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Improving ILO evaluation methods to better capture ILO's specific normative and social dialogue mandate

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Evaluation Office

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Abbreviations

CEACR	Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
DC	development cooperation
DWCP	Decent Work Country Programme
ILC	International Labour Conference
ILO	International Labour Office/Organization
IPEC	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
LIPW	labour intensive public works
OECD/DAC	Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Co- operation and Development
OSH	occupational safety and health
PSC	project steering committee
RBM	results-based management
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
ToC	theory of change
ToR	terms of reference
UNEG	United National Evaluation Group
WFCL	worst forms of child labour

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The tripartite and normative mandates of the International Labour Organization (ILO) are unique contextual factors for the Organization's programme and project interventions.¹ These interventions are the subject of rigorous evaluation.² In 2016, an Independent Evaluation of the ILO's Evaluation Function suggested, inter alia, that better account should be taken of the ILO's normative and tripartite mandate in the evaluation of its development cooperation (DC) work.³ It recommended that a model evaluation framework be developed for the evaluation of decent work, which would include normative interventions and would take into account the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN SWAP) through social dialogue. As a result, both ILO's evaluation policy (2017) and strategy (2018) called for the updating of evaluation approaches, methods and frameworks in order "to make them more participatory and people-centered, inclusive of disadvantaged workers, human rights and gender equality and adapted to the ILO's specific mandate and context (for example tripartism, social dialogue, normative work)".

This study was scoped and initiated by the Evaluation Office of the International Labour Office. The author was asked to look at how the ILO's evaluations could be improved by making them more responsive to the Organization's normative mandate and its objectives and mechanisms of social dialogue.

1.2 The reasons for better accounting of normative and social dialogue mandates

ILO constituents resolved in 2018 that the unique role of the ILO as defined by its Constitution, its tripartite structure and its normative mandate, including its supervisory system, is

¹ Reference to the term social dialogue and normative context in this paper is used to indicate the environment in which ILO programming and development cooperation interventions are conducted with respect to social dialogue and norms. The term is used broadly. It includes variables that are both independent and dependent of interventions (i.e. in the former case, existing standards, national ratification of standards, existence and relations between social partners, etc. and, in the latter case, outcomes identified in theory of change/logical framework related to social dialogue and norms, the use of social dialogue within the project, etc.). The foundations of this broad context are the normative and social dialogue mandates of the Organization, as described in this paper.

² As noted in text accompanying footnotes 6 and 7, the evaluation function in the ILO is broad. Evaluations are undertaken of programming work (i.e. results-based management and oversight) and of development cooperation activities (i.e. project interventions at national, regional and international levels). Since social dialogue and normative contexts affect all of this work, there are implications for their evaluation. To maintain focus while at the same time acknowledging their widespread implications, particular care has been taken here to use terms referring to evaluands (The subject of an evaluation, typically a programme or system rather than a person) such as programming, development cooperation, project, and intervention, all of which have their ordinary meanings. The intention is to use the term that is most relevant to the subject being discussed, acknowledging here that the point under discussion may have implications for other evaluands. It is foreseen that guidance will be developed to elaborate these points in respect of different evaluands.

³ Independent Evaluation of ILO's Evaluation Function 2011–2016. ILO, Evaluation Office, 2016, www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationreports/WCMS_545949/lang--en/index.htm [accessed 8 December 2018].

fundamental in fulfilling its DC role and should, as a matter of policy, be fully considered in funding and programming.⁴

The ILO has been formally adopting international labour standards (ILS) at the International Labour Conference (ILC) since 1919. It has encouraged Member States to ratify and implement them, and worked diligently to promote social justice and decent work for all.

Box 1

Decent Work

The Decent Work concept was formulated by the ILO's constituents – governments and employers' and workers' organizations – as a means to identify the Organization's priorities and reform and modernize its approach for the 21st century.

The concept of Decent Work has been defined by the ILO and endorsed by the international community as opportunities for women and men to obtain productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity.

Decent Work involves opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income; security in the workplace and social protection for workers and their families; better prospects for personal development and social integration; freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in decisions that affect their lives; and equality of opportunity and treatment for all.

Source: ILO Guide to Communicating Decent Work, 2008.

In practice, the ILS guides ILO's programme and project interventions on Decent Work. As discussed further below, the connection between the well-developed system of ILS and DC interventions is not always well elaborated in programme and project design. As a result, this connection is not always considered during the evaluation of DC. It would be helpful if it were because standards and DC interventions are mutually reinforcing actions in achieving Decent Work results; evaluation should be able to report that ILO DC is helping to produce Decent Work in accordance with ILO standards, and that ILO standards are being used in DC activities, which are complying with and promoting them.

The ILO is unique in being tripartite. It is composed of representatives of governments, and employers' and workers' organizations. It is the only international organization mandated to promote social justice and Decent Work through dialogue between and among these social partners. Since they are constitutionally joined in the ILO and mandated to promote Decent Work, it goes almost without saying that ILO's programming and project interventions should operate in the same way. This idea underpins an exceptional element of theories of change for ILO DC. ILO DC programmes and projects use, on the one hand, social dialogue to improve their results and, on the other hand, the quality of social dialogue itself and the abilities of the social partners to engage in social dialogue. The organizational mandate to both use and promote social dialogue is in itself an operational norm for ILO DC.

4 Resolution concerning effective ILO development cooperation in support of the Sustainable Development Goals, International Labour Conference, 107th Session, 2018, www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_633138.pdf [accessed 8 December 2018].

As such, and as discussed below, it would be helpful if better account were taken of it in the evaluation of ILO DC.

1.3 Organization and focus of this paper

From this introductory section, this paper proceeds in the next section to discuss how the social dialogue and normative mandates are currently treated in the evaluation of ILO DC. This discussion is based on a review of 100 recent ILO evaluations.⁵ The third section sets out a conceptual approach for thinking about the ILO's social dialogue and normative mandates in DC and its evaluation. The penultimate section proposes ways of using the approach developed in the third section and makes recommendations for changes to evaluation methodologies. The paper's final section draws conclusions.

Performance evaluations are the primary focus here on account of the nature of the study. These are operationalized in the ILO in various forms including project, multi-project, global project, joint, and programme evaluations.⁶ Some ideas presented here, however, may have implications for higher level evaluations, particularly thematic or Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) evaluations.⁷

In respect of 'standards', for many readers the ILO's constitutionally established ILS system is the potential normative content of the Office's programming and project interventions. While this is very often the case – and the term ILS will be used here where this indication is intended – the ILO systematically develops other norms that are frequently very relevant for its DC. For this reason, the term 'norm' is used here, and with an all-encompassing intent.⁸

2. Current practices in considering normative/social dialogue mandates in evaluation

Gender equality and non-discrimination, ILS and social dialogue are seen as cross-cutting policy drivers for ILO results at the global level; this is made very clear in the ILO's current programme and budget.⁹ There has been a mandate for many years to integrate gender

⁵ The study is based on a content analysis (for specific identified elements relevant to ILS and social dialogue) and the review of 100 evaluations specifically selected from the 40 evaluations used for the meta-analysis of development cooperation evaluations, 2013–2016, and 86 evaluations used for the internal assessment of evaluation report quality covering the period 2015–2017, interviews of ILO staff in Geneva, and the knowledge and experience of the author.

⁶ ILO policy guidelines for evaluation: Principles, rationale, planning and managing for evaluations (3rd edition), ILO, Evaluation Office, 2017b, p. 16–17, www.ilo.ch/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_571339.pdf [accessed 8 December 2018].

⁷ Guidance forthcoming.

⁸ For the ILO, these include "international labour standards" of the ILO, i.e. conventions, recommendations, and protocols adopted by the ILC, as well as instruments of a relevant normative character such as resolutions adopted by the ILC, conclusions adopted by ILC committees, guidelines, codes of practice, recommendations, etc., adopted by tripartite and/or expert committees and other expressions of recommended or accepted behaviour or practice intended to guide its constituents. A similarly broad meaning is intended in respect of relevant expressions by other international organizations.

⁹ Programme and Budget for the Biennium 2018–2019, International Labour Office, 2018, www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---

equality in all monitoring and evaluation of ILO projects; guidance for doing this has been available for some time.¹⁰ The 2018 Conference Resolution strengthened the mandate to systematically take account of norms and social dialogue in evaluation. Specific and detailed guidance is needed to complement what is already available.¹¹

Evaluations do, of course, consider both norms and social dialogue when they are part of what the intervention intended to do.

For example, some projects' logical frameworks do clearly call for results in terms of norms and/or social dialogue, and evaluations are able to draw directly on those reflections of the interventions' theory of change (ToC) in framing their approach.

- **Example of normative output and outcome as it appears within a logical framework:**
*A project outcome was “strengthening protection of FPRW [fundamental principles and rights at work]”. A contributing output was “public discussions in relation to ratification of ILO Conventions on Freedom of Association (C87) and Convention on social dialogue (C144)”. The evaluation assessed the effectiveness of the project in respect of the output and the outcome directly in terms of mobilizing public opinion in favour of ratification of these ILO Conventions.*¹²
- **Example of social dialogue output and outcome as it appears within a logical framework:**
*A project objective was “to promote a more dialogue-driven mediation of stakeholder interests in identified ports”. A contributing output was a “firmly institutionalized social dialogue mechanism linking internal port stakeholders that is reflective of international best practice.” The evaluation used indicators set out in the logframe to assess the effectiveness of the project in terms of achieving its social dialogue objective.*¹³

However, the content review of evaluations undertaken by this study shows that norms and/or social dialogue are only sometimes written into logical frameworks or into

program/documents/genericdocument/wcms_582294.pdf, [accessed 8 December 2018]. A just transition to environmental sustainability is also the fourth and final cross-cutting policy driver.

10 See, inter alia, Guidance Note 4: Integrating gender equality in monitoring and evaluation of projects, International Labour Office, Evaluation Office 2014a, www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_165986/lang--en/index.htm [accessed 8 December 2018].

11 Guidance is provided, for example, on stakeholder participation in evaluations. ILO policy guidelines for evaluation: Principles, rationale, planning and managing for evaluations (3rd edition), International Labour Office, Evaluation Office. 2017b, p. 31, www.ilo.ch/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_571339.pdf [accessed 8 December 2018]. See in more detail: Guidance Note 7: Stakeholder participation, International Labour Office, Evaluation Office, 2014b, www.ilo.org/global/docs/WCMS_165982/lang--en/index.htm [accessed 8 December 2018]. It implies principles of social dialogue, but is both narrower in substance and broader in target group than the social dialogue mandate discussed here.

