

▶ *i*-eval Flash news

The ILO Evaluation Office is pleased to share the thirty-seventh edition of *i*-eval Flash news. Through this triannual electronic bulletin, we provide readers with updates, news and information on publications and upcoming events related to evaluation.



The ILO Governing Body discusses the high-level evaluations on COVID-19 and programme of work in Central Asia and sets priorities for 2023 based on the Annual Evaluation Report

▶ by Guy Thijs, Director

For the first time in two years, since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ILO Governing Body met in full face-to-face – bringing together governments, workers' and employers' organizations to discuss issues pertinent to the world of work. During this 346th Session of the Governing Body the Evaluation Office (EVAL) had no less than three items on the agenda. EVAL presented a final status report on the implementation of the evaluation strategy contained in its [Annual Evaluation Report 2021-22](#), an overview of ILO's overall performance effectiveness, and the outline for a new evaluation strategy (2023-25). The two high-level independent evaluations undertaken in 2022 included the highly awaited evaluation of [ILO's COVID-19 response \(2020-22\)](#), alongside an evaluation of [ILO's programme of work in Central Asia \(2018-22\)](#). The [Independent Evaluation of the Evaluation Function \(2017-2021\)](#), due every five years, was on the agenda as well. All reports were well received by the Governing Body, generating lively discussions, leading to the approval of all recommendations, and endorsement of the outline of the new evaluation strategy.

The ILO's transformative evaluation strategy (2018-22) resulted in the evaluation function achieving or partially achieving 95% of its sub-outcomes. This confirmed earlier findings by the [2020 Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network \(MOPAN\) review of the ILO](#) and the recent [Independent evaluation of the ILO's evaluation function \(2017-21\)](#). These external reviews combined with a consultative process – involving the full evaluation network will inform a new evaluation strategy (2023-25) that builds on previous success and addresses former challenges, to take the ILO's evaluation function into a new period of growth with more emphasis on organizational learning and utility through a strengthened enabling environment.

The results from the [high-level evaluation of ILO's COVID-19 response](#) - the first comprehensive and objective account of the ILO's performance during the pandemic - shows that the ILO had to rapidly adapt its tools, intervention models and projects to ensure that they remained relevant and effective. It points to the commitment of the ILO to address these challenges head-on, maintaining its core value of social dialogue, while also taking stock of how the ILO might meet challenges posed by future crises. The [high-level evaluation of ILO's programme of work in Central Asia \(2018-22\)](#) critically examined the interventions in the sub-region - specifically in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Learning from this evaluation is key to ensuring that the ILO's support to national Decent Work Agendas are relevant and effective to address emerging challenges.

The New Year will be busy for EVAL. With preparations for three, 2023 high-level evaluations already underway, and with a biennial workshop on the horizon and various research reports set for launch in the first quarter, it will be an especially interesting, active and engaging year.

IN THIS ISSUE

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR - 1

INNOVATION & RESEARCH - 2

NEWS FROM THE REGIONS - 3

INSTITUTIONAL EVALUATION - 5

EVAL HIGHLIGHTS - 6

LEARNING ACTIVITIES & EVENTS - 7

► Evaluation advocacy

Evaluation is an essential partner in sustainable development

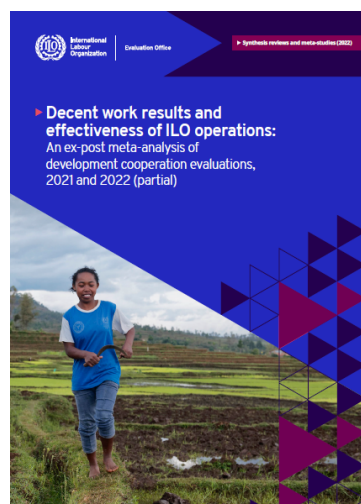


In this video, the new ILO Director-General, Gilbert Hougbo, highlights the important link between evaluation, the ILO social partners and the Sustainable Development Goals, and explains the significant contribution that evaluation can play in promoting public accountability and trust in governments. [Watch the video.](#)

► Innovation & research

Completed studies

How to measure the ILO's developmental effectiveness?



