

Under construction

SELF- AND INTERNAL EVALUATIONS

This guidance note provides information on self- and internal evaluation and how to conduct them. It is meant to guide the work of project managers and internal evaluation managers.

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CONTENTS

Purpose of self- and internal evaluation.....	1
Designing self- and internal evaluations	2
Reporting, presenting and disseminating evaluation findings	5

PURPOSE OF SELF- AND INTERNAL EVALUATION

Self- and internal evaluation is defined by EVAL as an evaluation that is coordinated by someone internal to the project or programme for the purposes of organizational learning. Self- or internal evaluations may be conducted by someone who is part of the project management team (self-evaluation), a qualified ILO official (internal evaluation), or an external consultant (internal evaluation). The format is used depends on the budget of the project, as well as the ability to identify an appropriate candidate for conducting the evaluation. See table 1 for a breakdown of these two forms of evaluation.

Table 1 Self- and internal evaluation

Type of Evaluation	Project or Programme Budget	Who is the evaluator?	Who is the evaluation coordinator?
Self-evaluation	Less than US\$500,000	It can be someone internal to the programme or project (project director, project manager).	The evaluation can be coordinated by someone internal to the project or programme
Internal evaluation	Between US\$ 500,000 and \$1 million	The evaluator can be a qualified ILO official or a consultant.	The evaluation can be coordinated by someone internal to the project or programme.

The main difference between independent and self- or internal evaluation is evaluation management. In self- and internal evaluation the project team initiates the work and selects an evaluation coordinator. Internal evaluations are more about improving than proving, and informing project management. In fact, with the management of the evaluation lying with an internal project team member, the utility of the evaluation is often enhanced because of the increased sense of ownership of the evaluation findings by project management. Additionally, self- and internal evaluation can be driven by the questions that are most important to project management. This will also insure that the evaluation is useful to making programme improvements.

Improvement of existing programmes or projects is the most important purpose of internal evaluation. The core evaluation questions should reflect this. Questions of this sort should investigate what is working, what isn't working, and why and be specific to the context of the project. The questions should generate information that can be used by the project team to make programme improvements, or generate information about how future programmes and projects can be better designed to enhance the likelihood of achieving their outcomes. By engaging in this kind of exercise, project management has the opportunity to reflect on what they did, and to recognize what they did well and what they could have done better. This fosters both organizational learning, but also the culture of evaluation.

All self- or internal evaluations should be sent to EVAL upon completion so that they may be uploaded into the i-Track database. This database is a centralized repository of evaluation reports and information that can be accessed by all ILO officials. These self- and internal reports do not require EVAL approval, but should adhere to the guidance below to produce findings that are relevant and useful.

See [Checklist 5: Preparing the Evaluation Report](#) & [Checklist 6: Rating the Quality of Evaluation Reports](#)

DESIGNING SELF- AND INTERNAL EVALUATIONS

Internal evaluations should be designed according to international standards for evaluation and in accordance with the guidance presented in the ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluation. Certainly, these evaluations may not have the same level of resources as evaluations for bigger programmes or projects. However, these evaluations should still be done systematically, utilize the OECD/DAC criteria, and collect empirical evidence to answer evaluation questions.

Self-evaluations may take a different form. They may model the traditional evaluation approach, they might be done as country program reviews, or they may be end of project summaries. One option for projects is to utilize PARDEVs Development Cooperation Final Progress Report to include evaluative information which can be included in Section D: Monitoring, Evaluation and Knowledge Sharing. These evaluations should still document important achievements, lessons learned, challenges faced, and suggestions for future improvement.

People - A member of the project team should be appointed as the evaluation coordinator to manage the work involved. This coordinator should work with the project staff to identify an **evaluator**. This might be another member of the project team in the case of a self-evaluation, or, a qualified ILO official or consultant in the case of an internal evaluation. The evaluator, evaluation coordinator and project staff work with **stakeholders**, such as representatives of the **tripartite constituent groups** and other **ILO officials**, to provide input into the evaluation design and implementation process.

In the case of a self-evaluation the most common scenario has the *project manager* taking on the role of evaluator. Other staff should be engaged to provide documentation, or assist with data collection. A self-evaluation can still be a considerable amount of work, and so it may be a good idea to appoint an evaluation coordinator to manage the process.

