



# *i-eval* Flash news

## *EVAL highlights*

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

### ***Evaluation Managers – New Directions – New Training – New Guidance***

If you have ever been asked to perform the duties and responsibilities of an Evaluation Manager, you know there is quite a bit to learn, organize and coordinate. EVAL is in the process of establishing a job enrichment programme to certify ILO selected staff to act as Evaluation Managers. Participants would be nominated by the Regions and Sectors.

The certification programme is foreseen to be a three-day workshop, possibly with a guided practice component. It is envisaged that a curriculum for the certification be developed and piloted in Turin. The learning objectives will be derived from the recently published Guidance Note No. 6 [The Evaluation Manager: Duties and Responsibilities](#) and the [UNEG](#) Core Competencies for Evaluators of the UN system.

Following the pilot of the certification programme in Turin, the training would be rolled out to headquarters and the regions. A community of practice would then be set up on the EVAL plone site to encourage exchange between certified and potential evaluation managers.

For those in the ILO that may not have to serve as an evaluation manager but are keen to learn more about evaluation, EVAL is in the process of completing an e-learning course in support of the recently released ILO policy guidelines for result-based evaluation.



The EVAL plone has been revitalized and reorganized and we are particularly excited to initiate a long-awaited forum for validating lessons learned and good practices through collaboration with technical departments and ILO's research agenda. EVAL aims to improve utilization of evaluation findings on lessons learned and good practices. This will involve:

- refining the way we design M&E plans in projects;
- improving how we draft the Evaluation Terms of Reference and phrase the evaluation questions;
- providing adequate guidance to our external consultants for identifying these in reports;
- storing and categorizing this data, distinguishing between operational versus substantive lessons; and
- organizing on-line technical peer review to validate selected lessons and good practices.

EVAL will soon contact technical departments to solicit feedback and to identify colleagues keen to collaborate in this initiative. Should you already be willing to join us in a brainstorming session on this matter, please [contact us](#).

## *Innovation & Research*

### *Completed Studies –*



#### **The Involvement of Social Partners in National Evaluation Systems by Tim Dyce**

Capacity building for national evaluation systems (NES) is at the heart of this study which aims to contribute to a greater understanding of how these systems can assist governments of developing countries to better manage for results. The underlying assumption of the study was that evaluations should not be funded by international agencies with the sole purpose to inform their own organizational accountability and performance, but to also offer insights on the importance of building national systems which will enable countries to evaluate and manage their own development process.

A literature survey was conducted along with a web-based survey covering five countries and six UN agencies. The author explored the extent to which member countries were realizing the potential of ILO's comparative advantage in social dialogue and using this to build capacity for NES. The study also reviewed the kind of activities being engaged in by other UN agencies to improve evaluation capacity and thus make their contribution to national evaluation systems. The countries covered were Albania, India, Jordan, Mexico, and South Africa; the UN agencies were: FAO, UNDP, UNICEF UNESCO, UN-Women, and WHO-UNAIDS. Interviews also took place with ILO experts, specialists and Country Directors, Turin training experts, as well as a number of evaluation experts in international agencies.

The study concluded that national evaluation capacities vary depending on the governance systems in place. It was found that NES often started as an audit function of government financial management but now are moving to include non-governmental agencies and social objectives. Analysis of the web-based survey showed some mixed results for ILO country offices which revealed a relatively low awareness of evaluation capacity development systems in their countries, as well as slow integration into the United National Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). ILO social partners did report to the Ministry of Labour, but none sent evaluations to the Ministry of Planning, for instance only 40 per cent of social partners shared their evaluation reports with other tripartite constituents and none sent them to the media.

A positive finding of the study was that evaluation capacity development delivered so far by the ILO and other agencies to its constituent partners was judged to be a high and satisfactory level by the partners. However, to ensure that this capacity is sustainable, more efforts and specific exit strategies need to be developed. The ILO partners also expressed that they felt their ability to participate in NES had been strengthened, as opposed to a relatively low level of confidence expressed about that participation by the ILO Country Offices themselves.

Interviews revealed that the language of evaluation is overly abstract and technical. Interviewees pointed out that ILO is involved with employers and workers that operate in practical environments using plain language – which is very different from the world of high bureaucracy and academia. There were recommendations for the language to be more *inclusive* than *exclusive*, pointing to the conclusion that there was a need to find ways to adhere to professional standards but improve the ability to share evaluation findings with “lay” publics. For instance, this was observation was linked to the importance of including the media as a routine recipient of evaluation information. Dissemination of evaluation information to the media was seen as a leverage point for providing civil society with informed scrutiny on government performance.

