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Annual Evaluation Report 2025–26

Purpose of the document

This document provides the Governing Body with a progress report on the work of the ILO's Evaluation Office during the reporting period 2025–26, as measured against the objectives, indicators and targets set out in the ILO's results-based Evaluation Strategy 2023–25, which was extended until the end of 2026 (Part I). The report also examines the overall effectiveness of the ILO, using 2025 project evaluation findings as proxy indicators to assess performance trends (Part II). In addition, it outlines the main features of a new forward-looking Evaluation Strategy for the period 2027–29 (Part III). The Governing Body is invited to endorse the recommendations contained in this report (see the draft decision in paragraph 108).

Relevant strategic objective: All.

Main relevant outcome: Enabling outcome B: Improved governance and oversight.

Policy implications: Yes. Work across the policy outcomes on issues relevant to decent work and productivity.

Legal implications: None.

Financial implications: None.

Follow-up action required: Yes.

Author unit: Evaluation Office (EVAL).

Related documents: [GB.355/PFA/5](#); [GB.352/PFA/8\(Rev.1\)](#); [GB.349/PFA/4](#).



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► Introduction

1. The Annual Evaluation Report 2025–26 marks the conclusion of an important chapter in the development of the ILO's evaluation function. The extension of the ILO's [results-based Evaluation Strategy 2023–25](#) until the end of 2026 provided an opportunity not only to consolidate the reforms introduced over many years but also to take stock of a broader institutional journey that has transformed evaluation into an increasingly strategic asset supporting accountability, learning and decision-making across the Organization.
2. This report therefore serves two purposes: it reviews the progress made during the final year of the current strategy cycle; and it outlines the key elements of a results-based Evaluation Strategy 2027–29.
3. The report is divided into three parts. Part I assesses the performance of the ILO's Evaluation Office (EVAL), as measured against the objectives, indicators and targets established under its strategy framework. Part II examines the ILO's overall effectiveness, drawing on evidence generated from project evaluations, high-level evaluations and annual meta-analyses during the period under review. Part III outlines the main directions and priorities of a results-based Evaluation Strategy 2027–29, which will be finalized in early 2027 and will guide the next phase of development of the evaluation function. Building on lessons from the previous and current strategies, the findings of the last three independent evaluations of the ILO's evaluation function, and guidance provided by the evaluation network, management and Governing Body members, the new Evaluation Strategy seeks to advance the evaluation function to the next stage of its maturity.
4. The findings from Part I are encouraging. Despite operating in a period marked by financial pressures, organizational reforms and increasing demands across the multilateral system, EVAL achieved, or made substantial progress towards, most of the end targets established for the extension year of the Evaluation Strategy. Of the 21 indicators, 17 were achieved, two were partially achieved and two were not achieved. The targets for all five enablers were also achieved. Overall, these results indicate that the principal ambitions of the current Evaluation Strategy have been realized.
5. The reporting period also demonstrated the continued capacity of the evaluation function to innovate and adapt. One of the most significant developments was the institutionalization of the *i-eval* AI Assistant and its integration into the broader evaluation knowledge architecture. Together with enhanced evidence synthesis methods, interactive project performance dashboards and strengthened knowledge products, these innovations are expanding access to evaluative evidence and supporting more informed decision-making across the Office. The institutional foundations developed over successive strategy cycles are now firmly established and increasingly embedded within the Organization's management, oversight and learning processes. The overall picture that emerges from Part I is therefore not one of an evaluation function focused only on maintaining systems, but one of a function that continues to improve and evolve. The finding that some targets relating to staffing capacity, certification programmes and planned system enhancements were only partially achieved, largely owing to resource constraints, does not alter the broader conclusion that progress has continued to be made in strengthening the relevance, credibility and utility of the evaluation function during the reporting period.



- 6. Part II turns from the performance of the evaluation function itself to that of the Organization. The findings presented this year are particularly relevant given the growing focus across the United Nations (UN) system on efficiency, value for money and the effective use of limited resources. The evidence provides a balanced assessment. Evaluations continue to identify areas where operational processes can be strengthened and efficiencies further improved. Value for money was achieved when projects combined realistic design, the timely and flexible use of resources, strong technical capacity and effective partnerships, enabling them to deliver results efficiently and leverage additional support to extend their impact beyond the original investment.
- 7. Part III presents the outline of a results-based Evaluation Strategy 2027–29, informed by the evaluations carried out, including an independent evaluation of the ILO’s evaluation function, a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis, lessons from previous strategy cycles and extensive consultations. It reflects both the strengths of the current evaluation architecture and the challenges of an increasingly complex and resource-constrained environment. Over the past decade, the ILO’s evaluation function has evolved into a mature system supporting accountability, learning and decision-making. The next challenge is to ensure that this institutional legacy continues to innovate and generate strategic value. The proposed Evaluation Strategy therefore places greater emphasis on evidence use through knowledge management and artificial intelligence (AI), organizational learning and decision-making, while safeguarding the independence, quality, credibility and already structurally lean capacity of the evaluation function.



► **Part I. Progress made towards achieving the targets of the Evaluation Strategy**



Outcome 1: Enhanced capacities at the individual, organizational and enabling environment levels for planning, undertaking and using evaluations

Sub-outcome 1.1. Improved strategic planning and coordination with key internal and external stakeholders strengthens evaluation relevance, effectiveness and efficiency

Indicator 1.1.1: Degree to which effective integrated criteria-based procedures and practices are institutionalized and applied in the ILO to reduce the volume of evaluation and have strategically oriented evaluation learning and evidence by 2025.	End target (2026): Evidence mapping as part of the Criteria-based Integrated Evaluation Planning System (CIEPS) will be piloted in one department or region.
Status: Achieved.	

- 8. The Criteria-based Integrated Evaluation Planning System (CIEPS) was launched in 2024 to move away from a financial threshold-based approach towards a more strategic model based on evidence needs and learning priorities. While CIEPS has contributed to the undertaking of fewer and more strategic evaluations, its intended purpose has not yet been fully realized

across regions and departments, where the identification of evidence gaps and learning needs requires further strengthening to better inform evaluation planning.

9. In the current reporting period, 23 evaluations were waived (6 independent and 17 internal), compared with 25 in the previous reporting period, while the evaluation requirements for 33 development cooperation projects were consolidated into 13 clustered evaluations. To strengthen evidence-informed planning, EVAL invested staff time in 2026 to developing and piloting an online evidence-mapping tool in 2026. The tool maps and visualizes evaluation evidence by thematic area, region and department, helping to identify areas where evidence is well established as well as areas where significant gaps remain. Once finalized, this tool will help regions and departments identify priority evidence gaps and areas where evaluation is most needed. Results from the pilot will be reported in the Annual Evaluation Report 2026–27.

Indicator 1.1.2: The existence of coordinated and complementary evaluations with other oversight functions, knowledge and learning mechanisms in the ILO by 2025.

End target (2026): Standard operating procedures for systematic information-sharing across evaluation, oversight and learning functions.

Status: Achieved.

10. Following a collaborative drafting and consultation process, a standard operating procedure between EVAL and the Office of Internal Audit and Oversight was formally agreed upon in May 2026 and took effect immediately. The standard operating procedure establishes a clear framework for collaboration and information-sharing, including work plan and mission coordination, referral procedures and recommendation follow-up. It is intended to strengthen governance, accountability, organizational learning and oversight coherence across the ILO while fully safeguarding the independence, mandates and professional responsibilities of both offices.

Indicator 1.1.3: Percentage of mandatory evaluations that are completed in a timely and quality manner until 2025.

End target (2026): 95 per cent of mandatory and corporate evaluations are completed in a timely and quality manner.

Status: Achieved.



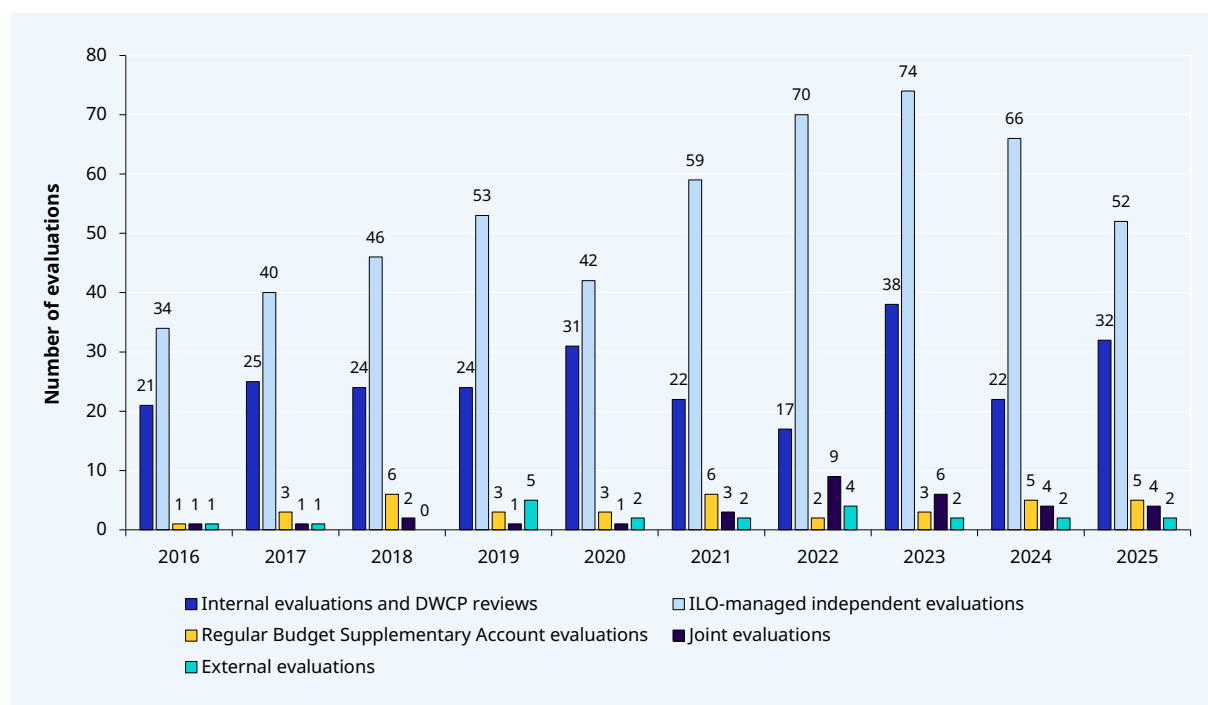
Project and programme evaluations

11. The *i-eval Discovery* dashboard provides public access to information on all planned and completed evaluations and, for completed evaluations, related lessons learned, good practices, recommendations and management responses. As at June 2026, the dashboard contained over 1,800 evaluations, 3,800 lessons learned, 1,700 good practices and 3,600 recommendations, providing staff and the constituents with a comprehensive repository of evaluative evidence for accountability, transparency and organizational learning.
12. In 2025, 52 independent evaluations were completed out of the 53 due – a welcome 21 per cent decrease from the previous year and a 30 per cent decrease from the record high of 74 in 2023 (figure 1). This reduction reflects the ongoing implementation of strategic evaluations through CIEPS (see indicator 1.1.1) and the intensified use of clustering in evaluations (see indicator 2.1.1).
13. Of the 53 independent evaluations due in 2025, 52 were completed, representing a 98 per cent completion rate and surpassing the end target. Of the 34 internal evaluations due, 32 were

completed, representing a 94 per cent completion rate and a 6 per cent increase from the previous year.

