International
Labour
Office

Geneva

EVALUATION
UNIT

International Labour Office

Annual Evaluation Report 2007-08

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Evaluation
Unit

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Abbreviations

ACT/EMP	Bureau for Employers' Activities (ILO)
ACTRAV	Bureau for Workers' Activities (ILO)
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
DFID	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
DWCPs	Decent Work Country Programmes
EAC	Evaluation Advisory Committee (ILO)
EVAL	ILO Evaluation Unit
GB	Governing Body
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus**/** Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ILO	International Labour Office
IPEC	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO)
IRIS	Integrated Resource Information System
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NPADW	National Plan of Action for Decent Work
NTAC	National Tripartite Decent Work Advisory Committee
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PFAC	Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee (GB)
PROGRAM	Bureau for Programming and Management (ILO)
PSI	Programme Support Income
RBM	Results-based Management
RO	Regional Office (ILO)
SRO	Sub-regional Office (ILO)
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
USDOL	United States Department of Labor

Chapter 1: Introduction

The evaluation function within the ILO provides a means for decision makers to draw from impartial assessment of ILO programmes and operations to improve ILO impact and effectiveness. Towards this end, the evaluation function has been designed and managed to ensure sufficient independence from those responsible for implementation. It has been developed to comply with international standards of professionalism, to ensure transparency, and to serve the needs of users.

The purpose of this annual report is to summarize the activities and progress made between mid-2007 and mid-2008 by the ILO in implementing its evaluation strategy aimed at strengthening the function and quality of ILO evaluation. Its reference point is the 2005 evaluation policy approved by the Governing Body during its November meeting.[1]

This report provides an overview of evaluation activities and evaluation performance within the ILO, covering all types and levels of evaluations completed during 2007. It also reports on the follow up to high-level evaluations presented to the PFAC in 2007. It presents the results of an external quality appraisal of independent project evaluations, and the findings of an internal assessment of evaluability[2] of a sample of projects and Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs). After summarizing work in progress and planned evaluations for 2008, the report concludes with a summary of main challenges to address for the coming year.

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[1] GB.294/PFA/8/4.

[2] Evaluability refers to the degree to which programmes, projects and their components are defined and documented such that, once they are complete, they can be evaluated and demonstrate their effectiveness in achieving the established outcomes.

Chapter 2: Development of the evaluation function in 2007-08

Strengthening independent evaluation

The ILO evaluation policy calls for independent evaluations of several types. High-level evaluations of major ILO policies or strategies and of the ILO's support to specific countries, particularly within the DWCP framework, are carried out by the ILO evaluation unit and led by an external evaluator. These are submitted to the Governing Body in summary form. Independent evaluations of extra budgetary projects and programmes with a budget in excess of $500,000 are also to be conducted by the ILO regions and sectors (decentralized), with the central evaluation unit providing oversight and quality control. Finally, the Office engages in periodic independent thematic and joint evaluations with UN and other organizational partners.

During the reporting period, the Evaluation Unit (EVAL) was able to meet its high-level independent evaluation schedule, with the exception of the GB summary of the independent evaluation of ILO's strategy to improve the impact of standards, which was submitted during the 2008 reporting period. For high-level evaluations reviewed by the Governing Body, submissions were found acceptable but with calls for further improvement being expressed, particularly for evaluating impact and reporting follow-up action taken.

Harmonizing practices and quality standards for evaluation

From mid-2007 to mid-2008, EVAL took further action to ensure a sufficient level of independence on decentralized evaluations by monitoring processes for managing and conducting the evaluation at critical points. It addressed specific quality constraints through targeted training and guidance and also took steps to ensure that the projects and programmes would be evaluable, with a sound results framework in place, adherence to the design, and documented progress through systematic data collection and analysis.

In addition to delivering training on monitoring and evaluation planning, EVAL launched an evaluability assessment. The findings highlight the current weak basis upon which to evaluate projects and programmes, particularly regarding DWCP performance planning, monitoring and reporting. An ex post external quality appraisal of 33 decentralized evaluations was also completed, the results of which are profiled in this report.

In late 2007, EVAL co-managed a joint UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) evaluation of the One UN Pilot initiative, participating in two country missions (Uruguay and Mozambique) and preparing case studies that reviewed the designs of the pilots and mechanisms put in place for implementing the reforms. The UNEG joint evaluation teams also identified and assessed the adequacy of the reform process and substantive parameters that could guide an evaluation in the future.

As a result of this mission, the Office is supporting ILO staff in the One UN Pilot countries to improve their results framework and information base for reporting progress. EVAL has drafted guidance to converge practices for monitoring and evaluation to be consistent and compatible with United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) procedures for monitoring and evaluation.

Improving the usefulness of evaluations: Follow-up, institutional learning and knowledge sharing

The purpose of management response and follow-up mechanisms is to strengthen the usefulness of evaluation report findings, to increase stakeholder and management buy-in to the findings of the evaluation, and to ensure follow-up of agreed recommendations through formal processes.

An established practice of systematic management response and follow-up is an effective indicator of a well implemented evaluation policy and of senior management commitment to results-based programming. The ILO has therefore used this as a key indicator of Office commitment to increasing the utility of evaluations in RBM. In 2008, of the two high-level evaluations submitted to the Governing Body, reports on follow-up to evaluations were submitted to the Evaluation Advisory Committee (EAC) for review, with the result that 46 per cent of recommendations were found to have been satisfactorily acted upon, and 54 per cent partially addressed.

Progress on systems and practices to support the use of evaluation for organizational learning through improved knowledge management has been limited in part due to delays in finishing the electronic information system to underpin these processes and also due to unsystematic submission of evaluation information to EVAL. In 2008, these constraints are being addressed through the addition of a full-time evaluation knowledge and communication specialist to manage these systems and related services.

Resourcing EVAL and the evaluation function

During the 2006-07 biennium, EVAL's regular budget allocation covered the positions of Director plus one professional and 12 work months of secretarial support. In non-staff resources, $100,000 was allocated to cover costs of external evaluation consultants linked to high-level evaluations. This budget was supplemented with PSI, expenditures of which were $332,766 and extra budgetary funds, expenditures of which were $445,172.

For the 2008-09 biennium, EVAL's regular budget allocation increased by roughly two-thirds to cover core positions of Director plus two professionals, and a full-time secretary. A third professional is being financed through an initial PSI allocation. Non-staff RB and PSI resources are currently allocated at $317,523 for the biennium.

EVAL continued to make use of extra-budgetary support through the "*Decent Work Country Programmes and Results-Based Management: Strengthening ILO Capacity*" project. In addition to direct funding to EVAL from the respective Governments of the United Kingdom and the Netherlands during 2007, additional project resources were earmarked for evaluation capacity development to establish full-time evaluation positions in each of the ILO's five regional offices. Currently, Asia, Europe and Arab States have established dedicated evaluation officers through 2009.

Chapter 3: Quality improvements of independent evaluations, self evaluation and evaluability: Performance information

Overview of independent project evaluations completed in 2007[3]

Since 2005, the ILO has monitored and reported on the number, distribution and quality of independent project evaluations completed each year. In 2007, a total of 42 independent project evaluations were reported to EVAL, of which 35% were interim and 65% were final evaluations. This constitutes a 24% decline over the previous year and a 35% decline from the 65 reported in 2005. In terms of distribution, half were of projects pertaining to rights and standards, of which the vast majority pertained to national support to eradicate child labour. Geographically, Asia constituted the largest share of independent evaluation work, the majority of which was focused on employment.

