

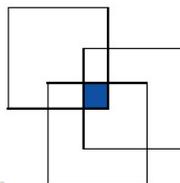
i-eval

Flash news



International
Labour
Office

EVAL highlights



EVAL is pleased to share the *twenty-second edition* of *i-eval Flash news* with you. Through this triannual electronic bulletin we provide readers with updates, news and information on publications and upcoming events related to evaluation.

Governing Body approves new evaluation policy and discusses evaluations of ILO's field structure, social protection programmes and country programmes in the Mekong subregion

The 331st session of the Governing Body (GB) discussed the Evaluation Office's (EVAL) [Annual Evaluation Report 2016-17](#), a [new evaluation policy](#) and three high-level evaluations covering: The [ILO's field operations and structure](#); [social protection floors](#); and [Decent Work Country Programmes in the Mekong subregion](#). The new evaluation policy, formulated following an [independent evaluation of the ILO's evaluation function](#) in 2016 and extensive consultative processes, was adopted without amendments. Constituents welcomed the new policy and underscored the importance of its alignment with the revised United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards, and the need to increase constituents' engagement in evaluation processes. This includes their capacity to monitor and evaluate progress made in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Furthermore, the GB endorsed the need to establish an integrated evaluation planning and funding system, and supported the need to enhance evaluation methods in order to fully reflect the ILO's specific normative mandate and tripartite structure.

The long awaited high-level evaluation of the *ILO's field operations and structure* showed that good progress was made in terms of realizing the 2014 Field Structure Implementation Plan. A total of 78% of initiatives were either completed or are in progress of being completed. Areas of strong performance included strategic management and programming, and enhancing quality services to constituents. Areas for improvement pertained to staff mobility, country presence and partnerships. The high-level evaluation of the *ILO's social protection programme* was considered well-designed, demand-driven and highly effective with respect to policy development, legal reform and technical advice. Areas of concern included the timely response to requests, transaction-intensive procedures and the absence of a comprehensive capacity-building strategies. The *ILO's work in the Mekong subregion* was considered impressive in terms of the volume of achievements with recommendations to strengthening M&E systems to provide feedback on performance and linking work more to regional (e.g. ASEAN) and international development initiatives (e.g. SDGs).

Moving forward, the 332nd session of the GB will discuss ILO's evaluation strategy 2018-2021 which will incrementally roll out the new evaluation policy.

Visit our website:

<http://www.ilo.org/eval>



Guy Thijs, Director
Evaluation Office

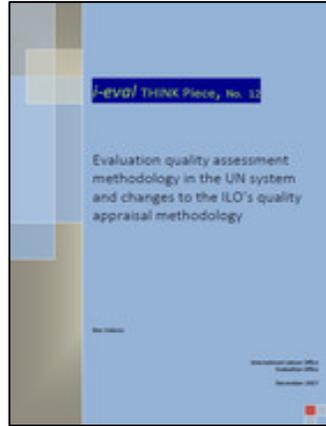
QUICK navigation

Regional Article: [Asia & the Pacific](#) – Departmental Article: [Social Protection Innovation & Research](#) – [Learning Activities and Events Blogs](#) – [Evaluation Newsletters](#)

Innovation & Research

Completed studies

- **THINK Piece, No.12: Evaluation quality assessment methodology in the UN system and changes to the ILO's quality appraisal methodology**



