



## Governing Body

309th Session, Geneva, November 2010

GB.309/PFA/5/1

Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee

**PFA**

**FOR DECISION**

FIFTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

## Evaluations

### Annual evaluation report 2009–10

#### Overview

**Issues covered**

This report summarizes ILO evaluation performance and activities with special focus on progress made in 2010 as measured against the 2005 evaluation policy and strategy.

**Policy implications**

To be determined in the light of the discussion on the ILO's future evaluation policy in March 2011.

**Financial implications**

None.

**Decision required**

Paragraph 41.

**References to other Governing Body documents**

GB.291/PFA/9, GB.309/PFA/5/5, GB.304/PFA/2(Rev.).



## Introduction

1. This report is the last of five on the implementation of ILO's evaluation policy and strategy during the period covering the Strategic Policy Framework (2006–09).<sup>1</sup> The strategy's aims have been to deliver an institutional-level evaluation capacity and practice in line with international evaluation norms and standards, to improve the quality, credibility and usefulness of evaluations, and to support accountability and organizational learning linked to performance and results.
2. This report covers evaluation performance from several perspectives. It highlights the work done over the past five years, noting progress to date against indicators linked to each of the strategy components, as well as outstanding related challenges and issues. Major improvements reported for 2010 include the survey results regarding follow-up to independent project evaluations, and information systems improvements and the results of analysis of lessons learned. The final section of the report proposes a programme of work for evaluation in 2011.
3. Feedback from the Committee in November 2009 indicated satisfaction with progress but called on the Office to move substantively to put in place an integrated and transparent monitoring system for projects and programmes. Representatives of the Employers' and Workers' groups both noted the importance of evaluation processes that involve constituents and take into consideration the extent to which their needs are being met. Future reporting should also give more attention to the impact of ILO activities, lessons learned, and specific follow-up work on recommendations. Several speakers also drew attention to their interest in receiving more comprehensive strategic information linking lessons learned to the programming and budgeting for the subsequent period.

## Taking stock of the ILO evaluation function: 2005–09

4. The ILO 2005 evaluation strategy set the following parameters as key indicators of achievement:
  - More systematic use of self-evaluation and independent evaluation.
  - Regular reporting to senior management and the Governing Body on evaluation activity and its effects.
  - Follow-up to evaluation findings and recommendations, including their use in the results-based planning, programming and budgeting process.
  - Improved institutional learning and knowledge-sharing.
  - Harmonization of evaluation practices and methods within the Office, regardless of source of funds.
  - Decentralized evaluation responsibilities and accountabilities, as appropriate.
  - Improved internal capacity and skills in evaluation and self-evaluation methodologies.

<sup>1</sup> GB.291/PFA/9.

<sup>2</sup> Summaries of each evaluation are available on the ILO website ([www.ilo.org/eval](http://www.ilo.org/eval)).

- Participatory process of ILO constituents in evaluation.
  - Independence of the evaluation function preserved.
5. Progress made over the past five years under each of these parameters is highlighted below.

### **More systematic use of self-evaluation and independent evaluation**

6. Key steps have included issue-focused scoping, adequate budgeting, confirming the topic's evaluability, using appropriate methodology, being transparent and participatory, and making evaluation results accessible to key stakeholders and decision-makers. The Office has made improvements on each of these points through guidance, training and quality control. It also systematically reserves adequate budget for evaluation, conducts periodic evaluability checks and scoping missions for larger evaluations. The involvement of stakeholders and multimedia dissemination of evaluation results is well established. However, recent assessments have found limited evidence that evaluations are being widely used by ILO managers and constituents. Major challenges are to improve the usefulness of evaluation, and to ensure the relevance of results to the issues at hand.
7. All projects budgeted at US\$500,000 and over are subject to independent evaluation. Results from 2009 show that compliance with the policy has been reasonably high. In 2009, the ILO completed 63 independent project evaluations, out of a total of 74 planned for the year, or 82 per cent.<sup>2</sup> Nine of the 74 were replaced by an internal evaluation, one reported insufficient funds, and one was replaced by a final progress report.
8. Since 2006, the Office has conducted standardized quality appraisals of independent decentralized evaluations. The results point to an improvement in the quality of evaluations. Evaluability checks in 2008, however, revealed uneven preparedness – primarily because of weakly defined results frameworks, use of indicators and targets and other forms of results monitoring.
9. Since 2005, the ILO has reported on the systematic use of independent evaluation of projects; figure 1 shows the geographic distribution and figure 2 shows the five-year trend in terms of technical themes covered. The graphs indicate that throughout the period, activities have been concentrated in Asia and Africa and roughly two-thirds have focused on child labour and employment. The table in the appendix shows the distribution by technical theme of the 63 evaluations completed in 2009.
10. Self-evaluation has been less systematic, although the Office has regularized the use of internal country programme reviews by regional offices, which are implemented jointly with ILO constituents. The Office has also revised the format for extra-budgetary technical cooperation progress reporting to incorporate a greater element of self-assessment. A system to collect and track progress reports is currently being piloted by the Partnerships and Development Cooperation Department (PARDEV).

