

▶ *i*-eval Flash news

The ILO Evaluation Office is pleased to share the thirty-second 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.



COVID-19 one year on: What have we learned about ILO's influence and impact in rebuilding the world of work? *

▶ by Guy Thijs, Director

It is now over one year ago since we, in EVAL, reflected on the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and the implications it would have on ILO's work, particularly with respect to assessing the ILO's response to the crisis. There is a strong consensus among colleagues that ILO's agenda and mandate are extremely relevant at this critical moment and that the Office has made tremendous efforts to address the pandemic in a timely, adaptive and effective manner. However, there is also a strong realization that all of this needs to be validated in an independent manner. Evaluation provides credible and impartial observations on the ILO's results and the likelihood that they will lead to long-term impact going beyond a few beneficiaries.

In March 2020, when the pandemic erupted, EVAL quickly responded by issuing a detailed [risk-based guidance note](#) on how to continue evaluations during the pandemic. This pro-active response was important. Most interestingly, it is a paradox that, during a crisis, there can be resistance to the evaluation process because it is perceived as being unnecessary, and an extra burden that slows response. EVAL's view is that the challenges posed by the pandemic only amplified the need for evaluative evidence to ensure effective responses and to validate lessons learned. During the third quarter of 2020, EVAL also issued a protocol on collecting evaluative evidence on the ILO's COVID-19 response measures. All project evaluations, since then, are required to include COVID-related questions.

I am glad to report that, in retrospect, this determination to keep the evaluation process going was the right one. We managed to keep up with our work plan and concluded close to 50 project evaluations in 2020. High-level evaluations for the Governing Body covering both field and HQ work conducted in 2020 revealed some preliminary information on COVID-19 results. For example, the [independent high-level evaluation on research and knowledge management](#) identified ILO's response to the crisis as a good practice, stating "the recent research and knowledge management dimension of the ILO response to COVID-19 has established a benchmark for senior management sponsorship, fast turnaround, risk taking, quality assurance and global teamwork (demonstrating) that the ILO can work strategically, as One, at the operational level (..) with acknowledged benefits from constituents".

Moreover, a large [cluster evaluation in Bangladesh](#) conducted in May 2020 on the garment industry showed that, "while stakeholder perceptions were mixed about the speed in responding, Ministry of Labour officials expressed appreciation for COVID-19 OSH guidelines and workers largely expressed satisfaction with the safety protocols put in place in their factory." In the coming months a synthesis review will be released that captures lessons learned from project evaluations. It will also inform a GB approved, high-level evaluation of ILO's response to the pandemic, for release in 2022. Additionally, during 2021, we will continue to ensure that all high-level evaluations and project evaluations will address the results of the COVID-19 response to continuously support organizational learning at all levels.

*Extract from remarks delivered as part of ILO-wide session on "One ILO connect: Delivering effectively in times of COVID-19: Maximizing the ILO's influence and impact in rebuilding the world of work."

IN THIS ISSUE

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR - 1

INNOVATION & RESEARCH - 2

NEWS FROM THE DEPARTMENTS - 3

NEWS FROM THE REGIONS - 5

EVAL HIGHLIGHTS - 7

LEARNING ACTIVITIES & EVENTS - 9

► Innovation & research

Planned and ongoing studies

SDG evaluability assessment

The Evaluation Office (EVAL), through its regional evaluation officers, continues to ensure the evaluability of ILO's decent work country programme frameworks (DWCP), notably their contributions to SDGs and to the capacity of constituents in supporting national review processes. Since our last newsletter, one evaluability review has been completed as part of the mid-term review of the DWCP in Pakistan.

Two evaluability assessments of the ILO's country programming framework in China and Ghana are underway to support the strengthening of M&E requirements. Key recommendations provide insights on reinforcing capacity of the Office to track and report on progress made in achieving the SDGs. This ensures managerial follow-up. Since 2020, evaluability assessments have been core component of the internal guidance to design and review ILO's DWCP.