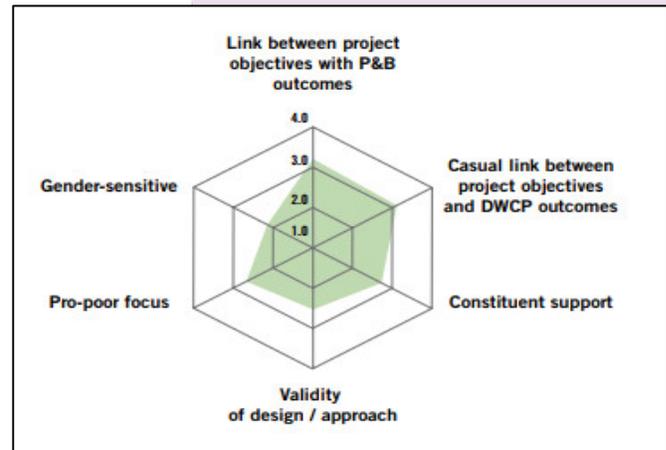
What do quality appraisals (QAs) tell us about the quality of independent project evaluations? The last three QA exercises and the 2016 independent evaluation of the evaluation function, reported that from 2009-15 evaluation quality had persisted at 'acceptable' levels. To examine why this is the case, EVAL commissioned a study. The report concluded that this trend is a result of some report sections (e.g. 'methodology') or items (e.g. 'use of norms and standards') consistently scored low. Moreover, an analysis of evaluation methodology revealed that, even though the quality of evaluations did not improve over the period in question, reports did become more comprehensive. These findings led the THINK Piece to propose new and innovative revisions to EVAL's quality appraisal methodology that can also be applied by other UN entities that want to improve their quality assessment system.

- **Meta-study of Decent Work results from project evaluations, 2013-16**

The findings from the meta-analysis of Decent Work results were presented to ILO in October 2017. The findings broadly confirm the results from previous meta-analyses (2013, 2014) with similar patterns of performance in the area of *effectiveness, sustainability and impact* (rated successful), *strategic relevance and alignment* (rated relatively successful), while the area of *implementation performance and efficiency of management and resource use* were rated less successful. Recommendations from the study were in line with recurrent issues. These include: strengthening logical frameworks; providing realistic timelines and results; including a gender focus; further involving constituents to improve project sustainability; including



a specific focus on aspects that are of strong interest to the ILO; and assigning performance scores on a consistent manner in each evaluation. Work continues to document and review the methodology as part of an effort to show how the ILO can use this meta-analysis to assess decent work results and the effectiveness of development cooperation. The final report will be available on [EVAL's website](#) in January 2018.



Average rating on strategic relevance and alignment of performance criteria (scoring: 1=unsuccessful, 2=partly successful, 3= successful, 4=highly successful)

- **Quality Appraisal**

EVAL conducts regular appraisals of the quality of independent evaluation reports. The most recent appraisal took place during the third quarter of 2017. A THINK Piece describing its results has been recently published. The quality appraisal (QA) covers a total of 86 evaluation reports conducted worldwide. The following describes some findings from the QA:

- Aggregated scores of various evaluation components revealed that 48.8 per cent of evaluations were deemed "satisfactory" and 41.9% "somewhat satisfactory";
- Despite the efforts made to integrate gender equality and empowerment of women (GEEW) related issues into the scope of the evaluations, the overall (GEEW) average rating was low;
- The evaluation practice for projects within the ILO is supported with adequate financial resources. However, timeframes and access to relevant information are constraining factors for improving quality; and

- According to the results from a survey of evaluation managers, factors of success included the ILO's evaluation policies and guidelines, the technical support provided to evaluation managers, and the expansion of their capacities.

➤ **Employment review**

In collaboration with EVAL and the Partnerships and Field Support Department, the Employment Policy Department created eight development cooperation intervention models to improve the design, effectiveness and measurability of ILO's interventions in employment promotion. The models also reflect on how employment related projects and programmes can contribute to the ILO's corporate results and to the Sustainable Development Goals. The models present the key elements of the theory of change that underpin ILO employment promotion. The review is based on findings from previous evaluations of employment promotion projects and other available evidence. A synthesis study complementing the intervention models will be finalized by the end of the year.

Ongoing and planned studies

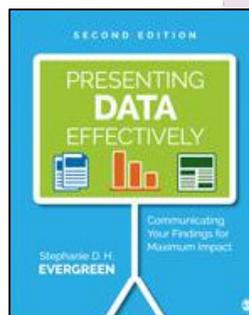
- **Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) evaluability diagnostic instrument in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

As part of EVAL's ongoing efforts to contribute to the ILO implementation Plan for the 2030 Agenda, a DWCP evaluability diagnostic instrument is under development with a special focus on the Sustainable Development Goals. The diagnostic instrument aims to serve three objectives with respect to SDG monitoring and evaluation. First, it provides guidance to ILO officials on the extent to which the SDGs are integrated in Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs). Second, the instrument reviews existing national monitoring and evaluation systems as they apply to the SDGs relevant to Decent Work. Finally, it identifies how ILO Constituents can engage in, and advocate for, the use of national monitoring and evaluation systems to support the Decent Work Agenda.