<sup>2</sup> Summaries of each evaluation are available on the ILO website ([www.ilo.org/eval](http://www.ilo.org/eval)).

Figure 1. Number of independent evaluations by region and year, 2005–09

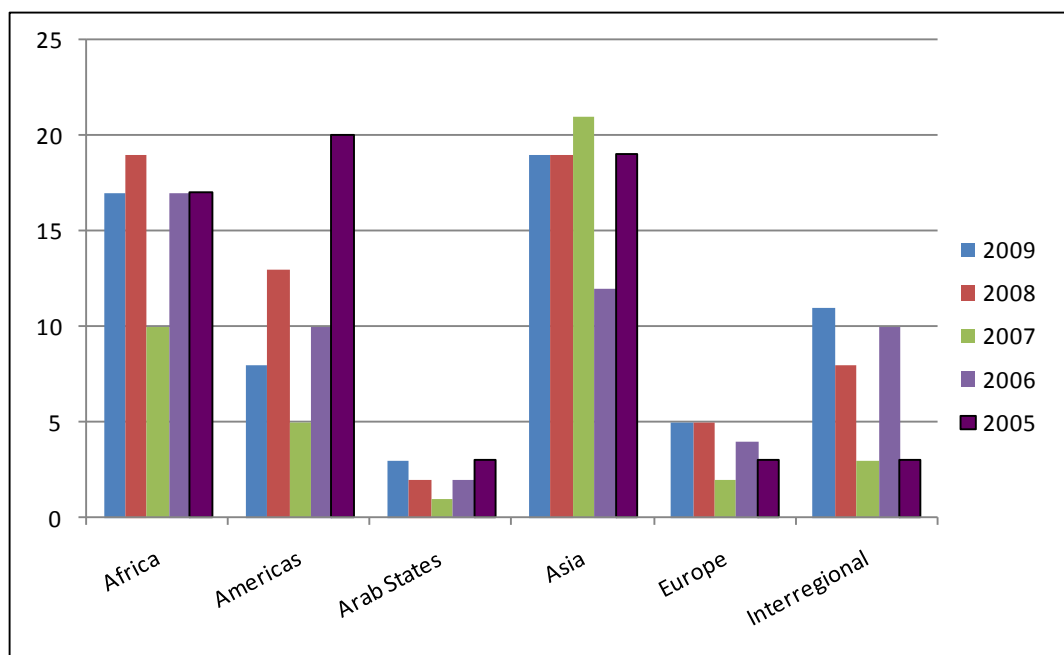
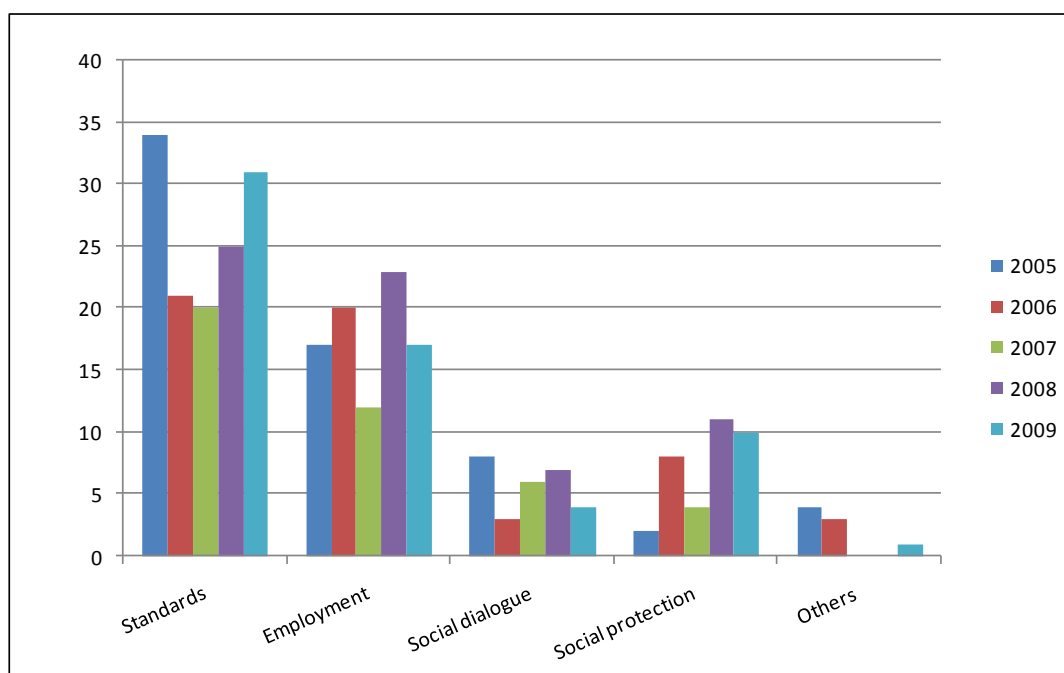