The decline in the number of independent evaluations conducted does not coincide with a drop in the number of projects for which an independent evaluation is required. Other reasons need to be found. An IRIS data review in 2007 of project budgets in excess of $500,000 showed that of the non-IPEC projects, less than 5% had funds reserved explicitly for independent evaluations. This is in contrast to nearly all IPEC project budgets, which reserved such funds. In addition, between 2005 and 2008, the Office did not maintain a centralized schedule of planned project evaluations. Efforts by EVAL to re-establish this practice have been hindered by the slow roll-out of the 'i-track' evaluation monitoring database system. This situation has improved with a knowledge management expert now in place to work full time on evaluation information systems and products. In addition, beginning in 2008, EVAL now regularly monitors funds reserved for independent evaluation within technical cooperation budgets.

Table 1: Number of independent evaluations conducted compared to number of projects subject to independent evaluations, 2005-07

	Africa	Americas	Arab States	Asia	Europe	Inter-regional
Number of independent evaluations submitted to EVAL*	44	35	6	52	10	16
Number of project budgets in excess of $500,000**	64	75	12	108	16	n/a

  *Some evaluations cover more than one project; does not include internal evaluations.
  **Estimate based on IRIS data of active projects in which budget amounted to US$ 500,000 or more, (March, 2006).

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[3] The complete list of independent technical cooperation project evaluations can be found in Annex 1.

Figure 1: Independent project evaluations by region and year: 2005-07

	Africa	Amercias	Arab States	Asia	Europe	Inter-regional	Total
2005	17	20	3	19	3	3	65
2006	17	10	2	12	4	10	55
2007	10	5	1	21	2	3	42
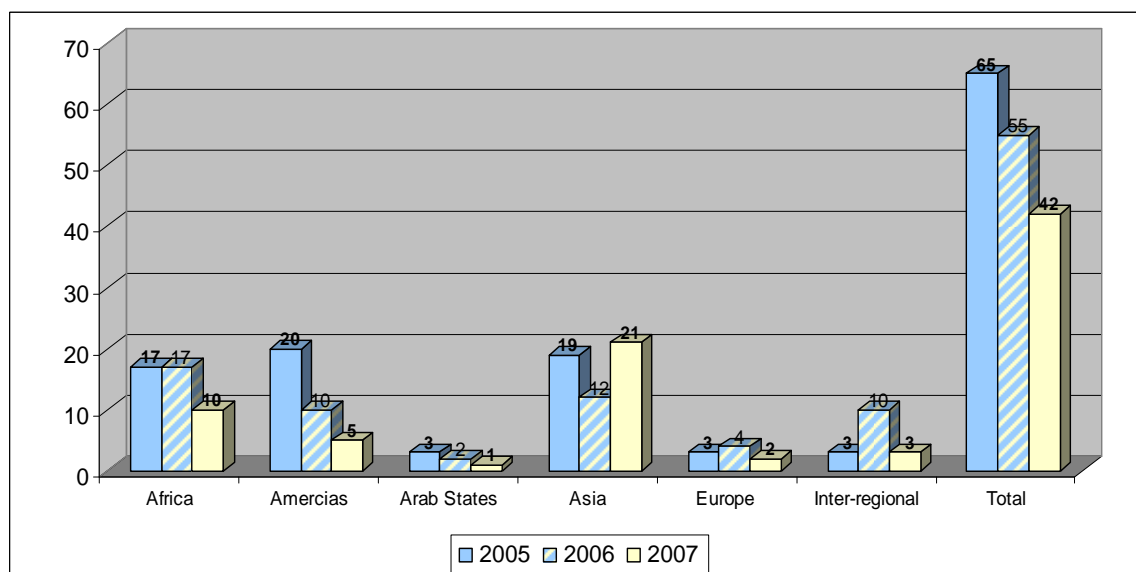
Quality appraisal of independent project evaluation reports[4]

A summary of findings from an independent appraisal of the quality of evaluation reports from different technical cooperation projects was prepared in 2007 for internal use. The aim of this exercise is to promote discussion around strengthening the quality of future evaluations. The appraisal checklist contains 71 criteria, sub-categorized into eleven sub-sections. These are drawn from evaluation norms and standards as laid out in two key guidance documents used by the ILO to promote international best practices in evaluation; the UN System Evaluation Norms and Standards, and the OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Standards.

Based on a scale of 1 to 3, an average score of between 2.0 and 2.5 is ascribed as being of satisfactory standard for an independent evaluation. Of the 33 reports appraised, approximately 80% received a score above 2.0. The satisfactory levels may be attributed to: a) high quality findings, conclusions, and project background sections; and
        b) recommendations and executive summaries of satisfactory standard.
The 2007 results indicate an improvement over 2006 when only 30% of 31 appraised reports were considered of at least a satisfactory standard.

The evidence presented in this report confirms that the findings, conclusions, and project description sub-sections are of high quality, owing to strong familiarity with organizational arrangements and strong knowledge of the ILO's mandate and role. However, the average scores could be rated upwards of 2.5 – a standard of *high quality* – if the evaluation background and methodology sections were to be improved.   EVAL is expanding guidance and advisory support in this area to ensure proper design and documentation of methodologies to be used.

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[4] Greater detail of the appraisal and its results can be found in Annex 3.

Figure 2: Average score of project evaluation reports by sub-section 2007
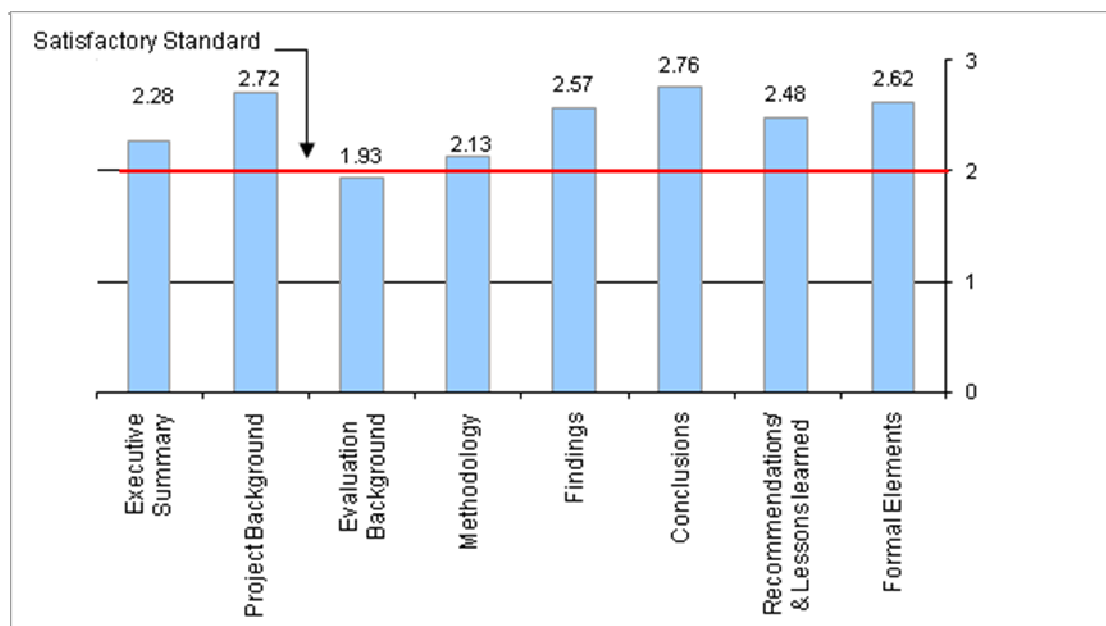
Assessment of evaluability of projects and DWCPs

EVAL has conducted the first phase of an evaluability exercise, which has assessed monitoring plans for DWCPs and related projects, as well as a validation of results frameworks and appropriate indicators[5]. The main objective of the exercise is to examine the degree to which DWCPs and projects are defined such that, once they are complete, they can demonstrate their effectiveness in reaching established outcomes. By focusing on well-defined and reliable metrics that allow for improved results reporting, the assessments help increase the feasibility of effective evaluations. The assessments therefore act as both a complement to, and a validation of, the Office's quality assurance mechanisms that have been developed for DWCPs and TC projects. This first phase provided an opportunity to test and refine the evaluability technique by rating an initial sample of two DWCPs and six projects from two ILO regional offices[6].

