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Internal Oversight Division

Evaluation Policy

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CDIP	Committee on Development and Intellectual Property
CEF	Centralized Evaluation Function
EQA	External Quality Assessment
IAOC	Independent Advisory Oversight Committee
IOC	Internal Oversight Charter
IOD	Internal Oversight Division
IP	Intellectual Property
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
OECD-DAC	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development - Development Assistance Committee
PPR	Program Performance Reports
RBM	Results-Based Management
RG	Reference Groups
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization

1. BACKGROUND

1. The new Evaluation Policy (hereinafter the Policy) provides the framework for planning, and conducting evaluations in the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and reporting on and using the results from such evaluations. The Policy establishes principles for the evaluation function within the program cycle management system of WIPO. This Policy supersedes the Evaluation Policy approved in May 2010.

2. This Policy has been prepared considering recommendations from an External Quality Assessment (EQA¹) of the Internal Oversight Division (IOD) Evaluation Function conducted in 2014 and taking stock of lessons learned from five years of evaluation practice. Feedback provided by WIPO Senior Management, the Independent Advisory Oversight Committee (IAOC) and Member States was also taken into account in the formulation of the Policy. This Policy comes into effect upon approval by the Director, IOD in fulfillment of his obligation to establish a Policy for planning, conducting evaluations².

2. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION POLICY

3. The Policy is in line with WIPO regulations and rules and the Internal Oversight Charter (IOC) and has been prepared in accordance with the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards and with the definitions and criteria of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC).

4. The Policy aims to:

(a) Set the conditions for the evaluation function to support learning and accountability and to help promote good practices and results-based program cycle management within WIPO, of which evaluation is an integral part;

(b) Define principles for the conduct of evaluation activities and their use for WIPO and its stakeholders; and

(c) Define the positioning and main tasks of the evaluation function and the way the Centralized Evaluation Function (CEF) located within the IOD interacts with decentralized evaluation activities conducted by the sectors and programs.

5. An Evaluation Manual with guidelines and operating procedures is developed to implement this Policy and to guide WIPO staff in understanding the evaluation function and its benefits.

¹ External Quality Assessment of the Evaluation Function Final Report

² See WIPO Internal Oversight Charter, paragraph 24.b. With regard to decentralized evaluations, The Director General is responsible to establish a system for planning, conducting and using evaluative information for decision making in line with WIPO Financial Regulation 2.15.

3. DEFINITION AND TYPES

6. An evaluation is a systematic, objective and impartial assessment of an on-going or completed project, program or policy, its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, its efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. An evaluation should contribute to learning and accountability and provide credible, evidence-based information, enabling the incorporation of findings and recommendations into the decision-making processes of WIPO.

7. The evaluation function supports accountability of the Secretariat to its Member States, as well as that of WIPO to national stakeholders (particularly national governments). At the same time, it promotes learning and reflection by Member States, management, staff, as well as that of national stakeholders.

8. Functionally, evaluation is an organization-wide responsibility focusing on learning and accountability. It examines processes and contextual factors to understand why and to what extent expected results are achieved and what outcomes and impacts (intended or not) they have. Evaluation measures only collective and not individual performance.

9. While using all the criteria described in paragraph 6, evaluation gives more weight to the assessment of relevance and sustainability from the perspective of beneficiaries. Evaluation typically responds to questions such as “Are we doing the right things (relevance, operational comparative value or strategic niche)?” “Have we done them in the right way (efficiency, value for money, coherence and coordination)?” “Are we making a difference (effectiveness)?” “What remains at the end (impact and sustainability)?”

10. Evaluations provide performance assessments at the level of the Organization. They look beyond the classical organizational performance criteria and also encompass the dimensions of organizational capacity and motivation as well as the external environment. Evaluations operate as the critical mind of the organization helping it to be accountable as well as to learn and to improve.

11. The following types of evaluations shall be conducted:

(a) Program evaluations assess for each program the performance of a set of activities in obtaining expected results and their contribution to the achievement of high-level strategic goals. They also support the programs in defining their logic models and frameworks.

(b) Strategic evaluations assess, from the perspective of each strategic goal, the collective performance and strategic value of contributing programs to their achievement. Their findings, conclusions and recommendations inform decisions on adjustments at the strategic level.

(c) Thematic evaluations assess organization-wide performance in areas that are critical to ensure sustained contribution to results. They contribute to increasing the Organization’s knowledge and strategic relevance and to generating high-level strategic recommendations.

(d) Geographical (Country or Regional) evaluations assess the relevance, performance and sustainability of the portfolio of activities conducted by the Secretariat in selected countries or regions. Recommendations in this context typically address coordination issues and coverage of needs.

