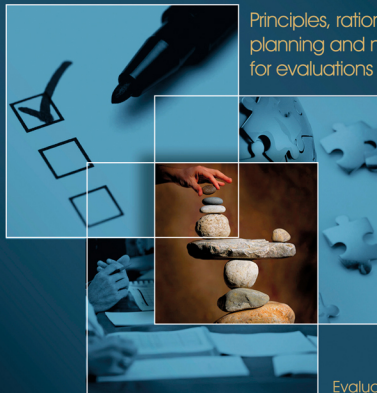


ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluation:



International
Labour
Organization



Principles, rationale,
planning and managing
for evaluations

Evaluation Unit

Introduction

Principles and
rationale for
evaluation in
the ILO

Operational
approach to
evaluation
in the ILO

Planning
and managing
the evaluation

Conducting
the evaluation

Evaluation
results and
knowledge
dissemination

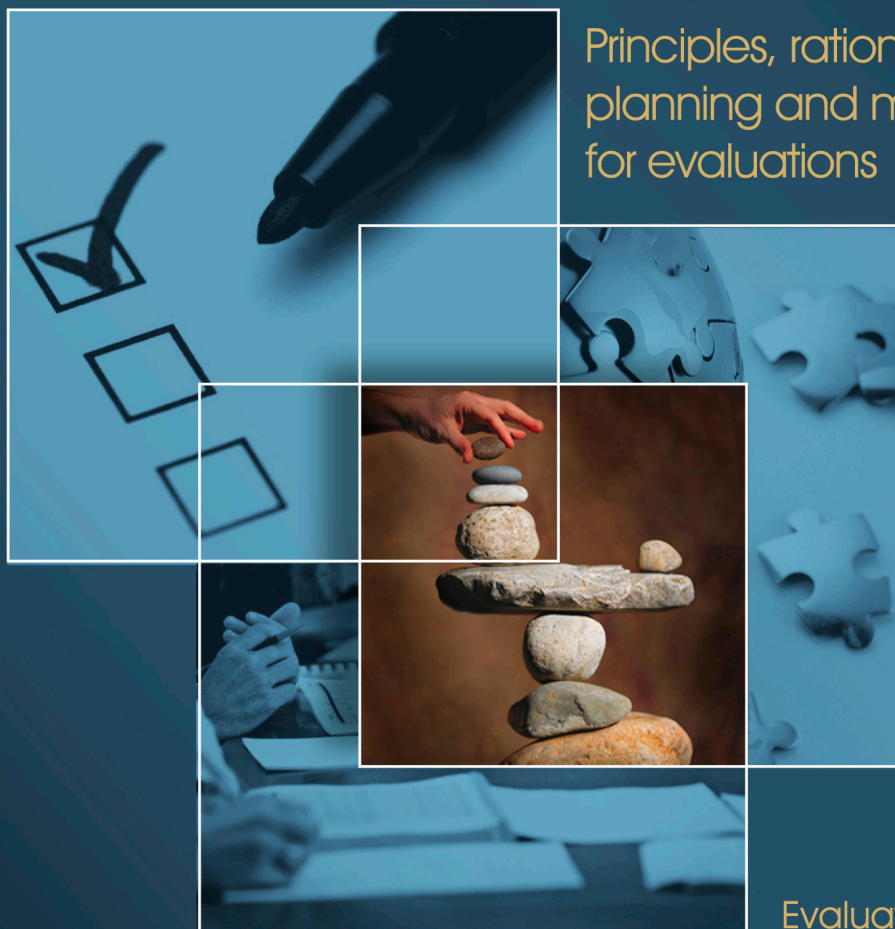
Links to
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ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluation:

Principles, rationale,
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for evaluations



Evaluation Unit

2nd
Edition

ILO policy guidelines
for results-based evaluation:
Principles, rationale, planning
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Contents

Acronyms	vi
Introduction.....	1
Navigating the guidelines and accompanying CD-ROM	2
Acknowledgements	2
1. Principles and rationale for evaluation in the ILO	3
1.1 Evaluation in the ILO’s results-based management framework.....	4
1.2 Guiding principles of evaluation in the ILO.....	5
1.3 Evaluation in a changing development environment	7
1.4 The evaluation function in the ILO	7
1.5 Evaluation Advisory Committee (EAC) oversight of evaluation use	8
2. Operational approach to evaluation in the ILO	9
2.1 Types of evaluations: governance-level and decentralized evaluations	9
2.1.1 Strategy and policy evaluations	12
2.1.2 Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) evaluations	13
2.1.3 Thematic evaluations.....	13
2.1.4 Impact evaluations	13
2.1.5 Joint evaluations	14
2.1.6. Project evaluations.....	14
2.2 ILO regional and sector department networks	17
2.3 Evaluation schedules and work plans for regions and departments	20
3. Planning and managing the evaluation	21
3.1 Defining the purpose, scope and clients of an evaluation	23
3.2 The intervention logic and evaluability	23
3.3 Stakeholder involvement	25
3.4 Defining evaluation questions and criteria	26
3.5 Drafting and circulating the Terms of Reference (TOR)	27
3.6 The evaluation budget.....	28

3.6.1 Regular Budget Supplementary Account (RBSA) for monitoring and evaluation.....	29
3.7 Evaluation teams for independent evaluations: roles and skills	31
4. Conducting the evaluation	33
4.1 The inception report	34
4.2 Data collection and analysis: tools and methods	35
4.2.1 Types of data.....	35
4.2.2 Quantitative and qualitative techniques	35
4.2.3 Data quality.....	37
4.3 Drawing conclusions and making recommendations	38
4.4 Generating lessons learned	39
4.5 Reporting	40
4.5.1 Commenting on the draft evaluation report.....	41
4.5.2 Process for approving the final evaluation report	42
4.5.3 Disclosure and dissemination of the evaluation report.....	43
5. Evaluation results and knowledge dissemination	44
5.1 Communicating evaluation results.....	44
5.2 Management response to recommendations.....	45
References.....	48
ILO References.....	48
References from other agencies	49
ILO web links of interest	50
ILO Evaluation Guidance.....	51
Checklists, Protocols, Templates and Tools	51
Checklists	51
Protocols	52
Templates.....	52
Tools.....	52





ILO Policy Guidelines for Results-Based Evaluation

Figure 1. Evaluations and the ILO’s results-based framework	10
Figure 2. Key steps in planning and managing an evaluation.....	22
Figure 3. Financing for project evaluation	29
Figure 4. General Workflow for the evaluation report	42
Figure 5. Workflow for response to recommendations	46
Table 1. Types, designated responsibilities and timing of high-level and decentralized evaluations.....	11
Table 2. ILO decentralized evaluation approaches	16
Table 3. Key roles and general responsibilities in decentralized evaluations.....	18
Table 4. Definition of key evaluation criteria.....	26
Table 5. Data collection approaches, tools and methods.....	36
Table 6. Roles and responsibilities for management response to high-level evaluations	47
Box 1. Definition of evaluation.....	4
Box 2. Specific ILO principles for evaluation	6
Box 3. Norms and standards for evaluation.....	6
Box 4. ILO policy for project evaluation requirements	15
Box 5. Categorizing decentralized evaluations by degree of independence	16
Box 6. Categorizing evaluations by timing.....	17
Box 7. Evaluation planning in I-Track	22
Box 8. Evaluability is assessed at three key stages	24
Box 9. Evaluability reports should address the following factors	25
Box 10. Stakeholders of ILO evaluations	25
Box 11. Outline of terms of reference	28
Box 12. Steps to calculate the budget for financing evaluation missions	30
Box 13. Repository for evaluation documents	34
Box 14. Requirements for recommendations	39
Box 15. Sample structure and table of contents of an evaluation report	40
Box 16. Addressing fraud and whistle blowing at the ILO	41
Box 17. i-Track	43

Acronyms



ACTEMP	Bureau for Employers' Activities
ACTRAV	Bureau for Workers' Activities
AER	Annual Evaluation Report
CODEV	Development Cooperation Branch
DFID	United Kingdom Department for International Development
DG	Director-General
DSA	Daily Subsistence Allowance
DWCP	Decent Work Country Programme
DWT	Decent Work Team
EAC	Evaluation Advisory Committee
ED	Executive Director
EVAL	ILO Evaluation Unit
FO	Field Office
GB	Governing Body
HQ	Headquarters
IFAD	UN International Fund for Agriculture Development
IGDS	ILO Internal Governance Documents System
ILO	International Labour Organization
IPEC	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OECD/DAC	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development/Development Assistance Committee
P&B	Programme and Budget
PARDEV	ILO Partnerships and Development Cooperation Department
PFAC	Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee
PRODOC	Project document
PROGRAM	Bureau of Programming and Management
RBM	Results-Based Management
RBSA	Regular Budget Supplementary Account
RBTC	Regular Budget for Technical Cooperation
RD	Regional Director
REO	Regional Evaluation Officer
SPF	Strategic Policy Framework
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group

Introduction


These ILO evaluation guidelines are written for any ILO staff tasked to plan, manage, oversee and/or follow up on an evaluation. They are based on the *ILO evaluation policy* (ILO 2005)  and the *ILO results-based evaluation strategy for 2011-15* (ILO 2011e) , which are the two key governance level documents defining the ILO's organizational approach and results-based framework for evaluation¹. The evaluation strategy is operationalized within the context of the *Strategic Policy Framework 2010-15* (SPF)  and the biennial programme and budgets (P&B). .


The 2011-15 evaluation strategy aggregates under three main outcomes:

- Improved use of evaluation by ILO constituents and management for governance;
- Harmonized Office-wide evaluation practice to support transparency and accountability;
- Evaluation capability expanded in the form of knowledge, skills and tools.

Internally, further high-level parameters for evaluation are elaborated in two internal documents, The *ILO Evaluation Unit* (ILO 2009b)  and the Director-General's Announcement on *Evaluation in the ILO* (ILO 2011f) . In addition, the ILO also adheres to the latest designated good practices in evaluation within international development, such

¹ For a glossary of evaluation terms used officially by the ILO, see OECD/DAC (2002) 

as the *Norms and Standards* of the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG 2005a, 2005b) , which are accommodated.

The ILO evaluation guidelines have been produced as an integral part of the internal document *Evaluation in the ILO*, Director General's announcement, IGDS Number 75 (V.2) (ILO 2011f)  to serve as an additional internal governance document rather than a set of recommended good practices.

The most recent version of these guidelines can be found on EVAL's public website.

Navigating the guidelines and accompanying CD-ROM

The first section of the guidelines provides an overview of the principles and rationale guiding evaluations in the ILO, and aims to clarify basic concepts. It serves as an introduction to explain the added value of evaluation to the organization in the context of results-based management (RBM), and applies to all evaluations in the ILO. The second section focuses on the ILO's operational approach to evaluations, both centralized and decentralized. The third and fourth sections guide the reader through the processes of planning, managing and conducting evaluations in the ILO. The fifth and final section discusses the use of evaluation results and knowledge dissemination.

The policy guidelines, while being a formal and freestanding document, also serve as the backbone of the "i-eval resource kit". The resource kit consists of the guidelines and a CD-ROM in one package and has been conceived to serve as a gateway into ILO expertise and knowledge on evaluation for both managers and practitioners in the ILO. For those who require information at the more detailed level, the CD-ROM, using the policy guidelines in PDF format as the conduit, provides hyperlinks to guidance notes, tools and checklists. Where applicable, suggestions for further reading have been included. The CD-ROM will be updated on a regular basis, and is also stored on the ILO intranet, Internet and EVAL's Knowledge Sharing Platform.

Acknowledgements

The policy guidelines and accompanying CD-ROM is a collaborative product resulting from contributions of numerous people from inside and outside the ILO.

Key to the hyperlink icons used in the guidelines and accessing documents



Book icon – Links to a document or website that offers further information



Sheet of paper icon – Links to an EVAL Guidance Note




Pencil icon – Links to an EVAL Checklist, Template or Tool

When a document is cited as internal or Intranet it can only be accessed through the ILO internal intranet. Non-ILO officials may request a copy of such documents through email to EVAL@ilo.org.



1. Principles and rationale for evaluation in the ILO

Evaluation in the ILO is primarily used as a management and organizational learning tool to support ILO constituents in forwarding decent work and social justice. It is a critical means to improve decision-making, generate knowledge in the organization and provide verifiable evidence of effectiveness. An evaluation is an assessment of an intervention, focusing on what worked, what didn't work, and why this was the case. The evaluation process also examines if the best approach was taken, and if it was optimally executed.

The *ILO evaluation policy* (2005)  uses the OECD/DAC definition of evaluation presented in Box 1.



Box 1

Definition of evaluation

Evaluation is an evidence-based assessment of strategy, policy or programme and project outcomes, by determining their relevance, impact, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. An evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into the decision-making process of both recipients and donors.