Finally, the study suggests that evaluation capacity development itself needs to be evaluated against results. This would have to take the form of a strategy evaluation that would cover issues like the capacity to receive capacity development, as well as the impact of evaluation efforts of technical cooperation activities over a period of time. It was also suggested that there be an impact evaluation of ILO evaluation training activities. The summary of the study is being published as an [i-eval THINK Piece](#).



## *Innovation & Research*

### *Joint Evaluation*

#### **Concept Note for effective participation of ILO in Joint Evaluations** by Monika Zabel

There has been a call for harmonization and alignment from the donor community, as well as among the UN agencies: Delivering as One UN; joint programming at country level under UNDAF; and the Millennium Development Goal Achievement Fund (MDG-F). Partnership-based modalities are increasing and this has affected collaboration on joint evaluation (JE).

This development requires a review of ILO's policies and practices regarding joint evaluation, to ensure that ILO is adequately participating in evaluations of technical cooperation that involve both the ILO as lead agency and participant. Joint evaluations offer numerous benefits as development agencies shift their strategies away from isolated projects towards programmatic approaches and also foster greater consensus among the partner agencies on future priorities.

ILO commissioned this study to review the current UN environment and practices and offer guidance on how ILO can best collaborate and participate. The study examines the benefits and challenges of JE in the UN community and presents the key steps in the process. Suggestions and recommendations for ILO policy are specifically directed at:

- decision to undertake a JE
- setting the evaluation management structure
- establishing ToR
- setting up the evaluation team
- budgeting and contracting issues
- conducting the evaluation
- effective follow-up of recommendations
- review and use of lessons learned

The study emphasizes that the key objectives of a JE process are to ensure that the evaluation becomes an efficient learning tool for all participating partners. The aim is to promote good governance and national ownership of the findings; to enable the partners to be fully accountable; and, of course, to be a cost-effective means of evaluation. This study will be used as a basis for a new guidance note on joint evaluation, linked to the [ILO Policy Guidelines for Results-Based-Evaluation](#), to be ready in June 2012. Click [here](#) to request a copy of the study.



*The latest report from the Delivering as One evaluation effort has been released in a draft format: [Independent Evaluation of Lesson Learned from Delivering as One](#).*

*Click [here](#) to read the statement of Ms. Lillian Flores, Chair of the UN Evaluation Management Group, addressing the IV High-Level Intergovernmental Conference: Status of the Independent Evaluation - Montevideo, Uruguay (November 2011)*

#### ***Some new evaluations from 2011-2012***

[Entrepreneurship education: Introduction of Know About Business \(KAB\) in vocational trainings in Palestine \(Final Evaluation\)](#)  
PAL/08/01/UND

[Sustaining competitive and responsible enterprises GLOBAL Component \(SCORE\) - \(Mid Term Evaluation\)](#) GLO/10/52/NAD

[Promotion of youth employment in Mozambique \(Final Evaluation\)](#)  
MOZ/08/51/OUF

[Building capacity for coordination of social security for migrant workers \(Final Evaluation\)](#) MOL/08/02/ROM

[Jobs for peace: 12,500 youth employed and empowered through an integrated approach in Nepal \(Final Evaluation\)](#) NEP/09/50/UND

[Broad-based wealth and job creation in Zambia economic development through MSME development \(Final Evaluation\)](#)  
ZAM/07/01/FIN

[Social security quantitative training for Africa \(Quatrain Africa\) \(Final Evaluation\)](#) RBSA Funded Activity

## *Evaluation News from the Regions*

### **Asia and the Pacific: Working with other UN agencies in the regions to strengthen the national M&E capacity**

**by Pamornrat Pringsulaka**

The United Nations Evaluation Development Group for Asia and the Pacific (UNEDAP), a network of UN agencies in Asia and the Pacific region (UNICEF, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN Women, UNESCAP, UNAIDS, and ILO) established with the aims to promote an evaluation culture in the region and to strengthen the region's evaluation capacities, conducted a regional thematic study of National M&E Systems in 2011. The study was jointly funded by UNESCO, UNICEF and ILO and its purpose was to identify strategic issues and options for UNEDAP's future engagement in national evaluation capacity development in the region. More specifically, the study sought to analyse opportunities as well as evaluation capacity gaps by analysing and assessing the existing approaches in national M&E systems in the region. The study included seven case studies of India, Malaysia, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Fiji, and Papua New Guinea. Some of the findings include:

- Despite some good examples, most countries have weak M&E systems facing capacity constraints.
- Increased understanding of the actual and potential benefits of M&E systems is needed and critical to increase the demand for and use of evaluation information (e.g. informed decision making).
- National level M&E units exist in all countries with varied capacities and mandates. More focus has been placed on monitoring data at national, institutional, and project levels than undertaking and providing evaluation information for programme decisions. The national M&E system links to 'planning' but not to national budgeting or the personal performance appraisal system.
- There is a weak enabling environment, including inadequate legislative and regulatory requirements to support the practice and use of evaluations. This is exacerbated by limited leadership, lack of funds and incentives.
- There is either a lack of or inadequate mechanisms to ensure quality of evaluations.
- An independent evaluation unit (IEU) is absent in many countries (India has been able to establish the IEU, which is exemplary).
- There is a lack of allocated resources for evaluation (other than that of donor-funded projects), indicating no government budget for sustainable evaluation.
- Evaluations of projects rely heavily on the expertise of external evaluation consultants, pointing to a need to build internal evaluation capacity to improve institutionalization of evaluation for the effective implementation of the national development agenda.
- Though every country practices M&E to a certain degree, evaluation culture and critical mass in evaluation needs to be promoted and developed.

Based on the findings, lessons learned and recommendations of the study, UNEDAP has developed a set of next steps. These include: the preparation of knowledge products on national M&E capacity (targeting governments, UN agencies, and others); integrating the concept of national M&E systems and evaluation capacity development into the planned UNEDAP evaluation training; and further exploring the possibility to sponsor national governments, social partners, and civil society to participate in international and regional evaluation capacity development events. Moreover, UNEDAP intends to make use of the findings and lessons learned to support the UNCTs' work, in particular, to support UNDAF evaluation processes in Asia and the Pacific region. Click [here](#) to request a copy of the UNEDAP report.





## *Independent Project Evaluations from Asia 2011-2012*

<a href="#">BGD/09/01/EEC</a>	Bangladesh Technical and Vocational Education and Training Project (TVET)
<a href="#">INS/09/02/IDA</a>	Nias Islands Rural Access and Capacity Building Project
<a href="#">PHI/08/03/HSF</a>	Inter-agency Programme to Nurture Peace, Security and Decent Work in the Philippines
<a href="#">RAS/10/56/JPN</a>	Effective Implementation of National OSH for Improving Safety & Health in Viet Nam
<a href="#">SRL/09/03/JPN</a>	Enhancement of employment possibilities in Sabaragamuwa Province
<a href="#">VIE/09/03/OUF</a>	Support to the Industrial Relations and Labour Code Reform in Viet Nam
<a href="#">VIE/07/02/EEC</a>	Labour Market Project in Viet Nam

### Partners in evaluation in the Asia and Pacific Region

#### Regional:

[Asian Development Bank – Evaluation \(ADB\)](#)  
[United Nations Evaluation Development Group for Asia and the Pacific](#)

#### By Country:

**Bangladesh:** [Monitoring and Evaluation Network \(BDMEN\)](#)  
**China:** [Chinese Evaluation Network \(CEN\)](#)  
**India:** [Development Evaluation Society of India \(DESI\)](#)  
**Indonesia:** [Indonesian Evaluation Community \(InDEC\)](#)  
**Japan:** [Japan Evaluation Society \(JES\)](#)  
**Malaysia:** [Malaysian Evaluation Society \(MES\)](#)

**Nepal:** [Nepal Evaluation Society \(NES\)](#)  
**Pakistan:** [Pakistan Evaluation Network \(PEN\)](#)  
**Philippines:** [Pilipinas M & E Society \(PMES\)](#)  
**Sri Lanka:** [Sri Lanka Evaluation Association \(SLEvA\)](#)  
**Thailand:** [Thailand Evaluation Network](#)

## *Evaluation News from the Sectors*

### Sector 4: [Better Work Programme](#)

In 2007, the International Labour Organization and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) launched the Better Work Global programme. The objective of the programme is to increase the rate of compliance of enterprises in developing countries with international labor standards and national labor laws. Through a competitive bidding process the ILO retained Nexus Associates, Inc. to undertake an independent evaluation of Better Work Global (BWG) Stage II - managed by EVAL. Some conclusions from the evaluation are reported below.



