



CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST – February 2022

1. ***Ex-post quality review of impact evaluations***
2. ***Review of the approach to clustered evaluations and their strategic value***

ILO Evaluations

The [ILO Evaluation Office \(EVAL\)](#) seeks expressions of interest (Eols) from qualified independent evaluators, evaluation consultants or teams of independent evaluators and others with experience in strategic and methodological work related to the review, analysis and quality appraisal of evaluations at the programme and project-level for the following assignments:

1. Ex-post quality analysis of impact studies & evaluations carried out in ILO 2013-2021
2. Review of the approach to clustered evaluations and their strategic value 2017-2022

The deadline to submit expressions of interest for both assignments is 23h59 (CET) on 14 March 2022.

Interested candidates are invited to send their expressions of interest to ILO EVAL at eval@ilo.org.

Expressions of interest must contain:

1. A cover letter indicating willingness and availability during the evaluation/study timeframe.
2. Full CV(s) of the applicant team members and clearly indicating the lead evaluator/researcher.
3. A list of the most relevant credentials/past experience.
4. Maximum 2-page outline of proposed approach and methodology.
5. A statement confirming that the candidate/team has no previous involvement in the implementation of ILO impact evaluations, impact studies or clustered evaluations.

6. The names and contact details (including email) of two referees who can be contacted for each candidate.
7. Two reports/documents relevant to this assignment where the candidate or team leader was the lead author.
8. A financial offer confirming the daily professional fees expressed in USD. In case of a team, indicate the proposed level of effort with a clear distribution of days among the proposed team members, as applicable.

The expected level of effort for each assignment is indicated below. Fees will be based on competitive UN system relevant levels.

Applicants should submit their Eols to eval@ilo.org and indicate the assignment for which they are applying in the e-mail's subject line. Short-listed expressions of interest may be asked to prepare a brief proposal based on detailed terms of reference (TORs) to be provided by EVAL. Expressions of interest are welcome from individual consultants, team of consultants and companies. Fluency in English and capacity of the team to process material in French and Spanish is required for both assignments.

1. Ex-post quality analysis of impact studies and evaluations carried out in the ILO, 2013-2021

Background of impact evaluation in the ILO

The ILO's Governing Body (GB) called on EVAL several times to strengthen efforts on impact evaluation in the ILO in a more coordinated and rigorous manner. This mandate includes Office-wide impact and ex-post evaluation standards and guidance for sound methodological approaches to ensure consistent quality. There have also been calls by the GB for an increase in the number of impact evaluations and meta-studies to demonstrate the ILO's developmental effectiveness. Selected impact evaluations can produce data that provide evidence of change at the policy outcome- level and data that support the theories of change that underpin the intended results framework. Demonstrating such impact is part of validating the developmental effectiveness of the ILO's work by showing that its interventions improve people's lives in a sustainable manner.

Based on initial guidance and a [Stock-taking of current practices of impact evaluation in the ILO](#) , EVAL launched a three-tier strategy, including: (1) development of an impact evaluation framework using concept mapping; (2) an EVAL impact evaluation review facility to support impact evaluations; and (3) planned biennial quality appraisals of completed impact evaluations. The concept mapping was the basis for engaging with interested colleagues throughout the Office. A position paper by an external impact evaluation expert in 2016 outlined the options and challenges for the impact evaluation strategy going forward.

The 2016 [Independent evaluation of the ILO's Evaluation Function \(IEE\)](#) also considered impact evaluation as an emerging and important area of activity and that it should prioritize the assessment of the ILO's relevance, its contribution to policy change and long-term impact, including for beneficiary groups. The IEE 2016 stressed the need to maintain a balance between EVAL's principal mandate of performance evaluations and that of impact evaluations. The need to build in impact evaluations at

the design stage of project interventions was identified as a main challenge which is beyond EVAL's control.

