Governing Body

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Programme, Financial and Administrative Section
Audit and Oversight Segment

PFA

FIFTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Annual evaluation report 2015−16

Purpose of the document

In the present document, Part 1 provides the Governing Body with a progress report on the ILO's evaluation work during 2015 and 2016, in the context of its results-based strategy. Part II examines the implications of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for the ILO's new results framework from the perspective of evaluation. It also provides an update on impact evaluation as an additional tool for identifying and documenting the ILO's development effectiveness. The Governing Body is invited to take note of this report, endorse its recommendations to be included in the ILO's rolling plan for the implementation of recommendations, and confirm priorities for the 2017–19 programme of work (see draft decision in paragraph 72).

Relevant strategic objective: Relevant to all strategic objectives.

Policy implications: The recommendations in this report may have policy implications.

Legal implications: None.

Financial implications: None.

Follow-up action required: ILO's Evaluation Office will incorporate approved recommendations into its rolling action plan on the implementation of recommendations and suggestions contained in annual evaluation reports (see appendix).

Author unit: Evaluation Office (EVAL).

Related documents: None.

Introduction

1. This report has been produced during a period in which the International Labour Office (ILO) is faced with unprecedented opportunities and challenges, as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development makes decent work a part of many of its Goals. There is growing recognition that evaluation will have an important role to play in validating the ILO's contribution towards the realization of these Goals. This coincides well with the ILO's advanced preparations for the new Strategic Plan 2018–21, and an independent evaluation of the evaluation function is currently being conducted. This evaluation is expected to yield recommendations that will strengthen the Evaluation Office (EVAL), making it better able to meet these challenges.

2. In keeping with established practice dating back to 2011, Part I of this report provides updates on developments and progress made with the implementation of the three outcomes identified in the 2011–15 results-based evaluation strategy. Part II reviews and reflects on selected points aimed at strengthening the Office's overall effectiveness in implementing the Strategic Policy Framework 2010–15. It expresses views on a new Strategic Plan 2018–21 that should be aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In keeping with previous reports, and as requested by the Governing Body, the report includes an update on steps taken by the Office in relation to the rolling action plan for the implementation of the recommendations contained in previous annual evaluation reports (see appendix).

3. The year 2016 was a particularly eventful and productive one as far as evaluation in the ILO was concerned. A biennial stocktaking workshop was held in February–March 2016; it included members of the ILO's field and headquarters evaluation network. The purpose of the biennial workshop was to determine how far EVAL has come since the previous workshop, identify goals that EVAL would like to attain over the next two years, discuss the three outcomes of the evaluation strategy as part of the preparations for an updated four-year evaluation strategy (2018–21), and discuss preparations for the upcoming independent evaluation of the evaluation function.

4. Results from the biennial workshop found that evaluations were being used more effectively. Stronger performance was noted in the use of evaluations, and a culture of evaluation and of evaluation thinking had become more established thanks to training and awareness raising on the topic. Areas for improvement included report quality (as highlighted in the external quality assessments of 2014–15) and the ways in which the volume and complexity of the work were addressed in both centralized and decentralized evaluations. Part I of the report provides an update on EVAL's performance as measured against milestones and targets under the three outcomes that guide the evaluation function.

5. Part II of the report reflects on the discussions held within the ILO and the larger United Nations community (United Nations Evaluation Group – UNEG) on how evaluation interfaces with the SDGs. Work undertaken so far highlights the need to map out pertinent theories of change and results chains that incorporate relevant SDG targets into the ILO's new Strategic Plan. This mapping out will include the identification of other players involved in the attainment of these targets, particularly at the national level. Revised or updated theories of change that reflect relevant SDG targets will require new indicators and data that can further inform monitoring and evaluation needs. They may also require an adjustment of new and existing approaches to evaluation. Part II also discusses the role of impact evaluation in the ILO, and the important advances made on this front during the period under review.

6. There are high expectations of the role of evaluation. In his address at the UNEG Annual General Meeting in March 2016, the Director-General emphasized the importance of

evaluation for the ILO's strategic planning: "Evaluation will not only provide evidence-based findings, it will also be a partner on our journey to 2030 that can inform us as to the challenges and the gaps in our strategies; enabling us to adjust, to speed up, or even to go a different route altogether if need be." The next evaluation strategy should build on the findings of the independent evaluation of the evaluation function and determine how to meet these expectations.

Part I. Implementation of ILO's evaluation strategy

Progress made towards achieving key milestones

7. The results-based evaluation strategy for 2011–15, which was extended for a further two-year period (2016–17), guided the implementation of ILO's evaluation policy during the period under review. Progress was rated satisfactory to highly satisfactory for the 11 biennial milestones relating to the three outcomes for the 2016–17 extension. Substantial headway was made with harmonizing Office-wide evaluation practices, strengthening evaluation capacities, improving follow-up to recommendations, and optimizing the role of the Evaluation Advisory Committee (EAC). Challenges that continued to require attention included a growing demand for evaluations and for evaluation of high quality, and the presentation of the large amounts of information generated by evaluations in a format that facilitates and promotes better use of findings.

Outcome 1: Better use of evaluation by management and constituents for governance

A. *Improving the effectiveness of the Evaluation Advisory Committee*

Biennial milestone 1.1 (2016–17): Four meetings per year; formal record of recommendations for evaluation programme of work (2017–18); record of EAC advice on recommendation use; EAC will coalesce support to address cross-cutting Office-wide issues that are identified in evaluations

8. The use of evaluation results for governance and for improved efficiency and effectiveness through organizational learning remains a key concern for EVAL, use being the ultimate measure of success. While the actual use of evaluations is not under EVAL's direct control, supporting processes and initiatives that facilitate the use of evaluations continue to drive its agenda. Since its reconstitution in 2011, the EAC has become a proactive and respected advisory body. It promotes the use of evaluations and meets four times a year on average, keeping detailed records of its proceedings. This has continued during the current biennium despite the fact that over half of its membership was replaced during 2016. Table 1 summarizes the EAC's decisions on follow-up to high-level evaluations for 2014 and 2015.

Table 1. **EAC decisions on follow-up to high-level evaluations of 2014 and 2015**

High-level evaluation	Status of follow-up	EAC review of actual follow-up
Coherent decent work policies – 2014	Approved	Line management follow-up, reported as delayed in the previous annual evaluation report, approved in November 2015.
Caribbean – 2015	Approved	Initial implementation of the endorsed action plan reviewed and approved in June 2016.
Labour inspection – 2015	Approved	Initial implementation of the endorsed action plan reviewed and approved in June 2016.
Technical cooperation strategy – 2015	Delayed	The workplan, initially rejected by the EAC during its February 2016 meeting, was approved during its June 2016 meeting. The Partnerships and Field Support Department (PARDEV) was asked to give the Committee a report on its implementation in six months' time.

9. The EAC's expanding role is reflected in more substantive discussions on follow-up to high-level evaluations. There have been written and verbal updates by line managers on the follow-up to their workplans, and the EAC has taken a more active role in the identification of topics that would benefit from additional evaluations or meta-studies. Examples include the independent thematic evaluation of the ILO's work in post-conflict, fragile and disaster-affected countries, and the in-depth study of how the ILO addresses recommendations that pertain to larger systemic issues, such as programme design, capacity development, mainstreaming and coherence. Most recently, as a follow-up to the discussion on the impact of the Social Justice Declaration at the 105th Session of the International Labour Conference, June 2016, the EAC recommended that EVAL identify and plan the timing of Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) evaluations, policy outcome evaluations, and other strategic evaluations in such a way as to optimize their contribution to high-level discussions in the Governing Body and the International Labour Conference.

Use of high-level or thematic evaluations

10. The 2015 high-level evaluations of labour inspections and of DWCPs in the Caribbean led to appropriate strategic follow-up. The labour inspection evaluation contributed to the development of the ILO's Flagship Programme on Occupational Safety and Health (OSH). For the Caribbean subregion, evaluation findings were used in discussions with constituents about a new DWCP. Findings from the thematic evaluation on post-conflict, fragile and disaster-affected countries were mentioned in statements at the International Labour Conference as part of the discussion on the revision of the Employment (Transition from War to Peace) Recommendation, 1944 (No. 71). Findings from this evaluation also contributed to the development of the ILO flagship programme "Jobs for Peace and Resilience". Findings from the independent evaluation of the ILO's Action Plan for Gender Equality 2010–15 informed governance-related discussions on an updated action plan, at the March 2016 session of the Governing Body. Management took note of issues relating to performance deficits, identified in the gender evaluation, and this was a catalyst for improved performance.

B.   Assessing ILO performance

Biennial milestone 1.2 (2016–17): Annual evaluation reports
inform the new Strategic Plan 2018–21

11. The ILO's evaluation strategy, developed in 2011, included a new chapter on the assessment of the ILO's overall performance based on findings from evaluations and meta-studies. Part II of the annual evaluation report became a tool for systematically assessing current issues affecting the ILO's effectiveness, as examples in table 2 illustrate.

Table 2.   Key issues with effectiveness, addressed in annual evaluation reports

Annual evaluation report	Key issues addressed, relating to effectiveness
2010–11	Evaluability assessment of the ILO's Strategic Policy Framework 2010–15. Assessment of the effectiveness of the ILO's work in technical cooperation projects.
2011–12	Review of the effectiveness of the ILO's quality appraisal mechanism in the design of project documents and DWCPs. Assessment of oversight of project performance reporting.
2012–13	Evaluability assessment of country programme outcomes as building blocks of the ILO Strategic Policy Framework 2010–15. Assessment of the effectiveness of the ILO's work in technical cooperation projects. Assessment of the evaluation findings of the Regular Budget Supplementary Account (RBSA)-funded activities.
2013–14	Stocktaking assessment of how recommendations on the Strategic Policy Framework, country programme outcomes and DWCPs led to management action.
2014–15	Identification of recurring issues requiring an institutional response. Identification of critical gaps relating to evaluation, in project and programme design.