To date, the diagnostic instrument has been pilot tested during the design of the new DWCP in Sri Lanka. A process report reflecting how the instrument can be used to identify next steps for the ILO's DWCPs within

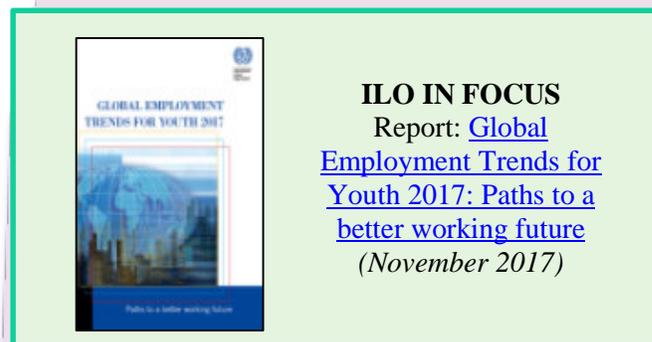
the SDG framework will be completed by the end of December 2017.

New Books and Articles on Evaluation



[Presenting Data Effectively: Communicating Your Findings for Maximum Impact 2nd Edition](#) by Stephanie D. H. Evergreen

Summary from Sage Publishing, "Now in striking full color, the Second Edition shows readers how to make the research results presented in reports, slideshows, dashboards, posters, and data visualizations more interesting, engaging, and impactful. The book guides students, researchers, evaluators, entrepreneurs, and non-profit workers—anyone reporting data to an outside audience—through design choices in four primary areas: graphics, text, color, and arrangement. The Second Edition features an improved layout with larger screenshots, a review of the recent literature on data visualization, and input from a panel of graphic design experts."

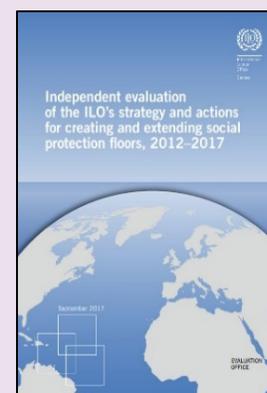


ILO IN FOCUS
Report: [Global Employment Trends for Youth 2017: Paths to a better working future](#)
(November 2017)

News from the Departments

Social Protection (SOCPRO)

[Independent evaluation of the ILO's strategy and actions for creating and extending social protection floors, 2012–2017](#)



In 2016, the Governing Body mandated EVAL to evaluate ILO's strategy and actions for creating and extending social protection floors. The high-level evaluation was discussed, and its recommendations were approved

during the 331st session of the Governing Body on 31 October 2017. The evaluation assessed the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the ILO's programme approach and work on social protection from 2012 to 2017. The evaluation process was participatory and included ILO's tripartite constituents, ILO staff and other partners. The *key findings* of the report are as follows:

Relevance of ILO's work: ILO's work has been relevant at the global, country and regional levels. At the global level, the ILO has played a leading role in advocacy and strengthening partnerships. It has provided relevant contributions to essential global debates on social protection from a social justice perspective and to reinforcing the role of social protection in the SDGs. [The Global Flagship Programme on Building Social Protection Floors for All](#) has widened the geographical focus and provided a clear narrative on ILO's social protection activities for different stakeholders.

At the country level, ILO's work is appreciated for its demand-driven approach, its comprehensive normative guiding framework and its expanded tripartite approach. Constituents expressed their appreciation for ILO's flexible and highly specialized technical support. Gaps in expertise on how to most effectively support policy implementation remain.

Coherence of operations: [Recommendation No. 202](#) and related policy documents provide a coherent and comprehensive framework for ILO's social protection activities. Its high acceptance can be observed through its uptake, especially within the ILO and the larger UN system but also beyond: through integration in the SDGs, the G20 Agenda and in some of the work being done by international financial institutions.

