i-eval
Flash news

EVAL is pleased to share the **ninth** 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.

EVAL highlights

EVAL introducing more rigorous guidance to identify and formulate Lessons Learned and Good Practices

The recent discussions during the dialogues on the Areas of Critical Importance (ACIs) organized by the Director General vividly illustrated the growing appetite in the Office for information on what works and why. This coincides well with work EVAL started earlier this year to overhaul its guidance on the identification of and data collection for lessons learned and emerging good practices.

As most colleagues in the ILO know, all independent project evaluations are required to include sections on lessons learned and emerging good practices. EVAL's own assessment, as well as some recent external studies, have confirmed that these are often too process oriented, not actionable, and not specific enough. To some degree these quality issues can be attributed to initial poor design of projects and inadequate monitoring and documentation practices during implementation, all of which limit the potential contribution evaluations can bring at the end of the process. Another important reason for low quality is that lessons learned and emerging good practices are too casually formulated. EVAL's more rigorous guidance emphasizes to evaluators the importance of applying specific criteria for the identification and formulation of these important findings. After peer review and testing during 2013, EVAL is now ready to roll out its new guidance and templates, set out in Guidance Note 3.

As of 2014 all independent project evaluations will be required to include only lessons learned and emerging good practices which adhere to the analytical process described in Guidance Note 3.

The completed templates will be stored on EVAL's database (i-track) and made available in data modules for searching, compilation and consideration when drafting new project proposals.

Experience has shown that good practices are hard to come by and need to be thoroughly validated in a supplementary process before an intervention or practice deserves this label. Selected emerging good practices identified by independent evaluators will be subjected to a technical peer review and rating process. EVAL will facilitate, through its Knowledge Sharing Platform, discussion with internal experts, and **link up with the recently established ACI Communities of Practice (ACI CoPs).** These discussions and the results of validation will be presented in a document series to share the (evidence-based) knowledge gained on specific technical interventions and practices from operational work performed at the country level.

Evaluation News from the Regions *and* Departments

Biennial Evaluation Network Workshop - *11-13 November 2013*

EVAL conducted its third Evaluation Network meeting to bring together the ILO Regional Evaluation Officers (REOs), EVAL staff, and representatives from CABINET, PROGRAM and PARDEV. Also present were representatives from ITC and the Headquarters evaluation network with participants from GOVERNANCE, ENTERPRISE, RESEARCH, SOCPRO, and SECTOR. The group welcomed a new staff member, Nathalie Bavitch, who will take the post of Regional Evaluation Officer for the Arab States.

The workshop provided a forum for exchanging information on the application of the ILO evaluation strategy with special emphasis on addressing higher demand for evaluation, improving evaluation quality, and building an evaluation culture. Activities and discussion focused on ways to strengthen communications and identify areas of action for the achievement of the three evaluation outcomes as identified in the 2011-2015 strategy.

> The three outcomes of the result-based evaluation strategy as approved by the Governing Body, March 2011 are:
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> - **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**

Within this context, lively discussions and a range of dynamic activities, including a SWOT analysis and a "world café", resulted in brainstorming on ways to improve quality, communication and delivery. **Suggestions for action** called for:

➢ Official job descriptions for regional and departmental evaluation officers; as well as evaluation duties reflected in the performance appraisals, including recently trained and certified evaluation managers.

➢ Analysis of the demand for evaluation, including the consideration of 1) reducing the number of project evaluations, and 2) findings ways to deal with the growing interest in Country Programme Reviews. Special consideration needs to be given to the dramatic increase in evaluation work in the Africa and Asia regions.

➢ Improvement of evaluation quality by addressing the recommendations of this year's external quality appraisal of project evaluations.

➢ Dialogue with the Office on follow-up to the results of the 2013 meta-analysis on the effectiveness and operational performance of technical cooperation.

➢ Creation of an effective communication strategy that would 1) deepen the evaluation culture in ILO through information events, training, and increasing the utilization of evaluation products; 2) improve and expand dissemination of evaluation findings; 3) answer constituents needs for more synthesized information on lessons learned; and 4) incorporate more focus on development effectiveness in evaluation work.

EVAL is looking forward to working more closely with **Departmental evaluation focal points** and **Regional Evaluation Officers** which have been recently appointed or confirmed in their positions:

EVAL work distribution for evaluation backstopping			
Thijs	Guy		CABINET , PROGRAM , PARDEV, Evaluation Advisory Committee
Guzman	Francisco	Asia, Americas	GOVERNANCE , WORK QUALITY SOCPRO Safework
Henry	Carla	Europe, Arab States	NORMES , EMPLOYMENT SOCPRO – Social Security
Russon	Craig	Africa	ENTEPRISES , SECTOR , RESEARCH ACTRAV, ACT/EMP
Neubecker	Janet		Knowledge Management – iTrack database, Management of recommendations follow-up
Regional Evaluation Officer (Full-time on evaluation)			
Burga	Cybele	RO-Lima	Americas region
Farice	Gugsa	RO-Addis	Africa region
Pringsulaka	Pamornrat	RO-Bangkok	Asia region
Sinelina	Irina	RO-Moscow	Europe & Central Asia region
Bavitch	Nathalie	RO-Beirut	Arab States region
Departmental Evaluation Officers (Focal Point role only)			
Cairola	Enrico		ACTRAV
Chiarabini	Alessandro	interim	NORMES
Corley-Coulibaly	Marva	w/ Thuy Nguyen	RESEARCH
Drouin	Anne		SOCPRO
Liu	Xu		ENTERPRISES
Mello da Cunha	Maria Beatriz		SECTOR
Schmidt	Dorothea		EMPLOYMENT
Schoellmann	Ilka		ACT/EMP
Tabbara	Rasha		WORKQUALITY
Walter	Dagmar		STATISTICS
Wichmand	Peter		GOVERNANCE

