



► Guidance Note 3.2: Adapting evaluation methods to the ILO's normative and tripartite mandate

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This guidance note is part of Pillar 3 ► *Planning and designing evaluations*

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► 1. WHY THIS GUIDE?

This Guidance Note explains why it is important to systematically integrate social dialogue (SD) and normative context in ILO monitoring and evaluation. It explains how to go about doing this. It presents the subject in a way that is intended to be useful for both an intervention designer and an evaluator. Guidance is needed because there is clear evidence on the one hand that these contexts have not been adequately considered in the past, and on the other hand that the mandate to do so is clear and emphatic and has never been more so. In sum, this Guidance Note is needed to realize the policy imperative to improve ILO monitoring and evaluation in respect of the SD and normative mandates that are and have been at the heart of ILO's mandate since its foundation in 1919.

► 2. ILO'S NORMATIVE AND TRIPARTITE MANDATES

Everyone who has professional contact with the ILO must be aware – or be made aware – and understand, the quintessence of tripartism and standards for the Organization's mandate. Both are designated as cross-cutting policy drivers, along with gender equality and environmental sustainability.¹

2.1 THE ILO AS A TRIPARTITE ORGANIZATION

The ILO is the only tripartite international organization among UN specialized agencies. Tripartism – the participation of representatives of workers' and employers' organizations on an equal footing with governments – is embedded in the governance of the Organization² and its work.³ The Organization was mandated at the time of its founding in 1919 to promote dialogue between governments, employers' and workers' organizations as a means of establish the social justice deemed so necessary at the time for maintaining peace.⁴ The importance of tripartism is regularly cited as a fundamental guiding principle for the Organization, in day-to-day operations as well as in expressions and declarations of historic dimension, including the [Declaration of Philadelphia](#) (1944), the [Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work](#), and the [ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization](#) (2008). Numerous Resolutions of the International Labour Conference mandate the promotion of social dialogue as an operational imperative, with implementation implications for monitoring and evaluation.⁵ The ILO wants to learn how to better promote and improve tripartite practices and SD around the world, and it wants to do this through monitoring and evaluation practices.

2.2 THE ILO AS A NORMATIVE ORGANIZATION

The original – and an ongoing – purpose of the ILO is developing, promoting the integration and implementation of labour standards. This continues to be a means of action for having more decent work and social justice. Labour standards are the fundament for all the work the Organization does and how it does that work, whether that work directly or indirectly implicates standards. The Organization wants to assure coherence and consistency not only of its work that directly implicates standards, but also for the work that implicitly promotes the integration and/or implementation of standards in its member States. It wants monitoring and evaluation to help do this.

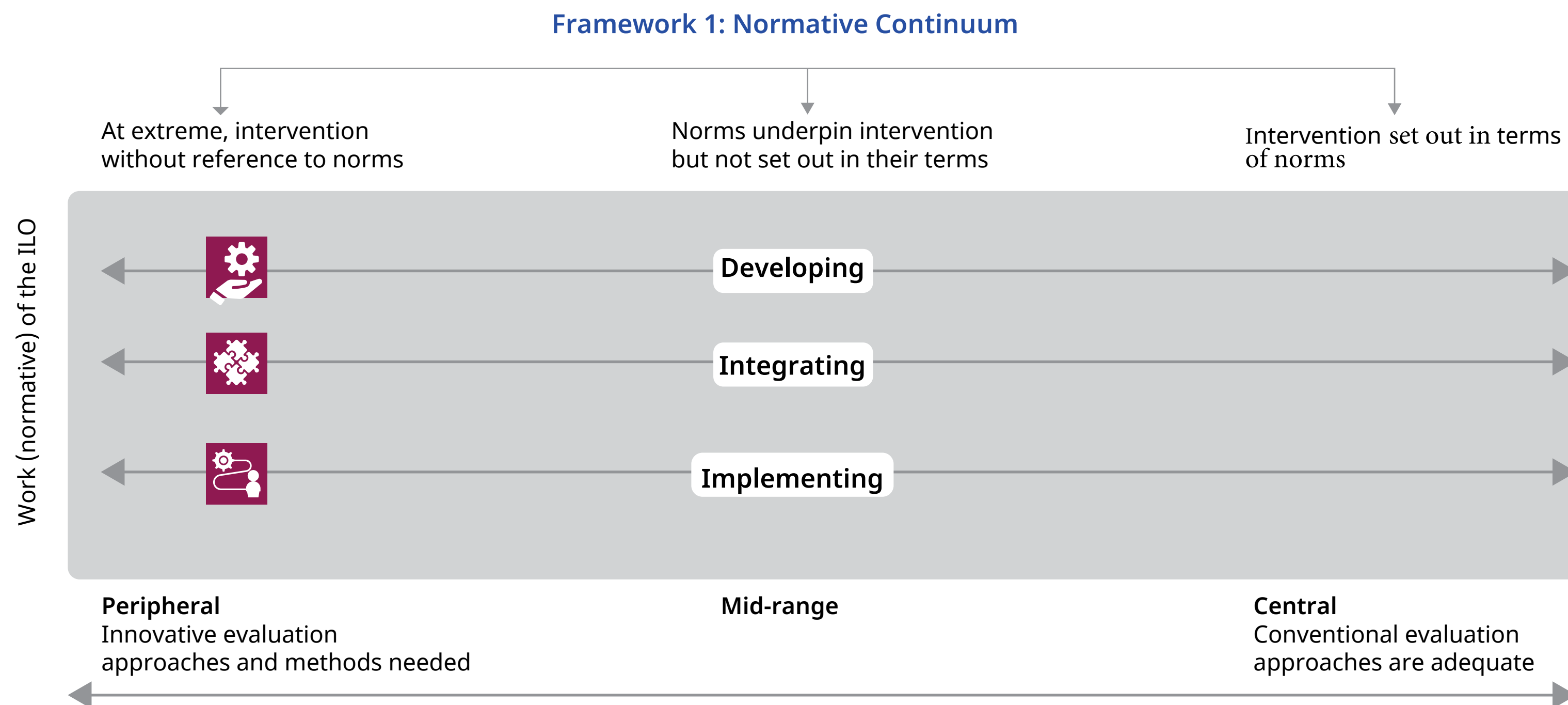
2.3 THE NORMATIVE AND TRIPARTITE MANDATES IN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

The United Nations Evaluation Group has defined the “normative work” of the UN and its specialized organizations. The definition applies to the ILO. Since normative work in a generic sense is the ILO's *raison d'être*, the UNEG's definition has potent practical implications for the Organization and its evaluators. The making, integration and implementation can

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1. International Labour Office 2018. *Programme and Budget for the Biennium 2018-2019*, Available at: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---program/documents/genericdocument/wcms_582294.pdf. p. 50
 2. Note the tripartite composition of its Governing Body and annual International Labour Conference, etc. See the [ILO website](#) here.
 3. Note the operational [employers'](#) and [workers'](#) bureaus within the secretariat International Labour Office.
 4. See Rodgers, G., Swepston, L., Lee, E. & Daele, J. v. 2009. *The International Labour Organization and the quest for social justice, 1919-2009*, Geneva, International Labour Office, Available at: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/@publ/documents/publication/wcms_10_4643.pdf.
 5. For example, [Resolution concerning the recurrent discussion on social dialogue](#) (2013); [Resolution concerning advancing social justice through Decent Work](#) (2016) ; [Resolution concerning the second recurrent discussion on social dialogue and tripartism](#) (2018); [Resolution concerning effective ILO development cooperation in support of the Sustainable Development Goals](#) (2018).

and should be seen in everything the ILO does. For purposes of institutional learning, that normative work – in the UNEG sense – should be monitored and evaluated to the extent possible. Likewise, for SD.