12 ILO: Promoting Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work through Social Dialogue and Gender Equality – final independent evaluation, MOR/11/03/CAN, Evaluation Office (Geneva, 2014). p. 15.

13 Promotion of decent work in the South African transport sector (Phase I) – final evaluation, ILO, 2013b, www.ilo.org/evalinfo/product/download.do?type=document&id=15646 [accessed 8 December 2018].

interventions' ToC. Where this occurred, integration was rarely comprehensive. Previous ILO evaluation quality assurance exercises have likewise observed this.¹⁴ As a result, the functions uniquely served by these two contextual features of ILO interventions have tended to be overlooked in the approach to evaluations.

➤ ***Example where international standards were central but the normative context for the intervention could have been more fully developed***

According to this evaluation's Terms of Reference (ToRs), the project had three immediate objectives:

- 1. Improved policy framework to prevent trafficking for labour exploitation;*
- 2. Improved implementation of trafficking prevention measures in pilot provinces;*
- 3. Increased ability of women and children to protect their rights and migrate safely.*

These immediate objectives were to lead to its intermediate objective of "Reduced trafficking for labour exploitation in China", and ultimate outcome of "Enhanced protection of labour rights in China, consistent with international rights and standards".

Both ILO child labour Conventions C182 and C138 had been ratified by the country. Prior to, during and after the project the ILO's supervisory Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR) had made comments on trafficking. The project document indicated that the project would support the country's efforts to implement international conventions including C182, C138, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and the Palermo protocol; no reference was made to unratified forced labour Conventions C29 or 105. CEACR Observations made on C182 from 2006 (prior to the start of the project) raised the issue of trafficking in the context of allegations made by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU); it also noted government efforts to combat trafficking.¹⁵

Reconstruction of ToC for normative and/or social dialogue context is permitted in ILO evaluations, but observed infrequently in practice.¹⁶ Guidance is needed on how to do this

14 "The integration of ILS into projects was an area of focus and strong performance (88 per cent) in those projects that could be scored. In these cases, strengthening ILS was one of the objectives of the project, and this was supported by a range of activities, including training, technical assistance, policy development, and awareness campaigns aimed at strengthening policy and regulatory frameworks, and guiding the development of national policies, systems and programmes at country level. While most evaluations did not articulate to what extent ILS had been strengthened through ILS-related activities, some evaluations provided specific examples directly related to ILS...." Decent work results and effectiveness of ILO operations: A meta-analysis of development cooperation evaluations, 2013–2016, International Labour Office, Evaluation Office, 2017a, p. 17, www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_625809.pdf [accessed 8 December 2018].

15 Labour rights: Preventing trafficking for labour exploitation in China (CP- Ting Phase II) – final evaluation, CPR/09/01/CAN, International Labour Office, 2013a, www.ilo.org/evalinfo/product/download.do?type=document&id=8003 [accessed 8 December 2018].

16 Evaluation policy guidelines say that "the reconstruction of some form of theory of change based on the relevant documents may be necessary, including the details of the logical framework.... to provide a result framework against which the achievements of the programme/project can be assessed." ILO policy guidelines

when it comes to the normative context of the intervention such as that seen in the example above, where an evaluation would have benefited from an explicit and well-articulated ToC that described how its activities were expected to lead to the ultimate objective. In such a case, proper articulation would have addressed the gaps in applying ILS as identified by ILS supervisory bodies, stakeholders, and project designers. An evaluation of the success of such a project would need coherent ToC and logical framework referencing the relevant ILS.

In the case of social dialogue, evaluations are replete with indications of how a project's strategy relies on social dialogue to affect the changes envisaged or set in motion by the interventions. This can be expected given the premise upon which the ILO promotes change: Social partners pursue social justice and Decent Work through the give and take of social dialogue. The further premise is that this method would give lasting and better solutions than would otherwise have been achieved. Institutionally, social dialogue is one of the four definitional pillars of Decent Work and a strategic objective for the Organization. Guidance is needed for the evaluation of interventions where social dialogue is not identified or well elaborated as part of the activities.

The need for guidance is particularly important because all ILO programming and project interventions in fact have the Organization's normative and social dialogue mandates as part of their operational underpinning. The challenge for an evaluator is in identifying the influence of these mandates, and accounting for them in the many and diverse interventions where they have not been highlighted, as in the case below.

➔ Case study of standards in labour-intensive employment promotion

The ILO has decades of important experience in demonstrating and promoting labour-intensive infrastructure construction and maintenance methods as a means of increasing freely chosen and productive employment. These projects typically involve the employment of persons in productive work that is labour intensive. Conformity of this employment with national labour laws and ILS is always a matter of concern in these projects, but very rarely something that is targeted as part of the theory for intended change. The focus is typically employment generation, poverty alleviation, and policy change through capacity building and demonstrated effectiveness of approaches.¹⁷

In one recent evaluation, evaluators were asked:

- *How did the project align with and support other relevant areas of the ILO's mandate like decent employment, social inclusion, and social protection measures?*
- *Has the Project successfully built or contributed to or strengthened an enabling environment (laws, policies, technical capacities, local knowledge, people's attitudes, etc.)?*

In response to these questions, the evaluators found:

for evaluation: Principles, rationale, planning and managing for evaluations (3rd edition), International Labour Office, Evaluation Office, 2017b, p. 30, www.ilo.ch/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_571339.pdf [accessed 8 December 2018].

¹⁷ See, for example, Technical assistance for capacity building support to the Ghana Social Opportunities Project (GSOP) – final evaluation, GHA/11/01/IBR, International Labour Office, 2013c, www.ilo.org/evalinfo/product/download.do?type=document&id=13270 [accessed 8 December 2018].

*"Impacts of project on beneficiaries' awareness of occupational safety and health (OSH), social security, and minimum wages were validated from the meetings with beneficiary groups. Information drawn from the monitoring sheet of the project [...] would also appear to corroborate that minimum wages were generally paid. The project exposed the workers employed to social protection, i.e. enrolment in PhilHealth and Social Security System coverage. The orientation/briefings on the nature of the PhilHealth and SSS coverage prior to enrolment heightened their awareness of the benefits that are prescribed by law and should be available if engaged in employment. Incidents of actual claims of benefits from the social protection coverage (PhilHealth and SSS) were shared by the beneficiaries during the meetings."*¹⁸

3. Frameworks for seeing normative and social dialogue contexts

ILO evaluators typically have a technical knowledge of the subject of the intervention they are tasked with evaluating, along with expertise in evaluation methodology. They may often have some exposure to the concept of social dialogue, and possibly to the ILO's normative work. Similarly, ILO constituents, donors and other stakeholders understandably focus on their own needs and infrequently demand that interventions be designed in ways that are fully optimized for results that harmonize with the ILO's normative and social dialogue mandates. Indeed, the Office has been directed to assure that its "[d]evelopment cooperation should be demand-driven, adapted to ... countries' specific needs, in particular decent work deficits as defined in national development frameworks, and identified through social dialogue processes with ILO constituents."¹⁹

Two frameworks can help groups such as these – who are better acquainted with matters and interests other than social dialogue and norms – to improve the way the ILO's normative and social dialogue mandates are brought into the design and evaluation of ILO programming and project interventions.

3.1 The normative continuum

To start, this study has confirmed that the ILO's DC work is normative in the three ways catalogued in 2013 by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG).²⁰ As

18 "Generating emergency employment and recovering sustainable livelihoods in the Philippines: Norway's contribution to the livelihoods recovery programme after Typhoon Haiyan – final evaluation", in PHI/13/05/NOR, International Labour Office, 2015b, www.ilo.org/evalinfo/product/download.do?type=document&id=18125 [accessed 8 December 2018].

19 Resolution concerning effective ILO development cooperation in support of the Sustainable Development Goals, International Labour Conference, 107th Session, 2018, www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_633138.pdf [accessed 8 December 2018]. The Resolution also specifically calls upon the ILO "to ... assist countries in addressing recommendations from the ILO supervisory bodies regarding the implementation of international labour standards, upon request [emphasis added]."

20 Normative work is used as a term of art in this paper, following the approach used by the UNEG in its Handbook: UNEG Handbook for conducting evaluations of normative work in the UN system, UNEG, United Nations Evaluation Group, 2013, para. 2, www.uneval.org/document/detail/1484 [accessed 8 December 2018].

illustrated in the examples below (Table 1), the ILO works with and supports its constituents in:

- (1) developing normative standards;
- (2) integrating its standards into national legislation, policy and plans; and
- (3) implementing legislation, policies and plans based on its standards.

Table 1. Examples of normative work in ILO projects

	Developing	Integrating	Implementing
Law-Growth Nexus III: Labour Law and the Enabling Business Environment for MSMEs in Kenya (RAF/13/03/MNAD)		- Enactment of the Private Security Regulation Act, 2016	- Support to increased levels of compliance to the established (hopefully ILS compliant) labour law - Formalization of informal economy (R. 204)
Way Forward: after the revolution – Decent work for women in Egypt and Tunisia (RAF/12/01/FIN)		- Ratification of C183 and reform of law to reflect C183 requirements	- Improving women's skills to improve employability (C111 and C122)
Technical Assistance for Capacity Building Support to the Ghana Social Opportunities Project (GSOP) (GHA/11/01/IBR)		- Formulation of National Policy for Labour-Intensive Public Works (LIPW) on a national level (R. 122, para. 9)	
Occupational Health and Safety in Non-Traditional Agro-Export Sector in Peru (PER/13/01/CAN)		- Implementation of a system to register labour, accidents, dangerous incidents and occupational sickness (ILO Code of Practice, ²¹ R194)	- Develop training and technical assistance services in OSH in agro-export companies in three regions (C155, C161)
HIV/AIDS workplace education project in Ghana (GHA/03/50/USA)	- Lesson learned through evaluation, to address workers in the informal economy, corresponds to reference to informal economy in R200	-	
Projects of the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour	- Experiences derived from IPEC operations since start in 1992 culminated in C182 and adoption in 1999	- Promoting policies, legislation, and plans for the integration of C138, C182	- Broad range of interventions designed to eliminate the worst forms of child labour (C182) and enforce minimum age for entrance to employment (C138)