14. Looking ahead to the new strategy period (see Part III), EVAL will pilot the application of a higher financial threshold for mandatory independent project evaluations from the current US\$1 million to US\$1.5 million. The last threshold increase, from US\$500,000 to US\$1 million, dates back to 2011 and an update is needed to address evaluation fatigue and workload pressures in the context of capacity constraints. This threshold increase could lead to a reduction in the number of independent evaluations required in 2027 by 25 per cent.

► **Figure 1. Number of completed evaluations by type, 2016–25**



Selecting high-level evaluation topics for strategic use

15. In line with established practice, the Director of EVAL conducted an informal written consultation with Governing Body members on the 2027–29 rolling work plan for high-level evaluations. The constituents were invited to review past evaluations and comment on the proposed priorities for future strategic and institutional evaluations, taking into account the sequencing of evaluations. They were also informed of the Office's current capacity and resource constraints and the potential implications for sustaining the current practice of undertaking two strategic or institutional evaluations and one Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) evaluation annually.
16. The consultation generated strong interest in expanding the scope of the evaluation agenda, with the constituents identifying a broad range of strategic and institutional areas for future evaluation. The proposed rolling work plan reflects these priorities to the extent possible, taking into account the Office's available capacity and the need to preserve the quality, independence and timeliness of evaluations. Responses also reaffirmed the value of continuing to undertake DWCP evaluations. The proposed work plan, which reflects the feedback received, is set out in table 1.

► Table 1. Rolling work plan for high-level evaluations, 2027–29

Year	Strategic or institutional evaluation 1	Strategic or institutional evaluation 2	DWCP evaluation	Rationale
2027	Employment – to inform the 2028 recurrent discussion	Normative action	Europe and Central Asia (subject to available resources)	Strong support from the constituents for prioritizing employment to inform the 2028 recurrent discussion and for an evaluation of normative action.
2028	Social protection (labour protection) – to inform the 2029 recurrent discussion (to be confirmed)	Care economy or sustainable enterprise development and productivity	Arab States (subject to available resources)	Strong support from the constituents for continuing to align evaluations with recurrent discussions. Sustainable enterprise development and productivity received some support as a strategic priority, while an evaluation of the care economy would also be timely, as this area of ILO work has not previously been evaluated.
2029	Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work – to inform the 2030 recurrent discussion (to be confirmed)	Occupational safety and health	Africa (subject to available resources)	Strong support from the constituents for continuing to prioritize evaluations that inform recurrent discussions and for evaluating occupational safety and health as a core element of the Decent Work Agenda and the promotion of a safe and healthy working environment.



17. Recommendation 1: Endorse the topics proposed in the rolling work plan for high-level evaluations in 2027.

Sub-outcome 1.2. Enhanced evaluation capacity further strengthens evaluation function to implement its programme of evaluations

Indicator 1.2.1: Availability of improved training and recognition of, and incentives for, regional and departmental evaluation officers, focal points and evaluation managers in the ILO by 2025.

End target (2026): A cumulative total of 20 ILO staff are certified in the advanced Evaluation Manager Certification Programme (EMCP+).

Status: Partially achieved.

18. Progress in enhancing evaluation capacity for programmes presenting greater evaluation complexity has continued, although the cumulative target for 2026 has not yet been reached. Achieving certification under the advanced Evaluation Manager Certification Programme (EMCP+) requires a significant investment of staff time, combining intensive training, practical application and sustained follow-up work, reflecting the high standards expected of certified evaluation managers. Reaching the target of 20 certified evaluation managers will remain challenging unless departments and the regions are supported through cost-recovery mechanisms in releasing staff for certification and related evaluation management activities. While the approval of a job family for Evaluation Specialists and Officers at headquarters and Regional Evaluation Specialists and Officers in the field strengthens the recognition and professionalization of these specialists and officers, further investment in building a sustainable and appropriately incentivized cadre of evaluation managers remains essential to enhance evaluation quality, consistency, accountability and evidence-based decision-making across the ILO.

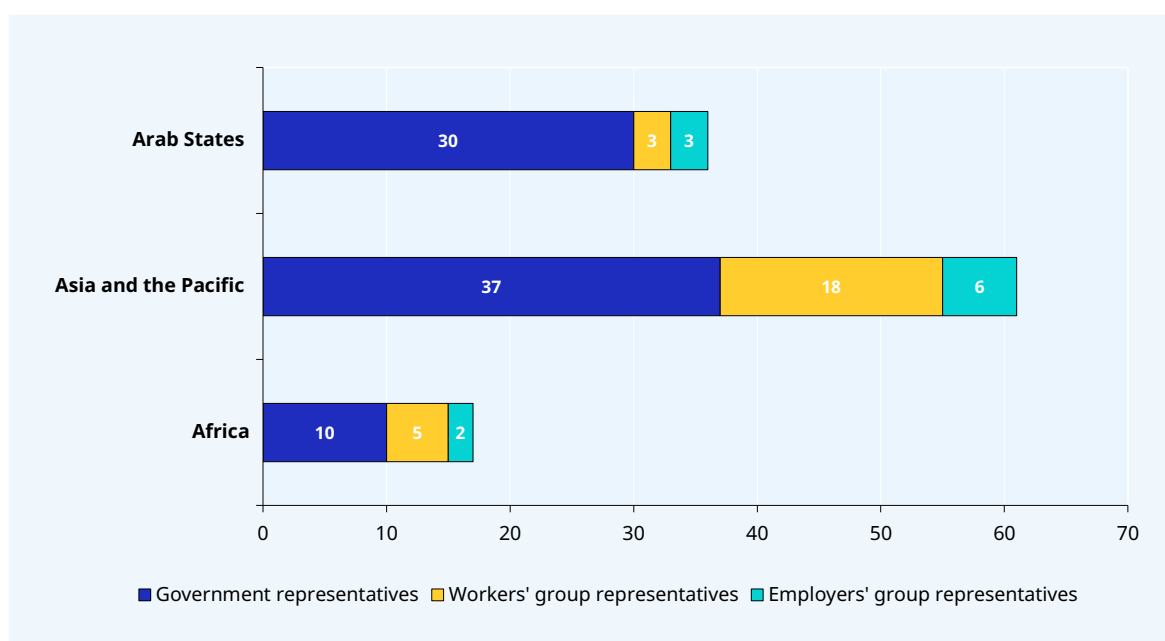
Indicator 1.2.2: Number of standard training activities organized by the ILO for tripartite constituents that are supported by EVAL to mainstream concepts on the evaluation of decent work until 2025.

End target (2026): By the end of 2026, EVAL will support at least one training course organized by the International Training Centre of the ILO and led by the Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP) or the Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV), based on identified relevance and demand.

Status: Achieved.

19. Experience to date suggests that flexible, demand-responsive support at the field level is an effective way to foster ownership and the practical application of evaluation concepts among the constituents. Consistent with this approach, EVAL has continued to contribute to existing training where there was clear demand and scope to add value. Building on previous efforts, EVAL supported three regional monitoring and evaluation initiatives involving the constituents in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and the Arab States, linked to the formulation and review of DWCPs (figure 2).

► **Figure 2. Number of representatives trained by region, 2025–26**



20. Beyond internal collaboration, EVAL is also contributing to the preparations for the forthcoming National Evaluation Capacities Conference, to be convened by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Global Evaluation Initiative, in which the tripartite constituents will again be invited to participate, continuing efforts to promote knowledge exchange and dialogue on evaluation issues relevant to decent work.
21. Strengthening evaluation capacities among the tripartite constituents remains an important area of collaboration for EVAL. Continued attention to this area in the next Evaluation Strategy period would help strengthen partnerships, expand opportunities for peer learning and dialogue, and further embed evaluation perspectives into constituent capacity-development initiatives.

Indicator 1.2.3: Percentage increase in the number of EMCP-certified ILO staff.

End target (2026): Maintain 150+ active certified evaluation managers; offer training if numbers fall below target.

Status: Achieved.

22. In an environment of continued financial and staffing pressures, certified evaluation managers remain essential to the effective functioning of the ILO's decentralized evaluation system. EVAL relies on a network of trained evaluation managers across headquarters and field offices to help manage a substantial portfolio of independent evaluations, while retaining full oversight of the process, including with regard to planning, coordination and quality assurance.
23. Although the number of certified evaluation managers has reached more than 250, a key challenge remains maintaining an active roster of such staff. Currently, approximately 125 certified evaluation managers are active, below the target of 150. This shortfall is largely due to the departure of around 30 per cent of active evaluation managers from the ILO during the reporting period, as a result of natural attrition and financial constraints. This highlights the need for continued training and certification to maintain a sufficiently large and geographically diverse pool of qualified evaluation managers. To help address this challenge, EVAL certified 15 additional staff members through the Evaluation Management Certification Programme (EMCP) during the reporting period. A further 11 staff members are currently undergoing the certification process.
24. At the same time, as emphasized by EVAL and supported by Governing Body members during the 355th Session (November 2025) of the Governing Body, continued attention is needed to develop sustainable cost-recovery and cost-sharing mechanisms. Embedding such arrangements within the ILO's financial governance framework should be pursued during the next Evaluation Strategy period to help compensate departments and the regions for staff time devoted to evaluation tasks. This would contribute to preserving institutional knowledge and sustaining the Organization's long-term evaluation capacity.





Outcome 2: Enhanced evaluation systems and processes leading to more credible, strategic and higher-quality evaluations

Sub-outcome 2.1. Use of more strategically oriented evaluations provides evaluative information that is more responsive to strategic and learning needs, enhancing the knowledge base on the ILO's contribution to decent work and providing more learning opportunities

Indicator 2.1.1: Degree to which clustered evaluations are institutionalized and functional in the ILO and are supported by donors by 2025.

End target (2026): 30 per cent of the 20 largest donors are involved in clustered evaluations.

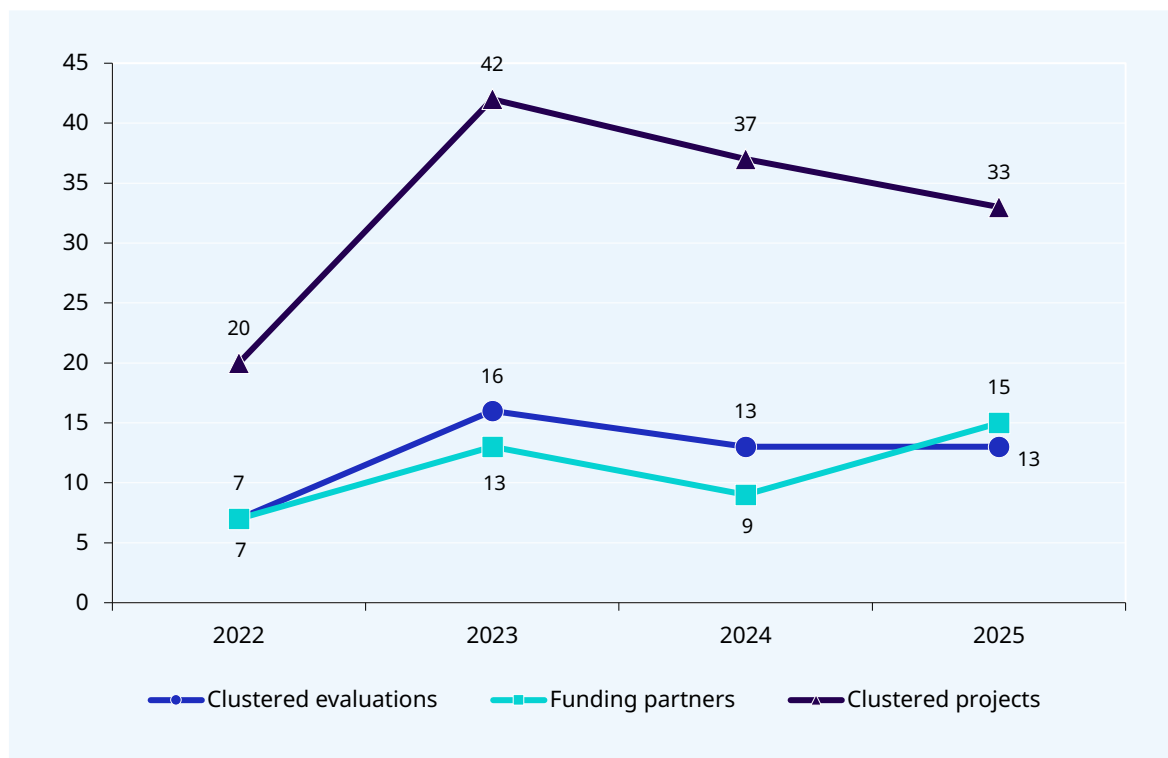
Status: Achieved.