Figure 2. Number of independent evaluations by technical topic, 2005–09



### Regular reporting to senior management and the Governing Body on evaluation activity and its effects

11. Since 2006, the Office has submitted to the November Governing Body annual evaluation reports profiling evaluation activities, within the framework of its agreed policy and strategy. While this has enabled the Governing Body to exercise its oversight role, the reporting has not attempted to synthesize the large body of information generated from evaluations. There may be a need to consider how future annual reports can better focus on analysis of findings, lessons learned and good practices as they reflect the results and

impact of ILO activities. The Evaluation Unit is reviewing various approaches taken by other organizations, as well as considering the need for timeliness linked to the Governing Body and International Labour Conference agendas.

### **Follow-up to evaluation findings and recommendations, including their use in the results-based planning, programming and the budgeting process**

12. Since 2006, each year the Office has reported to the Governing Body on the follow-up to high-level evaluations, including the outcome of the Evaluation Advisory Committee (EAC) deliberations regarding the adequacy of the follow-up to each recommendation. The completion rate of the follow-up is a key performance indicator within the Strategic Policy Framework 2010–15.<sup>3</sup> As of 2011, completion rates on the follow-up will also be reported for decentralized evaluations. In 2010, approximately 95 per cent of planned follow-up activities for two high-level evaluations had either been completed (51 per cent) or partially completed (44 per cent).

### ***Follow-up to high-level independent evaluations from 2009***

13. Each year, independent high-level strategy and country programme evaluations are presented to the November Session of the Governing Body and a management response from the Office forms part of the reports. To support the governance process during the following year, the Annual Evaluation Report updates the Governing Body on the adequacy of the Office's follow-up based on its own assessment and that of the EAC, which monitors and ensures adequate management follow-up to these high-level evaluations.
14. With regard to the **evaluation of Indonesia's Decent Work Country Programme**, the Committee noted with satisfaction that the follow-up was progressing with most recommendations having been addressed or making satisfactory progress. Across the nine recommendations, 29 specific follow-up actions were planned of which 14 were fully implemented, 12 were partially implemented, and for three no action was yet recorded.
15. Implementation of the nine recommendations from the **evaluation of the ILO strategy to support national capacities for youth employment (2005–09)** indicates steady progress against the management response and action plan for follow-up. Some follow-up items had longer timelines and therefore were not foreseen to be completed within the first six months. The EAC noted with satisfaction that of the 26 specific actions planned across the nine recommendations, 14 were fully implemented and 12 partially implemented.
16. The **evaluation of the ILO Country Programme for Honduras (2002–08)** was completed in early June 2009 but the findings and recommendations were not presented to national constituents due to the political situation. The evaluation process has since been completed and the ILO Office in San José will consider the lessons and recommendations in the design of the next Decent Work Country Programme. The report is available on the ILO evaluation public website.