12. In the 2016–17 annual evaluation report, EVAL will report on follow-up assessments of the effectiveness of the ILO's work in technical cooperation projects for the period 2013–16, building on similar exercises undertaken for the periods 2009–10 and 2011–12. The 2014 stocktaking exercise on the uptake of EVAL recommendations (relating to the Strategic Policy Framework, country programme outcomes and DWCPs), included in table 2, demonstrated that there has been steady, incremental management uptake and follow-up as part of the reform process and in support of preparations for the Programme and Budget for 2016–17.

13. In 2016, EVAL supported preparations for the new Programme and Budget for 2018–19 as a member of a small working group that had the task of providing methodological guidance. EVAL also provided detailed input for peer reviews of the outcomes. As described in Part II, EVAL contributions were largely but not exclusively focused on how to better factor in the implications of the SDGs for the ILO's results framework as far as evaluation is concerned, including implications for approaches to evaluation.

C.   Selecting high-level evaluation topics for strategic use

14. EVAL conducts annual consultations with senior management, the EAC and constituents to select topics that will be the subject of high-level evaluations in the future. The proposed topics are reviewed by the EAC and submitted to constituents prior to inclusion in this report for approval by the Governing Body. As there are fewer outcomes in the 2016–17 biennium

and they cover broader areas of work, the scope of each outcome is expected to be broader and more ambitious. The summary in table 3 of proposed evaluation topics for 2017 and beyond reflects the EAC's request that EVAL find ways whereby evaluation reports can contribute more effectively to high-level discussions in the Governing Body and the International Labour Conference. Feedback from constituents suggests that there is concern about how this alignment can be assured in the absence of clarity on the process used to identify recurrent topics or policy outcomes for discussion. Alternative evaluation topics proposed for 2018 and 2019 included the formalization of the informal sector and more and better jobs for inclusive growth.

Table 3.   Summary of selected evaluation topics shortlisted for 2017–19

Year	Type	Region	Status
2017	DWCP	Asia (cluster of selected DWCPs)	Already pre-selected for 2017 and due on a rotation basis in 2017.
2017	Institutional	ILO's field structure	Requested first in 2014 but postponed to 2017.
2017	Outcome	Creating and extending social protection floors	Pre-selected earlier for 2017.
2018	Institutional	ILO capacity-building efforts (covering all tripartite constituents)	Pre-selected earlier for 2018.
2018	Outcome	Selected based on recurrent discussions and/or Governing Body policy outcomes	Subject to strict timelines as eight months are required to complete a full evaluation cycle.
2018	DWCP	Arab States (cluster of selected DWCPs)	Due on a rotation basis in 2018.
2019	Institutional	ILO public–private partnerships (PPPs)	In GB.326/POL/7 an independent evaluation of PPPs, their value added and their intervention models was requested.
2019	Outcome	Topic selected based on recurrent discussions and/or Governing Body policy outcomes	Subject to strict timelines as eight months are required to complete a full evaluation cycle.
2019	DWCP	Africa (cluster of selected DWCPs)	Due on a rotational basis in 2019.

D.   Independent evaluation of the evaluation function and implementation of evaluation policy

Biennial milestone 1.3 (2016–17): Independent external evaluation of the ILO's evaluation function informs EVAL's new evaluation strategy

15. The independent evaluation of the evaluation function is on track with follow-up to recommendation 1 of the annual evaluation report 2014–15. [1] A technical committee is providing direct management and oversight under the EAC's supervision. The technical committee comprised the Chief of the Office of Internal Audit and Oversight, a regional programming chief with a background in evaluation, and a technical department branch chief. The terms of reference have been shared with constituents, and the process is fully consultative. The Procurement Bureau has helped the technical committee with the selection of external consultants, using a formal and competitive bidding process. A summary of the full report by the evaluation team, with recommendations and responses from managers, is

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[1] Recommendation 1 of the annual evaluation report 2014–15 states: "The Office should ensure that the independent evaluation of the evaluation function is launched by June 2016 at the latest so that it is ready for reporting to the Governing Body in March 2017 using the structure described … to ensure its independence, credibility and utility", p. 4.

scheduled to be submitted to the Governing Body in March 2017. This report will contain recommendations for a new evaluation strategy (2018–21) that will be presented to the Governing Body in November 2017 as part of the annual evaluation report 2016–17.

16. The evaluation will focus on the evaluation function, taking the 2005 evaluation policy and the extended 2011–15 evaluation strategy as the basis for assessing its effectiveness. It will be a follow-up to the evaluation conducted in 2010, and is expected to be forward-looking and provide recommendations to inform strategic decisions on the future of evaluation in the ILO. The timeline for work will allow for full alignment with the ILO's new Strategic Plan 2018–21 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

17. The new evaluation strategy will draw on past reviews of the ILO's evaluation function. These will include the 2014 Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) study, [2] recent donor reviews, such as the Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN), and a review of procedures and structures in place to ensure that effective use is made of evaluation findings.

Outcome 2: Harmonized Office-wide evaluation practices to support transparency and accountability

18. Apart from EVAL's high-level strategy and the DWCP evaluations (centralized evaluations), discussed under outcome 1, much of EVAL's work remains at the project level (decentralized evaluations). These types of evaluations are part of a larger effort to support effective project design, implementation, monitoring and reporting.

19. Outcome 2 has always been high on EVAL's list of priorities. This is reflected in: (i) efforts to enforce standardized Office-wide evaluation practices through coherent and up-to-date documentation on procedures and guidelines; (ii) the maintenance of a strong network of departmental and regional evaluation focal points and officers; and (iii) the use of a rigorous quality control system and follow-up to evaluation recommendations. Unfortunately, the biennial milestones and targets in the current evaluation strategy do not fully capture these important indicators, and instead are focused on the extent to which constituents, departments and regions participated in the evaluation process. EVAL reports on these required milestones (2.1 and 2.2) and has also consistently reported on other measures that contribute to the realization of harmonized, Office-wide evaluation practices. These items are described in paragraphs 23–44.

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[2] The JIU study was based on an assessment of central and corporate-level evaluation functions in 28 UN organizations. A report on its findings can be found in the annual evaluation report of September 2014.

E. Upgrading and expanding the use of decentralized evaluations for management

Engaging constituents in the evaluation process

Biennial milestone 2.1 (2016–17): Action taken on 75 per cent of recommendations specifically targeted at constituents

20. EVAL's systematic management response system is one of the most comprehensive mechanisms used in ensuring that evaluation findings are being reviewed and considered for action. Of the 427 recommendations that were reported in 2015, a total of 217 (51 per cent) were targeted at constituents (see figure 1). This represents an increase of 12 per cent relative to the previous year. Figure 2 illustrates the extent to which action was taken in response to recommendations concerning constituents. A total of 67 per cent of these recommendations led to high levels of action, 27 per cent led to moderate levels of action, and no action was taken on 6 per cent of recommendations. [3] Taken together, the percentages relating to high and moderate levels of action taken by constituents substantially surpass the milestone.

Figure 1.   Recommendations targeting constituents compared to total received, 2011–15
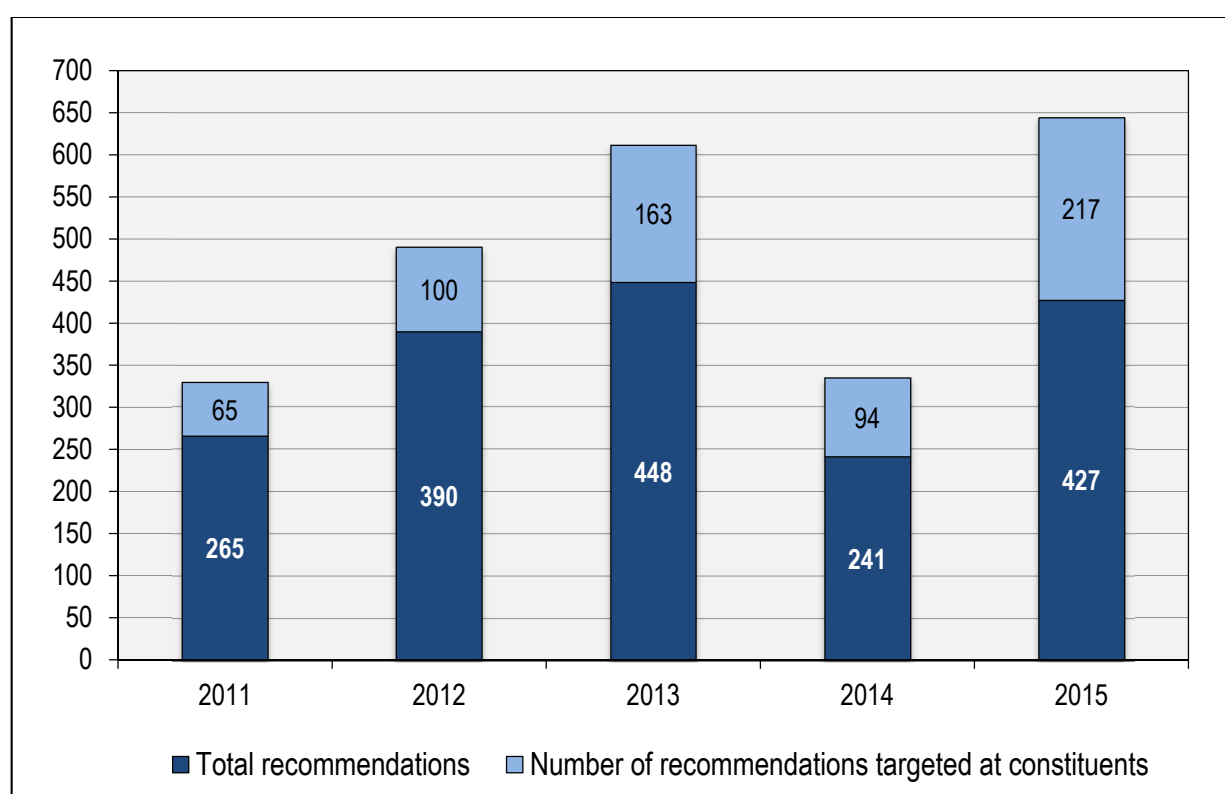
[3] "High levels of action" refers to recommendations that were fully addressed and "moderate levels of action" to recommendations that were partially addressed.