25. In 2025, 15 donors were involved in 13 clustered independent evaluations (including one high-level evaluation), covering 33 development cooperation projects (figure 3). This continues the positive trend in donor participation in clustered evaluations: in 2024, 9 donors were involved in 13 clustered independent evaluations, covering 37 development cooperation projects. Overall, the number of donors participating in clustered evaluations increased by eight between 2022 and 2025. Of the 15 donors involved in clustered evaluations in 2025, 10 were among the 20 largest donors, representing 50 per cent, well above the 30 per cent end target and surpassing levels since 2022.¹
26. This result was achieved in part due to a new corporate standard text for evaluation clauses, agreed with the Multilateral Partnerships and Development Cooperation Department (PARTNERSHIPS) for inclusion in standard donor agreement templates, which designate clustered evaluations as the default modality. In addition, updated guidance for evaluation focal points in the departments and regions has supported the implementation of clustered evaluations. Looking ahead, EVAL expects more of the ILO's top 20 funding partners to be involved in clustered evaluations, which can reduce duplication, improve efficiency and generate more strategic evidence for decision-making.

¹ The ten donors were Canada, Colombia, the European Union, Germany, Japan, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United Nations and the United States of America.



► **Figure 3. Number of funding partners involved in clustered evaluations and clustered projects, 2022–25**



Indicator 2.1.2: Degree to which impact and ex-post evaluations are integrated in the evaluation plan of the ILO by 2025.

End target (2026): 50 per cent of impact evaluations are captured in the *i-eval* Discovery evaluation planning process.

Status: Partially achieved.

27. The consistent use of CIEPS by the evaluation network across regions and departments to capture in *i-eval* Discovery planned impact evaluations that are in addition to normal evaluation requirements has not yet been fully achieved, despite regular requests from EVAL. To date, EVAL has identified only a few planned impact evaluations, although there are indications that additional impact evaluations are being planned or are under way. EVAL will continue to strengthen its collaboration with the evaluation network to improve the identification and tracking of such evaluations.

Sub-outcome 2.2. Appropriate methodologies responsive to the ILO's mandate, context and learning needs are implemented

Indicator 2.2.1: Degree to which participatory methods for evaluations are further developed and applied for an enhanced use of results by 2025.

End target (2026): At least 30 per cent of surveyed evaluation users positively report on using evaluation results.

Status: Achieved.

28. The ILO continues to strengthen participatory methods and track performance on this indicator through the ex-post quality appraisal of decentralized evaluations, with the aim of

improving the credibility and use of evaluation results. EVAL's ex-post quality appraisal tool systematically tracks the level of stakeholder participation in evaluations, which can contribute to improved ownership and potential use of evaluation results. Meaningful stakeholder participation can include the discussion of evaluation findings and recommendations through validation workshops, thereby contributing to greater ownership and uptake of results.

29. The 2025 quality appraisal of 50 independent evaluations of development cooperation projects shows a significant improvement in stakeholder participation, rising from 45 per cent in 2024 to 90 per cent in 2025. Moreover, the extent to which participatory methods were used in evaluations continued to improve, with a 52 per cent "satisfactory" or above rating in 2025, on a par with 2024 (see indicator 2.4.1).

Indicator 2.2.2: Development of improved ILO evaluation policy guidelines and guidance material to best reflect the ILO's mandate and policy drivers by 2025.

End target (2026): The fifth edition of the policy guidelines is produced as an interactive, modular platform that adapts to the evaluation needs step by step.

Status: Not achieved.

30. Evaluation guidance is regularly updated to reflect evolving evaluation priorities and practices related to the world of work. During the current reporting period, EVAL prioritized the further development of its knowledge management platform as part of a broader strategy to create a comprehensive one-stop platform for evaluation knowledge across the ILO. The platform already provides integrated access to evaluation reports, lessons learned, good practices, recommendations and management responses, supported by the *i-eval* AI Assistant to improve accessibility and knowledge retrieval. Future phases aim to integrate evaluation policy guidance, external quality assessments of evaluation reports (see indicator 2.4.1) and project performance cards, based on the 29 key performance indicators (see Part II) currently available through an interactive business intelligence dashboard, creating a single-entry point for evaluation evidence, guidance and performance information. Due to budget constraints, implementation of this vision has been delayed. In the meantime, EVAL has focused on keeping existing guidance up to date and developing an implementation road map for further enhancements once resources become available.

Sub-outcome 2.3. The ILO's continued involvement in relevant initiatives in the United Nations system and multilateral institutions strengthens the independence, quality and credibility of its evaluation work

Indicator 2.3.1: Outcomes and products of the working groups of the United Nations Evaluation Group integrated in Evaluation Strategy guidance documents by 2025.

End target (2026): At least one joint UN synthesis initiative to capture progress concerning Sustainable Development Goal 8 has been completed.

Status: Achieved.

31. As part of the Global SDG Synthesis Coalition – an initiative led by the Independent Evaluation Office of the UNDP and supported by partners of the United Nations Evaluation Group to synthesize evaluative evidence across the five pillars of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – EVAL has played a key role in advancing the Prosperity Pillar synthesis, which covers Goals 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 and is co-led by the ILO, the UNDP, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The



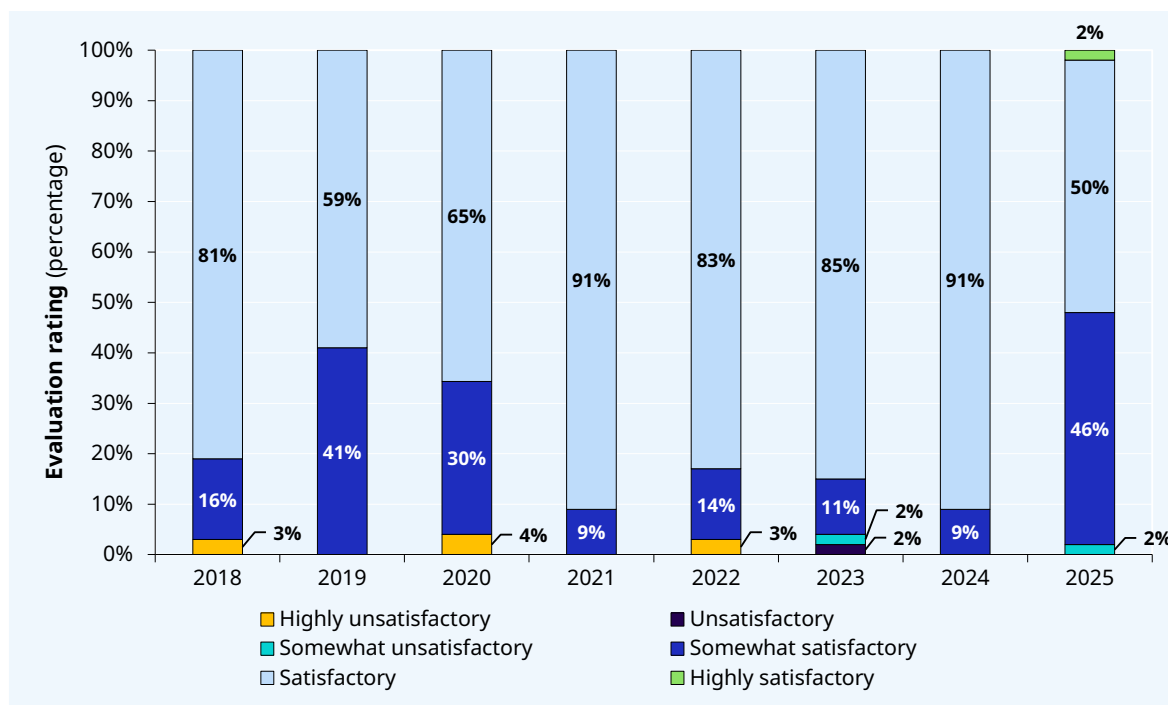
preparatory phase has been completed, including agreement on governance arrangements, resource mobilization and the launch of a scoping exercise to assess the available evidence base and identify priority knowledge gaps. Particular attention has been given to Goal 8 and the Decent Work Agenda, in consultation with the office of the Chief Economist of the ILO. By the end of 2026, the initiative is expected to produce an evidence-gap map for the Prosperity Pillar, including Goal 8, providing a systematic overview of available evaluative evidence and identifying priority areas for further evidence generation and synthesis. EVAL is also contributing to the section on AI in the United Nations Evaluation Group’s Evaluation Synthesis Guidance, strengthening collaboration on evaluation methods across the UN system.

Sub-outcome 2.4. Quality of all types of evaluations assures credible, useful evaluation results that can be acted upon by management and constituents

Indicator 2.4.1: Availability of an improved and effective quality assessment mechanism in the ILO by 2025 to assess the utility of independent evaluations.	End target (2026): At least 15 per cent of evaluations involve diverse categories of stakeholders in analysis and reporting through participatory methods measured against the 2025 baseline.
Status: Achieved.	

32. The ILO’s external quality assurance system provides an independent assessment of the quality of evaluation reports submitted in the previous year, supporting continuous improvement in evaluation practice. Since 2015, the system has been aligned with UN standards, including the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP) and, since 2025, the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy. In the 2025 quality assurance cycle, a sample of 50 evaluation reports was reviewed. Overall, 98 per cent of reports were rated at least “somewhat satisfactory”, maintaining a median quality score of 5 on a scale of 1 to 6 and confirming the consistently high quality of the evaluation portfolio. The evolution of evaluation report quality ratings is presented in figure 4.
33. The quality assurance findings also showed encouraging progress in participatory evaluation approaches. The median score for participatory methodologies increased from 3 in the 2024 quality assurance cycle to 5 in 2025, reflecting broader uptake of participatory practices. While the proportion of evaluations rated “somewhat satisfactory”, “satisfactory” or “highly satisfactory” remained close to 100 per cent, compared with the previous cycle, the analysis confirmed a moderate positive correlation between participatory methodologies and overall evaluation quality, reinforcing the value of stakeholder participation in strengthening evaluation quality. These findings indicate continued progress towards the 2026 target of increasing stakeholder participation through participatory methods.
34. Performance against the UN-SWAP framework also improved, with 50 per cent of evaluations fully meeting gender-responsive standards, compared with 32 per cent in the previous quality assurance cycle. The introduction of disability inclusion into the quality assurance framework established a baseline for future monitoring and identified disability inclusion analysis as an area requiring further attention across the evaluation portfolio.