The idea of a normative continuum as a way of thinking about where normative work can be found and evaluated in all ILO work was explained in *i-Eval Think Piece No. 14*. See the Framework 1 diagramme below, followed by examples. So, while normative work as defined by the UNEG always exists and is indeed truly at the root of all ILO development cooperation interventions, the relationship between those interventions and the relevant norms – be they Conventions, Recommendations, guidelines, agreed policy instruments, etc.⁶ – are set out variously in projects. In some cases, the normative basis is set out in a way that makes it very central to the intervention(s) being evaluated. In other cases, the focus is elsewhere – for example, doing technical things that are implied by standards but not set out explicitly in them⁷ – making the normative relationship somehow peripheral to the intervention, but still quite present.⁸ In remaining extreme cases it is not set out at all. This Guide elaborates in detail how to operationalize the continuum in monitoring and evaluation.



6. Some normative instruments are clearly more so than others; this study relies on the normative usage and does not attempt to draw fine distinction. See, for example, International Labour Office 2010, [A Skilled Workforce for Strong, Sustainable and Balanced Growth: A G20 Training Strategy](#) which has been used as a normative instrument, although arguably at the limits of a definition as compared to international labour standards or other, more formally promulgated and adopted instruments.

7. A full discussion of the very significant role of flexibility provisions in the ILO's universal ILS is beyond the scope of this paper. For an explanation of the intentional flexibility of international labour standards, see Servais, J. M. 1986. "Flexibility and Rigidity in International Labour Standards", in *International Labour Review*, Vol. 125, 193-208.

8. United Nations Evaluation Group 2013. [UNEG Handbook for conducting evaluations of normative work in the UN system](#). See Tables 2 and 3, which refer to this idea.
documents/publication/wcms_104643.pdf.

Table 1: Examples of normative work in ILO project

	Developing	Integrating	Implementing
Law-Growth Nexus III: Labour Law and the Enabling Business Environment for MSMEs in Kenya (RAF/13/03/MNAD)		Enactment of the Private Security Regulation Act, 2016	- Support to increased levels of compliance to the established (hopefully ILS compliant) labour law - Formalization of informal economy (R. 204)
Way Forward: after the revolution – Decent work for women in Egypt and Tunisia (RAF/12/01/FIN)		Ratification of C183 and reform of law to reflect C183 requirements	Improving women’s skills to improve employability (C111 and C122)
Technical Assistance for Capacity Building Support to the Ghana Social Opportunities Project (GSOP) (GHA/11/01/IBR)		Formulation of National Policy for Labour-Intensive Public Works (LIPW) on a national level (R. 122, para. 9)	
Occupational Health and Safety in Non- Traditional Agro-Export Sector in Peru (PER/13/01/CAN)		Implementation of a system to register labour, accidents, dangerous incidents and occupational sickness (ILO Code of Practice, ⁹ R194)	Develop training and technical assistance services in OSH in agro-export companies in three regions (C155, C161)
HIV/AIDS workplace education project in Ghana (GHA/03/50/USA)	Lesson learned through evaluation, to address workers in the informal economy, corresponds to reference to informal economy in R200		
Projects of the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour	Experiences derived from IPEC operations since start in 1992 culminated in C182 adoption in 1999	Promoting policies, legislation, and plans for the integration of C138, C182	Broad range of interventions designed to eliminate the worst forms of child labour (C182) and enforce minimum age for entrance to employment (C138)

Like its normative mandate, the ILO’s SD mandate is also present in its development cooperation and the Organization wants to learn how to improve its use and promotion. To improve how SD is considered in the evaluation of interventions, it is critical to identify how it is seen by the intervention. More particularly, how does the theory of change see SD relative to intervention results? How to do this will also be explained in this Guide.

9. International Labour Office 1996. [Recording and notification of occupational accidents and diseases: An ILO code of practice.](#)

► 3. EVALUABILITY: MAPPING THE NORMATIVE AND TRIPARTITE CONTEXTS

How do you know the extent to which an activity or program can be evaluated for normative and SD contexts in a reliable and credible fashion? In principle evaluability for normative and SD contexts should be addressed in the design to ensure that an activity or programme can be evaluated for these matters in a reliable and credible fashion? Exceptionally evaluators can reconstruct the normative and SD contexts of projects if resources and time permit.

3.1 USING TOOLS TO MAP NORMATIVE AND SOCIAL DIALOGUE CONTEXTS

Mapping the normative and SD context of an intervention means coming to know how normative substance and frameworks and SD as a means and objective pertain to the evaluand.

The intervention designer should map normative and SD context following the table below, step by step. Figure 1 below at page 6 displays the mapping process as a flow.

Identify ...	To be able to...
A. norms relevant to the intervention...	... know the basis for whatever normative work the intervention is or could be doing.
B. relevant social partners...	... know with whom the intervention should or could be interacting in promoting social dialogue.
C. ratification status of relevant norms, including ILS...	... say if there are legal obligations underpinning potential normative work.
D. relevant international supervision, if any...	... say what gaps have been authoritatively identified, to potentially be included in normative work.
E. whether intervention activities and/or outcomes intend to develop / integrate / implement the identified norms, regardless of ratification or supervision...	... say whether the intervention intends to actually do normative work.
F. whether standards' supervision are intended to guide or be addressed by intervention activities and outcomes...	... say whether and how implementation is intended to be taken up by intervention activities and outcomes.
G. the intended role played by social dialogue in activities and outcomes...	... say how social dialogue figures in the ToC and logical framework.
H. the intended relevance of activities and outcomes for social dialogue.	... whether improvement of social dialogue figures among intervention results.

Step One. Identify the norms relevant to the intervention.

The ILO's standards are many, including Conventions, Recommendations, guidelines, agreed policy instruments, etc. Starting from the subject of the intervention, and working in an hierarchal manner, one can begin looking to ILO Conventions, then Recommendations, then operational guidelines, etc., for the norms that are potentially relevant to the intervention. Help can be found in the ILO's categorizations of standards, search tools in NORMLEX, lists of sectoral guides, etc. In some cases, relevant norms may only partially touch on the subject of an intervention; in other cases, an intervention may fill the entire substantive space of the relevant standard. Thus, one must identify not only the standards by its name, but also that part or parts of the standard that are potentially relevant to the intervention.