So, while normative work as defined by the UNEG always exists and is indeed at the root of all ILO DC interventions, the relationship between those interventions and the relevant norms – be they conventions, recommendations, guidelines, agreed policy instruments, etc.²² – are set out variously in projects. In some cases, the normative basis is set out in a

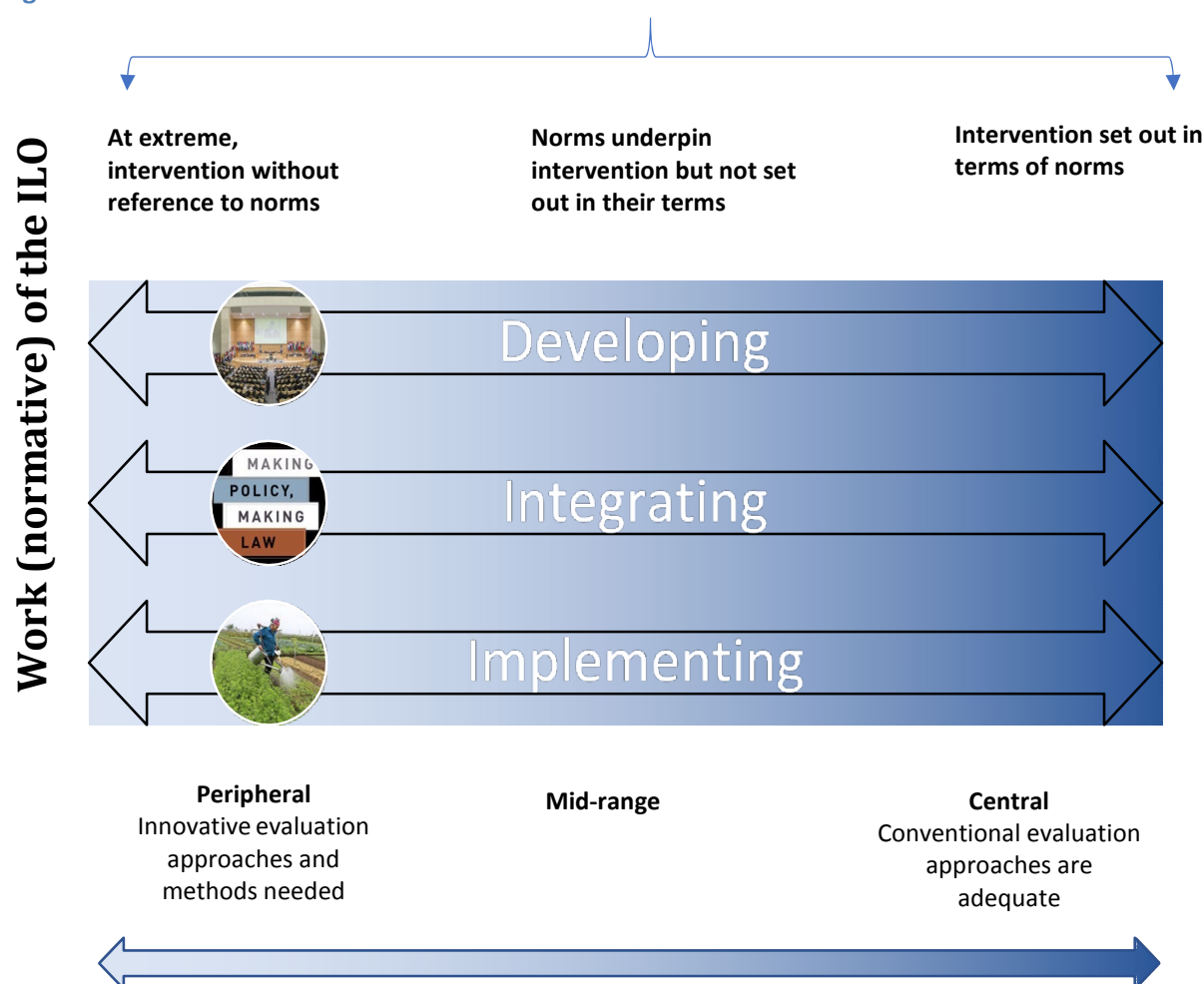
²¹ Recording and notification of occupational accidents and diseases: An ILO code of practice, International Labour Office, 1996, www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_protect/@protrav/@safework/documents/normativeinstrument/wcms_107800.pdf [accessed 8 December 2018].

²² Some normative instruments are clearly more so than others; this study relies on the normative usage and does not attempt to draw fine distinction. See, for example, A skilled workforce for strong, sustainable and balanced growth: A G20 training strategy, International Labour Office, 2010, www.skillsforemployment.org/edmsp1/idcplg?IdcService=GET_FILE&dID=354351&dDocName=FM11G_021626&allowInterrupt=1 [accessed 8 December 2018], which has been used as a normative instrument, although arguably at the limits of a definition as compared to ILS or other, more formally promulgated and adopted instruments.

way that makes it central to the intervention(s) being evaluated. In other cases, the focus is elsewhere, for example, undertaking technical activities that are implied by standards but not set out explicitly in them,²³ making the normative relationship somehow peripheral to the intervention, but still quite present.²⁴ In the remaining extreme cases, it is not set out at all. The study confirms that these relationships lie on a multi-factor continuum between these extremes.

Bringing these observations together, a framework can be used to see how norms are part of the context of a DC intervention. Figure 1 illustrates the framework. The case studies that follow show how it can be used.

Figure 1. Framework 1: Normative continuum



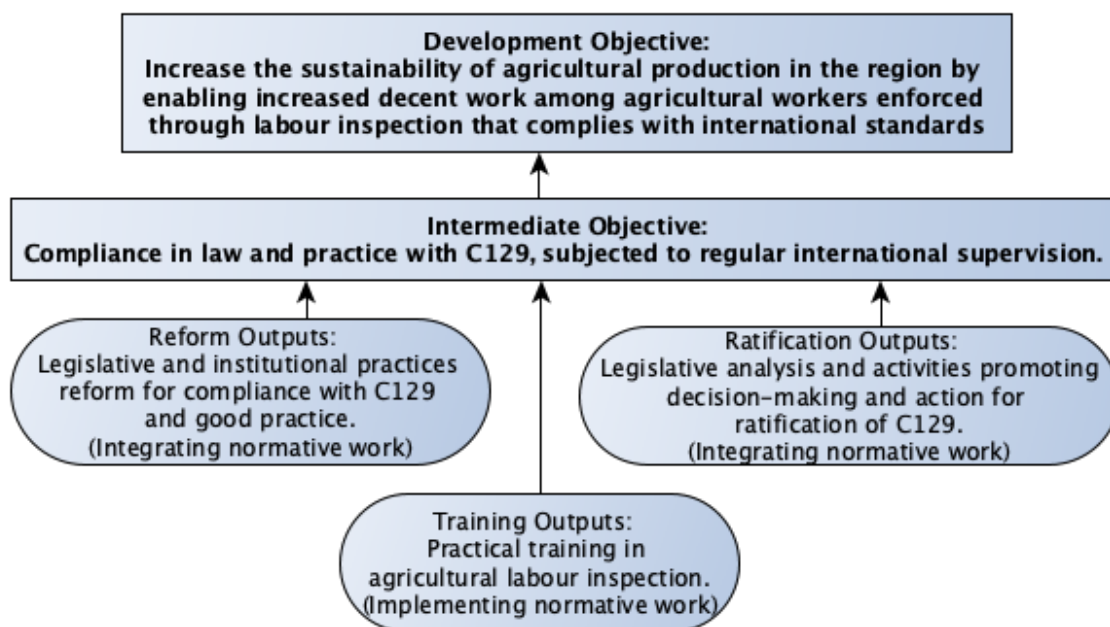
²³ A full discussion of the very significant role of flexibility provisions in the ILO's universal ILS is beyond the scope of this paper. See For an explanation of the intentional flexibility of international labour standards, see J.M. Servais: "Flexibility and Rigidity in International Labour Standards", in *International Labour Review*, Vol. 125, pp.193-208.

²⁴ UNEG handbook for conducting evaluations of normative work in the UN system, United Nations Evaluation Group, 2013, www.uneval.org/document/detail/1484 [accessed 8 December 2018]. See Tables 2 and 3, which refer to this idea.

➤ **Case study of intervention with implementing and integrating work far along (central) on the normative continuum**

Governments in ILO Member States want DC to train labour officials so that they can do labour inspection in agriculture, aiming to meet growing demands for sustainability from domestic and international buyers of agricultural products from the region. Some countries have ratified the ILO Labour Inspection in Agriculture Convention, 1969 (No. 129). Available resources enable the ILO to offer DC with a development objective of increasing the sustainability of agricultural production in the region by enabling increased Decent Work among agricultural workers enforced through labour inspection that complies with ILS. Tailored country level interventions are planned for training, legislative reform and institutional capacity building taking into account international supervision of C129, and the promotion of its ratification (figure 2).

Figure 2. ILO DC intervention in agricultural production ensuring compliance with C129



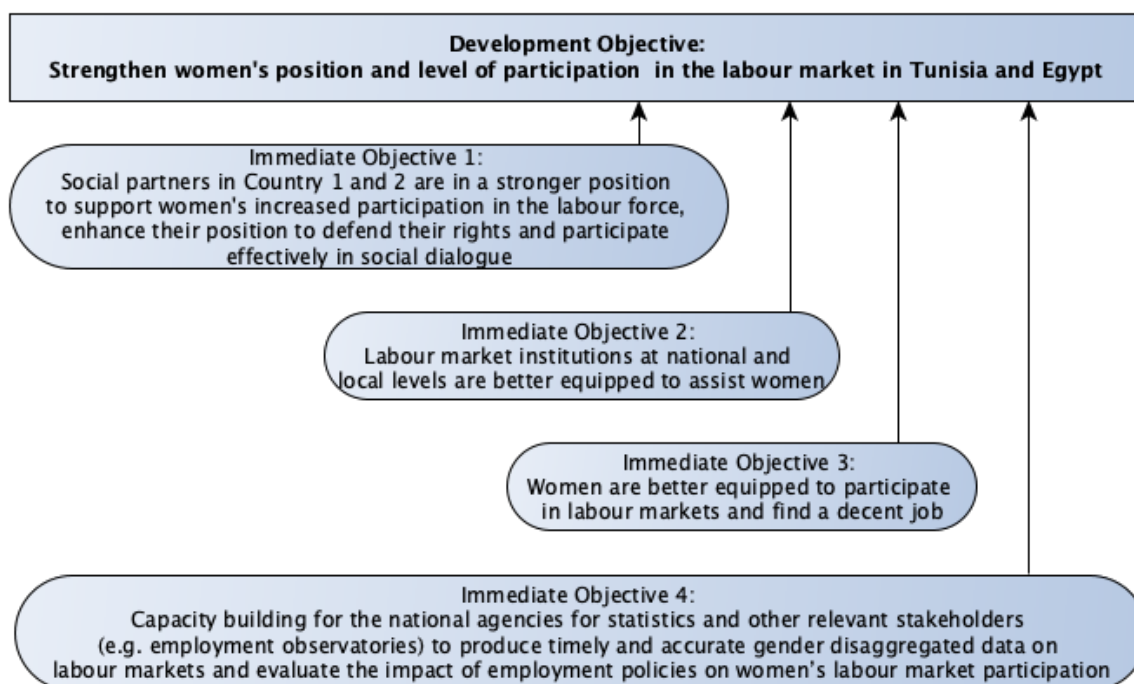
As stakeholder interest increases and funding becomes available, other intermediate objectives and outputs could be added to the intervention to address the many intervening variables that challenge the development objective in the example above.

