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International  
Labour  
Organization

# i-eval

## Flash news

### *EVAL highlights*

EVAL is pleased to share the third edition of *i-eval : Flash news* with you. Through this quarterly electronic bulletin we provide readers with updates, news, publications and upcoming events related to evaluation. [You are invited](#) to alert us about any news item that you wish to include in the next issue.

#### **Regional Evaluation Workshop, Dec 2011**

Regional Evaluation Officers, EVAL staff and a range of partners such as PROGRAM, PARDEV and representatives from the Sectors, convened at the John Knox Center in Geneva in early December 2011 to review the evaluation strategy for 2012-13, exchange ideas and brainstorm. Emphasis was placed on developing the 2012-13 work plan and identifying bottlenecks and challenges faced by the regions and sectors. Here are some action points the ILO Evaluation participants identified during the workshop:

- More focus should be placed on generating thematic evaluations
- The management follow-up exercise would be strengthened by improving the quality and usefulness of recommendations
- Internal evaluations should be made more useful to the organization, including some form of follow-up mechanism
- The processes for identifying lessons learned should feed into the field or sector context to ensure better uptake
- PARDEV and EVAL should formalize criteria for establishing evaluation requirements at the appraisal and approval stages
- The Office needs new guidance for impact and joint evaluations
- Regional knowledge sharing platforms need to be optimized, with better interface with Knowledge Sharing in evaluation at Headquarters



**Workshop participants:** From left to right: Irina Sinelina (Europe), Sabas Monroy (Americas), Elisa Furuta (EVAL), Laetitia Weibel (Arab States), Guy Thijs (EVAL Director), Janet Neubecker (EVAL), Carla Henry (EVAL), Gugsu Farice (Africa), Pamornrat Pringsulaka (Asia), Francisco Guzman (EVAL) – *not shown* Craig Russon and Evelyn Murcia-Paes (EVAL)

#### **Evaluation Strategic Outcomes**

The workshop focussed on linking evaluation strategies in the field and headquarters with the Outcomes put forward in the evaluation strategy approved by the [GB 310, March 2011](#):

**Outcome 1:** Improved use of evaluation by ILO constituents and management for governance

**Outcome 2:** Harmonized Office-wide evaluation practice to support transparency and accountability

**Outcome 3:** Evaluation capability expanded through enhanced knowledge, skills and tools

## *Innovation & Research*

### *Completed EVAL study*



#### *Lessons Learned* – Ralph Mauer

Over the past few years the ILO has deployed a number of initiatives to reinforce its evaluation function with a view to support more systematic institutional learning. There still persists, however, a general perception that lessons generated by evaluations are not yet adequately incorporated into programme and policy. To this end EVAL undertook a study to explore how greater policy learning can be achieved from project and country programme evaluations.

The study, conducted by Dr. Ralf Maurer, found that project and country programme evaluations are not geared to extract lessons on national policies. Notwithstanding this weakness, independent project evaluations have some potential to become more productive in terms of policy content. Evaluators could be encouraged to place more emphasis on policy rationale of the project by validating the underlying ‘theory of change’, the assumptions on which the project is built, and by establishing the relevance of institutional roles and approaches. A ‘Theory of change’ in this context would be a model indicating how policy influencing activities are linked to desired changes in policy. This would involve formulating project evaluations as outcome evaluations.

This, of course, has implications for project design. Projects or programmes would have to be designed with reference to national policy outcomes and, in particular, their contribution to reinforcing capacity for policy implementation or alternatively to promoting policy change. Such an approach would allow evaluations to confirm or refute the assumptions embedded in the theory of change and, based on those findings, identify lessons that are valuable beyond the particular project or programme. [Click here](#) to request a copy.

**What ILO EVAL offers** – EVAL has improved guidance to consultants to achieve better formulated lessons learned in evaluation reports to ensure these adhere to specific criteria and link to the outcomes of the project or programme being evaluated. The EVAL database logs all lessons learned from independent evaluation reports into searchable data modules to facilitate analysis across thematic and administrative areas and to provide specific inputs for programme and policy design. [Click here](#) to request a search on lessons learned from the i-Track database.

### *Forthcoming EVAL studies*

**Ratings Methodologies** - EVAL is in the process of undertaking a study on rating instruments. Rating is used to measure performance for DWCP Reviews, high-level and project evaluations. Given the sensitivity of rating exercises it is imperative to ensure high validity and reliability across methods used. With the aim of harmonizing and improving EVAL rating instruments, [Dr. William Trochim](#) of

Cornell University (USA) has been contracted to conduct the study.

