

THE ICAO EVALUATION POLICY 2021

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The ICAO Evaluation Policy (“the Policy”) provides the framework for planning and conducting evaluations and use of evaluations in ICAO. The Policy provides more detailed information on the role and purpose of evaluation, as established by the Charter for the Office of Internal Oversight (OIO) (C-WP/15115) and is consistent with the United Nations System Norms and Standards for Evaluation approved by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG).¹
- 1.2. The Policy outlines the aims of evaluation, guiding principles, types of evaluation that ICAO conducts, planning and budgeting of evaluations, elements of quality assurance, roles and responsibilities, dissemination of evaluation reports, and follow up of evaluation recommendations. This Policy supersedes the Evaluation Policy approved in 2014.
- 1.3. The Policy shall be periodically reviewed and updated, ensuring alignment with the OIO Charter. OIO will consult with the Evaluation and Audit Advisory Committee (EAAC) and the Secretary General on any subsequent changes to the Policy, which are subject to approval by the Council.

2. Definition, Aims and Guiding Principles of Evaluation

- 2.1. Evaluation is an assessment of an activity, project, programme, strategy, policy, topic, theme, sector, operational area or institutional performance. It analyses the level of achievement of both expected and unexpected results by examining the results chain, processes, contextual factors and causality using appropriate criteria such as relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability². Evaluation is an important source of evidence of the achievement of results and institutional performance, it builds knowledge and contributes to organizational learning and is an important agent of change. Evaluation at ICAO aims to provide credible, useful, evidence-based information that enables the timely incorporation of its findings, recommendations and lessons into the decision-making processes of management and stakeholders.
- 2.2. Consistent with the 2016 UNEG Norms and Standards, evaluation at ICAO aims to contribute primarily to organizational learning and decision-making by providing lessons learned and recommendations for improvement; as well as accountability by providing evidence of institutional performance. Other aims of evaluation at ICAO include knowledge management and capacity development.
- 2.3. In accordance with the provisions of the OIO Charter and in line with the UNEG Norms and Standards, ICAO is committed to ensuring the independence, impartiality, transparency, quality, inclusiveness and utility of evaluations.
 - (a) **Independence and Impartiality:** ICAO will ensure that responsibility for managing and implementing evaluations is separate from line management functions for policies, programmes and projects. Evaluators must maintain the highest standards of professional and personal integrity during the entire evaluation process. Evaluators must have no vested interest and be free to conduct their evaluative work impartially, without potential negative effects on their career development. They must be able to express their assessment/views in a free manner. In addition, all evaluators who are to be involved in an evaluation shall confirm the absence of any conflict of interest in writing.

¹ UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation 2016.

² UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation 2016.

- (b) **Transparency:** Stakeholders should be aware of the rationale and the selection criteria for the evaluation, and the purposes for which the findings will be used. Transparency will be ensured through continuous consultation with relevant stakeholders throughout the evaluation process from evaluation topic identification to report finalization. The evaluation report shall contain details of evaluation methodologies, approaches, and sources of information. In accordance with ICAO's Policy on Public Disclosure of Internal Audit and Evaluation Reports, once finalised, all evaluation reports will be made public on the ICAO public website. In addition, external evaluators and technical experts contracted for the purpose of an evaluation must be selected in a transparent manner in accordance with applicable ICAO HR rules for consultants.
- (c) **Quality:** Quality relates to the appropriate and accurate use of evaluation criteria and methodology, impartial presentation and analysis of evidence, and coherence of findings, conclusions and recommendations. Quality will be ensured through (a) the continuous adherence to ICAO evaluation guidelines and the application of UNEG's tools, Norms and Standards; (b) oversight by the EAAC; and (c) review of the evaluation reports by evaluation reference groups and peers whenever necessary.
- (d) **Credibility:** Credibility is achieved through independence, impartiality and a rigorous methodology. Key elements of credibility include transparent evaluation processes; close consultation of stakeholders during evaluation planning and implementation; and robust quality assurance mechanisms. Evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations are based on the best available, objective, reliable and valid data and on accurate quantitative and qualitative analysis of data. Credibility also requires that evaluations are ethically conducted and managed by evaluators that exhibit professionalism.
- (e) **Inclusiveness/Participation:** The evaluation process should be inclusive and participatory of relevant stakeholders at all stages of the evaluation. The planning and data collection phases of evaluations will be conducted in a participatory manner to address the concerns of all relevant stakeholders. Particular attention is to be given to ensuring the participation of those actors who might be directly affected by evaluation recommendations.
- (f) **Utility:** Utility relates to how the results of the evaluation are used in decision-making and requires that evaluation findings be relevant and useful, presented in a clear and concise way. ICAO will ensure utility through prioritizing evaluation topics based on established criteria and consultation with relevant stakeholders; the systematic follow-up of recommendations; stakeholders' access to evaluation reports; and alignment with the Business Plan and ICAO Strategic Objectives.