Findings and observations:
* While the DWCPs set out their priorities and outcomes in a satisfactory manner, none followed this by articulating a clear and complete set of indicators, together with appropriate baselines and milestones. From the perspective of the desk assessment, it was therefore difficult to see how these DWCPs would be able to effectively demonstrate progress towards achieving established outcomes.

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[5] The assessment tool gave credit for the presence of outcome indictors that adhered to the SMART criteria: specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and timebound.

[6] Evaluability sample: 2006-2009 Jordan DWCP (4 projects), 2005-2009 Pakistan DWCP (2 projects). Assessments are pending for Honduras and Moldova DWCPs.

- Variation in quality of results frameworks and indicators was notable among projects. Some paid reasonable attention to results-based planning, monitoring and reporting, but others gave these no consideration.

- The incomplete nature of monitoring plans at programme and project level suggests a limitation on managing for results. Monitoring plans often focused on recording progress towards outputs rather than outcomes.

- All projects reviewed fell under a DWCP umbrella, but most did not link their results to the attainment of wider country programme outcomes. This led to a narrow focus on project strategy and objectives.

- No DWCPs or projects adequately addressed the issue of risk management in the identification of objectives and indicators.

Figure 3 below quantifies the findings of this evaluability assessment as described above. Scores of 50% or above are considered to be evaluable.

Figure 3: Summary score from the first phase of evaluability assessment exercise
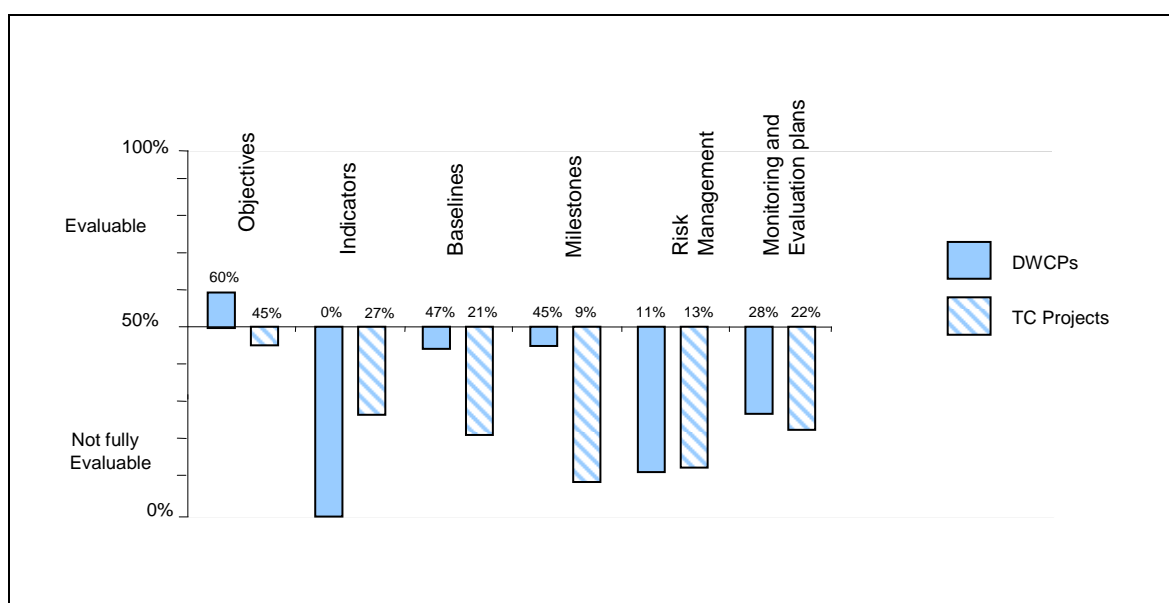
 Lessons learned from internal reviews of DWCPs

In 2007, the Evaluation Unit drafted guidance and proposed a set of methodologies by which to internally review implementation and progress being made within DWCPs. The reviews are designed as a management tool to support organizational learning. Under EVAL guidance, the Europe and Asia Regional Offices conducted five pilot internal review exercises to test the approach (Cambodia, Nepal, Pacific Island Countries, Moldova, and Albania). The reviews gathered feedback from staff, constituents and UN partners regarding:

- the coherence and technical fit of the DWCP strategy vis-à-vis national development priorities;

- adequacy of ILO capacity, coordination, and communication in delivery of the DWCP;
- degree to which the DWCP is managing for results, including sustainability strategies;

In addition, for each DWCP outcome, the reviews also considered the adequacy of resources, delivery of outputs, progress made against achieving joint outcomes, and shared risks and opportunities.

The pilot reviews uncovered some limitations with the methodology as well as a few flawed underlying assumptions. First, in several cases, constituents and UN partners were not adequately aware of what a DWCP entails and some had not seen the DWCP document. Familiarity was often limited to a specific project or technical area. A second limitation was the unfamiliarity with the review purpose and process, and the difficulty some had in objectively assessing implementation progress. In a few cases, there was some politicization of the exercise.

Overall, however, the reviews were found to be a useful means of raising constituent commitment to sharing responsibility for results, improving their know-how in the planning, implementation and evaluation of a DWCP, and jointly agreeing to focus on a few high-priority areas where collective effort could produce tangible results.

For future reviews, the evaluation function will make a concerted effort to regularly involve employers' and workers' specialists in the process, to keep the methodology simple and timely, to combine a participatory review approach with targeted training, and to confirm the soundness of the results framework and monitoring plan as part of the exercise. Finally, actions will be taken to systematize joint follow up to the findings and recommendations of the review.

Chapter 4: Follow-up to recommendations of independent high-level and thematic evaluations

During the past year, the EAC reviewed various options for determining its level of satisfaction with reported follow up to recommendations, taking into account EVAL's independent assessment. It was agreed that the Committee would comment on those recommendations that required further EVAL action. The EAC also agreed that the report to the Governing Body should constitute a summary of issues raised during the discussion, noting whether the EAC was satisfied with progress being made. The following section therefore reports on the outcome of both EVAL and EAC monitoring of follow-up action taken on the recommendations contained in the two high-level country programme evaluations presented and discussed by the Programme, Finance and Administration Committee (PFAC) in 2007.

Independent evaluation of the ILO's country programme of support to Ukraine: 2000-2006[7]

Regarding progress in implementing the sixteen recommendations in the 2007 evaluation report, the evaluation unit considered that ten had been fully implemented and six partially implemented. EVAL will continue monitoring progress on these six over the coming year.

The EAC was satisfied with progress being made on follow-up to recommendations as reported by the Europe Regional Office, Budapest Sub-regional Office and the ILO National Coordinator in Kiev. However, the Committee emphasized the limitations within which the Office operated at country level. It noted that those recommendations dependant on constituent action were outside of the Office's direct control. The Office can continue to support the process; social partners and the government will continue to be assisted. However, the main responsibility for follow-up of some recommendations lies with them.

Independent evaluation of the ILO country programme for Argentina: 2001-2006[8]

Of the eight recommendations in the 2007 evaluation report, EVAL assessed one as having been fully implemented and seven partially implemented. Although EVAL considers that the seven remaining recommendations are being properly addressed, these cannot be classified as fully implemented until follow-up activities are reported as completed by the Regional Office.

The EAC noted that satisfactory action is being taken by the Americas region. However, it requested that EVAL continue to monitor follow-up of the recommendations not fully implemented so far. The EAC also noted the positive cooperation between the regional and the country offices and EVAL in monitoring the implementation of these recommendations.

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[7] GB.300/PFA/13/4(&Corr.)

[8] GB.300/PFA/13/3 (add.)

Independent evaluation of the ILO-Irish Aid Partnership II: 2004-2007

In 2007, the evaluation units of Irish Aid and the ILO jointly managed an independent evaluation of the second phase of their partnership programme. The thematic evaluation gave special focus to how the ILO was building sustainable capacity development of the strategic and implementing partners in mainstreaming disability and women's entrepreneurship.