<sup>3</sup> Governance, support and management, outcome 2, indicator 2.3. See GB.304/PFA/2(Rev.), p. 30.

17. The EAC adopted the progress reports on implementation of recommendations for the two high-level evaluations and requested that updates be presented to the EAC in six months' time. A summary of progress is provided below.

**Table 1. Summary of planned follow-up and completion status, 2009 high-level evaluations**

Evaluation topic	Actions planned	Completed	Partial	No action taken
Indonesia Decent Work Country Programme	29	14	12	3
ILO strategy to support national capacities for youth employment (2005–09)	26	14	12	0
ILO Country Programme for Honduras (2002–08)*	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

\* Progress report to be submitted in early 2011.

### ***Follow-up to decentralized independent evaluations***

18. Since 2009, the ILO also has in place policies, procedures and information systems that translate into systematic monitoring and reporting on the follow-up to all decentralized independent evaluations. Twice yearly, ILO managers report progress towards implementing evaluation recommendations. By July 2010, of the 105 independent decentralized project evaluations completed in 2008 and 2009, follow-up to 1,264 recommendations was assessed, with the Evaluation Unit receiving reports on 640.<sup>4</sup> The results indicated that 112 recommendations were aimed at organizations other than the ILO and 53 required follow-up outside the administrative unit managing the project. Informal feedback suggested that the quality of recommendations needs to be improved to make follow-up more feasible. Noting these issues, 41 per cent of recommendations were reported as completed and 34 per cent were reported as partially completed. This indicates that for those reporting, 75 per cent were being implemented within 12 months of completion of the independent evaluation report.
19. This measure establishes a sound benchmark against which progress can be compared and reported. The validation and quality assurance of the reported follow-up actions will be conducted by the Evaluation Unit periodically on a sample basis. Table 2 summarizes the results of the follow-up surveys completed in 2010.

<sup>4</sup> Results do not yet include information on the follow-up to IPEC project evaluations because of differences in reporting systems. This information is being compiled and will be incorporated in the i-Track database by late 2010.