► **Figure 4. Evolution of evaluation report quality ratings, 2018–25**

Indicator 2.4.2: Operational and effective quality assessment process for impact evaluations in place and applied in the ILO by 2025.

End target (2026): At least 50 per cent of impact evaluations in the ILO known to EVAL use the ex-post impact evaluation quality assessment tool.

Status: Not achieved.

35. EVAL has integrated impact evaluations into CIEPS. However, greater awareness of the system's application to impact evaluations is needed, as its use, to date, has been focused mainly on traditional project evaluations. An inventory and baseline have therefore not yet been established to determine the proportion of impact evaluations using EVAL's ex-post impact evaluation quality assessment tool. During the reporting period, EVAL received three initial proposals for impact evaluations from technical and regional offices. Following review, however, none were found to meet the criteria for an impact evaluation.
36. To strengthen institutional capacity, EVAL organized a community of practice event in September 2025 to discuss an impact evaluation of youth employment services in Tunisia. The event was attended by more than 100 participants from headquarters and regional and country offices, and featured presentations by the consulting firm that conducted the evaluation, the government institution using the findings to inform policy priorities and the ILO Country Office for Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia.
37. EVAL will continue to promote its impact evaluation tools and technical support through the community of practice, while establishing a reliable inventory and baseline to monitor their use. Progress remains constrained by the limited number of evaluations that meet the methodological standards for credible impact evaluations, resulting in a smaller-than-anticipated pool of evaluations eligible for the Impact Evaluation Review Facility and the associated quality assessment tool.



Outcome 3: Expanded knowledge base of evaluation findings and recommendations that effectively contributes to organizational learning and enhances organizational effectiveness

Sub-outcome 3.1. The ILO's evaluation dashboard (*i-eval* Discovery) is revamped with improved functionality and use

Indicator 3.1.1: Existence of an improved *i-eval* Discovery for enhanced visibility and use by 2025.

End target (2026): The *i-eval* Discovery AI chatbot is rolled out to the external public and over 60 per cent of users find the chatbot to be responsive to their needs.

Status: Achieved.

38. The *i-eval* AI Assistant is a key component of EVAL's knowledge management strategy to make evaluative evidence more accessible, usable and actionable across the ILO. Drawing on the extensive knowledge base available through *i-eval* Discovery, which already integrates evaluation reports, lessons learned, good practices, recommendations and management responses, the AI Assistant provides concise, source-cited responses to evaluation-related questions. Between July 2025 and June 2026, 336 unique users engaged with the AI Assistant, with an average of five messages per chat session. User feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with 95.1 per cent of respondents reporting satisfaction, 3.8 per cent reporting high satisfaction and only 1.1 per cent expressing dissatisfaction.
39. EVAL's broader vision is to transform *i-eval* Discovery into a comprehensive one-stop platform for evaluation evidence. Making evaluation resources accessible through a unified, AI-enabled interface would enable users to navigate more easily between evidence, guidance and performance information, significantly enhancing the use of evaluation for learning, accountability, decision-making and project design.
40. Many of the elements for the one-stop platform are already in place. During the reporting period, senior management approved the roll-out of the *i-eval* AI Assistant beyond the Office to the ILO's constituents and external users. This represents a transformative step towards democratizing access to more than two decades of evaluation knowledge. This public roll-out, expected before the end of 2026, will significantly expand the reach and use of evaluation findings while positioning the ILO at the forefront of AI-enabled knowledge management and evidence use within the multilateral system.



Sub-outcome 3.2. Better targeted knowledge and communication products strengthen their potential use and integration in the ILO's knowledge base

Indicator 3.2.1: Development of enhanced synthesis and meta-study reports responsive to needs by 2025.

End target (2026): Evaluative evidence generated through the *i-eval* AI Assistant is used to support at least three audience-specific products of synthesized information on evaluation results and learnings.

Status: Achieved.

41. As reported under indicator 3.1.1, EVAL developed the i-eval AI Assistant, an AI tool designed to improve the accessibility and synthesis of evaluative evidence while increasing the overall efficiency of EVAL's business processes.
42. The i-eval AI Assistant has already been applied across several evaluation processes. For the 2026 high-level evaluations, it supported the rapid screening and synthesis of large volumes of evaluative evidence from decentralized evaluations, enabling the scoping of synthesis reviews for each evaluation. In addition, the thematic evaluation of the ILO Action Plan for Gender Equality 2022–25 used the tool to identify cross-cutting trends and recurring recommendations related to inclusion and gender-responsive programming across a broad portfolio of evaluations. Throughout these processes, EVAL ensured that all AI-assisted outputs were subject to human oversight and validation to maintain methodological rigour, contextual accuracy and alignment with ILO evaluation standards and principles.
43. Looking ahead, the tool is expected to play an important role in the next Evaluation Strategy by supporting the rapid synthesis of evaluative evidence and the production of targeted knowledge products for governance, management and technical audiences, thereby strengthening evidence-informed decision-making across the ILO.

Indicator 3.2.2: A functional and effective mechanism to validate good practices is in place in the ILO by 2025.

End target (2026): Two targeted reports presenting good practices drawn from evaluation findings are developed and are validated by ILO technical experts to enhance relevance and uptake.

Status: Achieved.

44. During the previous reporting period, EVAL launched the *i-eval Insights* series to provide targeted analysis on the world of work grounded in evaluative evidence. The first three issues, covering the promotion of international labour standards, tripartism and social dialogue, and disability inclusion, synthesized large volumes of evaluative evidence, validated by technical experts, and offered practical insights to inform ongoing and future interventions. Since the last reporting period, EVAL has published a fourth issue, *How the ILO shaped policies, delivered strategic results and ensured sustainability through development cooperation (2019–2024)*. A fifth issue is scheduled for publication in the last quarter of 2026 and will focus on the ILO's operational efficiency in delivering development cooperation-funded initiatives.
45. Moving forward, the i-eval Insights series will remain an important vehicle for translating evaluative evidence into actionable knowledge to support accountability, organizational learning and strategic decision-making across the ILO.

Indicator 3.2.3: Extent to which innovative ways to present targeted evaluation results exist and are applied in the ILO by 2025.

End target (2026): 30 per cent of new communication and knowledge management products incorporate innovative ways of presenting targeted results.

Status: Achieved.

46. The scope and number of communication and knowledge products have increased by more than 150 per cent since 2016, reflecting EVAL's commitment to innovative approaches to presenting targeted evaluation results to diverse audiences. During the reporting period, key examples include the launch of a pilot business intelligence dashboard that displays an up-to-date snapshot of project performance trends across 29 key performance indicators (KPIs),



drawing on annual meta-analyses of evaluations. The dashboard enables users to explore and compare data in an accessible and user-friendly format. Another notable innovation is EVAL's enhanced presentation of its core evaluation reports on its public website through interactive modules, alongside the continued synthesis of evaluation findings into tailored knowledge products under EVAL's Insights series. Looking ahead, EVAL will continue to develop targeted communication and knowledge products designed to meet the needs of different audiences.

Indicator 3.2.4: Percentage of evaluation recommendations fully or partially implemented within 12 months of completion of an evaluation. An effective mechanism to assess the quality of follow-up to recommendations is in place in the ILO by 2025.

End target (2026): 85 per cent of recommendations are fully or partially implemented within 12 months of completion of an evaluation.

Status: Achieved.

47. EVAL's Automated Management Response System enables the recording and tracking of management responses to recommendations from independent evaluations. Line managers are responsible to submit management responses on a timely basis and are required to indicate the extent to which a recommendation has been completed, partially completed, if no action is planned, if action has not yet been taken or if it has been rejected.
48. During the review period, all of the 50 required management responses to recommendations from independent evaluations were received (100 per cent), representing 359 recommendations that have been addressed. Of these, 79 per cent of recommendations have been "completed" or "partially completed"; 12 per cent have not yet been actioned; 7 per cent do not have any action planned; and 2 per cent have either been rejected or are not applicable.

Sub-outcome 3.3. Improved tracking of uptake and use by constituents and management of the knowledge and lessons generated from evaluations for governance and decision-making

Indicator 3.3.1: Extent to which the profile of evaluation results is strengthened in the ILO's strategic and programmatic documents (programme and budget, programme implementation report, Governing Body reports) and knowledge-sharing platforms.

End target (2026): Evaluation findings are consistently embedded across strategic and programmatic documents (programme implementation reports, programme and budget documents and strategic plans) and organizational knowledge platforms.

Status: Achieved.

49. As part of its annual review of the use of evaluation findings in ILO strategic and programmatic documents, EVAL assessed documents from recent sessions of the International Labour Conference and the Governing Body, together with key corporate documents, including the programme implementation report, programme and budget proposals, and major strategy and reform-related documents.
50. The review found that, in 2026, 55 per cent of references to evaluation related to programme design, 34 per cent related to evidence used in discussions, and 10 per cent related to policy decisions (table 2). Compared with previous reporting cycles, evaluation findings were more frequently used to inform programme design – including the design and refinement of strategies, action plans, implementation frameworks and organizational reforms – while continuing to provide evidence for policy decisions and discussions, including Governing Body deliberations. Recent high-level evaluations and synthesis reviews were consistently



referenced in the development of the programme and budget, development cooperation strategies, thematic action plans and reform initiatives.

51. These findings suggest an increasing use of evaluation as a forward-looking tool and a source of evidence for programme development and organizational learning. While evaluation evidence continued to support accountability and policy discussions, its increased use in strategic planning reflected the Organization's focus on setting strategic priorities during the reporting period.

► **Table 2. References made to evaluation in ILO strategic and programmatic documents, 2024–26**

Year	Documents reviewed	Total references	Policy decisions (percentage)	Programme design (percentage)	Evidence used in discussions (percentage)
2024	182	66	23	9	68
2025	169	60	38	13	48
2026	175	67	10	55	34

Indicator 3.3.2: Enhanced strategic role of the Evaluation Advisory Committee and regional chapters in the ILO by 2025 for the strategic identification of knowledge requirements, uptake and use of evaluation results.

End target (2026): The Evaluation Advisory Committee's role in supporting regional and departmental uptake is enhanced further through evaluative insights.

Status: Achieved.

52. In 2025, the Evaluation Advisory Committee, chaired by the Deputy Director-General, met twice (March and August), as reported in the Annual Evaluation Report 2024–25. In the absence of a Chairperson at the mandated Deputy Director-General level, a further session was conducted through online correspondence in March–April 2026, with discussions facilitated by EVAL. The session continued to advance the Committee's role in promoting the strategic use of high-level evaluation recommendations.
53. Key messages from the Evaluation Advisory Committee to the responsible ILO offices included the need to use the new Development Cooperation Strategy as a living document that fosters continuous learning and improvement; to place the constituents' needs at the centre of development cooperation programming; and to strengthen the engagement of the Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP) and the Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV), including in project design and resource mobilization. The Committee also reflected on the Governing Body's discussions on the high-level evaluation of the Better Work programme, particularly regarding the ILO's role in global supply chains.
54. These discussions reaffirmed the role of management responses to high-level evaluations in addressing strategic institutional priorities and promoting organizational learning and improvements in the ILO's effectiveness, impact and efficiency in a rapidly evolving operating environment.
55. Building on the good practice of establishing regional chapters of the Evaluation Advisory Committee, first introduced in Latin America and the Caribbean, a regional chapter for the Arab States was launched online in September 2025. The Committee reviewed management



responses and work plans for project evaluation recommendations, strengthening follow-up, accountability and organizational learning.