The evaluation found that the activities supported through the partnership programme were relevant and consistent with the needs of the partner organisations. The evaluation also noted that country selection did not appear systematic based on clear criteria, nor did there seem to be a systematic approach to capacity building required of the partners. To improve programme effectiveness and efficiency, the ILO should reinforce technical support in the field which appears to be inadequate. Additional recommendations for improvement are found in the full report.[9] The Office has satisfactorily reported on follow-up to specific recommendations, which EVAL has monitored.

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[9] The evaluation report including recommendations can be found on the ILO evaluation web site.

Chapter 5: Work in progress and proposed evaluations

1.   This chapter presents an overview of independent evaluations of all types being done in 2008 as well as the proposed agenda for independent evaluations in 2009.

Work in progress for 2008

2.   As part of the Evaluation Unit's work plan for 2008, table 2 below gives an overview of all the independent evaluations that are being carried out in 2008.

Table 2: Type, topic and timing of independent evaluations in 2008

Evaluation type	Topic of evaluation	Timing	Dissemination
Strategy	Independent evaluation of ILO's strategy for the protection of migrant workers 2001-2007	Apr.-Sep. 2008	Summary submitted to PFAC Nov. 2008 Full report public (Internet)
Strategy	Independent evaluation of the ILO's strategy to support member States to improve the impact of International Labour Standards.	Apr. 2007-May 2008	Summary submitted to PFAC Nov. 2008 Full report public (Internet)—postponed from Nov. 2007
Country programme	Independent evaluation of the ILO's country programme for Zambia: 2001-2007	Feb.-Aug. 2008	Summary submitted to PFAC Nov. 2008 Full report public (Internet)
Country programme	Independent evaluation of the ILO's country programme for the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan: 2002-2007	Mar.-Sep. 2008	Summary submitted to PFAC Nov. 2008 Full report public (Internet)
Project (independent evaluations for projects above US$ 500,000)	As every year, about 50 independent project evaluations will be carried out: The evaluation focal persons with the support and oversight of EVAL are currently monitoring the project portfolio and appraising evaluation processes and reports.	Jan.-Dec. 2008	Full reports to donors, partners, national constituents, other stakeholders; Summaries public (Internet)

Proposed evaluations for 2009

The 2009 portfolio for high-level evaluations in the ILO has been developed with consideration of relative benefits in terms of organizational learning and strategy development, the feasibility of a credible evaluation being conducted, and the need for accountability for results within a broader development context.

As a result of these factors, Indonesia and Honduras have been selected for country programme evaluations and the ILO's support to member States to develop policies or programmes focused on youth employment for a strategy evaluation. The latter will also consider ILO support for Millennium Development Goal 8 on youth employment.

Table 3: Type, topic and timing of independent high-level evaluations planned for 2009

Evaluation type	Topic of evaluation	Timing	Dissemination
Strategy	National capacity development of member States to develop policies or programmes focused on youth employment	Jan.-Jul. 2009	Summary submitted to PFAC Nov. 2009 Full report public (Internet)
Country programme	ILO's country programme for Indonesia	Jan.- Jun. 2009	Summary submitted to PFAC Nov. 2009 Full report public (Internet)
Country programme	ILO's country programme for Honduras	Jan.- Jun. 2009	Summary submitted to PFAC Nov. 2009 Full report public (Internet)

Chapter 6: Priority areas for action and emerging issues

As emphasized by the PFAC in 2007, improving the usefulness of evaluations by demonstrating results, providing lessons learned to inform for future decisions, and ensuring follow up is the real aim of the evaluation policy and strategy.

Within its core strategy components (improving evaluation quality, building capacities, upgrading knowledge management, and promoting effective use of evaluation), EVAL will expand measures to improve the quality and coverage of decentralized evaluations, through systematic use of ex ante evaluability checks, and ex post evaluation appraisals.

EVAL will also continue to technically backstop and train in areas such as logic models, the management and use of evaluation, and application of common evaluation methodologies. Particular attention will be paid to capacity building of the ILO constituents to enhance their evaluation know-how. As evaluation practices improve, EVAL will give greater attention to upgrading the methodologies used for evaluations. Greater attention will also be paid to participatory reviews of country programmes, and reinforcing constituent efforts to develop their own monitoring and evaluation capacities.

To improve the usefulness of evaluations, the Office will upgrade its IT systems to better target and disseminate evaluation information, both publicly and to its main stakeholders—eg. national constituents, UN partners, donors. It will continue efforts to systematize monitoring of evaluation follow-up and scale up the i-track system to track follow up to recommendations of decentralized evaluations.

Finally, EVAL will conduct a stock-taking exercise of the monitoring and evaluation requirements generated by donor funds and the Office's own mechanisms. The objective of this exercise will be to contribute to the streamlining of current practices by identifying challenges and ways of striking the right balances and actions needed in harmonizing activities to minimize the burden on national capacities while enhancing practices that can contribute significantly to improving the ILO's governance.

Addressing risks to the ILO evaluation function

Implementation of the evaluation strategy is not without risks and bottlenecks. Those factors needing particular attention are:
- high-level support for internalizing evaluation-linked management practices;
- significantly improved quality of the Programme and Budget and DWCP indicators and documentation of results being achieved;
- Regional capacity to support decentralized evaluation for DWCPs and technical programmes and projects and themes;
- ILO adherence to UN norms and standards for evaluation to protect the credibility of its evaluation function.

Chapter 7: Evaluation briefs

1. Independent evaluation of the report "Ensuring that working conditions in the textile and apparel sector in Cambodia comply with internationally recognized core labour standards and the Cambodian labour law"

Background

In 1999 the government of the Kingdom of Cambodia and the United States signed a Trade Agreement on Textile and Apparel. The agreement established a link between an increase in the quota for garments produced in Cambodia for export to the United States and a commitment to improve working conditions in the textile factories according to international labour standards and Cambodian labour law. The project evaluated was conducted within the framework of this agreement to meet ILO commitments to improve working conditions in this sector. Known as Better Factories Cambodia (BFC), the project was launched in parallel with the Labour Dispute Resolution Project (LDRP).

Conclusion of the evaluation

The evaluation team found that project objectives were relevant and aligned with local priorities and needs. Project objectives also conformed to ILOs decent work country programming. It was deemed, however, that the immediate project objectives were not achievable given the project's timeframe and budget.

Staffing problems were experienced through the repeated change of the Chief Technical Adviser, but other local staff performance compensated and the project was generally well managed.

The credibility, transparency and independence of the ILO BFC monitoring system and the resulting compliance played an important role in drawing significant commercial resources to the sector. This is turn served the poverty reduction strategy overall by making it possible to redistribute funds to impoverished rural parts of the country, a development that has been recognized as a major contribution to poverty alleviation in Cambodia.

The capacity of local organizations was strengthened through training, substantially contributing to the sustainability of project achievements. Unprecedented local alliances were built resulting in multi-donor funding arrangements that have guaranteed the continuation of project activities until January 2009 and have strengthened the prospects for long-term buy-in by trade unions and employers. This project also represents good practice in addressing gender equality.

Main recommendations

It is recommended that a forum of knowledge sharing and lessons learned be created to serve the tripartite community. Further strengthening of trade union growth and training for employers will alleviate some current communication and adherence issues. It is recommended that the industrial relations situation receive a broader-based intervention by the ILO.

In synthesis, project performance ensured good sustainability, considering its ability to mobilize local resources and create local alliances around project objectives. The project created a solid base on which to build further alignment with BFC project objectives.