Dr. Trochim will deliver a map of existing good practices regarding ratings; an analysis of the ILO’s current practice; and provide inputs into EVAL’s new Guidance Note on Validity and Reliability. To request a copy of the Trochim report, forthcoming April 2012, [click here](#).

## Forthcoming studies (cont'd)

### ***National capacity development - ILO***

**Study on how to engage social partners in National Evaluation Systems.** This study examines the engagement of social partners in national evaluation systems. It covers five countries with special emphasis on the existing priorities of international development organizations and line ministries to promote the participation of civil society, workers' and employers' organizations in national evaluation systems. The study was designed to collect information from a) the ILO country constituents (the representative bodies of Employers and Workers, and Ministries of Labour); b) the ILO Country Offices; and c) a number of United Nations and International Financing Agencies (IFAs), in order to review their practices and experience in supporting national evaluation capacities. It is hoped the findings of this study will inform how ILO can better support a greater number of its constituent partners to participate in, contribute to and gain from their national evaluation systems. A final aim of the study is to contribute to learning in ILO and other United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) member agencies' on the involvement of the social partners of UN agencies, including those of the ILO, in national evaluation systems. [Click here](#) to request a copy of the report.

### ***Guidance tool for the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) - National***

**Evaluation Capacity Development (NECD)** During 2011 the ILO assumed the role of co-chair of the UN Evaluation Group's National Evaluation Capacity Development Task Force. With financial contributions from UNICEF and UN WOMEN the ILO took on the responsibility of managing the key deliverable of developing a guidance tool. The purpose of the guidance tool is to provide the UN system with practical guidance on how to strengthen national evaluation capacity systems.



It is not meant to be prescriptive but is intended to highlight key elements to consider when working on NECD. The guidance tool will benefit from the earlier mentioned study on the role of social partners in national evaluation systems. [Click here](#) to request a copy.



### **Finding an Evaluation Consultant**

The International Program for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) has maintained an [evaluation consultant database](#) for more than six years. In 2008 EVAL collaborated with IPEC to consolidate their two collections and there are now 640 consultants listed with searchable experience criteria. Staff wishing to search the database can request a login and password from the IPEC [database manager](#).

Officials searching the consultant database and considering using a consultant found there are strongly advised to conduct their own due diligence in checking backgrounds and experience, as a listing in the database does not automatically constitute endorsement by IPEC or EVAL. Consultants who have had experience with either IPEC or EVAL will have a notation to this effect in the database record and a request to see samples of their work can usually be accommodated by sending a request to the department having contracted the consultant.

New evaluation guidance is available on [identifying and selecting a consultant](#) in the new i-eval Resource Kit.

## *Evaluation News from the Regions*



### *AFRICA : Equipping constituents for effective programme ownership*

Decent Work Country Programme Reviews are critical sources of analysis for DWCP design and implementation. The Regional Office for Africa (ROAF) has conducted a number of DWCP reviews ([Lesotho](#), [Ethiopia](#), [Zambia](#),

[Zimbabwe and Nigeria](#)). These internal reviews have pointed to the need to strengthen capacity of ILO offices and constituents in planning, monitoring and evaluation across the region. Based on this finding, capacity enhancement investments have been made to enable offices and constituents to support the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of results-based DWCPs in the region. These enhancements include providing guidance and training for ILO staff at country level as well as training on M&E for members of the Monitoring and Evaluation network in the region. In cooperation with EVAL, workshops and meetings have been held for ILO constituents and staff in Accra, Dakar, Mauritius, Algiers, Lomé, Ethiopia, Gambia, Malawi, Mozambique, Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Tripartite capacity building is now built into national DWCP formulation and review exercises as a result of the findings of both high-level and internal reviews in the region.

To strengthen the capacity of ILO Offices to further support constituents in planning, monitoring and evaluation across the region, ROAF has integrated RBM and M&E training into the agenda of meetings and training programmes organised for directors, specialists, CTAs/NPCs and programming staff. In addition, ROAF is providing RBM and M&E training for ILO staff and hands-on capacity building support to assist offices and constituents to develop good quality DWCPs and M&E plan. As a result of these capacity building interventions, there has been significant improvement in quality and evaluability of DWCPs in the region with all approved DWCPs having clearly articulated implementation and M&E plans, as well as analysed resource gaps.