➤ **Case study of intervention with a normative basis implemented according to national conditions and practice**

ILO constituents in two countries asked for support in promoting gender equality and non-discrimination in the world of work as well as in women economic empowerment. This was to be done through women's entrepreneurship development, advocating for, and promoting, women's participation in social dialogue processes and increased involvement of women in

trade union structures. ILO equal pay and non-discrimination Convention Nos. 100 and 111 are long ratified; both are considered promotional instruments with broad obligations, which are meant to be implemented by “methods appropriate to national conditions and practice” (figure 3).

Figure 3. ILO DC intervention to strengthen women’s participation in labour market, Egypt and Tunisia



The interventions in this example are “implementing work” by promoting the normative principles of gender equality and non-discrimination. The broad and flexible character of the standards enables only the broad statement that interventions are undertaken in their name.²⁵

→ Case study of interventions promoting norm-based Decent Work, without normative reference

A project within a larger Responsible Business development programme was undertaken to increase Decent Work in garment production and the fisheries

25 Interestingly, in this case, the evaluator drew on the relevant country-level-programming instrument to recall an expressed interest in integrating, implementing and potentially ratifying the Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183). With this in hand, the evaluator assessed the relevance of the project’s study of the financial feasibility of implementing C183, finding it relevant and asserting moreover at length the importance for the project to note the right embodied in the standard over determining financial feasibility of implementation. “The way forward after the revolution – decent work for women in Egypt and Tunisia mid-term evaluation”, in RAF/12/01/FIN, International Labour Office, 2015c, <http://www.ilo.org/evalinfo/product/download.do?type=document&id=14794> [accessed 8 December 2018].

sectors. The development objective of the project was “to contribute to Decent Work opportunities for men and women in the two value chains, as the main actors targeted within these, work towards following responsible business practices”. It was envisaged that this would be achieved through the following immediate objectives (outcomes):

- *Immediate Objective 1: Increased knowledge of key social partners on the underlying constraints and opportunities within the Garment and Fisheries sectors analysed and key underlying constraints identified.*
- *Immediate Objective 2: Improved business service provision for selected sectors.*
- *Immediate Objective 3: Improved social dialogue and policy environment in both sectors.*
- *Immediate Objective 4: Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) System and knowledge sharing strategy for both sectors is in place.*

The evaluator identified the main achievements under each of the four outcomes.

Although present, the normative work in this case is difficult to find on account of its design. The evaluator captured the situation well in his discussion of the relevance of the interventions.²⁶

“Both sectors (Garment, Fisheries) selected for this project, which includes the enterprises, workers, women and youth operating in or linked to these sectors (final beneficiaries), are highly relevant for receiving the ILO attention in terms of Decent Work and responsible business practices. Both sectors are labour-intensive, have issues with working conditions, child labour, sustainable practices and, at the same time, a high future economic potential. Both sectors rank among the top 5 export industries of the country and increasingly attract foreign investments. Foreign investors particularly in the garment sector are keen to fully comply with all Decent Work and sustainability standards right from the start despite significant growth rates of the sector.”

The ILO’s social dialogue mandate was more pronounced in this intervention, as seen by the intermediate outcome 3 (IO3). In this example, social dialogue events were orchestrated by the intervention, with the aim of helping to develop it as a means of mediating and resolving differing interests in developing the sector.

3.2 Social dialogue functions as seen by interventions

The ILO defines social dialogue broadly. For ILO programming and project interventions generally, improving social dialogue means doing things that make it possible for social partners to engage in dialogue to achieve results that are considered by all to be satisfactory.

²⁶ "Programme on responsible business in Myanmar – final evaluation", in MMR/13/14/DAN, International Labour Office, 2016, www.ilo.org/evalinfo/product/download.do?type=document&id=20528 [accessed 8 December 2018].

To improve how social dialogue is considered in the evaluation of interventions, it is critical to identify how it is seen by the intervention. More particularly, how ToC relates social dialogue to the intervention's results.

At a minimum, the social partners are always involved as stakeholders in overseeing ILO project implementation through an advisory body or steering committee. That process is a form of social dialogue. The social partners should be involved in project design, but there may not be any dialogue between them.²⁷ They may also be directly involved in implementing project activities, which sometimes involves dialogue. Additionally, the intervention may rely on social dialogue to move activities towards the intended outcomes and impacts.

Box 2

Social dialogue

"Social dialogue is defined by the ILO to include all types of negotiation, consultation or simply exchange of information between, or among, representatives of governments, employers and workers, on issues of common interest relating to economic and social policy. It can exist as a tripartite process, with the government as an official party to the dialogue or it may consist of bipartite relations only between labour and management (or trade unions and employers' organizations), with or without indirect government involvement. Social dialogue processes can be informal or institutionalised, and often it is a combination of the two. It can take place at the national, regional or at enterprise level. It can be inter-professional, sectoral or a combination of these.

The main goal of social dialogue itself is to promote consensus building and democratic involvement among the main stakeholders in the world of work. Successful social dialogue structures and processes have the potential to resolve important economic and social issues, encourage good governance, advance social and industrial peace and stability and boost economic progress."

Source: ILO website, Governance and Tripartism Department, 2018.
<https://www.ilo.org/ifpdial/areas-of-work/social-dialogue/lang-en/index.htm>%20%20a

Any dialogue between social partners in connection with ILO DC should improve social dialogue. To use a common metaphor, intervention operation and activities function as a machine facilitating "practice to make perfect" social dialogue. But an intervention's logical framework may or may not specify improved social dialogue as an intended result. In terms of intervention substance, the ToC should specifically reflect how social dialogue is intended to contribute to results. Formally intended results, whether they be a better performing project, better substantive world of work policies or practices, or better social dialogue, should be set out in the ToC and/or logical framework.

Figure 4 below of the function machine framework illustrates how social dialogue is part of the context as well as the content of an intervention. Examples of typical matters for dialogue include: (A) intervention oversight; (B) intervention activity selection; (C) discussions or "negotiations" on the substance of an intervention's focus; and (D) social dialogue on matters beyond the intervention (which is a potential indicator in social dialogue impact evaluation) (table 2). The intervention facilitates the function of social dialogue in, for example, substantive workshops, direct bi- and tripartite discussions, and dialogue in a project steering

²⁷ A certain amount of ILO DC involves unilateral support to employers or workers and their organizations. This support does not always clearly involve or directly imply dialogue with either of the other partners. However, one could imagine that by building capacity, the support will at some time be useful in actual dialogue. Interventions that clearly intend dialogue are considered matters of a social dialogue context in this study.

committee. Dialogue practice should be ongoing and ideally contribute to the improvement of dialogue on matters beyond the intervention, as in D below. Note that the results of activity selection and issue discussions and negotiations are made possible through social dialogue, and, as in D, by improving dialogue itself. These would be expected to appear in the intervention's logical framework (figure 4).