Collecting evaluative evidence on the ILO's COVID-19 response measures

In October 2020, EVAL issued a [Protocol](#) on collecting evaluative evidence on the ILO's COVID-19 response measures. Since then, terms of reference of mandatory project and programme evaluations include key COVID-19 related questions to yield relevant results and actionable recommendations. To maximize learning from evaluation results, EVAL started work on a synthesis review on the effectiveness of the ILO in responding to the effects of COVID-19 on the world of work. This will be assessing information on a rolling basis since 2020 until the end of 2021 from decentralized evaluation reports. Relevant intersection with SDGs and the ILO's response to COVID-19 will also be underlined. A first synthesis review of evaluations from mid-2020 to June 2021 will be conducted in June. It will serve as input to EVAL's upcoming Annual Evaluation Report (AER). A second and full synthesis review will be completed by the end of the year. This final report will serve as an input of the 2022 high-level evaluation on the ILO's COVID-19 response.

Rolling decent work results and effectiveness of ILO operations: a meta-analysis

The ILO evaluation policy and strategy call on the Office to learn from and make effective use of evaluations to improve decent work results. Since 2011, EVAL has commissioned a series of biennial meta-analyses of project evaluations covering the periods [2009-2010](#), [2011-12](#), [2013-16](#), [2017-18](#), and [2019-20](#). A meta-study of Regular-budget supplementary account-supported interventions covering the period 2013-17 was also conducted in 2019.

EVAL has already started to work on the meta-analysis for 2020-2021 to assess decent work results and the effectiveness of ILO's operations based on the findings from all independent evaluations completed in 2020-21. This meta-analysis is, for the first time, conducted on a rolling basis, thereby producing results closer to a real time basis. Three additional performance criteria have been added allowing the ILO to learn more about its contribution to the SDGs, responsiveness to disability inclusion concerns, as well as the degree of responsiveness towards a just transition to environmental sustainability. Results from the meta-study will be included in the AER in August 2021 and published as a separate report in September 2021.

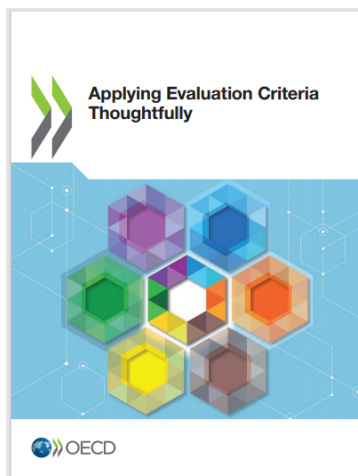
Synthesis review on SDG 8

In 2021, the High-level policy forum (HLPF) of the United Nations will conduct a review of the SDGs, including SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth. Against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, the theme of the review will be "Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development." The 2021 HLPF will explore various aspects of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the various measures and types of international cooperation that can control the pandemic, its impacts and put the world back on track to achieve the SDGs by 2030, within the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development.

EVAL is providing deliverables that can feed into the preparation for the 2021 HLPF by conducting a synthesis review of recent independent evaluations to identify contributions to SDG 8 against the backdrop of the pandemic. The study will build on the inclusion of SDG 8 in EVAL's evaluation guidance and SDG-related performance indicators in EVAL's recurrent Decent Work results meta-studies for assessing the ILO's overall development effectiveness. EVAL's synthesis review is expected to be complete by mid-year.



New publications on evaluation and use of evaluations



Applying evaluation criteria thoughtfully By OECD

Extraction from the OECD, "Relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability are widely used evaluation criteria, particularly in international development co-operation. They help

to determine the merit or worth of various interventions, such as strategies, policies, programmes or projects. This guidance aims to help evaluators and others to better understand those criteria, and improve their use. It starts by describing what they are, and how they are meant to be used. Then the definitions and concepts underpinning each criterion are explained."

[Visit here](#) for access to the report.

These guidelines are based on the revised criteria from 2019. They reflect a range of experience collected from many organisations, including the ILO.

News from the Departments

► Governance and Tripartism Department

Clustered evaluations: experiences and lessons from Vision Zero Fund

This article presents experiences and some key lessons that emerged from an independent clustered mid-term evaluation of by the Vision Zero Fund (VZF), a global initiative on Occupational Safety, Health, and Global Supply Chains. The VZF is part of the International Labour Organization (ILO)'s flagship programme Safety + Health for All, administered by the LABADMIN/OSH Branch of the GOVERNANCE department.

