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i-eval Flash news



International
Labour
Organization

EVAL highlights

EVAL is pleased to share the **fourteenth** edition of *i-eval Flash news* with you. Through this quarterly electronic bulletin we provide readers with updates, news and information on publications and upcoming events related to evaluation. You are invited to alert us about any news item that you wish to include in the next issue at EVAL@ilo.org.

Independent external evaluation of ILO's evaluation function due in 2016

It is now over 5 years since the [ILO's evaluation function was independently and externally evaluated \(IEE\)](#). The 2010 IEE overseen by the Governing body was an important landmark in ILO's efforts to turn evaluation into a modern and up-to-date function. That is, to ensure evaluation contributes to improved accountability, learning and decision making in the context of the ILO's commitment to results based management. The implementation of the [ILO's 2011-15 result-based evaluation strategy](#) that emanated from this exercise has been systematically monitored and reported upon in [ILO's Annual Evaluation Reports](#). The latest assessments show that there has been good progress in further embedding a culture of evaluation in the ILO. All 11 milestones, related to the three evaluation strategy outcomes were fundamentally met. However, coping with growing demand, both in terms of quantity and quality of evaluations, has been challenging. Headway on improved use of evaluation for governance has been hampered by various factors, including the sheer amount of information generated by over 150 evaluations per biennium. Nevertheless, recent external reviews ([Joint Inspection Unit](#) and donor reviews) have highlighted that ILO's evaluation function has made good progress and is on the right track. In 2016, this will be put to the test as a repeat independent external evaluation of ILO's evaluation function will be undertaken.

On-going high-level and thematic evaluations for 2015 are:

- *High Level Independent Evaluation of the ILO's Technical Cooperation Strategy, 2010-2015*
- *High Level Independent Evaluation of the ILO's DWCP, Strategies and Actions in the Caribbean, 2010-2014*
- *High Level Independent Evaluation of the ILO's Strategy and Actions for Strengthening Labour Inspection Systems: Towards Improving Workplace Compliance, 2010-14*
- *Thematic Evaluation of the ILO's Work in Fragile States, 2004-2014*
- *Effective Labour protection for all: Lessons learned from a synthesis review, 2004-2014*

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Innovation & Research

On-going and planned studies

- **Thematic evaluation on fragile states**

Since its foundation in 1919, the ILO has facilitated post-conflict reconstruction through social reform by promoting democratic participation, social dialogue and fundamental rights. In more recent years, the ILO has adopted a specific focus on conflict resolution and disaster response reconstruction. The Evaluation Office has embarked on a thematic evaluation of the ILO's work in fragile states. The methodology will be carried out in two phases: i) an in-depth meta-study of ILO documents and evaluation reports; ii) based on issues identified in the meta-study, field missions to selected countries will be undertaken.

- **Synthesis review of ILO interventions on labour protection 2004-2014**

A draft report has been received which presents the findings of a systematic analysis of the results, lessons learned and good practices of labour protection interventions carried out by the ILO and selected international organisations in the past decade (2004-2014). The interventions were primarily at high, intermediate and grass-roots level in the areas of wages, working-time, and health and safety. The preliminary results emphasized the importance of key dimensions of project implementation including the development of synergies, ensuring sustainability and a focus on gender mainstreaming.

New Books and Articles on Evaluation

[Theories of Change in International Development: Communication, Learning or Accountability](#)



By Craig Valters, Justice and Security Research Programme, International Development Department, London School of Economics, in conjunction with the Asia Foundation (JRSP Paper 17, 2014). *Abstract:* This paper argues that while a Theory of Change approach can create space for critical reflection; this requires a



much broader commitment to learning from individuals, organizations, and the development sector itself. Critically analysing assumptions is a much needed endeavour in international development policy and practice: existing management tools rarely encourage critical thinking and there are considerable political, organizational and bureaucratic constraints to the promotion of learning throughout the sector. The Theory of Change approach – an increasingly popular management tool and discourse in development – hopes to change some of that. This approach explicitly aims to challenge and change implicit assumptions in world views and programme interventions in the lives of others, yet little is known about the extent to which it really does so. This paper provides a much needed analysis of how Theories of Change are used in the day-to-day practice of an international development organization, The Asia Foundation. They use the approach in three ways: to communicate, to learn and to be held accountable, which each exist in some tension with each other. Creating Theories of Change was often found to be a helpful process by programme staff, since it provided a greater freedom to explain and analyse programme interventions. However, the introduction of the approach also had some troubling effects, for example, by creating top-down accounts of change which spoke more to donor interests than to the ground realities of people affected by these interventions.