Source: *Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management* OECD/DAC (2002)

Evaluation in the ILO focuses on the achievement of development results and, in this context, considerations of design, implementation and management processes.²

1.1 Evaluation in the ILO's results-based management framework



The aim of evaluation in the ILO is to support improvements in programmes and policies and to promote accountability and learning. This is consistent with the *UNEG Norms for the UN System*, which states: *"The purposes of evaluation include understanding why, and the extent to which, intended and unintended (positive and negative) results are achieved, and their impact on stakeholders. Evaluation is an important source of evidence about the achievement of results and institutional performance. Evaluation is also an important contributor to building knowledge and to organizational learning. Evaluation is an important agent of change and plays a critical and credible role in supporting accountability."*

Evaluation and results-based management (RBM) are interlinked: according to the ILO's *Results-Based Management Guidebook* , the evaluation process provides *"a distinct, essential and complementary function to performance measurement and RBM."*³ RBM tends to be used to assess whether results were achieved, while evaluation is used to inquire about why and how results were achieved. The evaluation function provides information not readily available from performance monitoring systems, in particular in-depth consideration of attribution, relevance, effectiveness and sustainability. Evaluation also brings elements of independent judgment to the performance system and provides recommendations for appropriate management action. For these reasons, evaluation is an essential component of RBM.

² Evaluation should not be confused with implementation monitoring and reporting, audit, inspection, investigation or assessment of individual performance.






³ RBM is defined by the ILO as "a management approach that directs organizational processes, resources, products and services towards the achievement of measurable outcomes" from ILO. 2011a. *Results-Based Management in the International Labour Organization: A guidebook*, p. 2.



Evaluation is only beneficial if it guides decision-making processes and is used for managing the ILO's work. As an integral part of RBM in the ILO, evaluation aims to reinforce coherence between results, impact and resource allocation in the programming process (ILO 2005). The decision-making process by the policy organs and senior management can be strengthened based on sound assessment of effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, impact and sustainability of ILO activities.


Independent, objective and impartial evaluations are usually considered a precondition for accountability.⁴ The *ILO accountability framework* (2010)  comprises the full range of legal instruments, regulations and rules, policies, procedures and formally documented functions, responsibilities and authorities, which, taken as a whole, establish the accountability of staff at all levels for their decisions, actions and omissions. To foster accountability, evaluation in the ILO aims to inform managerial decisions involving line management and constituents to inform future planning in a particular technical area or country context, and to inform policy in the ILO or amongst partner country governments in line with the Paris Declaration (OECD 2005)  and the UN reform's focus on transparency.⁵

Knowledge development, organizational learning, and capacity building are also goals of evaluation in the ILO. There are specific tools and mechanisms in place to facilitate learning lessons from the work evaluated, and to encourage ILO staff and implementing partners to learn throughout the evaluation process. Feedback is important for ongoing improvement of the ILO's work and is addressed in the following sections.

1.2 Guiding principles of evaluation in the ILO

All aspects of evaluation in the ILO are guided by the ILO evaluation policy  and the ILO results-based evaluation strategy for 2011-15  which adhere to the OECD/DAC Principles  and UNEG norms  and standards . The evaluation function is designed to be objective and independent, with the aim of enhancing external credibility and a culture of learning as well as providing better support to the governance and oversight roles of the Governing Body (GB). In addition, evaluation makes an essential contribution towards RBM by informing the planning, programming, budgeting, implementing and reporting cycle.

The evaluation strategy incorporates the key guiding principles of the *Strategic Policy Framework 2010-15* (ILO 2009d) , which call upon evaluation to strengthen knowledge development and accountability in the areas of decent work, international labour rights and standards and the *ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization* (ILO 2008d) , as well as to enhance the relevance and usefulness of evaluation to constituents.

⁴ According to the OECD/DAC Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results-Based Management (2002),  accountability is: "the obligation to demonstrate that work has been conducted in compliance with agreed rules and standards or to report fairly and accurately on performance results vis à vis mandated roles and/or plans. This may require a careful, even legally defensible, demonstration that the work is consistent with the contract terms."


⁵ The Paris Declaration sets the agenda for far-reaching and monitorable actions to reform the ways of delivering and managing aid. The signatory thereby commits to fostering "ownership, harmonization, alignment, results and mutual accountability," among other things; to strengthening partner countries' national development strategies and operational frameworks; increasing their capacities; and to addressing weaknesses in partner countries' institutional capacities to develop and implement results-driven development strategies (OECD 2005).



Evaluation should contribute towards decision-making through evidence-based assessment of strategies, policies, programmes and projects. The evaluation function in the ILO is designed to ensure transparency and independence of evaluations, which in turn reinforces their quality, credibility and usefulness.



Box 2

Specific ILO principles for evaluation

- Limited management influence over terms of reference, scope of the evaluation and selection of evaluators;
- Involvement of constituents and others as appropriate, in the planning, implementation and reporting process;
- Upholding the ILO mandate and mission by selecting an evaluation approach and methods that reflect the tripartite organization and its focus on social justice and its normative and technical mandate;
- Adequacy of treatment of core ILO cross-cutting priorities, such as gender equality  and non-discrimination, promotion of standards, tripartite processes and constituent capacity development.


Line managers are called upon by the Director-General to safeguard the integrity of the evaluation process by ensuring adherence to the ILO's evaluation policies and guidelines and use of the evaluation system. In addition, the evaluation function in the ILO also draws on the internationally accepted norms  and standards  of independent evaluation prevailing in the UN system, as presented in Box 3.








Box 3

Norms and standards for evaluation


- **Usefulness:** The selection, design and follow-up of evaluations aim to be useful, particularly to support decision-making.
- **Impartiality:** Evaluation processes are established to minimize bias and protect impartiality at all stages of the evaluation, thereby supporting the credibility of the evaluation function and evaluation results. Reports must present the evidence, findings, conclusions and recommendations in a complete and balanced way.
- **Independence:** There should be a clear separation of evaluation responsibility from line management functions. Evaluators are selected with due regard to their independence and professionalism to avoid potential conflicts of interest.
- **Quality:** Each evaluation should employ design, planning and implementation processes that are inherently quality oriented, covering appropriate methodologies for data collection, analysis and interpretation.
- **Competence:** Those engaged in designing, conducting and managing evaluation activities shall have all necessary skills to conduct high-quality and ethical work as defined in the UN Evaluation Group's professional standards.
- **Transparency and consultation:** Transparency and consultation with the major stakeholders are essential features in all stages of the evaluation process. This improves the credibility and quality of the evaluation. It can facilitate consensus building and ownership of the findings, conclusions and recommendations

Source: *The ILO Evaluation Unit*. IGDS Number 74. ILO, 2009 .


1.3 Evaluation in a changing development environment

The importance of evaluation is highlighted in the context of the UN reform process. The Secretary-General's High Level Panel recommended a common UN evaluation system to promote transparency and accountability in its report, titled "Delivering as One" (2006) . The Declarations of Monterrey (2002) , Rome (2003) , Marrakech (2004)  and the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005)  among others, show a growing trend to integrate all external development support into the national development processes. Consequently, the ILO is increasingly expected to document its role and contribution within the broader context. Joint UN evaluations and UNDAF evaluations, along with other initiatives focusing on coherent, comprehensive, multi-partner programmes or frameworks, play an important role in this process.

Evaluations with UNDAF partners, including the United Nations Country Team (UNCT), the government of the programme country and donors who support the programmes, are growing in importance, as is demand for evaluation of Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCP) and projects by individual agencies such as the ILO. In this context, UN interventions, including those supported by the ILO, will also be evaluated as to how they support the achievement of national priorities related to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) through advocacy, capacity development and programming (United Nations 2007).


Further reading: *Common Country Assessment and United Nations Development Assistance Framework. Guidelines for UN Country Teams on preparing a CCA and UNDAF*, United Nations (2007). 

1.4 The evaluation function in the ILO

According to internal document IGDS Number 75 (V.2) *Evaluation in the ILO*, , "The evaluation function is designed to be objective and independent, with the aim of enhancing external credibility and the culture of learning and provide better support to the governance and oversight roles of the Governing Body" (ILO 2011f, p.1). High-level evaluations and annual evaluation reports (AER) are submitted to the GB as appropriate. The annual programme of evaluation is approved by the GB, which may initiate external evaluations. The GB is also kept apprised of progress on implementation of recommendations for high-level evaluations.


Eval is mandated to manage the evaluation function and ensure proper implementation of the evaluation policy. Eval's structure and modalities of operation are designed to protect its functional independence. The Director of Eval reports directly to the Director-General. Eval is responsible for elaborating policies, setting operational guidelines and quality control of the evaluation components of projects, programmes, partnerships and strategies, as well as managing high-level evaluations. It is also accountable for the systematic monitoring of follow-up to recommendations that have been accepted by management and then reporting on such follow-up to the GB.

1.5 Evaluation Advisory Committee (EAC) oversight of evaluation use

The Evaluation Advisory Committee (EAC) (ILO 2008a)  was established by an internal circular to provide a mechanism to oversee the use, implementation, and follow up to lessons learned and recommendations resulting from ILO evaluation activities. Its objective is to promote institutional follow-up on independent evaluation findings and accepted recommendations and to provide pertinent information and advice to the Director-General on progress made by the Office in this regard.

The scope of its functions includes all independent evaluations with particular emphasis on strategy and outcome evaluations, country programme evaluations and major thematic evaluations. The Committee may also consider feedback on follow-up plans and actions taken in respect to a selected number of large technical cooperation projects.

All managers are accountable for ensuring proper use of relevant evaluation findings, lessons learned and recommendations. However, without substituting the reporting and accountability obligations of managers, the EAC provides additional assurance to the senior management team and to the Director-General by ensuring that follow-up to evaluation recommendations is transparent and regularly conducted.

The Committee also functions as a forum for internal dialogue on the implementation of the ILO evaluation policy and strategy and, in particular, ensures that evaluations are credible and conducted in an impartial and independent way. It may discuss the draft plan for independent evaluations and provide its recommendations to the Director-General or EVAL, as appropriate. The Committee verifies that all independent evaluation reports are disclosed according to the ILO Policy on public information disclosure (ILO 2008b). .

In relation to the preparation of P&B proposals, the Committee provides its views to PROGRAM regarding the findings and recommendations of evaluation reports that could be used in developing new P&B proposals. The Committee also provides advice on any other evaluation issues that may be referred to by the Director-General.




2. Operational approach to evaluation in the ILO

2.1 Types of evaluations: governance-level and decentralized evaluations

Since 2005, the ILO evaluation function has incorporated a combination of governance-level and decentralized evaluation responsibilities. Independent strategy and DWCP evaluations are governance-level⁶ evaluations, managed or coordinated directly by EVAL, and are considered centralized. All other types of evaluations are decentralized since their direct management, including resourcing, is primarily the responsibility of departments and regions. Decentralized evaluations include thematic evaluations, project evaluations, impact and joint evaluations, as well as all forms of internal review, including self-evaluations. These are further described in the following sections.

⁶. Also referred to as “high-level” in these guidelines.

Governance-level evaluations aim to generate insights into organizational-level performance within the context of the RBM system. These contribute towards high-level decision-making about policies, strategies and accountability. Strategy and DWCP evaluations are two types of high-level evaluations, managed and commissioned by EVAL. ILO senior management and the GB participate in the process of identifying priorities for evaluation and determining the timing and intended uses of each high-level evaluation. To this end, a process of informal consultations including governments, through regional coordinators and the secretariats of the Employers' and Workers' groups on the topics for high-level strategic evaluations and their terms of references (TORs) is organized annually. According to the ILO's Evaluation Strategy for 2011-15 (ILO 2011e) , a rolling three-year evaluation programme of work with proposed high-level evaluation topics is to be presented to the GB each November; this plan is to be updated annually.

Decentralized evaluations focus on programmatic areas more directly under the control of managers, such as technical cooperation and implementation of country programmes, and review of technical interventions from all sources of funds, including the Regular Budget Supplementary Account (RBSA) and Regular Budget Technical Cooperation (RBTC).