Editor's note: EVAL is carrying out a review of the experience with clustered evaluations across ILO which is likely to confirm these lessons learned, identify others and document the strategic value of clustered evaluations.

About the Vision Zero Fund

The Vision Zero Fund (VZF) is an initiative of the G7,

endorsed by the G20. It works at global, country and workplace levels., It seeking seeks to strengthen the worldwide enabling environment for safe and healthy working conditions; and to improve national legal and policy frameworks. It also seeks to implement more effective prevention, protection and compensation mechanisms for women and men working in targeted supply chains, in particular in the world's least developed countries. The VZF's objective is to work towards the vision of zero fatal and severe work-related injuries and diseases by improving occupational safety and health (OSH) practices and conditions in sectors that link to global supply chains (GSCs).

Currently, VZF operates in eight countries [1] and in three sectors: garment, agriculture and construction. The VZF is governed by a Steering Committee (SC) and a tripartite Advisory Committee. The programme [strategy](#), entitled "Collective Action for Safe and Healthy Supply Chains" was adopted in 2019 for the period 2019-23.

Why and how VZF adopted a clustered evaluation approach

The concept of clustering evaluations was discussed between VZF and EVAL in 2019. It emanates from a [policy objective of EVAL](#) to increase clustering of evaluations whenever effective and efficient, to minimize the number of evaluations and provide broader strategic findings, results and impact. A number of factors made this approach an attractive option for the VZF to undertake:

- at the global level, this evaluation came at a time when the programme had established operations and conducted work in a significant number of countries: a cluster evaluation approach would allow the VZF SC and Secretariat with a comprehensive, more complete picture of how the programme was operating at all levels, and also in an integrated manner;
- all country projects were scheduled to carry out, either a mid-term or a final evaluation, in a 6-month window, i.e., five separate evaluations were scheduled to take place in a period of six months, which meant a heavy burden for the SC and the VZF Secretariat to support and digest, not to mention the time and financial implications.

The concept along with an evaluation plan was presented to the VZF- SC by the VZF team and EVAL in November 2019. VZF initiated the evaluation process after the idea and the plan were endorsed by the SC.

The mid-term clustered evaluation was conducted between July-October 2020. Although the initial concept of the evaluation included evaluation mission to selected countries, by March 2020, it was clear that international travel would not be possible due to the COVID-19 situation. The Terms of Reference for the evaluation were, therefore, adjusted to use remote means of primary data collection and using national consultants for Myanmar and Laos countries. These adjustments were in line with the guidance issued by EVAL for planning and managing evaluations during the pandemic.

The **evaluation found** the VZF to be highly relevant in providing a coherent response to real and pressing OSH deficits in GSCs by bringing together different actors and stakeholders and is directly relevant to workers themselves as it supports interventions that address the OSH hazards at workplace level. It noted that significant progress was made towards expected results at country and global levels and several of its intervention areas, such as those related to improving legal, policy and institutional frameworks and building technical and institutional capacity of relevant institutions work in favour of sustainability of results. Finally, it made useful recommendations towards gender mainstreaming, private sector engagement and knowledge management and visibility.

Click [here](#) to access the VZF cluster MTE report and summary!

Key lessons emerging on experience from the clustered evaluation process:

Managing the scope: The mid-term clustered evaluation had an ambitious scope. It covered the VZF programme since its inception in 2016 until 2020. During this period, the programme had evolved considerably in its strategy, scope, governance structure, partnerships, resource and its portfolio of projects. Overall, the evaluation covered the entire VZF portfolio that included eight separate projects spread over seven countries as well as the role of the VZF Secretariat.

Alike other multi-country programmes, there were further complications pertaining to language and time zones. Since evaluation-missions were not possible in the wake of the COVID-19 situation, evaluators' dependence on desk review, virtual means of data collection and support from national consultants and interpreters increased.

One of the key lessons in this regard was that availability of comprehensive strategy documents, reports, project level evidentiary documents, past evaluations is of

immense importance in evaluations of this magnitude. In this particular case, the evaluability assessment conducted towards the end of 2019-early 2020 as well as prior independent evaluations available for Myanmar and Laos and self-evaluation for Madagascar were extremely helpful in informing the cluster evaluation.