2. Independent evaluation of the report "Capacity Building for Employers' Organizations on Productivity and Competitiveness"

Background

The project, *Capacity Building for Employers' Organizations on Productivity and Competitiveness,* undertook studies and surveys on productivity and competitiveness with local consultants, organised workshops to validate the findings of the studies, conducted seminars and produced training material and tool-kits. The project provided a combination of direct support and institutional development. It was implemented by the Regional Employer Expert in West Africa and south Asia, by an external consultant in Caucasus–Central Asia and finally, by national experts in each country to work inside the employers' organizations.

The main purpose was to strengthen the capacity of employers' organizations to provide and deliver services to member and potential member enterprises on productivity and competitiveness at enterprise and national policy levels.

Conclusion of the evaluation

The evaluation team found that the capacities of national employers' organizations were substantially strengthened through this project.

Project objectives and approaches were relevant and it was considered highly efficient in developing tools and organising workshops and seminars. There was a notable list of outputs covering activities and products that can be used again by future projects. Some of the tool-kits and workshop materials might require revision for future adaptation.

Gender issues were adequately addressed in several workshops on entrepreneurship, with the workshops in general being assessed as a particular strength in this project.

In some countries, project activities were curtailed due to civil unrest, but project objectives and outputs were successfully achieved in most countries. Particular impact was acknowledged by the evaluation team in awareness raising and mind set shifts through which the project will achieve sustainability in enhancing capacity of employers' organizations to promote productivity and competitiveness.

Main recommendations

The evaluation team suggests that on national policy issues, the social partners could have been engaged to an even greater extent.

The duration of a project should be longer than two years and there should be sustained support from donors during the implementation period.

At the enterprise level more staff should be involved in trial projects and use of the competitiveness and productivity tool kits. Future focus should ensure training of employers' organization staff and stocks of the tool kits and training material should be reprinted and disseminated to meet ongoing training needs.

3. Independent evaluation of the report "Workers' Education Programme on Social Dialogue and Social Dialogue and Youth Employment"

Fact Box

Countries:	Armenia, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Niger, Nepal, Palestine, Uganda, Vietnam, Yemen and Zambia (Samoa for joint activities).
Evaluation:	September-October 2007
Mode of Evaluation:	Independent
Technical Area:	Social Dialogue
Evaluation Team:	Robert Salomon Helge Lovdal Else Marie Osmundsen
Project Start:	January 2004
Project End:	December 2007

Background

These projects were undertaken under the ILO-Norway Framework Agreement, aimed at promoting social dialogue to improve support and capacity building to workers' organizations. Project objectives were also aligned with ILO strategic objectives related to strengthening partnerships with trade unions.

The first phase of the project, *Workers' Education Programme on Social Dialogue*, aimed to follow a rights-based approach to alleviation of decent work deficits, especially in the informal economy. Specific attention was given to poverty reduction through the promotion of the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. Phase two, *Social Dialogue and Youth Employment*, was a continuation targeted at strengthening and influencing national policies related to decent work and youth employment. This phase was aimed at enhancing the contribution of workers' organizations to job creation and poverty alleviation through practical measures, as well as creating broader forums for dialogue and joint learning exercises among the social partners.

Conclusion of the evaluation

The evaluation team noticed that many of the activities of the first phase were a continuation of Danish-sponsored projects with the Norwegian sponsored programme continuing the approach of the Danish projects.

The evaluation team recognized that a general lack of focus on the social dialogue activities hampered success due to varying opinions of what constituted social dialogue. Sustainability was weak and many activities were terminated after only one year of operation. In addition, there were discrepancies between the Framework Agreement and what was actually planned in the individual country documents.

Administrative costs were considered very high in comparison with budgetary allocations for actual social dialogue training and capacity building. Countries like India and Cambodia, however, had success in implementing a broad range of tripartite capacity building interventions, establishing forums, etc.

Main recommendations

The evaluation team suggests that the programme should continue but with a clearer definition of social dialogue as a forum for learning and problem solution. Social dialogue being a methodological approach, programmes should be flexible enough to target the needs of different national interests, such as child labour, gender, environment or skills training.

Evaluators found that a two-year programme cycle was too short, with a three- to four-year cycle a preferred time-frame. Administrative costs should be reduced and local resource persons utilized wherever possible.

ACTRAV and ACT/EMP should collaborate more closely in the future for identifying countries and subjects where social partner skills and experience is sufficient to sustain capacity building exercises and engagement.

It is also recommended that it would be reasonable to include a child labour component into future programmes to strengthen trade union cooperation.

4. Independent evaluation of the report "Lao PDR Social Security Project, 2002-2007"

Background

The *Lao PDR Social Security Project*, better known as ILOSSP, was financed by the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and was carried out by the ILO in two phases (1997-2001 and 2002-2007). The first part of the project is considered as the second phase of the jointly-funded project of UNDP and Belgium on social security. In the first phase the objective was to set up a social security office and a central social security system which could cover a very broad protection scheme, including loss of earnings and some medical treatment schemes. The second phase of the ILOSSP was meant to continue the work of the first phase and expand to create a strong private sector scheme, while offering additional focus on two areas of the informal sector: the self-employed, and subsistence agriculture and ethnic groups. Further objectives focussed on coverage for civil servants and protection in respect of injuries sustained in motor vehicle accidents.

Conclusion of the evaluation

The evaluation team found the objectives of the ILOSSP were coherent with the current priorities of the government of the Lao PDR, the programmes of assistance to development of Luxembourg and of the ILO. The project adequately considered the national macro-economic situation, the transition to a market economy and the needs for social welfare and health protection. The ILOSSP is the only ILO donor-financed project on national social security.

The evaluation team endorsed the project as a model that can be expanded to include other sectors of the economy. There were also some important indirect benefits which included:

- Reform of the civil servant scheme improved fiscal management by introducing accountability, capping pension rates; and
- Establishing health insurance for wage earners provided an important source of revenue for health providers and helped fund improvements in medical services that will benefit the wider population.

The establishment of the national policy framework for social protection has long-term benefits for the majority of Lao citizens. For these reasons, combined with the establishment of government social security offices, the project achieved broad sustainability.

Main recommendations

The evaluation team recommends to refine objectives and indicators of performance to conform to a scope within control of the project. Civil servant and private enterprise schemes, and the institutions to administer them, should be the central component of any future project, with an evaluation of the pilot before wider implementation.

Health insurance schemes should be considered separately, and these should be encouraged to develop synergies with building capacity of health service delivery.

Efforts should continue for institutional policy capacity building within the relevant government agencies, including analysing social security issues, drafting legislation and promoting training with the government and community. Creating joint systems wherever possible will considerably reduce costs.

Motor vehicle insurance is not seen as a natural extension of the project's activities and should be treated through separate efforts.

5. Independent evaluation of the report "Projet d'Appui à la Mise en Œuvre de la DECLARATION relative aux Principes et Droits Fondamentaux du Travail, PAMODEC1"

Fact Box

Countries:	Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Togo
Evaluation:	November 2007
Mode of Evaluation:	Independent
Technical Area:	Standards and Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work
Evaluation Team:	François-Corneille Kedowide
Project Start:	2002
Project End:	2005
Project Code:	RAF/02/56/FRA
Donor:	France, Ministère du Travail ; des Relations Sociales et de la Solidarité

Background

The *Support Project for the Implementation of the ILO Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, PAMODEC1* covers six African countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo. The project explored the extent to which the ILO Declaration was being popularized, adopted and implemented. The Declaration is based on eight core International Labour Conventions: No. 29, Forced Labour (1930), No 87 Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize, No. 98 Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining (1949), No. 100 Equal remuneration (1951), No. 105 Abolition of Forced labour (1957), No. 111 Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) (1958), No. 138 Minimum Age Convention (1973), and No. 182 Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (1999).

The project aim was to examine legislation, provide training and sensitisation, increase communication and popularisation of the Declaration based on its eight core conventions. Project achievement was measured in preparation for a second phase in the targeted countries.