[Inspection and Evaluation Manual](#), United Nations. Office



of Internal Oversight Services, 2014.

Though primarily for internal use, the manual contains

information that might be valuable to colleagues outside of OIOS-IED. For example, it contains technical pointers on how OIOS tackles the many challenges that programme evaluation entails. This revised version was developed as follow-up to OIOS-IED's first manual, released in January 2008. As such, it contains a number of new features that are intended to make it more beneficial to users. Among these improvements are additional components of guidance; expanded resources, including updated examples of OIOS-IED's own good practice and a significantly expanded list of external resources; and a more interactive and user-friendly online format.

[How systematic is that systematic review? The case of improving learning outcomes](#). Submitted by David Evans and Anna Popova to the World Bank's Development Impact website. Further interesting observations and comments on this posting can be found on the [Monitoring and Evaluations NEWS blog](#) submitted by Rick Davies.

News from the Departments

Two major evaluations underscore growing relevance of mainstreaming and measuring Decent Work

The importance of coherent policies for Decent Work within Member States and international organizations has been growing since the 2004 World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization. In 2007, the High Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) of the Chief Executive Board for Coordination (CEB) endorsed a mainstreaming toolkit developed by ILO in consultation with other members of the HCLP. The purpose of the toolkit was to assist UN agencies in mainstreaming decent work in their policies and programmes. The Social Justice Declaration of 2008 called for promoting the Decent Work Agenda through global and national level strategies. The Declaration mandated the ILO to provide assistance to its constituents to this effect.

At the organisational level, the ILO designed an exclusive outcome to this effect within its strategic policy framework (SPF) 2010-15. Outcome 19 of the current SPF states

'Member States place an integrated approach to decent work at the heart of their economic and social policies, supported by key UN and other multilateral agencies'. In the ILO, MULTILATERALS (earlier known as the Policy Integration Department) and the Department of Statistics have been intensively involved in DW mainstreaming and measurement. This includes upstream policy coherence and mainstreaming efforts as well as in developing and refining DW indicators. The department received cooperation and support from the IMF and EC apart from that provided by other sources.

Two important evaluations came out in 2014 on DW mainstreaming. The first was an independent evaluation of the ILO's strategy for coherent decent work policy. The evaluation focussed on the ILO's global strategy and contribution in supporting Member States to adopt coherent policies for Decent Work. It was reported upon by the ILO Evaluation Office to the Governing Body in November 2014. The second independent evaluation conducted by the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) focussed on DW mainstreaming by UN system agencies. It examined the

performance of individual UN organizations in mainstreaming the decent work agenda into their strategies and actions. Both the evaluations were presented during the joint JIU-ILO side event to the ECOSOC meeting in New York in February 2015. The [presentation](#) can be viewed online.

[The JIU evaluation](#) concluded that the mainstreaming of the decent work agenda into the activities of United Nations system organizations met with 'moderate success'. It noted that there were wide variations amongst agencies on the level of DW mainstreaming. While some organisations showed "moderate" to "strong" mainstreaming, most others (nearly half of the reviewed agencies) only showed ad-hoc actions or no visible sign of mainstreaming. None of the organisations fully implemented The CEB Toolkit for Mainstreaming Employment and Decent Work. Similarly, a system wide action plan on decent work did not materialise. However, some elements of decent work were included in the United Nations Second Decade for the Eradication of Poverty. Decent work elements, however, gained prominence in various crisis response initiatives during 2008-10, especially through the Global Jobs Pact and Social Protection Floor discussions.

DW mainstreaming was particularly limited by organisations having very specific areas of work (such as WHO, IAEA UNODC). Those with direct work on aspects of poverty reduction or on areas that fall within the ambit of decent work concept showed better results. FAO was the only agency that showed high levels of commitment and action towards mainstreaming decent work at policy and operational levels.

At the country level, employment creation and social protection, and to some extent rights at work, appeared more frequently in UNDAFs. This was attributed to greater awareness on these issues due to the financial crisis than to conscious efforts to mainstream DW concepts by UN agencies. Indeed, efforts made by the ILO towards advocacy, awareness-raising and technical support played an important role in inclusion of the decent work pillars in UNDAF and UNCT activities.

Low awareness about the decent work agenda among United Nations staff was one of key weaknesses found by the JIU evaluation. This was attributed to the lack of any systematic training and also to high staff turnover within agencies. Use of the knowledge sharing portal developed under the EC-ILO project was found to be weak and many of the UN staff members who were interviewed during the evaluation were not aware of it. Awareness about DW was higher at the country level, mainly due to UNDAF process. The absence of a monitoring framework to measure mainstreaming levels within organisations and weak cooperation within and between organisations also limited the scope of mainstreaming decent work and joint actions.