Managing time and logistical support: The clustered evaluation was undertaken in a time-frame of four months, which is consistent with the time-frame followed by most other evaluations in the ILO. The evaluation manager and the evaluators were committed to timely completion of the exercise despite all the challenges. An important lesson here is to have realistic estimates of time, resources and logistical support that such an exercise demands. Simple measures, such as lining-up the national evaluators and interpreters in advance can help manage time pressures and allow for better co-ordination and quality exchanges between the lead evaluators and national evaluators. Similarly, greater canvassing by project teams to motivate stakeholders to participate in the evaluation through interviews, surveys etc., also helps in timely data collection and allows for better triangulation, especially as evaluators rely on virtual means of data collection.

Balancing between a 'comprehensive' feedback Vs 'in depth' feedback: The clustered evaluation experience shows that by mandate and nature of the 'cluster' approach, there are certain trade-offs between getting a comprehensive, strategic feedback on a programme like VZF and the general expectation of getting in-depth feedback on each project that is part of the clustered evaluation. The evaluation had a great value in terms of weaving the themes and approaches across the countries and provide the VZF with a comprehensive picture on its strategy and operations and the areas where the programme could improve. On the other hand, country level projects, particularly those that were not previously evaluated, did not go through the same rigorous review that a traditional project evaluation offers. Indeed, a clustered evaluation approach does not eliminate the option of individual project evaluations, as and when required or relevant.

See EVAL's [Guidance Note 3.3 on Strategic clustered evaluations to gather evaluative information more effectively](#).

[1] Ethiopia, Madagascar, Colombia, Mexico, Honduras, Vietnam, Lao, and Myanmar. Operations in Vietnam started in late 2020 and hence was not part of the clustered midterm evaluation.

The key takeaway on this aspect is that programmes like VZF that encompass a combination of projects with varied scope, geography and timelines, would benefit more from the clustered approach if they follow a combination of project evaluations and a periodic overall clustered evaluation. It is necessary that the projects meriting an independent evaluation, plan for more focussed individual evaluations even if they are or were part of a clustered evaluation. This will, of course require prior planning in terms of resources and timing. Sequencing project evaluations in a manner where they could serve as an input to clustered evaluations will serve the dual purpose of having project specific in-depth feedback while also balancing the scope of cluster evaluations by reducing the burden of evidence gathering for each project.

Following up on clustered evaluation: The cluster MTE was timely as the VZF was at the mid of implementing its current strategy and some of the projects were either towards the end of their term or were entering into new phases or were in their initial stages where findings could be used to elaborate the design of the project. This allows using the findings and recommendations at the global as well as country levels. However, it is important to keep in mind that a clustered evaluation is not a solution to all the learning needs of large-scale programmes. In the case of VZF, the Secretariat, in consultation with country teams and other stakeholders, plans to undertake complementing evidence based learning exercises in the forms of thematic case studies, based on some of the promising practices or result areas noted by the cluster evaluation as well as some of the previous evaluations conducted under the auspices of VZF. A short document presenting individual stories on how the projects brought positive changes in people's work and life is also in the pipeline.

Know more about [Vision Zero Fund!](#)

News from the Regions

▶ Asia and the Pacific

Impact of ILO work: how can it be defined so it can be measured?

It has been frequently observed that the ILO struggles to articulate its long-term impact. This is despite, generally, high ratings for relevance and effectiveness generally in project evaluations [2]. This recurring observation led the Regional Programming Services Unit (RPS)

for the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP), to search for an explanation. Typically, reasons given for the difficulties include the types of capacity building and normative work done by the ILO, that in some areas, may not easily yield impacts for years, making it challenging to document significant changes.

In addition, the majority of evaluations in the ILO are done at the project level, financed through project funds. These evaluations do not have the scope to study or examine long-term impacts, nor do they have the resources to look beyond the project end date at what may happen once the formal project ends.

Reliance on project evaluations also ignores a larger systems perspective that includes the full portfolio of work done in a country as part of one cohesive initiative guided by the DWCP. Because specific components of DWCPs are funded on a project by project basis, it means that funds are not earmarked to evaluate the programme as a whole. This, also contributes to the difficulty of capturing the impact long term. This structure makes it difficult for the ILO to undertake ex-post or longitudinal studies [3].