Conclusion of the evaluation

According to the evaluation, the project was able to achieve significant impact in terms of knowledge sharing, popularisation and sensitisation of the Declaration and the eight core conventions. Though the project started late, it was able to generate widespread demand from magistrates and other legislative bodies for capacity building, guidelines and knowledge sharing on implementation and application of standards in the national context. Insufficient financial resources and low capacity of trade unions were cited as limitations to full achievement of the project.

Main recommendations

The evaluator found more extensive training was needed by employers and workers, involving increased financial support for some workers organizations. Media advocacy, publications and guidelines in local languages were also recommended for the broader range of workers and enterprises. Further training and capacity building is also required for Government legislative institutions which would facilitate extension training for provincial or local magistrates on the relevant rights and obligations of workers and employers. This would further root a standards culture in government and provide project sustainability.

Other specific recommendations were:

- Preparation of a workers' and employers' rights and obligations guide;

- Improve awareness of and adherence to the Declaration, particularly the ILO Convention against employment discrimination, especially that of women;

- Ensure partnership with vocational training centre that promotes the Declaration; and

- Conduct research at the national level to generate better understanding of the socio-cultural constraints likely to block the application of the Declaration and the international labour standards. A participative approach, representative of African values, was strongly recommended.

6. Independent evaluation of the report "Expanding economic opportunity and income security through workforce education, skills training, employment creation, and local economic development in Pakistan and the Philippines project / Training for rural economic empowerment (TREE) project: Pakistan and the Philippines"

Fact Box

Countries:	Pakistan, Philippines
Evaluation:	November 2007
Mode of Evaluation:	Final
Technical Area:	Employment
Evaluation Team:	Frederick C. Huxley
	Lucita Lazo
Project Start:	September 2002
Project End:	September 2007
Project Code:	RAS/02/12/USA
	RAS/02/55/USA
Donor:	U.S. Department of Labor

Background

The Training for Rural Economic Empowerment Project (TREE), was conceived within the framework of a cooperation agreement between the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) and the ILO. This project developed and implemented a training/support methodology that created employment and generated income among poor, mostly rural populations living in widely different geographic and social contexts from 2002-07. In Pakistan, the target areas were in the Northwest Frontier and Punjab provinces. In the Philippines, the target areas were in three zones of Mindanao. In both countries the target populations were women, unemployed male youth and disabled persons. The project's development objectives were also aimed at improved economic opportunities and security through increasing employment, and access to information and financial resources.

Conclusion of the evaluation

Although implementation was delayed by security concerns at the beginning and recurrently through the five years of the project, all key targets were met and surpassed in some areas. The project was extended because of the success documented through the mid-term evaluation.

For example, more beneficiaries were trained and supported than planned in both countries. More than nine-in-ten beneficiaries (93% in Pakistan, 95% in the Philippines) had secured new employment based on their training within a 3-5 month follow-up period. The project improved access to financial resources through significantly increasing savings and credit groups. Access to information was also increased through broad engagement with business associations and other support organizations.

In general the evaluation team concluded that the project could be measured as a model for interventions elsewhere. It is also important as a model in that project success was achieved in an atmosphere of fragile security and conflict.

Continuation and sustainability of the successes achieved are highly likely in the Pakistan component, and likely, albeit more modest, in the Philippines.

Main recommendations

Continued support should be aimed at maintaining the gains of reducing poverty and unemployment in both countries through further support of community-based skills programs, such as the Program for Vocational and Skills Training in Pakistan.

Partnerships with credit, savings and information sharing institutions and organizations in civil society will further ensure sustainability of the project.

Future target populations might benefit through targeting a mix of ethno-religious minorities and non-minority populations.

The USDOL and the ILO should sustain their engagement with those who have already benefitted from or are aware of the TREE methodology and migrate the pilot-level successes to a nation-wide programme.

7. Independent evaluation of the report "Proyecto de fortalecimiento del sitio Web de Cinterfor/OIT y socialización de conocimientos"

Background

This project, *Strengthening the Cinterfor/ILO Web site and reinforcement of knowledge sharing,* was aimed at consolidating and improving the knowledge network in Latin America and the Caribbean. The focus of the project was to improve the website structure and strengthen and expand the knowledge network through training, translations of documents and further development of relevant information and communication technologies (ICTs), including an experimental e-learning component developed for strengthening vocational training.

Conclusion of the evaluation

The evaluation team found that the project had relevant and well-defined objectives, conducted on behalf of Cinterfor/OIT, and funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). The project was able to make efficient use of past experience and lessons learned, thereby minimizing costs for the products delivered. The project was able to meet the delivery deadlines for all outputs, producing the Cinterfor/OIT website and their publications both in Spanish and English. The evaluation found that extensive consultation with participating institutions before the start of the project contributed to the optimization of achievements. One area indicating lower performance was ICT training conducted in the Anglophone Caribbean.

Main recommendations

The evaluation recommends that national vocational training institutes should continue to use and share the project outputs, e.g. training concepts, manuals, knowledge networks.

It was noted that for certain vulnerable countries like Haiti and Surinam in the region where French and Dutch are spoken, it would be necessary to develop the same materials in these languages. In addition, the government of Brazil expressed a strong interest in generating the information and activities of the project in Portuguese. This request is supported by the evaluation team, especially since Brazilian vocational training institutions expressed the desire to realize the adaptation of the publications and the Web site.

It is recommended that shorter, simpler and more practical documents be published in the five languages, to complement the high quality, more extensive texts already published.

The SDC could further build capacity for knowledge sharing in the region by supporting Cinterfor/ILO activities in the predominant informal sector and examining emerging potential development of information sharing on the "new rural reality".

Annexes

Annex 1: List of independent project evaluations conducted in 2007

The following table, arranged by thematic area and country, lists all the 42 independent evaluations of technical cooperation projects conducted in 2007. An independent evaluation can be a mid-term or a final evaluation. The 33 evaluation reports marked with a (*) are the sample used for the quality appraisal exercise.

List of independent project evaluations conducted in 2007

	Region	Donor	Project Title
	SECTOR 1: STANDARDS AND FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES AND RIGHTS AT WORK		
1	**Cambodia**	The United States	(*) Support to the Cambodian National Plan of Action on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour: A Time-Bound Approach
2	**China**	The United Kingdom	(*) Preventing trafficking in girls and young women for labour exploitation within China (CP-TING)
3	**Dominican Republic**	The United States	Combating the Worst Forms of Child Labour in the Dominican Republic. Supporting the Time Bound Programme in the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour in the Dominican Republic
4	**India**	The United States	Preventing and eliminating child labour in identified hazardous sectors in India (child labour components)INDUS, Part I and II
5	**Indonesia**	Norway	(*) ILO Combating Forced Labour and Trafficking of Indonesian Migrant Workers
6	**Madagascar**	The United States	Combating the Worst Forms of Child Labour in Madagascar (WFCL) - IPEC's contribution to the National Plan of Action to Eliminate Child Labour
7	**Malawi**	The United States	(*) Country Programme to combat Child Labour in Malawi
8	**Pakistan**	The United States	Combating Child Labour in the Carpet Industry in Pakistan - Phase II
9	**Republic of the Philippines**	The United States	(*) Supporting the Time-Bound Programme on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour in the Republic of the Philippines
10	**Tanzania**	Eliminating Child Labour in Tabacco-growing Foundation	(*) Combating Hazardous Child Labour in Tobacco Farming in Urambo (UTSP) Urambo District, Tanzania
11		The United States	(*) Supporting the Time Bound Programme on the Worst Forms of Child Labour in Tanzania
12	**Region Africa**	France	(*) PAMODEC1 - Projet d'Appui à la Mise en Œuvre de la DECLARATION relative aux Principes et Droits Fondamentaux au Travail