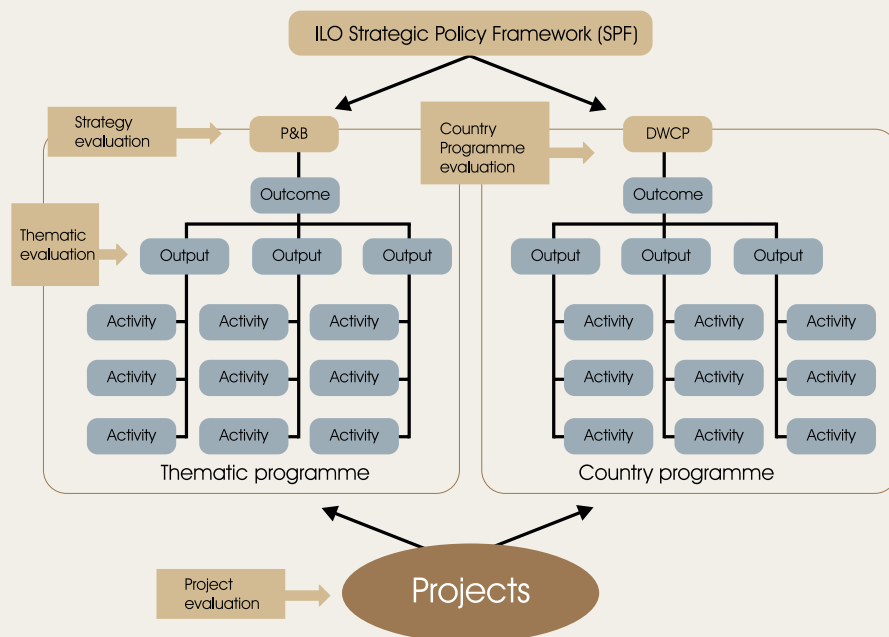
The ILO evaluation policy (ILO 2005)  provides an operational framework that serves different needs and aims to generate knowledge and inform decisions at different levels of programming within the Office, as presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Evaluations and the ILO's results-based framework



According to the ILO evaluation policy, the Executive Directors and Regional Directors of staff managing decentralized evaluations approve the topics and take responsibility for completing evaluation work that falls administratively under their authority. ACTRAV and


ILO Policy Guidelines for Results-Based Evaluation

ACTEMP are responsible for evaluations of workers' and employers' technical cooperation. For quality control purposes, the independent evaluation TORs, budgets, selection of consultants and determination of methodologies are overseen by department focal points or regional evaluation officers, and the final report is approved by EVAL. The role of EVAL is to focus on quality control and technical support to departments and regions as requested, and also to profile evaluation results and share experiences in order to promote organizational learning. Responsibility for conducting and financing decentralized evaluations is with those managing the projects or programmes. The aims, designated responsibilities and timing of the different types of evaluations in the ILO are summarized in Table 1.


Table 1. Types, designated responsibilities and timing of high-level and decentralized evaluations

	Type of evaluation	Main purpose	Responsibility	Timing
Governance-level Independent	Strategy, policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review major policies or institutional issues Assess impact, effectiveness and benefits of ILO core strategies as described in P&B Improve strategies and policies, and the functioning of the Office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EVAL to plan and manage Governing Body and senior management confirming topics. EAC reviewing follow-up 	Two each year; additional as mandated and resourced.
Governance-level Independent / internal	Decent Work Country Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the extent to which significant impact is being made towards decent work and related Country Programme Outcomes set in the P&B. Feed into country tripartite dialogue on impact, effectiveness and relevance of ILO action at the country level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EVAL to plan and manage Regional Offices responsible for financing internal Country Programme Reviews 	EVAL will conduct at least one each year; and support regions to internally evaluate a number of DWCPs and Country Programme Reviews
Decentralized Independent / internal	Thematic evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop cross-cutting lessons, including success stories to innovate and feed into departmental / regional learning on specific technical interventions and strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical departments, other technical groups and regions to plan and manage EVAL to oversee and support as required Technical programmes and regions to resource 	Based on work plans of thematic evaluations
	Impact evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess effects and impact of specific policy and programme interventions on beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical departments, other technical groups and regions to plan and manage EVAL to oversee and support as required Technical programmes and regions to resource 	Based on work plans of impact evaluations

	Type of evaluation	Main purpose	Responsibility	Timing
Decentralized External /Joint	Joint evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess jointly with partner organizations, programmes where ILO is one of several managing and implementing joint programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management of ILO's input to evaluation supervised by regional or department-level evaluation officers EVAL provides oversight on quality and compliance Cost to be covered by joint programme 	Subject to planning and reporting schedule according to project document of agreement
Decentralized Independent, internal or self	Project evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess projects for relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and contribution to broader impact Appropriateness of design to ILO's strategic and national decent work programme frameworks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EDs and RDs responsible for ensuring application of ILO evaluation policy Management of evaluation supervised by regional or department-level evaluation officers EVAL provides oversight Cost of evaluation to be included in project budget 	Mid-term or final or as stipulated in the project evaluation plan

Adapted from *A new policy and strategic framework for evaluation at the ILO* (ILO 2005) .


2.1.1 Strategy and policy evaluations

Evaluations of ILO strategies and policies  are designed to assess their effectiveness and impact, and to provide an account to the GB regarding strategy results. The focus is on specific outcomes within the frameworks provided by the SPF and P&B. These high-level evaluations aim to assess relevance, efficiency and effectiveness, and identify potential for impact and sustainability of the associated SPF strategies.


Each biennium, EVAL proposes topics to the GB and subsequently EVAL manages at least two strategy and policy evaluations per year. In accordance with ILO guidelines for independence, credibility and transparency, responsibility for the strategy evaluations falls on EVAL. The evaluation team is to be composed of one or more external consultant(s) and an ILO independent evaluator without prior links to the strategy or policy. These evaluations are financed by EVAL through its regular budget and may benefit from cost-sharing with the regions or departments.

Strategy and policy evaluations are generally conducted over a six to nine month period, usually directly following the November GB approval of the selection. They are finalized prior to the next November GB meeting. The evaluation summary report and subsequent status reports on implementation of the recommendations are presented to the ILO's GB. Follow-up to high-level evaluations is reviewed by the Evaluation Advisory Committee, which in turn reports to the Director-General on the adequacy of follow-up.

Further reading: *Discussions of high-level evaluations: Strategies and Decent Work Country Programmes* (ILO 2011b) .

Protocol 1: High-level Evaluation Protocol for Strategy and Policy Evaluation .

2.1.2 Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) evaluations

DWCPs  are the main vehicle for delivery of ILO support to countries, and represent the distinct ILO contribution to UN country programmes. The ILO supports independent evaluations of DWCPs to provide its national and international partners with an impartial and transparent assessment of the ILO's work in these countries. They are a means of validating the achievement of results and the ILO's contribution towards national development objectives, decent work and related Country Programme Outcomes set in the P&B. Furthermore, they focus on the coherence and coordination of the ILO's work with other UN agencies within UNDAF. DWCP evaluations also generate information that can feed into country tripartite dialogue on the effectiveness, relevance, and impact of ILO interventions at the country level.


In consultation with the regions, EVAL manages at least one DWCP evaluation each year for reporting at the governance level. DWCP evaluations are posted on EVAL's web site and a summary of each is presented to the GB. In addition, internal reviews of DWCPs, also known as Country Programme Reviews, are conducted by the regional offices, and mainly serve organizational learning needs.

Guidance Note 1: Monitoring and evaluation of Decent Work Country Programmes 

Further reading: *ILO Decent Work Country Programmes. A Guidebook. Version 2* (ILO 2008c) 

Protocol 2: High-level Evaluation Protocol for DWCP Evaluation 

2.1.3 Thematic evaluations

Thematic evaluations  assess specific aspects, themes and processes of ILO's technical work, and may also focus on particular departments, issues, or approaches. Thematic evaluations provide the means for ILO technical programmes to explore the effectiveness and impact of particular approaches in depth. These evaluations can draw from lessons learned at project level, both inside and outside the ILO, and focus on themes that have significance beyond a particular project. The focus of thematic evaluation on effectiveness and impact implies that this evaluation type is typically used towards the end of interventions.


ILO technical programmes conduct thematic evaluations, with support from EVAL, and are fully responsible for resourcing. All share responsibility for dissemination and follow-up.

2.1.4 Impact evaluations

Impact evaluations aim to assess the "positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended" (OECD/DAC 2002). Impact evaluations respond to the growing demand among constituents and international partners for a more credible measurement of impact. An impact evaluation is usually distinctive in its focus, conceptually and methodologically, in determining the form and level of attribution that can be given to specific factors, including policies, programmes or interventions. One of the toughest challenges related to establishing this causal impact is to distinguish between what was a direct result of a particular factor and what would have happened had this factor not existed. To address this fundamental aspect, impact evaluations typically attempt to establish a means by which to compare these two situations either through a counterfactual or comparison group. This form of evaluation can be complex

and expensive, as these frequently involve systematic collection of data for the analytical work. EVAL, in collaboration with technical departments and PARDEV, has developed guidance and quality standards, and offers advisory services for impact evaluations.

ILO technical programmes are primarily responsible for conducting and financing impact evaluations. The Department Director approves the topics and takes responsibility for completing the evaluation according to ILO evaluation standards. For quality control purposes, independent impact evaluation TORs, budgets, the selection of consultants, determination of methodologies and finalization of the report should be done in coordination with EVAL.

Guidance Note 13: Impact Evaluation 


2.1.5 Joint evaluations

Joint evaluations are evaluations foreseen in joint project/programme documents or Donor Agreements, and to which different partners contribute. Any evaluation can be conducted as a joint evaluation and there may be varying degrees of collaboration among partners, depending on the extent to which they cooperate in the evaluation process, merge their evaluation resources, and combine their evaluation reporting. According to the OECD/DAC, joint evaluations can help overcome attribution problems in assessing the effectiveness of programs and strategies and the complementarities of efforts supported by different partners, and the quality of aid coordination.

Joint Evaluation Definition: *Joint evaluations are development evaluations conducted collaboratively by more than one agency. The focus is not on participatory evaluation with its techniques for bringing stakeholder communities into the process, but on evaluations undertaken jointly by more than one development co-operation agency.*


Joint evaluations address the expanding portfolio of evaluation work being planned, managed and financed jointly by the ILO and national and international partners, the most prevalent of which have been linked to UNDAF and Joint Programmes of the UN at country level. Regional or department-level evaluation officers are responsible for the ILO input to joint evaluations, while EVAL should provide oversight on quality and compliance. Joint evaluations should be financed from the joint programme resources. Specific guidance has been developed by EVAL for joint evaluations.

Guidance Note 14: Joint Evaluation 

Further reading: *Managing Joint Evaluations*  (OECD/DAC, 2010c)

Further reading: *Quality Standards for Development Evaluation*  (OECD/DAC, 2010b)

2.1.6. Project evaluations


ILO project evaluations  aim to assess the relevance of project design as it relates to the ILO's strategic and national policy frameworks. They also consider the efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of outcomes, and test underlying assumptions about contributions to broader development impacts. Project evaluations are used to improve project performance and contribute towards organizational learning: they help those responsible for managing the resources and activities of a project to enhance development results along a continuum,

from short-term to sustainable long-term along a plausibly linked chain of results. In addition, project evaluations assess the effectiveness of planning and managing for future impacts during the project cycle. A final function of project evaluations is to serve accountability purposes by feeding lessons learned into the decision-making process of project stakeholders, including donors and national partners. Project evaluation is one means to further empower local actors and move the decision-making processes closer to the national partners. In the context of project implementation, this evaluation process provides space for reflection about how the ILO and its national partners can better support each other to achieve the desired development results.

Further reading: ILO Technical Cooperation Manual (intranet links only) 

Box 4 ILO policy for project evaluation requirements

Budget-based requirements for project evaluations:

- All projects over US\$1 million must undergo at least one independent evaluation.
- Multi-phase projects with combined budgets over US\$1 million must undergo at least one independent evaluation.
- Projects with budgets below US\$1 million do not require independent evaluations.
- Projects with budgets between US\$500,000 and US\$1 million must undergo an internal evaluation, and a self-evaluation should be completed for projects with budgets below US\$500,000.
- Projects with budgets over US\$5 million must undergo: 1) an initial monitoring and evaluation appraisal by EVAL (see Evaluation Tool: Monitoring and evaluation plan appraisal tool ); 2) an evaluability review within one year of start-up is strongly recommended; and 3) both the mid-term and final evaluations must be independent.


Schedule for project-level evaluation based on project duration:

- For projects with duration of less than 18 months a final evaluation (internal or independent depending on budget size) is required.
- Projects with duration of more than 18 months but below 30 months require an annual review and a final evaluation.
- For projects over 30 months, annual reviews, a mid-term evaluation and a final evaluation, are required.

All reports mentioned above must be sent to EVAL for storage, including internal evaluations of projects with budgets above US\$500,000.

A single evaluation may be conducted to cover several projects, which are clustered by theme or geographic focus, provided that the evaluation: 1) applies a scope, purpose, and methodologies comparable to what would be used for an individual evaluation; 2) has donor consent; and 3) is approved by EVAL or regional evaluation officers for projects with a budget over US\$1 million.

Project evaluations can take the form of internal evaluations, independent evaluations or external evaluations, depending on their degree of independence. The differences between these are summarized in Box 5 below.



