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Internal Oversight Division

Evaluation Policy

THIRD EDITION

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

Acronym	Meaning
AI	Artificial Intelligence
CDIP	Committee on Development and Intellectual Property
CEF	Centralized Evaluation Function
ERG	Evaluation Reference Group
IAOC	Independent Advisory Oversight Committee
IOC	Internal Oversight Charter
IOD	Internal Oversight Division
IP	Intellectual Property
JIU	Joint Inspection Unit
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
QAIP	Quality Assurance and Improvement Program
RBM	Results-Based Management
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UN-SWAP	United Nations System-wide Action Plan
UNSWEO	United Nations System Wide Evaluation Office
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization

BACKGROUND

1. The new Evaluation Policy (hereinafter referred to as “the Policy”) establishes the framework for the planning, conduct, reporting, dissemination, and use of evaluations within the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). It frames evaluation as an oversight function that supports organizational learning, accountability, evidence-based decision-making, and results-based management. The Policy defines the principles, standards, governance arrangements, institutional roles, and stakeholder responsibilities required to ensure that evaluations are credible, impartial, and useful. It also clarifies the relationship between centralized and decentralized evaluation activities.
2. This Policy supersedes the Evaluation Policy approved in February 2016.
3. This Policy has been prepared considering recommendations from the 2025 United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Peer Review of the WIPO Evaluation Function.
4. The Policy applies to all evaluations commissioned or managed by WIPO — independent evaluations conducted by the Evaluation Section of the Internal Oversight Division (IOD), and decentralized evaluations managed by sectors with IOD’s quality assurance. It binds all WIPO personnel regardless of contractual status, who commission, manage, or conduct evaluations. In fulfillment of the Director, IOD’s obligation under the Internal Oversight Charter (IOC) to establish a Policy for planning and conducting evaluations, this Policy comes into effect upon her approval.¹

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION POLICY

5. This Policy establishes the framework for evaluation at WIPO. Its organizing principle, Decision-Centered Evaluation, is an intentional approach further defined in the Evaluation Manual.
6. The Policy is in line with the WIPO Financial Regulations and Rules and the IOC and has been prepared in accordance with the UNEG Norms and Standards².
7. The Policy aims to:
 - a) set the conditions for the Evaluation Section of IOD to support decision-making, 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 Section and the way the Centralized Evaluation Function (CEF), i.e., the Evaluation Section, interacts with Decentralized Evaluation activities conducted by the WIPO sectors and programs.
8. An Evaluation Manual with guidelines and operating procedures is developed to implement this Policy and to guide all WIPO personnel, regardless of contractual status, as well as outsourced service providers, in understanding the Evaluation function and its benefits.

DEFINITION AND MISSION

9. In conformance with the definition of Evaluation adopted by UNEG,³ “an evaluation is an assessment, conducted as systematically and impartially as possible, of an activity, project, program, 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 sustainability. An evaluation should provide credible, useful evidence-based information that enables the timely incorporation of its findings, recommendations, and lessons into the decision-making processes of organizations and stakeholders”.
10. Evaluation can inform planning, programming, budgeting, implementation, and reporting, and can contribute to evidence-based policymaking, development effectiveness, and organizational effectiveness.
11. For WIPO, Evaluation is useful when it is deliberately positioned to inform decisions, learning, and improvement. This means that evaluations should be aligned with the Organization’s strategic priorities, planned and delivered in time to inform key policy, program, budgetary, and management decisions, and communicated in formats that enable learning, adaptation, and improvement. Independence, credibility, and methodological rigor remain essential; the value of these attributes is realized when evaluation evidence is translated into timely, accessible, and actionable insights that strengthen performance and results.
12. The evaluation function supports the accountability of WIPO to its Member States and their national stakeholders. Simultaneously, it encourages learning and reflection among Member States, management, staff, and national stakeholders.
13. Functionally, evaluation is an organization-wide responsibility focusing on learning and accountability. It examines processes and contextual factors to understand why, to what extent expected results are achieved, and what outcomes and impacts (intended or not) they have. Evaluation measures only collective, not individual performance.

¹ Internal Oversight Charter, paragraphs 30 and 59

² Internal Oversight Charter, paragraph 19

³ UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation, 2016

ACCOUNTABILITY AND AUTHORITY

14. The authority, organizational independence, access rights, confidentiality obligations and conflict-of-interest requirements applicable to the Director, IOD, and Evaluation Section staff are established in the WIPO Internal Oversight Charter, in particular paragraphs 4–8, 12, 13 and 22.
15. The Head of the Evaluation Section works under the supervision of the Director, IOD, and cooperates with WIPO Program Managers and other IOD functions, as appropriate, while safeguarding the independence and impartiality of the evaluation function.
16. Evaluation information shall be handled in accordance with the confidentiality requirements of the Internal Oversight Charter and applicable UNEG ethical standards. Aggregated data, fully anonymized quotations, general demographic trends and synthesized findings may be disclosed where this does not enable the identification of sources.
17. To strengthen evaluation coverage, improve efficiency, and avoid duplication, the Director, IOD, and the Head of the Evaluation Section shall coordinate, as appropriate, with internal and external providers of evaluations and related assessment activities. Relevant arrangements and procedures shall be specified in the Evaluation Manual.