13		The United States	Sub Regional Programme on Combating the Trafficking of Children for Labour Exploitation in West and Central Africa.
14		Canada	Skills Training Strategies to Combat WFCL in Urban Informal Sector in Sub-Saharan Anglophone Africa
15		The United States	(*) Combating the trafficking of children for labour exploitation in West and Central Africa
16	**Region America**	The United States	(*) Prevention and Eradication of Domestic Child Labour and Commercial Sexual Exploitation in Chile, Colombia, Paraguay and Peru, Final evaluation.
17	**Region Asia and the Pacific**	The United States	(*) Support to the Proposed National Sub-programme to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labour: Time-Bound Measures
18		UN Human Security Fund	Papua Indigenous Peoples Empowerment Program (PIPE) - Mid-term Evaluation Report
19	**Region Europe**	The United States, Germany	CAR Capacity Building Project: Regional Programme on the Worst Forms of Child Labour and Combating the Worst Forms of Child Labour in Central Asia through education and youth employment (EYE Project)
20	**Inter-Regional**	The United States	Prevention and Reintegration of Children Involved in Armed Conflict An Inter-Regional Programme

SECTOR 2: EMPLOYMENT

21	**Afghanistan**	Germany	(*) Independent Evaluation of Expansion Services to Nine Provinces in Afghanistan
22	**Bolivia**	UNDCP (UNODC), The United States, Austria, Italy, Luxembourg	Evaluación del impacto del proyecto Capacitación de mano de obra y promoción de microempresas en apoyo a la estrategia de erradicación de cultivos de coca en el trópico de Cochabamba
23	**Cambodia**	Japan	(*) Report of Independent Final Evaluation of EEOW Cambodia Chapter
24	**Indonesia**	Multi-donor	(*) Creating Jobs: Capacity building for local resource-based road works in selected districts in NAD and Nias - Indonesia
25	**Maroc**	Spain	(*) Evaluation externe indépendante du projet travail décent Maroc
26	**Republic of the Philippines**	Canada	(*) Promoting Youth Employment in the Philippines
27	**Timor-Leste**	Multi-donor	(*) Mid-Term Evaluation of the Rural Development Programme for Timor-Leste (RDP 2003)
28	**Region America**	Switzerland	(*) Proyecto de fortalecimiento del sitio Web de Cinterfor/OIT y socialización de conocimientos. Informe Final de la Evaluación Externa
29	**Region Asia and Pacific**	The United States	(*) Expanding economic opportunity and income security through workforce education, skills training, employment creation, and local economic development in Pakistan and the Philippines project
30		Norway	(*) Income Recovery Technical Assistance Programme ILO-IRTAP- Final Evaluation

31		Sweden	(*) Poverty Reduction through Integrated Small Enterprise Development Project (PRISED)
32	**Region Europe**	Italy	(*) Skills Development for the Reconstruction and Recovery of Kosovo (Phase I and II)

SECTOR 3: SOCIAL PROTECTION

33	**Cambodia**	The United States	(*) International HIV/AIDS Workplace Education Programme - Cambodia
34	**Lao People's Democratic Republic**	Luxembourg	(*) Lao PDR Social Security Project 2002-2007
35	**Mexico**	The United States	(*) Support for the Prevention and Elimination of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) and the Protection of CSEC Victims in Mexico. Combate a la Explotación Sexual Comercial Infantil (ESCI)
36	**Region Africa**	The United States	(*) Combating and Preventing HIV/AIDS-Induced Child Labour in Sub-Saharan Africa: Pilot Action in Uganda and Zambia

SECTOR 4: SOCIAL DIALOGUE

37	**Cambodia**	The United States	(*) Labour Dispute Resolution in Cambodia Project
38		The United States	(*) Ensuring that Working Conditions in the Textile and Apparel Sector in Cambodia Comply with the Internationally-Recognized Core Labour Standards and the Cambodian Labour Law
39	**Indonesia**	The United States	(*) ILO/USA Declaration Project Indonesia: Promoting and Realising Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining by Building Trust and Capacity in Industrial Relations Systems
40	**Jordan**	The United States	(*) Strengthening the Social Partners Capacity for Promotion of Social Dialogue in Jordan - Final
41	**Inter-Regional**	Norway	(*) Final Evaluation - Workers' Education Programme on Social Dialogue & Social Dialogue and Youth Employment (Armenia, Burkina Faso, Haiti, India,…)
42		Norway	(*) Capacity Building for Employers' Organization on Productivity and Competitiveness (West Africa. South Asia, Caucasus/Central Asia)

Annex 2: Statistical overview of independent project evaluations conducted in 2007

Independent project evaluations 2007 by technical area

	Technical area	Number	Percentage
Standards	Elimination of child labour	12	29%
	Promoting the Declaration	1	2%
	Others	7	16%
	Standards total	**20**	**47%**
Employment	Employment policies and advisory services	5	12%
	Job creation and enterprise development	1	2%
	Programme on skills, knowledge and employability	3	7%
	Youth employment	1	2%
	Boosting employment through small enterprise development	2	5%
	Employment total	**12**	**29%**
Social protection	Social security	2	5%
	ILO programme on HIV/AIDS and the world of work	2	5%
	Social protection total	**4**	**10%**
Social dialogue	Social dialogue, labour law and labour administration and sectoral activities	6	14%
	Social dialogue total	**6**	**14%**
ILO total		**42**	**100%**

Independent project evaluations 2007 by region

Region	Number	Percentage
Americas	5	12%
Asia	21	50%
Africa	10	24%
Europe	2	5%
Arab States	1	2%
Inter-regional	3	7%
Total	**42**	**100%**

Independent project evaluations 2007 by timing

Timing	Number	Percentage
Final evaluation	28	67%
Mid-term evaluation	14	33%
Total	**42**	**100%**

Annex 3: Quality appraisal of independent project evaluation reports 2007

Executive summary[10]

1.1 Introduction

This report has been prepared for the Evaluation Unit (EVAL) of the International Labour Organization (ILO). This report is a summary of findings from an independent appraisal of the quality of evaluation reports from different technical cooperation projects prepared in 2007. The aim of this exercise is to help improve and promote discussion around strengthening the quality of future evaluations, and ultimately the findings from this report will serve as background information for the ILO's Annual Evaluation Report, 2007-08.

1.2 Methodology

The present report was prepared using one methodology. An existing tool comprised of criteria, the Quality Checklist, was revised and applied systematically to the appraisal of 33 evaluation reports. The checklist contains 71 criteria, sub-categorized into eleven (11) sub-sections, only six (6) of which were used to create averages. The tool draws from evaluation norms and standards as laid out in two key guidance documents used by the ILO to promote international best practices in evaluation. These are United Nations System Evaluation Norms and Standards and the OECD/DAC quality standards.[11]

Each score assigned to criteria is determined by the appraiser's overall impression, which is a subjective judgement and interpretation of the report's technical elements, accuracy, strengths, and weaknesses. In addition to a substantive review, the Quality Checklist is designed to appraise how information that is presented as evidence, or findings, *support* conclusions and corresponding recommendations.

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[10] The appraisal was conducted by Tristi Nichols in June 2008.

[11] The United Nations System Evaluation Norms seek to facilitate system-wide collaboration on evaluation by ensuring that evaluation entities within the United Nations follow agreed-upon basic principles. They provide a reference for strengthening, professionalizing and improving the quality of evaluation in all entities of the United Nations system. The Standards for Evaluation in the United Nations build upon the Evaluation Norms. They are intended to guide the establishment of the institutional framework, management of the evaluation function, conduct and use of evaluations. They are also a reference for the competencies of evaluation practitioners and work ethics, and are intended to be applied as appropriate within each organization. The Evaluation Norms are consistent with other main sources (OECD/DAC--see below) and reflect the singularity of the United Nations system, characterized by its focus on people and respect for their rights, the importance of international values and principles, universality and neutrality, its multiple stakeholders, its needs for global governance, its multidisciplinarity, and its complex accountability system.

