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Labour
Organization

i-eval *Flash news*

EVAL highlights

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

Raising the bar on the quality of evaluation reports

With the reform agenda in full swing, there has been a growing interest for evidence-based qualitative and quantitative information on 'what works and why'. EVAL reviewed what needs to be done to raise the quality of evaluation reports to address these growing expectations. During the 2012-13 biennium, two independent quality reviews were commissioned. One focused on the annual high-level evaluations undertaken at the request of the Governing Body, while the other looked at the quality of close to 100 independent project evaluations.

The external review of the high-level evaluations found that the quality of the reports complied largely with professional OECD and UNEG evaluation standards and that the use of findings was reasonable. While recognizing the limitations of the relatively small budget allocated for high-level evaluations, the reviewers recommended that analysis in future reports could be more firmly focused on priority questions and evaluative considerations, such as why, and under what circumstances, given approaches work or not, and what could be done to improve them. The review also suggested that ILO stakeholders and external constituents could be more engaged throughout the evaluation process.

The appraisal of the independent project evaluations concluded that the proportion of crucial components addressed in the sampled evaluation reports had improved since the introduction of the new evaluation strategy in 2011. Across evaluation report sections, acceptable quality was observed for the majority of the sample. However, recommendation sections in many reports were deemed of insufficient quality, largely due to infrequent or unspecific consideration of timeframes, priority areas, resource implications, and the level of specificity in terms of needed actions.

EVAL's policy guidelines were subsequently upgraded, particularly through its guidance notes, protocols and training, and a network meeting convening the five regional evaluation focal points will take place in November to discuss any further needed changes and introduce adjustments to improve the quality and utilization of evaluation reports. To request a copy of these independent reviews, contact EVAL@ilo.org.

This Flash News contains evaluation news from: [the Americas](#) and [Social Protection](#)

[New Books](#) – [New EVAL Studies](#) – [UNEG Community of Practice](#)

Take a look at [Evaluation Blogs](#)

Innovation & Research

Completed Studies –

Study on the Evaluability of DWCP Country Programme

Outcomes: This evaluability assessment (EA) of Country Programme Outcomes (CPOs) examined how clearly these outcomes and underlying logical frameworks are expressed, and whether reliable metrics (indicators, baselines, milestones and targets) and adequate reporting are in place to track results. Taking into account the experiences of other international organizations, and the progress made so far by the ILO in the application of results-based management, the study recommends a set of steps to enhance evaluability. A summary of the findings has been published in EVAL's [Annual Evaluation Report \(AER\) 2012-2013](#). To request a copy of the full study, contact EVAL@ilo.org.

Independent quality appraisal of ILO's 2009-2011 project

evaluation reports: EVAL returned to the Western Michigan University (WMU) Evaluation Center in 2013 to carry out a quality appraisal of independent project evaluations. A sample of 60 per cent (n = 93) of the 154 evaluation reports provided by the ILO were selected. WMU applied the same methodology used for the same study conducted in 2008. Results showed that overall quality of ILO's evaluation reports improved, however, problems with evaluation methodologies and the quality of recommendations persist. EVAL is currently assessing how guidance to evaluators can be improved, as well as raising awareness and technical expertise in its ongoing Evaluation Manager Certification training.

Decent work results and effectiveness of ILO operations: A meta-analysis of technical cooperation evaluations 2011-2012

– In this study, ILO's technical cooperation performance is assessed through an ex-post scoring along a six-point scale. The ILO's overall performance in terms of relevance and effectiveness was mostly favourable. Management and implementation performance were rated in the adequate to good range. Use of monitoring and evaluation, reporting against results, and the adequacy of resources for the planned results, however, were flagged as weak. A summary of the findings has been published in EVAL's [Annual Evaluation Report \(AER\) 2012-2013](#). To request a copy of the full study, contact EVAL@ilo.org.