2.4. In conducting evaluation in ICAO, OIO will be committed to following the UNEG ethical guidelines and the UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation including protecting sensitive information used in evaluations.

3. Types of evaluation

3.1. Evaluation in ICAO consists of independent evaluations conducted by OIO's evaluation function and decentralized evaluations managed by other ICAO Bureaus and Offices.

Independent Evaluations conducted by OIO

3.2. Independent evaluations conducted by OIO primarily assess areas of high significance or strategic importance that contribute to the achievement of ICAO's Strategic Objectives. Independent evaluation covers strategies and policies and high level outcomes and selected thematic areas. These types of evaluations are conducted using OIO's internal capacities and expertise with assistance from external consultants as necessary. All completed evaluations are submitted to the Secretary General

and shared with the ICAO Council. OIO is fully responsible for managing these evaluations and they are issued as OIO evaluation reports.

Decentralized Evaluations

- 3.3. Decentralized evaluations are conducted and commissioned directly by management and functional units, without the involvement of OIO as per ICAO's guideline for decentralized evaluations (<https://intranet.icao.int/osg/OIO/Pages/Evaluation.aspx>). OIO will assist ICAO Bureaus/Offices by providing technical and quality assurance advice and guidance on decentralized evaluations. These types of evaluations could include project evaluations, thematic evaluations (other than those conducted by OIO), joint evaluations and internal reviews. Their resourcing is primarily the responsibility of ICAO Bureaus and Regional Offices. Decentralized evaluations conducted by Bureaus and Regional Offices are properly recorded and sent to OIO, which may also carry out a quality check as necessary. Bureaus and Regional Offices are required to keep OIO informed of decentralized evaluations planned to be conducted under their responsibility.

4. Evaluation Planning

Independent Evaluations conducted by OIO

- 4.1. Each year OIO prepares a Work Programme in consultation with Senior Management of the Secretariat and the EAAC and presents this to the Council for approval. OIO identifies and prioritizes evaluation topics for the Work Programme taking into account the following:

Relevance: the contribution of the subject or topic to ICAO's mandate, strategic plan, global priorities or cross-cutting themes. This also includes the relevance of the topic or subject of evaluation to critical key governance issues, policies or programmes.

Materiality/Resource invested: considerable investment (time, funds) in the subject of evaluation.

Last oversight activity/Periodicity: whether the topic/subject has ever been evaluated and / or audited and, if so, how recently.

Evaluability: whether there is sufficient data/information to evaluate the topic and whether the timing of the evaluation is appropriate.

Risk: political, economic, funding, structural, organizational, performance related factors that may prevent the topic/subject of evaluation from meeting its objectives.

Potential for replication or learning: potential of the topic/subject for learning or to provide key insights for ICAO and its partners.

Senior Management/Council Concern: request from the Council or management and other key stakeholders for evaluation.

- 4.2. When developing the evaluation work programme, due regard will be given to the cost of conducting an evaluation in relation to its potential benefit. A key consideration is the extent to which the evaluation results could be reliably and effectively used for decision-making.
- 4.3. OIO should have access to all necessary organizational data and information in order to conduct evaluation planning and analysis.

Decentralized evaluations³

- 4.4. Bureaus and Regional Offices are responsible for planning decentralized evaluations. Bureau and Regional Office decentralized evaluation plans should be reflected in their annual Operating Plans. Bureau and Regional Office Directors are responsible for ensuring that evaluations under their administrative authority are completed in line with these plans.

5. Quality Assurance

- 5.1. The quality of the evaluation process and results at ICAO is ensured through:
- a) conformity to the UNEG Norms and Standards;
 - b) the hiring of evaluation staff with sound evaluation competencies, which are maintained and further developed through relevant learning opportunities;
 - c) the use of the ICAO Evaluation Manual and associated tools and templates;
 - d) review of the evaluation reports by evaluation reference groups and peers;
 - e) the conduct of evaluability assessments and internal reviews of evaluation reports; and
 - f) validation of evaluation methodology, data and results.
- 5.2. Quality of the evaluation function is ensured through engagement with UNEG activities in order to keep up to date with best practices in UN evaluations, by conducting periodic self-assessments and taking part in independent external assessments of the ICAO evaluation function, such as the UNEG peer review mechanism or the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU).