Table 2. Summary of recommendations and follow-up status, 2008–09

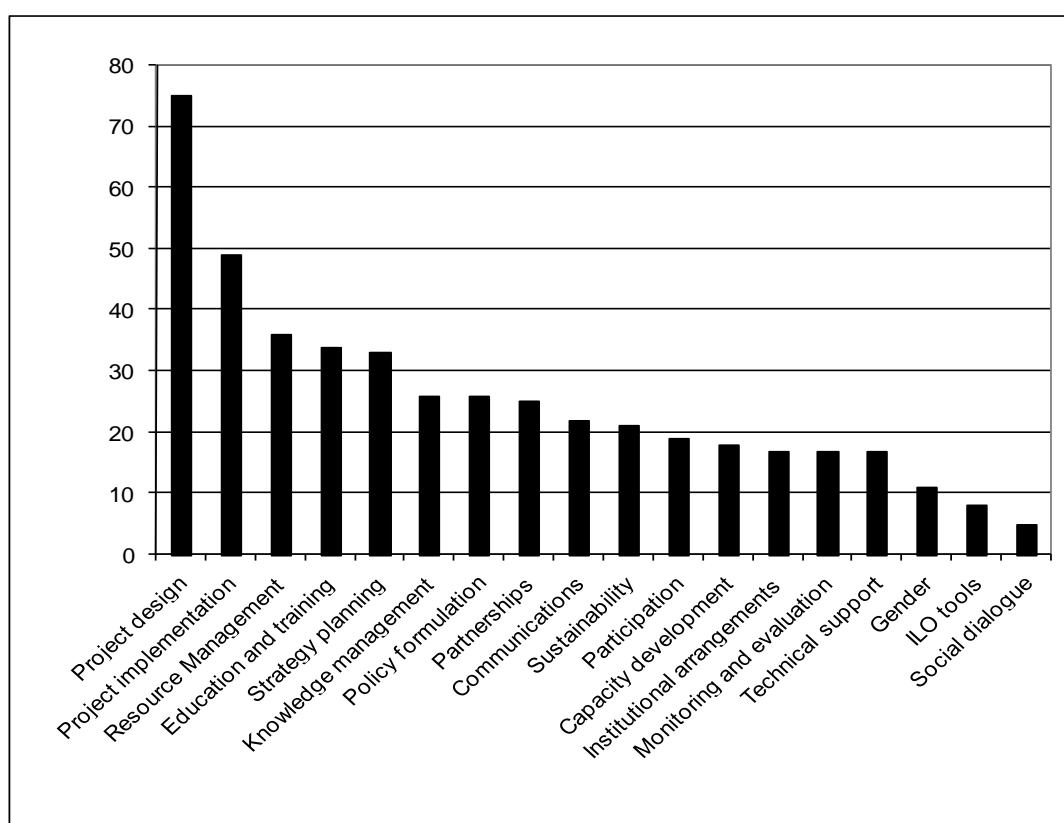
Region/Sector	Evaluations			Follow-up status						
	Reports	Recommendations		Completed	Partially	Pending	No action reported or taken	No response	Total reported	
	Number	Sent	Received							
Africa	20	230	204	50	63	13	9	69	135	
Americas	17	255	254	48	36	10	6	154	100	
Arab States	4	51	46	11	5	2	1	27	19	
Europe and Central Asia	7	58	58	26	11	1	1	19	39	
Asia and the Pacific	30	356	331	96	62	19	39	115	331	
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>950</b>	<b>893</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>509</b>	
Dialogue	2	16	8	6	1	0	1	0	8	
Employment	2	15	15	12	1	0	2	0	15	
Social protection	8	94	73	9	26	8	21	9	64	
Standards	12	162	162	2	0	10	5	145	17	
Other	3	27	27	2	14	3	8	0	27	
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>131</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>1 264</b>	<b>1 178</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>538</b>	<b>640</b>	
<b>Percentage</b>				<b>22.24</b>	<b>18.59</b>	<b>5.60</b>	<b>7.89</b>	<b>45.67</b>	<b>54.33</b>	



## Improved institutional learning and knowledge-sharing

20. The Governing Body has encouraged the ILO to take greater advantage of evaluations to promote organizational learning. In response, the Office has expanded the i-Track database system to store lessons learned from evaluations of projects and programmes. Since 2009, lessons learned are integrated into the project design process, including quality criteria that call for evidence of the use of lessons learned in the design of new projects as part of the appraisal process.
21. In 2010, the Office analysed the lessons learned from recently completed project evaluations, categorizing these into cross-cutting themes linked to technical cooperation. Figure 3 below shows the breakdown of the 459 lessons learned by category. Many of these related to project design, with frequent themes calling for general improvements with regard to needs assessment, the project end goals, log frames and time frames involved. The study results have been shared and discussed internally. PARDEV is revising training and guidance accordingly.