Update for upcoming studies –

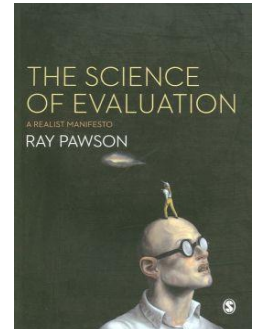
Only one high-level DWCP independent evaluation is conducted by EVAL each year and discussed at the governance level. For this reason less formal, internal studies, alternatively referred to as **DWCP internal reviews**, have become more important. EVAL commissioned a **meta-analysis of the 15 most recently completed country programme reviews** with the objective to extract common lessons learned and good

practices, in terms of methodologies and results achieved.
Forthcoming Spring 2014

Books on Evaluation –

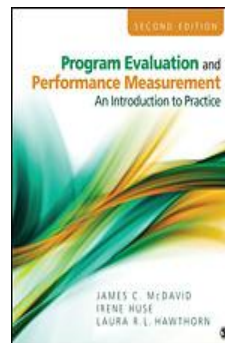
The Science of Evaluation: A Realist Manifesto This book is

an effort to render evaluation research more pertinent than impertinent. To accomplish this goal, Ray Pawson, a Professor of Social Research Methodology at the University of Leeds, argues for a radical transformation of evaluation research. Often the challenge facing evaluation reflects a tension between those who undertake evaluations and those who are both the objects and subjects of them. In part, this tension derives from efforts to cast evaluation as a rigorous scientific endeavour yet which often results in less than useful data. By introducing a realist perspective to evaluation research, Pawson hopes to rectify this situation. (Read more on this [London School of Economics Review](#))



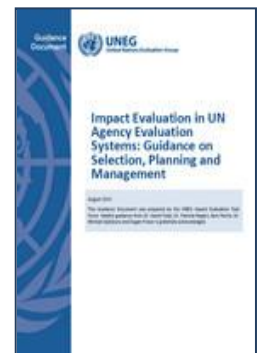
Program Evaluation and Performance Measurement, 2nd Ed.

This updated edition offers an accessible, practical introduction to program evaluation and performance measurement for public and non-profit organizations. The authors, James C. McDavid, Irene Huse, and Laura R. L. Hawthorn, guide readers through conducting quantitative and qualitative program evaluations, needs assessments, cost-benefit and cost-effectiveness analyses, as well as constructing, implementing and using performance measurement systems.



Impact Evaluation in UN Agency Evaluation Systems: United Nations Evaluation Group

This guidance addresses the rising interest in impact evaluation (IE). A fundamental element of IE is establishing cause and effect chains to show if an intervention has worked and, if so, how. Various impact evaluation designs and approaches are reviewed, providing insights on how, and to what extent, interventions have caused anticipated or unanticipated effects. A Theory of Change approach has become accepted as a basic foundation for most types of impact evaluation. The document explores quality control issues, and there is a short section on normative work.



Evaluation News from the *Regions*

Americas: *Lessons from DWCP Reviews: How to ensure proper evaluations of DWCP? Questions and experiences from Latin America*

"We need to revise indicator 1.2", said the Minister of Labour."

"In my view, the indicator is sound", replied the Secretary General of the trade union confederation. And he added: "The problem is that means of verification are poorly defined."

"You are correct!" agreed the president of the employer's national organization, who was also a member of the Governing Body. "In addition, we will also need to determine a baseline to measure the effects at the end."

The atmosphere of the meeting room was electric. Everyone could feel a tripartite consensus approaching.



"And we should add a quasi-experimental design for the impact evaluation!" shouted the three in unison. At that point, the ILO Office Director decided that it was time to conclude the debate: "Thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for your guidance. We will adapt the Memorandum of Understanding for the Decent Work Country Programme accordingly."

This is, of course, an imaginary conversation. To our knowledge, it never took place. The political discussions leading to the design of DWCPs are of a very different nature. Conceivably, the necessary information for conducting sound evaluations of such programmes is seen by the leaders of our constituents as superfluous, or as a "technical" cherry on the cake. The cake – the tripartite agreement on certain priorities of work in the country to be supported by the Office - is what really matters to ILO constituents.