Programme effectiveness: The social protection programme has been highly effective in relation to the ILO's Strategic Policy Frameworks and the other relevant planning instruments. Interventions in policy formulation, legal reform and technical advice for the reform of social protection schemes were found to be particularly effective. Efforts to improve UN collaboration on social protection at the global level are increasing, but more joint programmes at the country level should be developed.

Efficiency of interventions: Efficiency is positively assessed in most interventions. Interviews with constituents and other stakeholders revealed that the

ILO is seen as carefully applying its relatively limited resources. Survey respondents generally perceived the ILO as cost-effective. However, some areas of concern remain.

Sustainability of ILO's work: The principles underlying the ILO's social protection approach (universal social protection, focus on fiscal space, etc.) and the nature of the intervention strategies (improving donor coordination, focus on policy and legal reforms, etc.) all contribute to programme sustainability. In turn, gains made in building local social protection capacity are threatened by the absence of comprehensive capacity-building strategies and systematic progress monitoring.

Key recommendations: The report provided a number of recommendations which intend to contribute to improved decision-making on the ILO's future strategic direction and work on social protection. These include: (1) strengthening long-term capacity-building approaches, such as the development of a strategic document; (2) strengthening the effectiveness of ILO's interventions by applying long-term programmatic approaches supported by strong M&E systems; (3) strengthening the programme's capacity for integrated approaches and multi-stakeholder collaboration; and (4) systematically capitalizing on ILO's specific strengths such as tripartism, rights-based approach and gender equality throughout the entire project cycle.

In addition to the [full report](#), please choose the best product for you depending on your information needs:



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News from the Regions

Asia and the Pacific

[Independent evaluation of the ILO's Decent Work Country Programme strategies and actions in the Mekong subregion, 2012-2017](#)

The Evaluation Office presented the results of the independent high level evaluation of the ILO's work in the Mekong region to the Governing Body on 31 October 2017. The evaluation assessed the work of the ILO during 2012-2017 in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam. A total of US\$55.42 million in external funds from 67 sources supported 89 projects and the services of a Decent Work Technical Specialist Team that is made up of 23 specialists and various technical cooperation staff. Below is a summary of the *findings* by criterion:



Relevance: Consultative processes guided by evidence and tripartite/stakeholder participation ensured that programmes are aligned with national and international development frameworks and with the ILO's priorities in the subregion.

Coherence: The strong results-based management focus without the logic of explicit theories-of-change prevents a more holistic approach to understanding and managing the DWCPs. The monitoring and evaluation systems in the ILO are not yet fully aligned with decision making processes in the ILO.

Effectiveness: Progress has been made in supporting social protection, migration, addressing skills gaps, and tripartite constituent capacity development. Areas for improvement include the ratification of labour standards, freedom of association and collective bargaining, forced labour, discrimination, and decent work integration. Despite progress, gender equality, indigenous communities and people with disabilities require attention.

Efficiency: The four countries that were analysed did well in external fundraising. They received between 4-5% of all extra-budgetary technical cooperation (XBTC) funding between 2012 and 2016. That funding came

mostly from bi- and multilateral donors and it was used efficiently.

Impact: The ILO's comparative advantage helped it to engage with many and varied partners to work on policies, legislative frameworks, strategies, action plans, regulations, institutional coordination and delivery mechanisms. Some engagements took place over prolonged periods, and their cumulative effect increased impact.

Sustainability: The DWCPs in the subregion have been relatively well resourced. However, the unpredictable, short-term nature of funding hampers effectiveness and efforts to achieve sustained impact.

Recommendations: The report recognised the impressive volume of work and achievements in the subregion. This pointed to high-performance teams in the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, CO/DWT-Bangkok and CO-Hanoi. The recommendations were designed to help the ILO take its work to the next level. The report recommended: (1) better programme and project design using tools like theories of change; (2) strengthening monitoring and evaluation systems to provide feedback on performance; (3) linking to regional (e.g. ASEAN) and international development initiatives (e.g. SDGs); streamlining administration so that staff can focus on impactful work; (4) devolving power to the field; and (5) leaving no one (e.g. gender, people with disability and indigenous communities) behind.