PROFESSIONALISM AND PROFICIENCY

18. The Director, IOD, shall ensure that the Evaluation function adheres to the UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation. In addition, the Evaluation function will adhere to WIPO regulations, rules, policies, procedures, and other related instructions and the [Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service](#).
19. The Director, IOD, shall ensure that the evaluation function comprises staff who collectively possess the knowledge, skills, and other competencies needed to perform its tasks and duties effectively.
20. The Director, IOD, shall promote continuing professional development to meet the requirements of the IOC. Staff members in the Evaluation Section must exercise due professional care when carrying out their duties and tasks.

CODE OF ETHICS

21. The Evaluation Section of IOD shall adhere to the [WIPO Code of Ethics](#),⁴ which is built on the [Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service](#),⁵ and additionally to the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation⁶ and the UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System.⁷

TYPES OF EVALUATION

22. Evaluations provide performance assessments at the level of the Organization. They look beyond classical organizational performance criteria and encompass organizational capacity and motivation, as well as the external environment. Evaluations serve as the Organization's critical mind, helping it be accountable, learn, and improve.
23. The following types of evaluations shall be conducted according to focus and scope:
 - 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 about strategic adjustments.
 - 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.
 - d) geographical (Country or Regional) evaluations assess the portfolio of activities conducted by the Secretariat in selected countries or regions.
 - e) project-level and process evaluations assess specific activities designed to achieve specific objectives within limited time frames and budgets.

CENTRALIZED AND DECENTRALIZED EVALUATIONS

24. As in other UN Organizations, WIPO differentiates between centralized and decentralized evaluation functions:
 - a) Centralized evaluations — commissioned, managed, and owned by the Evaluation Section, IOD; and
 - b) Decentralized evaluations managed by Program Managers under the normative framework established by IOD pursuant to the IOC, with advisory support from the Evaluation Section, IOD, as appropriate.

⁴ OI No. 84/2012 https://intranet.wipo.int/oiiic_doc/en/2012/oi_84_2012.pdf

⁵ <https://icsc.un.org/Resources/General/Publications/standardsE.pdf> (the 2013 Standards of Conduct still apply at WIPO).

⁶ <https://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/100>

⁷ <https://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/102>

25. IOD is responsible for establishing the evaluation standards, methodologies, guidance, and tools applicable to all evaluations conducted within WIPO. All evaluations conducted by the Secretariat shall be recorded in a corporate registry of evaluations maintained by the Evaluation Section, IOD.
26. Centralized evaluations shall be designed, conducted, and managed by the Evaluation Section, IOD, in accordance with agreed criteria and principles and in line with the IOC. They will be implemented with support from external experts where needed.
27. Focus areas and coverage of centralized evaluations: IOD's work program 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 annual work plan risk analysis, taking into account, in particular, past and foreseen evaluation coverage, internal and external audits, performance audits by external auditors, CDIP evaluations conducted through DACD, JIU evaluations, evaluations by program managers, and United Nations System-wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP) assessments. IOD retains the final decision on which evaluations to include in its work plan.
28. Evaluations shall consider, as appropriate to their purpose, scope, and context, cross-cutting issues and principles relevant to WIPO's mandate and commitments, including equity, non-discrimination, gender equality, human rights, disability inclusion, environmental sustainability, and the principle of leaving no one behind. Detailed guidance on such considerations is provided in the Evaluation Manual.
29. Decentralized evaluations are all evaluations conducted under the responsibility of Program Managers, including those requested by Member State Committees, such as the Committee on Development and Intellectual Property⁸. They are used to assess the achievement of expected results at the beginning, mid-term, or end of program cycles, and to support adjustments for ongoing and future planning. Evaluations shall be conducted by qualified evaluators who are independent of the design and implementation of the intervention being evaluated.
30. Program Managers shall communicate planned decentralized evaluations to IOD annually, for consolidation into the corporate registry of evaluations and to inform coverage analysis under paragraph 27, and shall keep IOD informed of any evaluations initiated thereafter.
31. Quality assurance of decentralized evaluations shall apply from the outset of each exercise. Program Managers shall submit to the Evaluation Section, IOD, for quality review at the relevant milestones, the terms of reference, the inception report or evaluation design, and the draft and final reports. The Evaluation Section, IOD may participate in evaluation reference groups or equivalent consultation mechanisms in an advisory capacity, without assuming management responsibility for the evaluation.
32. Program managers are responsible for preparing management responses and action plans to decentralized evaluation recommendations and for monitoring their implementation.