In order to meet the needs of constituents, the formulation of a fully-fledged DWCP should, therefore, be done in phases. In the first phase, high-level tripartite discussions are led by the Office, usually concluding with a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in which agreed priorities and commitments are captured. The second phase is the responsibility of a technical team formed by the Country Office. In the second phase, the technical team should transform the initially agreed upon priorities into measurable outcomes, based on testable evidence and with verifiable indicators. During this phase, the strategy to carry out activities and produce specific outputs should also be developed. Finally, there should be a third phase to develop an implementation plan. This includes setting a timeline, allocating resources for the activities, designing a monitoring plan with baseline information, and setting achievable targets for the indicators, as well as details on data gathering. The overall approach should, therefore, be based on the development of logic chains, log-frames and theories of change. Only DWCPs that go through these consecutive (and sometimes iterative) phases will be useful for results-based management and later, deemed appropriate for independent evaluation. This is again the responsibility of the Office's technical team, whose members should have appropriate knowledge on result-based management. Training on RBM for our staff is really useful.

Reality shows that this process is not always followed, or does not make it to the third stage. The fact that most of the evaluations of DWCP highlight design problems is, therefore, not surprising. Experience in Latin America and the Caribbean shows that, if we want to have DWCPs worth evaluating, we still need to make significant efforts at least in three areas:

No. 1 - Think SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound): ILO staff should think SMART from the beginning. Priorities and outcomes should be expressed in terms that facilitate performance measurement. This is not about defining indicators and monitoring systems from the beginning, but to think SMART when discussing the expected results,

based on a sound situational analysis, and involving the constituents. This is the basis for a strong monitoring and evaluation framework, essential for ensuring evaluability. Experience in the Caribbean has shown that it is useful to explain the ILO's strategic framework, with its 19 outcomes, 50 indicators and hundreds of measurement criteria, to governments, employers and workers, before deciding on the phrasing of the DWCP outcomes, which will later become Country Programme Outcomes in the Strategic Management Module of IRIS. Thinking SMART also includes reflecting on and discussing recommendations and conclusions from previous DWCP evaluations, since this improves the design and facilitates consensus building.

No. 2 – Constituent Participation and Involvement:

Constituents should play a more intense and informed role in the whole process. By definition, DWCPs require buy-in from the constituents. This is expressed at the highest level during the negotiation of priorities but should continue while the DWCP is further developed, during implementation (for monitoring purposes) and even for resource mobilization (a strategy that should be embedded in every DWCP). Our experience in Argentina shows that countries where there is an active tripartite monitoring committee (technically led by the Office) have better designed and implemented DWCPs. Ownership by constituents is also obviously enhanced. The evaluation of such programmes is not only easier but much more useful. RBM and evaluation training for designated members of our constituents can help strengthen tripartite monitoring committees.

No. 3 – Quality Control: Quality control should be enhanced. The third version of the DWCP Guidebook has established a new Quality Assurance Mechanism (QAM) giving more responsibility to Regional Programming Services (RPS). It is, however, difficult to decide in which moment the QAM should start. If we wait until all phases are completed, it might be too late to introduce changes in the agreed, often signed, DWCP document. If we start too early, there will be gaps in information. The QAM should therefore be seen as a continuous effort, effectively led by the Regional Programme Service (RPS), calling on different departments at different moments in the process. EVAL and the Regional Evaluation Officers should provide specific assistance at the moment of preparation of the implementation and monitoring plans.

Thinking SMART, involving constituents during the whole process and improving internal quality control are not easy processes. This is, however, necessary if we want to learn from our experience and design DWCPs that are relevant and useful for the countries we wish to serve.