On an annual basis, the ILO Evaluation Office (EVAL) conducts a meta-analysis of independent project evaluations to assess the extent to which decent work results and the effectiveness of ILO's operations have been achieved. For the first time, the recently completed [meta-analysis](#) used evaluations conducted on a rolling

basis to produce results in real time, and to inform ILO's performance in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Overall, results for the period 2021 - 22 showed that the effectiveness and impact of ILO's work continues to show steady improvement. While operations in 2021 presented some decline in their strategic relevance and cost-efficiency, preliminary results for 2022 showed noticeable improvements, notably in the area of sustainability, with performance returning to pre-pandemic levels. Results are available in the [full report](#) and in part II of the [Annual Evaluation Report 2021 – 22](#).

Planned and ongoing studies

What can be learned from ILO's work on labour protection?

As it has done in the past, EVAL plans to support the recurrent discussion on labour protection by conducting a synthesis review which identifies lessons learned from ILO interventions in this area. From a draft, annotated outline of the recurrent discussion paper, EVAL worked with relevant departments to identify issues that could inform the scoping of the synthesis review. The focus of the recurrent report will be on how to bring together the natural interconnections between different areas of work, including between labour protection and social protection. It will build on lessons drawn from the pandemic, migration crisis and other events, to develop an approach that will bolster resilience in protecting workers in future crisis contexts. The recently conducted High-level evaluations (HLEs) on [ILO's response to the COVID-19 pandemic](#), on [labour migration](#) and on [gender equality](#) will be included as subjects of secondary analysis.

Guidance note on applying environmental sustainability practices in evaluation

Environmental sustainability is recognized by the ILO as being an important challenge that requires urgent attention. Therefore, in January 2016, the Director-General of the ILO introduced the Environmental Sustainability Policy. The policy creates a mandate for the ILO to reduce and to mitigate any negative impacts on the environment, and to improve the ILO's environmental performance towards the goal of achieving climate neutrality. To achieve these aims and commitments, the Office is progressively mainstreaming environmental sustainability in its results-based management frameworks, policies, programmes, and projects. To keep pace with these developments, EVAL is preparing a guidance note on environmental sustainability that will be launched during the first quarter of next year. The note provides guidance to evaluation managers on integrating environmental sustainability into the design of the evaluation and offers advice to evaluators on collecting data on potential environmental and social impacts identified at the outset of the project.



How to better measure the development effectiveness and results of ILO's work?

In response to the growing recognition that evaluations provide credible and useful feedback to the ILO on its effectiveness in advancing decent work, [EVAL has regularly conducted meta-analyses of independent project evaluations, since 2011](#), using comparable approaches and methodologies. EVAL has commissioned a Think Piece to reflect on the key proxy indicators of performance that are widely used in these meta-analyses, and the main formats followed, to report on operational effectiveness. The findings from the Think Piece will be published in January 2023.

A new ILO evaluation strategy for 2023-25

The [ILO evaluation policy 2017](#) is implemented through an evaluation strategy and associated policy guidelines, tools, capacity building and management systems. The current [ILO results-based Evaluation Strategy 2018–21](#) (extended to 2022) was subject to an [Independent evaluation of the ILO's evaluation function for the period 2017-2021](#). The evaluation endorsed the continued relevance and structure of the current Evaluation Strategy and its outcomes, identifying areas where adjustments should be considered or where strengthening was needed.

The ILO Governing Body, in November 2022, endorsed the outline of an updated strategy for 2023-2025, presented in part III of the [Annual Evaluation Report 2021-22](#), and the steps that will be taken to develop a fully-fledged results-based version. The strategy will focus on the enabling environment for evaluation and the link to other evidence generating and learning processes. It will also maintain independence of the evaluation function and a focus on the contribution of evaluative evidence for organisational learning and improvement. Further consultations will lead to a full strategy with a Theory of Change and a results matrix, with detailed sub-outcomes, including for the enabling environment, milestones and targets and the identification of custodians throughout the office, involved in the implementation of the evaluation strategy for ILO.