One lesson drawn from internal reviews was the need for strong ownership of DWCPs by constituents. Regional Offices are now aiming to build stronger engagement and participation of constituents in identifying priorities, outcomes and outputs, as well as drafting DWCP documents (including M&E and implementation plans) and overseeing the implementation of the CPOs through substantive national institutions (e.g. Mozambique, Zambia, EAC, South Africa, etc.).

Another lesson identified is the need for an effective national mechanism to regularly monitor implementation to ensure that results are achieved as planned. To answer this need guidance has been provided to ILO offices and constituents resulting in clearly articulated implementation monitoring arrangements for each DWCP. In addition, ROAF has established a mechanism for bi-annual DWCP implementation reports which facilitate the regular monitoring of progress (or lack thereof) towards the achievement of DWCP outcomes.

### **Partners in evaluation in the Africa Region**

[African Gender and Development Evaluators' Network \(AGDEN\)](#)  
[African Regional Evaluation Association \(AfReA\)](#)



## Evaluation News from the Sectors

**Sector II - Social finance:** The financial and economic crisis that started in 2008 led to the loss of millions of jobs. Mounting criticism of microfinance institutions (MFIs) as exploitative and contributing to the crisis gave momentum to the need for regulation of the sector and protection of low-income microfinance clients. The relevance of ILO social finance and decent work came into focus in the light of these crises, and demand for ILO services grew accordingly. Against this backdrop the Executive Director of the Employment Sector decided in March 2011, with support of EVAL, to commission a thematic evaluation of its technical work to support national policies and practices on social finance within the overall aim of promoting decent work.

The purpose of this evaluation was to provide impartial assessment and recommendations to support ILO management in charting directions for future ILO work on social finance. The period under review witnessed a substantial increase in activity by the [Social Finance Programme](#), boosted by the expansion of human resources from 2008 with the advent of two major initiatives, the [Microfinance for Decent Work](#) (MF4DW) and the [Microinsurance Innovation Facility](#) (MIIF). The evaluation applied a mix of methods including extensive interviewing at ILO Headquarters and across the world; five country studies (Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Mali, and Peru); and a questionnaire survey. One hundred and sixty-five individual interviews were conducted plus a number of group interactions, and 31 projects were examined in depth.



<b>Social finance objectives:</b>	<i>more employment</i>	-	<i>less vulnerability</i>	-	<i>stronger constituents</i>
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The evaluation concluded that the ILO has contributed to the achievement of the three social finance objectives, although mostly in an indirect manner in context settings where other social goals dominated. This is typically the destiny of cross-cutting issues. In the case of social finance, the contributions to *more employment* exist but cannot be measured. Given the types of projects in which social finance is an element, the contribution is stronger with regard to *less vulnerability* in relation to child labour, HIV&AIDS, cooperatives, etc. In spite of a number of initiatives, the contribution to *stronger constituents* appeared weak.

The evaluation further suggested that the strategic fit of social finance in overall ILO policy frameworks had been strengthened. The integration of social finance as a natural ingredient in employment promotion and social protection in Decent Work Country Programmes is uneven and the social finance concept has not yet sufficiently penetrated the ILO structures. The report highlighted two areas where ILO's comparative advantages are high, namely: i) The ILO's decent work approach to microfinance; ii) Microinsurance as a new area of microfinance that attracts attention from many quarters. The decent work dimension attracts sympathy from the wider development community, while microinsurance is also of interest to commercially-oriented business society. ILO has, with the support of the [Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation](#), managed to place itself in a central position in the microinsurance development context. In conclusion, the relevance of social finance at the strategic level has therefore been fairly clear in the period under evaluation. The report recommends several next steps including:

- Take measures to ensure consistent application of microfinance good practices across the wide array of projects incorporating this as a means of action;
- Expand the number of ILO professional staff with microfinance expertise;
- Synchronise the conceptual approaches being taken on microinsurance and improve synergies with other enterprise and employment initiatives; and
- Consolidate the various initiatives being supported by the social finance programme into a more coherent set of operations.