(e) Project-level and process evaluations assess specific activities designed to achieve specific objectives within limited time frames and budgets. These evaluations shall be conducted at the request of managers and at short notice (work load permitting).

4. CENTRALIZED AND DECENTRALIZED EVALUATION FUNCTIONS: COOPERATION WITH PROGRAMS

12. As in other UN Organizations, WIPO differentiates between centralized and decentralized evaluation functions:

(a) CEF = independent evaluation conducted by IOD; and

(b) Decentralized Evaluation Function = evaluations conducted by programs with support from IOD as appropriate, e.g. by providing advice and tools;

13. All evaluations conducted by the Secretariat are recorded and subject to quality checks by IOD. Program and project managers have the obligation to keep IOD informed of decentralized evaluations to be performed under their responsibility.

14. Centralized evaluations in WIPO shall be designed, conducted and managed by IOD in accordance with agreed criteria and principles and in line with IOC. They will be implemented with support from external experts where needed.

15. IOD is the custodian of the CEF and also supports decentralized evaluations conducted by the sectors and programs.

16. To ensure that the CEF's independence and integrity are protected, the Policy builds upon the principles contained in the Internal Oversight Charter. As for other oversight reports, evaluation reports are sent directly to the DG with copies to the IAOC and the External Auditor.

17. Focus areas and coverage: IOD's work program for the CEF maximizes the relevance of evaluations for WIPO managers, as well as coverage of sectors, programs, regions, themes and projects. It also follows priorities, where possible according to IOD's risk analysis, taking into account in particular past and foreseen coverage by internal and external audits. IOD retains the final decision regarding the evaluations to be included in its work plan.

18. Special aspects (equity-focus including gender): Evaluations conducted by IOD shall abide by the standards for equity-focused evaluations endorsed by UNEG. This means that they need to take into account the way that final beneficiaries of services (and goods as applicable) have access to their rights without any discrimination, e.g. by social status, origin, religion, political obedience, gender, age or health status. Intellectual Property (IP) right holders and users of the IP system are the final and mostly indirect recipients of services. IOD promotes monitoring and evaluation of equity issues in the Secretariat by discussing these with the programs, e.g. proposing that data about direct beneficiaries of WIPO services are disaggregated by any relevant population category including by gender.

19. Decentralized Evaluations: this category refers to all evaluations conducted under the responsibility of Program Managers.

20. Decentralized evaluations are used to estimate or to measure effective achievement of the expected results of program activities at the beginning, respectively at mid-term or at end of program cycles. They support adjustments for ongoing and future planning cycles.

21. Decentralized evaluations include those requested by Committees, e.g. Development Agenda projects for the Committee on Development and Intellectual Property (CDIP). Decentralized evaluations are primarily conducted as self-evaluations (with or without the support of experts and facilitators) under the responsibility of program and project managers and financed by the programs themselves.
22. The CEF records and provides quality assurance for decentralized evaluations commissioned by WIPO programs: it provides advice and tools for the programs to be able to design and conduct their evaluations in conformity with Evaluation Standards. It provides feedback on evaluation processes and products and lists all evaluations planned and completed in WIPO.
23. In order to strengthen decentralized evaluations, the CEF also provides advice to programs - from the perspective of their evaluability - on planning and monitoring within existing frameworks. With the same objective, it also supports self-evaluations of programs at their request.
24. Program Performance Reports (PPR) are a form of decentralized self-evaluation³ or self-reporting and as such are provided by each program as part of the RBM system. They are issued annually through the mid-cycle report to the Program and Budget Committee. IOD validates the performance data used for the PPR on a biennial basis.

5. EVALUATION PROCESS: PLANNING, CONDUCTING AND REPORTING

25. To support the programs, IOD coordinates and establishes a network with the focal points for Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) in each sector. Evaluations are planned in consultation with managers so as to support them at critical phases of the program cycle.
26. IOD retains the final decision on the work program for centralized evaluations after considering their potential usefulness, as well as risk assessments and availability of resources.
27. Procedures for planning, implementing and reporting on evaluations shall be specified in the Evaluation Manual.
28. In terms of planning, the Manual shall provide explanations about:
- (a) The selection of evaluation topics yielding benefits for learning and accountability and with high relevance on WIPO direct beneficiaries;
 - (b) Internal coordination with other oversight functions, prioritization and identification of risk areas through appropriate analysis; and
 - (c) Support to project and process managers in planning and conducting evaluations prior to, in the middle or after implementation of projects.
29. In terms of implementation, evaluations are scheduled to fit into the planning cycle: ideally, they are implemented in a way that their conclusions can inform and improve decision making on further work orientation and planning. The practical steps to address in an evaluation are the following:

³ The PPR is a critically important mechanism to ensure accountability and transparency of WIPO work and performance to which IOD also contributes by providing a validation of the Program Performance Report on a biennial basis.

