

ANNEX II: METHODOLOGY

This meta-analysis rates and synthesizes findings related to performance from final independent evaluations completed in 2025, using EVAL's established methodology, fine-tuned and improved over the years since 2013. The final independent evaluations assessed in the meta-analysis are for the most part decentralized evaluations of development cooperation projects with budgets exceeding \$1 million. Over the years, there has also been a growing number of clustered evaluations covering several interventions implemented by the ILO and the joint programmes of the ILO with other UN agencies.

REVIEW AND SCORING PROCESS

The framework used in the effectiveness review focuses on an ex-post performance rating based on findings of evaluation reports. Performance information related to a list of 29 criteria (see Figure 1) will be obtained from the evaluation reports. The criteria cover elements related to strategic relevance and coherence and alignment; effectiveness, sustainability and impact; and operational and resource efficiency (in alignment with OECD-DAC recommended evaluation parameters), as well as areas of strategic interest to ILO.

FIGURE 1. PERFORMANCE CATEGORIES, WITH ASSOCIATED APPRAISAL CRITERIA¹

Strategic relevance and coherence	▶ Link between project purpose and/or objectives with P&B outcome ▶ Causal link between project objectives and DWCP outcome(s) ▶ Constituent support ▶ Validity of design/approach ▶ Consistency and contribution of the intervention to SDGs
Overall effectiveness	Achievement of outputs and outcomes: ▶ Quality and completeness of outputs ▶ Achievement of immediate objectives ▶ Promotion of cross-cutting areas: ▶ Pro-poor focus ▶ Gender-responsive ▶ Normative work / standards promotion ▶ Tripartite processes and social dialogue ▶ Disability inclusion ▶ Integration of just transition to environmental sustainability ▶ Other key types of ILO support/means to achieve results ▶ Knowledge development ▶ Capacity building ▶ Strategic relationships
Sustainability and impact	▶ Policy influence ▶ Strategic importance of results achieved ▶ Sustainability of policies, knowledge & capacities ▶ Acknowledgement and Use of ILO expertise and involvement ▶ Visibility and accessibility to knowledge and information

Overall efficiency	Operational efficiency: ▶ Results-Based Management approach and goal orientation ▶ Implementation management ▶ ILO support to project ▶ Internal ILO coordination ▶ Monitoring and reporting Resource efficiency: ▶ Resource leveraging ▶ Cost efficiency ▶ Adequacy of resources
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A four-point rating system (see Table 1) was applied to the findings. Criteria with insufficient evidence received a rating of ‘0’ and was excluded in the quantitative analysis of performance but may be included in the narrative. To achieve a top rating (4), evidence will need to justify all aspects of the criterion description.

TABLE 1. FOUR-POINT SCORING SYSTEM

UNSUCCESSFUL	PARTLY SUCCESSFUL	SUCCESSFUL	HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL
1	2	3	4
Highly deficient performance	Basic level of performance but stated need for improvement	Adequate level of performance and results	Very good level of performance and results

Qualitative information was obtained from each evaluation report to present evidence and justification for the rating for each performance criterion and to allow for more in-depth analysis.

ANALYSIS AND REPORTING

Evidence from all ILO independent final evaluation reports completed in 2025 and submitted until March 2026 were synthesized in the annual meta-study report. Qualitative data was used to provide narratives to support and explain the quantitative findings, and to deepen the thematic synthesis of trends, lessons learned and good practices from the meta-analysis. As such, all findings will be backed by evidence and analysis.

Analysis of performance across Policy and Enabling Outcomes and regions for interventions evaluated in the 2022-23 and 2024-25 biennia was performed, based on data from individual evaluation appraisals and aggregated data provided by EVAL. Evaluation findings were analysed by Policy Outcome, region and weighted¹ performance criterion to identify patterns in effectiveness, sustainability and impact across the portfolio. Given the varying number of evaluations associated with different Policy Outcomes, findings are presented based on the level of representativeness of the underlying evidence base (see Annex III). Where evaluations contributed to multiple Country Programme Outcomes and corresponding Policy Outcomes, performance ratings were included under each relevant PO. Comparative analysis was complemented by qualitative highlights of evaluation findings from the 2025 portfolio to showcase key achievements.

Key insights regarding ILO’s resource efficiency were identified based on analysis of interventions evaluated in the past two biennia (2022-23 and 2024-25) with strongest performance for the three associated indicators.

1 A weighted approach was applied to the analysis of performance, using the same approach as previous meta-analyses since 2023, to ensure continuity and comparability over time.³ The weight ratios provide more prominence to the Overall Effectiveness category.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

The meta-study report was written in an evidence-based manner, referencing individual appraisals of the independent evaluation reports.

LIMITATIONS

The main limitation concerned the extent and depth of information provided in the evaluation reports, which influenced the scoring process. In some cases, insufficient detail regarding certain criteria may hinder the attribution of a top score, despite potentially different realities on the ground.

Scoring thematic, cluster or regional evaluations poses challenges when results vary across countries or areas. While it is possible to qualitatively highlight variations, quantitatively representing these differences was more difficult, potentially leading to misrepresentations of effectiveness and possibly diminishing the utility of results. This underscores the importance of combining quantitative results with a nuanced narrative, which was the approach used in this meta-study.