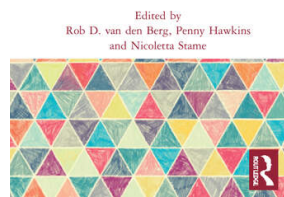


New publications on evaluation and use of evaluations



Ethics for Evaluation: Beyond “doing no harm” to “tackling bad” and “doing good”

Edited By Rob D. van den Berg, Penny Hawkins, Nicoletta Stame



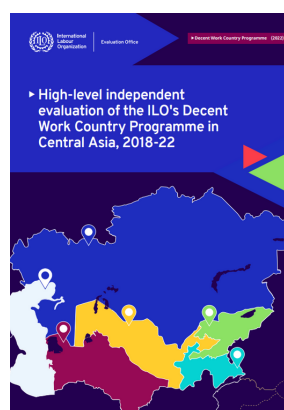
Extraction from Routledge, “In Ethics for Evaluation the diverse perspectives on ethical guidance in evaluation are untangled

and ordered in a theoretical framework focusing on evaluations doing no harm, tackling bad and doing good. Divided into four parts a diverse group of subject experts present a practical look at ethics, utilizing practical experience to analyze how ethics have been applied in evaluations and how new approaches can shape the future of ethics. The chapters collectively create a common understanding of the potential role of ethics to infuse policy decisions and stakeholder initiatives with evaluations that provide better insight and potential solutions for problems, going beyond “what works” to what needs to be done and what would help.”

► News from the Regions

Europe & Central Asia

Independent high-level evaluation of ILO's programme of work Central Asia, 2018-22



ILO has a long history of advocating for decent work and social justice around the world. In Central Asia, the ILO offers diverse technical advisory activities, focusing on a variety of topics. Some of these include, raising awareness and enhancing compliance with international labour standards; recommending policies and ways to improve public

Considering all these activities: what has been achieved? How effective have they been? What can be learned to inform future interventions? To find out, EVAL undertook a [high-level independent evaluation of ILO's programme of work in Central Asia from 2018-22](#), focusing on five countries: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. In line with international good practices, the evaluation examined the relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, progress towards

impact and sustainability of the programmes in each country. The evaluation followed [EVAL's high-level evaluation Protocol for Strategy and Policy](#) and used a mixed methods approach (qualitative and quantitative) to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings.

Some key findings:

- The constituents in Central Asia perceived that the ILO's assistance aligned with their priorities. They expressed strong appreciation for the speed, flexibility, and adaptiveness of the ILO's assistance to meet unanticipated needs emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The ILO contributed to many noteworthy results in Central Asia in the areas of combatting child labour, forced labour and trafficking; strengthening legal protections for freedom of association; developing employment and social protection policies and action plans; and adopting improved vocational training assessment, planning and curriculum development methodologies.
- The ILO and its constituents identified many factors that either helped or hindered country programmes' effectiveness. Key success factors included access to the ILO's technical expertise, active participation from national constituents, strong ILO management, effective use of ILO research, and well-designed interventions. Identified constraints included: varying capacity of social partner institutions, variances in political will for reforms, economic or political instability, and COVID-19-related delays.
- From 2018 to 2021, the ILO's technical assistance and development cooperation activities in Central Asia produced 48 results towards Programme and Budget (P&B) and Country Programme Outcomes (CPOs). Overall, the contributions of Central Asian countries to total CPO results in the region were outsized relative to its budget. With about 15 per cent of the regional budget, Central Asia contributed to about 25 per cent of the reported results.
- By clearly identifying priorities and desired outcomes and outputs, DWCPs in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan were largely effective as a results-based approach to decent work promotion. However, the choice of indicators and use of targets, as well as activities to monitor progress against outcomes, were relatively weak.



