
6.4 Phase 3 – Interview Guide to gain feedback on the ideas

How can we help the user to exchange information / experiences and to put what they have learned into practice?

Presentation of the ideas

Questions:
1. From which of the ideas would you make use?
2. What do you like/dislike from which idea and why?
3. How would you change the ideas and why?
4. For which of the ideas would you be willing to pay?

How can we make the IPDET community tangible for users?

Presentation of the ideas

Questions:
1. From which of the ideas would you make use?
2. What do you like/dislike from which idea and why?
3. How would you change the ideas and why?
4. For which of the ideas would you be willing to pay?
6.5 Phase 3 – Questionnaire: short survey to gain feedback on the ideas

Dear IPDET community,

thank you for participating in this questionnaire. IPDET is currently working on expanding and strengthening its community! To offer activities in the future that fit the needs and interests of the evaluation community, we are seeking the perspectives of our alumni. Please take 5 minutes to give us feedback by rating the statements in this questionnaire.

This survey is collected anonymously. Your answers will only be used by the IPDET team members in the Community Building process.

This questionnaire will be available until August 23.
Please do not hesitate to contact me for further questions: contact@ipdet.org

Vanessa Krieger
IPDET Marketing and Communication
Center for Evaluation (CEval GmbH)
Dudweiler Landstraße 5 | 68123 Saarbrücken | Germany
contact@ipdet.org
www.ipdet.org
1. Thinking of expanding and exchange your knowledge and make use of peer-to-peer learning together with the IPDET Community: Please estimate on which rate you agree to the following statements.

I would...

- like to connect with other evaluation experts based on place of work, employer/organization or region.
  
- make use of best practices and exchange knowledge.
  
- jointly work on current and relevant evaluation topics over a longer period to make use of peer-to-peer learning and develop evaluation solutions.
  
- use online formats to discuss, get best practices or watch knowledge videos about certain evaluation topics by using virtual collaboration platforms like "Gathertown".
  
- use IPDET as contact point for problems and questions, as well as the appropriate handling of new ideas and how to develop them further.
  
- use an IPDET mentoring program in one-on-one settings.
  
- use an IPDET mentoring program in a group setting.
  
- use 'Deep Dives' in group settings like round tables or supervision to exchange ideas and find solutions on specific questions/topics.
  
- use IPDET Mini Series where tools like the "GEMS" shortly are explained.
  
- appreciate Community Awards (awards from and for the community) on different topics e.g. for good mentoring.
  
- a certain annual topic, which all offers are geared towards.

"Gathertown" is a web-conferencing software with the component that you have the ability to move around and interact with other participants in a virtual house/room, just like in real life.
2. Thinking of being part of the IPDET Community and what you need to feel being part of it: Please estimate on which rate you agree to the following statements.

I would...

- create my own content to share via IPDET social media which contains personal experience with IPDET and IPDET offerings (e.g. participation in Social Events).
- create my own content to share via IPDET social media which contains evaluation experience and knowledge (e.g. own evaluation papers, work reports).
- support the IPDET Community by moderating online Community content.
- support the IPDET Community by organizing small regional IPDET events.
- use the IPDET webpage to connect to peers by using a forum or voice chat.
- use the IPDET webpage to exchange, not only material and information, but also job assignments and tenders.
- use informal game evenings.
- join an evaluation simulation game.
- use competitions and challenges like "exit games" and quizzes.
- like to see and learn from cultures from around the world e.g. by theme evenings with music, food and clothing presentation.
- like to see and learn from cultures from around the world e.g. by theme evenings with different evaluation views.
- like to gain "tokens" by joining IPDET Community offerings which in turn enable access to other IPDET offerings (e.g. exclusive events or documents).

3. If you have further concrete ideas for IPDET Community offerings, you personally would make use of, please share them below.

01
02

Last Page

Thank you for completing this questionnaire!