Figure 2. **Constituent involvement in response to recommendations made in evaluations, 2015**

High-level action taken · Moderate-level action taken · No action taken
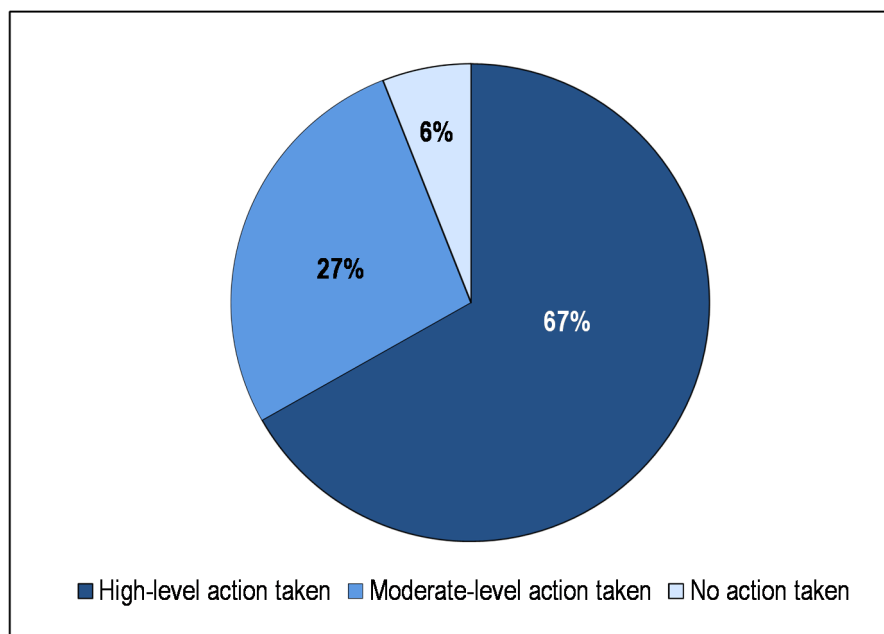
Enhancing self-assessment and critical reflection through internal evaluations

Biennial milestone 2.2 (2016–17): 95 per cent submission rate of mandated internal evaluations available for use by management

21. EVAL received 22 internal evaluations and self-evaluations (61 per cent) of the 36 projects not requiring independent evaluation during the review period (see table 4). The biennial milestone of 95 per cent for 2016–17 was therefore not met for the first year of the biennium. These reports, while not technically overseen by EVAL, are formally requested by EVAL so that they can be entered into the i-Track database, but submission rates are low. EVAL will continue to inform staff of their importance and will continue to raise awareness on this issue through contributions to project cycle management training efforts and through its new training programme on internal evaluations.

22. This new training programme was developed in an effort to increase awareness of the importance of these reports and the required capacity to prepare them. It will be made available to ILO officials as a pilot in December 2016. EVAL and PARDEV will collaborate to provide briefings and formalize the workflow so as to ensure that internal evaluations are routinely submitted for storage in the i-Track database and are made available for dissemination.

Table 4. **Internal evaluations and self-evaluations submitted to EVAL, 2010–15**

Internal and self-evaluations	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
DWCP reviews	4	8	6	7	4	5
Internal evaluations and self-evaluations	12	24	34	31	39	22

F. Harmonizing and standardizing types of evaluations and associated roles and responsibilities to improve use, quality and efficiency

The codification and upgrading of procedures and guidelines

23. Since late 2015, EVAL and its internal network have been reviewing and updating the *ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluation* to ensure that they remain current. The third edition of these policy guidelines, introduced for the first time in 2011, will be made available to ILO staff by the end of 2016. The document consists of an enhanced PDF version that will be accessible via EVAL's website, and a hard copy "booklet" with a memory stick for ease of use. In preparation for this work, EVAL reviewed all supplementary guidelines in order to ensure that they are still in alignment with evolving evaluation practices. Guidelines on the following topics have been updated since December 2015: the evaluation consultants' database, management responses to recommendations, lessons learned, engaging stakeholders, midterm and internal evaluations, data collection methods, and evaluability assessments. EVAL is currently updating guidelines on impact, joint, gender and thematic evaluations, and drafting new guidelines on how to formulate a "theory of change".

24. EVAL requires that all evaluation terms of reference include, at minimum, a gender mainstreaming clause to support this cross-cutting theme. In addition, evaluation managers must now confirm in a formal submission that the quality checklist for evaluations was applied.

Evaluation provisions in donor and project agreements

25. It is essential that donor and project agreements include the evaluation provisions required for the maintenance of consistency with the evaluation policy. EVAL and JUR review and provide feedback on proposed evaluation arrangements at the project drafting stage. When compliance is not possible within specific donor agreements, EVAL requires a formal waiver at the highest level in the Office on "exceptional non-compliance". EVAL collaborates with donors to reach compromises that allow both parties to meet their respective reporting and accountability requirements.

Networks and collaborations

26. EVAL maintains an internal evaluation network made up of regional monitoring and evaluation officers and departmental evaluation focal points. EVAL also has a diverse external evaluation network drawn from UNEG, the International Development Evaluation Association (IDEAS), and regional and national evaluation organizations, including the Geneva Evaluation Network.

Internal network

27. EVAL hosted a biennial evaluation network workshop in Geneva from 29 February to 3 March 2016, attended by EVAL staff, regional evaluation officers and departmental evaluation focal points. It included a stocktaking exercise and planning for the forthcoming four-year strategy and for the independent evaluation of the evaluation function. In 2016, EVAL also organized quarterly conference calls with staff at headquarters and the regions to discuss issues of mutual interest, with the aim of promoting mutual understanding and incorporating these views into planning and strategy development.

External network

28. UNEG recently held an "Evaluation Practice Exchange" at its Annual General Meeting in Geneva, where the lead theme was Evaluation Fit for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The ILO, together with other Geneva-based UN organizations, co-hosted the event, which was held at the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). The Directors-General of WIPO and the ILO welcomed participants to the high-level event.

29. EVAL participates in UNEG's work, paying particularly close attention to the issues of evaluation use, decentralized evaluations, evaluation and the SDGs, and the professionalization of evaluation. EVAL also served on a management committee for the pilot UN Independent System-wide Evaluation that examined efforts by the United Nations system to build national statistical capacities.

Collaboration between EVAL and the
International Training Centre of the ILO

30. EVAL benefits from extensive collaboration with the International Training Centre of the ILO in Turin (Turin Centre). The Turin Centre Director recently decided to assign a focal point for future collaboration with EVAL. A package of activities covering a wide range of projects is currently being negotiated. These include collaboration with the layout of EVAL's updated policy guidelines, evaluation manager certification training and training materials, the new internal project evaluation training, and guidelines for evaluation consultants.

Upgrading decentralized evaluations and increasing
their use

Independent project evaluations

31. The number of independent project evaluations conducted rose from 37 in 2014 to 56 in the 2015 reporting period. This increase was expected because a significant number of projects were extended and carried over into 2015. Figure 3 shows the number of evaluations received between 2010 and 2015 by evaluation type. In 2015, there were 48 independent evaluations managed by the ILO, a figure close to the six-year average. There were 22 internal or self-evaluations, four RBSA evaluations and four externally-managed or joint evaluations. The projected number of evaluations scheduled to be completed for 2016 is high (117) because 32 evaluations were planned for 2015 but carried over into 2016.

32. As mentioned in previous annual reports, EVAL is eager to decrease the number of project evaluations requiring EVAL oversight in order to focus instead on quality. One way of achieving this is to raise the budget threshold (over US$1 million), currently set for independent project evaluations. Another option, which is currently being explored, is to conduct more cluster evaluations. Cluster evaluations can be more cost-effective and more strategic, as they provide a comparative perspective. This is also the case for evaluations of projects under certain partnership programmes (with outcome-based funding) and other programme frameworks, such as flagship programmes. Evaluations conducted in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (particularly country-led evaluations, partnerships, enhanced UN system procedures and related work) might also lead to more cluster or joint evaluations. Good programme and project design and appropriate donor negotiations and planning could facilitate such clustering and thereby enhance the overall efficiency and cost of the decentralized evaluation process.

33. Recommendation 1: In response to larger numbers of interrelated approaches and as part of an effort to improve the quality and efficiency of evaluation reports, EVAL will promote

and implement more cluster and programme-level evaluations in collaboration with other involved entities.

Figure 3.   **Number of evaluations by type, 2010–15**
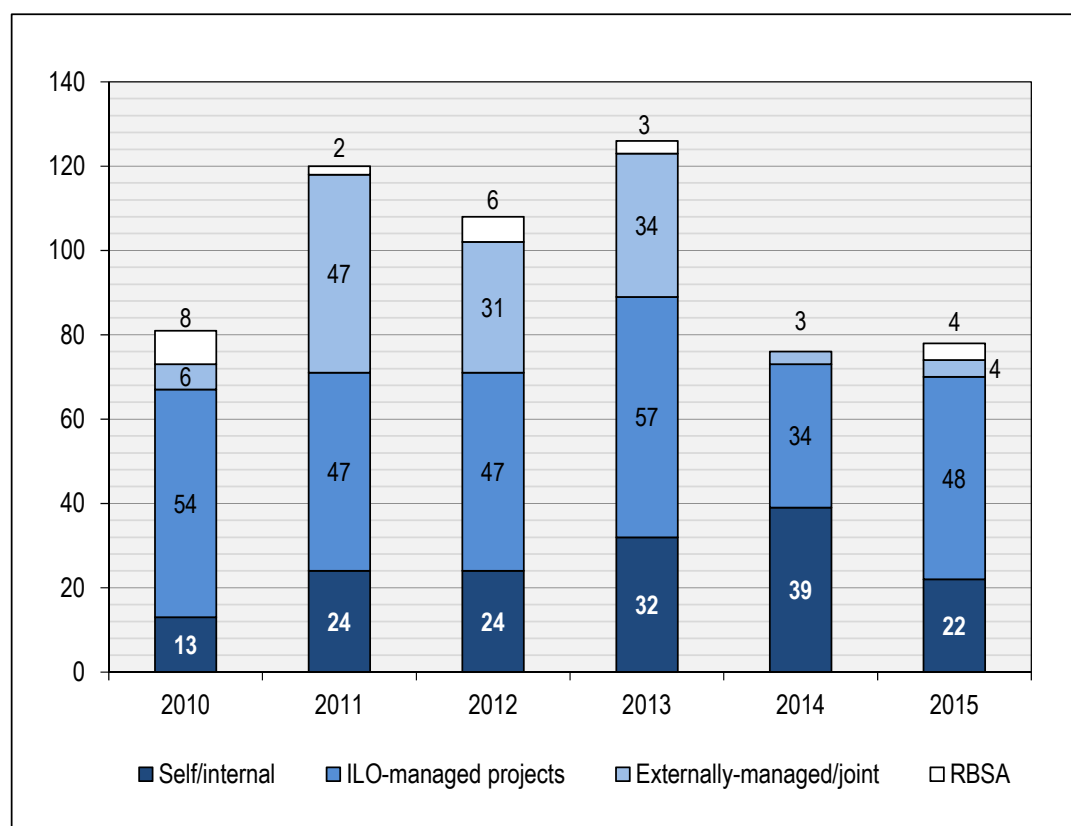
Follow-up to project recommendations

