

PANEL 4D

INTERNATIONAL ENERGY PROGRAM EVALUATION: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Moderator: Edward Vine, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory

Panelists:

- Howard Geller, American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy
- Hossein Haeri, Barakat & Chamberlin, Inc.
- Casper Kofod, DEFU, Denmark
- Carol Mulholland, International Resources Group
- Dan Violette, Hagler Bailly Consulting

Summary:

Many countries have been implementing energy efficiency programs for several years, and several countries have conducted evaluations of their programs. The U.S. evaluation community has been involved in some of these evaluations – either as active participants or as technical advisors to the evaluations. As more countries see the value of evaluation, it is expected that there will be more opportunities for U.S. evaluators to participate in international program evaluations.

However, the opportunity for additional evaluation work is not without its challenges. For example, evaluators will inevitably find themselves working in organizations and cultures that do not understand and are skeptical of evaluation. Evaluators will also be confronted with inexperienced staff and limited resources to perform the type of evaluations they desire. In some countries, the inadequate (and sometimes nonexistent) infrastructure for collecting data and the lack of data (particularly high quality data) makes good evaluations very problematic. Finally, the political pressure to implement programs without conducting program evaluation not only raises the anxiety levels of evaluators but also creates an environment that may not utilize the results of program evaluations at all.

In this session, the challenges and opportunities of conducting program evaluation in countries outside of the U.S. are discussed. Panelists will provide examples from Brazil, Eastern and Western Europe, Nepal, and Thailand. We expect a lively discussion and expect that other evaluators in the audience will share their experiences as well.