



► Tool 1.2: Monitoring and evaluation appraisal tool for project proposals over US\$ five million

► **DATE:** JANUARY 2021, V.2 (V.1 – 2017)



This tool is to be read in conjunction with ►  [Guidance note 1.3 on Evaluability](#)

PROJECT PROPOSAL STAGE

Title of project

Type of project

Budget size

Project duration

Proposal authors

Potential donor

Assessors

Date assessed

INTRODUCTION

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) appraisal is the analytical review of the design and formulation of the project's plan for monitoring and evaluating performance and impact. As part of ILO's quality assurance process, all project proposals with budgets above \$5 million need to be appraised by ILO's Evaluation Office (EVAL) for the quality and completeness of the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan, including reserved budget as a prerequisite before donor submission.

This tool illustrates the key dimensions of EVAL's M&E appraisal of project proposals over USD \$ 5 million. Since 2019, EVAL and PARDEV review proposals using a joint appraisal checklist. In completing this form, EVAL rates and provides comments for a total of 20 evaluability components. An aggregate score indicates the overall project's evaluability as per its design. Concluding remarks point out the components in need of further improvement before the final appraisal. In cases where the project originator is unable to incorporate some of the given comments prior to the final appraisal, s/he should indicate this and inform EVAL and PARDEV about when and how these comments will be addressed.

This tool is a living document and has not been professionally edited.

Right-click on hyperlinks and select 'Open in new tab' to access, if viewing in browser.

SCOPE AND CRITERIA FOR THE APPRAISAL

The M&E appraisal process reviews the project proposal in terms of:

- Internal logic and assumptions;
- Quality of indicators;
- Baselines;
- Targets;
- Milestones;
- Feasibility of means of verification/measurement and methods;
- Human and financial resources;
- Partners’ participation;

Based on the following scale, project proposal M&E appraisals will be rated against each of the criteria listed in the enclosed tables. The ratings are intended to raise attention to potential problems. Comments indicate how improvements can be made.

- (1) Unsatisfactory quality
- (2) Satisfactory quality
- (3) High quality
- (X) Not relevant to project

► 1. RELEVANCE

Question	Quality assessment criteria	Rating
A. Is the programme's/project's overall objective clearly defined? (e.g., does the proposal identify how the intervention contributes to ILO outcomes, as stated in P&B and the DWCP?)	The intervention specifies its contribution to the long-term ILO priorities, outcomes, and DWCP outcomes, including the relevant CPO(s).	
Comments:		
B. Does the project identify and align with relevant SDGs, UN cooperation framework, national SDG frameworks and other cooperation frameworks, including national development plans?	- The proposal explains how the project fits into the broader framework of development assistance to the country, including national development plans. - The proposal is coherent with UN cooperation framework and contributes to the particular areas that ILO is accountable to. - The proposal identifies relevant SDG indicators that are consistent with the SDG indicators linked to the relevant CPO(s).	
Comments:		
C. Is the proposed intervention relevant in addressing the problem identified and responds to all aspects raised in the problem and stakeholder analyses?	- A problem statement has been formulated through a situation analysis (baseline study or other evidence). - The population group/ultimate beneficiaries affected by the problem has been identified, and the proposal refers to existing gender roles, division of labour, opportunities and constraints for women and men to access and control resources. - The stakeholders related to the problem and the proposed solution have been identified, along with their respective constraints and interests in contributing towards the proposed solution to the problem. The stakeholder analysis was conducted in a gender-responsive manner.	
Comments:		
D. Does the proposal reflect ILO's cross-cutting areas in a relevant and integrated way?	The level of ambition and visibility with regards to the mainstreaming of CCPDs in the proposal is on par with the CCPD marker of the corresponding CPO(s).	
Comments:		
Recommendation to project designers:		