Figure 4. Framework 2: Intervention as dialogue function machine

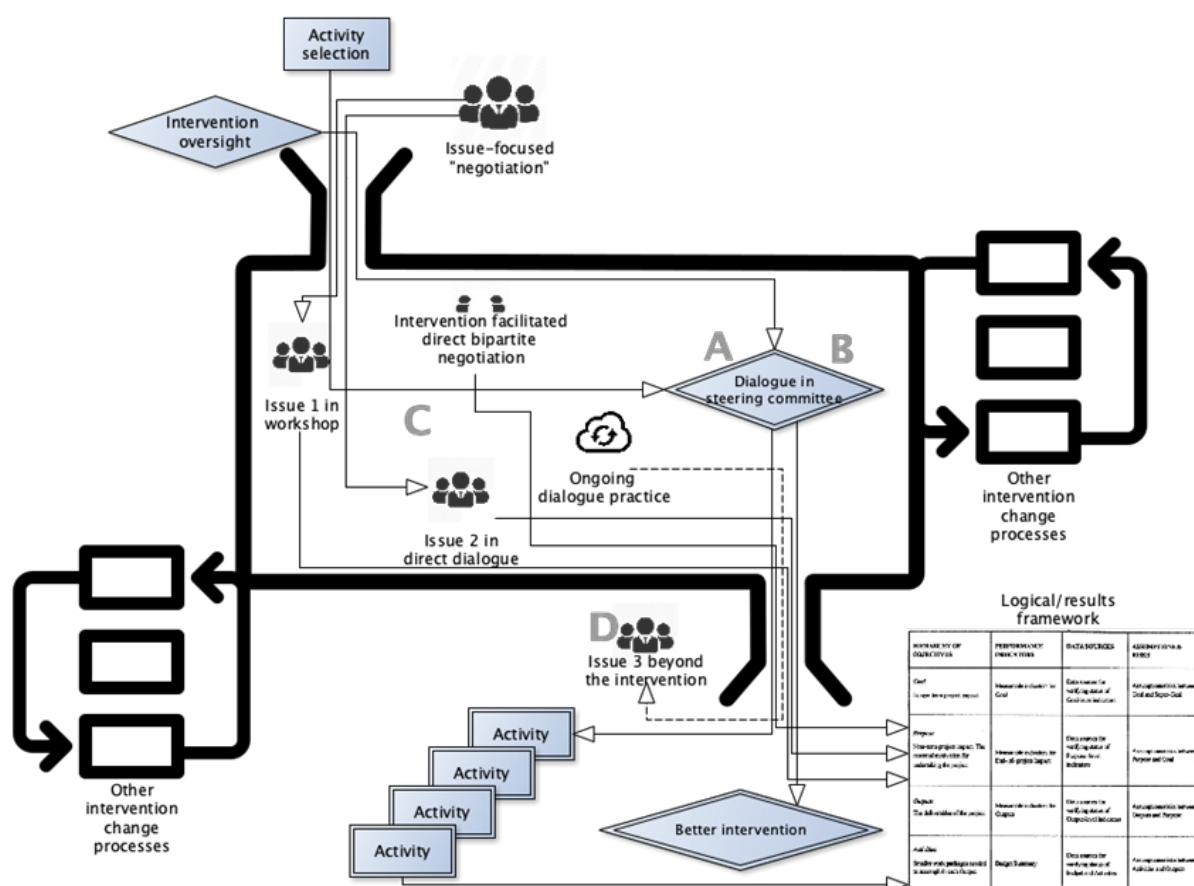


Table 2. Typical issues for social dialogue

	Examples of matters for dialogue	Intervention function	Results
A	Intervention oversight	Dialogue in steering committee (i.e. intervention operational issues)	Project operation that reflects the desires and interests of the social partners, as agreed through dialogue
B	Selection of activities to achieve results targeted by the intervention	Dialogue in steering committee	Activities that contribute to intervention effectiveness because they were selected to achieve designated intervention results
C	Intervention output result from dialogue (during project)	Dialogue facilitated by intervention activities (i.e. workshops on subject)	Substantive practice established with support of intervention

		matter)	
D	Intervention outcome result from dialogue (flowing from project)	Dialogue set in motion by intervention (i.e. ongoing dialogue body established by intervention)	Social dialogue improved through intervention support, through which constructive dialogue has continued (intervention impact), producing substantive agreements

4. Suggestions for using frameworks for improved approaches

When using the normative continuum and the dialogue function frameworks, an evaluation team would be able to approach the intervention's results frameworks that have not adequately taken normative and social dialogue contexts into account; similarly for the intervention's ToC.²⁸ The ILO may consider the following suggestions and recommendations for operational changes in ILO evaluations.

4.1 Map normative and social dialogue contexts

Contextual information needs to be properly mapped to improve consideration given to normative and social dialogue mandates in designing and evaluating interventions. Starting from the interventions being evaluated or being considered for programming, this means systematically setting down or checking to see that the situation analysis and/or ToC for the intervention has identified specific essential components set down in table 3.

Table 3. Identification of specific components to improve normative and social dialogue interventions

Identify...	To be able to...
A. Norms relevant to the intervention...	... know the basis for whatever normative work the intervention is or could be doing.
B. Relevant social partners...	... know with whom the intervention should or could be interacting in promoting social dialogue.
C. Ratification status of relevant norms, including ILS...	... say if there are legal obligations underpinning potential normative work.
D. Relevant international supervision, if any...	... say what gaps have been authoritatively identified, to potentially be included in normative work.
E. Whether intervention activities and/or outcomes intend to develop/integrate/implement the identified norms, regardless of ratification or supervision...	... say whether the intervention intends to actually do normative work.
F. Whether standards' supervision is intended to guide or be addressed by an intervention activities and outcomes...	... say whether and how implementation is intended to be taken up by an intervention activities and outcomes.

²⁸ The adequacy of account taken of normative and social dialogue contexts in an intervention subject to evaluation is a judgement for the evaluation commissioner and evaluation team. Generally speaking, as argued above, inadequate account is currently taken.

G. The intended role played by social dialogue in activities and outcomes...	... say how social dialogue figures in the ToC and logical framework.
H. The intended relevance of activities and outcomes for social dialogue...	... whether improvement of social dialogue figures among intervention results.

This mapping should be undertaken during an intervention's design. For evaluations, it could be carried out by the evaluation manager and set out in ToR, but at the latest by the evaluator and set out for confirmation by the evaluation commissioner in the inception report.

Context mapping is intervention-specific and is more than a list of ratifications, social partners, supervisory body comments, etc. It comes from the intervention's ToC for evaluation. If carried out at the design phase, it becomes part of the ToC. By capturing this context including the intentions of the intervention, it becomes possible to formulate improved evaluation questions and sub-questions, and ultimately permits evaluation against established criteria.

Mapping the normative and social dialogue contexts under current programming practices will in many cases imply supplementing or reconstructing ToC. The evaluation commissioner will need to be consulted to determine if this is appropriate. Adjustments to a ToC will need to take evaluability into account. For example, indicators should be available for any additional outcomes or outcomes that are amended to take account of the context. Mapping context that can be part of changes to ToC enables institutional learning for future programming and project design whether or not changes are made to take aspects of context into account.²⁹

4.2 Describe the intervention's social dialogue functions and results

With the help of the function-machine metaphor, an evaluation team should be able to use information from the context map to say specifically where the intervention's results are formally intended to depend and/or improve on social dialogue. Using the same framework, account can be taken of matters discussed during social dialogue that are facilitated by the intervention but not registered formally as intended results. Nevertheless, that practice may contribute to the benefits and improvements meant to arise from the use of social dialogue as a policy of ILO DC.

Improving an evaluation to take account of the social dialogue context will ultimately depend on the view of it seen through the lens of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD/DAC) evaluation criterion, which is systematically used in ILO evaluations. The questions below provide structure to

²⁹ It would be useful to have a detailed guidance tool for making and using context maps. These maps are used in ways that are relative to the situation in which they are made. In the case of intervention design, a map could be used to optimize the description of the context. At the start or during the intervention, or during funding processes, approaches to the use of the map may change as a result of give and take between donor and other stakeholders. In the case of evaluation, how the map is used might be adjusted after an assessment of evaluability or after consultations with stakeholders. If so, they would be highlighted in the final findings of an evaluation report to strengthen institutional learning.

improve evaluators' focus by asking about criterion dependency. Their responses will help formulate key and subordinate evaluation questions.

According to its ToC, does the intervention's	<i>relevance</i> <i>effectiveness</i> <i>efficiency</i> <i>impact</i> <i>sustainability</i>	depend on social dialogue?
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If so, how?

In examples A, B, C and D described in figure 4, a good ToC might see intervention relevance and effectiveness being highly dependent on example types A and B, and intervention effectiveness, impact, and sustainability being highly dependent on types C and D, although views could differ depending on an intervention's activities. Appropriate evaluation questions would flow from these insights.

4.3 Identify points on the normative continuum and work with specific norms

Acting to improve an evaluation for the ILO's normative mandate will depend on the intervention's initial view of them. As seen above, norms are placed far from centre stage in some interventions. In the past, unidentified normative underpinnings have been ignored in evaluation. As a first step in improving this situation, the type of normative work should be identified for the intervention under evaluation. It should be possible to name the norm(s), and say how its/their implementation, integration or development is seen within the intervention. The normative continuum framework can be helpful in making these characterizations. The results are used in the context map.

Information in the context map is next used to make useful evaluation questions and sub-questions that take into account the normative mandate. The following questions are helpful in focusing on this:

Was the intervention	<i>relevance</i> <i>effectiveness</i> <i>efficiency</i> <i>impactful</i> <i>sustainability</i>	in terms of its normative context as mapped?
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If so, how?

In sum, the evaluation team uses the normative continuum framework to: (i) characterize the development, integration, or implementation role(s) they play; (ii) acknowledge where intervention elements figure on the continuum; and (iii) work from the answers to the evaluation criteria-based questions above to develop useful evaluation questions and sub-

questions.³⁰

To ultimately make assessments against OECD/DAC criteria, it is important that provisions of international standards are specifically identified where they are relevant to intended results. The broad statement asserting the promotion of a Convention or principle is often seen in current practice. But where interventions have a focus on results, for example

- Improving inadequate protection from discrimination for anti-union discrimination [C98, Art. 2(1)]
- Establishing a national policy on vocational rehabilitation and employment of disabled persons (C159, Art. 2)
- Improving good faith consultation with indigenous peoples [C169, Art. 6(2)], or
- Extending existing systems of vocational guidance to persons disabled through armed conflict [C142, Art. 3(1)]
- Addressing gaps identified by the CEACR.

Those specific provisions should be named in the context map as being implicated by the interventions to be undertaken and the results hoped for.

There is an even greater need to refer explicitly to the relevant standard and intervention logic where the relevant Convention is itself broadly framed – as many are.³¹

→ Example of need to make clear a link between intervention and WFCL standard

C182 does not require the piloting of Life Skills education in schools as a way to move towards an ultimate goal of eliminating one of the worst forms of child labour named in the Convention, i.e. child prostitution. Such piloting was conducted in the name of implementing the norm in one example above.³² Evaluating their results starts with an explanation of the logic linking the piloting to the ultimate goal.

→ Example of need to make clear link between intervention and employment policy standard

Pursuing labour intensive ways of building and maintaining infrastructure is not required by the Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122). Such efforts can and do, however, contribute to implementing an “active policy designed to promote full,

³⁰ It would be helpful to have a detailed guidance tool for evaluators to work through the processes described here.

³¹ For an explanation of the intentional flexibility of international labour standards, see J.M. Servais: "Flexibility and rigidity in international labour standards", in *International Labour Review* (1986, Vol. 125), pp. 193–208.

³² "Labour rights: Preventing trafficking for labour exploitation in China (CP-Ting Phase II) – final evaluation", in CPR/09/01/CAN, International Labour Office, 2013a, <http://www.ilo.org/evalinfo/product/download.do?type=document&id=8003> [accessed 8 December 2018].

productive and freely chosen employment” [(C122, Art. 1(1)). That Convention’s non-binding Recommendation (No. 122) does suggest “expanding employment by ... promoting more labour-intensive techniques...” and “measures to expand employment by the encouragement of labour-intensive products and techniques” (R122, para. 25, and Annex, para 9). This is part of the normative context of the ILO’s multi-decade and multi-million US\$ support for labour-intensive technologies.

4.4 Evaluability

The formal assessments of evaluability during the design of an intervention are current ILO practice for interventions valued above US\$5 million.³³ Other guidance is provided to help ensure that “an activity or project can be evaluated in a reliable and credible fashion.”³⁴ Evaluability is typically checked at the inception phase in virtually all ILO evaluations.