6. Roles and Responsibilities

- 6.1. OIO is the custodian of the independent evaluation function at ICAO. OIO's structure and methods of operation are designed to protect its operational and functional independence. The main role and responsibilities of OIO with respect to the independent evaluation function are to:
- (a) Develop a triennial and annual evaluation work programme;
 - (b) Conduct independent evaluations;
 - (c) Develop and establish effective guidelines, manuals, tools and templates for evaluations at ICAO;
 - (d) Provide an annual report of OIO's activities to the Council;
 - (e) Present evaluation results to Senior Management, the EAAC⁴ and the Council;
 - (f) Promote the use of evaluation through consultations with the President of the Council, Council Members and Senior Management for the purpose of evaluation planning and follow-up of recommendations and through the evaluation process and use; and
 - (g) Participate in relevant UNEG and Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) events and/or contribute to related activities to represent the interests of ICAO on evaluation issues.
- 6.2. The main role and responsibilities of OIO with respect to the decentralized evaluation function are to:
- (a) Develop and establish effective guidelines, tools and templates to support decentralized evaluation at ICAO;

³ For planning decentralized evaluation, please refer ICAO's Guidelines for Decentralized Evaluations

⁴ EAAC is not an independent body but a committee of the ICAO Council.

- (b) Provide capacity building support including methodological and quality assurance support to decentralized evaluations; and
 - (c) Maintain a register of decentralized evaluations conducted at ICAO.
- 6.3. Evaluation staff may offer advisory services upon request and provide guidance to inform decision-making by ICAO Senior Management, ensuring that such services do not assume a management role or responsibilities. Evaluation staff may also conduct periodic awareness raising and training sessions on the evaluation function to ICAO management and staff.
- 6.4. The role and responsibilities of Senior Management, Bureaus and Regional Offices in supporting the evaluation function include:
 - (a) Proposing relevant evaluation topics for the annual evaluation work programme;
 - (b) Reviewing evaluation terms of reference;
 - (c) Facilitating access to data and information on activities, projects and programmes, including performance results;
 - (d) Ensuring data quality, consistency and elimination or minimization of bias;
 - (e) Engaging relevant staff in the evaluation process and encouraging their participation;
 - (f) Sharing evaluation results with their staff;
 - (g) Preparing management responses to evaluation recommendations;
 - (h) Implementing Management Action Plans;
 - (i) Informing OIO when planning for a decentralized evaluation;
 - (j) Submitting decentralized evaluation reports to OIO; and
 - (k) Ensuring the use of the ICAO Evaluation Manual when conducting decentralized evaluations.
- 6.5. The role of the Council in supporting the evaluation function includes:
 - (a) Approving the Evaluation Policy and subsequent amendments, as needed;
 - (b) Safeguarding the independence of the OIO evaluation function;
 - (c) Approving OIO's triennial and annual work programme that includes the evaluation work programme; and
 - (d) Taking note of, and using evaluation findings and recommendations to inform organizational policy, strategy and programmes and other decisions.
- 6.6. The EAAC advises the Council on the adequacy and effectiveness of the evaluation function and relevant strategies, priorities and work plans.

7. Use of Evaluations and follow up of evaluation recommendations

- 7.1. Making effective use of the knowledge and learning generated by evaluations is the responsibility of Secretariat Management and the Council as well as other evaluation stakeholders. Effective use requires a strong evaluation culture. By participating in and using evaluations, staff, Senior Management and the Council promote a culture of organizational learning, improve transparency in the use of resources and enhance accountability for results.
- 7.2. The full evaluation reports, including the executive summaries and the Management Action Plans to address recommendations are published on the Council website. A summary version of the report is presented as a Council Working Paper, if required.
- 7.3. The Management Action Plan to address recommendations outlines the decisions by Senior Management in response to each evaluation recommendation and specifically whether they accept, partially accept or reject each recommendation. OIO reserves the right to maintain any

recommendation that may be rejected by Senior Management if a valid justification is not provided. Subsequently, the Council is informed of the Management Action Plan to address the evaluation recommendations. For each accepted or partially accepted recommendation, managers are required to clearly articulate the aspects of the partially accepted recommendations that are accepted and those that are not, formulate action(s) specifying how the recommendations will be implemented, by whom, and the implementation timeline. Senior Management ensure that accepted evaluation recommendations are implemented and monitored in their areas of responsibility.

- 7.4. Follow-up of the implementation of decentralized evaluation recommendations comes under the responsibility of the directors of Bureaus and Regional Offices.

8. Resourcing of evaluation

- 8.1. The Secretary General shall ensure that adequate resources are available and committed to implement OIO's triennial evaluation Work Programme.
- 8.2. Directors of Bureaus and Regional Directors must ensure that adequate resources are allocated to conduct planned decentralized evaluations in their respective Bureaus and regions. An appropriate evaluation budget must be an integral part of the Operating Plans of Bureaus and Regional Offices. The Guideline for Decentralized Evaluation will provide the indicative level of resources for funding decentralized evaluations.

9. Disclosure and dissemination of evaluation reports

- 9.1. ICAO shall make evaluation reports available to the public in accordance with the Policy on Public Disclosure of Internal Audit and Evaluation Reports approved by the Council. Lessons learned from evaluations shall be distilled, reported and disseminated as appropriate.

10. Review of the Policy

- 10.1. OIO will regularly monitor the implementation of the Policy. In addition, the Policy and the evaluation function of ICAO will be reviewed at regular intervals and at least every five years from the date of the adoption of the Policy by the Council.

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