Some key recommendations:

- The ILO should continue to consult supervisory bodies' findings to determine gaps in the integration or implementation of Conventions as an input for the design of technical cooperation activities. Moreover, overcoming concerns raised by these bodies should be high on the priority list of ILO country programmes in Central Asia.
- The ILO should continue efforts in all Central Asian countries to strengthen freedom of association in law and practice. It should strengthen its support and cooperation on safe labour migration, entrepreneurship and enterprise development in the subregion, building on its experiences and good practices in other regions. ILO should capitalize on all opportunities to combat forced labour in Turkmenistan's cotton industry.
- The ILO should reinforce efforts to educate partners on the role and importance of international labour standards in Central Asia's economic development.
- The ILO should continue to engage in research on labour topics; to increase ownership and strengthen the capabilities of national institutions and experts, it should reinforce its collaboration with national institutions and experts in Central Asia.
- The ILO should endeavour to mobilize additional resources from donors so that it can continue its support to national counterparts in Central Asia, especially in the areas where it has successfully provided policy advice but needs implementation support.
- The ILO should strengthen DWCP monitoring activities in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, by improving the formulation and monitoring of programme indicators and indicator targets.

Key good practices

- Supporting workers' organization research activities on pandemic effects and the formulation of policy recommendations.
- ILO participation in country-level inter-agency working groups to promote inter-agency cooperation and programme coherence.
- Supporting national and international alliances in favour of fundamental principles and rights at work.

- [Read the report](#)
- [Access the Quick Facts](#)

► Institutional evaluation

How did the ILO perform during the COVID-19 pandemic?



In November 2021, while many parts of the world were still under pandemic-related health regulations and the omicron variant scare was still to come, the Evaluation Office began working on scoping an evaluation that would look at how ILO performed during the COVID-19 pandemic. A synthesis review of 87 evaluation reports, that began a

few months earlier, looking to see what the evaluation reports were saying about ILO and COVID-19, served as the initial basis for establishing the scope. Since the start of the pandemic, ILO evaluation reports have followed the “Implications of COVID-19 on evaluations in the ILO: Practical tips on adapting to the situation” and EVAL’s Protocol on collecting evaluative evidence on the ILO’s COVID-19 response measures through project and programme evaluations.

In January of 2022, an evaluation team of 4 women and 3 men, made up of both EVAL staff and external experts, began consulting ILO staff, both in headquarters and the regions, and representatives of constituents in Geneva, on potential evaluation questions, identification of case studies and field visit countries, and available data sources. The evaluation used a mix of quantitative and qualitative analysis of data from 2020-22 to draw findings and conclusions.

International health regulations, once again, did not allow the international evaluation team to undertake field visits as part of data collection. However, five national and regional evaluators were brought onto the team to undertake interviews and visits in each of the case study countries: Argentina, Indonesia, Iraq, Madagascar, Mexico, Thailand and Viet Nam and countries in the Western Balkans.

Some key findings:

- ILO governance systems were challenged in unprecedented ways, demanding speed, adaptability, and new virtual processes, while preserving social dialogue.
- Despite reservations about the virtualization of governance systems, constituents were satisfied that the ILO’s response was appropriate and that the ILO remained committed to social dialogue throughout the crisis.

Key findings at the institutional level:

- The ILO’s management and governance adapted well to changed circumstances, ensured constituent engagement and support were maintained, and introduced new systems to allow staff to continue to work.
- In the crisis phase, the ILO worked with its constituents to protect the safety and health of their members, developed resources to support employment and enterprise continuity, and influenced and helped implement emergency social protection measures. Gender-specific and anti-discrimination initiatives were included in this work.

Key findings for inclusive economic growth and employment:

- The threat of enterprise failure was seen as a priority. The ILO scanned global best practices for supporting enterprises, distributed weekly updates, and produced support recommendations for constituents and knowledge products to directly support enterprises.

Key findings for promotion of protection of all workers:

- The promotion of labour standards to protect workers’ rights was crucial and the ILO made significant contributions to their enforcement, playing a facilitating role through social dialogue and coordinating action to promote adherence to international labour standards.

Key findings for the promotion of universal social protection:

- The ILO supported social protection interventions for vulnerable groups, including informal workers, refugees, migrants, people with disabilities and those living with HIV. Over half of ILO COVID-19 related social protection interventions were reported to have contributed to gender equality.

Key findings for ILO action alignment with UN and global responses:

- At the country level, the ILO was reported to have influenced over 120 Socio-Economic Response Plans (SERPs). Calls for new models of development financing will require the ILO to acquire greater expertise in the “whole of government” approach, as well as further human resources to manage the workload associated with this approach, especially at the country level.