**Figure 3. Lessons learned by category from independent project evaluations, 2009–10**

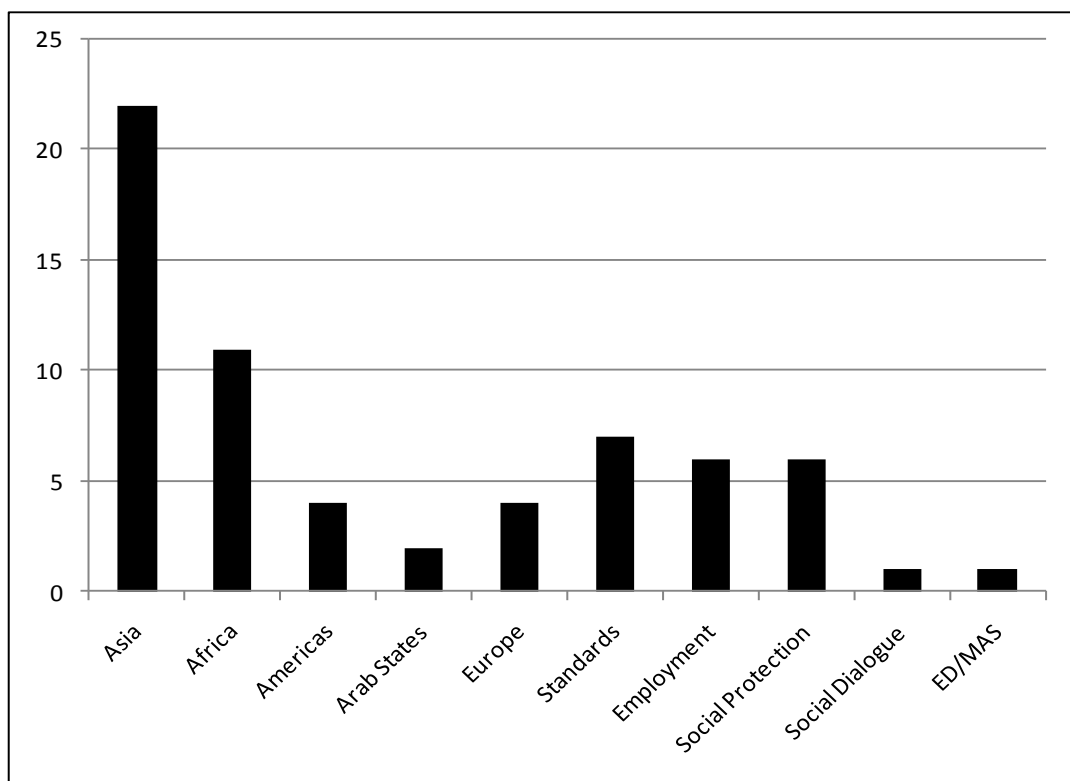


22. The i-Track system currently enables systematic evaluation monitoring involving a range of measures which support evaluation performance reporting to the Governing Body:
- Evaluation plans versus project approvals > \$500,000.
  - Evaluation reports (quality and completion rates) against plans.
  - Profile of lessons learned by thematic category.
  - Rate of follow-up to recommendations.

**Harmonization of evaluation practices and methods  
within the Office, regardless of source of funds  
and  
Decentralized evaluation responsibilities and  
accountabilities**

23. Most ILO evaluations are now managed by technical sectors and regions, either as part of an evaluation responsibility linked to technical cooperation, or as an internal review activity linked to a country or technical programme, or as a thematic, or special impact assessment initiative.
24. To ensure harmonization and quality control, the ILO maintains a network of evaluation professionals to support decentralized evaluation planning, implementation, report quality and monitoring of the follow-up. In 2009, the evaluation network registered several advancements, in part due to the expanded information base and improved functionality of the i-Track evaluation information system. Network members have regular virtual workshops and meetings of the evaluation network, and regions and sectors share evaluation workplans, with regular updating and periodic reconciliation exercises. This has further facilitated peer-to-peer evaluation support across regions and technical programmes, including for activities aimed at supporting capacity building of constituents.
25. The breakdown of administrative responsibility for the 63 projects evaluated in 2009 is shown in figure 3, which demonstrates the need for decentralized evaluation capacities. For 2010 and into 2011, the Office will maintain monitoring and evaluation officers in the five regions and has secured funds for additional specialized monitoring and evaluation expertise in sectors and regions (e.g. IPEC, Youth Employment, CoopAfrica, Microinsurance Innovation Facility and Better Work).

**Figure 4. Breakdown of administrative responsibility for 63 projects evaluated in 2009**



## Improved internal capacity and skills in evaluation and self-evaluation methodologies and Participatory process of ILO constituents in evaluation

26. One of the core components of the evaluation strategy is capacity development. The primary methods that the Office has used to promote it include providing guidelines, tools and technical information, supporting regional evaluation networks, and targeted training and technical support to ILO staff and constituents. The form and level of capacity building can be seen in table 3 below.