Step Two. Identify the relevant social partners.

Identifying the relevant social partners starts with seeing the level at which SD and potential partners at that level are present. Thus, an intervention looking for change in national policy will implicate national employers' and workers' organizations; those aiming for change in a sector of economic activity will implicate organizations at the sectoral level. Interventions working across sectors but perhaps geographically or by the characteristics of beneficiaries, imply a search for organizations operating at that level. Representivity is important for the ILO's brand of SD; non-representative NGO's are not what the ILO has in mind for speaking for a group of beneficiaries. It is possible that representative organizations of employers or workers are absent from the intervention's context. This fact is important in itself, as it a gap where an organization should otherwise exist and exercise voice in civil society.

Step Three. Identify the ratification status of relevant norms.

Normative works' potential integration and implementation of identified relevant norms can mean different things depending on the norm and whether it has been endorsed by actors integral to an intervention. Thus, a norm that has been formally endorsed through ratification or citation within policy or law or through an executive decision have received an imprimatur for use. Ratification of an ILO Convention clearly signals the intention for the prescriptions in that normative instrument to be duly integrated into national law and policy, and implemented in practice in the real world of work. Ratifications need to be identified since they mean a legal obligation underpins interventions. Seeing whether a Convention has been ratified is easily done in NORMLEX. Finding more subtle signs for recognition can be more difficult, but is nevertheless important for potentially leveraging it into outcome supporting action. Policy statements of government and the social partners, their involvement in making the relevant standards, even their engagement to achieve the outcomes intended by the norms – at the extreme – can be cited and drawn upon.

Step Four. Examine the intervention to identify the normative work.

With the preceding steps completed, the intervention itself can be examined to see first whether the intervention is broadly consistent with the normative prescription and more specifically whether it aims to integrate or implement prescriptions into national law, policy, or practices. Integration

means the acceptance, adoption, or embrace of what norms say should be done. Implementation means bringing the norms as they have been integrated nationally into actual practice. The distinction between integration and implementation for the ILO's standards is important because many of the Organization's standards have flexibility inherent to them, obliging a consistent practical interpretation when the standard is integrated domestically. The work of an intervention may also or alternatively have the development of standards as its normative work. While possible, most normative work in ILO development cooperation has to do with integration and/or implementation.

Step Five. See how the intervention relates to standards' supervision.

ILO systems for supervising the implementation of standards, particularly international labour standards, is frequent, dynamic and sufficiently detailed such that it would make sense for the Organization's DC to take account of its content where relevant. For a programmer this means accessing and assessing relevant supervision. Where an identified relevant Convention has been ratified, its supervision by the ILO's regular and special supervisory bodies should be read to determine if any gaps in integration or implementation have been identified and if so whether account has been taken of them in DC. ILO DC should help fill identified normative gaps. All of this needs to be done as part of the design process to ensure monitoring and evaluation are able to capture and report on these efforts. It is also possible that the supervision of unratified ILS has

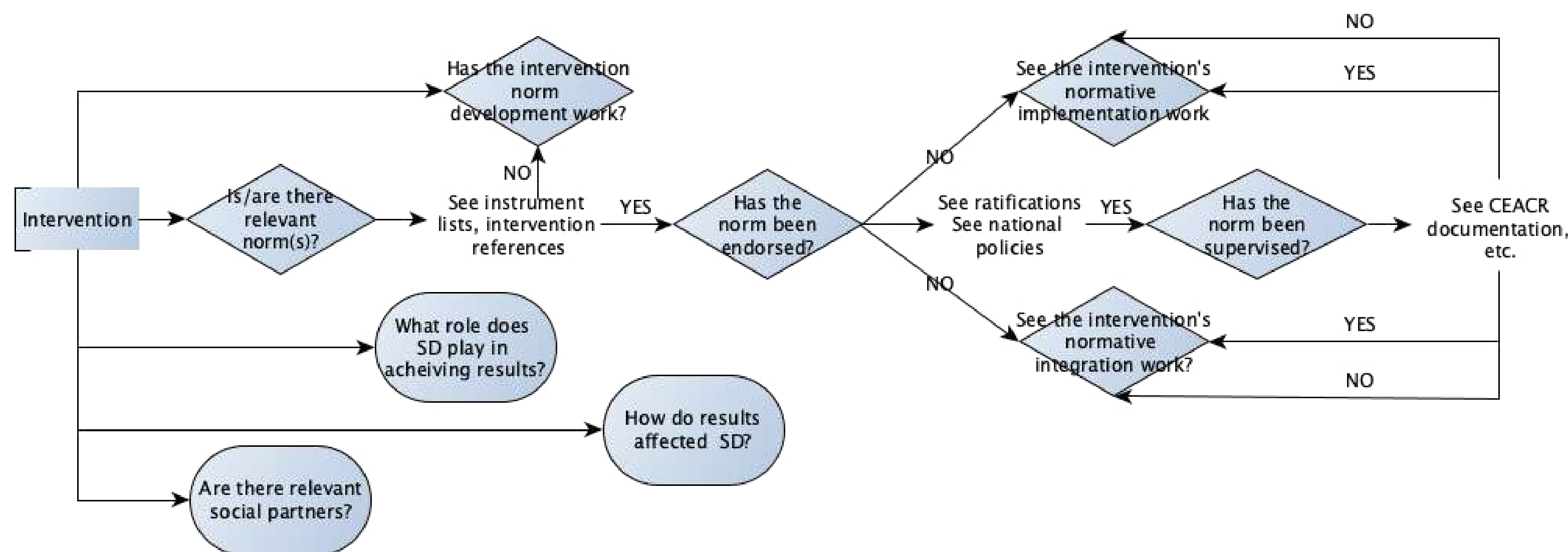
taken note of the integration or implementation of relevant standards in the absence of ratification. The implications of this are different insofar as the standards have not been formally acceded to and thus cannot be leveraged for integration or implementation in the same way. The ILO's mandate obliges it nevertheless to comply with and promote standards, monitoring and evaluation should look for the promoting of standards' integration and/or implementation. Finally, other ILO normative instruments have aspects of supervision attached to them. For the same reasons the ILS systems are considered, these should be looked for and considered.

Step Six. Identify the intended role played by social dialogue in the theory of change. As the ILO's mandated means of change, SD's role in the ToC should be clearly seen. Programmers should assure this at all relevant levels of an intervention, from activity to outputs to results. The programmer must be able to say clearly how the intervention can use SD to achieve its results so the evaluators can validate whether the programme has done so.

Step Seven. Identify the intended relevance of activities and outcomes for social dialogue. As one of the ILO's mandated outcomes, the programmer must be able to say what result the intervention have on SD.