Several findings of [the ILO evaluation](#) were confirmed by the JIU evaluation, namely those related to mainstreaming at national levels, use of CEB toolkit and the knowledge sharing platform. The evaluation found that the ILO was able to consistently advocate for promotion of coherent macroeconomic policies, inclusive economic growth and social cohesion at the international as well as at national levels. Joint initiatives with the European Union, International Monetary Fund and G20 to support and advance the decent work agenda are particularly notable in this regard. A reflection of these upstream initiatives is the progress made by the Office in establishing decent work as a means of poverty reduction within the MDGs. It is hoped that the upcoming sustainable development goals (SDGs) will identify employment and decent work as an exclusive goal.

At the national levels, Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCP) have been progressively more consultative and representative of the needs and concerns of the constituents including those of the national governments. There is clear evidence that decent work concerns are being reflected in UNDAFs and joint UN programmes. The evaluation pointed out that effectiveness of DW mainstreaming strategies and activities depended on comprehensive needs assessment carried out by the country offices.

While ILO-IMF cooperation provided an enabling environment for policy coherence, the European Union (EU) supported technical cooperation projects. The Monitoring and Assessing Progress on Decent Work (MAP) was effectively used to advance the process of decent work measurement. In most of the countries where the MAP project was active, the ILO was effective in providing technical assistance on labour statistics and developing decent work profiles. The level of support required by constituents varied depending on their existing capacities. In some cases, the process led to capacity enhancement of the national statistical offices, as well. At regional level, South-South Triangulation Cooperation promoted decent work mainstreaming through special programmes and through formal regional alliances.

Existence of multiple methods of assessment, such as DW Country Profiles, Global Jobs Pact Scans, Studies in the Growth with Equity series and Labour and Social Trends reports was identified as problematic. In addition, the need to pay more attention to building local institutional capacity was identified. The evaluation pointed to the need of better assessment of national capacity and ownership, sustainability potential and clearer messaging of the purpose of measuring and mainstreaming decent work. Some of the key limitations to sustainability of current efforts include: low visibility of the ILO, often due to lack of

strategy for wider communication; low national ownership; challenges relating to technical expertise and financial resources at the national levels; and inadequate horizontal coherence within the ILO. The evaluation recommended better coherence among HQ and field initiatives on decent work measurement. It also insisted on further strengthening of the ILO's comparative advantage on decent work and labour statistics.

Lessons on mainstreaming and measuring decent work are particularly important in light of the forthcoming Sustainable Development Goals. The ILO and other UN agencies can use the feedback generated through these evaluations to shape their strategies towards more coherent action on the decent work agenda within the SDGs once adopted.

ILO Evaluation Guidance *i-eval Resource Kit –* *ILO policy guidelines, 2nd ed. 2013*

Revision plans: EVAL will start drafting new guidance on how to conduct the internal Country Programme Reviews (CPRs). The guidance will use input from ILO's evaluation network and from studies conducted on the evaluability of DWCPs and CPRs. EVAL invites your input for this guidance note. Please send any comments or suggestions to EVAL@ilo.org.



Regional News - Africa

Labour Intensive Public Works Programme

The Labour Intensive Public Works (LIPW) Programme has proved to be a viable development approach especially from the point of view of cost effectiveness, income and employment generation, overall poverty reduction and overall economic growth.

During the last 2 years, the ILO regional office for Africa carried out LIPW projects in the following countries:

- Sierra Leone: Quick Impact Employment Creation Project (QIECP) for Youth through Labour-based Public Works
- Ghana: Social Opportunities Project (GSOP)
- Liberia: Labour-based Public Works Project in Liberia (LPWPL)
- South Africa: Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) at national level
- South Africa: Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) in Limpopo Province

The purpose of these evaluations was mainly independent assessment of project progress and to provide strategic and operational recommendations. An additional purpose was to highlight lessons to improve performance and the delivery of projects results. Some of the major findings of these evaluations are summarized and presented below.

Inclusive partnership and cooperation: Many of the evaluations indicated effective partnership with government and other stakeholders as a key factor for effective implementation of LIPW programmes. For example, the QIECP demonstrated how effective collaboration with other partners could enhance the impact of a project beyond its original concept. The project collaborated not only with UN agencies, but also with related ILO projects in Sierra Leone. This collaboration with other projects in meeting governments’ objectives showed the project’s effectiveness and efficiency in mainstreaming employment creation. The GSOP also proved that effective collaboration with all partners significantly contributes in achieving common goals in large-scale and multi-sector programmes.