EVALUATION PROCESS: PLANNING, CONDUCTING, AND REPORTING

33. To support the programs, the Evaluation Section, IOD, coordinates with sectors. Evaluations are planned in consultation with managers to support them at critical phases of the program cycle.
34. Procedures for planning, implementing, and reporting on evaluations shall be specified in the Evaluation Manual.
35. In relation to planning, the Evaluation Manual shall provide guidance on:
 - a) selection and prioritization of evaluation topics to support decision-making, learning, and accountability;
 - b) coordination with other oversight and assurance functions to avoid duplication and promote synergies;
 - c) identification of risk areas and evaluation needs through appropriate analysis; and support to program and project managers in planning and conducting evaluations before, during, or after implementation. Where appropriate, evaluations shall be scheduled to inform key planning, programming, and management decisions.
36. The practical steps of the evaluation process include:
 - a) consultation with relevant stakeholders to define the purpose, scope, timing, and intended use of the evaluation and to facilitate participation throughout the process;
 - b) development of evaluation terms of reference in accordance with UNEG norms and standards and the Evaluation Manual, subject to quality assurance by the Evaluation Section, IOD, where applicable;
 - c) establishment of evaluation reference groups or other appropriate consultation mechanisms, where required, to support the quality, credibility, and usefulness of the evaluation.
 - d) in terms of reporting, evaluations shall employ credible, transparent, and ethically sound methodologies.
 - e) Data shall be collected and analyzed using appropriate methods and triangulated, where feasible, to strengthen the validity of findings. Draft reports shall be shared with the relevant program or project management for factual review prior to finalization.
 - f) Evaluation recommendations shall be evidence-based, actionable, feasible, and addressed to clearly identified responsible parties. Evaluation reports shall be accompanied by a management response with an action plan for their implementation.
 - g) dissemination:

⁸ Committee on Development and Intellectual Property is a member state body within the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) governance structure established to ensure that development considerations are structurally integrated into all fields of WIPO's work through Development Agenda projects. Evaluations for development agenda projects are covered by The Guidebook for the preparation, implementation and evaluation of DA projects

https://dacatalogue.wipo.int/projectfiles/DA_01_05_01/Guidebook/EN/Development%20Agenda%20Guidebook_E.pdf

- .g.1. each evaluation generates a tailored product suite aligned with intended users and decisions identified in the uptake strategy;
 - .g.2. products may include executive notes, briefs, dashboards, videos, podcasts, infographics, learning notes, and technical annexes;
 - .g.3. final evaluation reports are transmitted to the Director General and Program Managers, the IAOC, and the External Auditor. They contain a management response with an action plan for accepted recommendations. Where recommendations are rejected, the governance procedures provided for in the IOC will be implemented;⁹
 - .g.4. 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 policy and the Charter.
37. Use of artificial intelligence and data analytics. The Evaluation Section may use artificial intelligence, data analytics, and other technological tools to support evaluation processes, including evidence synthesis, document review, translation, and the preparation of evaluation products. Such tools shall complement, and not replace, evaluative judgment. Their use shall be governed by the safeguards set out in the Evaluation Manual, including requirements regarding approved tools, confidentiality, transparency, human review of AI-supported outputs, and mitigation of bias.¹⁰

USE OF EVALUATION RESULTS

38. Timely provision of Evaluation outputs is crucial for program planning, budgeting, implementation, and reporting. The main purposes of evaluation outputs are to:
- 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 key stakeholders and
 - e. contribute to effective knowledge sharing within a learning Organization.

QUALITY ASSURANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

39. In line with UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation and Paragraph 30(e) of the Charter, IOD has established a Quality Assurance and Improvement Program (QAIP) for the Evaluation function.
40. The QAIP comprises:
- a) ongoing internal quality assurance, including tiered review of evaluation deliverables and working papers within the Evaluation Section;
 - b) periodic self-assessments against UNEG Norms and Standards; and
 - c) periodic external quality assessments, including UNEG peer reviews.
41. The results of the QAIP are reported in the Annual Report of the Director, IOD, which is submitted through the IAOC and the Program and Budget Committee to the WIPO General Assemblies.

REVIEW CLAUSE

42. The Policy will be reviewed and revised as necessary, in accordance with the Charter.

[End of document]

⁹ IOC paragraphs 52e and 51

¹⁰ Innovation in dissemination — The UNEG Strategy 2025–2032 Direction. “AI also presents opportunities for evaluation offices to deliver findings in more timely and concise ways. Visual, AI-assisted products can be more widely disseminated, potentially enhancing evaluation use and impact.” This Policy commits WIPO to that direction, responsibly applied.