Project Evaluations from Americas

2012 - 2013

(summaries are available through the hyperlink, full reports from EVAL@ilo.org)

BOL/10/01/RBS: Apoyo al desarrollo de políticas públicas para la promoción de las cooperativas en Bolivia - Evaluación RBSA
BRA/08/50/USA: Support to national efforts towards a child labour-free state, Bahia-Brazil - Final Evaluation
BRA/10/01/USA: Combate ao tráfico de pessoas (Combat trafficking in persons) - Evaluación final
HAI/08/01/USA: Better Work: Enhancing workers' access to labour rights and jobs in Haiti - Midterm Evaluation
HAI/11/50/UND: Gestion des débris en appui au retour au foyer des populations affectées par le tremblement de terre dans les quartiers de Port-au-Prince, Débris 1 et 2 - Évaluation final
HON/08/50/UND: Creatividad e identidad cultural para el desarrollo local Honduras - Evaluación conjunta final
HON/08/51/UND: Gobernanza Económica Agua y Saneamiento en Honduras - Evaluación Final conjunta
RBSA Brasil y Perú: Apoyo al combate al trabajo forzoso en Brasil y Perú (RBSA) - Evaluación final
RBSA Americas: Asignaciones de Fondos RBSA 2010-2011 en Apoyo a Organizaciones de Trabajadores y Organizaciones de Empleadores - Evaluación final
MEX/09/50/USA: Alto el trabajo infantil en la agricultura – Evaluación intermedia
RLA/09/51/SPA: Programa regional para la aplicación de programas de trabajo decente en los países del MERCOSUR - Evaluación final
RLA/09/52/USA: Lucha contra las peores formas de trabajo infantil mediante la cooperación horizontal en América del Sur - Evaluación intermedia

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Latin American Partner Organizations in Evaluation

- [Red Brasileira de Monitoramento e Avaliação](#)
- [Regional Center for Learning on Evaluation and Results \(CLEAR\)- Latin America and the Caribbean Center](#)
- [Red de Evaluación de America Latina y el Caribe](#)
- [Evaluatca](#)

News from the Departments

Social Protection - Step/Portugal II

The ILO launched the [Global Campaign on Social Security and Coverage for All](#) in 2003. This campaign involves the considerable challenge of addressing the large percentage of the world's population which currently has either no or minimal access to adequate social protection. In the immense majority of sub-Saharan African countries, for example, social security schemes only cover between 5 and 10 per cent of the population.

STEP/Portugal is a part of this global campaign and is a product of cooperation between the Portuguese Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity, the ILO and Portuguese-speaking African countries. The main objective is to support the extension of social protection in the framework of promoting decent work, especially to the poor and vulnerable in: **Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, and São Tomé e Príncipe.**

The direct beneficiaries of STEP/Portugal are principally public institutions with responsibility for contributory and non-contributory social protection in these countries. STEP/Portugal also participates in the International Social Protection Floor Initiative. STEP's interventions are structured around four main areas:

- Providing technical assistance for the formulation of public social security policies, their implementation and the evaluation of their results.
- Increasing the role of social protection in national development and poverty reduction strategies.
- Contributing to improved integration and coordination of actions in the field of social protection.
- Reinforcing national competence and capacities, including through South-South cooperation.

Final Evaluation Conclusions

Phase II of the STEP/Portugal project covered 2009-2012 and was evaluated in December 2012 with the aim to examine project achievements, efficiency, effectiveness and outcomes, with primary focus on Mozambique and Cape Verde. The overall objective of Phase II was to increase the extent and effectiveness of social protection as an instrument to reduce poverty and social exclusion, promote human development and access to decent work. Project activities were designed to build capacity in public institutions involved in the development of social protection and concentrated on the national structures that manage non-contributory systems.

The evaluation showed that Phase II was able to substantially strengthen national social security strategies, regulations and institutions in the target

countries. In Mozambique, project interventions were instrumental in the development of The National Strategy for Basic Social Security (2010) as well as the development of the Regulation for Basic Social Security (2009). Capacity building also proved successful in unifying the voices and social protection interventions of multi-sectoral stakeholders, such as the Ministry of Women and Social Action in Mozambique, the National Institute of Social Action, UNICEF, the British development agency DFID and the Embassy of the Netherlands and the PRSPs (Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers).