Impact evaluations are identified in the [ILO evaluation policy](#) (2017) as being an integral part of knowledge building, particularly on effective policy interventions and under the responsibility of the technical departments and regions. The current [ILO evaluation strategy](#) (2018-21) emphasises the need to conduct credible impact evaluations at the level of technical departments for effective policy interventions which includes indicators, milestones and targets. More details can be found in a [factsheet](#) on the current work on impact evaluation in the ILO.

EVAL offers guidance and technical support to impact evaluation within available capacity and priorities. The Impact Evaluation Review Facility (IERF), operational since May 2016, serves as the institutional review board based on a set of quality criteria, depending on the design stage and implementation of the impact evaluation or study. An annotated bibliography of manuals, templates, model studies and other resources was created in 2017 and are part of the updated [Guidance on Impact evaluation](#) (2020).

A community of practice (CoP) or ILO Impact Evaluation Network of interested researchers, technical staff and evaluation professionals exists but has met infrequently to review systematic reviews and specific impact evaluations, both at the design and completion stages. In some cases, the CoP carried out tasks equivalent to an institutional review board function through peer review.

As per the continually updated inventory of impact evaluations that EVAL maintains, over 95 impact studies and evaluations have been carried out since 2013. The inventory went through major updates in 2015 and 2021.

A revised framework for support, guidance and implementation of impact evaluations and ex-post evaluations is under development and the current study is intended to contribute to this.

The ex-post quality analysis

This analysis will examine a sample of impact evaluations based on criteria developed from existing guidance, as well as from comparable quality assessment criteria used by peer organisations that are aligned with international standards, such as [UNEG](#) and the Network of Networks on Impact Evaluation ([NONIE](#)).

The analysis has two key purposes: (1) identify areas of strength and weakness in the current impact evaluation practice in the ILO and provide a suitable quality analysis method for impact evaluations; and (2) develop a baseline for the state of impact evaluation in the ILO and provide input to revise EVAL's impact evaluation framework, guidance and support. The report should contain a set of suggestions on how to further enhance impact evaluation in the ILO and include an analytical framework for identifying and providing further support for impact evaluations and as the basis for future ex-post quality control. A possible [Think Piece](#) based on the report may be considered.

The analysis will be carried out by one or more external independent impact evaluation experts, with expertise in this type of appraisal and with no prior involvement with impact evaluation in the ILO. Experience from as broad a range of methodologies and approaches, both quantitative and qualitative, on impact evaluations, assessments and studies would be preferred, including experience with programme and performance evaluations. Relevant external good practices, benchmarking and experiences are expected to be considered.

The ex-post quality analysis will mainly take the form of a desk review but could include, depending on the ongoing situation of the COVID-19 pandemic, up to two on-site visits to ILO headquarters in Geneva for consultation and data collection. The analysis is expected to be completed by July 2022 for results to be reported on in the Annual Evaluation Report 2021-22 as part of the end of strategy reporting for the evaluation strategy 2017-2021. The external consultant(s) will be supported by the designated Senior Evaluation Officer in EVAL who serves as the coordinator for impact evaluation.

The analysis will identify a suitable sampling or selection methodology to identify typical impact evaluations and other impact studies that reflect a range of such work in the ILO, representing technical areas of work and range of IE methodology. The expected level of effort is expected to be between 40-45 workdays, depending on the proposed sampling methodology.

Fluency in English (spoken and written) is essential. The ability to review documents in French and Spanish is required (can be within the team).

2. Review of approach to Clustered Evaluations and their strategic value 2017-2021

Background of clustered evaluation in the ILO

The ILO Governing Body endorsed in 2016 a recommendation that called for the promotion and implementation of more clustered and programme-level evaluations. The clustering of evaluations was seen by EVAL as a method to allow for more strategic and high-quality evaluations of inter-related approaches and as part of an effort to improve efficiency in undertaking evaluations. The [Independent evaluation of the ILO's Evaluation Function \(IEE\)](#), completed in 2017, also recommended for the ILO to consider a more strategic focus by clustering evaluation and using evaluation funding in a more integrated manner.