Mapping the normative and SD context following these seven steps should ideally be embedded as part of the situation analysis in a project document. The results of mapping can also or alternatively be used in pieces where appropriate in the relevant document.

Figure 1: Mapping flow



3.2 LOGICAL FRAMEWORKS, NORMATIVE AND SOCIAL DIALOGUE MANDATES

With a completed map of normative and SD contexts, the logical framework of an intervention's activities, outputs and intended outcomes (immediate and development objectives) can be considered to see how they relate to the overarching mandate of promoting and supporting both. The implementation, monitoring and reporting frameworks including their targets, benchmarks and evaluation criteria can be given a similarly enlightened consideration. These are exercises in identifying opportunities taken as well as those that have been overseen, with a view to improvement. Being able to evaluate for normative and social dialogue mandate is the overall objective in having a logical framework and monitoring and reporting framework that takes them into account.

So, for example, if none of the activities or outputs of an intervention designed to improve working conditions in a particular sector of economic activity involve or promote SD among employers' or workers' organizations representing enterprises and employees in that sector, the question "Why?" needs to be asked. The same question applies in a case where gaps identified in law or practice by standards' supervisory bodies have not been targeted for correction by relevant development cooperation. An intervention's logical framework needs to be read with the normative and SD contexts as mapped in mind.

10. International Labour Office. 2015. Development Cooperation Internal Governance Manual, Geneva, Available at: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---exrel/documents/publication/wcms_452076.pdf, p. 64.

11. This assertion may be tempered by the "reality check" suggested further below in 3.4.

3.3 SEEING NORMATIVE AND SOCIAL DIALOGUE CONTEXTS IN THEORIES OF CHANGE

The explanation of how an ILO intervention is expected to contribute to change should be able to refer to relevant norms and SD as actual drivers of change. Even if the strategy chosen for an intervention has deprioritized the promotion of ILS, SD or tripartism in favour of direct action, institutional development or upstream policy promotion,¹⁰ with a context map in hand it is realistic to imagine that norms and SD can be framed as drivers of change in most – if not all – cases.¹¹

In the case of norms, the motivation to meet a standard is a main driver of change. In a ToC, this should be set out in a way that goes beyond citing passive conformity. Recall, for example, that many ILS say how or for what purpose institutions should function. The motivation to achieve these standards should be presented as a driver of actions taken to do so, as part of the explanation of change strategized in a ToC. Similarly, for the motivation to close a gap identified by an ILS supervisory body.

In the case of SD, it should be used as a process for driving and guiding change. Citing the involvement of social partners at the margins – while potentially significant and important – may not be engaging SD as an actual driver of change. The engagement of SD as a driver of change can unfortunately implicate people and institutions in ways that increase risk, for example, of not achieving desired or timely results. Finding ways to deal with this can only improve an ILO intervention and increase results for SD as part of results, as compared to the means of an intervention.

3.4 WHEN, WHY AND HOW TO RECONSTRUCT A THEORY OF CHANGE

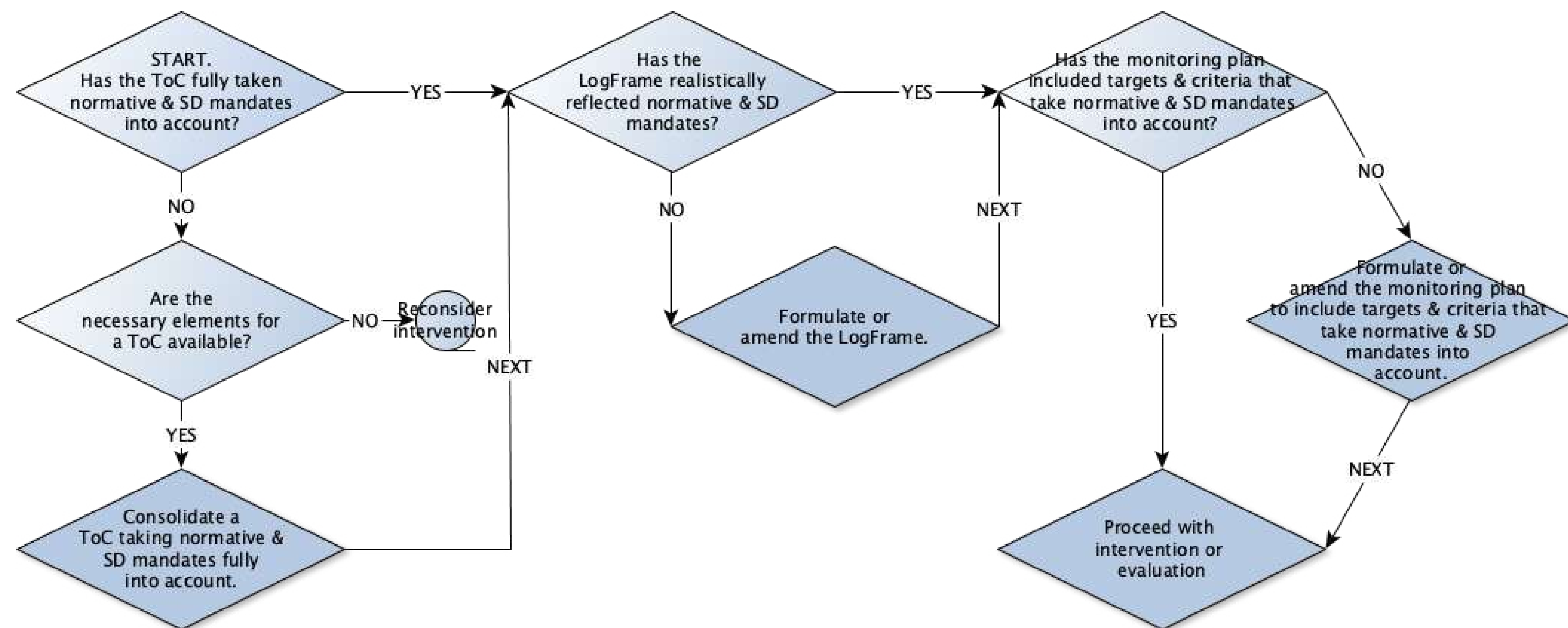
The scope and breadth of norms or SD as an explanation of change is more likely to vary between interventions than their potential for use as an explanation. ToC have many factors and rely on many assumptions, for which norms or SD may play a minor, if any, role. Engaging norms and SD as change drivers in a ToC does not necessarily mean that priorities for an intervention are altered. It is more likely to mean that attention is drawn to matters already present. Yet to the extent norms and SD are *potentially* relevant as change drivers, they ought to be *really* relevant for change. For example, it would not be appropriate to invoke SD or norms where there are no workers' or employers' organization partners or to where there is no motivation for or interest in meeting standards. The situation analysis part of a ToC should include reality checks of these matters.