34. The ILO's evaluation policy requires that project management respond to recommendations made in independent evaluations. Of the 56 independent evaluation reports received in 2015 (containing within them 427 recommendations), 44 evaluations were included in the management response exercise. Those that were excluded were either externally managed evaluations or inappropriate for the exercise due to low budgets, poor evaluation quality or the fact that the evaluation report was completed too late in the year to be included in the current reporting cycle.

35. In the reporting period, EVAL received 363 responses from management out of 427 total recommendations. Altogether, 89 per cent of these recommendations were completed or partly completed, representing a five-point increase over the previous year (84 per cent).

Table 5. Management responses to recommendations in evaluations, 2015 [4]

| Region/Department	Evaluation reports (44)		Recommendations		Completed	Partially addressed	No action taken
	Management responses received						
	No	Yes	In reports	With responses			
Africa	3	12	152	129	70	40	19
Americas	0	2	16	16	8	6	2
Arab States	0	2	21	21	8	11	2
Europe and Central Asia	0	5	36	36	21	14	1
Asia and the Pacific	2	11	122	95	23	63	9
Subtotal	**5**	**32**	**347**	**297**	**130**	**134**	**33**
Employment	0	3	32	32	15	17	0
Enterprises	0	1	6	6	0	3	3
Governance	0	3	28	28	8	17	3
Subtotal	**0**	**7**	**66**	**66**	**23**	**37**	**6**
TOTAL	**5**	**39**	**413**	**363**	**153**	**171**	**39**
Percentage	11	89	–	88	42	47	11

[*] 89 per cent of recommendations were either completed or partially addressed.

*Proactive use of recommendations, lessons learned
and good practices*

36. Follow-up to recommendations is an important part of how evaluations are used, and consequently can serve as an indicator of their use. A more advanced use of evaluations is when the recommendations, lessons learned and emerging good practices are fed into programme and project design and implementation.

37. EVAL actively collects and stores recommendations in the i-Track database, which is accessible to all ILO officials. The most of recommendations received in 2015 were related to management issues such as planning and programme design (64 per cent), followed by tripartism and constituent partnerships (9 per cent), and government capacity-building efforts (7 per cent).

38. In 2015, a total of 138 lessons learned from independent project evaluations were documented and made available via the i-Track database. Users can search these by year, theme, country/region, strategic area, keyword, and technical or administrative office. As shown in figure 4, most lessons learned concerned management issues (49 per cent), such as planning and programme design, programme implementation, organizational learning and capacity building. This was followed by labour standards (10 per cent), tripartism and constituent partnerships (9 per cent), and youth employment (7 per cent). Hence, nearly half of all lessons learned concerned management issues.

[4] Some departments do not appear in table 5, because either (i) a project under their technical responsibility was decentralized to the regions; or because (ii) the project was below the budget threshold for management follow-up, or because (iii) the evaluation response was excluded because of quality or late submission.

Figure 4.   Lessons learned by theme, 2015
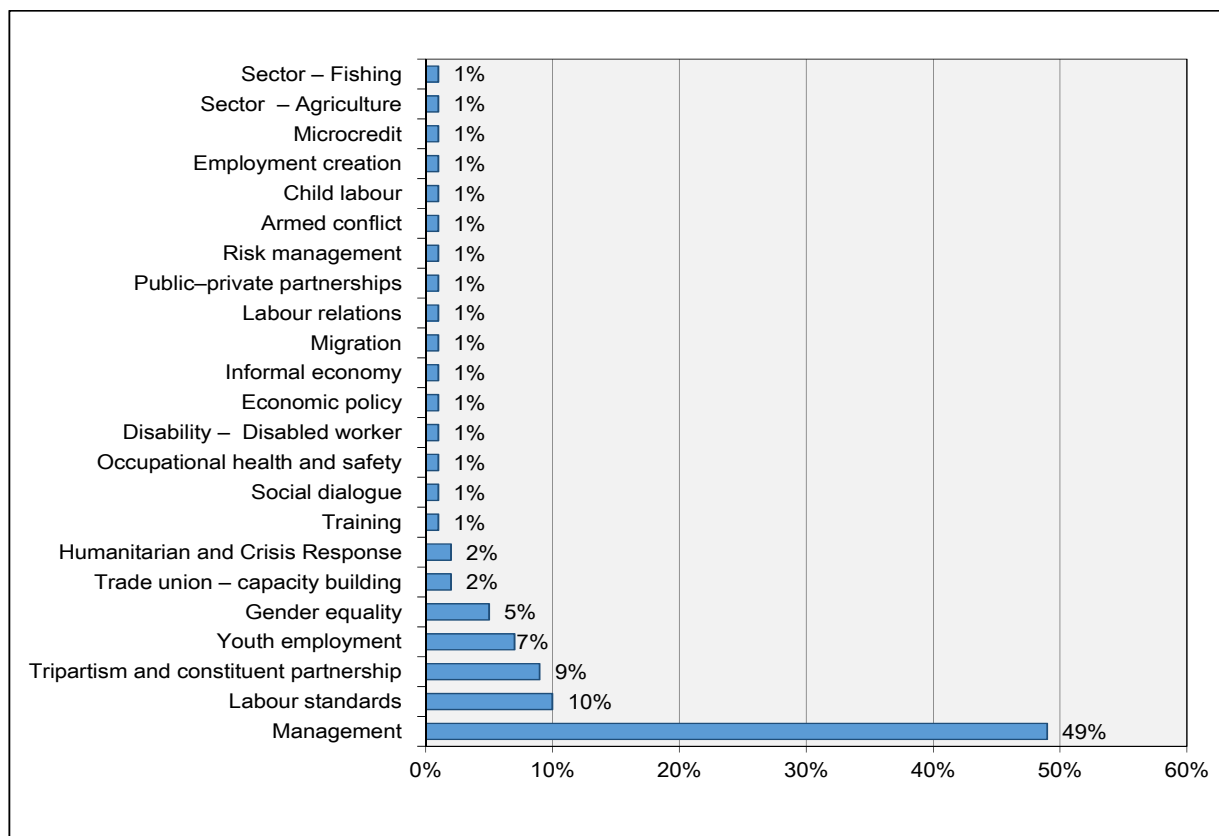
39. Independent project evaluations conducted in 2015 documented 63 emerging good practices. These are stored in EVAL's knowledge-sharing platform (http://eval.ilo.org) and are searchable by theme or keyword. Most emerging good practices relate to the following thematic areas: social dialogue (30 per cent), employment (28.5 per cent), and social protection (21 per cent). Please see figure 5.

Figure 5.   Emerging good practices by theme, 2015
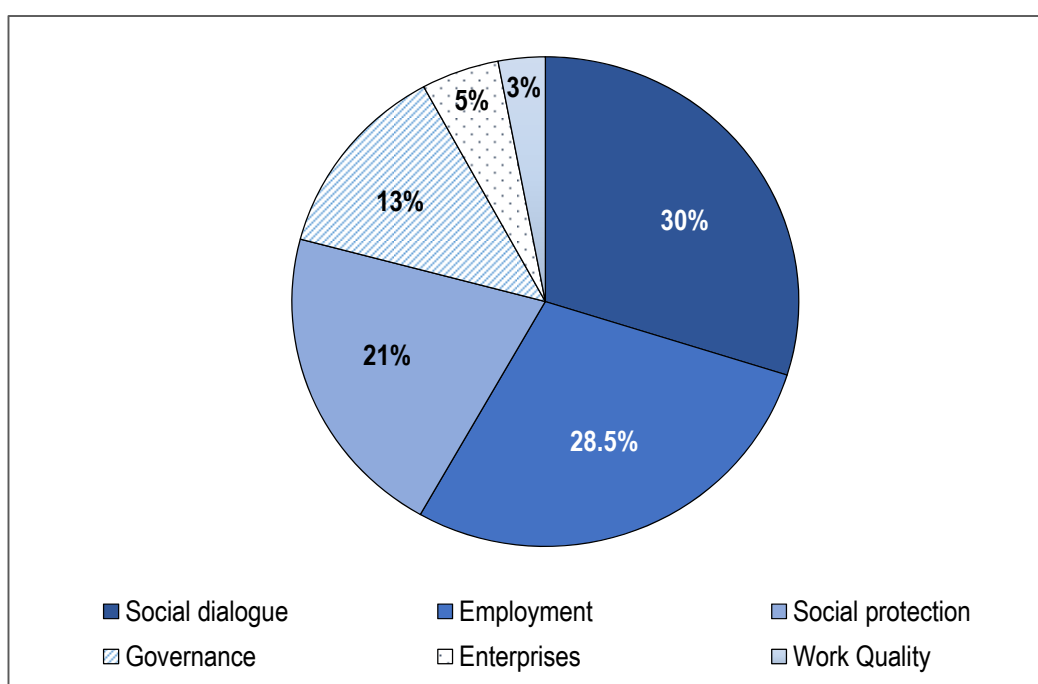
40. The fact that ILO staff can look up lessons learned and emerging good practices makes it possible for them to identify, replicate or scale up what works, and make appropriate adjustments to improve design, implementation and, ultimately, results. Systematic assessments of how lessons learned and good practices are actually reflected in new programme and project designs would be useful. For one such assessment, EVAL is conducting a study of the review that assessed the extent to which it was possible to evaluate project proposals with budgets of over US$5 million. The objective of this study is to determine the extent to which these projects are incorporating lessons learned and emerging good practices.