Box
5

Categorizing decentralized evaluations by degree of independence

- **Internal evaluations** are managed by ILO staff members, including project management, technical specialists and backstoppers, and conducted either by independent consultants or by independent ILO officials who have not been involved in the design, management or backstopping of the project. These also include self-evaluations, which are managed and conducted solely by ILO staff members who are entrusted with the design and delivery of an intervention, including project management, technical specialists and backstoppers.
- **Independent evaluations** are managed by independent ILO officials and overseen by evaluation officers. They are carried out by external evaluators who have no previous links to the project. Other independent ILO officials may participate as team members in the evaluation.
- **External evaluations** are managed from outside the ILO and conducted by external evaluators who have no previous links to the project being evaluated. External evaluations are usually initiated, led and financed by a donor agency.

These types of decentralized evaluations are associated with different actors and varying degrees of impartiality and costs, as shown in Table 2.


Table 2. ILO decentralized evaluation approaches

	Management	Evaluators	Degree of Impartiality	Costs to the ILO
Self-evaluation	ILO (including project management)	ILO (including project management)	Low	Low
Internal evaluation	ILO (including project management)	ILO (excluding project management)/ External	Medium	Medium
Independent evaluation	ILO (excluding project management)	External (leadership) possibly plus ILO (excluding project management)	Medium to high	High
External evaluation	External	External	Medium to high	Low

Evaluations can also be categorized by their timing in the implementation process, as presented in more detail in Box 6.

Box 6 Categorizing evaluations by timing

Annual Reviews, such as Technical Cooperation Project Reports from PARDEV, focus on outputs and outcomes of projects, programmes, strategies or policies. They are a form of internal evaluation during which the stakeholders reflect upon how well the intervention is progressing towards achieving its objectives, taking into account available monitoring and evaluation data. Reviews with this type of focus may also be organized to look at specific issues. ILO managers and CTAs are responsible for annually reviewing and reporting their progress. PROGRAM and PARDEV oversee the processes at an organizational level and report performance to the Governing Body.

Mid-term evaluations should take place approximately half-way through the implementation of projects, programmes, strategies or policies. They are most useful when a number of planned activities have been delivered, and a considerable percentage of funds have been spent. Mid-term evaluations aim to assess the continued relevance of an intervention and progress made towards achieving its planned objectives. They also provide an opportunity to make modifications to ensure the achievement of these objectives. The Evaluation Unit has oversight responsibility for all independent mid-term evaluations. Regional and department-level evaluation officers have responsibility for hands-on supervision. (see Guidance Note 2: Mid-term evaluation lessons learned )

Final evaluations focus on the outcomes of projects, programmes, strategies or policies and the likelihood that they will achieve impact. Evaluations provide an opportunity for in-depth reflection on the strategy and assumptions guiding the intervention. They assess progress made towards the achievement of the intervention's objectives and may recommend adjustments to its strategy. They are also a means by which to assess how well intervention-level actions link to and support higher level ILO strategies and objectives, as articulated in Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs) and the ILO's Programme and Budget (P&B). The Evaluation Unit has oversight responsibility for all independent final evaluations. Regional and department-level evaluation officers have responsibility for hands-on supervision.

Ex-post evaluations take place after completion of the project with the aim to assess longer term effects of specific interventions. They can be part of thematic or country programme evaluations that also consider linkages between different interventions and longer term development outcomes.

2.2 ILO regional and sector department networks

Decentralized evaluations focus on programmatic areas more directly under the control of ILO management, such as technical cooperation projects and implementation of

country programmes, including interventions funded from all sources of funds. The planning and management of these evaluations are primarily the responsibility of the regions and departments assigned to their implementation. Specific roles and responsibilities are listed in Table 3.

Regional evaluation networks support the planning and implementation of evaluation activities, especially for decentralized technical cooperation projects. A regional network is comprised of a designated evaluation officer at the Regional Office and evaluation coordinators in Decent Work Teams (DWT) and Country Offices. In departments, a designated evaluation focal person coordinates evaluation activities. EVAL provides technical guidance and assistance to the network and has oversight for quality control of decentralized evaluations.

Regional evaluation officers are the regional focal points on internal country programme reviews and technical cooperation project evaluations. They oversee and advise on the process of planning, managing and following up of DWCP reviews and project evaluations, including the approval of the final TORs and the choice of consultants, and oversee reporting on follow-up. Department-level evaluation officers and focal points oversee and advise the planning, managing and following up processes for thematic reviews and evaluations of centralized projects.

Regional evaluation officers or departmental evaluation focal points work in conjunction with project management to identify an evaluation manager. For RBSA evaluations, where 4.6 per cent of total RBSA resources are set aside for M&E, evaluation managers are selected by the regional evaluation officer in collaboration with relevant technical expertise, with EVAL providing oversight on the use of RBSA M&E resources.

Table 3. Key roles and general responsibilities in decentralized evaluations.⁷

Actors	Responsibilities
Evaluation Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manages independent evaluations (appointed by regional evaluation officers or department evaluation focal points) • Should have no links to decision-making for projects undergoing independent evaluation • Works with project management to draft evaluation TORs • Submits draft TORs to stakeholders, then submits to Regional evaluation officers or department evaluation focal points for approval • Finds a consultant and submits to Regional evaluation officers or department evaluation focal points for approval • Once consultant is approved, negotiates terms, and finalizes consultant arrangements • Works with project staff to ensure consultant is provided with adequate documentation and access to data • Circulates the draft report with consolidated comments to stakeholders • Submits draft report to Regional evaluation officers or department evaluation focal points for approval • Once approved by EVAL, endorses payment for consultant and forwards report to PARDEV and stakeholders

⁷ Specific roles and responsibilities may vary slightly according to regions

ILO Policy Guidelines for Results-Based Evaluation

Actors	Responsibilities
Regional Evaluation Officer / Department Evaluation Focal Point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides support in the case of evaluability studies or scoping mission • Provides support in the planning of evaluation for the region or department • Works with evaluation manager to facilitate access to consultant profiles for selection • Approves: i) selection of evaluation consultant on behalf of EVAL; and ii) the final version of the TORs • Reviews the final evaluation report prior to submission to EVAL • Uploads evaluation process documents into i-Track
Project/ Programme Manager and staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides input to TORs • Ensures consultant has adequate documentation, assists in data gathering and logistical support • Arranges meetings and coordinates exchanges between the evaluation team and partners • Participates in evaluation workshop and provides input to evaluation manager on draft report • In the case of mid-term evaluations, co-ordinates follow-up plans
ILO responsible official and intervention backstoppers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures that sufficient funds are secured for evaluations at the intervention design stage • Provides administrative and technical support for the evaluation, including help in preparing the TORs, including participation in the evaluation workshop • Provides comments on the draft report • Line management responds to evaluation recommendations according to ILO evaluation policy • Follows up the evaluation and disseminates lessons learned
Regional Directors and Department Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures principles supporting the evaluation function apply to all evaluations falling within their domain • Ensures compliance with Office policies calling for regular self-evaluation of programmes and projects, with copy of self or internal reports to the EVAL database i-Track
Lead Evaluator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertakes the evaluation according to the agreed TOR • Prepares and submits draft and final evaluation reports to evaluation manager • Is always an external person for all independent evaluations but may be aided by an independent ILO evaluator • Must be independent and has sole responsibility for the content of the final evaluation report
EVAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assures quality of report meets international standards; monitors compliance with ILO evaluation policy • Provides standards and guidance on procedures • Approves the final evaluation report prior to submission to donor • Stores and publishes independent evaluation reports and summaries, includes all internal evaluations in i-Track • Initiates the recommendation follow-up procedure for independent evaluations
PARDEV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receives final evaluation report after approval from EVAL • Forwards final evaluation report to donors

2.3 Evaluation schedules and work plans for regions and departments

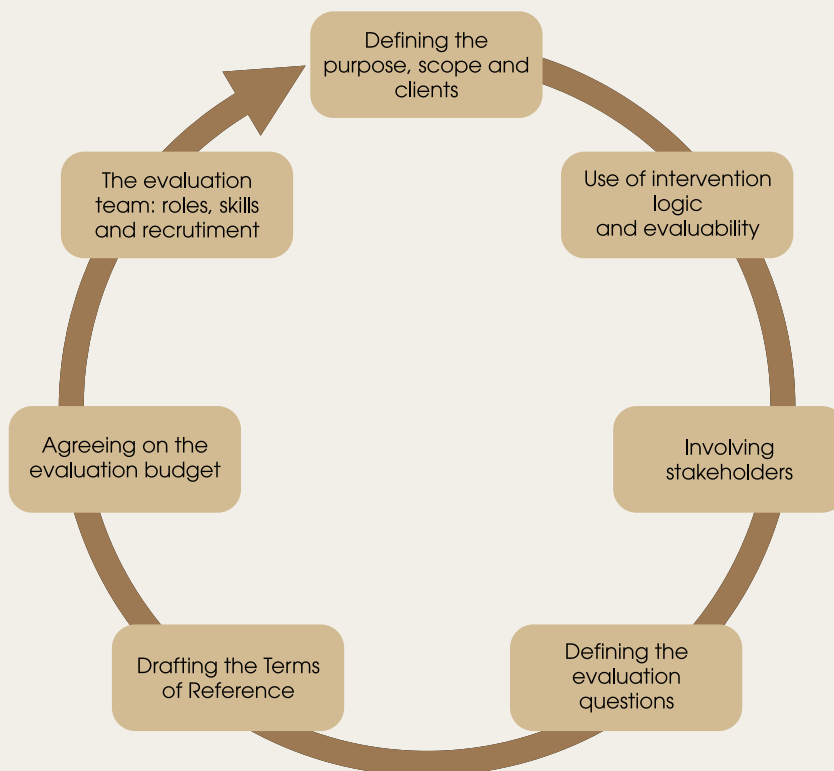
Each biennium, EVAL takes a comprehensive approach to planning decentralized evaluations that involve managers within departments and regions. Evaluation focal points develop two-year rolling work plans to implement the evaluation strategy. These should be broadly consistent with the GB approved organizational level programme of work, and should be discussed across the Office to identify opportunities for collaboration and consolidation. These work plans should provide a detailed schedule of all decentralized independent evaluations scheduled for the upcoming year, as well as plans to conduct training and other capacity building activities. The timing, scope and orientation of evaluations should be verified to ensure that these respond to higher management and constituent interests, are relevant and adequately address accountabilities for performance.



3. Planning and managing the evaluation

Before conducting an evaluation, a number of key steps need to be taken, as summarized in Figure 2. This ensures that the evaluation design process is participatory, transparent and independent of any one stakeholder's specific interests. Since these steps also establish the credibility and usefulness of the evaluation exercise, they should not be modified or skipped. When a new project is approved and an evaluation is required, EVAL enters a planning record into the i-Track system (see Box 7). These planning records serve as a work plan for administrative and technical backstopping offices to prepare for upcoming evaluations.

Figure 2. Key steps in planning and managing an evaluation



Box 7

Evaluation planning in I-Track

The Eval-track module contains the following information:

- Evaluation type (e.g. project, strategy, thematic, etc), timing (e.g. mid-term/interim, final) and nature (e.g. internal – DWCP, independent, external project, etc.)
- Responsible ILO office
- Evaluation Manager
- Planned date of evaluation
- Evaluation Budget
- Links to other evaluations for mid-term or project phases
- Copy of Approval Minute and all process documentation

3.1 Defining the purpose, scope and clients of an evaluation

Initially, the intervention stakeholders should determine the objectives, coverage and key clients of the evaluation. Evaluations should not be commissioned unless the purpose and clients are clearly identified. The evaluation manager becomes involved once the initial plan is agreed upon. When appropriate, consultation with ILO's primary stakeholders to determine the scope of the evaluation is a good way to identify some key parameters for the evaluation, and raise interest in its findings. The scope can be defined in terms of time and space (e.g. project start/end and geographic areas of implementation) or by project phase or elements of a project. The consultation process helps project management and the evaluation manager to accommodate the priorities of key stakeholders when drafting the TOR and to avoid making major revisions after circulation. When determining the purpose and scope of the evaluation, TOR drafters should also keep in mind that the evaluation itself should be effective in delivering its purpose and efficient in its use of time and financial resources.

Guidance Note 6: The Evaluation Manager: Role and Function 

3.2 The intervention logic and evaluability

For projects, the reference point for each evaluation is the project document (PRODOC) which provides the background and rationale of the project, its planned objectives, outcomes, outputs and activities, corresponding outcome indicators and assumptions. Good project design and a well-written project document represent a strong foundation for an evaluation. Project documents will specify additional links to higher-level results frameworks such as DWCPs and P&B outcomes. These should also be considered integral to the rationale and design of an evaluation.