Assuming that the ToC for an intervention has been formally formulated in the first place, it is unlikely that it would need to be entirely reconstructed to take account of normative or SD context. Where on the other hand the elements of a ToC – that is, the outcomes sought by the intervention, how they will be achieved and assumptions relied upon in doing so, and how progress on achieving them can be monitored – have not been brought together, a consolidation is warranted and account should be taken of normative and SD context.

The ILO's mandate to promote norms and SD requires that consideration be given to altering a ToC as much as a realistically possible. This may involve awareness raising among intervention agents and actors. It is incumbent, for example, for the ILO to inform intervention actors of existing relevant norms, their status internationally (i.e. up-to-date, relevant) and for the

country involved in a foreseen, partially concluded, or completed intervention, and the reasons why they should be motivated to pursue change in line with the relevant norms. The same goes for SD as a means of achieving change. In cases where this type of groundwork is needed in pursuit of a ToC that may fully account for normative and SD mandates, reality checking the results of groundwork may make it necessary to reflect these mandates realistically, with a limited scope and breadth. Figure 2 below illustrates a process for considering the adequacy and correction of ToC, its logical framework and ultimately monitoring plan.

Figure 2: ToC/LogFrame/Monitoring plan flow



3.5 ESTABLISHING EVALUABILITY IN PRACTICE

In practice, monitoring and evaluation of normative and SD mandate will need SMART targets and criteria just as any other dependent variable targeted for change through an intervention.

UNEG's idea of normative work offers a useful framework for organizing potential targets and criteria. Appropriate targets and criteria can be aligned to situations where the normative and SD mapping process reveals that either integration or implementation is the predominant normative work of an intervention. Where an intervention implicates both, targets and criteria can be drawn accordingly. Where the development of norms is the work being done by the ILO, targets and criteria can be aligned accordingly. See examples offered in Annex II below at page 16.

Box 1: Types of data needed for evaluating context

Normative work	Data needed for evaluation ...	Notes
Development	... evidencing the taking of inputs from the DC for making norms	ILO DC infrequently engages in this type of normative work
Integration	... evidencing changes in domestic laws, regulations, policy, institutional practices that reflect the relevant norms	Matter of international standard becoming the national standard
Implementation	... evidencing changes in the practical situation that conform to targets of the norm, i.e. desired effect of the norm being applied	Depending on standards involved, norm targets can be situations of – • Institutions or policy, as well as actual working conditions; • generally applicable, as well as limited by economic, occupational, or population groupings/sector • Evidence may be of achievement may be of a – • static situation, or • dynamic situation, i.e. progress depending on the standard

Box 2: Key questions to consider for monitoring and evaluation of a project

Setting up the M&E system and deciding what to monitor

- Does project documentation include analysis of standards and social dialogue?
- Do project indicators, milestones/targets refer to standards and/or social dialogue? Do they be revised to do so?
- Are project indicators closely aligned to standards' requirements so as to assure compatibility with things being monitored?
- Does monitoring of SD processes capture substances as well as process, i.e. the measurement of dialogue quality as well as the instances of dialogue?

Gathering and managing information during implementation

- How does the regular reporting schedule for the relevant ratified ILO Conventions coincide with the timeframe for the intervention? If it does, the government's reporting into the system and CEACR's observations on implementation should be monitored.
- If other standards are implicated by the project, is there independent supervision of their integration and/or implementation? If so, consideration should be given to drawing on data related to that system.
- Have the social partners been drawn upon as contributors to monitoring of SD developments related to the project?
- Has consideration been given to the breadth of scope of monitoring to assure the capture of developments where ever they may be occurring, i.e. within different organization, geographically, hierarchically within organizations?

Regularly analyse information and reflect critically with the partners to improve action

- Have institutions and/or policy makers involved with the substance of the relevant standards – even if external to project governance mechanisms – been involved in monitoring in terms of international standards?
- Has there been reflection by stakeholders of intervention performance during implementation in terms of normative and SD mandates, suggestions made for improvement and actions taken on those suggestions?

► 4. EVALUATION CRITERIA, NORMATIVE AND SOCIAL DIALOGUE MANDATE

The criteria on which evaluation findings and conclusions are made are influenced by normative and SD context. A context map prepared –

- during – and reflected in – an intervention’s design, or
- *exceptionally provided time and resources permit, post ante* going into an evaluation or at the evaluation inception report stage, should be used to incorporate these contexts into evaluation criteria, and the questions organized around them. The ToR for an evaluation can propose evaluation questions that take account of the observed contexts. Reasons and methods are discussed in this part for improving account of these contexts in generic questions falling under OECD/DAC criteria.¹² Examples of questions are in Annex III below at page 17.

4.1 NORMATIVE CONTEXT, CRITERIA AND QUESTIONS

Relevance

The normative context of an intervention influences findings and conclusions about its relevance for stakeholders and for the intervention itself.

Stakeholder relevance. The evaluation would want to measure the degree to which intervention activities, outputs, and objectives are consistent with prescriptions in relevant normative instruments where they have been formally embraced through ratification or expressions of endorsement by stakeholders. This is stakeholder relevance.¹³ The idea is that

12. OECD/DAC criteria are currently under review at the global level. Whatever the results of the review process, the approach here is that evaluation questions falling under evaluation criteria can be designed to take account of normative and social dialogue context.

elements of interventions happen – activities are undertaken, outputs are identified and produced, outcomes are sought – because of or in line with norms claimed by the stakeholders as relevant to them.

Intervention relevance. Regardless of stakeholders’ embrace of a standard, the relevance of an intervention’s design is enhanced the more it contributes to meeting the standard. This is intervention relevance. In this case, elements of the intervention happen in line with relevant norms because the ILO as a normative UN agency is duty bound to respect and promote its own and other relevant standards. This has operational and political implications for an intervention depending on stakeholders’ attitudes toward the relevant standards. Where standards implicated by an intervention have not been endorsed, the intervention should inherently promote endorsement and measure its relevance on this basis.

Evidence of relevance. Since recognition and embrace of a relevant norm is the focus of the relevance criteria, evidence of those characteristics needs to be monitored. The fact of ratification, recognition or embrace of the standard in part or in whole needs to be known.

Criteria measures can include:

- Evidence of embrace, such as  [ratification](#), incorporation in policy, etc.
- Intervention content assessment, for alignment

13. “A measure of the extent to which development cooperation is suited to the priorities and policy of the target group.” Definition of the relevance in OECD/DAC website.

Effectiveness

The effectiveness of an intervention should be measured against relevant standards.

Effectiveness in explicit cases. Norms should be considered in assessing effectiveness if they are explicitly implicated in the objectives of an intervention. For example, if the declared intermediate objective of an intervention is the “establishment and operation of [an Institution A] conforming to Convention X”, effectiveness of the intervention would be measured against Convention X.