Evaluation guidance

The second edition of the *Policy Guidelines and Guidance for Results-based Evaluation* is up on the EVAL website and printed versions are also available from the EVAL Secretariat. A convenient access list to all supplementary guidance documents is also available, providing quick links to the complementary guidance documents, checklists, protocols, templates, and tools.

Evaluation Learning Activities & Events

ILO Evaluation Learning Activities

Training course to certify evaluation managers: EVAL and TURIN, with support from HRD, conducted for the first time (December 2013) a version of this new training programme in the regions. The Africa region requested EVAL's support, as part of their continuing efforts to provide more trained officials to meet the rising demand for evaluation management. Once an initial training is completed, the official will manage their first evaluation with the support of EVAL personnel. Once a pilot evaluation experience (practicum) is successfully managed, the official will then be considered for certification as a recognized ILO evaluation manager. EVAL is negotiating with HRD to have these duties built into current job descriptions and performance evaluation criteria. Click here for information on the 2014 training workshops in the ITC Turin catalogue.

External Knowledge Sharing, Courses and Webinars –

➢ *Monitoring and Evaluation Systems: Design and Implementation – SETYM International*, **Kuala Lumpur – April 21 – May 9, 2014:** Programs and projects are expected to reach specific goals. They involve multiple components, each with multiple activities, sometimes implemented in various parts of the country. Those activities require monitoring and evaluation in a results-based management (RBM) context. Donors, beneficiaries and national agencies should be able to measure the progress of ongoing activities and assess outcomes. The course is designed for officers and agents involved in monitoring and evaluation activities in various agencies, departments, programmes or projects, this seminar presents a comprehensive tool-kit and best practices for implementing a performance-based framework.

➢ *International Program for Development Evaluation Training* - *Mini Program in Kosovo*, **12-18 May, 2014, Pristina, Republic of Kosovo:** Quadrant Management for Development (M4D) and the Development Worldwide (DWW) are offering a Mini – International Program for Development Evaluation Training – Mini – IPDET 2014, continuing the tradition of the other Mini-IPDETs organized around the world. The core curriculum of the training follows a successful scheme of the IPDET Summer School (www.ipdet.org), organized annually at Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada. Mini-IPDET Kosovo 2014 will be provided in English by top lecturer in the field of Development Evaluation, Ms Linda G. Morra Imas. The training is recommended for evaluators, managers and decision makers of development projects and programs. Certification will be provided by IPDET and IDEAS – International Development Evaluation Association (www.ideas-int.org).

➢ *African Evaluation Association:* *7th Annual Conference on Evaluation for Development: From analysis to impact:* **Yaoundé, Cameroun, March 3-7, 2014** The Board of the African Evaluation Association will be hosted by the Cameroon Development Evaluation Association (CaDEA) in 2014. The conference theme is: Evaluation for Development: From Analysis to Impact.

➢ ***Integrating Communication in Evaluation – To be held in Switzerland March 13-14, 2014***: An often-overlooked step in evaluation is ensuring that findings are communicated, understood and acted upon. Equally important, however, is what, how and when we communicate with different stakeholders throughout the evaluation process. Communicating effectively implies using different means, messages and methods to reach different groups with very different needs and expectations. Participants are encouraged to bring examples of evaluations they have commissioned or implemented to be used as case studies during the workshop. The workshop will be co-facilitated by Glenn O'Neil of Owl RE, Geneva and Marlène Läubli Loud of Lauco Evaluation and Training [website*: www.amiando.com/SEVAL2014.html]*

➢ ***National University of Ireland –*** *Monitoring and Evaluation: Applying Human Rights Based Approaches* ***Maynooth Ireland, June 16 – 20, 2014:*** This programme aims to enhance the substantive knowledge and practical skills for applying Human Rights Based Approaches to monitoring and evaluation.

➢ ***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 Evaluation Group

United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG): UNEG's new strategy 2014-2019: The Strategy sets out an ambitious agenda for concerted action and priority areas for 2014-2019. This Strategy set the course for UNEG's future work, building on its past achievements. It is based on an independent assessment of UNEG, conducted between November 2012 and April 2013. It outlines how the group will continue to support its members and partners as they strengthen the independence, credibility and use of evaluation and how UNEG will inform UN reform processes and cooperate with the global evaluation community. Four strategic objectives are identified:

1) **Evaluation functions and products of UN entities meet the UNEG Norms and Standards for evaluation;**
2) **UN entities and partners use evaluation in support of accountability and programme learning;**
3) **Evaluation informs UN system-wide initiatives and emerging demands; and**
4) **UNEG benefits from and contributes to an enhanced global evaluation profession**.

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

Intelligent measurement

Better Evaluation Blog

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