In addition to the [full report](#), please choose the best product for you depending on your information needs:

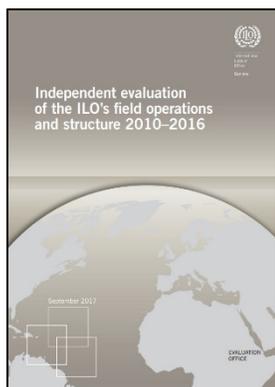


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Institutional evaluation

Independent evaluation of the ILO's field operations and structure, 2010-16



This institutional evaluation reviewed ILO initiatives from 2010 to 2016 aimed at decentralizing organizational activities and strengthening the field structure in order to effectively support ILO constituents. In particular, the evaluation examined the main delivery mechanisms for services and support to constituents across the ILO's five regional offices, more than 40 country offices, and over 600 programmes and projects around the world. The report evaluated the extent to which steps taken to improve the support services to the field and tripartite constituents have had an effect during the 2010–16 period. The evaluation was forward looking in terms of assessing the extent to which the field structure is fit for purpose, given the Decent Work Agenda, the 2030 Agenda, and ongoing reform in the UN system in view of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Below is a summary of the report's main *findings*:

Overall, **good progress on field structure reforms** has been made, although the pace has been somewhat slow. A total of 78% of the 40 initiatives in the 2014 "Field Operations and Structure and Technical Cooperation Review: Implementation Plan" was either complete or was in progress of being completed. Areas of implementation that had the highest level of full completion were "improving our strategic management and programming" (81% with 16 initiatives) and "enhancing quality services to constituents" (77% with four initiatives). Areas of implementation that had lesser levels of completion were in "investing in our people" (50% with 11 initiatives) and "presence and partnerships" (44% with nine initiatives). Key initiatives in the plan notably not completed or with "unknown status" included: a portfolio of services to constituents; policy or guidance on the ILO's operations in non-resident countries; strengthening multilateral and regional partnerships; and significant progress on functional and geographical mobility.

There was widespread agreement among tripartite constituents that the **ILO's mandate and work are**

highly relevant, useful and increasingly important. However, the current ILO field operations and structure is not always fully aligned with current and future needs.

There are **wide disparities on the level of coherence** in the number of countries covered by different levels and components of the field structure. This includes each regional office, Decent Work Technical Support Team and country office, as well as in the office architecture.

ILO's field operations and structure followed the Organization's priorities and outcomes, and showed **general improvement in the effectiveness of services delivered at the country level**. However, the improvement was relatively slow in fruition and had major regional variations. The number and level of achievement of country programme outcomes had improved over time. While DWCPs have witnessed improvements in quantity and quality (except for gender responsiveness in CPOs), there are significant regional differences.

The **administration and efficiency of field operations is still wanting in regards to adequate decentralization of decision-making**. Furthermore, staff and constituents perceive some procedures to have become more centralized and time-intensive.

Staff capacity will continue to be an important variable in the sustainably impact of the field operations and structure. Increased attention to international labour standards, including to human rights and gender equality, were particularly noticeable at the country level.

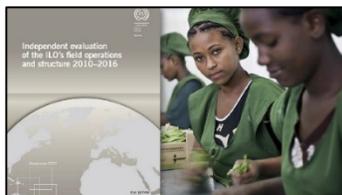
The ILO's efforts on decent work and international labour standards was clearly embraced by constituents, the wider UN system and the donor community.

Six key recommendations were made that reflected on the need to: (1) undertake a systematic *field operations demand inventory* to be complemented by the development of a portfolio of ILO services that reflects cross-cutting policy drivers, such as gender equality and discrimination, and according to country typologies; (2) review the *configuration of the field structure* to make it more effective using established models. It also recommended (3) identifying the key functions, requirements and challenges that particularly *address the countries where ILO is not resident*; (4) improving *decentralization efforts* to establish more agility of administrative decision-making at the field level; (5) improve results-based management reporting at the

field level so expected results, activities and outputs for the office are clearly defined; (6) improve *staff incentives and mobility* to equip field staff with the right competencies; and (7) improve communications functions in order to *influence policy*. In addition to the [full report](#), please choose the best product for you depending on your information needs:



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that evaluability reviews are undertaken on a compulsory basis for projects over \$5 million.