Recommendations

1. Continue to strengthen the capacity of tripartite constituents to enhance and adapt their services to contribute to the development of effective global, regional and national post-pandemic recovery policies and actions.
2. Develop an Organization-wide crisis response strategy encompassing both headquarters and the field.
3. Enhance the ILO's capacity to monitor, report and evaluate crisis response actions that are developed and implemented outside the normal programming cycle.
4. Strengthen the institutional capacity of governments to respond to systemic crises through Universal Social Protection.
5. Continue to strengthen constituents' capacities to sustain international labour standards and fundamental principles and rights at work for workers, even during a crisis, and develop inclusive, gender-responsive policies for the protection of workers in insecure forms of work.
6. The ILO should more clearly integrate just transition into its post-pandemic employment and skills development strategies and actions, and use its experience and expertise to implement approaches with maximum potential for impact.

Strategy for enhancing the use of the evaluation

In an effort to improve the use of evaluation findings and conclusions by ILO colleagues and constituents, EVAL has over the years developed a series of products extracted from key reports that enhance readability and use. The products include the formal Governing Body summary, the full evaluation report, a PowerPoint presentation, a Quick Facts, and a video presentation. Keep your eyes open for the upcoming Info Guide on the report in the first quarter of 2023!

- I want to read the **full report**
- Give me the **official summary** presented to the Governing Body
- I want the **Quick Facts**
- Show me the **video** teaser on the report **English**, **French** and **Spanish**

On 5 December 2022 (10am Geneva time), there will be a knowledge dissemination event during which the evaluation team will share the findings from the report and ILO senior managers will discuss how the ILO will implement the recommendations and what the report findings imply for future ILO work. If you are interested to attend, please [sign up here!](#)

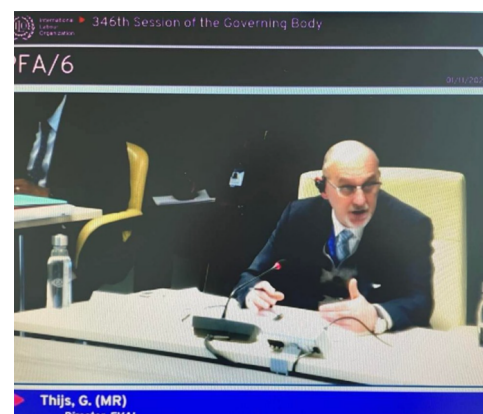
▶ EVAL Highlights

Annual evaluation report 2021-22



This year's **Annual Evaluation Report (AER)** provides a final status report on the implementation of the ILO's evaluation strategy, as measured against its indicators and targets. As confirmed in the [independent evaluation of the ILO's evaluation function \(2022\)](#), and the [2020 Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network \(MOPAN\)](#) assessment of the ILO, the evaluation function has achieved or partially achieved 95 per cent of the sub outcomes, set out in the Evaluation Strategy, indicating that the function managed to meet its operational targets and maintain quality standards despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

The AER also examines the ILO's overall developmental effectiveness by drawing on findings from recent meta-analysis of decent work results-based on evaluations, undertaken during the previous year. It was also informed by findings from the recent high-level independent evaluation of the ILO's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The report concludes by presenting an outline for an updated Evaluation Strategy for 2023-25, which will be finalized early next year. The AER was discussed by the 346th Session of the Governing Body, in November 2022, and its recommendations were approved.



EVAL Director, Guy Thijs, presenting the AER and two high-level evaluations to the Governing Body in Nov. 2022.