Programmes and strategies are also based on an intervention logic, a theory of change often expressed in logic models and at times in logframes for projects and programmes. These are also articulated in the P&B and SPF for technical areas, regions and the overall organization.

Implementation planning, progress reports and related revision documents are key sources of information on modifications to the original design during the implementation process. The project/programme manager should update the documentation on the intervention logic and add supplementary documentation and explanation. The evaluation manager and project management draw on this information to prepare the TOR. This documentation is later submitted to the evaluator who should consider the appropriateness of any changes in the strategy.

The evaluator should have a clear understanding of the intervention design, logic and strategy. Relevant documentation is not always of the same quality, nor does it always reflect the situation at implementation start-up accurately. In some cases, the strategy and design of the project or programme is modified during the course of implementation to adapt to changing conditions. In this context and before writing the TOR, the evaluation manager, project management and other key stakeholders should determine if the project/programme document continues to accurately describe the situation. Any changes should be explained in the TOR.

Evaluations assess the relevance of the intervention objectives and approach; establish how far the intervention has achieved its planned outcomes and objectives; the extent to which its strategy has proven efficient and effective; and whether it is likely to have a sustainable impact. Evaluations test the propositions upon which the intervention logic is based to see if it is valid. The process of reviewing the intervention logic helps to decide whether it is possible to evaluate the intervention. This process should be conducted during the planning stage and may require an additional scoping mission or scoping activities, in particular for projects with budgets over US\$5 million.⁸



Box 8

Evaluability is assessed at three key stages

- 1 During the proposal design of a project: this is done through the monitoring and evaluation appraisal.
- 2 At project start-up: within the first year of the intervention, there should be an evaluability review that can be used to validate the monitoring and evaluation system in place.
- 3 Before the evaluation of an intervention: this is done through a scoping exercise, in order to check the feasibility of the evaluation, and determine the design of the evaluation.

To determine evaluability before the evaluation of an intervention, questions regarding the context of the planned evaluation should be addressed. These include: the presence of a documented results framework against which to assess progress towards outcomes; the availability and quality of baseline data to track changes; the timing of the planned evaluation within the intervention cycle; the political, social and economic context in the country; and the adequacy of resources. Any evaluability exercise would normally be undertaken in coordination with the regional evaluation officer or an evaluation expert who is capable of conducting a technical assessment of the basic parameters for a comprehensive evaluation.

Lack of information and negative answers to the evaluability questions are not necessarily grounds for cancelling the evaluation, but can help narrow down the set of key evaluation questions, and choose methodologies and timing, or indicate remedial steps to be carried out prior to an evaluation.

⁸ Scoping can be defined as the analysis of alternative ways for conducting an evaluation. It clarifies the validity of issues, the complexity of the assignment, the users of final reports, and the selection of team members to meet the needs of an evaluation. It ends when a major decision is made on whether to proceed or not with the evaluation.



Box 9

Evaluability reports should address the following factors

- Clarity of intent of the project or programme to be evaluated (relevance and design of the expected outcome statements and result matrices).
- Quality of the design for the achievement of results (e.g. the existence of clear and measurable indicators and eventually baselines and milestones for reliable analysis).
- Overall quality of monitoring systems.
- Initial appraisal of processes for optimal involvement of the relevant national and international stakeholders.
- Potential degree of national ownership and leadership in the evaluation process.
- External factors that have influenced or would be expected to influence the realization of the expected outcomes.

Guidance Note 11: Using the evaluability assessment tool

Guidance Note 12: Dimensions of the evaluability assessment tool

Evaluation tool: Evaluability assessment tool for DWCP and projects

Evaluation tool: RBM tools for monitoring and evaluation

3.3 Stakeholder involvement

The ILO's key stakeholders are the tripartite constituents, who compose its organizational membership. Apart from the ILO's constituents, stakeholders are likely to include relevant HQ and field staff as well as national partners, such as UN officials from partner agencies, government officials in collaborating ministries, implementing agencies and representatives of other donors as listed in Box 10.



Box 10

Stakeholders of ILO evaluations

Primary stakeholders



- Representatives of governments (e.g. ministries of labour)
- Representatives of employers' organizations
- Representatives of workers' organizations

Other key stakeholders (for projects and DWCP)

- ILO HQ staff of cooperating departments
- ILO field staff
- UN agencies in country
- NGOs
- Other partners in country (e.g. donor agencies)

The specific primary stakeholders to involve in an evaluation can be determined by their involvement in design and delivery of the programme, strategy or project being evaluated. The primary stakeholders should be specified in the TOR, and it is the responsibility of the evaluation manager to ensure that consultations with stakeholders take place. If the key stakeholders are involved in obtaining answers to the questions they are interested in, then they are more likely to implement the recommendations.

Participation is one of the guiding principles of ILO's tripartite approach and one of its comparative strengths. The core stakeholders should participate as early as possible in the planning stage to create a common understanding about the purpose and use of the evaluation and the approach to be taken. The relevant stakeholders should be involved in defining the main focus and the key questions that the evaluation should address. These evaluation questions are of significant importance to check the assumptions of the intervention logic of projects or programmes and to assess risks taken.

Stakeholders also participate as key informants, being interviewed individually, in groups at workshops or consulted through questionnaires. Maximizing participation in the planning phase helps to ensure that the focus and methodology are appropriate and that interest in the results has been stimulated. Maximizing participation in the data collection phase should ensure that the evaluation team registers all points of view. Through participation, ILO constituents gain hands-on experience with evaluation and improve their know-how regarding its use. Developing the evaluation capacity of constituents is one of the priorities of the ILO's Evaluation Strategy  and training material has been developed for this purpose, see *Evaluation training for tripartite constituents: Presentations, learning activities and reference materials* (ILO 2012) .

Guidance Note 7: Stakeholder participation in ILO evaluations 

3.4 Defining evaluation questions and criteria

In line with international good practices for evaluations, the ILO expects that each evaluation will assess the key evaluation criteria defined in Table 4 below. These criteria are derived from the internationally agreed standard performance criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.

Table 4. Definition of key evaluation criteria

Evaluation criteria	Definition
Relevance and strategic fit of the intervention	<p>The extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners' and donors' policies.</p> <p>The extent to which the approach is strategic and the ILO uses its comparative advantage.</p>
Validity of intervention design	The extent to which the design is logical and coherent.

ILO Policy Guidelines for Results-Based Evaluation

Evaluation criteria	Definition
Intervention progress and effectiveness	The extent to which the intervention's immediate objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.
Efficiency of resource use	A measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results.
Effectiveness of management arrangements	The extent to which management capacities and arrangements put in place support the achievement of results.
Impact orientation and sustainability of the intervention	<p>The strategic orientation of the project towards making a significant contribution to broader, long-term, sustainable development changes.</p> <p>The likelihood that the results of the intervention are durable and can be maintained or even scaled up and replicated by intervention partners after major assistance has been completed.</p>

The analytical framework and the key evaluation criteria help formulate appropriate evaluation questions. The evaluation manager should include two or three specific evaluation questions related to each criterion to guide the evaluation process on important aspects and issues to consider. While evaluation criteria are fairly standard, evaluation questions should be tailored to the specifics of the project, with the answers to these leading to recommendations for guiding key decisions on further steps. When developing the analytical framework, the evaluation manager should consider the priorities of the main stakeholders. This is done as part of the TOR and circulated for comment to all the main stakeholders of the evaluation, as described in the following section.

EVAL is looking into the systematic use of ratings to assess performance of projects and programmes. This will facilitate the statistical analysis of performance trends related to ILO interventions and will provide more detailed information to stakeholders.

Guidance Note 8: Validity and reliability 

3.5 Drafting and circulating the Terms of Reference (TOR)

The TOR document forms a substantive part of the contractual basis for undertaking an evaluation. Writing the TOR with sufficient clarity and detail will improve the basis for joint understanding with the evaluator about what is expected to be delivered. Well-considered and well-written TORs are the foundation of a good evaluation. The TOR specifies the reasons for the evaluation and summarizes different stakeholders' expectations of the evaluation. The TOR describes the project or programme to be evaluated and its context. The content of the TOR should follow the outline indicated in Box 11.



Box 11

Outline of terms of reference


1. Introduction and rationale for evaluation
2. Brief background on project and context
3. Purpose, scope and clients of evaluation
4. Key evaluation questions
5. Methodology to be followed
6. Main outputs: inception report, draft and final reports
7. Management arrangements, work plan, formatting requirements and time frame


The evaluation manager works with the project or programme manager and ILO officials to prepare the first draft of the evaluation TOR. In the drafting process, the evaluation manager consults with, and receives input from the project manager, the ILO Office Director and the line manager of the technical unit backstopping the project.


As noted earlier, the evaluation manager then circulates the draft TOR to the following key stakeholders who provide comments within a specified time span:

- Project or programme manager and key staff;
- Global, regional and/or national constituents, as appropriate;
- Main global and national partners;
- ILO Field Office Director;
- Technical backstopper at headquarters;
- Field technical specialist;
- Responsible evaluation focal point; and
- Donor, if required (not for RBSA, RBTC, DWCP or thematic evaluations).

The evaluation manager integrates comments into the draft TOR, as appropriate, and passes the TOR to the responsible evaluation focal point for approval. Copies of the final TOR are then sent to the same group of stakeholders who provided comments on the draft.

Checklist 1: Writing terms of reference 

Checklist 2: Rating the quality of terms of reference 

Checklist 5: Preparing the evaluation report 

3.6 The evaluation budget

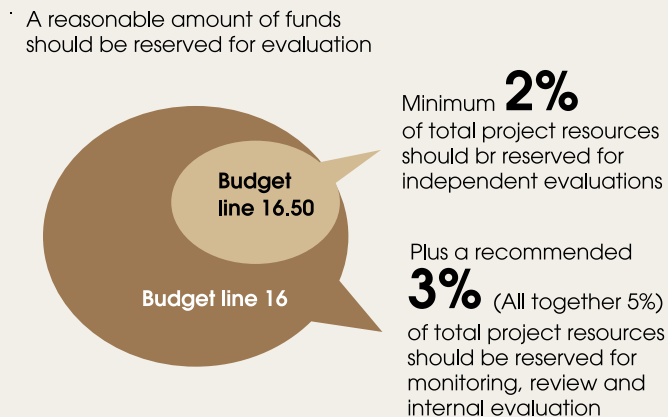
Most evaluations in the ILO are financed from programme or project budgets.⁹ As per the ILO evaluation policy, a minimum of 2 per cent of the total project funds should be reserved for independent evaluations, which should be assigned to budget line 16.50. For larger projects, an evaluability exercise is recommended within the first year to check that a sound monitoring system is in operation, and that the evaluation design and supporting data collection is on

⁹ The regions, through extra budgetary and/or regular budget funds, should absorb the costs for the evaluation of CPRs, and where possible, contribute to independent DWCP evaluations.

track. Prior to an evaluation, the number of consultants needed and coverage of operational sites should be determined in order to avoid bias.

The use of the resources allocated under budget line 16.50 is restricted to evaluation related activities. Project managers require the approval of the evaluation manager and, in case of doubt, the Departmental or Regional Evaluation focal point to use these resources. Figure 3 provides a financing overview for monitoring and evaluation activities in ILO project budgets.

Figure 3. Financing for project evaluation



The project budget line 16 should reserve adequate resources to cover monitoring and evaluation activities for all phases of the project or programme, e.g. gathering of baseline data and development of monitoring and evaluation plan, end of phase evaluations and end of programme evaluation to assess end results and impact. Although internal evaluations may not require extra staff costs, they also need to be scheduled and budgeted for, as they may involve additional travel costs or workshop costs for consulting partners.

3.6.1 Regular Budget Supplementary Account (RBSA) for monitoring and evaluation

To ensure adequate capacity to oversee the use of the RBSA, a minimum of 5 per cent of total RBSA resources are reserved in a special account to fund oversight, monitoring and evaluation activities: 0.4 per cent of total RBSA resources are allotted to oversight (audit), while 4.6 per cent are allocated directly to the regions, with EVAL providing quality control.

The existing ILO evaluation policy applies to RBSA funded initiatives, meaning that those initiatives with budgets over US\$1 million will be subject to independent evaluation while smaller budgeted initiatives will be required to carry out internal or self-evaluations. In addition, performance of RBSA funded initiatives, as part of DWCP outcomes, will be regularly monitored by ILO Regional Offices. Initiatives funded through RBSA can also be monitored and evaluated as parts of other related technical cooperation (clustered).

The RBSA reserve account can be used to support and supplement ongoing monitoring and evaluation activities relating to DWCPs and P&B outcomes where there is a clear need for additional or expanded monitoring or evaluation activities or capacities as a result of RBSA funded interventions.