See EVAL's [Guidance Note 2.5 on impact evaluation](#) and the [Impact Evaluation Review Facility](#) for guided support on conducting impact evaluation.

In order to improve ILO ROAP's capacity to better articulate impact, RPS with the Regional Evaluation Officer launched an initiative to assess where exactly the challenges lay and rigorously follow up. Phase 1 of this work took place from September 2019 to February 2020, and phase 2 is ongoing. The goal of the first phase was to explore ways to improve the ability of ILO staff to more effectively identify and collect data that could serve as evidence for the impact of the ILO's work at the country level.

Through evaluation experts, discussions were held with ILO staff. Recommendations and findings from prior evaluations, as well as other core documents were reviewed. It became clear that an infrastructure for studying the impact of the ILO's work required a return to basics: 1) theories of change; and 2) monitoring systems.

ILO requirement for theory of change, "*The Office should strengthen its monitoring, evaluation and internal implementation reporting system on programmes and projects, and make a strong theory of change a compulsory requirement at all levels of its results-based management system*" [4].

The findings in phase 1 highlighted the importance of building an enabling culture for discussion of impact and monitoring results. In other words, it was not knowledge or awareness that was lacking, but infrastructure that valued and supported monitoring and reporting. It was agreed that in order for Country Offices to make shifts at the country level, additional support and coaching of staff were needed to increase their capacity for monitoring and reporting to help them succeed in this goal.

A number of important insights emerged from phase 1. First is the confusion over the definition of “impact”. This may be due to the definition used by the UN Development Group (UNDG) [5] which states “Impact implies changes in people’s lives. This might include changes in knowledge, skill, behaviour, health or living conditions for children, adults, families or communities. Such changes are positive or negative long term effects on identifiable population groups produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended...”. The ILO’s revised definition of impact draws from the revamped 2019 [OECD/DAC](#) criteria; “The extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended (primary and secondary long terms), higher-level effects and is not restricted to change at individual / population levels” [6]. The definition is broader than the previous one and does not restrict change to the individual level only. None-the-less, the participants in the coaching initiative (and others generally) tended to search for ILO’s impact at the individual or population levels.

This presented two distinct types of obstacles: (1) the ILO’s outputs are mainly policy level work. The “degree of separation” between policy level outputs and impact at individual level is marked with very many change pathways making the impact uncertain and attribution a challenge; and, (2) much of ILO’s intended effects of policy do not necessarily lead to uniform benefits for each individual, or to durable/ permanent change. For example, primary school

enrollment is a non-reversible change; once attained, it is irreversible. Surviving infancy is another irreversible individual change. However, increase in income, starting up an enterprise, even exiting child labour are “reversible” changes that are heavily affected by context specificities well outside ILO’s control [7]. This said, donor funded development cooperation (DC) projects may be able to achieve a direct, time bound change at individual levels (for example rehabilitation from child labour, increase in income). However, what these DC projects prove is that the ILO’s intervention models work and that they are ready to be scaled-up. Therefore, the impact that the ILO ought to be seeking is how it achieved long term capacity change at institutional level to sustain and scale-up successful interventions rather than how the “pilot models” were effective in themselves.

Second, there is tendency to overlook the ILO’s added-value; tripartism and labour standards. For example, the ILO in India has, since 2006 or so, been engaged in technical assistance to put in place an employment policy that would contribute to growth, productivity and decent work. Since the effort began, there have been political changes that have created a strain in tripartism and social dialogue, and the headwinds continue to be strong. If the purpose was to pass a policy that was beneficial to one constituent only, the ILO in India would already have a Policy in place. Instead of looking at certain policies not passing, we need to look at what we have upheld in the meantime. This often means not compromising on labour market governance. Policies that are firmly grounded on international labour standards and social dialogue and helping those mechanisms stay fit for purpose are things only the ILO can do.

See [EVAL Guidance note 3.2 on Adapting evaluation methods to the ILO’s normative and tripartite mandate](#).

Lastly, creating an impact narrative includes political decision-making. It is not purely evidence-based [8]. Whether the focus is on “policies that did not pass” or “policies still on the table and social dialogue continuing” is a choice that Country Offices need to make. Afterward, evidence should be collected to support this claim in a responsible manner that represents all sides of the argument.