Effectiveness in implicit cases. Where there is no explicit reference to norms and the location of the intervention and its elements on a normative continuum warrants it, the focus in each case would depend on the context map. For example, if the declared intermediate objective is “improved working conditions as a result of increased institutional support from [Institution A]”, intervention work with Institution A, the existence of Convention X, and – let us assume – the ratification of Convention X, would justify some measure of the effectiveness criteria against Convention X norms, although the focus of the effectiveness in an impact evaluation would have to be actual improved working conditions.

Unexpected effectiveness. Unintended effects that are consistent – as well as those that are inconsistent – with normative context should be a measured part of the effectiveness of an intervention. The potential for capturing this should be first seen during context mapping. For example, an intervention that had the unexpected effect of undermining the independence of an institution called for in a standard should

be measured. Similarly, for example, the unexpected effect of an intervention in reducing the use of unmarked containers of hazardous chemicals in workplaces of an economic sector the productivity of which is being targeted, improved labelling and systems for promoting labelling should be measured.

Criteria measures can include:

- Assessment of intervention results against standards.

Efficiency

Normative context can be a factor in how efficient an intervention is in producing results. Normative context can also be a result influenced by intervention efficiency.

Hindrance. By setting a quality or quantity for achievement, norms are sometimes seen as a potential hinderance to the efficiency of interventions.

Enhancement. Following a normative framework in providing technical supports can have efficiency effects by adding or reducing result producing tasks that might otherwise not be apparent. For example, efficiency in developing labour statistic collection and analysis capacity can be enhanced by assuring capacity to treat a complete range of standards-endorsed data sets.

Lessons learned. Where an intervention aims to integrate or implement norms, an evaluation can contribute particularly to learning about efficient, results-producing intervention practices. For example, in the normative domain, patterns in

the effect of supports (i.e. which have costs) for the adoption of legal and/or policy reforms to improve integration of a particular international standard leading to actual adoption (result/benefit), can be sought through evaluation.

Criteria measures can include:

- Assessment of intervention results against standards, account taken of inputs.

Sustainability

The evaluation of sustainability is about assessing whether the change brought about by an intervention is likely to continue after its conclusion. Normative work can support this.

Integration. Intervention results can be sustained by embedding them in national laws and/or policies, thereby integrating relevant international standards into national standards.

Implementation. Intervention results can be sustained by implementing national standards that conform with international norms. Similarly, for institutional implementation of international standards.

International supervision. Broadly speaking, the more central norms are for an intervention,¹⁴ the greater the potential for the supervision of ILO standards to contribute to the sustainability of outcomes. For example, the periodic supervision by the CEACR helps sustain the results of the project if the project helped bring the national situation into

conformity with a ratified ILO Convention and the ILO’s CEACR noted the improvement. The possibility of allegations of failure to apply the Convention likewise may help sustain intervention results.¹⁵ This will depend on what the results were relative to the standard. An evaluation can draw on these evidences to the extent they have occurred in time for the evaluation.

Criteria measures can include: in each case where the DC supported achievement :

- the [fact of ratification](#);
- the [provision of periodic reports](#) on implementation as required by the ILO’s [regular system of supervision](#); and/or
- improvement in integration or implementation [as monitored by the relevant supervisory bodies](#) and/or by the evaluation itself.

Where standards have been peripheral to an intervention, the system of ILS supervision may be more distant from intervention outcomes and outputs. This is difficult to assess without particulars. For example, where the standard is a broad one and intervention results nevertheless contribute to achievement of the broadly-set standard, reversing those results may still potentially be the subject of complaints to supervisory bodies. A government’s reporting of the contribution made by an intervention and its impact on the application of a ratified Convention can help set up a situation supporting sustainability, by making backtracking less tenable.

14. The normative continuum framework helps determine this.
 15. See special supervisory mechanisms under art. 24 and 26 of the ILO’s Constitution.

Impact

Norms potentially play roles as both targets for lower-level change themselves and as a means by which higher-level objectives are achieved.

Implementation. Improved compliance with norms in practice ought to contribute to the longer-term impact sought by an intervention. For example, where an ILS compliant legislative framework for domestic workers should impact on actual employment contracting, keeping of work/rest time, access to social security, etc. for domestic workers, and that this is the impact explicitly sought be the intervention. This is “compliance for decent work”. It is possible however that the results chain of the intervention’ ToC has ended with achieving compliance with the relevant norms, i.e. the legislative framework, full stop. In this case, the intervention’s impact has been seen as “compliance for compliance sake”. The first position is more consistent with approaches to impact evaluation, as it looks to higher levels and more long-term results, where attribution issues are more acute. The second position is consistent with performance evaluations. But this is not necessarily the case, depending on what norms are involved – where they, in fact, set the longer-term standard – and what the intervention intends.

Criteria measures can include:

- Field measurements of decent work, where attribution to the intervention is credible
- Compliance with the norm, best through international supervision

4.2 SOCIAL DIALOGUE CONTEXT, CRITERIA AND QUESTIONS

Relevance

For the ILO, an intervention’s relevance is positively correlated with the measure of social dialogue and social partner support for it. The amount of social dialogue an intervention supports is likewise correlated to its relevance for results desired by the ILO, that is, potential for improving social dialogue practices.

Stakeholder relevance. The evaluation would want to measure the degree to which intervention activities, outputs, and objectives flow directly from – or are at least consistent with – agreements reached or consensus apparent in social dialogue. The idea is that activities are undertaken, outputs are identified and produced, and outcomes are sought because of or in line with the results of social dialogue. Care is needed to assure that this type of relevance takes its measure from consensus support rather than support of social partners individually.

Intervention relevance. The relevance of an intervention’s design is enhanced the more it uses and contributes to social dialogue. In this case, elements of the intervention rely on social dialogue and thus promote social dialogue because the ILO is duty bound to promote tripartism and social dialogue as a means of social development. This has operational and political implications for an intervention depending on stakeholders’ attitudes toward tripartism and social dialogue. Where dialogue implicated by an intervention has not been previously used, its promotion should be inherent to the intervention and a measures of its relevance on this basis.

Criteria measures can include:

- Evidence of social partner agreement or consensus on intervention and its elements;

Effectiveness

Social dialogue should be considered in assessing the effectiveness of an intervention in achieving results. It should also be considered where a change in social dialogue practice is a measure of intervention effectiveness.

Contribution to effectiveness. Social dialogue in an intervention should be monitored and evaluated since the ILO expects that it contributes to the effectiveness of its interventions. Social partners and stakeholders can be asked if dialogue contributed either to the quantity or quality of results anticipated and/or achieved.

Effectiveness in explicit cases. Social dialogue should be considered in assessing effectiveness if it is explicitly implicated in the **objectives** of an intervention. For example, if the declared intermediate objective of an intervention is the “establishment and operation of organs of social dialogue in [an sector of economic activity]” or “social partners’ organisations have improved capacity and effectiveness in implementation of [labour laws] and work together constructively on dispute resolution, collective bargaining, occupational safety and health and building an industrial relations system based on mutual respect”, the effectiveness of the intervention would be measured by looking to social dialogue practices pre and post ante.