Both internal and self-evaluation should engage key stakeholders in order to insure relevance and credibility. Additionally, engagement with key stakeholders will enhance the utility of the evaluation. It is particularly important to engage key stakeholders in this case because of the focus on programme improvement. This is an opportunity to develop a better sense of what worked and why, and often key stakeholders are an important source of information for answering these types of questions.

See [Guidance Note 7: Engaging Stakeholders in Evaluation](#)

Gender and diversity is expected to be included as a cross cutting issue in any self- or internal evaluation. It should be considered during the design of the evaluation so that it is thoroughly addressed in

- the evaluation questions,
- the methodological choices, and
- the reporting of the evaluation.

At the most basic level this means examining data collected for differences by gender and/or race, ethnicity, age and disability. This should be used to assess the relevance and effectiveness of gender-related strategies and outcomes which aim to improve the lives of beneficiaries. Gender is expected to be addressed in the ToRs of any self- or internal evaluation, the inception report and the final report.

See [Guidance Note 4: Integrating gender in monitoring and evaluation of projects](#)

Budget - Funds for internal evaluations are *stipulated in the project budget* and according to ILO Policy Guidelines for Evaluation.¹ Because self-evaluations are conducted by project management, the most important resource to allocate for these types of evaluations is time. Time should be made available for project management to sufficiently scope a study, develop questions, identify sources of data, collect data, conduct analysis and report on findings.

¹ ILO. Evaluation Office. [ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluation: Principles, rationale, planning and managing for evaluations](#), 2016. p. 29 (indicates the various percentages that belong to budget lines for project evaluation).

Certainly, project management cannot simply drop all other responsibilities and undertake an evaluation full-time. Therefore, an appropriate timeline must be considered whereby project management can conduct the self-evaluation while still fulfilling their remaining responsibilities.

Resources for internal evaluations should be included in the project's budget. Costs for conducting an internal evaluation should not be substantial since it can be conducted by a qualified ILO official. Time must be given to the ILO official who has agreed to undertake the evaluation. This may mean requesting diminished duties in their primary role and should be negotiated by the project manager and the supervisor of the ILO official who is being sought for the evaluation. In an instance where an ILO official is not available, a consultant will need to be hired. Therefore, resources need to be allocated to compensate this person.

Evaluation Questions - Questions for both self- and internal evaluations should be based upon the OECD/DAC criteria (see section 3.4 of the [ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluation](#)). Because of this form of evaluation emphasizes organizational learning and improvement the evaluation questions used to guide the study should reflect this purpose.

Self- and internal evaluations are intended to serve project management as a tool for learning and project improvement. These evaluations are an opportunity for project management, or other key stakeholders, to think about what key questions they have about their project or, about how they might improve it. These should be the driving questions, the use of which should help improve the utility of the evaluation itself.

Terms of Reference - ToRs should be prepared for both self- and internal evaluations. It should be drafted by the evaluation coordinator. Guidance for writing a ToR can be found in [Checklist 1: Writing the Terms of Reference](#).

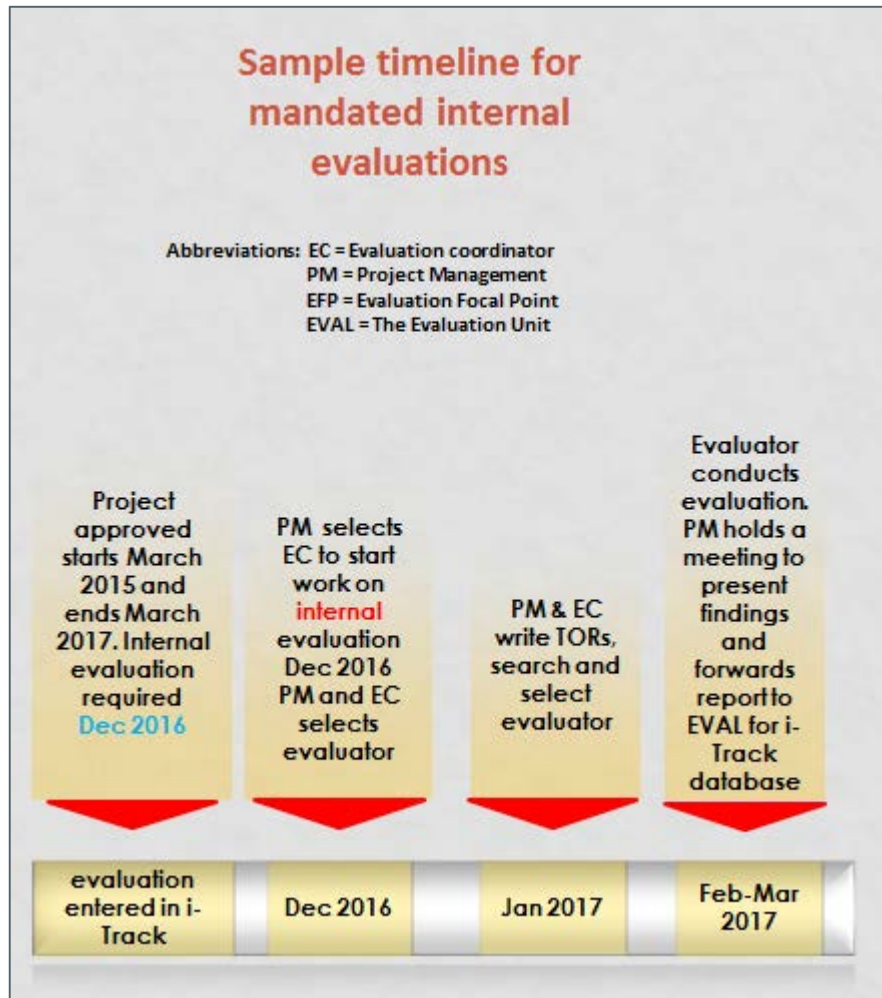
Once the ToR has been drafted it should be shared with key stakeholders. These include other members of the project team, project partners, or representatives from tripartite constituent groups. This will help to insure proper scope, and focus for the evaluation. The ToR should serve as the guiding document for the evaluator as they plan their evaluation.