Focused Capacity building interventions: The other success factor is the implementation of a focused strategy to

develop the capacity of stakeholders of public works programmes. Experiential learning (e.g. practical training and study tours) which was adopted by the EPWP and LPWPL proved to be an effective way of fast-tracking stakeholders’ knowledge acquisition, attitude change and capacity development, in general. However, the GSOP demonstrated that only planned and well-prepared training by sufficient and professional trainers can achieve the desired training effects.

Addressing Gender inequalities: The other major finding of the evaluations was related to gender inequalities. It was found that the issue of gender inequalities should be addressed to ensure better and more successful implementation of the LIPW programme. For instance, the QIECP suggested the need to pay more attention to certain fundamental issues such as the existing traditional practices that continue to hinder the promotion of gender equality and related matters. Thus, a better focused gender sensitive strategy for ensuring balanced participation of women and men in all aspects of the LIPW programme was fundamental for better achievement of the programme.

Finally, the two South African evaluations indicated that implementation of Employment-Intensive Approach focusing on the creation of temporary work opportunities does not necessarily result in **improved “sustainable livelihood”**. Complementary initiatives - including forging win-win partnership with potential employers in the private sector (within the public-private-partnership), entrepreneurial skilling and linkages to financial services are required for sustainable impact.

Other selected project evaluations from Africa 2014-15 <i>(summaries are available through the hyperlink, full reports from EVAL@ilo.org)</i>	
CMR/10/02/CMR	Programme national de réhabilitation et de construction des routes rurales au Cameroun (PNR2) - Évaluation finale
RAF/10/53/USA	Élimination des pires formes de travail des enfants en Afrique de l’Ouest et renforcement de la coopération sous régionale par les projets CEDEAO I et II - Évaluation finale
TUN/11/02/EEC	Création d’emplois et accompagne-ment à la réinsertion en complétant les dispositifs de l’Etat en Tunisie - Évaluation mi-parcours
SAF/13/01/MUL	Promotion of Decent Work in Southern African Ports (phase II) - Midterm Evaluation
GLO/11/01/MCF	Work for Youth (W4Y) - Midterm Evaluation <i>(Included Egypt and Tunisia)</i>
GLO/11/52/JTI	A programme to reduce WFCL in tobacco growing communities in Brazil (BRA/11/50/JTI) and Malawi (MLW/11/50/JTI) - Final Evaluation

Evaluation Learning Activities & Events

ILO Evaluation Learning Activities in Turin

[Training course to certify evaluation managers](#) - The fifth training session for EVAL's Evaluation Manager Certification is planned for 29 June to 1 July 2015 on the campus of the ITC/ILO in Turin, Italy. Registration information can be found [here](#).



External Knowledge Sharing, Conferences, Courses and Webinars

- [IDEAS Global Assembly](#) – International Development Evaluation Association (IDEAS) in Bangkok, Thailand from 26 to 30 October, 2015. The theme of the Global Assembly will be “Evaluating Sustainable Development”. This theme recognizes the move towards integrating sustainability into development. This is illustrated by the sustainable development goals which the UN is expected to adopt as successors to the millennium development goals. The evaluation community, as well as policy makers, politicians and stakeholders in the development world, needs to be ready for these goals. They may bring changes to development policies and programmes; to action for equity and gender; to public service and market based interventions; and to democratic governance, action on the ground and accountability.
- [United Kingdom Evaluation Society Annual Conference](#) – London, May 13-15. The UK Evaluation Society's 2015 conference aims to examine the relationship between evaluation and the influence it has on programme/policy development and to identify the ways in which it contributes to, or is affected by, innovation, inclusion and impact.

Blogs on evaluation

[World Bank Blog on Impact Evaluation](#)
[Evidence matters blog – Impact 3iE](#)
[Better Evaluation Blog](#)
[John Gargani's EVAL Blog](#)
[Genuine Evaluation](#)
[Evaluation Capacity Development Group](#)

[American Evaluation Association Blog](#)
[Foundation Strategy Group \(FSG\) Blog](#)
[Intelligent measurement](#)
[Design, Monitoring and Evaluation](#)
[IDB Development effectiveness blog](#)
[African Development Bank eval- blog](#)

Other evaluation newsletters

- [OIOS Inspection & Evaluation](#)
- [Center for Evaluation Innovation](#)
- [UN Women Newsletter](#)
- [IFAD Evaluation News](#)
- [EVAL Partners Newsletter](#)
- [OECD DAC Evaluation News](#)
- [European Evaluation Society – Connections](#)
- [UNDP Independent Evaluation Office Newsletter](#)
- [EU- Rural Evaluation](#)

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