41. Many evaluations have been catalysts for change or have led to new approaches and further planning. One such evaluation is the 2016 RBSA-funded country programme outcome evaluation on social dialogue in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The findings of this low-cost evaluation were applied to the Decent Work Agenda for all countries in the region to a far greater extent than expected, in terms of both depth and scope. The conclusions and recommendations made for the new DWCP for Azerbaijan proved particularly useful. The ILO Office in Moscow used them in its formulation of country programme outcomes for the next programming cycle. Many large projects in Asia have undergone the evaluability assessment recommended by EVAL, and this has led to some of these projects developing and strengthening their monitoring and evaluation systems. One example of the use of systemic findings at the global level involves a key recommendation that was noted in the 2014–15 annual evaluation report. It specifies that when conducting quality control for project documents, greater emphasis should be placed on "getting it right" during the project design phase by using "hands-on" support from relevant technical experts. This recommendation was reconfirmed during the ongoing "Business Process Review" and has led PARDEV to start a pilot to shift part of the appraisal process towards implementing more design and field support.

42. Synthesis reviews and meta-studies make use of evaluations, producing knowledge and identifying intervention models. These are often modelled after EVAL's previous synthesis reviews on social dialogue (2013), employment policy (2014) and effective job creation (2015). Examples include a meta-analysis of evaluations of child labour projects in Africa, performed by the ILO's Regional Office for Africa, and a strategic learning assessment of its employment promotion interventions, conducted by the Employment Policy Department. Other similar examples include projects on labour migration in Asia and youth employment in the Arab States, both of which are ongoing.

Quality of independent project evaluations

43. EVAL consistently works to ensure that independent evaluations of the ILO's strategies, programmes and projects are credible, compliant with international norms and standards, and meet the expectations of its constituents and donors. Assessments of the quality of independent project evaluations are conducted on a regular basis with the latest appraisal covering the period 2014–15. This appraisal found that most evaluations were rated "acceptable or better", but some components of these evaluations, such as methodology and recommendations, continue to receive poor ratings. Gender, was also poorly rated; it was assessed separately.

Figure 6. Quality ratings by year and evaluation component
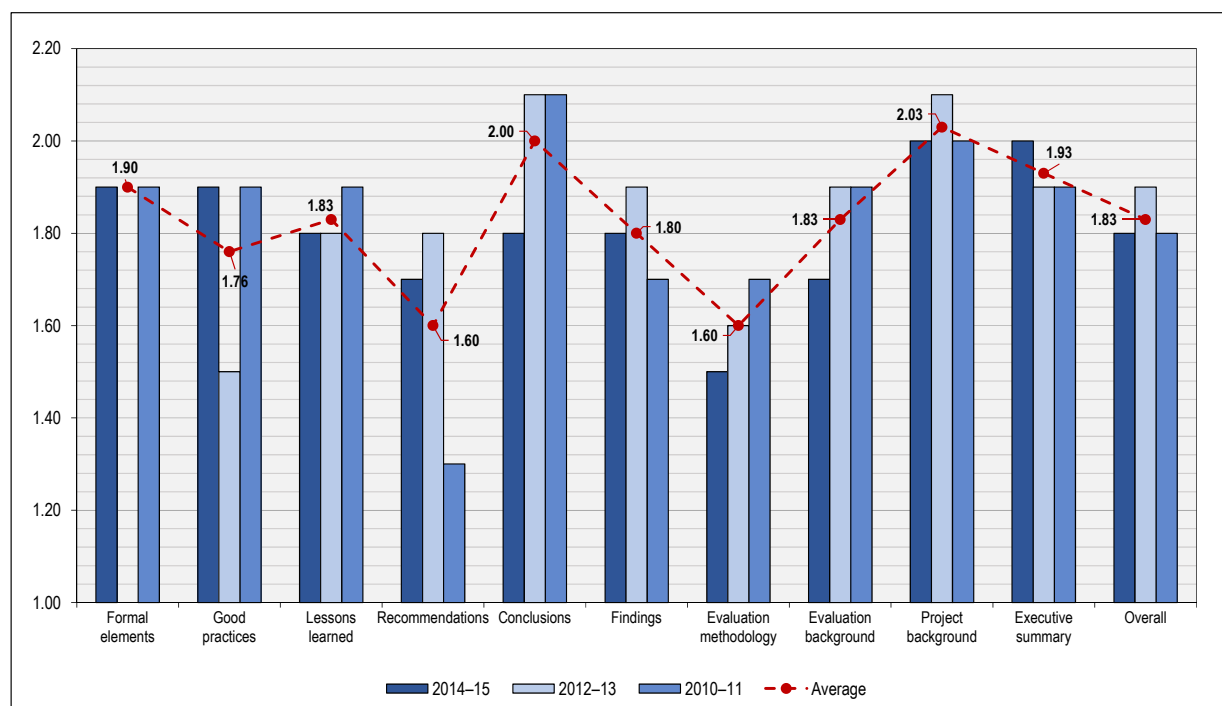
44. A comparison of the results of the most recent quality assessment with previous ones indicates that quality has been steady over the years. There has been little improvement, despite substantial effort in this regard. This problem was the subject of a discussion with external consultants and members of the internal evaluation network during the biennial workshop. The action points identified include the following: (i) evaluation consultants are not always using EVAL guidelines, and consequently a protocol for briefing them may be needed; (ii) resources for evaluations are limited, resulting in inadequate data collection; (iii) theories of change need to be improved, as to the monitoring and reporting components of project design; and (iv) the quality assessment process and tools may need to be revised so as to better capture improvements that go beyond mere compliance with checklists.

Outcome 3: Evaluation capacity expanded through enhanced knowledge, skills and tools

Evaluation capacity and practice among ILO staff and constituents

Biennial milestone 3.1 (2016–17): 75 constituents and 75 ILO officials develop specialized evaluation, knowledge through ILO training

45. EVAL's training strategy has three components: constituents and staff, including evaluation managers. Table 6 shows training results for 2015–16. The 2011–15 strategy for increasing the use of evaluations covered two bienniums, both of which had as their objective the training of 75 constituents and 75 officials. Overall training has already surpassed the target by an impressive margin, particularly in as far as constituents are concerned.

Table 6. Evaluation training delivered to constituents and ILO officials in 2016

Persons trained	Africa	Americas	Arab States	Asia and the Pacific	Europe	HQ	Total
Constituents	54	30	5	29	6	0	124
ILO staff	16	22	2	10	10	0	60
Evaluation managers	2	3	0	7	0	5	17
Total	**72**	**55**	**7**	**46**	**16**	**5**	**201**

46. Given the assumptions and expectations that have been built into the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, EVAL is anticipating that there will be a number of new challenges relating to evaluation at the country level. EVAL is reviewing the training materials that it has developed for ILO tripartite constituents in English, French and Spanish with the aim of taking into account, in the development of these materials, learning needs relating to the SDGs.

47. A five-day training programme is currently being developed for ILO staff who have participated in the Evaluation Manager Certification Programme and who wish to learn more about designing and implementing internal evaluations. It will use two distance-learning modules with a face-to-face workshop and an application/coaching phase.

48. To date, 84 ILO staff have participated in the Evaluation Manager Certification Programme and 43 of them (51 per cent) have completed all of the requirements for certification. UNEG has expressed interest in the ILO's certification programme, as its offers a novel approach to the challenge of improving the quality of decentralized evaluations.

49. A recent impact assessment of one cohort of participants, commissioned by EVAL, showed that there was no statistically significant difference between the quality of evaluations produced under trained evaluation managers versus under individuals who had not completed the programme. Further impact assessment is planned so as to make possible comparisons over time, increase the power of the statistical analysis and take into account limitations in the initial research design.

Further professionalization of evaluation in the ILO

Biennial milestone 3.2 (2015–16): Departmental evaluation focal points have elements of evaluation responsibilities included in their job descriptions with input from EVAL for the corresponding part of their performance appraisals; certified evaluation managers receive recognition in their performance appraisals

50. Efforts to motivate evaluation managers to take on more evaluations include the provision of more systematic recognition of this task in the performance assessment system, and the provision of opportunities for hands-on evaluation management experience through missions. It is hoped that in the long term, interesting evaluation assignments will motivate evaluation managers to take on more evaluations voluntarily. Efforts to consolidate project-level evaluations by conducting cluster evaluations may also help, and may result in more challenging assignments.

51. The development of a new job family for evaluation officers started some time ago with the preparation of draft job descriptions. This work will resume in the next few months as part of a larger effort to review and update current ILO job families and corresponding generic job descriptions. The approach and processes to be followed are currently under discussion. The Human Resources Development Department will need to ensure a unified approach and style between the different job families and ensure that job descriptions are aligned with the

standards of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) that are implemented across the UN common system; it will also need to consider those recommended by UNEG. Broad consultations with the different stakeholders will be required.

G. *Improving the use of evaluation knowledge systems*

52. Over the past year, EVAL has been involved in a number of activities aimed at improving the use of evaluation knowledge systems. The Office has finalized and formally launched its new knowledge-sharing platform which provides a forum at which all ILO officials in the field and at headquarters can connect and share ideas and information through a large number of interactive modules. The platform contains an evaluation consultant roster, a mission facility, a database of emerging good practices, a resource centre featuring EVAL products and services, an "ask a question" facility, a calendar of evaluation events, regional workspaces, and a community of practice module. Feedback from ILO officials, and especially from regional evaluation officers and departmental evaluation focal points, has been positive with reference to its usefulness in supporting daily activities.