Evaluability for normative and social dialogue mandate is assessed within an overall assessment of evaluability. Besides the ToC being critically important for evaluability in principle, evaluability in practice will depend on data being available indicating intended results as regards the relevant norms and social dialogue.³⁵

The first step for the normative mandate is to identify the intervention’s normative work – this will have been done in context mapping – to roughly understand the type of data needed. The second step makes use of the normative continuum to distinguish between the types of data needed (table 4).

33 *Guidance Note 16: Procedure and tools for evaluability review of ILO projects over US\$5 million*, Evaluation Office, International Labour Office, 2014c, www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_239796/lang-en/index.htm [accessed 8 December 2018].

34 OECD/DAC definition of evaluability.

35 Davies. Planning evaluability assessments: A synthesis of the literature with recommendations, Working Paper 40 (Department for International Development, 2013), https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/248656/wp40-planning-eval-assessments.pdf [accessed 8 December 2018].

Table 4. Data needed for the evaluation of normative work

Normative work	Data needed for evaluation ...	Notes
Development	... evidencing the taking of inputs from the DC for making norms	ILO DC infrequently engages in this type of normative work
Integration	... evidencing changes in domestic laws, regulations, policy, institutional practices that reflect the relevant norms	Matter of ILS becoming the national standard
Implementation	... evidencing changes in situation that conform to targets of the norm, i.e. desired effect of the norm being applied	<p>Depending on standards involved, norm targets can be situations of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutions or policy, as well as actual working conditions; • generally applicable, as well as limited by economic, occupational, or population groupings/sector <p>Depending on the standard, evidence may be of achievement may be of a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • static situation, or • dynamic situation, i.e. progress

→ Example of intervention with implementing and integrating work far along (central) on the normative continuum

Normative mandate is central to such projects, for example, where interventions aim to resolve compliance issues identified by supervisory bodies. Logical and M&E frameworks should be expected to explicitly cite evaluation criteria and indicators linked to the relevant norms. The ultimate indicator is supervisory bodies' expressed satisfaction with results. Where interventions are looking for further change "on the ground" specifically guided by norm requirements, data evidencing this is needed and it is evaluated against OECD/DAC criteria.

→ Example of intervention with a normative basis implemented according to national conditions and practice

Normative mandate is present, with explicit flexibility in the relevant norm available for implementation. Intervention will be evaluable where its logic is aligned with the standard's target and indicators evidence implementation of the standard.

→ Example of interventions promoting norm-based Decent Work, without normative reference

No special requirements for evaluability. Evidence of intervention operations complying with norms may be needed where project operations could otherwise contravene norms.

Where social dialogue is intended as the means by which results will be achieved, it should be stated and indicators of direct linkage or contribution should be evidenced in documents and through key informants. Primary data collection methods traditionally used for ILO evaluations, such as surveys, focus group discussions, and interviews, can be used to measure against evaluation criteria relevant to social dialogue.

Where improved social dialogue is an intended result, evidence of changes in institutional arrangements can be found in documents. Actual changes in practices can be found in the results of dialogue, although care is needed in this respect. This could mean producing evidence in the form of agreements. Even so, these results may be confused with social dialogue processes. Improvement in social dialogue processes can occur and be evidenced in the absence of agreements that resolve a conflict or dispute. However, care should be taken to ensure that indicators and questions are formulated and understood in this light. Strengthened capacity for social dialogue may be cited as a result criterion, but here too care is needed to ensure that capacity is actually utilized. In sum, where social dialogue is an objective, indicators need to be characterized carefully and the social partners themselves may be best placed to help in this regard.³⁶

4.5 Cast evaluation questions for normative and social dialogue mandates

This study confirms that OECD/DAC criteria are used in ILO evaluations, and are consistent with policy. As suggested above, the normative and social dialogue contexts can influence evaluation questions. Assuming the evaluation's ToR call for context mapping, they would also need to specify evaluation questions that take into account the observed contexts. This is justified by the fact that the stated, "aim of evaluation in the ILO is to support improvements in projects, programmes, policies, and to promote accountability and learning." Considering the ILO's unique normative and social dialogue mandates, and the prospects of drawing lessons from evaluations, the evaluation questions ought to be different to those where accountability is the only or primary purpose of evaluation. It has been argued here that widespread normative underpinnings and the intended roles of social dialogue in programming and interventions should guide improvements in, *inter alia*, evaluation questions. Methods are discussed below for improving account of these contexts in generic questions falling under OECD/DAC criteria and the reasons for doing so.³⁷

4.2.1 Relevance

The normative and social dialogue contexts of an intervention can contribute to findings and conclusions about their relevance. For example, the evaluation would want to measure the degree to which activities, outputs and objectives are consistent with:

- agreements reached or consensus apparent in social dialogue; and
- prescriptions in relevant normative instruments, particularly where they have been embraced by stakeholders.

³⁶ It would be good to have guidance providing examples of logical and results frameworks for normative and social dialogue mandates.

³⁷ OECD/DAC criteria are currently under review at the global level. Whatever the results of the review process, the approach here is that evaluation questions falling under evaluation criteria can be designed to take into account the normative and social dialogue contexts.

Box 3

Relevance

The extent to which the aid activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor.

In evaluating the relevance of a programme or a project, it is useful to consider the following questions:

- *To what extent are the objectives of the programme still valid?*
- *Are the activities and outputs of the programme consistent with the overall goal and the attainment of its objectives?*
- *Are the activities and outputs of the programme consistent with the intended impacts and effects?*

Source: OECD/DAC Website.

The idea in both the above cases is that elements of the interventions happen because activities are undertaken, outputs are identified and produced, and outcomes are sought, which are because of or in line with social dialogue or normative contexts. Relevance is increased in both cases. Relevance in terms of the validity of the intervention's design is also enhanced in both cases.

Associated main and secondary questions might include:

- To what extent has the relevance of intervention activities, outputs, and objectives been reflected by social dialogue or been a direct result of it?
 - Was social dialogue involved in the design of interventions (as distinguished from inputs from the social partners)?
- To what extent has the intervention taken normative context into account in the design of its activities, outputs and/or outcomes?
 - Has account been taken of obligations flowing from ratifications? From international supervision? From normative prescriptions? What evidence is there of this having been taken into account (or is this only coincidental and without causal link)?
- Did activities or outputs facilitate or contribute to the relevance achieved through social dialogue?
 - Would the evidence of social dialogue have occurred without the intervention's support? What factors are relevant?
- Is there a specific normative context that makes the intervention's activities, outputs, and/or outcomes particularly relevant?
 - To what extent are stakeholders aware of that context? What evidence is there of their awareness?

- Are the intervention's outputs or outcomes relevant to improved integration or implementation of relevant standards, regardless of intention?

4.5.2 Effectiveness

If an intervention's objectives invoke norms or social dialogue, they should be considered in assessing effectiveness in achievement.

→ **Examples of norms and social dialogue invoked in intervention results frameworks**

- *Immediate objective: Assessment Based National Dialogue's Recommendations on social protection and employment support endorsed by national stakeholders.*³⁸
- *Outcome 1: Decent work indicators are identified in consultation with government and national partners and statistics are produced and analysed in line with national Decent Work strategies and ILO Decent Work Country Programme.*³⁹
- *Immediate Objective 2: Employers' and workers' organizations have improved capacity and effectiveness in implementation of the Labour Organization Law and the Settlement of Labour Disputes Law and work together constructively on dispute resolution, collective bargaining, occupational safety and health and building an industrial relations system based on mutual respect.*⁴⁰
- *Immediate Objective: Strengthen the institutional capacity of the Ministry of Labour, especially the labour inspectorate, to effectively enforce national labour laws and guarantee fundamental rights at work as they relate to freedom of association, collective bargaining and conflict resolution, in accordance with international labour standards.*⁴¹

Box 4

Effectiveness

A measure of the extent to which an aid activity attains its objectives.

In evaluating the effectiveness of a programme or a project, it is useful to consider the following questions:

- *To what extent were the objectives achieved/are likely to be achieved?*
- *What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?*

Source: OECD/DAC website.

Where this is not the case the implications of normative and social dialogue context on effectiveness questions depends on context mapping. The normative continuum and social

38 Promoting and building income security and employment services in Asia, Phase II – final evaluation (RAS/13/08/JPN), International Labour Office, Evaluation Office, 2017d, www.ilo.org/ievaldiscovery/#asr96qw [accessed 8 December 2018].

39 Monitoring and assessing Decent Work in developing countries (MAP) – two volumes – final evaluation (INT/07/15/EEC), International Labour Office, Evaluation Office, 2014d, www.ilo.org/ievaldiscovery/#bm3cbrq [accessed 8 December 2018].

40 Promoting freedom of association and social dialogue in Myanmar – final evaluation (MMR/13/06/NOR), International Labour Office, Evaluation Office, www.ilo.org/ievaldiscovery/#afp2efe [accessed 8 December 2018].

41 Promoting compliance with international labour standards in Colombia – midterm evaluation (COL/11/04/USA), International Labour Office, Evaluation Office, 2015, www.ilo.org/ievaldiscovery/#bnpusxg [accessed 8 December 2018].

dialogue function machine frameworks can help in determining question focus. Effectiveness evaluation questions need not refer to norms or social dialogue if there are no relevant standards (unlikely), or the importance of relevant norms and/or reliance on social dialogue is extremely minor.

Associated main and secondary questions might include:

- To what extent has social dialogue contributed to the intervention's effectiveness in meeting its objectives?
 - Was this by design?
- To what extent has the normative context contributed to the intervention's setting and/or meeting its objectives?
 - To what extent have normative systems been used to bring about or extend the intervention's results?
- To what extent has achievement of objectives been effective in promoting social dialogue?

Would seeing an unintended result that is consistent with normative context be a measure of the effectiveness of an intervention? As illustrated in the example below, the mandate to find unintended consequences is important for seeing them.