In Cape Verde, a significant achievement was the establishment of a unified system of non-contributory pensions, resulting from the creation and capacity building of the National Social Pensions Centre (CNPS). This effort in Cape Verde also involved the successful capacity building of national institutions to identify strategies to increase programme coverage and, for the first time, produce a comprehensive analysis of the financial processes, scope and action lines of the Cape Verde social protection system.

There was a substantial knowledge component of the project which contributed a range of knowledge products, such as studies, educational instruments, training modules and materials, information brochures in French and English, providing information in Portuguese at the Information Centre on Social Protection (CIPS), and the strengthening of and contributions to the project's web pages in the Social Security Extension platform (GESS).

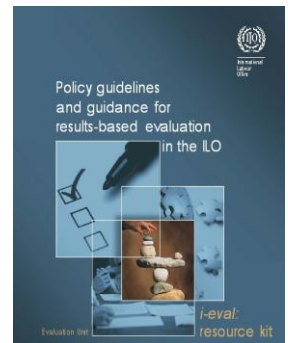
Recommendations and Lessons Learned

The evaluation recommended a more robust monitoring and evaluation plan that would harmonize and improve units of analysis, data collection instruments and methods of analysis. The evaluation cited the need for adequate information technology to support this work, emphasizing that maintenance of monitoring systems is essential to prevent these systems from decaying and collapsing.

It was also suggested that considerable investments in national capacity building efforts were necessary to ensure an expansion of the social protection floor and sustain achievements from Phase II. This included additional and continuous training of staff in the public sector. Retaining the project's trained staff in the public sector is still a difficult task and a problem for national authorities.

Good practices were found in the project's flexibility to adapt the content of its interventions to the realities and priorities in each country. Additionally, the evaluation praised the establishment of a permanent link with ILO's International Training Center to provide STEP-specific training on social protection for PALOPS. Further phases of STEP/Portugal will be incorporating the lessons learned and substantial number of good practices cited in the evaluation. To request a copy of the evaluation, send an email to EVAL@ilo.org.

Evaluation Guidance



The [Policy Guidelines and Guidance for Results-based Evaluation](#) were updated to keep pace with reform changes and improvements in individual guidance notes and checklists. The link to the 2nd edition is up on the [EVAL website](#) and the printed versions should be available by October. A quick [access list of all support documentation](#) is available, providing links to the full complement of the 51 supplementary guidance documents, checklists, protocols, templates and evaluation tools.

Evaluation Learning Activities & Events

ILO Evaluation Learning Activities

[Workshop on training and certifying evaluation managers](#): A summary is available of the first Evaluation Manager's Certification Workshop, held as a pilot to gauge the effectiveness of the training materials. The summary provides comments made by participants and their overall evaluation of the workshop. The training was very highly rated by participants and EVAL is preparing for a second round of training for 2014. For more information on future training workshops for evaluation managers at the International Training Centre in Turin, please contact EVAL@ilo.org.

Impact evaluation of technical cooperation projects and programmes

- **ITC Training Center, Turin – Nov 11-15, 2013. Code: A906142, in English**

Target group: Technical specialists in charge of monitoring and evaluation of development projects and programmes, as well as officials from ministries of planning, the UN and NGOs.

Description: The aim of "impact evaluation" is to assess the relevance and effectiveness of a development project or programme in accomplishing the "desired change" in the well-being of the affected target population, as well as to measure the attained improvements in pre-defined indicators in the particular sector, where applicable, that are attributable to the development intervention. It is usually undertaken at a defined period of time subsequent to project/programme completion using a variety of tools and techniques including counterfactuals using the "control group" method that measures/compares the "results achieved" with what would have happened (to the beneficiaries) had the project/programme intervention not taken place. Participants will be guided to perform an impact evaluation for a selected project based on the learning contents pursued in the course.