53. Since early 2016, EVAL has been working on a communication strategy as a way of improving the use of evaluation and of further strengthening a culture of evaluation within the ILO. Numerous communication measures have been implemented, including EVAL's new *Quick Facts* series. These briefs contain accessible descriptions of findings from thematic, regional and high-level evaluations, and meta-studies, written in a journalistic fashion. Eight have already been published, and because of the positive feedback received, more are planned. EVAL has also developed an evaluation resource centre with a mapping feature that presents current information on all evaluations, recommendations, lessons learned and emerging good practices. EVAL was featured in the ILO's internal newsletter, in a three-part series on the importance of evaluation. EVAL also held an "EVAL open house" in 2016, during which it provided ILO staff with information on its new products and services. The EVAL English website has been updated and there are plans to update the French and Spanish versions.

54. Because substantial technical programming is required for the maintenance of the i-Track database, and because of other changes in the ILO's information technology and electronic document management systems, EVAL has begun to plan the modernization of i-Track. The new database will still include evaluation reports, planning records, recommendations, lessons learned and emerging good practices, but will employ new software that can ensure compatibility with existing ILO computer systems.

Use of evaluation-related capacity in departments and regions

55. EVAL's work on expanding capacity, harmonizing practices and promoting the use of evaluations has resulted in more evaluation work being undertaken by departments and country offices. As mentioned above, departments are using evaluations for synthesis reviews and meta-studies. A number of thematic evaluations and internal reviews of programmes and strategies have been completed. Particularly encouraging developments include stronger monitoring and evaluation components within projects, and new impact monitoring and impact assessment of items used by flagship programmes. Increasingly, this work is done by dedicated specialists using large-scale monitoring and evaluation tools, such as the Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, and the Donor Committee for Enterprise Development Standards. These tools have the potential to increase the evaluation potential of large programmes and projects.

Part II. Assessing the ILO's effectiveness and results

Introduction

56. Part II provides an assessment of the Office's performance in terms of effectiveness and results, as required by the evaluation strategy. For a substantial part of 2010–15, EVAL focused on reviewing the evaluability of the ILO's results-based framework at various levels, including the Strategic Policy Framework, DWCPs, country programme outcomes, and projects. There is evidence to suggest these efforts have paid off, as reflected in the transitional results framework of the Programme and Budget for 2016–17 and inputs solicited from EVAL for the preparation of the Programme and Budget for 2018–19.

57. While EVAL will continue to carry out assessments of the ILO's overall effectiveness, it will become increasingly necessary to consider the implications of the 2030 Agenda for the ILO's results-based framework, and the related need to demonstrate development effectiveness. Initial consultations by EVAL [5] suggest that there is a pressing need to map out better theories of change and result chains that will indicate how the ILO's Decent Work Agenda contributes to SDG targets in the new Strategic Plan 2018–21. It is also necessary to look at tools, including impact evaluations, for improving the assessment of the Office's development effectiveness or the impact of its work.

Assessing the ILO's contribution to the SDGs

58. The ILO produced an implementation plan for the 2030 Agenda in February 2016 to determine and clearly state where and how the implementation of the SDGs will affect its functioning. While the implementation plan makes a solid case for the ILO's involvement in statistical monitoring and reporting, this alone may be insufficient as a vehicle for the learning and accountability that is needed. Evaluation should be included as a complement to monitoring and statistical capacity, so as to provide input on the "how" and "why" of progress made towards achieving the SDGs.

59. While United Nations-level mechanisms for monitoring and reporting are still being discussed, it has already been determined that a United Nations High-level Political Forum will receive information in the form of an annual progress report on the SDGs, based on the global indicator framework. The SDG 8 on Decent Work and Economic Growth is expected to be up for review in 2019. There are proposals for an annual evidence-based review of the implementation of the United Nations Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) by each agency, with a focus on development effectiveness in the context of the SDGs.

60. The ILO needs two types of monitoring and reporting: (i) management and reporting aimed at serving management-oriented needs and examining progress made with the implementation of the ILO's SDG Implementation Plan; and (ii) management and reporting aimed at demonstrating the contribution, impacts and effects of ILO interventions. Attributing change to ILO interventions could become more difficult as more international partners are implicated in the Decent Work Agenda, leading to agency and partner contributions becoming blurred, and to overlapping mandates.

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[5] EVAL has conducted in-house consultations and prepared a report on the implications of the SDGs for evaluation. This report provides further guidance on increasing the evaluation potential of SDG implementation at the global, country, programme and project levels.

61. The ILO will need to review its theories of change and develop new theories where none exist. It will then be necessary to review measures of success against the revised/updated theories of change so as to ensure alignment with the SDGs and the Decent Work Agenda. "Alignment" means that the SDGs will be incorporated into all aspects of major ILO interventions, at both global and national levels. [6]

ILO Evaluation: Fit for the 2030 Agenda

62. The United Nations community has established that evaluation is a crucial ingredient for the success of the SDGs. [7] However, it is also widely agreed that existing processes of statistical monitoring and reporting will be insufficient. Current means of reporting and generating data may show whether progress is being made towards goals and targets, but are not necessarily capable of providing information on attribution or contribution, or of answering key questions on the "how" and "why".

63. Methodical, systematic, rigorous, and cooperative evaluation can fill these gaps and independently validate the ILO's contribution to the SDGs at both global and national levels. To further identify the various ways in which evaluation could potentially be used to support the SDGs, it is important to recognize that:

■ any form of evaluation, monitoring or review is a feedback mechanism that is a tool for learning;

■ information in the form of constructive feedback can be particularly useful for making adjustments in implementation;

■ the current United Nations measurement apparatus for tracking indicators is not sufficient for the analysis needed to understand change being observed; and

■ to better support evidence-based decision making, evaluation initiatives need to be integrated into national, regional and global SDG "follow-up and review" mechanisms, including national monitoring and evaluation systems and processes.

64. The need for national-level monitoring and evaluation capacity building is a significant challenge facing SDG implementation, for many countries. All United Nations agencies, including the ILO, are well positioned to provide support, either directly (through training and mentoring) or indirectly (through funding, advice and/or oversight support) in relation to this need. For the ILO in particular, this requires support and training enabling social partners to become more involved in national evaluation systems by, for example, conducting reviews and diagnostic studies of country-level SDG evaluation and by implementing country-led evaluations with a decent work focus.

Impact evaluation, development effectiveness
and the ILO's contribution to the SDGs

65. Impact evaluations in the ILO can provide evidence that can be used by two main stakeholder groups: (i) the members of the Governing Body and others who oversee performance, and

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[6] See EVAL's annual evaluation report 2013–14, text for recommendation 3 on the theory of change: "The Office should strengthen its M&E and its internal system for reporting on the implementation of programmes and projects, and make a strong theory of change a compulsory requirement at all levels of the ILO's RBM system", p. 26.

[7] See UNEG (2016), *Evaluation in the SDG era: lessons, challenges and opportunities for UNEG*, May 2016.


(ii) those responsible for policy formulation and implementation in member States. Impact evaluations are viewed by stakeholders, both within the ILO and externally, as a way of producing credible evidence that meets learning needs. Impact evaluation is not generally being used to meet accountability needs at the organizational or project level, but rather is expected to contribute to accountability by demonstrating that the ILO is advocating for or supporting policies and interventions that are relevant and feasible.

66. Impact evaluation methodologies should produce data that provide evidence of change at the policy outcome level, creating confidence that the ILO has made a significant contribution. Impact methods can produce data that provide credible evidence that interventions that have been demonstrated to work in one country are likely to work in others. This, in turn, increases confidence that the theories of change underpinning the intended results framework are evidence-based.

Rolling out the ILO's impact evaluation strategy

67. Impact evaluation is conducted by technical departments, and since 2005, the ILO has conducted more than 60 impact evaluations. The increasing number of impact evaluations has resulted in more investment and interest. EVAL is gradually expanding its facilitation role, in part by ensuring that quality standards are met, as recommended in the annual evaluation report 2013–14. [8] In 2015, EVAL formulated a three-tiered strategic approach (see figure 7) and the strategy is now being implemented as an impact evaluation framework.

Figure 7.   Supporting ILO impact evaluation: the three-tiered strategy
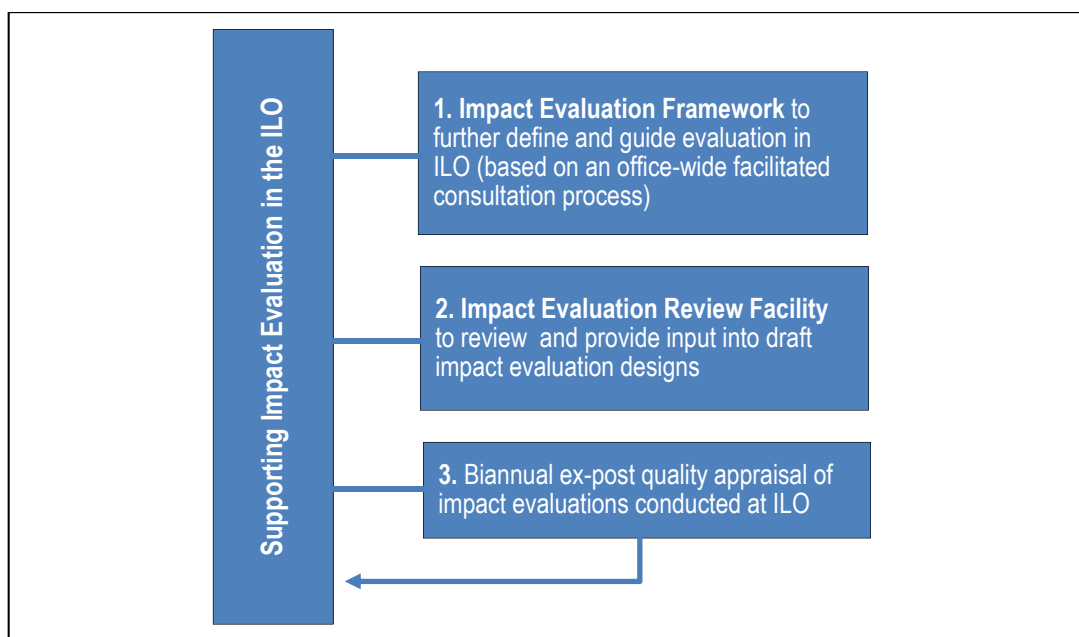
68. The impact evaluation framework is intended to further define, develop and apply impact evaluation across the ILO. The Impact Evaluation Review Facility (IERF) is already operational and provides input into new impact evaluation designs. EVAL continues to document and collect all impact evaluations conducted in the ILO. The EVAL-sponsored impact evaluation network continues to meet as a community of practice, and an ex-post

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[8] See EVAL's annual evaluation report 2013–14, "Recommendation 4: EVAL should continue to strengthen its efforts on impact evaluation in a more coordinated and rigorous manner", p. 26.

quality appraisal of selected impact evaluations will be undertaken in 2017. Further guidance and capacity-building initiatives will be considered as resources permit.