Unintended results. Interventions can have an effect that is not intended. This is particularly so when effects are located in interactions between interest organizations, their members, and leaders.

Criteria measures can include:

- Evidence of social dialogue contribution to intervention results;
- Evidence of change in social dialogue practice resulting from intervention;

Efficiency

Social dialogue can be a factor in how efficient an intervention is in producing results. It can also be a result influenced by intervention efficiency.

Hindrance. By setting a methodology through which objectives in whole or in part are to be achieved, social dialogue norms are sometimes seen as a potential hinderance to the efficiency of interventions.

Enhancement. Following a social dialogue methodology in providing technical supports can have efficiency effects by improving the quality of results. The social partners are, for example, often well positioned to understand the dynamics of the labour market that ILO interventions aim to influence.

Lessons learned. Considering the complexity of social dialogue, an evaluation can contribute to learning about efficient, results-producing approaches to interventions. For example, where an objective is improved social dialogue as measured by heightened confidence between partners, higher quality and quantity of social partner accords, etc., to be achieved by confidence and capacity building activities

over the period of a multi-year project, efficiency could be assessed by correlating data on benefits with characteristics of interventions, i.e. their periodicity, size, target groups, etc. – all of which equate to the use of resources. Lessons can be sought through evaluation.

Criteria measures can include:

- Results assessed, account taken of social dialogue frequency, time to consensus/agreement, substantive support costs.

Sustainability

Social dialogue can help perpetuate or defeat the changes brought about by an intervention. It is an important consideration for evaluation of sustainability criteria.

The context map is particular important for considering social dialogue and sustainability. This is so because the position of the social partners relative to interventions’ stated objectives may be well known in advance of the conclusion of an intervention. This makes it possible for the intervention to consider targeted actions to promote sustainability with the relevant social partners. Thus, for example, if it is known that the workers’ organizations have important concerns about the changes promoted by the intervention, and they have expressed those concerns in social dialogue fora, an intervention has the opportunity to monitor and attempt to affect change with this sustainability factor.

Criteria measures can include:

- Evidence of on-going/post ante social partner support for intervention results;

Impact

As with the sustainability criteria, social dialogue can play an all-important factor regardless where intervention impact is set in by the ToC and LogFrame.

Implementation. Support in social dialogue in practice ought to contribute to the longer-term and higher-level impact sought by an intervention. Whatever decent work outcome is sought by an intervention, the social partners’ support for it and for action taken to achieve it as a result, can make it happen. For example, the intervention-supported ILS-compliant legislative framework for domestic workers should impact on actual employment contracting. A social pact taken up in social dialogue to promote actual implementation of legislation through publicity, inspection, and other means can have game-changing decent work impact after the intervention’ ToC has ended with adoption of the legislative framework. An impact evaluation will want to look for social dialogue and social partner action for impact; a process/implementation evaluation will want to look for social dialogue/social partner action for legislation making.

Where the development objective is set for “compliance for decent work”, an evaluation would be looking for impact that is consistent with a norm, where the impact may be attributable to compliance with the norm.

Criteria measures can include:

- Evidence of support in social dialogue agreements or consensus, and in unilateral social partner support for continued implementation of intervention results, combined with evidence of impact

► 5. WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF MANDATES

For independent project evaluations, the [ILO Evaluation Office](#) has established a workflow and procedure with specific roles and responsibilities assigned to each step¹⁶. Normative and SD context should be considered in each of the process steps of the evaluation. See Box 3 below. More particularly:

1. The normative and SD mandates should be mapped to the subject of evaluation. This should be done with the inception report at the latest.
2. A decision should be taken on whether and if so how the ToC and/or logical framework should be adapted, constructed or reconstructed in light of the context map.
3. The results of the context map should be taken into account in the framing of the evaluation criteria and questions.
4. Data should be collected that enables findings and conclusions that take account of normative and SD mandates.

Box 3: Integrating normative and SD mandates with evaluation processes

Terms of reference

- Map (wholly or partially subject to time and resources) normative and SD context of the evaluand and include results in the ToR or mandate that it be done in the inception report.
- Require normative and SD context to be considered in assessing the quality of the ToC.

Inception report and consultation process

- Conclusions from the mapping indicating the main normative and SD consideration at stake and the extent the intervention is addressing them through its log-frame
- An evaluation scope that recognizes the normative and SD mandates and explicitly indicates how they will be reflected throughout findings, conclusions and recommendations.
- An evaluation matrix including criteria, evaluation questions and indicators designed or adjusted in a way that considers normative and SD mandates and ensures appropriate data is collected through a mix of qualitative and quantitative indicators.
- A detailed methodology about how methods, tools and data analysis techniques are designed to capture the normative and SD mandates

Approaches and methods, data collection tools and analysis techniques

- Documentation that shows integration and implementation including: laws, regulations, policy, operational manuals and guidelines, strategic plans of the stakeholders. Project guidelines, manuals, etc., showing orientation and compliance of intervention activities, outcomes and results.

16. For further detailed guidance on ILO’s policies and practices related to project evaluations, please see [ILO Guidelines to Results-Based Evaluation Principles, Rationale, Planning and Managing for Evaluations](#).

ANNEX I. TOOLS FOR MAPPING NORMS, THEIR STATUS AND SUPERVISION

To find ILO Conventions and Recommendation, by subject and status (to assure that they are considered up-to-date instruments), in [NORMLEX](#).

To find the country's ratifications on [NORMLEX](#).

Some of the ILO's numerous codes of practice and guides in the area of occupational safety and health:

[Ambient factors in the workplace](#)

[Guide to health and hygiene in agricultural work](#)

[Guide to the prevention and suppression of dust in mining, tunnelling and quarrying](#)

[HIV/AIDS and the world of work](#)

[Management of alcohol- and drug-related issues in the workplace](#)

[Model code of safety regulations for industrial establishments for the guidance of governments and industry](#)

[Model code of safety regulations for underground work in coal mines](#)

[Occupational exposure to airborne substances harmful to health](#)

[Prevention of accidents due to electricity underground in coal mines](#)

[Prevention of accidents due to explosions underground in coal mines](#)

[Prevention of major industrial accidents](#)

[Protection of workers' personal data](#)

[Safe construction and operation of tractors](#)

[Safety and health in agriculture](#)

[Safety and health in building and civil engineering work](#)

[Safety and health in coal mines](#)

[Safety and health in construction](#)

[Safety and health in opencast mines](#)

[Safety and health in ports](#)

[Safety and health in shipbreaking: Guidelines for Asian countries and Turkey](#)

[Safety and health in underground coalmines](#)

[Safety in the use of asbestos](#)

[Safety in the use of synthetic vitreous fibre insulation wools \(glass wool, rock wool, slag wool\)](#)

[Workplace violence in services sectors and measures to combat this phenomenon](#)

[Safety in the use of chemicals at work](#)

[Guidelines on occupational safety and health management systems \(ILO-OSH 2001\)](#)

[Technical and ethical guidelines for workers' health surveillance \(OSH 72\)](#)

ANNEX II. EXAMPLES OF NORMATIVE TARGETS AND CRITERIA

INTEGRATION WORK.