**Table 3. Evaluation capacity development at multiple levels including national, organizational and individual, as supported by the ILO evaluation network**

	Knowledge	Network creation	Training
National	Evaluation experts raise demand and supply for national information linked to decent work policies and programmes	Evaluation experts collaborate with regional and national evaluation organizations	Evaluation experts conduct evaluation training for national tripartite constituents
Organizational	Eval elaborates ILO guidelines, tools and information systems supporting the evaluation function	Eval coordinates the ILO network of regional evaluation officers and regional and sector focal persons for evaluation	Eval collaborates on joint training in RBM/Decent Work Country Programmes; evaluation experts conduct targeted/customized staff training on demand
Individual	Eval provides information through website and through a series of evaluation guidance papers	Evaluation experts participate in joint evaluations and other evaluation activities	Evaluation experts provide technical support to constituents and colleagues for specific evaluation activities

27. From 2006–09, the Office made use of a joint project to strengthen ILO capacity to support Decent Work Country Programmes and results-based management (RBM), with approximately \$1.2 million expended to strengthen evaluation capacities and activities.<sup>5</sup> These funds allowed the Office to establish the evaluation network, which is the major means of delivering support to field staff and constituents.
28. According to the project's independent evaluation, the evaluation function has played an important role in helping build the necessary skill sets needed for the planning, development, monitoring and evaluation of results-oriented projects and programmes. Notable activities over 2008 and 2009 included development of an evaluability assessment methodology for application to Decent Work Country Programmes to ensure that they are evaluable and oriented to RBM; a stocktaking of the ILO's monitoring and self-evaluation capability; developing regional evaluation networks; and capacity-building workshops for developing monitoring and evaluation skills.
29. The evaluation further noted that the evaluation capacity of constituents is uneven across countries. Efforts to strengthen evaluation capacity and skills would require a broader, and costlier strategy. From a budgeting perspective, the ILO will need to balance the monitoring and evaluation capacity-building support needed for its own field staff with

<sup>5</sup> The project was funded by DFID (United Kingdom) and the Government of the Netherlands.

that needed for the constituents. The Office is working on an integrated workshop programme and supporting materials that target constituents.

## Independence of the evaluation function preserved

30. The ILO evaluation policy addresses the need to maintain the independence of the evaluation function. It calls for a separation of evaluation responsibility from line management functions, the use of external, professional evaluators according to agreed criteria to avoid potential conflict of interest, transparency of processes and participation of constituents and other stakeholders. Additional criteria linked to UN evaluation standards call for adequacy of resources to comply with the evaluation policy and approved programme of work.
31. Since 2006, the Evaluation Unit has conducted evaluations independent of the Office management structure, contracted external evaluation consultants to lead independent evaluations, and established guidelines to ensure transparent and participatory evaluation processes. Feedback from within the Office suggests that these guidelines are not widely known by ILO staff and that evaluation processes in practice are often not as transparent or participatory as set out in the guidelines.

## New directions for ILO evaluation

### High-level evaluations conducted in 2010

32. The topics evaluated in 2010, with links to the full report and summaries, are provided in table 4 below.

**Table 4. Topics evaluated and links to the full report**

Evaluation topic	ILO internet links
ILO strategy for the extension of social protection	Long report: <a href="http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationreports/Strategyandpolicyevaluations/lang--en/index.htm">http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationreports/Strategyandpolicyevaluations/lang--en/index.htm</a> Governing Body summary: GB.309/PFA/5/4
ILO's Country Programme for the United Republic of Tanzania	Long report: <a href="http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationreports/Countryprogramme/lang--en/index.htm">http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationreports/Countryprogramme/lang--en/index.htm</a> Governing Body summary: GB.309/PFA/5/2
Decent Work Country Programme for Kyrgyzstan	Long report: <a href="http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationreports/Countryprogramme/lang--en/index.htm">http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationreports/Countryprogramme/lang--en/index.htm</a> Governing Body summary: GB.309/PFA/5/3

33. Based on the outcome of the Governing Body discussion, and as recommended in the independent external evaluation (IEE), the Office will propose multi-year programming for high-level evaluations. This new programme will be submitted as part of the new evaluation strategy to the March 2011 session of the Governing Body.

### The external evaluation of the ILO evaluation function

34. In 2010, the ILO supported an independent evaluation of the ILO's evaluation function, which built upon a self-evaluation exercise to gather feedback from ILO staff about what works well and what needs improvement, and to provide practical suggestions for next

steps. A summary of the IEE conclusions and recommendations, together with the Office's response, is elaborated in a separate paper before the Committee.<sup>6</sup>

35. The new evaluation strategy, to be submitted to the March 2011 Governing Body, will take into account the recommendations of the IEE.