Using impact evaluation to demonstrate the ILO's contribution to the SDGs

69. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/Development Assistance Committee (DAC) definition of impact, the purpose of impact evaluations is to show impact on beneficiaries. Since the ILO focuses on upstream policy work, the purpose of ILO impact evaluation is to demonstrate the impact of national policies and capacity building. It can take one or two bienniums for policy outcomes and country programme outcomes to have an impact that can be documented, and consequently an extended period of time is needed for impact evaluation.

70. The impact evaluation strategy uses both quantitative and qualitative methods to not only demonstrate the impact or change, but also the "how" and "why". This enables the ILO to provide evidence about the impact of policy changes, the contribution of the ILO, and the important work done by other partners. Demonstrating such impact is part of validating the development effectiveness of the ILO's work in that it shows that ILO interventions improve people's lives in a sustainable manner. The SDGs and its targets will require such data, and it is imperative that the ILO prepare itself so that it is able to demonstrate the contribution of its Decent Work Agenda.

71. Recommendation 2: As the ILO moves forward in reviewing and strengthening its contribution to the SDGs, the role of evaluation should be fully integrated into related planning, implementation and capacity building. The number of selected impact evaluations and meta-studies conducted should be gradually increased so as to demonstrate the ILO's development effectiveness.

Draft decision

72. *The Governing Body takes note of the present report and endorses the recommendations (paragraphs 33 and 71) to be included in the ILO's rolling plan for the implementation of recommendations to be reported on in the annual evaluation report 2016–17. It also confirms the priorities identified in the report for the programme of work 2017–19.*

Appendix

Plan of action for the implementation of suggestions and recommendations contained in the annual evaluation reports for 2011–12, 2012–13, 2013–14 and 2014–15

Suggestions and next steps	Long-term improvements	Short-term actions 2016–17	Who/additional cost	Status
Annual evaluation report 2011–12				
1. The ILO's quality control of project documents				
The appraisal function needs strengthening to fully carry out its function.	The Office should consider developing stronger mechanisms for linking final proposal quality to originating unit accountability. Where quality is found to be weak, plans for follow-up post-approval should become more systematic.	■ Strengthen accountability of originating units in line with the outcomes of the ongoing technical cooperation review under the ILO reform agenda.	PARDEV/ None provided	**Ongoing** With a view to improving the quality of development cooperation proposals, the business process review has reconfirmed the need to re-direct efforts from appraisal to upfront design support. The Office is exploring ways to save time with appraisals in order to establish a more systematic and focused procedure for design support, involving policy departments and other units.
2. Reporting on project performance				
Technical progress reports should inform decision making and provide input for PARDEV's annual reports on the overall implementation of ILO's Development Cooperation portfolio.	The administrative units in charge in the regions and at headquarters should conduct systematic quality control of technical progress reports, with oversight exercised by PARDEV.	■ The administrative units in charge in the regions and headquarters should conduct systematic quality control of technical progress reports, with oversight exercised by PARDEV.	PARDEV/ $10,000	**Ongoing** PARDEV routinely reminds ILO officials in charge about reporting deadlines, and is planning to carry out annual technical progress report assessments. While an automated workflow system to track reporting requirements is being designed and piloted (Microsoft SharePoint), the existing monitoring tables have been updated and have significantly improved the timing of report submissions. PARDEV is not in a position to carry out in-depth quality control of technical progress reports but insists that the relevant ILO officials should sign off on the reports being submitted, and that copies be sent to the technical backstopping units.

Suggestions and next steps	Long-term improvements	Short-term actions 2016–17	Who/additional cost	Status
	In the absence of an all-encompassing monitoring and evaluation system, the Office should establish a centrally managed knowledge exchange system where technical progress reports can be stored and accessed by all internal stakeholders. ILO's donors should, as far as possible, support the use of the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review approach to advance reporting.	■ Finalize business requirements for an end-to-end project cycle management system in Microsoft SharePoint.	PARDEV and INFOTEC/ $350,000	**Ongoing** As part of the Business Process Review, the business requirements for an end-to-end project cycle management system, including agreement, appraisal and the reporting of workflows in Microsoft SharePoint, are being determined. The decision on production and funding is expected to be made before the end of 2016.

Annual evaluation report 2012–13

3. Results-based management and the ILO's effectiveness: Insights from the evaluability reviews

While substantial progress towards implementation and compliance with the results-based management policy has been made, the review of evaluation potential has identified areas for improvement that could be taken into account in the next Strategic Policy Framework.	Improved evaluation potential of the ILO's RBM framework, starting with country programme outcomes and moving up to the Strategic Programme Framework outcomes using strong underlying logical frameworks and reliable metrics (indicators, baselines, milestones and targets).	■ Provide proactive support to field offices, including training for the development of strategies and indicators that can be evaluated.	PROGRAM/ (Cost not provided) EVAL ($50,000 using EVAL's RBSA monitoring and evaluation allocation)	**Ongoing** Progress was made with the development of a new results framework for the transitional strategic plan and Programme and Budget for 2016–17, drawing on lessons learned from the current Strategic Policy Framework (2010–15). Examples of improvements include: (i) the inclusion of baselines for all outcome indicators; (ii) greater coherence across measurement criteria under outcome indicators; and (iii) systematic integration of cross-cutting dimensions (i.e. international labour standards, social dialogue, and gender equality and non-discrimination) into both the outcomes strategies and the results framework.
		■ Review the advantages and disadvantages of linking a country programme outcome to only one programme and budget outcome in order to better plan and report on crosscutting initiatives.		In May 2016, the Office commenced work on the preparation of the Strategic Plan 2018–21 and Programme and Budget for 2018–19. Key features of the approach driving the review of the results framework include: (i) emphasis on the identification and development of core indicators of programme performance and the establishment of a corporate monitoring framework to support ILO reporting on performance; and (ii) outcome strategies based on a clearly articulated theory of change.

Suggestions and next steps	Long-term improvements	Short-term actions 2016–17	Who/additional cost	Status
		■ Encourage good practice through appropriate incentives, such as: (i) making the allocation of resources dependent on the quality of the design; (ii) making line managers and staff accountable for complying with minimum design standards; and (iii) highlighting good practices in reports and individual performance appraisals.	PROGRAM	As part of the improvements for the implementation of the 2016–17 programmes, the following measures were introduced: (i) linking a country programme outcome to multiple programme and budget indicators within the same outcome; and (ii) introducing "markers" to better plan and report on the cross-cutting dimensions. Further improvement on how to reflect cross-cutting dimensions in the strategy of policy outcomes will continue during the preparation of the Programme and Budget for 2018–19. With regard to the increasing evaluation potential of the ILO's results-based management framework, a major revision of the DWCP guidelines was completed in June 2016. This included the Quality Assurance Mechanism, the implementation planning and the monitoring components of the DWCP. Building on the findings and lessons learned from a new training course aimed at strengthening the capacity of ILO programming staff in the regions, piloted in September 2015 and May 2016, a complete training package is being developed in collaboration with the Turin Centre. Training is expected to begin in the last quarter of 2016. As per new guidelines on RBSA for 2016–17, issued in December 2015, the allocation is based on the quality, merit and timely submission of the country programme outcome information, including the results focus.
4. ILO performance in development cooperation				
The 2013 meta-study found that the ILO's overall performance in terms of relevance and effectiveness was good. Areas of weak performance included the use of monitoring of and reporting relating to results; the adequacy of resources; the time planned for results; and internal project design and implementation.	Projects are designed to the highest standards and apply state-of-the-art monitoring and evaluation systems and management practices to optimize their contribution to the ILO's results-based management framework	■ Define project objectives more narrowly so as to ensure that each is achievable with the available resources and timeframes, factoring in time for unplanned contingencies and making gender sensitivity a major vector of development effectiveness.	PARDEV	**Ongoing** The appraisal continues to systematically include an assessment of feasibility, gender sensitivity and sustainability. PARDEV has done a better job of systematizing the management of the project appraisal–approval workflows in collaboration with management, oversight and support services, such as the Technical Cooperation Unit (BUD/CT) of the Budget and Finance Branch, HRD, Strategic Programming and Management (PROGRAM), the Evaluation Office (EVAL), the Security Unit (SECURITY) and the Procurement Bureau (PROCUREMENT).