- (a) Ensure that design and detailed scheduling of evaluations is done in close consultation with the programs to minimize disruption of work and maximize participation of programs and their ownership.
 - (b) The selection of external experts on the basis of their substantive and methodological knowledge and experience. The tasks to be undertaken by external experts are described in terms of reference and agreed upon by all key stakeholders.
 - (c) The roles of external experts and key internal and external stakeholders participating in an evaluation, as well as a detailed schedule of evaluation phases (planning, field work, reporting) that need to be described in the evaluation design phase documents (approach notes, terms of reference and inception reports).
 - (d) Establishing Reference Groups (RG) with clear terms of reference at the beginning of an evaluation process. RGs act as sounding board and information exchange and learning platforms: as such, RG members participate in the regular exchange of relevant data and information. RG are expected to provide regular feedback during all phases of the evaluation process. They are composed of key persons who have a stake and interest in the evaluation process and in learning from key findings and results, typically Program Managers and their alternates and senior staff as well as M&E focal points.
30. In terms of reporting, specifications for the quality of evaluation products are based on the following principles:
- (a) Evaluation reports are concise and evidence-based. They summarize key findings, conclusions and main recommendations clearly laying out the chain of evidence.
 - (b) Reports are discussed and finalized in close consultation with relevant programs. It is very important that factual accuracy and buy-in for recommendations are supported by management feedback mechanisms which are built into evaluation processes.
 - (c) Recommendations are practical⁴ and describe critical changes: they are formulated in a well-defined manner to enable management actions to be taken within a reasonable timeframe. For longer term changes and more generic issues, suggestions can also be formulated instead of recommendations. IOD conducts regular follow-up of the implementation of recommendations within the first months of the issuance of evaluation reports.
31. Quality assurance is provided in all steps of an evaluation process. The evaluation process is described in detail in the Evaluation Manual.

6. PURPOSE AND USE OF EVALUATION OUTPUTS

32. Evaluation outputs can take the form of reports, briefings and other forms of information exchanges. Timely provision of such outputs is crucial for program planning, budgeting and implementation and reporting.

33. The main purposes of evaluation outputs are to:

⁴ i.e. recommendations have to be SMART: Specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time bound. They can also include closing criteria to clarify expectations on how to address them.

- (a) Identify good practices established in the programs and disseminate these to other programs or organization-wide where relevant;
- (b) Make proposals for improving the quality, relevance and impact of ongoing and future program activities;
- (c) Provide a base for improved decision-making;
- (d) Promote and ensure accountability to constituents; and
- (e) Contribute to effective knowledge sharing within a learning organization.

34. Final reports produced by the Centralized Evaluation Function, including findings, conclusions and recommendations, are published on the WIPO website and disseminated actively in accordance with the IOD publication policy⁵ and the Internal Oversight Charter⁶. Final reports are sent to the Director General and Program Managers with copy to the IAOC and the External Auditor. They contain a management response with an action plan for accepted and explanations for rejected recommendations.

35. Evaluation is an integral part of WIPO's Results-Based Management (RBM) system. A well-functioning RBM system is a clear pre-condition for an evaluation function. Evaluation contributes to RBM by providing evidence-based information for decision-making in the program cycle.

36. Evaluation is no substitute for a weak or non-existent planning or monitoring. On the contrary, it needs to build on well-crafted plans with clear frameworks and well-defined baselines and targets. To this end, evaluation helps to clarify the logical links between activities, their contributions to the achievement of expected results and to strategic goals. Evaluation supports the refining of existing RBM frameworks based on new theories of change.

37. Evaluations are focused on learning rather than on "fault-finding". Evaluation reports focus on both key successes and main challenges and the ways to capitalize on the former and to address the latter.

7. REVIEW CLAUSE

38. The Policy will be reviewed on a regular basis, preferably every four years from the date of its issuance.

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⁵ See [Report Publication Policy](http://www.wipo.int/export/sites/www/about-wipo/en/oversight/iaod/pdf/report_publication_policy.pdf) - http://www.wipo.int/export/sites/www/about-wipo/en/oversight/iaod/pdf/report_publication_policy.pdf

⁶ "31. The Director, IOD shall publish internal audit and evaluation reports, as well as Management Implication Reports resulting from investigations, on the WIPO website within 30 days of their issuance. If required to protect security, safety or privacy, the Director, IOD may, at his/her discretion, withhold a report in its entirety or redact parts of it."