Indicator 3.3.3: Number of comprehensive and timely overviews of the overall effectiveness of the ILO produced annually by 2025.

End target (2026): Four annual overviews of ILO effectiveness are produced and the results are presented to the Governing Body through the Annual Evaluation Report.

Status: Achieved.

56. EVAL continued its annual assessment of the ILO's decent work results through its established performance review framework, achieving the 2026 target. During the reporting period, the meta-analysis of development cooperation results applied a strengthened and innovative methodology to assess effectiveness against the ILO's strategic priorities. The analysis presents performance findings at both the country programme outcome and policy outcome levels and includes a dedicated analysis of trends in the ILO's efficiency in delivering decent work results. The detailed findings are presented in Part II.



Enabling environment

Enabler 1: Degree to which a functioning evaluation trust fund exists in the ILO by 2025 that is supported by funding partners.

End target (2026): At least two new funding partners are part of the ILO Evaluation Trust Fund.

Status: Achieved

Custodians: PARTNERSHIPS, Financial Management Department (FINANCE) and EVAL.

57. The establishment of the ILO Evaluation Trust Fund represents a significant institutional achievement, following several years of consultation, design and engagement with internal and external stakeholders. The Fund provides a mechanism to move from fragmented project-level evaluation financing towards a more strategic and cost-effective approach to evaluation planning and delivery.
58. During the reporting period, a new donor agreement template was developed with PARTNERSHIPS, offering donors greater flexibility in supporting the ILO Evaluation Trust Fund. Options include direct voluntary contributions to the Fund as well as the allocation of 1.5 per cent of project budgets to the Fund in lieu of the mandatory 2 per cent currently earmarked for individual project evaluations. This enables EVAL to undertake evaluations in a coordinated and clustered manner, reducing transaction costs, improving coverage and creating opportunities for strategic, impact and ex-post evaluations that are often not feasible under project-based funding arrangements.
59. The Government of Flanders has already contributed its evaluation budget to the ILO Evaluation Trust Fund, while Luxembourg has agreed to transfer unspent project evaluation funds to the Fund to support follow-up evaluation activities. The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation have also expressed interest and are considering formal participation in the arrangement, reflecting growing donor interest in the Fund and its potential to strengthen the evaluation function.



Enabler 2: Percentage of ILO DWCPs and development cooperation-funded interventions that are responsive to constituents' institutional capacity needs and their on-the-ground realities.

End target (2026): At least 60 per cent of ILO development cooperation projects involve constituents in design and implementation. At least 70 per cent of new DWCPs (against 2022 baseline) involve constituents in their design.

Status: Achieved.

Custodians: Evaluation network (EVAL, regional evaluation officers, departmental evaluation focal points, evaluation managers) ACT/EMP, ACTRAV, PARTNERSHIPS and the Strategic Programming and Management Department (PROGRAM).

60. Constituent participation continued to be an important feature of the ILO's development cooperation and country programming processes throughout the reporting period. EVAL's annual meta-analysis of decent work results found that 60 per cent of development cooperation interventions implemented in 2025 involved the constituents in their design, achieving the target set for 2026. At the country level, all DWCPs approved during 2025–26 were developed through direct consultation with the constituents. This sustained commitment to participatory approaches helps strengthen the responsiveness of ILO interventions, foster national ownership and support more durable results. Moreover, EVAL's pilot business intelligence dashboard will continue to provide the ILO with a robust tool for providing an up-to-date snapshot of project performance trends at the country, regional and global levels to support evidence-based decision-making (see indicator 3.2.3).

Enabler 3: Integrated evaluation needs into monitoring and evaluation frameworks of development cooperation projects by 2025.

End target (2026): 30 per cent of ILO development cooperation-funded interventions have acceptable monitoring systems in place as measured by EVAL data.

Status: Achieved.

Custodians: PROGRAM, PARTNERSHIPS, EVAL, regions and technical departments.

61. The latest edition of EVAL's meta-analysis of decent work results (see Part II) found that 35 per cent of development cooperation-funded interventions had established monitoring systems, thereby achieving the 2026 target. Good practices included the use of dedicated monitoring systems, digital platforms and multi-level frameworks to track results, supported by the stronger involvement of monitoring and evaluation officers and the use of mixed quantitative and qualitative methods.
62. Innovative monitoring approaches continued to emerge across regions. In Latin America and the Caribbean, standardized monitoring templates improved the consistency, quality and comparability of project data, while evaluability reviews for projects exceeding US\$5 million strengthened monitoring and evaluation frameworks. Elsewhere, tracer studies were used to assess longer-term results in Colombia, Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon, while outcome mapping was applied in Asia and the Pacific, including in Cambodia, Indonesia and Viet Nam. Regular coordination meetings further strengthened reporting, partner capacity and accountability.
63. The Office continues to strengthen project-level monitoring and reporting mechanisms to support improved performance. In 2026, it expects to launch an application linking the ILO's programme and budget, DWCPs and development cooperation projects, further enhancing results monitoring and reporting.



Enabler 4: Number of strategic programmatic and knowledge-sharing and learning discussions to which EVAL contributes with evaluative inputs.

End target (2026): EVAL (including regional evaluation officers and departmental evaluation focal points) invited to and contribute in at least four strategic programmatic, knowledge-sharing and learning discussions to provide evaluative inputs.

Status: Achieved.

Custodians: EVAL (including regional evaluation officers and departmental evaluation focal points), regions, technical departments, the Research and Statistics Department, PROGRAM, the Office of Internal Audit and Oversight and the Independent Oversight Advisory Committee.

64. To strengthen the use of evaluative evidence in organizational decision-making, the 2026 target was to contribute evaluative inputs into at least four strategic, programmatic or learning discussions. The target was achieved through contributions at both the global and the regional levels. At the global level, the 2024 high-level independent evaluation of ILO's Development Cooperation Strategy informed Office-wide discussions on organizational efficiency and the reform process. EVAL's annual meta-analysis of decent work results from project evaluations, organized by country programme outcome, informed outcome-based work planning across the Office. In addition, evaluative inputs are consistently provided to the Office of Internal Audit and Oversight in relation to planned audits.
65. At the regional level, evaluations informed strategic thinking and strengthened planning capacity. For instance, in the Arab States, the findings from evaluations of the Employment-Intensive Investment Programme in Jordan were presented by the regional evaluation officer to inform the Programme's future direction in the context of the ILO reform. In Latin America and the Caribbean, evaluation evidence from the previous five years was presented by the regional evaluation officer as a dedicated agenda item at the Regional Management Team meeting in July 2026. The discussion highlighted recurring implementation challenges, emerging patterns across evaluations and opportunities to strengthen the uptake of recommendations.

Enabler 5: Availability of formal training that integrates evaluative thinking in the ILO by 2025.

End target (2026): At least 25 per cent of all newly onboarded ILO staff have completed the training module on evaluation.

Status: Achieved.

Custodians: Human Resources Development Department, International Training Centre of the ILO and EVAL.

66. As part of the ILO Orientation Journey programme offered by the International Training Centre of the ILO, EVAL organized an interactive onboarding session on the role and value of evaluation in the Organization. In 2025, 62 of the 102 newly recruited staff (61 per cent) participated in the session.
67. To further institutionalize evaluative thinking, EVAL, in collaboration with the International Training Centre of the ILO, rolled out the new online induction course *Evaluation at the ILO: Learning for Greater Impact* in 2025. The 30-minute interactive course explains the purpose of evaluation, its contribution to organizational accountability and learning, and key evaluation processes and responsibilities across the Office. Since its launch, 138 staff have completed the



course, contributing to efforts to embed evaluation knowledge and evidence-informed thinking across the Organization.

► Part II. Assessing the ILO's effectiveness and results through development cooperation projects

68. Over the past decade, EVAL has annually synthesized evidence from independent project evaluations as a proxy for assessing organizational effectiveness through a series of decent work meta-analyses. These assessments have served as a key source of information for monitoring progress against KPIs in successive programmes and budgets.
69. Each year a specific theme is examined. This year, section 2.1 presents an analysis of the ILO's resource efficiency based on evidence from evaluations of the ILO's development cooperation portfolio conducted during 2022–25. Using the same evidence base, section 2.2 provides the traditional longitudinal synthesis of performance against 29 KPIs, organized by thematic cluster. The analysis highlights overall progress across indicators while identifying areas where efficiency challenges remain.
70. In line with EVAL's ongoing efforts to strengthen alignment with the ILO's programme and budget framework, Part II concludes with an examination of performance trends at the policy outcome level and across regional clusters of country programme outcomes for 2022–25 (section 2.3).

2.1. Thematic analysis: Efficiency in delivering decent work results, 2022–25

71. This section presents six key insights into the factors that contributed to resource efficiency across the 2022–25 portfolio of development cooperation-funded interventions (figure 5). The insights are interrelated and are based on evidence from three of the 29 KPIs: cost-efficiency; the adequacy and timely deployment of human and financial resources; and the mobilization of additional financial, technical and institutional support.

► **Figure 5. Better outcomes and greater impact through the efficient use of resources**





Insight 1: Efficiency begins with realistic project design, proportionate scope and the use of existing systems

- 72. Projects were generally more resource-efficient when objectives, delivery models and geographic scope were realistically aligned with available resources from the outset. Efficiency was often enhanced when interventions built on existing ILO tools, institutional relationships, lessons from previous initiatives, previous programme investments and established delivery systems rather than creating parallel arrangements.
- 73. Shared management functions, joint implementation platforms and coordinated approaches across projects further reduced duplication and generated economies of scale. In some cases, alignment with existing strategic priorities also contributed to more efficient implementation. Conversely, weaker-performing projects often reflected a mismatch between objectives, scope and available resources.



Insight 2: Efficiency requires timely access, deployment and the management of resources

- 74. Across 2022–25, resource adequacy depended not only on the volume of resources available, but also on their timely access, deployment and management. Evaluations showed that implementation challenges arose both when resources were insufficient and when available resources could not be mobilized or deployed effectively. Procurement processes, disbursement delays, recruitment bottlenecks, contracting procedures and administrative requirements frequently constrained implementation and slowed the delivery of outputs and outcomes.
- 75. Stronger-performing projects benefited from predictable funding flows and the timely deployment of staff, expertise and other inputs. Evaluations also documented cases where available resources could not be used effectively because of operational and administrative constraints. In some instances, weak expenditure monitoring, limited financial information or resource shortfalls further constrained the achievement of planned outputs and outcomes.



Insight 3: Flexibility supports efficiency in complex contexts. Adaptive management and flexible delivery models improve performance

- 76. Projects operating in fragile, crisis-affected or rapidly changing environments often sustained performance through adaptive resource management. Evaluations highlighted the importance of reallocating budgets, adjusting delivery modalities, reprioritizing activities, redeploying staff and modifying implementation arrangements in response to changing circumstances, while maintaining progress towards intended results.
- 77. Flexible implementation arrangements also helped sustain efficiency. Adaptations frequently involved the greater use of local capacities and delivery systems, enabling projects to respond more effectively to contextual constraints. Several projects reduced costs and strengthened contextual relevance by relying on national consultants, local trainers and in-house expertise. Similar approaches also helped sustain implementation where travel restrictions, security challenges or limited access to international technical support affected delivery.