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The new 2017 evaluation policy

In October 2017, the ILO's Governing Body adopted a [new evaluation policy](#). Inspired by internationally accepted norms and standards internal and external to the United Nations system, the 2017 ILO evaluation policy aims to further improve and strengthen the practice of independent evaluation in the ILO. It also establishes principles for systematic self-evaluation of programme performance so that together these provide comprehensive coverage of all ILO activities. The evaluation function is committed to the following key principles for evaluation approaches at the ILO:

- Enhance further evaluation value through methods specific to the ILO Decent Work Agenda and to the SDGs;
- Consider tools such as selected impact evaluations and meta-studies to assess the Office's development effectiveness and impact of its work;
- Conduct evaluations in the most effective and efficient manner. This includes clustering evaluations of projects and programme activities under identical or similar themes, programme frameworks and locations.

In order to operationalize the new evaluation policy, the 332nd session of the Governing Body will discuss ILO's new evaluation strategy which will be aligned with the ILO's Strategic Plan 2018-21.

The draft evaluation strategy 2018-2021

In order to operationalize the 2017 evaluation policy, an updated evaluation strategy will be presented to the Governing Body in March 2018. The evaluation strategy will cover the period 2018-21 to be aligned with the ILO's Strategic Plan. To inform the new strategy, EVAL has been developing a theory of change for the evaluation function. The strategy will roll out the 2017

EVAL Highlights

Annual Evaluation Report 2016-17

With the evaluation strategy coming to an end, this year's [report](#) documented the progress that has been made over the last three biennia on the implementation of its outcomes: (1) Improved use of evaluation by management and constituents for governance; (2) Harmonized Office-wide evaluation practice to support transparency and accountability; and (3) Evaluation capability expanded through enhanced knowledge, skills and tools. It also reported on the effectiveness of the Office by drawing on a recent meta-study of decent work results. The report was submitted to the 331st session of the Governing Body for discussion and for the approval of two recommendations it contained: endorsing the new 2017 evaluation policy and ensuring



evaluation policy and will be informed by the findings of the 2016 Independent Evaluation of the ILO's Evaluation Function. It will also be informed by the outgoing evaluation strategy (as reported on in the Annual Evaluation Reports) and by inputs from members of the evaluation network, the Evaluation Advisory Committee, and other relevant ILO institutional strategies and plans.

Impact evaluation initiative – New developments

EVAL continues work on supporting impact evaluation (IE) in the ILO. In the first quarter of 2018, EVAL will:

- Publish updated guidance and checklists to support impact evaluation;
- Publish an annotated bibliography and an updated inventory of ILO impact evaluations (EVAL encourages departments to send their updates on completed, ongoing, and planned studies to EVAL_IMPACT@ilo.org);
- Commission an external ex-post quality appraisal of selected IEs; and
- Undertake a THINK Piece on IE as it relates to ILO policy and processes.

Departments and field offices are encouraged to write to EVAL_IMPACT@ilo.org to request a review IE related initiatives or to join the growing ILO IE network.

UNEG developments

- In terms of UN reform, the Secretary General's proposed new evaluation independent system-wide unit prompted UNEG to prepare two white papers on the topic.
- In the context of providing comments to the Legal Annex to UNDAFs - Supplement to the Guidance Notes "How to Prepare an UNDAF", the ILO's Evaluation Office prompted UNEG to take a position to cement the role of evaluation as a distinct area of professional practice.

For all of this and more, please see the December 2017 UNEG [newsletter](#).

Learning Activities and Events

Evaluation Manager Certification Programme

In 2018, the number of required decentralized and centralized evaluations (independent and internal) is projected to be at a peak again. In order to support the management and timely completion of the vast number of expected evaluations, EVAL developed and conducted the first Evaluation Manager Certification Programme (EMCP) in 2013. The EMCP is designed to build the capacity of ILO staff to manage evaluations in the interest of the organization, with guidance, oversight and final approval provided by EVAL.