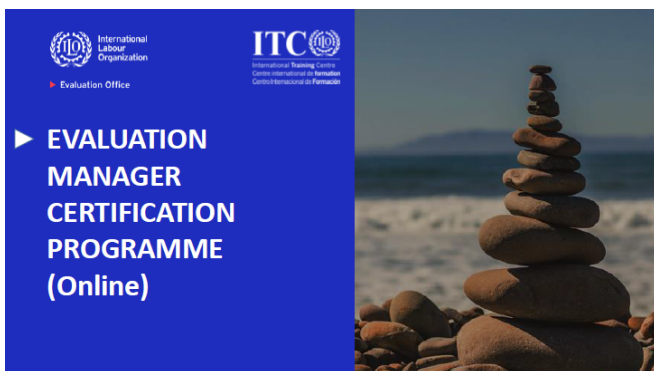
- [Read the report](#)
- [Access the Quick Facts](#)

Bringing together the evaluation network: biennial workshop

EVAL will hold its 7th biennial workshop in February 2023. It will bring together almost 30 members of the ILO's evaluation network, including Regional Evaluation Officers and Departmental Evaluation Focal Points, to discuss and to validate a new evaluation strategy for 2023-25 and to discuss how to implement key actions that will inform work for the next two years.

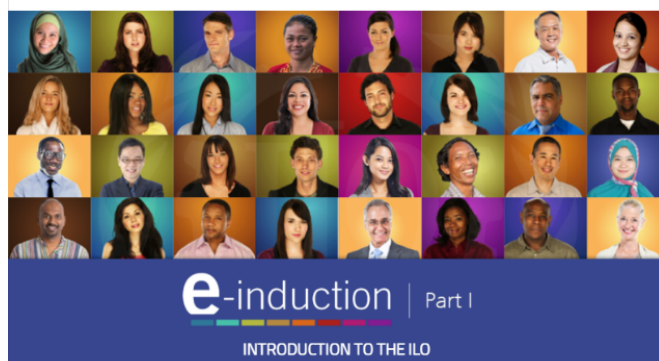
► Learning activities

Evaluation Manager Certification Programme



EVAL, in collaboration with the Human Resources Department and the International Training Centre (ITC), recently launched the **EMCP 2.0**, a digital version of the Evaluation Management Certification Programme. The digital EMCP allows participants a great deal of flexibility in planning their time for the training, as it combines online self-learning activities, with live webinars. Two iterations of the EMCP 2.0 have already been conducted this year with more planned in 2023.

Consultants' orientation programme



EVAL encourages consultants who are interested to undertake evaluations for the ILO to complete the **self-induction programme**. Its purpose is to improve familiarity with the ILO's mandate, its evaluation policy and strategy. Over 150 consultants have completed the programme since its launch. Attestations of completion are considered to be a demonstration of competence for being considered for ILO evaluation assignments.

External conferences and events

- **United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG)**: The Annual General Meeting of Directors of UN evaluation offices will take place in Washington on 25-27 January 2023 to discuss the workplan for the new year. A series of Evaluation Practice Exchanges will be organised ahead to share experiences and new developments on evaluation in the UN system.
- **Asia-Pacific Evaluation Association**: Taking place in New Delhi from 21-25 February, the conference will focus on "Towards a Vibrant Evaluation Ecosystem: Creativity, Collaboration and Convergence."

► UNEG developments & global collaboration

National Evaluation Capacities Conference



The **National Evaluation Capacities Conference**, organized by the UNDP, was hosted by the ITCILO in October 2022. With the theme of *Resilient National Evaluation Systems for Sustainable Development*, the conference offered an opportunity for the ILO

tripartite constituents to share experiences and to discuss how to 'build forward better' and to get back on track towards the SDGs, in an inclusive manner, through national evaluation systems.

2022 ILO Evaluation Champion

Ms Francesca Fantoni

Since 2015, the Evaluation Office annually recognizes one colleague which has made an extraordinary contribution to ILO's evaluation work. Ms Francesca Fantoni has been selected as the Evaluation Champion for 2022. Francesca is a certified evaluation manager and has managed three independent evaluations - most recently of the **second phase of the Inclusive Growth, Social Protection and Jobs project**. Her dedication, skill and attention to detail makes her a valuable member of the ILO's evaluation network.

All Departmental Evaluation Focal Points, Certified Evaluation Managers and Internal Evaluators are eligible.

The Evaluation Office wishes you a pleasant holiday season and best wishes for the New Year!

Evaluation Office (EVAL)
International Labour Office
CH-1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland
Email: eval@ilo.org
Editor-in-Chief: Guy Thijs, Director
Executive Editor: Janette Murawski