Insight 4: Partnerships and co-financing expand impact. Strategic collaboration helps achieve results beyond project resources

- 78. Resource efficiency increased when projects leveraged development cooperation results, partnerships and policy engagement to mobilize additional financing, in-kind support and follow-on investments. By leveraging external resources, projects were often able to expand their scale, reduce pressure on core budgets and improve prospects for sustainability beyond the project life cycle.
- 79. Projects expanded their resource base through co-financing and cost-sharing arrangements, while others benefited from in-kind contributions and other forms of partner support. Resource mobilization was often most successful when projects were embedded within broader policy, donor and partnership frameworks that created opportunities for collaboration and follow-on financing. Projects also drew on existing UN partnerships, donor platforms and thematic portfolios to attract complementary resources and extend implementation beyond the original project design.
- 80. At the same time, evaluations highlighted resource mobilization as an ongoing challenge. While good practices are identified, the decent work results meta-analysis series continues to highlight interventions that end without clear successor funding or government budget commitments.



Insight 5: Staffing capacity, technical expertise and field presence drive efficiency

- 81. Strong staffing arrangements, technical expertise and field-level presence emerged as important enablers of resource efficiency across the development cooperation portfolio assessed since 2022. Evaluations consistently found that projects with experienced coordinators, active country-office engagement and technical specialists embedded in implementation contexts were better able to maintain stakeholder relationships, mobilize partnerships, support implementation and adapt to changing circumstances, particularly in complex operating environments.
- 82. Access to specialized technical expertise further strengthened implementation capacity and contributed to effective delivery. However, staffing constraints frequently reduced efficiency where project scope exceeded available human resources. Overstretched teams, delayed recruitment and limited administrative support constrained implementation, reduced capacity for follow-up and increased pressure on existing staff.



Insight 6: Challenges remain in assessing efficiency across projects and contexts

- 83. Resource efficiency remains difficult to assess rigorously due to limitations in the availability and integration of financial and performance data. Assessments of efficiency and value for money were strongest when financial data could be considered alongside evidence of implementation progress and results achieved. Evaluators were more confident in positive efficiency judgements when projects demonstrated strong budget execution, the substantial delivery of planned outputs and clear progress towards intended outcomes. In some cases,



efficiency assessments were further supported by evidence that resources were directed towards beneficiaries and core technical activities.

84. These findings point to the need for stronger integration of financial, operational (including staffing utilization) and results data throughout implementation. Without such evidence, efficiency may be underestimated in some contexts or overstated on the basis of expenditure levels and positive perceptions alone.
85. **Recommendation 2: The ILO should strengthen project resource efficiency by adopting a more strategic approach to resource management throughout the project cycle. This should include conducting regular reviews of resource allocation, expenditure, implementation capacity and alignment with project objectives, while leveraging co-financing and partnerships where appropriate. This will support timely corrective action, improve value for money, enhance the sustainability of results and strengthen accountability to funding partners.**

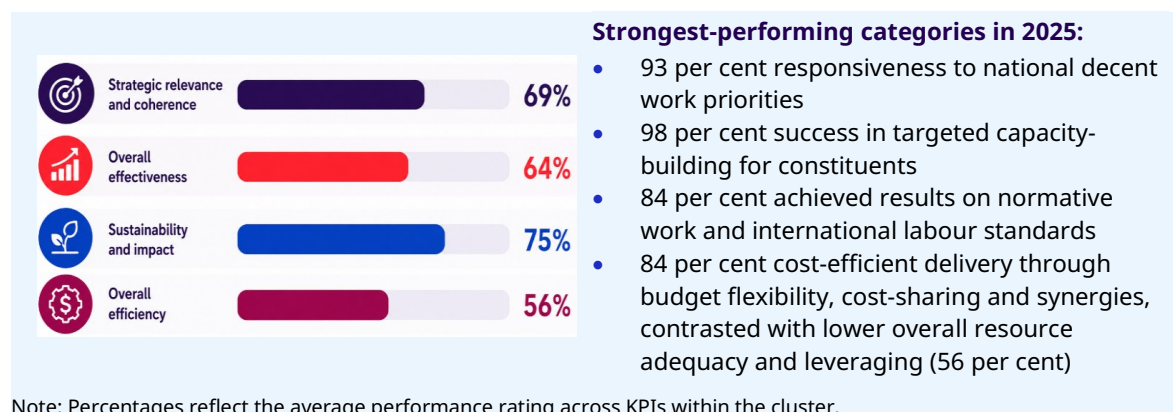
2.2. Assessing the overall effectiveness in the achievement of results of the ILO's development cooperation portfolio in 2025 against 29 key performance indicators

86. The 2025 performance of the development cooperation portfolio was assessed by EVAL using 29 KPIs, each rated on a four-point scale from 1 (unsuccessful) to 4 (highly successful). The indicators are grouped into four clusters – strategic relevance and coherence; effectiveness; sustainability and impact; and efficiency – in line with the evaluation standards of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and ILO cross-cutting policy priorities. A summary of the results and the main factors influencing performance is presented below (figures 6–10). The decent work results meta-analysis, including detailed evidence and illustrative examples of good practice, are available on the [EVAL web page](#).

Key trends and insights on overall ILO development cooperation performance in 2025

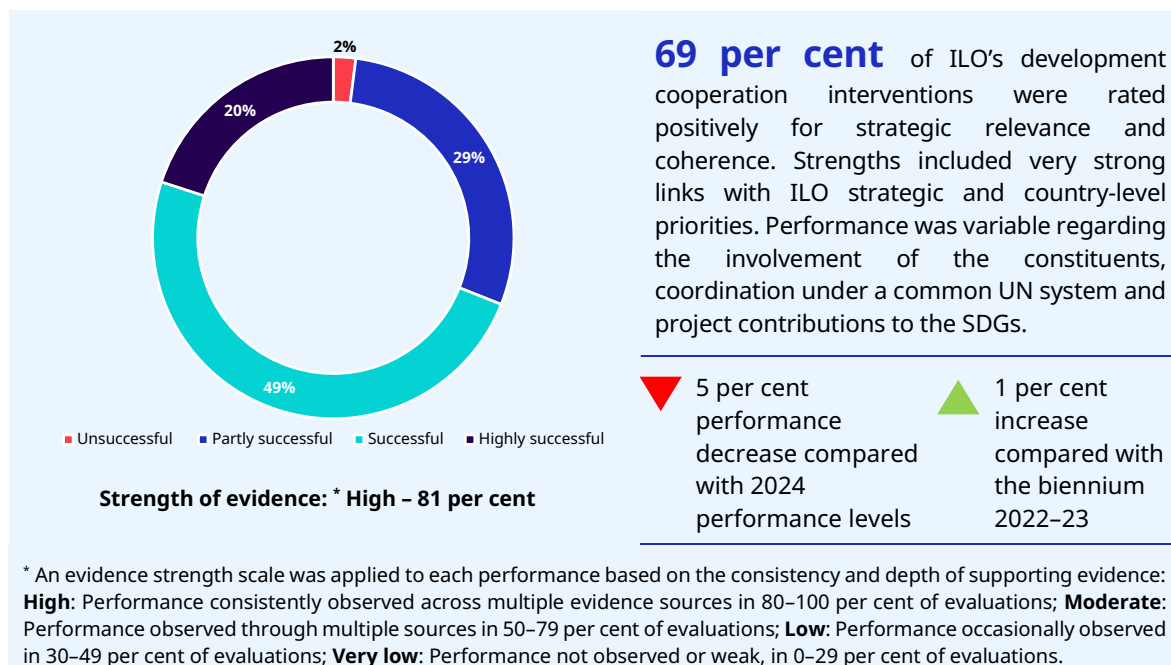
In 2025, 64 per cent of the ILO's development cooperation portfolio achieved average or above-average results, a 3 percentage-point increase from 2024, reflecting continued improvement.

► **Figure 6. Overall performance by cluster, 2025**



Strategic relevance and alignment of ILO development cooperation in 2025

► **Figure 7. Average distribution of scores on the strategic relevance and coherence of interventions, 2025**

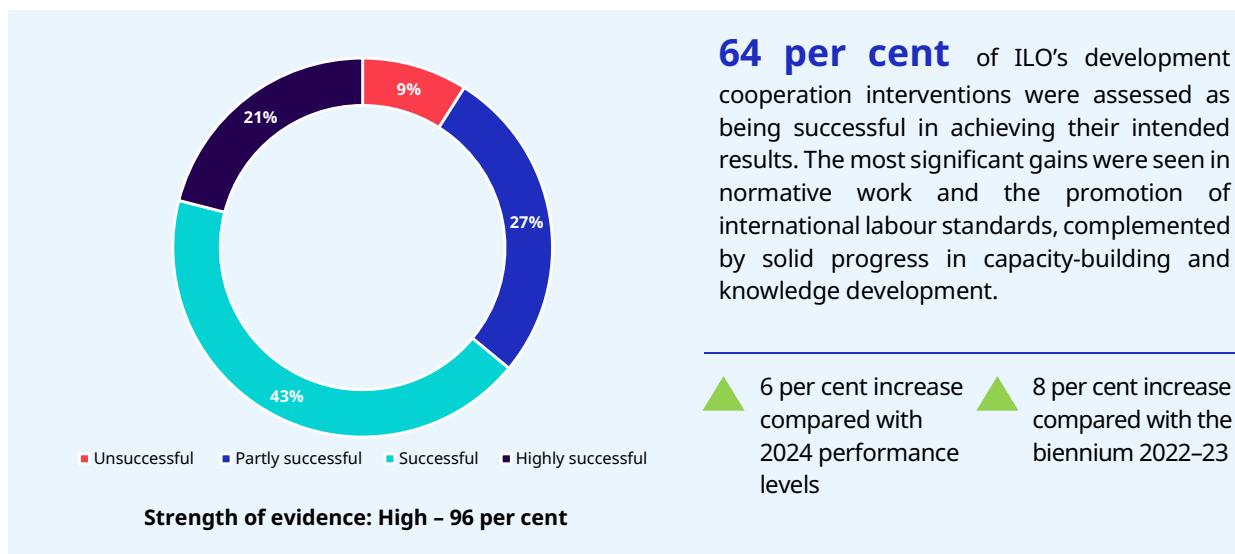


87. Strategic relevance was a consistent strength across the portfolio. Most interventions were closely aligned with ILO programme and budget outcomes, DWCPs and country programme outcomes. National decent work priorities identified by the constituents were reflected in 60 per cent of interventions.
88. Partly successful performance was associated with challenges in sustaining balanced constituent engagement throughout implementation. Alignment with UN coordination frameworks and shared SDG priorities and collaboration with other actors were more variable, although close to 60 per cent of interventions achieved successful results in these areas. Weaker performance was commonly linked to project design and coherence challenges, including unclear pathways to results, overly ambitious objectives, fragmented implementation approaches and insufficient integration across project components and partners. These challenges were sometimes compounded by shifting external priorities and the limited articulation of synergies.