While the EMCP is normally offered in Turin, EVAL has also been committed to offering the programme in the regions. Two sessions were held in Africa (2013, 2017) and a third was most recently conducted in the Asia and the Pacific region in November 2017. A total of six iterations of the programmes have been done over the past five years. As a result of these efforts, more than 100 ILO staff located in headquarters and around the work have been certified to manage independent evaluations. The next EMCP will take place in 2018. For more information, contact EVAL@ilo.org

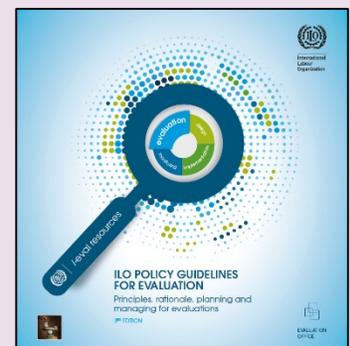
External knowledge sharing, conferences, courses and webinars

[Eastern Evaluation Research Society](#) – The 41st annual conference will take place from 29 April – 1 May 2018 in New Jersey. This year's theme is "equity, ethics and evidence".

[Evergreen Data Academy](#) – Join the academy to access online training series to improve data visualization skills in order to make a lasting impact.

New ILO policy guidelines for evaluation, 3rd edition

EVAL released the new [ILO policy guidelines for evaluation: Principles, rationale, planning and managing for evaluations](#) in August 2017. The ILO policy guidelines for evaluation are intended to provide a complete package of guidance for ILO staff, who are tasked with planning, managing, overseeing and/or following up on



evaluation recommendations. This revised edition accommodates changes resulting from organizational reform, streamlining and improving all guidance notes, and providing evaluation related guidance to support

the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. ILO officials are encouraged to contact EVAL@ilo.org for a booklet format of the guidelines.



[Access and share the flyer](#)

i-eval Discovery

ILO EVAL's application, [i-eval Discovery](#), is your source for easy access to evaluation information. This includes completed and planned evaluations, recommendations, lessons learned and good practices. The application encourages evaluation practitioners to inform programme and project design, implementation and organizational learning. It also facilitates organizational coordination and management decision-making by indicating opportunities for clustering evaluations and informing donors and ILO officials, including directors and project managers located in the field and in headquarters, of when evaluations are due to be completed and on which topic.



2017 ILO Evaluation Champion

Maria Beatriz Mello da Cunha

The Evaluation Office annually recognizes one colleague who has made an extraordinary contribution to ILO's evaluation work. Ms Maria Beatriz Mello da Cunha of the Sectoral Policies Department has been selected as the Evaluation Champion for 2017. She has acted as a departmental evaluation focal point for over five years and has been evaluation manager for several internal and independent evaluations. Ms da Cunha is also a certified ILO evaluation manager and has recently participated in EVAL's 2017 Internal Evaluation Certification Programme.

Congratulations!

All Departmental Evaluation Focal Points and [Certified Evaluation Managers](#) are eligible.



The Director of EVAL responding to questions from constituents at the 331st session of the Governing Body on the Annual Evaluation Report 2016-17



ILO facilitator, Ms Vidal, teaching a session of the Evaluation Manager Certification Programme to ILO

Blogs on evaluation

- ✓ [World Bank Blog on Impact Evaluation](#)
- ✓ [Evaluation Capacity Development Group](#)
- ✓ [African Development Bank eval- blog](#)

Other evaluation newsletters

- ✓ [United Nations Evaluation Group](#)
- ✓ [OIOS Inspection & Evaluation](#)
- ✓ [Center for Evaluation Innovation](#)
- ✓ [EVAL Partners Newsletter](#)

The Evaluation Office wishes you a pleasant holiday season and best wishes for the New Year.

Evaluation Office (EVAL)
International Labour Office
CH-1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland
Email: eval@ilo.org
Editor-in-Chief: Guy Thijs, Director
Executive Editor: Janette Murawski