The RBSA M&E reserve can finance the following:

- independent evaluations and internal reviews of activities directly linked to RBSA allocations;
- development and maintenance of results-focused monitoring and reporting practices in the regions and at headquarters linked to DWCP outcomes; and
- improvement of monitoring systems and the establishment of baselines against which to assess and report on results.

Regions or departments receiving RBSA M&E resources are required to develop an evaluation work plan on their use. These work plans indicate how the resources will complement existing evaluation work. To ensure adequate oversight of RBSA-funded activities, EVAL must approve these work plans. Annual reports on the actual use of the M&E resources, along with documentation, are submitted to EVAL.



Box 12

Steps to calculate the budget for financing evaluation missions

In order to calculate the evaluation budget for financing review missions, these six steps should be followed:

1. Calculation of number of consultant working days.
2. Determination of consultant level according to expertise and experience.
3. Calculation of travel costs, including travel days, vehicle use for field trips.
4. Calculation for data collection, either primary or secondary.
5. Calculation of accommodation and DSA costs.
6. Calculation of any additional costs (interpretation services, workshop facilities for focus group and stakeholder meetings, etc.).

Delays in the evaluation process can add to the overall evaluation costs. Therefore, realistically planning the timeframe of the evaluation, taking note of national holidays when key offices may be closed, is recommended. The evaluation manager should take into account the time needed to complete the tasks specified in the TOR, including travel days, time for stakeholders to comment on the draft report and for the consultants to accommodate these comments and, where necessary, a final workshop for clearance of the final report by EVAL.

The designated responsible ILO official should ensure that an adequate budget exists to implement the evaluation activity, including the financing of the broader monitoring and evaluation plan. This may include scoping and evaluability reviews, as required.

3.7 Evaluation teams for independent evaluations: roles and skills

Experienced external technical experts and professional evaluators are engaged to undertake independent evaluations and must be deemed independent of the project or programme being evaluated, and free of any conflict of interest. For an evaluator to be considered independent, they must fulfil the following requirements:

- Have no previous or current involvement – or offers of prospective employment – in the ILO project or programme being evaluated; and
- Have no personal links to the people involved in managing the project/ programme (not a family member, friend or close former colleague).

Both external and internal evaluators should adhere to the highest technical and ethical standards. They should fulfil the criteria of professionalism, impartiality and credibility, and abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation on the UN System (UNEG 2008b). Consultants should undergo an orientation on the ILO's guidelines and quality standards for evaluation. If an evaluation team is composed, then it is recommended that a local expert be part of that team, and that there be balance among women and men team members, with at least one person possessing gender-based knowledge.

One of the first steps in selecting an evaluator is to think through their role. Are they expected to simply judge the merit or worth of a project or programme, or to act as a facilitator and to provide ideas and options as to the way forward?

It is also crucial for the evaluation manager, together with project staff and stakeholders, to determine the purpose and scope of the evaluation, the questions to be addressed, as well as the degree of participation of stakeholders and identified challenges requiring special evaluation skills. The methodology (design and data collection methods) should be agreed upon and the evaluator's familiarity with the intended methodology should constitute a primary criterion in the selection of the consultant.

The evaluator may subsequently adapt the methodology proposed in the TOR, but any changes should be agreed upon between the evaluation manager and the evaluator. This agreement very often takes the form of an inception report, which is contractually specified and approved by the ILO, and described in more detail in section 4.1.

The lead evaluator of an independent evaluation is always an external consultant, but the rest of the team may be composed of evaluation specialists including members of EVAL and/or technical specialists experienced with evaluation, yet independent of the evaluation focus. The roles and responsibilities of the recruited consultant will ultimately be defined by the type of ILO evaluation, but may also be significantly influenced by the overall composition of the team.


The search for a consultant should be an open process, with several candidates being placed on a shortlist, and their relative strengths considered against objective criteria which should be included in the TOR. One of the most effective, efficient and transparent ways of searching for an evaluator is by posting a call for expressions of interest on the relevant electronic


newsletters and networks. At the ILO, EVAL and IPEC also maintain a consultant database.¹⁰


Calls for expressions of interest should include information on who is hiring; details on the assignment; the expected starting date and duration of the evaluation; the core requirements; the language of the report; and a contact email. The evaluation terms of reference may be attached or should be made available upon request.


The evaluation manager is responsible for proposing the external evaluation consultant but suggestions can also be received from stakeholders, including project management. If required by the donor, the evaluation manager can send the Curriculum Vitae of a proposed independent evaluator and a brief explanation of why the consultant was selected to the donor and other key stakeholders for information purposes. A final approval of the consultant selection must be given either by a regional evaluation focal point or EVAL. The finalized TOR and the consultants' CVs must be uploaded into i-Track by the regional or departmental evaluation focal point.


The consultant should also be supplied with the necessary EVAL guidance on preparing the evaluation report formatting (Checklist 5), writing the inception report (Checklist 3), as well as the ILO Guidance on Gender (Guidance Note 4).


Guidance Note 4 Considering gender in the monitoring and evaluation of projects 


Guidance Note 5 Using the ILO/IPEC consultant database 

Guidance Note 6 Identifying, selecting and managing evaluation consultants 

Checklist 3: Writing the inception report 

Checklist 5: Preparing the evaluation report 

Further reading: *External collaboration contracts*, (ILO 2011c) 

Further reading: *Procurement*, (ILO 2011d) 

¹⁰ Inclusion in this roster does not imply endorsement of these evaluators by EVAL.



4. Conducting the evaluation

ILO evaluation managers play a critical role in ensuring that evaluations are carried out credibly, particularly with regard to sound methods. Evaluations are typically conducted in three phases. In the first phase the evaluator prepares an operational evaluation plan, known as the inception report, which should be in agreement with the TOR. The second phase focuses on data collection and analysis, formulating conclusions and recommendations, generating lessons learned and best practices, and preparing the draft report. The third phase is the finalization and dissemination of the report. In the case of independent evaluations, this leads to the initiation of the management response follow-up to recommendations.



Box 13

Repository for evaluation documents

All evaluation process documents and approved reports should be stored in i-Track.

EVAL Track (Process Documents)

- Approval and other PARDEV minutes
- TORs
- Consultant(s) hired and CVs
- Inception reports
- Draft reports
- Consolidated comments
- Confirmation of approval by REO
- Confirmation of approval by EVAL
- Management Response Templates
- Management Response Updates

DOCU Track (Approved Reports)

- Approved evaluation reports
- Evaluation Summary

4.1 The inception report

It is during this first phase that the evaluation methodology proposed in the TOR is acknowledged, elaborated upon, or amended if required. For larger independent evaluations, evaluators are expected to specify the evaluation methodology and/or evaluation instruments to be used in a short inception report prior to conducting the evaluation. The timing and approval of the inception report should be listed as an output in the TOR. Sources and methods for data collection, data analysis and reporting are required. In addition, the choice of any site-visits within a country by the evaluator, who is entitled to select locations randomly or based on sound selection criteria, should be specified in the report.

Approval of the inception report by the evaluation manager constitutes an acceptance by the ILO of the results generated through the methodology proposed. It is therefore important for the evaluation manager to check the interview lists and guides, questionnaires and sampling, among others, for any aspect that could bias and distort results. Those reviewing should also check that methods draw on both subjective as well as objective sources of data to provide a balanced but insightful report. Inception reports should be shared with key stakeholders for their information and comment.

Checklist 3: Writing the Inception report 

4.2 Data collection and analysis: tools and methods

The data to be collected during an evaluation and the selection of data collection methods depend on several factors, including: the evidence needed to best answer the evaluation questions; data availability, including disaggregated by sex; the methods and analyses that are most appropriate to generate useful findings and address the evaluation criteria; the degree of women and men's equitable participation as key stakeholders in the evaluation; and the feasibility of data collection based on time and resource availability, and the local context.

4.2.1 Types of data

To strengthen the credibility and usefulness of evaluation results, most evaluations at the ILO use a mix of data sources collected through multiple methods.

Primary data consists of information evaluators observe or collect directly from stakeholders about their first-hand experience with the intervention. This data is collected through the use of surveys, meetings, focus group discussions, interviews or other methods that involve direct contact with the respondents. It can facilitate deeper understanding of observed changes and the factors that contributed to change.

Secondary data is data that has been collected by the ILO, other individuals or agencies for purposes other than those of the evaluation. It can take many forms but usually consists of documentary evidence that has direct relevance for the purposes of the evaluation: nationally and internationally published reports; economic indicators; project or programme plans; monitoring reports; previous reviews, evaluations and other records; country strategic plans; and research reports. Exploring the availability of relevant data should be done by implementers when designing the monitoring and evaluation plan for a project in order to ensure that it is available and usable for evaluation purposes. Making use of already existent data can be cost effective and save time, but it should not replace the collection of primary data.

4.2.2 Quantitative and qualitative techniques

A range of methods and tools can be used to collect and generate data for evaluations. Each tool and method has advantages and disadvantages in terms of time, usefulness and resource requirements. Table 5 presents a detailed but non-exhaustive list of data collection tools and methods, including a short description and analysis of their advantages and challenges. Most of these are used to generate qualitative data, but some, including surveys, are used to obtain quantitative data.

To carry out their functions effectively, evaluators may need to interview staff, and have access to all relevant Office documents. Staff at all levels is expected to cooperate fully with evaluators and to take all necessary steps to ensure timely access to requested information. In most cases, collection of data through interviews and focus groups should be carried out in a confidential manner without the involvement of those whose work is being evaluated. Evaluators requiring assistance should be provided with the help they need (e.g. non-ILO translators).

Table 5. Data collection approaches, tools and methods

	Method	Description	Advantages	Challenges
Qualitatively	Desk reviews	Systematic analysis of existing documentation, including quantitative and descriptive information about the initiative, its outputs and outcomes, such as documentation from capacity development activities, donor reports, and other evidence.	Cost efficient.	Documentary evidence can be difficult to code and analyse. Difficult to verify reliability and validity of data.
	Interviews (face-to-face, telephone or computer-assisted)	Solicit responses to questions designed to obtain in-depth information about a person's impressions or experiences. Can be fully structured, semi, or unstructured	Facilitates fuller coverage, range and depth of information on a topic.	Can be time consuming. Can be difficult to analyse. Can be costly. Potential for interviewer to bias interviewee's responses.
	Direct On-Site Observation	Entails use of a detailed observation form to record accurate information on-site about how a programme operates (ongoing activities, processes, discussions, social interactions and observable results as directly observed during the course of an initiative).	Can see operations of a programme as they are occurring. Can adapt to events as they occur.	Can be difficult to categorize or interpret observed behaviours. Can be expensive. Subject to (site) selection bias.
	Focus Group Interviews	A small group (6 to 8 people) is interviewed together to explore in-depth stakeholder opinions, similar or divergent points of view, or judgments about a development initiative or policy, as well as gather information about their behaviours, understanding and perceptions of an initiative or to collect information around tangible and non-tangible changes resulting from an initiative.	Quick, reliable way to obtain common impressions from diverse stakeholders. Efficient way to obtain a high degree of range and depth of information in a short time. Single-sex interviews (e.g. with women only) often provide information and qualitative insights that are not articulated otherwise. This can also apply to other groups.	Can be hard to analyse responses. Requires trained facilitator. May be difficult to schedule.
	Key Informant Interviews	Qualitative in-depth interviews, often one-on-one, with a wide range of stakeholders who have first-hand knowledge about the initiative's operations and context. These experts can provide particular knowledge and understanding of problems and recommend solutions. The majority of questions are open-ended and meant to stimulate discussion	Can provide insight on the nature of problems and give recommendations for solutions. Can provide different perspectives on a single issue or on several issues.	Subject to sampling bias. Must have some means to verify or corroborate information.