Suggestions and next steps	Long-term improvements	Short-term actions 2016–17	Who/additional cost	Status
		■ Plan and manage risks and opportunities with respect to sustainability, and particularly weaknesses in national institutional capacities and commitment; introduce ex-post accountability into the RBM cycle; design real-time measures to identify and address instances of bureaucratic slowness.	PARDEV	Semi-annual comparative data on appraisals show that the number of appraisals remains stable compared with the previous year. Most of the proposals prepared by headquarters under outcome-based funding partnerships were decentralized; others could not be decentralized due to the lack of technical expertise in the field. Appraisal improvement is part of the ongoing business process review. The ILO Development Cooperation Dashboard will be further enhanced to serve direct performance tracking by users. http://www.ilo.org/DevelopmentCooperation Dashboard/.
		■ Develop logical frameworks that will be used by management for accountability and boost the use of performance monitoring through the systematic collection of baseline measurements. Provide proactive support to field offices, including training for the development of evaluable strategies and indicators.		Regional learning journeys (staff development activities) have been developed and are currently being validated by the regions. Meanwhile, dates and times of staff development activities are being confirmed. Gender mainstreaming as part of proposal design is a specific learning topic. This is an initiative from HRD, the Turin Centre and PARDEV.

Suggestions and next steps	Long-term improvements	Short-term actions 2016–17	Who/additional cost	Status
5. Findings from Regular Budget Supplementary Account (RBSA) evaluation and initial experience with outcome-based funding				
The 2013 study of the RBSA and outcome-based funding found that the country programme outcomes that had received major RBSA contributions had used resources effectively but that efficiencies could be improved, including reducing delays with approvals, the release of funding sources, and more clarity for evaluation procedures for the evaluation of outcome-based funding.	RBSA and outcome-based funding initiatives support evaluable country programme outcomes and are designed, implemented and evaluated in a timely and efficient manner so as to optimize support for the ILO's results-based management framework.	■ Given the increase in outcome-based funding, the Office should update existing RBSA monitoring and evaluation guidelines or introduce new guidelines to include the planning and budgeting of monitoring and evaluation of outcome-based funded activities.	PROGRAM/ $27,300 for the review of the RBSA funding procedure.	**Ongoing** Templates for outcome-based funding proposals and reporting have been developed and systematically applied. Evaluation practices for outcome-based funding partnerships have been agreed upon in close cooperation between PARDEV, EVAL and outcome coordinators. As regards RBSA, an internal review of this funding procedure, conducted in August 2014, provided further input for the improvement of programming and RBSA allocation within an integrated resource framework. Building on these developments, a revision of RBSA and outcome-based funding allocations and appraisal processes is under way as part of the Implementation Plan of the Field Operations and Structure and Technical Cooperation Review. As per new guidelines on RBSA for 2016–17, issued in December 2015, the appraisal and decision process is time-bound (i.e. a maximum of 15 days after submission of proposals).
		■ Country programme outcomes receiving major RBSA contributions or outcome-based funding should be evaluated in a timely manner, preferably towards the close of the DWCP, and even as part of a DWCP evaluation or country programme review, to maximize the "use of evaluation".	EVAL/ $15,000 for a synthesis review.	**Ongoing** All high-level evaluations include a review of RBSA-funded activities as part of the analysis. A follow-up synthesis review on the 2013 study is still under consideration as is a synthesis review on common findings.

Suggestions and next steps	Long-term improvements	Short-term actions 2016–17	Who/additional cost	Status
		■ Country offices and PROGRAM should weigh up the potential areas of continued support under RBSA, well in advance. This will help these offices to identify early on the areas in which better results could be achieved with additional financial support, and prioritize.	PROGRAM/ PARDEV	**Ongoing** PROGRAM, in collaboration with PARDEV, continues its work aimed at streamlining the RBSA appraisal, decision and allocation mechanism, building on improvements made in 2015 in response to the findings of the 2014 internal RBSA review. The new guidelines for 2016–17, issued in December 2015, include clear roles and responsibilities for appraisal and a well-defined timeframe for the whole process.

Annual evaluation report 2013–14

6. Recommendations concerning the evaluation function

Suggestions and next steps	Long-term improvements	Short-term actions 2016–17	Who/additional cost	Status
Extend the 2011–15 evaluation strategy by one biennium (2016–17) and postpone the independent evaluation of the evaluation process to 2016.	Updated evaluation policy and strategy (2018–21) informed by the results of a second independent evaluation of the evaluation process.	■ Prepare terms of reference for endorsement by the Governing Body and agree on exact timing and management of the exercise.	EVAL/ $140,000	**Completed** The Governing Body endorsed proposals on how to undertake the independent evaluation of the evaluation function and a new recommendation was adopted to ensure that it is conducted independently and credibly (see 8 below).
Drawing on the findings of the communication needs survey, EVAL should launch a communication strategy to further strengthen the culture of evaluation within the ILO.	The production of the communication strategy involves implementing three action strategies. Their goals are to: (i) broaden understanding of evaluation in the ILO; (ii) increase active participation by ILO officials in evaluation activities; and (iii) improve the use and re-use of evaluation findings and products.	■ During 2015–16, at least three meta-studies will be produced re-using and capitalizing on evaluation findings. ■ During 2015–16, at least six information events will be organized on recent evaluation findings .	EVAL/DCOMM/ (recurring cost of $50,000 per year)	**Ongoing** While progress with the production of the communication strategy has generally been slow due to staff constraints, it has sped up since early 2016. The knowledge-sharing platform has been launched; EVAL produced more than five *Quick Facts* on high-level regional and thematic topics; an "Evaluation Resource Centre" has been set up, visually displaying (through a mapping feature) all evaluations and lessons learned, with search options; EVAL was featured in a three-part series within an internal ILO newsletter; one information-sharing event on a 2015 high-level evaluation was organized, in addition to an EVAL "open house" event in 2016.

Suggestions and next steps	Long-term improvements	Short-term actions 2016–17	Who/additional cost	Status
EVAL should continue to intensify its efforts in relation to impact evaluation, working on this in a more coordinated and rigorous manner.	Office-wide impact and ex-post evaluation standards that provide sound methodological approaches available to the technical departments with EVAL oversight and support provided to ensure consistent quality.	■ Update and improve EVAL's guidelines on impact evaluation. ■ Organize peer-review meetings to review impact evaluation or assessment proposals. ■ Provide guidance and expertise on impact evaluation to technical departments on demand.	EVAL/ $50,000 (recurring cost per year not available as part of the core budget)	**Ongoing** In 2015, EVAL developed a three-tiered strategic approach for further work on impact evaluation. EVAL conducted concept mapping followed by a results workshop in March 2016, enabling ILO staff and other interested individuals to further define, develop and apply impact evaluation. This resulted in a position paper on impact evaluation. An Impact Evaluation Review Facility was launched in May 2016 and is now fully operational. Impact evaluation quality appraisal (ex-post) will be undertaken in 2017.

7. Strengthen project design, monitoring and reporting (see 4 as well)

The Office should strengthen its monitoring and evaluation, and internal implementation reporting system on programmes and projects, and make a strong theory of change a requirement at all levels of the ILO's results-based management system.	Strengthened monitoring and evaluation frameworks at the programme, DWCP, and project proposal phase. This includes the implementation stage with "complete" result frameworks (theory of change, objective, baselines, indicators, targets, milestones, and regular reporting). Development of a "standard" results framework or logical framework (equipped with objectives, baselines, indicators, targets, and milestones).	■ Update relevant guidelines on DWCPs.	PROGRAM/PARDEV/ EVAL	**Ongoing** PARDEV: It is expected that the continuous improvement process, launched by the business process review, will result in more systematized and enhanced design support for proposals funded by voluntary contributions. PARDEV supports headquarters and field office initiatives with the development of theories of change and intervention models. EVAL: Work continues with donors to reconcile ILO policy with donor requirements. This had led in some cases to agreements on alternate responsibilities for evaluations and joint evaluations as exceptions to the policy. EVAL has also worked with technical departments interested in developing or connecting with monitoring and evaluation frameworks specific to their models of intervention; this has been part of EVAL's evaluability reviews of larger projects. PROGRAM: The revised DWCP guidebook highlights the importance of the application of the theory of change for the design of DWCPs and for a better results framework that is in line with the revised interim UN Development Assistance Framework Guidance issued in May 2016.

Suggestions and next steps	Long-term improvements	Short-term actions 2016–17	Who/additional cost	Status
Annual evaluation report 2014-15				
8. Evaluation function related recommendations (see 6 as well)				
The Office should ensure that the independent evaluation of the evaluation function has begun by June 2016 at the latest so that it will be possible to report to the Governing Body in March 2017 using the structure described in paragraph 13 of this report to ensure its independence, credibility and utility.	The independent evaluation of the evaluation function will "look ahead" and provide recommendations so that strategic decisions for the future of evaluation in the ILO can be made as part of a new evaluation strategy and policy, the new Strategic Policy Framework, and alignment with the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda.	■ Take all necessary steps to ensure that the independent evaluation of the evaluation function is completed in time for the March 2017 session of the Governing Body and meets credibility and independence requirements.	Evaluation Advisory Committee (EAC) (EVAL as secretariat only)	**Ongoing** A Technical Committee that oversees the independent evaluation of the evaluation function on behalf of the EAC was established and the terms of reference were circulated to the Governing Body Committee (Chairperson of the Government Group, Regional Coordinators) and updated based on input received. PROCUREMENT is now to take the preparation further to identify and contract an external evaluation team.
9. Strengthen, project design, monitoring and reporting (see 4 and 7 as well)				
Given the importance attributed to results-based management, there should be more focus at the project design phase on "getting it right" with respect to the development of the theory of change, logical framework, performance indicators, measurement strategies and monitoring and evaluation plans. The ILO should require hands-on support from relevant technical experts (either internal or external) for all high-value project proposals and reject those that are not up to standard.	Results and information needed for a quality evaluation will be available as a result of well-designed projects and programmes with a logical framework that is part of a solid theory of change; performance indicators; performance measurement strategies and monitoring and evaluation plans.	■ Provide quality support with design, monitoring, evaluation and terms of reference. Reject proposals not meeting quality criteria. Draw on expertise by experts in PARDEV and the regions, or alternatively outsource to external experts. ■ Establish sign-off accountability with line management on logical frameworks, performance indicators, measurement strategies and monitoring and evaluation plans articulated in the project document.	PARDEV	**Ongoing** As part of the continuous improvement process launched by the business process review, PARDEV explores ways to move Office efforts from appraisal to design support and to design a fully-fledged design support process that would draw on technical expertise across the Office.