→ Case study of exposing unintended effectiveness in promoting a normative result

In a project entitled "Construction of primary schools in Madagascar using labour intensive methods", the ILO worked with UNICEF to achieve two objectives: (1) create Decent Work using labour-intensive methods, good governance, and the private sector; and (2) increase access to primary education by increasing the number of schools. The evaluation focused on construction and maintenance of schools, transference of labour-intensive methods to public and private actors including community committees, applying OECD/DAC criteria. Notably, the evaluators were asked to assess – under the relevance criteria – the alignment of the project with national (national education programme, school construction strategy) and international (DWCP, UNDAF, etc.) strategy documents, and – under effectiveness – whether men and women benefited equally from the intervention, etc. No references were made to normative or social dialogue contexts either in the ToR or in the evaluation report. These included the ratifications and supervision of C138, C182, and C122.⁴²

In this example, results favouring the elimination of child labour (implementing normative

⁴² "Construction d'écoles primaires, Madagascar selon l'approche, haute intensité de main d'oeuvre – évaluation finale indépendante", in MAG/12/01/CEF, International Labour Office, 2015a, www.ilo.org/evalinfo/product/download.do?type=document&id=13286 [accessed 8 December 2018].

work) and support for active labour market policy-making (integrative normative work) were apparently not intended – at least they were not observed in the documentation available to the study. Such results could easily be intended from a project aimed at increasing access to primary education by building schools. However, for this ILO project and its evaluation, assessing effectiveness meant asking questions about employment creation through labour-based construction methods. Yet, in addition, in conformity with the institutional mandate to promote and evaluate gender equality, questions were asked about the benefits being derived by both women and men. The mandate helped to expose the effects.

4.5.3 Efficiency

Social dialogue and normative contexts can be factors in the efficiency of interventions. They can also be results influenced by an intervention's efficiency.

Box 5

Efficiency

Efficiency measures the outputs – qualitative and quantitative – in relation to the inputs. It is an economic term that signifies that the aid uses the least costly resources possible in order to achieve the desired results. This generally requires comparing alternative approaches to achieving the same outputs, to see whether the most efficient process has been adopted.

When evaluating the efficiency of a programme or a project, it is useful to consider the following questions:

- *Were activities cost-efficient?*
- *Were objectives achieved on time?*
- *Was the programme or project implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternatives?*

Source: OECD/DAC website.

Since norms and/or social dialogue processes are sometimes seen as a potential hindrance to the efficiency of interventions, a preliminary question may be asked:

- Have normative and/or social dialogue contexts been considered in establishing the intervention's objectives?
 - If they were not, why not?
 - Are there results that make a difference in assessing the overall effectiveness of the intervention?

Social dialogue can influence the quality and the cost of an intervention's results both positively and negatively. In terms of evaluation questions, the evaluators of an intervention that is highly dependent on social dialogue might well want to ask whether the degree of reliance on social dialogue for results has affected efficiency, and whether the results were justified given any perceived or measured loss in efficiency. Following a normative framework in providing technical support can have efficiency effects by adding or reducing results that might otherwise not be apparent. For example, efficiency in developing labour statistics collection and analysis capacity can be enhanced by ensuring capacity to treat a complete range of standards-endorsed data sets.⁴³

⁴³ Standards set by the International Conference of Labour Statisticians or needed monitor SDG targets, for example.

Where an intervention aims to improve social dialogue, integrate or implement norms, an evaluation can contribute to learning on efficient, results-producing intervention practices. For example, where an objective is improved, social dialogue as measured by enhanced confidence between the partners, and a higher quality and quantity of social partner accords. This would be achieved by confidence and capacity-building activities over the period of a multi-year project. Efficiency could be assessed by correlating data on benefits with the intervention's characteristics, i.e. periodicity, size, target groups, etc., all of which equate to the use of resources. In the normative domain, patterns in the effect of support (i.e. costs) for the adoption of legal and/or policy reforms to improve the integration of a particular ILS leading to actual adoption (result/benefit) can be sought through evaluation.

Associated main and secondary questions might include:

- To what extent has intervention efficiency been affected – positively or negatively – by the social dialogue or normative contexts?
 - What is the character of positive and/or negative effects? What is the overall net implication on efficiency?
- To what extent has intervention efficiency affected social dialogue or normative results?
 - Considering the unique features of social dialogue, what could have been done more efficiently to achieve the desired results? What could have been done more efficiently to achieve the desired results in the normative domain?

4.5.4 Impact

When it comes to the intervention's impact, social dialogue and norms potentially play roles as both a means by which objectives are achieved and as targets for change themselves.

As a means, for example, social dialogue processes set in motion by an intervention are often intended to contribute to longer term impacts. For example:

-improved levels of youth employment resulting from social pact initiatives that favour strategies for the activation of young people in the labour market.

As a target for change, longer term social dialogue practices may be part of the development objective. For example:

- improved social dialogue practices started during a project intervention making possible (but also reflect) a period of industrial peace.

Box 6

Impact

The positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. This involves the main impacts and effects resulting from the activity on the local social, economic, environmental and other development indicators. The examination should be concerned with both intended and unintended results and must also include the positive and negative impact of external factors, such as changes in terms of trade and financial conditions.

When evaluating the impact of a programme or a project, it is useful to consider the following questions:

- *What has happened as a result of the programme or project?*
- *What real difference has the activity made to the beneficiaries?*
- *How many people have been affected?*

Source: OECD/DAC website.

Evaluations should always seek to assess an intervention's impact on social dialogue, regardless of its stated objectives. This is because the ILO uniquely promotes social dialogue as a method for achieving change, and as a strategic objective for achieving Decent Work. All ILO interventions "exercise" social partners in social dialogue, at the very least to the extent of engaging them in steering the intervention. The universal question associated with this might be:

- To what extent has the social dialogue used to steer project operations improved social dialogue outside of the project?

Where social dialogue practices are targeted for change with the help of an intervention, those changes are most often written in at the level of the immediate objectives. They are thus the subject of the effectiveness criterion as discussed above. If not written clearly into the ToC, a mapping of context should identify if there are any operationally implied impacts for social dialogue.

Questions about attitude may be appropriate in looking for longer term impacts on social dialogue practices. Associated main and secondary questions might include:

- To what extent has the intervention demonstrated the value of social dialogue for your organization?
- To what extent has the intervention had an impact on the way you see the usefulness of social dialogue in addressing matters of concern for your organization in the future?
- What could the intervention have done better in order to increase its impact on your views of social dialogue as a way of addressing matters of concern for your organization?

Where social dialogue is intended to be the method by which changes occur elsewhere and in the long term, a broad question might be asked in this respect:

- To what extent is the long-term impact of the intervention attributable to social dialogue?

With respect to norms and impact, improved compliance with norms ought to contribute to the longer term impact sought by the intervention. For example, ILS-compliant legislative framework for domestic workers should impact on proper employment contracting, i.e. observing work/rest times, access to social security, etc., for domestic workers. However, it is possible that an intervention's ToC has ended with achieving compliance with the relevant norms, i.e. only the legislative framework. It could be said that in this case, the intervention's impact has been "compliance for compliance's sake". The first position is more consistent with approaches to impact evaluation, as it traditionally looks to higher levels and more long-term results, where attribution issues are more acute. But this is not necessarily the case, depending on what norms are involved – where they, in fact, set the longer term standard – and what the intervention intends.

Where the development objective is limited to compliance for compliance's sake, questions might include:

- To what extent has the intervention had an impact on laws and practices under national normative frameworks?
- Has the intervention contributed to an observed reduction in child labour?

Where the development objective is higher than compliance for compliance's sake, an evaluation would be looking for impact that is consistent with a norm, where the impact may be attributable to compliance with the norm.

→ **Examples of normative mandate contributing to impact**

Figure 5. Example: Normative mandate contributing to impact in labour inspection intervention

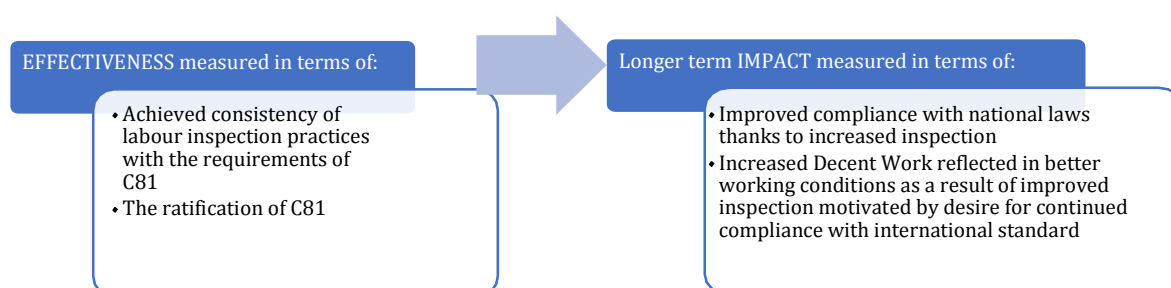
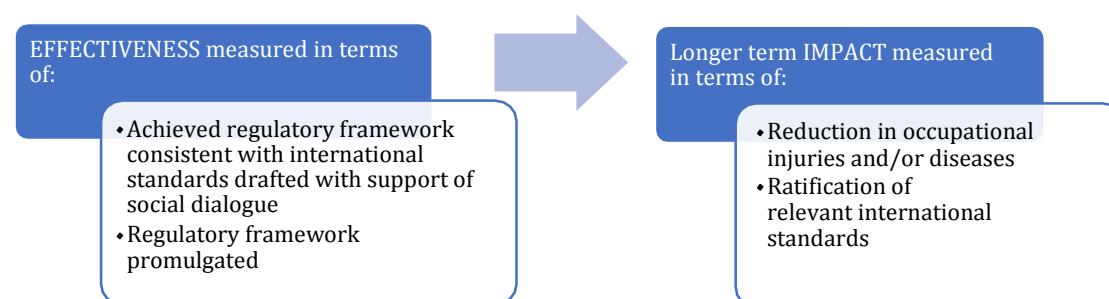


Figure 6. Example: Normative mandate contributing to impact in the area of safety and health



As a general question in these cases, it might be asked:

- To what extent has the intervention contributed to the overarching result aimed for by the [relevant norm]?

→ **Examples of evaluation impact questions might include:**

- *Has the incidence of child labour targeted for elimination by the intervention contributed to reduction in poverty and/or improved access to well-remunerated livelihoods?*

- *Has the Decent Work deficit experienced by domestic workers been measurably reduced as a result of the intervention's legislative reforms?*

4.5.5 Sustainability

Sustainability in evaluations is concerned with assessing whether the change brought about by an intervention is likely to continue after its conclusion. Social dialogue can help perpetuate or defeat the changes brought about by an intervention. An intervention's results that will have future

impacts can be sustained by implanting them into national laws or integrating relevant ILS into national standards. This also applies to the institutional implementation of ILS, where they exist.