## Evaluation Guidance



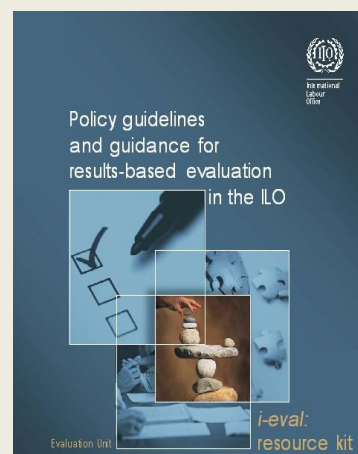
### **Exercising tripartism** *Evaluation and capacity building for constituents*

#### **Evaluation training for tripartite constituents: Presentations, learning activities and reference materials (2012)** *Available in English, French and Spanish*

- This new training CD-ROM developed by EVAL contains training materials to conduct a workshop to increase the evaluation capacity of ILO tripartite constituents.
- 17 modules are included, each with a description of the session, slide presentations and learning activities. All modules can be presented, or a subset selected, according to the relevance of the topics to participant needs.
- These materials were developed for the first tripartite constituent evaluation workshop that took place in Turin at the ILO's International Training Centre in May 2009. They were subsequently revised based on feedback from participants in this workshop, with the assistance of ILO training experts. To get a copy [click here](#).

### **New Evaluation Resource kits and CD Roms**

Policy Guidelines: Officials who have already requested a copy can be assured that their names have been registered for delivery when the kit is finished. If you have not yet requested a copy of the i-eval Resource Kit [click here](#) to submit your request.



#### ***Evaluation Training for ILO Tripartite Constituents: Presentations, learning activities and reference materials*** **Order a copy now**

## New Evaluation Report Highlights

### **2011 Decent Work Country Programme Internal Reviews**

**Argentina**

**Cambodia**

**Dominican Republic**

**Lao**

**Paraguay**

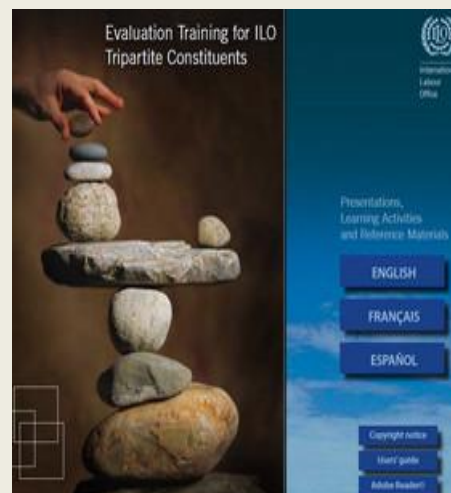
**Zambia**

**Zimbabwe**

[click for a copy](#)

### **2011 Project evaluations**

[Click here](#) to browse the summaries, full reports are in i-track





## External Evaluation Activities & Events

- **International Program for Development Evaluation Training** - IPDET 2012 summer program is designed to meet the professional development needs of senior and mid-level evaluation and audit professionals working in developed and developing country governments, bilateral and multilateral development agencies, or non-governmental organizations. The deadline for registering for this summer's program is May 2, 2012. [<more>](#)
- **Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and the European Development Research Network (EUDN)** annual conference, *Evaluation and its discontents: Do we learn from experience in development?*, Paris, March 26, 2012 [<more>](#)
- **International Workshop: Case Studies in Development Evaluation: Validity, Generalization and Learning** - May 21-23, 2012. Contact Centre for Social Science Development Research, University of Copenhagen [<more>](#)
- **10<sup>th</sup> European Evaluation Society Conference**, Helsinki, Finland, Oct 2012, *Evaluation in the networked society: New concepts, New challenges, New Solutions*. [<more>](#)
- **The Clear Initiative:** CLEAR is a global initiative whose goal is to strengthen monitoring and evaluation and performance management (PM) of countries and their governments to achieve development outcomes. CLEAR is involved in providing in-region capacity development and technical assistance services, and global learning to build practical knowledge-sharing on M&E and PM across regions. See their [website](#) for conferences and events.



**The United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG)** is a professional network that brings together the units responsible for evaluation in the UN system including the specialized agencies, funds, programmes and affiliated organisations. UNEG currently has 46 such members.

UNEG aims to strengthen the objectivity, effectiveness and visibility of the evaluation function across the UN system and to advocate the importance of evaluation for learning, decision making and accountability.

**New Publication:** *Update note on Peer Reviews of Evaluation in UN Organizations* (2012). The DAC Network on Development Evaluation (EvalNet) and UNEG have established a Joint Task Force to support professional peer reviews of the evaluation function of organizations. [<more>](#)

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