The [ILO evaluation policy](#) 2017 refers to evaluation of ILO Decent Work Country Programmes as clustered evaluations that cover development cooperation activities and projects. The [ILO results-based evaluation strategy](#) 2018-2021 calls for more strategic evaluations of projects and programme activities under identical or similar themes, programme frameworks and locations by means of *clustering and integrated funding*.

The evaluation strategy included a specific sub-outcome with indicators on establishing clustered evaluations as the preferred modality for development cooperation evaluations. An initial perspective paper was prepared reviewing current internal and external experience and identifying options and key issues going forward (2019). Five specific pilot applications of clustered evaluations by typology were designed and implemented as of 2019. [Guidance on strategic clustered evaluations](#) was prepared in June 2020.

Several other clustered evaluations emerged over the period, and some departments and regions have opted for clustered evaluations as a modality for evaluations to provide strategic and comparative information. In the period 2017 to 2021, 28 clustered evaluations were implemented. These evaluations are available in in [ILO's portal to evaluation information \(i-eval Discovery\)](#).

Progress and findings of initial ad-hoc review of the experience have been reported in previous [Annual Evaluation Reports](#) (AERs). A further recommendation endorsed by the GB in 2019 called for presenting strategic clustering of evaluations as the preferential option to all donors when discussing

agreements and use the expertise of the evaluation function to explain the benefits and various scenarios for compliance with the evaluation policy.

Review of the clustered evaluation approach

A structured, formal review of clustered evaluations is now to be undertaken as a deliverable in the extended 2022 evaluation strategy. The review is to document the strategic value of clustered evaluations; identify key challenges and approaches to clustered evaluations; review and refine typology and conditions under which clustered evaluations are possible and useful; and provide suggestions for any revision of guidance and approach. The regular external quality appraisal of project evaluations, commissioned by EVAL, will include data on clustered evaluations and will be one of the sources for the review.

The review should cover the process of planning, implementing, and using clustered evaluations. It should review the methodology, challenges, conditions of application, scope and type of evaluation questions and evaluative information that clustered evaluations produce. It should also review the content of clustered evaluations in terms of whether specific type of findings and other content are particular to clustered evaluations.

The report will need to be completed by July 2022 for results to be reported on in the Annual Evaluation Report 2021-22 as part of the end of strategy reporting for the evaluation strategy 2017-2021. The final version of the report will serve as basis for further guidance and discussions with constituents and donors as part of advancing on clustered evaluation as preferred modality for evaluations, providing more strategic and organization-wide documentation of results and impact. Preliminary output to facilitate ongoing process of demonstrating strategic value and promoting the approach to be considered. A possible [Think Piece](#) based on the report may be considered

The review will be carried out by one or more external independent senior evaluation experts, with expertise in these type of reviews and with no prior involvement with clustered evaluation in ILO. Experience from evaluation of a broad range of evaluations at the project, programme and strategic level and with developing and implementing innovative evaluation strategies, approaches and methodology in organisational settings is preferred. Experience from evaluation capacity development and organisational reviews is desirable.

The review will take the form of mainly a desk review but could include, depending on the ongoing situation of the Covid19 pandemic, up to two on-site visits to ILO headquarters in Geneva for consultation and data collection.

The review consultant(s) will identify review existing documentation, identify suitable sample of evaluations, prepare a survey, formulate analytical framework, carry out relevant interviews with key actors, review agreed sample of clustered evaluations, prepare draft review report with recommendations and outlines of follow-up action, facilitate a de-briefing workshop for EVAL and the ILO evaluation network, and finalise the report. The work will be done in close cooperation with the designated Senior Evaluation Officer facilitating support on clustered evaluations across the ILO. Level of effort is expected to be between 20-25 workdays depending on the proposed sampling methodology.

Fluency in English (spoken and written) is essential. The ability to review documents in French and Spanish is required (can be within the team).