You helped us a lot by developing future IPDET Community offerings that you would like to join! Please do not hesitate to contact me for further questions: contact@ipdet.org

Your answers were transmitted, you may close the browser window or tab now.

www.IPDET.org

Vanessa Krieger – IPDET 2021
6.6 Phase 3 – Questionnaire Results

Thinking of expanding and exchange your knowledge and make use of peer-to-peer learning together with the IPDET Community: Please estimate on which rate you agree to the following statements.

I would...

- ... a certain annual topic, which all offers are geared towards.
- ... appreciate Community Awards (awards from and for the community) on different topics e.g. for good mentoring.
- ... use IPDET Mini Series where tools like the “GEMS” shortly are explained.
- ... use 'Deep Dives' in group settings like round tables or supervision to exchange ideas and find solutions on specific questions / topics.
- ... use an IPDET mentoring program in a group setting.
- ... use an IPDET mentoring program in one-on-one settings.
- ... use IPDET as contact point for problems and questions, as well as the appropriate handling of new ideas and how to develop them further.
- ... use online formats to discuss, get best practices or watch knowledge videos about certain evaluation topics by using virtual collaboration platforms like gather.town*.
- ... jointly work on current and relevant evaluation topics over a longer period to make use of peer-to-peer learning and develop evaluation solutions.
- ... make use of best practices and exchange knowledge.
- ... like to connect with other evaluation experts based on place of work, employer/organization or region.

Table 1: Potential use of the Knowledge and peer learning offer ideas (n = 86) (own representation)
Thinking of being part of the IPDET Community and what you need to feel being part of it: Please estimate on which rate you agree to the following statements.

I would...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>1 = do not agree at all</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5 = completely agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>... like to gain &quot;tokens&quot; by joining IPDET Community offerings which in turn enable access to...</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... like to see and learn from cultures from around the world e.g. by theme evenings with...</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... like to see and learn from cultures from around the world e.g. by theme evenings with...</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... use competitions and challenges like &quot;exit games&quot; and quizzes.</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... join an evaluation simulation game.</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... use informal game evenings.</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... use the IPDET webpage to exchange, not only material and information, but also job...</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... use the IPDET webpage to connect to peers by using a forum or voice chat.</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... support the IPDET Community by organizing small regional IPDET events.</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... support the IPDET Community by moderating online Community content.</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... create my own content to share via IPDET social media which contains evaluation...</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... create my own content to share via IPDET social media which contains personal...</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Potential use of the social offer ideas (n = 86) (own representation)
6.7 Phase 3 – Overview on the interview feedback gained on the ideas and team ranking

Figure 6: Overview, DTP phase 4
6.8 Phase 4 – Creation process of the prototypes and their testing

Figure 7: Prototype and test creation, DTP phase 4
6.9 Phase 5 – Questionnaire: short survey to gain feedback on the Meeting Monday after the test execution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. The following statements will take a look into the usability of the platform. Please rate how much you agree or disagree.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I thought the platform was easy to use.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I found the system unnecessarily complex.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I would imagine that most people would learn to use the platform very quick.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I felt very confident using the platform.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I needed to learn a lot of things before I could get going with this platform.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>It is easy to find the information I need.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. The following statements will take a look into the platform format. Please rate how much you agree or disagree.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The time (3pm CET/CEST) is right for me.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Discord as place for the IPDET platform is suitable.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The separation of the IPDET CoSMOS and the Meeting Monday makes the platform clearer.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I would prefer to join the Meeting Monday on the IPDET CoSMOS directly.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. The following statements take a look into your future usage of the platform. Please rate how much you agree or disagree.

[Strongly Disagree] [Strongly Agree]

I would join the Meeting Monday in the future.

[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

I would join the IPDET CoSMOS in the future.

[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

I would join the Meeting Monday with following topics:

[ ] [ ]

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**Last Page**

Thank you for completing this questionnaire!

We would like to thank you very much for helping us.

Your answers were transmitted, you may close the browser window or tab now.

**B.Sc. Vanessa Krieger – 2021**
Figure 8: Prototype Flyer for the Group Setting of an M&E Clinic

Figure 9: Prototype Flyer for the Solo Setting of an M&E Clinic
List of references