Effectiveness of ILO development cooperation in delivering results in 2025

► **Figure 8. Average distribution of scores on the overall effectiveness of interventions, 2025**



89. Overall effectiveness was positive across the portfolio. Most interventions delivered quality outputs and achieved their immediate objectives, with no projects rated unsuccessful. Particularly strong performance was observed in capacity development (98 per cent of projects were rated successful or highly successful), knowledge generation (86 per cent) and the promotion of international labour standards (84 per cent).
90. Projects also performed well in advancing core ILO principles and priorities. Social dialogue and tripartism were successfully integrated in 66 per cent of interventions, while 66 per cent demonstrated a clear focus on improving the living standards of poor and vulnerable populations through decent work pathways. Building and maintaining strategic partnerships was another notable strength, with successful performance in 80 per cent of cases.



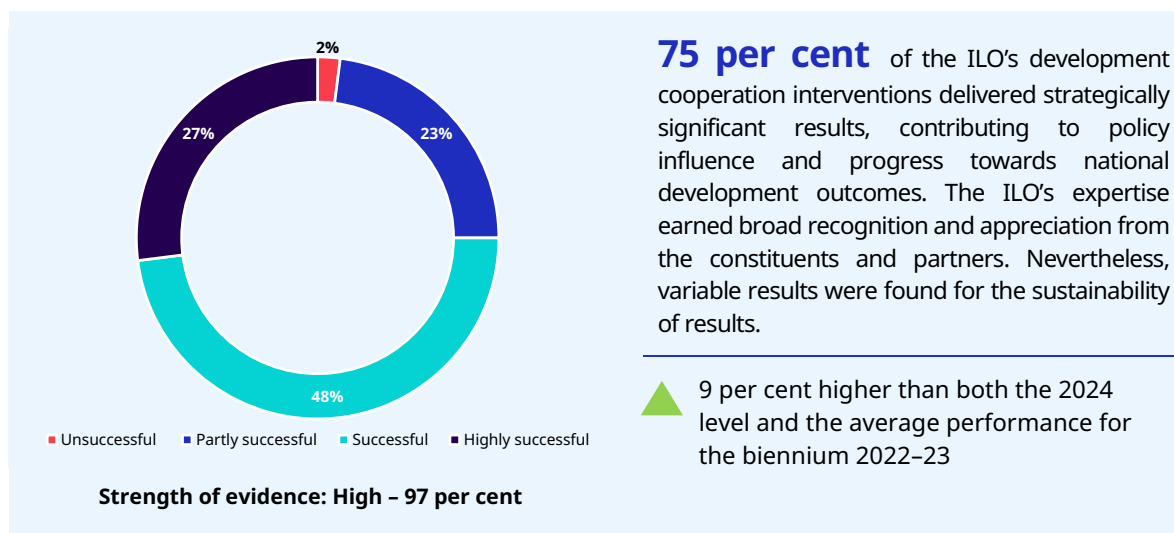
Normative progress is strongest when labour standards are linked to practical workplace improvements and sector-level application. Projects achieved stronger results when [international labour standards] were operationalized through collective bargaining, grievance mechanisms, [occupational safety and health] systems, anti-harassment measures, ethical recruitment practices, and improved labour relations. ILO, *Decent work results and effectiveness of ILO operations: An ex-post meta-analysis of development cooperation evaluations, 2025*, page 26

91. Performance was more uneven across cross-cutting areas. Gender-responsiveness was evident in just over half of interventions (53 per cent), while disability inclusion remained limited, with only 20 per cent of projects incorporating a disability perspective. Environmental sustainability was also unevenly integrated, with positive performance observed in 35 per cent of interventions.



Impact and sustainability of the ILO development cooperation portfolio in 2025

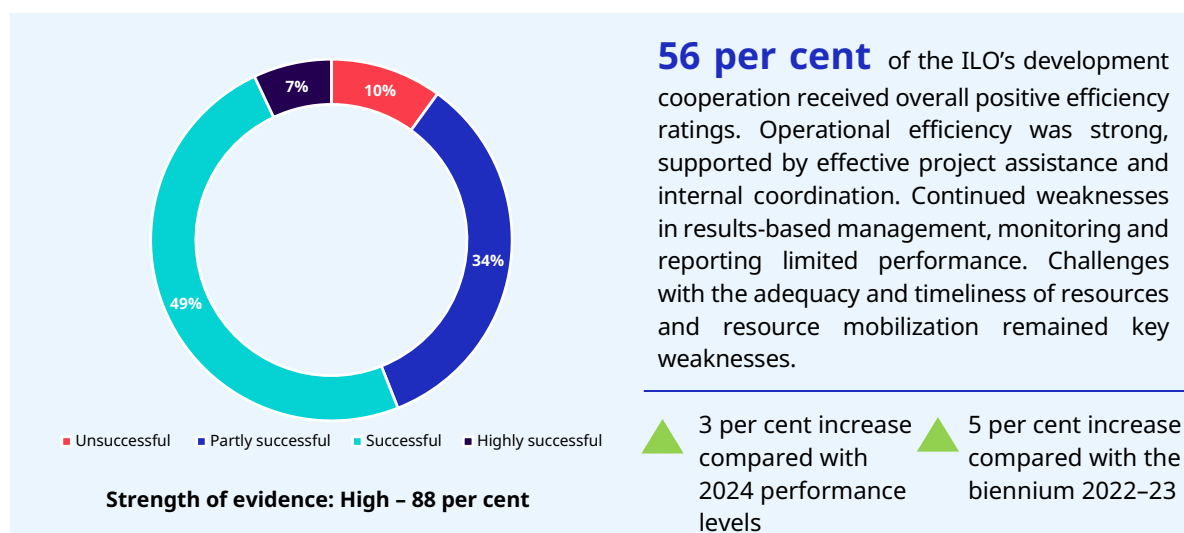
► **Figure 9. Average distribution of scores on the overall impact and sustainability of interventions, 2025**



92. Sustainability and impact was the strongest-performing criterion cluster. Policy influence was particularly strong, with 75 per cent of interventions achieving successful results and over one third rated highly successful. Results were most significant where project-supported tools, approaches and reforms became embedded within public institutions, governance structures and operational systems.
93. The ILO's technical expertise, normative mandate, tripartite structure and convening role were widely recognized as important enablers of influence and uptake. Knowledge visibility and accessibility also performed positively, with two thirds of projects achieving successful results.
94. Sustainability was successful in 66 per cent of interventions and was strongest where results were supported by national ownership, institutional capacity, political commitment and financing arrangements. However, fewer interventions established the systems or financing mechanisms needed to sustain and scale results over time.

Operational and financial efficiency of ILO development cooperation in 2025

► **Figure 10. Average distribution of scores on the overall efficiency of interventions, 2025**



- 95. The ILO’s strongest operational performance was observed in internal coordination (82 per cent positive ratings), while staff support and implementation management also performed strongly, with more than two thirds of projects rated successful in both areas. However, overall operational efficiency was constrained by weaknesses in results-based management, monitoring and reporting systems, with fewer than one third of projects performing well and a significant proportion receiving unsuccessful ratings in these areas.
- 96. Resource efficiency showed mixed results. Cost-efficiency was a clear strength, with projects generally making efficient use of available resources through flexible budget management, lean staffing arrangements and existing ILO tools and partnerships. However, only 56 per cent had sufficient human and financial resources to achieve their intended results, and fewer than 20 per cent successfully mobilized additional resources or secured new partnerships during implementation.

2.3. Effectiveness trends by policy outcome: 2022–23 and 2024–25

- 97. This section presents a comparative analysis of weighted average performance ratings for ILO project interventions, categorized by country programme outcome and aggregated by programme and budget policy outcome² and region. The analysis focuses on overall effectiveness, sustainability and impact across the biennia 2022–23 and 2024–25.
- 98. Given the uneven distribution of reports across outcomes and the limited sample of 300 reports, the findings should be interpreted with caution.³ This section therefore presents findings only for outcomes with high representativeness,⁴ providing a stronger basis for assessing performance trends.

Key positive performance trends

62 per cent of interventions promoting labour protection for all workers achieved average or above-average performance in 2022–25, with the strongest results in Asia and the Pacific, Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean.	61 per cent of interventions supporting sustainable enterprises achieved average or above-average performance in 2022–25, with particularly strong results in Europe and Central Asia.	58 per cent of interventions supporting full and productive employment achieved average or above-average performance in 2022–25, with the strongest results in Europe and Central Asia and interregional initiatives.
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- 99. Across the biennia 2022–23 and 2024–25, the strongest and most consistently positive performance was observed among interventions contributing to policy outcome 6, followed by

² To increase the relevance of the reporting, the following enablers and policy outcomes of the [Programme and Budget for 2024–25](#) were considered: Enabling outcome A – Enhanced knowledge, innovation, cooperation and communication to advance social justice; policy outcome 1 – Strong, modernized normative action for social justice; policy outcome 2 – Strong, representative and influential tripartite constituents and effective social dialogue; policy outcome 3 – Full and productive employment for just transitions; policy outcome 4 – Sustainable enterprises for inclusive growth and decent work; policy outcome 5 – Gender equality and equality of treatment and opportunities for all; policy outcome 6 – Protection at work for all; policy outcome 7 – Universal social protection; policy outcome 8 – Integrated policy and institutional responses for social justice through decent work.

³ When evaluation reports were associated with several country programme outcomes and the corresponding policy outcomes, their performance rating was included under each relevant policy outcome.

⁴ For reporting purposes, sample representativeness reflects the extent to which reported performance is supported by multiple evidence sources, measured by the number of evaluations per policy outcome. Representativeness is classified as high (≥40 reports), moderate (20–39 reports) and low (<20 reports).



policy outcomes 4 and 3. These interventions generated tangible systemic results, including strengthened labour market institutions and services, expanded employment and entrepreneurship opportunities, enhanced skills recognition systems, increased enterprise productivity and sustainability, and stronger labour migration governance and protection frameworks. They also promoted the inclusion of women, migrants and other vulnerable groups through policy reforms, institutional strengthening and expanded access to labour market services.⁵

- 100.** Regional performance varied across these areas. Africa and Asia and the Pacific showed particularly strong results in employment, skills development and formalization, while Latin America and the Caribbean reported positive results in green jobs, digitalization and labour market inclusion. The Arab States and Europe and Central Asia demonstrated positive results in employment, enterprise development and migration governance, and interregional initiatives helped to scale policy innovation, standards and knowledge-sharing across countries.