Where do we go from here? One thing clear is that defining the impact of the ILO’s work needs frequent, bottom-up, unrestricted, open discussion of change that we see around us. It also requires a localised

[2] See for example MOPAN 2015-16, HLE DWCP for the Mekong region; SDG evaluability diagnostics in Sri Lanka

[3] Report of the experts: ROAP coaching initiative.

[4] See EVAL’s [Annual Evaluation Report 2013–14](#), p. 21

[5] [UNSDG Results Based Management Handbook](#)

[6] See also EVAL’s internal working paper “The ILO - Position Paper on enhancing the value of impact evaluation” and [Guidance Note 2.5 on Impact evaluation](#).

[7] See also “[What is impact](#)”.

[8] See for example, Naila Kabeer’s Feminist Critique of Storytelling Practices in “[Randomista](#)” & [The Politics of evidence](#).

mechanism to discuss and to capture positive and negative change in relation to tripartism and social justice, in all areas of our work. We need to constantly assess how the ILO has made a difference or could further make a difference. This is, more than ever, needed in the current post-COVID-19 labour market where the narrative is filled with weakening social dialogue in the Asia and the Pacific Region.

▶ EVAL Highlights

Dissemination and discussion events

Learning opportunities from recent high-level evaluations on ILO's research and knowledge management strategy and approaches and ILO's strategy and action on sustainable enterprises

Earlier this year, EVAL hosted two virtual dissemination events on the [independent high-level evaluations of ILO's research and knowledge management strategy and approaches](#) and [ILO's strategy and action on sustainable enterprises](#). The purpose of the events was to share evaluation results and lessons that can inform the ongoing development of the organization's future work, with respect to both topics, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Both events brought together more than 100 ILO staff, including senior management, project officers and monitoring and evaluation officers. Additional dissemination events are planned, at the end of 2021, on the ongoing high-level evaluations (HLEs) on fair migration, gender equality and mainstreaming, and Decent Work Country Programmes in Asia and the Pacific.



See [video](#) of the event on ILO's strategy and actions on sustainable enterprises (password: EVAL)



See [video](#) of the event on ILO's ILO's research and knowledge management strategy and approaches (password: EVAL)

Using new communication tools: Podcasts to convey evaluation

In February, EVAL produced three, short (video) podcasts to convey the important link between evaluation and the ILO's cross-cutting themes. We invited Ms Adrienne Cruz, Mr Moustapha Kamal Gueye and Ms Katerina Tsotroudi were interviewed on topics corresponding to their respective areas of expertise.

Their podcasts were shared with participants of EVAL's first virtual Evaluation Manager Certification Programme for enhanced capacity-building efforts, particularly in this period of distance and online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

To continue the momentum of this good practice, in March, the Director of the Evaluation Office, Mr Guy Thijs, conducted a (video) podcast for a UNEDAP training event in the Asia and the Pacific region on the significance of evaluation with respect to organizational learning and results-based management.

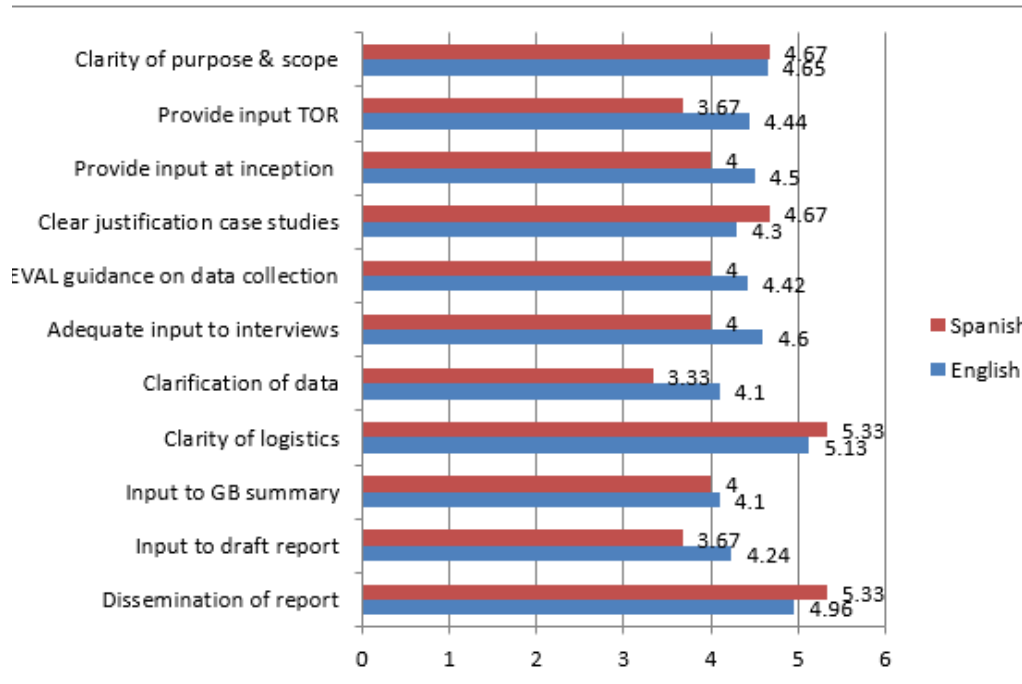
Access the podcasts here:

- [Evaluation & gender equality](#)
- [Evaluation & norms](#)
- [Evaluation & environmental concerns](#)
- [UNEDAP presentation on use of evaluations](#)

Taking stock of the 2020 high-level evaluations' process

EVAL is committed to continuous learning and improvement and one such way is to conduct a "lessons learned" process of the HLEs. Since 2017, the practice has been to conduct surveys and a series of internal reflection meetings to draw lessons and seek client feedback and satisfaction of the HLE process. In 2020, following the first ever HLE process conducted completely online due to the COVID-19 pandemic, EVAL launched three sets of surveys to solicit feedback from the evaluation teams (international team leaders and national consultants) and to our ILO colleagues.

The survey included questions specific to the remote data collection and overall evaluation process in light of the COVID-19 restrictions. *The overall score given to EVAL (combining both the English and Spanish survey*



results) from our internal colleagues was 4.3 on a 6 point scale. Internal clients pointed that EVAL could do a better job in getting wider consultation and input from colleagues at the time of finalizing the TOR, clarification on data received and the data collection process and comments and input to the draft report. The above graph is a summary of the results received. Based on these inputs an EVAL internal action plan was developed and discussed to directly feed into the HLE process currently underway on the DWCP in South Asia, Labour Migration and Gender Equality and Mainstreaming.

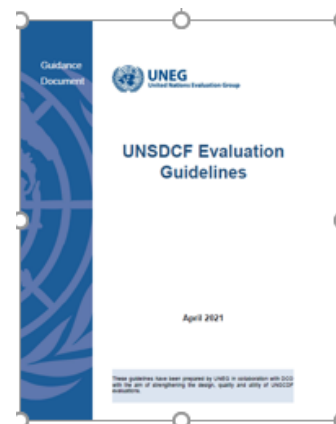
Exchange portal for certified evaluation managers

The ILO relies on certified evaluation managers to manage independent evaluations. To facilitate the assignment of [planned evaluations](#) to evaluation managers, EVAL created the “exchange portal” (accessible to ILO staff only). Stored in EVAL’s knowledge sharing platform, [i-eval Connect](#), evaluation managers are invited to indicate their availability and topics of interest that they would like to manage with respect to planned independent evaluations that are indicated in [i-eval Discovery](#).

The exchange portal takes it one step further by also storing information on the evaluations that evaluation managers have completed. This includes direct access to evaluation reports and their quality appraisals. Departmental Evaluation Focal Points and Regional Evaluation Officers are also welcome to access the exchange portal to contact prospective evaluation managers for upcoming work.

► UNEG developments

Fostering evaluations of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCF)- forthcoming



As part of ILO’s co-convening role for the UNEG Working Group (WG) on the UNSDCF, ILO’s Evaluation Office has led the development of the UNEG evaluation guide for the UN Cooperation Framework. These guidelines provide a step-by-step approach to conducting CF

evaluations and ensure a robust and effective evaluation set-up and design, data collection, analysis, reporting, and dissemination. The guide also features templates and quality checklists for key evaluation products, namely TORs, inception and evaluation reports.