#### ***Better Work Global has accomplished a great deal over the past three years***

It has established policies, procedures and systems to drive operations and ensure consistency across the different country programs. As part of this process, it has instituted new approaches within ILO, including fees for service, decentralized financial management, and different reporting lines. Tools for self-assessment such as Supply Chain Tracking of Assessments and Remediation (STAR) are still under development. While BWG has not achieved all of the original objectives, its accomplishments are significant.

#### ***Better Work Global is learning by doing***

While the basic concept for the program was in place before the start of Stage II, there has been a steep learning curve on how to plan, organize, direct and control it. Better Work Global has put structures in place such as the Operation Management Team (OMT) to provide a mechanism for discussing critical issues that emerge during the course of day-to-day operations and to develop a common approach to address them.

#### **Sector 4: Better Work Programme (cont'd)**

##### ***The compliance assessment process is well designed, but several issues merit attention***

The assessment process revolves around determining whether a particular factory is in compliance with international labor standards and national labor laws. The compliance assessment process is generally valid and reliable. However, there are several challenges that need to be addressed, including the difficulty in establishing policies against workplace discrimination and for freedom of association; dealing with ambiguous national laws; and ensuring that legal instruments are applied in a consistent manner. The evaluation noted that though publishing assessment results for individual factories in Synthesis Reports may encourage greater compliance among participating factories, this might have adverse consequences where participation is voluntary both in terms of legal mandates and buyer requirements.

##### ***The Better Work Countries covered by the evaluation***

Cambodia - Haiti - Indonesia - Jordan - Lesotho - Nicaragua - Viet Nam

##### ***Better Work is entering a crucial stage of development***

Various program documents emphasize the idea that the program is market-driven, relying on market incentives to drive greater compliance with labor standards. The program is entering a crucial phase where it needs to demonstrate that it



can reach a substantial percentage of garment factories operating in the participating countries. The strong encouragement of buyers is crucial. The new buyer partnership model is intended to secure a greater commitment from major international brands to the program. The current service delivery model is not yet scalable in large markets such as Bangladesh, Indonesia and Vietnam.

##### ***Improved labor conditions require a multi-faceted approach***

BWG has worked closely with other technical departments in ILO in some its participating countries. A coordinated approach that would include all countries should involve collaboration with ACT/EMP, DIALOGUE, LAB/ADMIN, SECTOR, and ACTRAV. The breadth and depth of activity depends, in part, on donor funding. Similarly, while Better Work has worked closely with IFC, more might be done to draw on resources available in the organization, including relevant financial and advisory services (such as the Global Trade Supplier Finance Program - GTSF). More broadly, IFC can provide a path to greater involvement of the World Bank in supporting efforts to ensure greater compliance with international labor standards and national labor laws.

BWG is currently using the findings and conclusions from the evaluation report to design strategies to address the challenges of sustainability and scaling-up that were identified. The report will also feed into the high-level strategy evaluation which will be presented to the Governing Body at the November 2012 Session on Outcome 13: *Independent evaluation of the ILO's sector-specific strategy to Decent Work (Outcome 13)*. Click [here](#) for a copy of the evaluation summary. To request a copy of the full evaluation report, please send us an [email](#).

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## ***Evaluation Guidance***

### ***New Guidance Note: Impact Evaluation***

With a growing call for more and better information on what works and does not work, EVAL has issued [Guidance Note 13 Impact Evaluation](#) as part of a wider series of impact evaluation support materials to be available to ILO staff as of 2012. An impact evaluation is used in the ILO to conceptually and methodologically determine the form and level of attribution that can be given to specific factors, including policies, programmes or interventions, for observed and measured changes.

One of the toughest challenges related to establishing this causal inference is to distinguish between what was a direct result of a particular factor and what would have happened had this factor not existed. EVAL has compiled links to a set of useful resources that can guide staff interested in designing such studies. These are available through hyperlinks on the last page of the guidance note.

EVAL can also provide generic support and advice during the design stage on the impact evaluation methodologies, budgets, and later on the TORs, the selection of consultants and service providers, and quality review of the eventual reports. ILO colleagues planning an impact evaluation of the ILO's programmes and approaches are encouraged to contact EVAL early in the process. For quality control, EVAL requires that all impact evaluations to be discussed by the ILO Governing Body undergo a quality review by EVAL at the design stage. EVAL has developed a simple checklist to help with the initial planning of an impact evaluation, [Checklist 9: Impact evaluation planning](#).

EVAL also links to a network of technical experts within the ILO who are willing and able to provide advice to those planning an impact evaluation. For the names of persons knowledgeable in particular topics and methodologies, please [contact EVAL](#).