### Priority areas for action and emerging issues for 2011

36. The ILO's proposed programme of work for evaluation in 2011 is ambitious, given the need to introduce new policies and secure core capacities and systems. In particular, the results of the IEE call on the ILO to choose and use evaluations more strategically, within a more coherent internal monitoring and evaluation system. In addition, in line with the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, the Office recognizes that building the capacities of constituents to monitor and assess decent work-related policies and programmes is integral to knowledge generation and informed decision-making. The evaluation function of the ILO will support technical teams to apply generic assessment methodologies and methods to review national policies and programming as requested by national constituents. With regard to improving the use of evaluation within the Office, initiatives in 2011 will focus on the following:
- systematic follow-up on evaluation recommendations and reporting on performance;
  - revised policies, guidelines and use of self-evaluation at project, programme and organizational levels;
  - advancements in tools and technical support aimed at improving constituent capacities and practices linked to monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment; and
  - development of a new format for the annual report, profiling key performance results and lessons learned, linked to the portfolio of ILO evaluation work.
37. Following a process of consultation, the Office is proposing three topics for high-level evaluations in 2011 (see table 5 below).
38. With regard to assessing high-level outcomes within the Strategic Policy Framework 2010–15, it is proposed to evaluate the strategy towards the world of work responding effectively to the HIV/AIDS epidemic (outcome 8).
39. Linked to efforts to eliminate discrimination in employment and occupation (outcome 18), the Office proposes to evaluate the ILO multi-pronged strategy to address the complex and evolving nature of discrimination. The evaluation will review ILO action within the context of the ILO Conventions addressing various forms of discrimination and will encompass the major means of action to support their application.
40. Within the ILO's Strategic Policy Framework, strengthening the institutional capacities of the constituents in line with the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization calls for a comprehensive approach to capacity development, combining technical assistance with the training and learning services offered by the Turin Centre. It is proposed that this be the focus of an independent evaluation comparing regional approaches and results.

<sup>6</sup> GB.309/PFA/5/5.

**Table 5. Type, topic and timing of independent high-level evaluations in 2011**

<b>Evaluation type</b>	<b>Topic of independent evaluation</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Dissemination</b>
Strategy	The world of work responds effectively to the HIV/AIDS epidemic (outcome 8)	Jan.–July 2011	Summary submitted to PFAC, Nov. 2011 Full report, public (Internet)
Strategy	ILO capacities to support decent work in regions are strengthened: a review of approaches to improve constituent institutional capacities.	Jan.–June 2011	Summary submitted to PFAC, Nov. 2011 Full report, public (Internet)
Strategy	Discrimination in employment and occupation is eliminated (outcome 18)	Jan.–June 2011	Summary submitted to PFAC, Nov. 2011 Full report, public (Internet)
Thematic	Topics to be determined by technical sectors	2011	Full reports, public (Internet)
Project	Estimated 60 independent evaluations	Jan.–Dec 2011	Summary report, public (Internet)

**41. *The Committee may wish to take note of the present report and express its views on the priorities for 2011.***

Geneva, 23 September 2010

*Point for decision:* Paragraph 41

## Appendix

### Decentralized independent evaluations by technical topic, 2009

	Technical area	Number	Percentage of total
<b>Standards</b>	Elimination of child labour	29	46
	Forced labour and human trafficking	1	2
	Promoting the Social Justice Declaration	1	2
	<b>Standards total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Employment</b>	Employment policies and advisory services	3	5
	Crisis intervention	3	5
	Gender equality	3	5
	Job creation and enterprise development	3	5
	Programme on skills, knowledge and employability	1	2
	Youth employment	2	3
	Boosting employment through small enterprise development	2	3
	<b>Employment total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Social protection</b>	HIV/AIDS and the world of work	3	5
	Governance and management of social security	1	2
	Occupational safety and health	2	3
	Migration	4	6
	<b>Social protection total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Social dialogue</b>	Social dialogue, labour law and labour administration and sectoral activities	4	6
	<b>Social dialogue total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Governance, support and management</b>	Decent Work Country Programmes and RBM, core capacity	1	2
	<b>Governance, support and management total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Total decentralized evaluations</b>		<b>63</b>	<b>100</b>