The evaluation coordinator should utilize evaluation focal points within ILO departments to seek out a qualified ILO official who might be willing and able to undertake the evaluation described in the ToR. If no qualified ILO officials can be identified, the evaluation coordinator may need to seek out a consultant. In either case, once the evaluator has been hired, the evaluation coordinator must be sure to thoroughly brief them on the project, and provide any necessary documentation to give the evaluator some contextual understanding of the project.

Timing - Internal evaluations and self-evaluations will vary in how much time they demand depending on the complexity of the project or programme being evaluated. Internal evaluations may take up to three months to plan, execute and properly conduct follow-up. Below is a sample internal evaluation timeline. This type of timeline can be created by the evaluation coordinator at

the start of the evaluation and used to guide evaluation process to insure it stays on track.

Be sure that resources are allocated for a self- or internal evaluation. Even though they may not cost extra in terms of dollars, they still demand considerable amount of time on the part of project staff. Therefore, this time will not be available for dealing with other tasks or duties and this must be taken into account when planning the evaluation.



REPORTING, PRESENTING AND DISSEMINATING EVALUATION FINDINGS

Reporting - Internal evaluation reports should follow the guidance in EVALs checklists related to report writing and preparation. This guidance lays out the different components which should be included. *Checklist 6: Rating the quality of the evaluation reports* can be used by the evaluation coordinator to do an initial assessment of the report produced by the evaluator.

This tool can guide the initial feedback provided to the evaluator, and articulate the criteria of quality that an evaluation report is expected to fulfill in order to be considered of good quality.

For reporting guidance see:

- [Checklist 5: Preparing the evaluation report](#)
- [Checklist 6: Rating the quality of evaluation reports](#)
- [Checklist 7: Filling in the evaluation title page](#)
- [Checklist 8: Writing the evaluation report summary](#)

Presenting the evaluation - Once the evaluation has been completed, the evaluator should present findings to project staff, the relevant technical department, key stakeholder groups and other relevant ILO officials. The presentation should focus on the evaluation findings evaluation, lessons learned and emerging good practices. Once all of this is accomplished, project management is expected to take action on the recommendations.

Internal evaluations done by an evaluator who is external to the project team should be presented to key stakeholders at a workshop. The evaluation coordinator, with support from project management should organize the workshop and take responsibility for ensuring that the appropriate stakeholder groups are present. This can also take a substantial amount of time to plan and organize. This is another reason it is important to assign an evaluation coordinator so to insure as high quality a workshop as possible.

For more information on conducting a stakeholder workshop see [Guidance Note 7: Engaging Stakeholders in Evaluation](#)

Storage - Once an evaluation report has been finalized, presented to stakeholders and appropriate revisions made, it should be submitted to EVAL for storage in the EVAL i-Track database. Internal reports are only made available through the intranet and plone websites to ILO officials, unless project management asks that they are to be circulated to a wider audience.