The ILO adheres to the OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Standards and uses these internally as the reference point for quality control of evaluation process and products. Evaluation managers should give these to external evaluators to guide on the conduct of evaluations and report preparation. The Quality Standards are intended to contribute to a harmonised approach to evaluation in line with the principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness.

A weighted and non-weighted score was calculated for all reports reviewed. Briefly, the weighted score is calculated under the assumption that not all sub-sections should have equal value. The logic of 40%-60% is applied, whereby the project and evaluation background and methodology represent 40 per cent of the entire score, and the remaining, or 60 per cent, is applied to findings, conclusions and recommendations. Alternatively, a non-weighted score includes **the same value** for all sections of the report, and these results are also presented.

1.3 Findings

It should be noted that an average score of between 2.0 and 2.5 is ascribed as being of satisfactory standard. **<u>Both the weighted and non-weighted scores for reports reviewed meet satisfactory levels.</u>** These acceptable levels may be attributed to a) high quality findings, conclusions, and project background sections; and b) recommendations and executive summaries of satisfactory standard. However, the average scores could be rated at 2.5 – a standard of *high quality* – **if the evaluation background and methodology sections were improved**.

The evidence presented in this report confirms that the findings, conclusion, and project description sub-sections are of high quality, owing to strong familiarity with organizational arrangements and strong knowledge of the ILO's mandate and role. The average score of the Project Background fell within high quality levels, ranging between 2.5 and 3.0, suggesting that there is clearly an understanding of how technical cooperation within this framework works. The ILO has complex and different relationships with host governments and entities representing employers and workers at multiple levels, and a couple of reports used graphs and flow charts to simplify the complexity of the ILO's links at national, provincial, and district levels. Overall averages demonstrate that most authors are well versed in presenting information which is aligned with the OECD/DAC criteria, as the strongest discussions concentrate in relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability.

The findings in relation to poverty, tripartite or social dialogue, and International Labour Standards all ranked about the same at an acceptable level of discussion. The average scores presented in figure 2 confirm that the evaluator's technical expertise is significant. Indeed, the needs assessments to build capacity to support international labour standards and relevant administration and the identification of elements to strengthen social dialogue were all thoughtfully articulated.

Figure 2 in this report also illustrates that the executive summary, evaluation background, and evaluation methodology are comparably the weakest sub-sections. Average and/or poor ratings in methodology may be attributed to an inadequate description of 1) the sampling rationale and subsequent weak linkages between data and conclusions and 2) the limitations or/and potential sources of bias and 3) the omission of the OECD/DAC quality standards. Specifically, 69 per cent of reports reviewed lack a sampling rationale or/and a justification for site selection, and there are relatively few explanations about what specific evidence is derived from different stakeholders. Essentially, this missing link led to a general observation that there was limited use of data to support, substantiate, and validate findings and conclusions. Indeed, it was noted, that less than half (43 per cent) of the reports assessed included recommendations which were unsupported or unsubstantiated with evidence from findings. The reader subsequently has difficulty distinguishing

between the evaluator's 1) professional expertise and biases - or what others could affirm as subjectivity; and 2) the evidence germane to the project or/and context.

All evaluations have limitations, and only 42 per cent of reports reviewed include a high quality discussion of what these were. The absence of limitations and potential sources of bias raises questions about methodological rigour, which subsequently weakens the accuracy of findings and the strength of conclusions.

Finally, an explicit reference to the OECD/DAC quality standards was minimal (27 per cent), and the omission of the reference may leave room for misunderstandings and/or ill-informed expectations. While an explicit reference may not change the outcome of a complex evaluation, its presence offers a common starting point for dialogue in the event that the formal contract is subject to (re)negotiation. Hence, the inclusion of and adherence to the OECD/DAC quality standards is strongly recommended.

Generally, it was noted that the executive summary, evaluation background, and methodology sections should be improved, so that the ILO's broader audience may better follow how and the circumstances under which the ILO carries out its mandate. In response to the urge for stronger coherence and the regional and country levels, stakeholders from other United Nations organizations may also be interested in including the ILO in joint programming efforts, and so a clear understanding of the ILO's project logic, operating procedures, and evaluation methodologies is warranted.

1.4 Recommendations

On the basis of the evaluation findings described in this report, there are five recommendations made to EVAL and evaluation managers/units:

(1) Strengthening the methodology sections to enhance conclusions and recommendations could take place through the use of a specific table formatted with the following *suggested* elements: the OECD/DAC criteria (i.e., relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability), stakeholders/project sites sampled and identified, and a list of actual methods employed. The table may facilitate one to link a) evaluation questions/criteria to b) sampling and stakeholder participation to c) findings. EVAL should reinforce the use of a clear system in documenting methods in future reports. An explicit reference to the OECD/DAC quality standards should also be made in the body of the report, and EVAL should introduce a standard form for consultants to sign, indicating compliance with Norms for Evaluation for the UN system and OECD/DAC criteria (i.e., relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability);

(2) Greater efforts to effectively connect gender issues throughout the body of evaluation reports should be made, and EVAL should further emphasize the relevance of existing guidance to use in reporting - *Considering Gender in Monitoring and Evaluation Projects*;

(3) Including the instrument(s) used for data collection in annexes would maximize the use of reports for future evaluators, managers, and ILO/non-ILO stakeholders, and so evaluation managers/units ought to make their inclusion in an annex compulsory in the Terms of Reference;

(4) The lessons learned ought to be limited to *one or two area(s) of discussion* to avoid repetition and to encourage sincere reflection about what contributes to good practice; and

(5) A complete executive summary reflecting *all* elements of the evaluation report would increase the likelihood that evaluation reports are read by ILO/non-ILO stakeholders, and so Managers/Units should pay close attention to ensure that the Executive Summary is complete.

Figure 4: Average score of 2007 project evaluation reports by findings
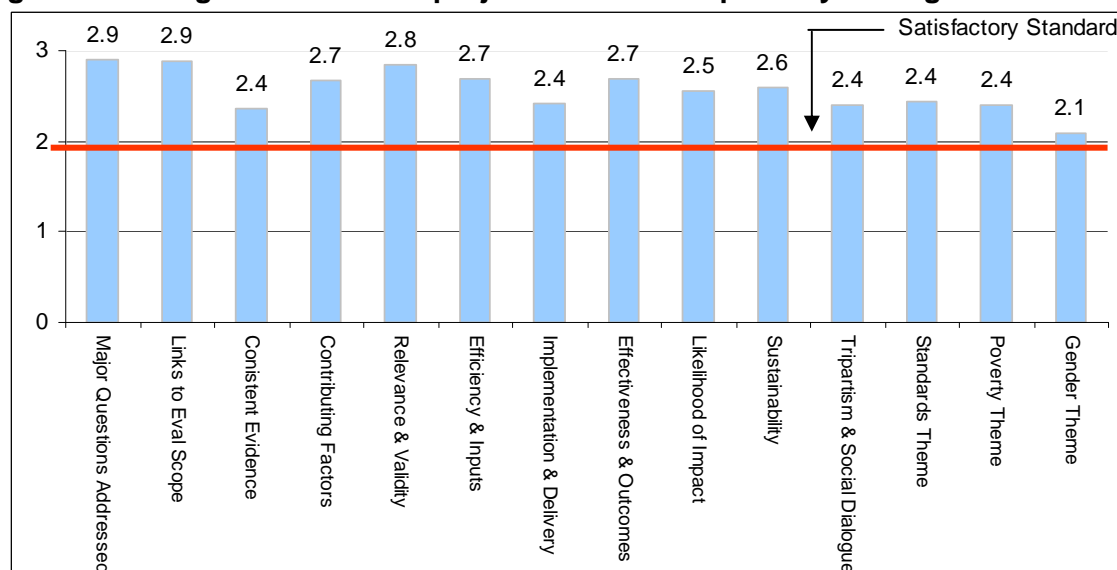

Figure 5: Weighted and non-weighted average scores of Project evaluation reports in 2007