Monitoring and evaluation of development projects and programmes

- **ITC Training Center, Turin (one week) – Oct 14-18, 2013. Code: A406105 (NEW: in Russian)**

Target Group: Monitoring and evaluation specialists; project coordinators; programme managers; independent evaluators; donor staff appraising and evaluating projects and programmes; non-governmental organizations officials involved in monitoring and evaluating. **Description:** Aims to impart the technical and managerial competencies needed for monitoring performance and for evaluating the efficiency, effectiveness, relevance and sustainability of development programmes and projects. Check the [ITC website](#) to review future dates for other languages.

Evaluation e-learning Module:





Evaluation e-learning Module: EVAL has completed its new e-learning module based on the [ILO Policy Guidelines for Results-based Evaluation, Second Edition](#). It was developed by EVAL in conjunction with Turin to provide an interactive e-learning experience for ILO Officials wishing to become more familiar with the conduct and use of evaluation in the ILO. The module forms part of the HR/Talent Learning Management System (LMS). The LMS allows an ILO official to upload the training and to track completion, time spent learning and some other statistical information. ILO staff can get access by signing in at the [LMS website](#).

External Knowledge Sharing, Courses and Webinars –

- **Impact Evaluation Guidance Note and Webinar Series** - [InterAction: A United Voice for Global Change](#)
With financial support from the Rockefeller Foundation, InterAction developed a four-part series of guidance notes and webinars on impact evaluation. The purpose of the series is to build the capacity of NGOs (and others) to demonstrate effectiveness by increasing their understanding of and ability to conduct high quality impact evaluation.
- **American Evaluation Society** - [27th Annual Conference of the American Evaluation Association](#) - The State of Evaluation Practice in the Early 21st Century - Washington D.C., October 16-20, 2013
- **Claremont Evaluation Center Webinar Series** – [Claremont Graduate University](#) This webinar series is hosted by the School for Behavioural and Organizational Sciences. The Claremont Evaluation Center is pleased to offer a series of webinars on the discipline and profession of evaluation. This series is free and available by internet connection.
- **Participatory Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Course** – [Wageningen University, Centre for Development Innovation](#) - March 10-18 2014 - This three-week course on **Manage for Impact (M4I)** aims to provide managers of development cooperation the skills to strengthen competence and to be able to play a more effective role in helping their organisations manage for impact.

UN and development community –

- ❖ **United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG): [UNEG Community of Practice on Evaluation](#)**: The UNEG Knowledge Management Working Group has launched the new UNEG Community of Practice. It is meant as a space for UNEG members to discuss ideas, share information and learn from each other. Strongly endorsed by UNEG Heads at their Annual General Meeting of April 2013 in New York, the COP is generously supported by funding from the MDG-F. Speakers from both inside and outside the UN system will be invited to share their experiences on a range of topics related to evaluation. UNEG members must have a login to the UNEG site; for problems or questions on access to the COP, contact [Laura Olsen](#).

- ❖ **OECD DAC – [Evaluating Development Activities: 12 Lessons from the OECD DAC](#)** – As development co-operation faces ever increasing pressures to demonstrate results, donors and partner governments need credible, timely evidence to inform their programmes and improve performance. Evaluation has a critical role to play in providing such evidence. New methodologies and ways of working are being developed to better identify what works, why and under what circumstances.

- ❖ **The UNDP and the Brazilian Ministry of Social Development and Fight Against Hunger** are hosting in São Paulo, Brazil, the [Third International Conference on National Evaluation Capacities 2013](#) - 29 September to 2 October, 2013. Read about the [National Evaluation Capacity Community](#)
- ❖ **Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action - ALNAP – [Strengthening Humanitarian Evaluation Capacities](#)**: ALNAP is launching a project to “create a ‘space’ in which the membership can come together” to share knowledge and expertise on strengthening humanitarian evaluation. [Read more](#).

Blogs on evaluation -

[World Bank Blog on Impact Evaluation](#)
[John Gargani's EVAL Blog](#)
[Genuine Evaluation](#)
[Evaluation Capacity Development Group Blog](#)

[American Evaluation Association Blog](#)
[Foundation Strategy Group \(FSG\) Blog](#)
[Better Evaluation Blog](#)

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