► 2. MANAGING FOR RESULTS

Question	Quality assessment criteria	Rating
A. Is the theory of change (e.g., the expectation of how change will actually happen) clearly expressed and explicitly laid out in a way that appears plausible to the non-specialist, in the narrative, and/or as a graph?	- The causal links, mechanisms for change and assumptions between outputs and outcomes as well as between outcomes and impact are clearly and convincingly explained. The weight of the explanation is on the achievement of outcomes (rather than the delivery of activities, and the achievement of outputs). - Outputs appear sufficient for the likely achievement of outcomes. The expected contribution of outcomes to impact is also clear. - It is clear from the theory of change which actors will benefit from capacity development and how capacity development is expected to lead to outcome results such as enhanced performance or changed behaviour etc. - Key assumptions are identified, including results of past, ongoing or planned interventions (including those of other actors, as relevant). - Previous experiences (other projects or regions) gathered from evaluations or reviews is cited as evidence to support the expected causal relationship between outputs, outcomes and the expected development objective/impact - including lessons learnt from past evaluations.	
Comments:		
B. Do results formulations capture the concrete situations to be achieved?	The outcomes (immediate objectives) clearly state the final situation to be achieved, the conditions under which the performance is to be observed and the standard which must be met to arrive at the desired result. Result formulations are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time bound.	
Comments:		
C. Have adequate mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation been established?	- The M&E section in the proposal describes the M&E system planned to collect necessary monitoring information accurately and timely, in a way that justifies required resources. It includes an evaluability review (mandatory for projects over \$5 million) and describes the type & nature of the evaluations to be conducted per ILO's evaluation policy requirements (link below). It also factors in 'Value for Money' data reporting, collection and analysis. Check: https://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationpolicy/WCMS_571339/lang--en/index.htm - The planned feed-back loop of information on progress into project management decisions is outlined and information needs for performance reporting is well identified. A project personnel responsible for monitoring and evaluation has been identified and roles and responsibilities for data collection, evaluation and reporting are specified. - The M&E plan is developed with well-identified information needs for performance reporting. Suggested data collection and analysis methods are technically adequate and feasible. It specifies roles and responsibilities for monitoring, evaluation and reporting on results. - The M&E plan includes SMART and gender-sensitive indicators, baselines, targets and milestones (also allowing for disability inclusion and/or inclusion of other vulnerable groups). Indicators measure the intended results. A baseline exists, describing the situation prior to the intervention, therefore allowing comparison of results. Targets are computed by adding amount of change desired vis-à-vis the baselines. Milestones are computed by dividing the targets into time-bound increments. - The M&E budget is in line with the ILO policy guidelines (link below). The evaluation budget is on a separate budget line and it is adequate for the size and duration of the project (2% of the total budget required per ILO policy guidelines). Idem for the monitoring budget (3% of the total project budget is recommended). Check here: https://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationpolicy/WCMS_571339/lang--en/index.htm	
Comments:		
Recommendation to project designers:		

► 3. TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Question	Quality assessment criteria	Rating
A. Does the proposal include a strategy for continuous progress communication with stakeholders, including final as well as direct beneficiaries?	The project describes how data and results (including evaluation results) will be communicated with stakeholders identified in the stakeholder analysis and has allocated adequate resources (human, financial) to implement it.	
Comments:		
Recommendation to project designers:		

ANNEX I. TEMPLATE FOR PRESENTING LESSONS LEARNED

ILO LESSON LEARNED TEMPLATE

Project Title:

Project TC/SYMBOL:

Name of Evaluator:

Date:

The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may be included in the full evaluation report.

LL Element	Text
Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	
Context and any related preconditions	
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	

ANNEX II. TEMPLATE FOR PRESENTING AN EMERGING GOOD PRACTICE

ILO LESSON LEARNED TEMPLATE

Project Title:		Project TC/SYMBOL:	
Name of Evaluator:		Date:	

The following emerging good practice has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text can be found in the full evaluation report.

GP Element	Text
Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)	
Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	
Establish a clear cause-effect relationship	
Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries	
Potential for replication and by whom	
Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO’s Strategic Programme Framework)	
Other documents or relevant comments	