ILO Policy Guidelines for Results-Based Evaluation

	Method	Description	Advantages	Challenges
Quantitative	Expert Panels	A peer review, or reference group composed of external experts to provide input on technical or other substance topics covered by the evaluation	<p>Adds credibility.</p> <p>Can serve as additional (expert) source of information that can provide greater depth.</p> <p>Can verify or substantiate information and results in topic area.</p>	<p>Cost of consultancy and related expenses if any.</p> <p>Must ensure impartiality and that there are no conflicts of interest.</p>
	Case Studies	Involve comprehensive examination through cross comparison of cases to obtain in-depth information with the goal to fully understand the operational dynamics, activities, outputs, outcomes and interactions of a development project or programme.	Useful to fully explore factors that contribute to outputs and outcomes.	<p>Requires considerable time and resources not usually available for commissioned evaluations.</p> <p>Can be difficult to analyse.</p>
	Surveys (samples of respondents, including project/ programme and control observations)	<p>A sample of the project/programme population, with sex-disaggregation (and possibly of a control group) is extracted. Questionnaires are usually administered face-to-face by enumerators on the basis of a pre-written and pre-coded questionnaire.</p> <p>Entries are recorded on electronic support media and analysed using computer software on the basis of standard descriptive, inferential and econometric techniques.</p>	<p>The sampling procedure should aim to select a statistically representative subset of the population.</p> <p>Large samples allow for more refined analysis and are representative of more sub-categories of the population (sub-region, province, etc.)</p>	<p>Trained specialists are required for survey design planning and data analysis</p> <p>Larger surveys can be costly and time-consuming to implement.</p>

4.2.3 Data quality


In some cases, the evaluation may be limited by the absence of baseline data, e.g. the description and documentation of the specific situation in the area targeted for change prior to the ILO intervention. In other cases, there may be a lack of data relative to the evolution of outcomes for a comparison group, which could make an assessment of the effectiveness of interventions and the identification of causal links particularly difficult. Where baseline surveys and studies have not been undertaken or are not of the required quality, the evaluator should identify how data should be collected in order to secure a reasonable proxy for the assessment of initial conditions. For instance, evaluators may conduct in-depth interviews (e.g. structured interviews and/or focus groups discussions) with project beneficiaries and have them reconstruct the logical chain of behavioural, productive or organizational changes generated or supported by the intervention.


For the process of data collection and analysis, a combination of methods is recommended to ensure data accuracy and facilitate its interpretation. This use of mixed methods and data from mixed sources is called triangulation and defined by the OECD/DAC as “the use of three


or more theories, sources or types of information, or types of analysis to verify and substantiate an assessment". The technique of triangulation allows evaluators to overcome the bias that comes from single information sources, the use of single methods or single observations. Hence triangulation strengthens the accuracy, robustness and reliability of evaluation results.

Systematic and random sampling techniques to determine which data will be collected are called for in most evaluation designs, even when deciding on the choice of key persons to interview, which field sites to visit, or which beneficiaries to survey. In some cases, a purposive sampling approach is more suitable. Sampling methodologies are applied to minimize selection bias. The design of appropriate sampling techniques should be determined early in the data collection design process in conjunction with the development of data collection methods. When applying data collection techniques, examination of socio-economic characteristics among respondents and sex-disaggregation of data is required. The evaluation manager is encouraged to explore other potential lines of disaggregation, such as grouping based on national livelihoods and poverty outcomes.

Guidance Note 8: Validity and reliability 

Checklist 4: Validating methodologies 

Further reading: *Evaluation Manual Methodology and Processes*, (IFAD 2009) 

Further reading: *Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results*, (UNDP 2009) 

4.3 Drawing conclusions and making recommendations

Once data has been collected and analysed, and the findings presented and discussed, conclusions should be drawn from these findings. Conclusions provide summary judgments about the strengths and weaknesses of the evaluated intervention, which should be fair, impartial and backed by evidence.

Recommendations are "proposals aimed at enhancing the effectiveness, quality, or efficiency of a development intervention; at redesigning the objectives; and/or at the reallocation of resources." (OECD/DAC 2002). They should be linked to the conclusions, be clear, concise, actionable, and time-bound, and should meet the requirements in Box 14 to ensure quality reports. These concise statements are also used in the Executive Summary of the evaluation.



Box

14

Requirements for recommendations

To ensure quality in evaluation reports, recommendations should:

- be numbered in the report, and limited – ideally not more than 12;
- be formulated in a clear and concise manner;
- be relevant and useful;
- be supported by evidence and follow logically from findings and conclusions;
- link to the programme indicators when feasible;
- not be too general but specific to the strategy/country programme/project evaluated;
- specify who is called upon to act;
- specify which action is needed to remedy the situation that needs improvement ;
- distinguish the priority or importance of single recommendations (high, medium, low);
- specify the recommended time frame for follow-up;
- acknowledge whether there are resource implications.

4.4 Generating lessons learned


One of the purposes of evaluation in the ILO is to promote learning. Evaluations are expected to generate lessons that can be applied elsewhere to improve programme or project performance, outcome, or impact. Each ILO evaluation report should contain a section on lessons learned which summarizes knowledge or understanding gained from experience related to the ILO intervention under evaluation. Lessons learned can highlight the strengths and the weaknesses of interventions to improve quality of delivery; contribute to sharing innovative responses to potential challenges; and/or allow practitioners to reuse lessons from previous experience into the design of future projects. They also contribute to learning and knowledge sharing among stakeholders by helping them to better understand the design, monitoring and evaluation of a given intervention, and to identify where collaboration and coordination need to be strengthened.

These lessons have to be captured, validated, stored, disseminated and reused if they are to fulfil their purpose. Capturing of lessons learned involves gathering, documenting and analysing evaluation findings. This may occur at the end of the intervention, or at the end of a phase of the intervention cycle.


Evaluation lessons learned can address both the internal and external logic of interventions. The intervention's concept / theory of change, design, development objective and strategy are subject to critical scrutiny. Accounting for the internal logic can help project or programme managers to know whether they are doing things right, by examining how to improve a current way of working or managing activities. Focusing on the external logic helps to know whether the right thing is being done, by questioning assumptions about how the project, programme or policy works, including the manner in which it fits into the broader context and environment.

Guidance Note 3: Evaluation lessons learned 

4.5 Reporting

For each evaluation report, a draft and a final version must be prepared. The draft version provides stakeholders with an opportunity to give feedback prior to the preparation of the final evaluation report. As stated in the Director-General's announcement on *Evaluation in the ILO*, ILO IGDS 75 v. 2 (2011f) , officials are expected to fully respect the confidential nature of draft evaluation reports and to strictly follow the guidelines set for handling such documents.

Box 15 presents a sample structure and table of contents of an evaluation report and identifies the standard elements that should be addressed in each evaluation. The single elements are explained below. The body of the evaluation report usually should not exceed 30 to 40 pages.


**Box 15** **Sample structure and table of contents of an evaluation report**

Cover page with key intervention and evaluation data

- 1 Executive Summary
- 2 Brief background on the project and its logic
- 3 Purpose, scope and clients of evaluation
- 4 Methodology
- 5 Review of implementation
- 6 Presentation of findings regarding project performance, organized by evaluation criteria
- 7 Conclusions
- 8 Recommendations
- 9 Lessons learned and emerging good practices


Annexes
TOR, questionnaires, list of informants, etc.

The evaluation report should stimulate readers' interest and economize their time. It should be well-structured, clear and concisely written, using plain, factual language and a constructive writing style. This enhances the overall value of the evaluation. Experience shows that even the most controversial evaluation findings can find acceptance when they are backed with evidence and presented in a sensitive and fair-minded way. Evaluators should not express their own opinions but report the evidence presented to them, and then draw their conclusions.

The precise structure of an evaluation report depends on the specific focus, needs and circumstances of the project or programme and its evaluation. However, certain elements should be addressed in every evaluation report. These should meet ILO evaluation quality standards, which are consistent with and directly inspired from the UNEG norms and standards. .

Interested parties may try to influence the content of an evaluation report. While the evaluation team should always be open to input from stakeholders, it is important that the team hold their ground where no clear evidence can be found for changing their findings. Robust discussion of findings can be expected, but intimidation or other unethical behaviour from third parties in an attempt to influence the independent evaluators should be reported to the evaluation manager. The ILO's anti-fraud policy is described in more detail in Box 16.

Box 16 Addressing fraud and whistle blowing at the ILO

The *ILO anti-fraud policy* (ILO 2009c)  is concerned with acts of fraud and dishonesty committed against the ILO by its officials, external collaborators, contractors, and suppliers of goods and services. Issues arising from the private and personal activities of officials are covered by the Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service, the Staff Regulations and the associated Office directives and Office procedures.


The term “fraud” is used in this policy to describe such acts as deception, bribery, forgery, extortion, theft, embezzlement, misappropriation, false representation, concealment of material facts and collusion.

An official of the ILO, or a person bringing the alleged case of fraud to the attention of the ILO, who acts in compliance with this policy and in good faith, shall not, based on any extent upon the fact that the person has reported an incident or participated in an investigation:

- be dismissed or threatened with dismissal;
- be disciplined, suspended or threatened with disciplinary action or suspension;
- be penalized or have any other form of retribution imposed; or
- be intimidated or coerced.

Checklist 5: Preparing the evaluation report

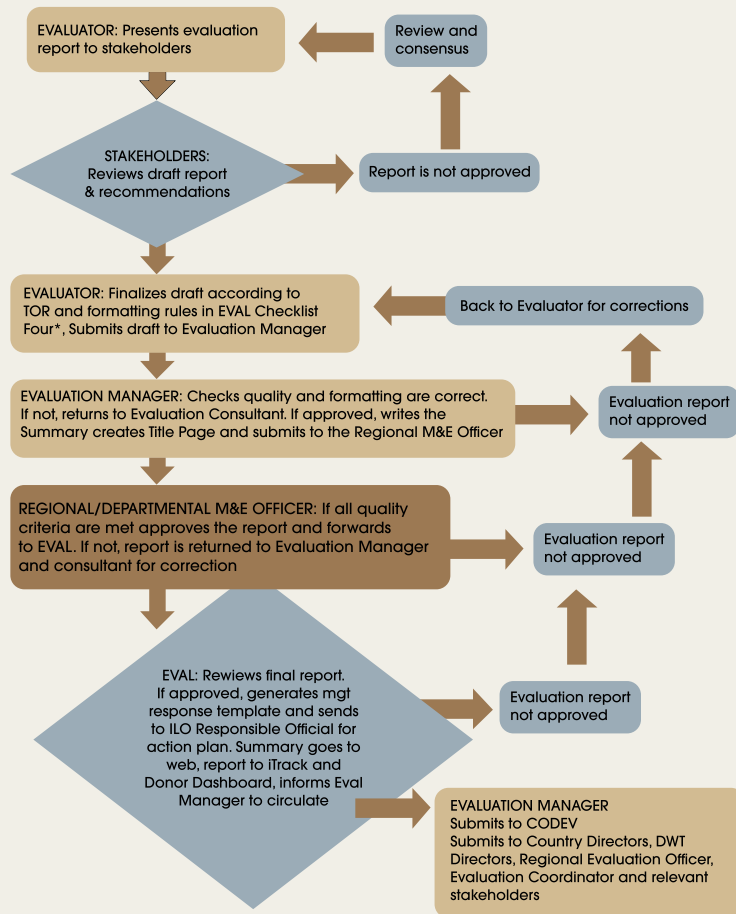
4.5.1 Commenting on the draft evaluation report

Evaluators are expected to submit a complete and readable draft report. Officials are expected to fully respect the confidential nature of these draft evaluation reports and to strictly follow the guidelines set down for handling such documents, as described in the *ILO policy on public information disclosure* (ILO 2008b) . Evaluators send the completed draft report to the evaluation manager who, after reviewing the draft for adequacy and readability, circulates it to concerned stakeholders simultaneously. This prevents any single stakeholder group editing the draft prior to wider circulation. Stakeholders are encouraged to make written comments but not to edit the document directly. Comments may be sent individually to the evaluation manager on a confidential basis, and/or collectively. The evaluation manager is expected to honour the confidentiality of those commenting and to forward all **consolidated** comments in a single communication to the evaluator.


4.5.2 Process for approving the final evaluation report

The workflow associated with the preparation and approval of final evaluation reports is presented in Figure 4. The checklist for rating the quality of evaluation reports is a useful support tool in the process of approving the final evaluation report. Specific attention should be paid to two key outputs of the report, namely, the lessons learned captured during the evaluation and recommendations on follow-up to the report.


Figure 4. General Workflow for the evaluation report



4.5.3 Disclosure and dissemination of the evaluation report

Final evaluation reports are disseminated in accordance with the *ILO policy on public information disclosure* (ILO 2008b) . For independent project evaluations, all key project stakeholders – i.e. the donor, the national constituents and key national partners as well as concerned ILO officials – receive a copy of the evaluation report via mail or email once it is finalized. This is the responsibility of the evaluation manager of the project with oversight of the responsible evaluation officer.

In addition, to ensure transparency and accessibility, all evaluation information is stored in i-Track, , the central repository of evaluation documentation (see Box 17).



Box 17

i-Track

A pro-active approach to knowledge sharing is intended to strengthen organizational learning, improvements in ILO technical work and the quality of new project proposals. The use of i-Track is mandatory and helps the ILO create the basis for systematic organizational learning and the application of learning in future intervention design. All evaluations are scheduled, updated, and eventually stored in i-Track. This includes mandated independent or internal evaluations, as well as joint evaluation and external evaluations covering ILO work.

ILO’s i-Track consists of three main elements: “Docu-track”, “Eval-track” and “Management reports”. As shown below, “Docu-track” is the placeholder for evaluation reports classified by year, type, country/region and theme as well as summaries of those reports.