► Part III. Outline of a results-based Evaluation Strategy 2027–29

3.1. Purpose and scope of the Evaluation Strategy

- 101.** The purpose of the results-based Evaluation Strategy 2027–29 is to provide a framework for EVAL to build on the mature and well-established evaluation system developed over the past decade and a half, strengthening its strategic and learning dimensions while preserving its strong accountability function. Building on the findings of successive independent evaluations of the ILO's evaluation function, Governing Body guidance and implementation experience, the Evaluation Strategy 2027–29 marks a further transition from institution-building towards maximizing the strategic value, use and influence of evaluative evidence.
- 102.** The key building blocks of a mature evaluation function have been in place for some time. While EVAL's role as a pillar of the ILO's accountability architecture will remain central, greater emphasis will be placed on further institutionalizing the use of evaluation and organizational learning. Independent evaluation is already embedded within the Organization; quality assurance systems and professional networks are in place; innovative approaches, such as clustered evaluations, have been successfully introduced; and significant investments have been made in evaluation knowledge management systems and digital infrastructure. The challenge for the next phase is therefore not primarily to build new systems, but to strengthen, integrate and scale existing mechanisms to better respond to the evolving evidence needs of the Organization.
- 103.** Against a backdrop of increasing demand for evidence, constrained resources and ongoing reform efforts, the Evaluation Strategy seeks to prioritize resources for strategically significant evidence work. Particular emphasis will be placed on generating evidence to inform the implementation of the ILO's Strategic Plan for 2026–29 and successive programme and budget outcomes; supporting organizational priorities and reform processes; improving access to and the use of evaluative knowledge; and leveraging innovation and AI to increase efficiency and strengthen evidence-informed decision-making. The Evaluation Strategy is anchored in a

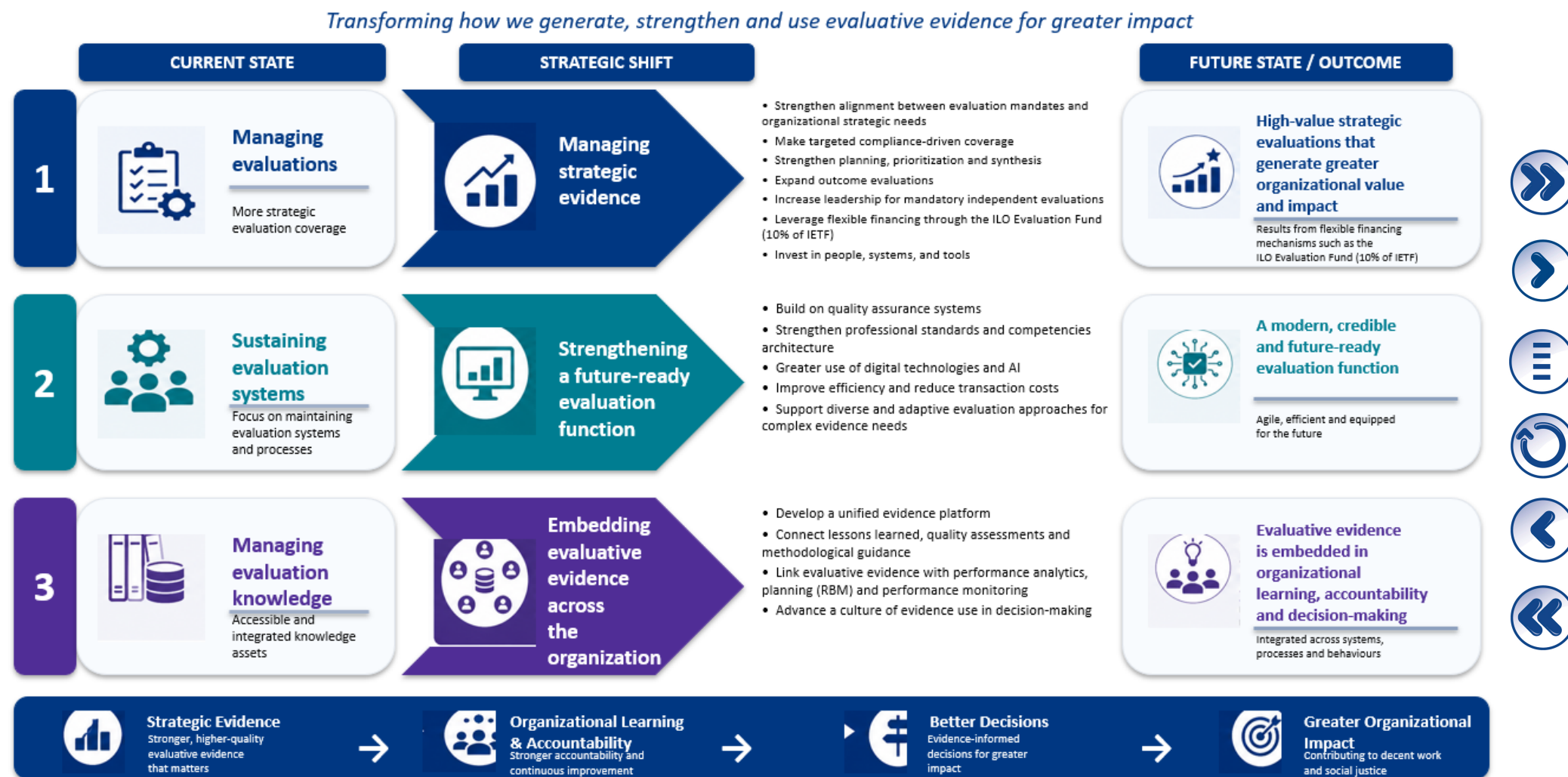
⁵ Key achievements associated with these outcomes in 2025 can be found in ILO, *Decent work results and effectiveness of ILO operations: An ex-post meta-analysis of development cooperation evaluations*, 2025, section 4.



theory of change whereby credible and relevant evaluative evidence informs decision-making; strengthens the evaluation function as an oversight mechanism with accountability for using evaluative evidence and organizational learning; improves institutional effectiveness; and ultimately contributes to the ILO's pursuit of decent work and social justice. To achieve this ambition, the Evaluation Strategy focuses on three interconnected strategic shifts, as presented in figure 11.



► Figure 11. Three strategic shifts for a stronger evaluative evidence function



3.2. Priority areas and strategic outcomes

- 104.** EVAL will advance the maturity of the evaluation function by strengthening the full evaluative evidence cycle, from strategic planning and evidence generation, through synthesis and knowledge management, to evidence-informed dialogue, organizational learning, management action and oversight. The Evaluation Strategy responds to UN-wide mandates calling for greater investment in evaluation and oversight functions to enhance accountability, institutional relevance and organizational learning (table 3).

► **Table 3. Strategic priorities, outcomes and key changes**

Priority area	Key activities and sub-outcomes	Key changes
Outcome 1: Strategically aligned evaluation portfolio		
1.1: Strategic evidence planning and prioritization	Evidence-gap mapping informed by organizational consultations; strengthen CIEPS; use evaluability assessments as a pre-condition for evaluations; align evaluation plans with strategic priorities.	Evaluation planning responds to strategic needs; evidence gaps identified and addressed; resources focused on highest-value areas.
1.2: Strategic and programmatic evaluation approaches improve coverage and learning	Pilot an increase in the threshold for independent evaluations to US\$1.5 million; classify evaluations of projects between US\$750,000 and US\$1.49 million as internal reviews and projects under US\$750,000 as self-assessments; establish clustered evaluations as a preferred modality; strengthen the ILO Evaluation Trust Fund; increase portfolio/thematic evaluations.	Greater strategic coverage; less fragmentation; greater investment in strategic evaluations.
1.3: Evaluations generate evidence for strategic and institutional needs	Expand impact and ex-post evaluations at the institutional and corporate levels; increase the use of synthesis reviews and meta-studies; strengthen the strategic alignment of high-level evaluations to institutional priorities.	More evidence on institutional performance and long-term results; stronger basis for reform and learning.
Outcome 2: Sustainable and professional evaluation function		
2.1: Professional evaluation capacity is sustained	Modernize EMCP/EMCP+; strengthen professional pathways; expand communities of practice; strengthen incentives.	Stronger evaluation management capacity; enhanced competencies; a stronger, more resilient and sustainable evaluation network.
2.2: Quality assurance and methodological support are strengthened	AI-enabled quality assurance tools; modernize review processes; strengthen guidance and technical support; continue the Impact Evaluation Review Facility.	More efficient quality assurance; stronger standards compliance; more accessible methodological support.
2.3: Fit-for-purpose evaluation approaches	Expand the use of impact, ex-post and synthesis methods; strengthen portfolio and clustered evaluations; strengthen evaluability assessments; develop guidance on innovative methods.	Effective methodological guidance and tools; innovative methodologies and broader evaluation questions addressed; more sophisticated evidence products.



Priority area	Key activities and sub-outcomes	Key changes
Outcome 3: Evaluation evidence used for learning, decision-making and accountability		
3.1: Integrated evaluative evidence ecosystem	Develop <i>i-eval</i> Discovery as a one-stop evidence platform that integrates all evaluation reports, recommendations, lessons learned, and quality assurance and KPI performance data.	Easier access to evidence; integrated knowledge systems; single evidence entry point.
3.2: Intelligent evidence discovery and knowledge services	Further refine the <i>i-eval</i> AI Assistant; strengthen advanced search and synthesis tools; expand public access.	Faster evidence discovery; greater accessibility; AI-supported evidence use.
3.3: Accountability and learning through evidence analytics	Integrate the recommendation tracking currently in EVAL's Automated Management Response System and <i>i-eval</i> Discovery into the broader performance monitoring framework, through EVAL's KPI-based assessment of ILO performance. Such an integrated system will help identify opportunities for systemic organizational improvement.	Better visibility of recurring and systemic issues; stronger organizational accountability and learning.
3.4: Evidence-informed dialogue and decision-making	Strengthen the Evaluation Advisory Committee; expand regional and departmental evidence dialogues and post-evaluation learning reviews; strengthen follow-up to recommendations.	More systematic discussion and use of evaluation findings in governance and management.



3.3. Enabling environment

Strategic enablers

- Strong monitoring and reporting systems support evaluability, adaptive management, learning and accountability.
- Flexible and sustainable financing supports strategic evaluation coverage and innovation.
- A strong evaluation culture promotes evaluative thinking and the use of evaluative evidence.
- Effective coordination across oversight and accountability functions strengthens organizational learning and accountability.
- An institutional commitment to continuous learning and capacity development strengthens organizational capabilities, fosters innovation and adaptation and supports evidence-informed decision-making.

3.4. Critical assumptions and risks

- Evaluation staffing capacity remains intact to sustain the continued development of the evaluation function while continuing to deliver mandated responsibilities.
- Core and voluntary funding remain stable and predictable.

- The ILO Evaluation Trust Fund continues to expand and support strategic evaluations.
- Monitoring and reporting systems continue to improve across the Organization.
- Demand for evaluative evidence remains strong among management, the constituents and governance structures.
- The evaluation network remains active and adequately supported.
- Organizational commitment to evidence-informed decision-making and learning remains strong.

3.5. Results framework for the Evaluation Strategy

- 105.** As has been the practice for previous Evaluation Strategies, the Evaluation Strategy 2027–29 will be underpinned by a results-based matrix with specific sub-outcomes, indicators and targets. The framework will include dedicated indicators for both the evaluation function and the enabling environment, with targets and responsible custodians identified across the Office.

3.6. Reporting and assessment of the Evaluation Strategy

- 106.** EVAL will provide annual progress updates through the Annual Evaluation Report, with particular attention to the use of evaluative evidence in informing policy and programmatic improvements. The five-yearly independent evaluation of the evaluation function or a peer review by the United Nations Evaluation Group or the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development is scheduled for 2027, subject to available resources, to provide an external assessment of the Evaluation Strategy and its policy impact and alignment with UN-wide good practices.
- 107. Recommendation 3: The Office should finalize the ILO's results-based Evaluation Strategy 2027–29 on the basis of the outline provided and through further consultations, taking into account the guidance provided by the Governing Body at its 358th Session (November 2026) during the deliberations on documents GB.358/PFA/5 and GB.358/PFA/6.**



► Draft decision

- 108.** The Governing Body endorsed the recommendations of the Annual Evaluation Report 2025–26 (paragraphs 17, 85 and 107 of document GB.358/PFA/5) for implementation by the Office.