Associated main and secondary questions to help evaluate these measures of sustainability might include:

- To what extent has social dialogue contributed to or detracted from the intervention's impacts continuing after donor funding ceased?
- Are social partners aware of the intervention's results and impacts, and prepared to pursue their maintenance and/or extension through social dialogue?
- To what extent have the intervention's results and impacts been reinforced by normative systems?
 - Do existing or new national or local legislation or regulations reinforce the intervention's results?
 - Do private normative systems, i.e. codes of conduct, industrial standards, etc., reinforce the intervention's results?
 - Has the use of existing or new ILS – through ratification, use as a guide for national practices or standards, as a basis for advocacy, etc. – contributed to sustaining the intervention's results?

Broadly speaking, the more central norms are for an intervention on the normative continuum, the greater the potential for the supervision of ILO standards to contribute to the sustainability of outcomes. For example, if a project helps bring national law into conformity with a ratified ILO Convention and the ILO's CEACR noted the improvement, the continued periodic supervision by the CEACR helps to sustain the project's result. The possibility of allegations of failure to apply the Convention may also help to sustain the intervention's results, depending on their relevance to the standard. An evaluation can draw on such evidence insofar as it is known in time for the evaluation.

Box 7

Sustainability

Sustainability is concerned with measuring whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn. Projects need to be environmentally as well as financially sustainable.

When evaluating the sustainability of a programme or a project, it is useful to consider the following questions:

- *To what extent did the benefits of a programme or project continue after donor funding ceased?*
- *What were the major factors which influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the programme or project?*

Source: OECD/DAC website.

In each case where the DC supported the achievement, criteria measures can include:

- the fact of ratification;
- the provision of periodic reports on implementation as required by the ILO's regular system of supervision;
- improvement in integration or implementation as monitored by the relevant supervisory bodies and/or by the evaluation itself.

Where standards have been peripheral to an intervention, the system of ILS supervision may be more distant from the intervention's outcomes and outputs. This is difficult to assess without particulars of the intervention. For example, where the standard is a broad one and the intervention's results nevertheless contribute to its achievement, backtracking on those results may still potentially be the subject of complaints to supervisory bodies. A government's reporting of the contribution made by an intervention and its impact on the application of a ratified Convention can help set up a situation supporting sustainability, by making backtracking less tenable.

4.6 Take account of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development set 17 goals, with 169 targets and some 230 indicators on which general agreement has been reached.⁴⁴ The ILO's programming and project interventions support its constituents in promoting the Decent Work Agenda within an overarching SDG framework.⁴⁵ Evaluations should capture how well this is being done.

In addition to the ILO's contribution to Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth, normative work contributes also to many others. The Office has catalogued the relationships between SDG targets and its thematic areas of work, and budgeted policy outcomes.⁴⁶ DC projects are linked at a global level into these results-based policy outcomes. Aggregated account at a global level is thus taken of programming and of projects' relation to SDGs.

⁴⁴ Report of the Inter-Agency Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators, Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators, 2016, www.sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/11803Official-List-of-Proposed-SDG-Indicators.pdf [accessed 8 December 2018].

⁴⁵ Resolution concerning effective ILO development cooperation in support of the Sustainable Development Goals, International Labour Conference, 107th Session, 2018, www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_633138.pdf [accessed 8 December 2018].

⁴⁶ ILO: Programme and Budget for the Biennium 2018–2019, International Labour Office, 2018, www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---program/documents/genericdocument/wcms_582294.pdf [accessed 8 December 2018].

Figure 7. Contribution of ILO's Policy Outcomes to the SDGs



Source: ILO Programme and Budget, 2018–19.

It would be good if country-level programming and DC evaluations could be harmonized with the SDG framework. This could add value by assessing their performance in contributing to SDG achievements at national level. As a first step, the currently available diagnostic instrument for assessing evaluability of the ILO's DWCP in the context of the SDGs can be used taking the specificities of normative and social dialogue context into account.⁴⁷

As seen in the case below, in order to assess the performance of programmes and interventions in contributing to the achievement of SDGs, monitoring and reporting capacity within projects would need to be improved to broaden the availability of data. The range of methods and questions would also need to be widened to evaluate effectiveness at the level of delivering decent work results, as well as to measure the impact of ILO's interventions.

➔ **Case study of a project directly impacting an SDG and target, among other standards in its normative context**

An intervention worked with the national employers' organization in training and promoting the advancement of women in entrepreneurial and managerial positions within the food processing sector, using a value chain approach. Activities included

⁴⁷ Diagnostic instrument to assess the evaluability of DWCPs in the context of the SDGs, International Labour Office, 2018, www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_626865.pdf [accessed 8 December 2018].

sensitization interventions, SME operations training, and management training. The ToC focused on affecting attitudes, improving skills, helping enterprises identify entrepreneurial and managerial talent among the targeted beneficiary groups. Evaluation ToR set OECD/DAC criteria. In addition to a tripartite project steering committee (PSC), the social dialogue context included facilitation of dialogue among industry's social partners to reach agreement on an industry-wide accord to find and promote skilled women into lower management positions. The principle of promoting gender equality was stated in the project document but not elaborated upon.

In her inception report, the evaluator mapped the normative context, observing ratification of CEDAW, C111 and C142 and noted the relevance of related ILO Recommendations. No mention had been made in international supervision of underrepresentation of women in entrepreneurial endeavours or managerial positions, although the government was urged to continue efforts to promote gender equality. The evaluator proposed the inclusion of two meso-level evaluation questions:

- Was the project relevant in terms of meeting international obligations and working towards SDGs targets?*
- Did the project make a significant difference in terms of international obligations and SDG targets?*

The evaluator found the project highly relevant in respect of the first question. Responding to the second question, the evaluator noted a contribution, but speculated about quantifying its significance. She was able to note survey data reflecting some change in attitudes and that women had come into entrepreneurial and managerial positions that they likely would not have but for the project. The evaluator noted that the project would have contributed to “increasing women in management positions”, SDG Target 5.5.2, but found that the government had not designated this as one of the indicators for SDG 5: Achieve Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls. The evaluator suggested that the project – along with the DWCP – could have taken greater account of this particular SDG and target, which was precisely in line with its intended outcome, and worked to promote its adoption as one of government's SDG target selections. She urged that ILO custodial work for this target in this country should take these points into account in future normative work.

The example above is an easy one. It is inspired by and constructed from an actual project and an actual SDG and target.⁴⁸ It illustrates the depth of analysis, questioning and data needed to begin to link DC evaluations to higher level decent work outcomes and the Decent Work Agenda at country level. It shows the important national context for relating DC evaluation work with SDG and target selections. It also illustrates the relationship between norms and a SDG and one of its indicators. The work needed to do all this is not insubstantial

⁴⁸ The way forward after the revolution - decent work for women in Egypt and Tunisia – mid-term evaluation", in RAF/12/01/FIN, International Labour Office, 2015c, www.ilo.org/evalinfo/product/download.do?type=document&id=14794 [accessed 8 December 2018].

and the call has been made for it to be done at all levels of results-based management (RBM) in the ILO, including DC evaluation.⁴⁹

It is probably easiest to imagine programme designers and evaluators doing this work on an ad hoc basis. Both can use the ILO's DW4SD Resource Platform ⁵⁰ to identify linkages between a prospective project or intervention in a particular thematic area and relevant SDGs, and from their targets in the light of national selections. The evaluability diagnostic instrument can help further in developing appropriate monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plans constructed on these bases. The ToC described by intervention designers should ultimately link normative and social dialogue contexts with this SDG analysis.

Yet, to be correctly carried out, the effort actually needs to be systemic. In doing so, the ILO's normative mandate can again be brought to the fore, where the objectives of particular ILS can be aligned with SDGs, targets and indicators. The ILO's DW4SD Resource Platform contributes by making the linkages to ILS in its presentation of Thematic Areas. ⁵¹ In evaluations, these can be used systematically to build linkages and determine if data are available to address possible evaluation questions designed to take the SDGs into account, as seen in the case above.

5. Conclusions

This study has reviewed evaluation approaches, methods, and frameworks with a view to improving consideration of social dialogue and normative mandates in ILO evaluations. Two frameworks have been proposed for helping to bring these mandates into the spotlight for inclusion in existing evaluation methods. A number of operational suggestions have been made to supplement existing evaluation approaches. Improvements can be made by mapping interventions' normative and social dialogue contexts, identifying how specific norms have been used in interventions, determining the evaluability of interventions taking these ILO mandates into account, and then casting evaluation questions as needed in the light of these unique ILO mandates.

A model evaluation framework taking normative and social dialogue mandates into account:

- suggests using conceptual tools in the normative continuum, typologies for the roles given social dialogue in interventions and the idea of OECD/DAC criterion dependency;
- advocates making appropriate adaptations to evaluation questions;

⁴⁹ The implications of the SDGs on ILO's results framework – remarks from an evaluative perspective, International Labour Office, Evaluation Office, 2016a, www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_626860.pdf [accessed 8 December 2018].

⁵⁰ See ILO DW4SD Resource Platform: www.ilo.org/global/topics/dw4sd/themes/lang--en/index.htm [accessed 8 December 2018].

⁵¹ For each of the themes, see ILO ILS Library Resources: libguides.ilo.org/international-labour-standards-en/resources [accessed 8 December 2018].

- proposes giving greater consideration in practice to reconstructing ToC in evaluations in the short term and improving their design and logical frameworks in the medium to long term; and
- urges the addition of preliminary contextual findings focusing on normative and social dialogue mandates within the intervention as a concrete evaluation output.

These approaches and methods build on earlier UNEG and ILO EVAL work and frameworks, by contributing details that take ILO practice and mandate into account. This presentation treats matters that are quite fundamental to the way the ILO goes about its “normative work” in supporting the development, integration and implementation of its – and others – standards among its constituents. The evolution and design of DC interventions today is the result of the interplay of many stakeholder interests. Mandating a parsing of foundational normative and social dialogue contexts in evaluation should cause deeper thinking about what interventions do, why and how. This is all about the roots of the “inseparable, interrelated and mutually supportive” strategic objectives of Decent Work seen from an evaluation perspective.

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