### **New Evaluation Tool: Establishing effective M&E at the design stage**

High budget projects generate high visibility for the ILO whether the project yields impressive results or not. In many cases, ILO projects provide inconclusive evidence of ILO effectiveness and impact. A recent Meta study by EVAL showed that adequate use of monitoring and evaluation in projects was the case in less than 40 per cent of projects. Less than 20 per cent made use of baselines and measurement data. To avoid such situations from occurring in the future, EVAL has introduced an appraisal process of the results framework and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan of project proposals with budgets above US\$5 million. The specific aim of the appraisal is to improve the quality of the plan for monitoring and evaluating the project. For those planning to draft project proposals, the [M&E appraisal template](#) can be a useful guide on what to include in the M&E plan.



## **External Evaluation Activities & Events**

### **ILO presents new guidelines on national evaluation capacity development**

#### **UNEG Annual General meeting, April 23-25, 2012**

Every year heads of evaluation units of the United Nations System get together to review the implementation of UNEG's Programme of Work to approve deliverables and to collectively reflect and guide UNEG on its future programme of work. This year the meeting took place in Rome and was hosted by FAO. ILO was represented by Guy Thijs, Director of EVAL, who also participated in his capacity as co-chair of the UNEG Task Force on National Evaluation Capacity Development. Topics of discussion included recently concluded system-wide evaluations, harmonization efforts in the field of evaluation, and developments in evaluation approaches and methods. Task forces in which ILO has been active include Evaluation of Normative Work, Gender Equality, Impact and Joint evaluation. As co-chair of the National Evaluation Capacity Task Force, ILO presented and received endorsement for a draft publication on "*Practical Tips on how to strengthen National Evaluation Systems*", for which it had taken the lead in collaboration with UNICEF, UNDP, UN-WOMEN, UNAIDS and UNV. EVAL is in discussions with Turin to develop a user-friendly version of the document for wider distribution.





## NONIE MEETING 2012

### Mixed methods in impact evaluation

NONIE Meeting, April 19-20, 2012

Carla Henry, Senior Evaluation Officer in EVAL, participated in the The Network of Networks for Impact Evaluation (NONIE) annual workshop, which featured two key note speakers on the use of mixed methods in impact evaluation (IE). Eliot Stern (Lancaster University) spoke on the growing effort of IE practitioners to contextualize and anchor their evaluation work in theory-based approaches. In addition, although

international development IE has predominantly relied on quantitative methods, in practice very few methods are actually being applied. Because 'evaluators do what they know best', he urged organizations to improve the methodological literacy of IE practitioners.

Patricia Rogers (Royal Melbourne University) also spoke on mixed methods to capture the descriptive as well as causal relations at play. She emphasized the need to understand the '*factual*' case for an impact, relying on details and context of an intervention. This contrasts with the *counter factual*, which in some cases is relevant, but in others is not. These and other presentations given during the workshop can be streamed from the NONIE web site link <http://www.nonie2012.org/>.

### Evaluation Webinars: Partnership and technology fosters M&E knowledge sharing

My M&E has been sponsoring a series of interesting evaluation webinars on a range of topics that are made available through an international collaboration of partners. UNICEF and IOCE manage it, but it is also supported by several other partners: ILO, DevInfo, IDEAS, UN Women, UNEG, UNDP, IDRC, Rockefeller Foundation, Better Evaluation, ReLAC, Preval, Agencia brasileira de Avaliacao, SLEVA and IPEN.

Webinars are broadcast using an interactive Web 2.0 platform to share knowledge on country-led M&E systems worldwide. In addition to being a learning source, it strengthens our global community, while identifying good practices and lessons learned about monitoring and evaluation in general – and country-led M&E in particular.

Webinars are free and open to interested people and participation can be arranged from virtually anywhere in the world. In addition to watching live presentations, there are question and comment options. Examples of some webinar series are: **Equity-focused Evaluations; Country-led M&E Systems; and Emerging practices in development evaluation.** These events enable the sharing of good practices and lessons learned on designing and implementing national and local M&E systems. They are hosted by leaders in the evaluation professional community. Please contact [MyMande](#).



### New CINTERFOR Publication: Guía para la evaluación de impacto de la formación

The Centro Interamericano para el Desarrollo del Conocimiento en la Formación Profesional (CINTERFOR) has published a new guide on impact evaluation related to skills development. This new interactive guide published in 2011 is available on their [website](#) in both English and Spanish.



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