The development of the guidance document was possible thanks to substantial contributions from ILO and FAO (as co-convenor of the WG) and OIOS, UNWOMEN, UNEP and UNICEF (members of the regional evaluation network UNNEESA). As required, collaboration with the United Nations Development Coordination Office (DCO) is taking place to ensure the relevance and utility of the guide vis à vis the nature and requirements of CF evaluations. The official release of the guide is expected in May 2021.

► Learning activities & events

Reflections - Lessons from evaluations: Learning from past crises for recovering from COVID-19



The Independent Evaluation Office of UNDP is hosting a [launch event](#) on 28 April of its first edition of Reflections. Against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, experts will reflect on “potential areas of strengths, challenges or collaborations in the use of evaluative lessons to help decision-makers make the right choices to get the global Sustainable Development Goals firmly back on track – towards a greener, more inclusive and more sustainable future.” The ILO’s Director of EVAL is invited to participate as one of the panellists for the event.

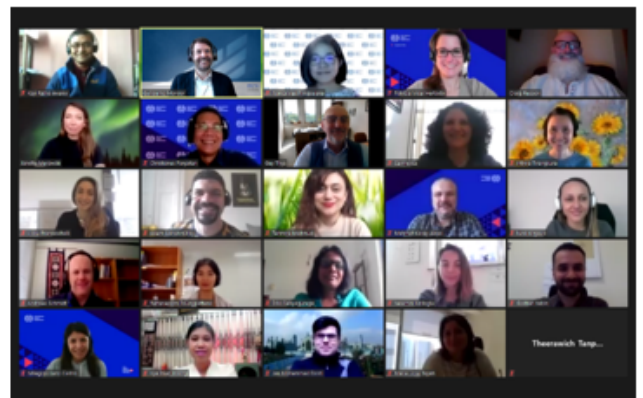
[Register here](#) to join panellists Oscar A. Garcia (Director, Independent Evaluation Office, UNDP), Alison Evans (Director, Independent Evaluation Group, World Bank Group), Guy Thijs (Director, Evaluation Office, ILO) and Isabelle Mercier (Director, International Assistance Evaluation, Global Affairs Canada) share their reflections on learning from past crises for recovering from COVID-19.

Adapting the Evaluation Manager Certification Programme for continued success

EVAL regularly conducts the Evaluation Manager Certification Programme (EMCP) coordination with the ILO’s International Training Centre. In early 2020, an EMCP was scheduled in the Asia-Pacific region but as the urgency of the COVID-19 pandemic became apparent, it was rescheduled and, ultimately, cancelled. EVAL subsequently revised the curriculum for on-line delivery and streamlined it by consolidating training modules, revising the learning activities and devising new ones to respond to the needs of online training modality. The programme was implemented during February and March 2021. The online method allowed participation from a diverse mix of regions. There were 26 participants of which: 16 were from Asia and the Pacific, five from Europe, three from headquarters and two from the Arab

States. Due to popular demand, a separate workshop is envisioned for Africa later in the year. The programme continued to apply a three-tier approach:

- *Phase 1 – Distance Learning Phase – Self-Guided*
During the first two weeks of February, participants attended a kick-off webinar, studied the Evaluation Management Manual and took a pre-test. Upon completion of the exam, participants were assigned an upcoming independent evaluation for their practicum.
- *Phase 2 – Online Workshop*
After the distance learning phase, participants attended a series of two Zoom webinars per week over a period of three weeks. The webinars provided an overview of the evaluation management process.
- *Phase 3 -- Practicum*
As in the past, the EMCP continues to have a guided practice in which trainees are required to return to their posts and manage an evaluation under supervision using the acquired know-how and the management tools and techniques provided during the workshop.



EVAL is currently taking stock of this online EMCP modality to implement it in other regions and headquarters. Work on an advanced EMCP course that integrates modules from the Internal Evaluation Certification Programme is ongoing too.

Calling all evaluation consultants: Complete the self-induction programme

Evaluation consultants interested in conducting evaluations for the ILO are encouraged to undertake the [self-induction programme](#). Participation will help to boost their familiarity with the unique aspects of the ILO’s mandate, its evaluation policy (2017) and evaluation strategy (2018). Almost 100 evaluators have already completed the programme and submitted their attestation of completion to eval@ilo.org.