Docu-track


- Document storage
- Accessible to all ILO staff
- Add and search function
- Up-loading of final evaluation reports


Eval-track


- For evaluation focal points and EVAL staff
- Keeps track of planning aspects of evaluation (ToR, budgets, etc.)


Managements reports


- Part of eval-track
- Compilation of data on recommendations lessons learned and emerging good practices
- Reporting on follow up

Evaluation summaries for all independent project evaluations are also available on the EVAL public website . The summaries provide the main findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned. Interested parties can receive a soft copy of the full report upon request to EVAL. EVAL reserves the right to withhold certain evaluation reports if they are considered below standard or if they contain confidential information whose wider dissemination could harm certain individuals. In case the release of a report is denied, EVAL will always provide an explanation.

Checklist 7: Filling in the evaluation title page 

Template: Evaluation Title Page 

Checklist 8: Writing the evaluation report summary 

Template: Evaluation summary 



5. Evaluation results and knowledge dissemination

5.1 Communicating evaluation results

Different potential users will be interested in different parts of the report. Some may be interested in recommendations that affect their work; others may be interested in broader lessons. It is important to plan a communication strategy for the evaluation report to decide who may need information from the evaluation, and the manner in which it should be communicated. It is more likely that users will find evaluations useful if they meet to discuss the main points face-to-face with the evaluators, instead of just receiving a report for comment.

Stakeholder engagement, throughout the evaluation process, is an important component in ensuring that the evaluation's findings remain open to implementing the suggested recommendations. As presented in previous sections, thinking about the use of an evaluation should start at the planning stage rather than when the final report is submitted. The stakeholders of the evaluation should be consulted in the planning stage to ensure that their questions are addressed by the evaluators. They should continue to be involved during the course of the evaluation to discuss mid-term findings, when applicable, as well as the actual findings and the draft report.

Evaluation reports are stored in a systematic manner and the knowledge generated in lessons learned and from emerging good practices are made available through I-Track to feed into the design of new projects or the next phase of a project. ILO officials should remember to consult previous relevant evaluation reports when developing technical tools and designing new projects and approaches. Lessons learned should address any positive or negative insights gained as a result of the intervention, which had substantial impact on operations, achievement of outcomes, or impact on sustainability. They can be aimed at the administrative aspects of the project or the technical context of the intervention. Lessons learned should highlight strengths and weaknesses and provide decision-makers with relevant information to help them avoid common mistakes and promote a more enabling environment.

The project manager, the ILO responsible official, the evaluation manager and the evaluation focal point are encouraged to disseminate evaluation report summaries to other interested individuals inside and outside the Office. The relevant technical specialists in headquarters and the field should also make an effort to disseminate relevant lessons learned to interested officials in the Office. This can be done via email, newsletter or by posting noteworthy insights on the website, for example.

Knowledge dissemination may also take the form of conferences, workshops, training sessions, or seminars and may be hosted by EVAL, the evaluator and project staff or other stakeholders. Large projects may have a dissemination strategy as part of their M&E plan targeting a specific range of clients. For higher-level strategy evaluations, the report and specific follow-up on recommendations and lessons learned are presented to the Evaluation Advisory Committee and the GB.

Finally, EVAL produces an Annual Evaluation Report (AER) that is presented to the Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee (PFAC) of the GB in November. The AER summarizes the evaluation activities of the Office, including: progress made in implementing the evaluation policy; all independent evaluations carried out in the reporting period; and management follow-up to high-level evaluations from the previous year.

Further reading: *ILO Technical Cooperation Appraisal Mechanism* (ILO Intranet web link only) 

5.2 Management response to recommendations

The final action on an evaluation report is initiation of the management response follow-up to recommendations. This strengthens the use of evaluation findings, promotes organizational learning and accountability for evaluation results, and thereby contributes towards an

improved programme and project design and delivery. It also aims to increase stakeholder and management buy-in to the findings, to facilitate in-depth dialogue about evaluation results, and to ensure follow-up of agreed recommendations through formal processes.

Evaluations only lead to organizational improvements if recommendations are given systematic follow-up by line management. Independent high-level strategy, policy and country programme evaluations are presented to the November GB and serve as decision-making papers. An official management response from the Office forms part of the report. A summary of the status of implementation of evaluation recommendations is reported in the AER and presented to the November GB of the following year. The Office is accountable to the GB for implementing the recommendations of these evaluations. For that reason, the Director-General created the EAC to monitor and ensure adequate management follow-up to high-level evaluations.

For decentralized evaluations, active and routine follow-up of recommendations is initiated by EVAL and carried out by management. EVAL collects management response data and reports to the GB each November on project recommendation follow-up in its AER.


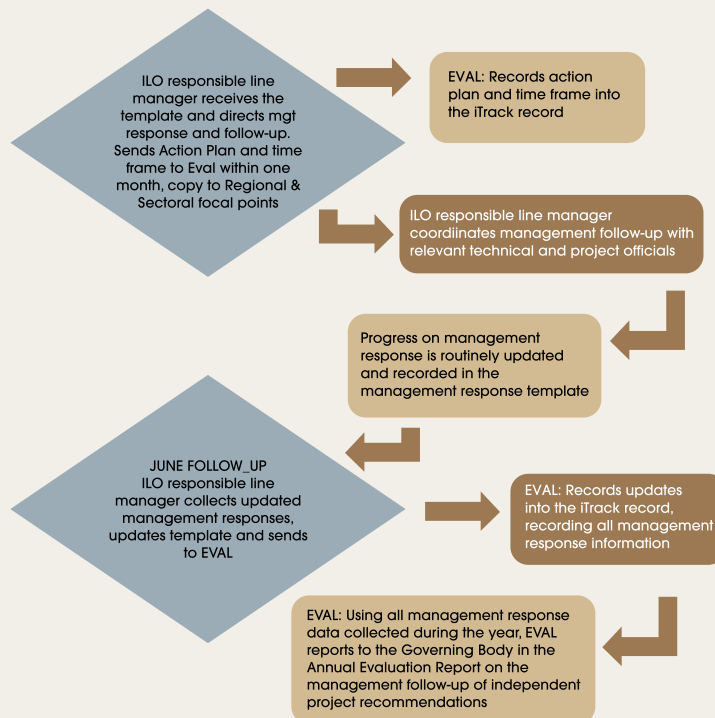
In order to systematize the management response and follow-up reporting, the Office has established certain procedures and templates (see Guidance Note 15: Management follow-up for independent project evaluations ). An overview of the workflow is shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5. Workflow for response to recommendations



ILO Policy Guidelines for Results-Based Evaluation


Line management can present an overall response to the evaluation but must also address each recommendation in the template individually, acknowledging if it is accepted or rejected. If rejected, management must explain why. If accepted, management must provide an action plan with a time frame. This completed management response template with the action plan is then sent back to EVAL within one month.

Updates on the progress of implementing the action plan are sent to EVAL and recorded in i-Track. Once a year EVAL conducts an annual review of management response and a summary of the findings are reported in the AER submitted to the GB each November. The roles and responsibilities of specific actors for the management response to high-level evaluations are highlighted in Table 6.

Table 6. Roles and responsibilities for management response to high-level evaluations

Actor	Roles and responsibilities
EVAL	<p>Supports Evaluation Advisory Committee in monitoring the management response by requesting and ensuring timely reporting from line management;</p> <p>Final editing responsibility for Annual Evaluation Report, including section featuring report on follow-up to high-level evaluations;</p> <p>Manages independent high-level evaluations and ensures that evaluation recommendations comply with the quality criteria.</p>
Responsible line manager	<p>Department Director (Policy and strategy evaluations) or Regional Director (Country Programme evaluations) submits management response via EVAL to Evaluation Advisory Committee;</p> <p>Follows up on evaluation recommendations;</p> <p>Coordinates implementation with other entities of the ILO as applicable.</p>
Evaluation Advisory Committee (EAC)	<p>Monitors and ensures adequate management follow-up;</p> <p>Meets in the third quarter of each year to review management responses and follow-up reports;</p> <p>Decides whether further follow-up actions are required;</p> <p>Advises Director-General on the information contained in the Office response to evaluation summaries presented to the Governing Body;</p> <p>Advises EVAL on how to feature report on follow-up to high-level evaluations.</p>
The Governing Body	<p>Recipient of the status report on the implementation of recommendations as part of the Annual Evaluation Report as well as of the Office management response transcribed therein.</p>

Further reading: *Good Practice Guidelines for Follow up to Evaluations* (UNEG, 2010) 

Further reading: *Evaluation Advisory Committee, Geneva* (ILO, 2008a) 

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ILO Web links of interest

- EVAL i-Track Evaluation Database - <http://www.ilo.org/evalinfo/> (generic log in: ILO password: view)
- EVAL public website - <http://www.ilo.org/eval>
- EVAL project evaluation summaries - <http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationreports/Projectevaluationreports/lang--en/index.htm>
- EVAL strategy and policy evaluations - <http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationreports/Strategyandpolicyevaluations/lang--en/index.htm>
- ILO thematic evaluations - <http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationreports/Thematischevaluations/lang--en/index.htm>
- ILO Decent Work Country Programmes - <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/dwcp/index.htm>
- The ILO biennial programme and budget (P&B) - <http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/how-the-ilo-works/programme-and-budget/lang--en/index.htm>
- ILO Technical Cooperation Appraisal Mechanism (ILO Intranet only) - <https://www.ilo.org/intranet/english/bureau/pardev/tcguides/appraisal.htm>
- ILO Technical Cooperation Manual (ILO Intranet only) - <https://www.ilo.org/intranet/english/bureau/pardev/tcguides/tcmanual.htm>

ILO Evaluation Guidance

1. Monitoring and evaluation of Decent Work Country Programmes - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_165973/lang--en/index.htm
2. Midterm evaluation lessons learned - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_165976/lang--en/index.htm
3. Evaluation lessons learned and emerging good practices - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_165981/lang--en/index.htm
4. Considering gender in the monitoring and evaluation of projects - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_165986/lang--en/index.htm
5. Using the ILO/IPEC consultant database - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_165979/lang--en/index.htm
6. The Evaluation Manager: Role and function - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_165980/lang--en/index.htm
7. Stakeholder participation - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_165982/lang--en/index.htm
8. Validity and reliability - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_165978/lang--en/index.htm
9. Internal evaluations for projects - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_167056/lang--en/index.htm
10. Using i-Track - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_165989/lang--en/index.htm
11. Using the evaluability assessment tool - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_165984/lang--en/index.htm
12. Dimensions of the evaluability assessment tool - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_165985/lang--en/index.htm
13. Impact evaluation - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_165974/lang--en/index.htm
14. Joint evaluation - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_165975/lang--en/index.htm
15. Management follow-up for independent project evaluations - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_165977/lang--en/index.htm

Checklists, Protocols, Templates and Tools

1. Checklist: Writing terms of reference - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_165971/lang--en/index.htm
2. Checklist: Rating the quality of Terms of Reference - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_165969/lang--en/index.htm
3. Checklist: Writing the Inception report - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_165972/lang--en/index.htm
4. Checklist: Validating methodologies - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_166364/lang--en/index.htm
5. Checklist: Preparing the evaluation report - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_165967/lang--en/index.htm
6. Checklist: Rating the quality of evaluation reports - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_165968/lang--en/index.htm
7. Checklist: Filling in the evaluation title page - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_166363/lang--en/index.htm
8. Checklist: Writing the evaluation report summary - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_166361/lang--en/index.htm

9. Checklist: Impact Evaluation Planning - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_181283/lang--en/index.htm
10. Checklist: Documents submitted to the evaluator - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_208284/lang--en/index.htm

Protocols

Protocol 1: High-level Evaluation Protocol for Outcome/Strategy Evaluation - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_215858/lang--en/index.htm

Protocol 2: High-level Evaluation Protocol for DWCP Evaluation - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_215859/lang--en/index.htm

Templates

Template: Evaluation title page - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_166357/lang--en/index.htm

Template: Evaluation summary - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_166356/lang--en/index.htm

Template: Evaluation Submission - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_206157/lang--en/index.htm

Template: Lessons Learned - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_206158/lang--en/index.htm

Template: Emerging Good Practice - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_206159/lang--en/index.htm

Template: Code of Conduct Form - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_206205/lang--en/index.htm

Template: Data Collection and Evaluation Timeline - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_209147/lang--en/index.htm

Tools

Evaluation tool: Evaluability assessment tool for DWCP and projects - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_165990/lang--en/index.htm

Evaluation tool: RBM tools for monitoring and evaluation - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_165991/lang--en/index.htm

Evaluation tool: Monitoring and evaluation plan appraisal tool (for projects over US five million) - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_166578/lang--en/index.htm

Evaluation tool: DWCP Monitoring and Evaluation Appraisal (form) - http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_207733/lang--en/index.htm

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