Reference should be to both the national situation and the normative standard. For example:

Target: Legislation governing inward and outbound migration for employment conforming to ratified ILO Convention No. 143 is drafted by the government and adopted by the Parliament within the life of the project.

Criteria: Draft text assessed to be conforming to Convention No. 143 by relevant ILO technical department.

Target: Policy establishing increased independence and professional specialization for labour inspection functions conforming to ratified ILO Convention No. 81 (in an otherwise unified government inspections institution) is adopted by the government and reported to ILO supervisory bodies.

Criteria: Evidence (i.e. policy papers, promotional information for civil society and press, etc.) of policy adoption by government.

Criteria: Timely government report on the ratified ILO Convention No. 81 replying to comments made by the CEACR on the subject of independence and specialization of labour inspection.

IMPLEMENTATION WORK.

Reference should be to both the national situation and the normative standard. For example:

Target: Employment service offices for international migration are established and operate throughout the country in a manner that follows and reflects accepted and binding international standards.

Criteria: List of employment service offices. Records of operations. Operations manual demonstrating operational rules that conform to international standards.

Target: Improved health among women workers in the footwear production industry as a result of changed practices in the use of hazardous chemicals.

Criteria: Changed practice in the use of hazardous chemicals resulting from intervention, evidenced reduction in absenteeism, evidenced reduction in new-born infant mortality, evidenced reduction in reported skin irritation of workers.

DEVELOPMENT WORK.

Reference should be to the manner and substantive objective of the work.

Target: Acceptability of content of new international standard on violence in the workplace among ILO member States and enabling.

Criteria: Ratification by member States within the first five years of adoption equal to or bettering other Conventions adopted in the past 20 years.

ANNEX III. EXAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR EVALUATION CRITERIA

Every evaluation assesses the following evaluation criteria: relevance and strategic fit; project effectiveness; adequacy and efficiency of resource use; impact; and sustainability. As described in the main text, each of these criteria has normative and SD dimension that should be incorporated into evaluation questions.

Relevance Associated main and secondary questions for normative context might include: - Is the intervention relevant for stakeholders insofar as it contributes to meeting standards embraced by them? - Have intervention outputs or outcomes been relevant for improved integration or implementation of standards, regardless of stakeholder embrace of them? - To what extent has the intervention taken normative context into account in the design of its activities, outputs and/or outcomes? activities, outputs and/or outcomes? - Is there specific normative context that makes the intervention’s activities, outputs, and/or outcomes particularly relevant? - To what extent are stakeholders aware of that normative context? What evidence is there of that awareness? - Does the particular relevance flow from account taken of obligations flowing from ratifications? From international supervision? From normative prescriptions? What evidence is there of this account being taken (or is it actually only coincidental and without causal link)?	Associated main and secondary questions for SD context might include: - To what extent has the relevance of intervention activities, outputs, and objective been reflected by or a direct results of social dialogue? - Was social dialogue involved in the design of interventions (as distinguished from inputs from the social partners)? - Did activities or outputs make possible or contribute to the relevance achieved through social dialogue? - Would the evidences of dialogue have occurred without intervention support? What factors are relevant in this regard? Effectiveness Associated main and secondary questions for normative context might include: - To what extent has normative context contributed to the intervention setting and/or meeting its objectives? - To what extent have normative systems been used to bring about or extend intervention results? - Associated main and secondary questions for SD context might include: - To what extent has social dialogue contributed to the intervention’s effectiveness in meeting its objectives? - Was this by design? - To what extent has the achievement of objectives been effective in promoted social dialogue?	- To what extent has the intervention been effective in changing social dialogue practices? - Has the intervention had any unintended effects on social dialogue practices? Efficiency Associated main and secondary questions for normative context might include: - Have relevant norms been used to establish standards for the intervention’s objectives? If so, to what extent have those standards affected – positively or negatively – efficiency? - Have identified efficiency effects been justified? - To what extent has intervention efficiency been affected by normative context? What is the overall net implication for efficiency? - Considering the unique features of normative context, what could have been done more efficiently to achieve desired results in the normative domain? Associated main and secondary questions for SD context might include: - To what extent has intervention efficiency been affected – positively or negatively – by social dialogue? - What is the character of positive and/or negative effects? What is the overall net implication for efficiency? - To what extent has intervention efficiency affected social dialogue results? - Considering the unique features of social dialogue, what could have been done more efficiently to achieve desired results?
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Impact

Where the development objective is limited to compliance for compliance sake, associated main and secondary questions for normative context might include:

- To what extent has the intervention had an impact consistent with [the relevant standard] on laws and practices under national normative frameworks?
- To what extent has the intervention had an impact consistent with [the relevant standard] on the establishment and operation of [standards-mandated] institutions under national normative frameworks?
- To what extent has the intervention contributed to establishment of [the implementing mechanism as required by the standard]?

Where the development objective is higher than compliance for compliance sake, an evaluation would be looking for impact that is consistent with a norm, where the impact may be attributable to compliance with the norm. Associated main and secondary questions for normative context might include:

- Has the intervention contributed to an observed reduction in occupational injuries by improving labour inspection enforcements? How has normative context played a role in this?
- Has the intervention contributed to a reduction in periods of unemployment by improving intermediation in the labour market? How has normative context played a role in this?
- Has the intervention had unforeseen impact on the reduction in child labour/occupational injuries? How has normative context played a role in this?

Associated main and secondary questions for SD context might include:

- To what extent has social dialogue contributed to the intervention's observed impact?
- To what extent has the intervention had an impact on social dialogue practices?

Sustainability

Associated main and secondary questions for normative context might include:

- To what extent has normative context contributed to or detracted from intervention impacts continuing after donor funding ceased?
- To what extent have intervention results and impacts been reinforced by normative systems?
- Does newly compliant national or local legislation, regulation or policy reinforce intervention results?
- Do private normative systems consistent with norms, i.e. codes of conduct, industrial standards, etc., reinforce intervention results?
- Has the use of existing or new international standards – through ratification, use as a guide for national practices or standards, as a basis for advocacy, etc. – contributed to sustaining intervention results?

- Associated main and secondary questions for SD context might include:
- To what extent has social dialogue contributed to or detracted from intervention impacts continuing after donor funding ceased?
- To what extent have intervention results and impacts been reinforced by social dialogue?
- Do social dialogue outcomes, i.e. social pacts, collective agreements, etc., reinforce intervention results?

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