“Analysis of the evaluation function of the UN system”

Emerging Findings*

Joint Inspection Unit of the UN System

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*Further validation being completed
Purpose of study

JIU mandate for evaluation

Article 5 of the JIU statute states that

“The Inspectors shall provide through independent view through inspection and evaluation aimed at improving management and methods and at achieving greater co-ordination between organizations.

Without prejudice to the principle that external evaluation remains the responsibility of appropriate intergovernmental bodies, the Unit, with due regard to its other responsibilities, may assist them in carrying out their responsibilities for external evaluation of programmes and activities. On its own initiative or at the request of the executive heads, the Unit may also advise organizations on their methods for internal evaluation, periodically assess these methods and make ad hoc evaluations of programmes and activities.”
A recent paper* by Robert Picciotto – Truth to Power and Lens former Director-General of the Independent Evaluation Group at the World Bank, states that:

“Recent events have confirmed that the United Nations has a deep reservoir of goodwill worldwide. But its reputation is undermined by the ineffectiveness of its development assistance. UN agencies could improve their performance by implementing effective evaluations.”

* Picciotto (2014), Future United Nations Development System (FUNDS) project, Briefing No. 14, “The UN has Lost the Aid Effectiveness Race: What is to be Done?”
Picciotto goes on to say:

“While the quality of evaluation systems and processes varies across the system, recurring themes nonetheless are striking: lack of structural independence; failure to adopt explicit evaluation policies; inadequate budgets; spotty quality assurance; and limited use of evaluation findings. Another pervasive weakness has been the lack of reliable self-evaluation information at the level of individual efforts. System-wide evaluations are clearly needed.”
Progression

Defined **ARCHITECTURE** to support decision making at various levels

Levels of **ALIGNMENT**: horizontal and vertical – silo operation with emergence of an **integrative system**
### Progression over time of the evaluation function of the UN system 1997-2014

Information from previous JIU studies 1997-2006*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of organizations which have:</th>
<th>1977</th>
<th>1982</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* Well developed elements of an evaluation function / Emergence of more impact and outward orientation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Major elements of an evaluation function and are routinizing their operation/institutionalization and integration/internal focus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Some key elements of an evaluation function (still ad hoc and mechanical)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Underdeveloped evaluation function</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Initiated the process for establishing an evaluation function</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* No evaluation function</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total no. of organizations covered</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>19 **</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Previous JIU studies follow conceptual schema on levels of development used in this study.

** Information covers 19 organizations only thus not indicative of a decline in function
DETAILS OF THE 2013/2014 JIU STUDY

THE CENTRAL FUNCTION

ANALYSIS BASED ON THE JIU MATURITY MATRIX
## Key components of the evaluation function

### A: Demand for evaluation

#### I. Demand and Intentionality
- Organizational context and drivers of demand
- Nature and level of demand

#### B: Supply, Adaptation, Growth

##### II. The Enabling Environment – Organizational and Institutional Framework for Evaluation
- Evaluation architecture and alignments
- Governance structure
- Mandate, Vision and Policy
- Supporting implementation of the policy
- Resources
- Results and accountability framework
- Leadership
- Learning culture

##### III. Relevance, Responsiveness, and Adaptability
- Relevance to stakeholder demands
- Actual coverage
- Responsiveness to UN Reform, National Evaluation Capacity Development (NECD), Global challenges, Gender and Human Rights
- Adaptability of the function and continuous improvement and growth

##### IV. Credibility: Independence, Impartiality, Inclusion (Stakeholder Involvement)
- Structural Independence and Head of Evaluation Unit
- Functional Independence
- Built in mechanisms for impartiality
- Professional/Technical Independence
- Behavioural Independence

##### V. Credibility: Quality - Validity and Reliability (Technical and Managerial Rigor)
- Evaluators and Evaluation Teams: Staff and consultant quality
- Conditions in place to ensure quality and consistency in the application of standards and approaches
- Quality of reports

### C: Results

#### VI. Use and Impact
- Conditions in place to enhance use (potential impact)
- Outcome Level: Nature and level of use
- Impact level: Effect of use
Overall finding

The central evaluation function of the UN system operates at an average level of maturity and is characterized by a progression from an ad hoc and non-integrated mode of operation to a more stable and routinized level of operation that is internally focused on enhancing overall integrity, quality, and institutionalization.

The system however, shows mixed levels of development:
(i) among the components of the function and
(ii) among the various organizations of the UN system.
Level of development varies among the key components of the function.
Main strengths and weaknesses of the evaluation function for the UN system overall (Components of the JIU maturity matrix)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Main strengths of the UN system</th>
<th>Main weaknesses of the UN system</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Credibility: Independence</td>
<td>• Independence with inclusion (stakeholder involvement)</td>
<td>• Appointment of head and rotation of head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Budgetary independence (only 2 organizations meet benchmark)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credibility: Quality</td>
<td>• Managerial rigor – systems in place to enhance quality (competencies, quality assurance, etc.)</td>
<td>• Quality assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Quality of reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• UNEG Peer Review for small organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Framework:</td>
<td>• Mandates and Policies</td>
<td>• Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enabling environment</td>
<td>• Board engagement</td>
<td>• Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Review of policy implementation,</td>
<td>• Organizational culture for results and learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Availability of non-core resources</td>
<td>• Vision and Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevance Responsiveness</td>
<td>• Management, Planning with criteria,</td>
<td>• Inadequate Coverage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readiness</td>
<td>• Balancing to address coverage</td>
<td>• Doing Joint evaluation and systemic constraints (limited)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• UNEG for harmonization and professionalization and coordination</td>
<td>• Alignment with decentralized evaluation (ad hoc strategy L3). But valued support by decentralized evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Alignment with national system and national capacity development (rudimentary - L2)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Contribution on global platforms and advancing development evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utility: Use and impact</td>
<td>• Conditions in place to enhance use (5.4)</td>
<td>• Level of use (implementation rate of MRS 4.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;Condition to enhance use</td>
<td>• Demand and Intentionality</td>
<td>• Above 85% implementation rate = 5 organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;Level of use</td>
<td>• Coverage (5.8)</td>
<td>• Between 50% and 85% = 11 organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;Nature of use</td>
<td></td>
<td>Organizational Factors:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;Impact assessment</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Shared vision and strategy/impact indicators/impact results/reporting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Follow up on implementation of recommendations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Other Analyses – Illustrative**

**Value of the function**

- Level of use X adequacy of coverage X readiness X quality of evaluation reports
- 82% for 8 top performers: 63% for 24 organizations

(RequestId: Need more data on budget to complete analyses)

**Value for money proposition**

Large organizations (organizational expenditure between 1-5.5 bill USD) make up 23/30 billion USD: Maturity level is High Average: 5 of 9 organizations are above average and high; 1 organization is average; 2 organizations are below average.

**Input output ratio (efficiency index)**

Comparison – World Bank though not same business model:

- World Bank
- Evaluation Budget = 31 million USD = 1.4% of organizational budget
- No reports = 62 (different types)

UN System – 24 organizations
- Evaluation budget = 30 Million USD = 0.09% of organizational expenditure
- No. reports = 265 (different types)
Differences associated with size* of organization

* 2011 organizational expenditures (CEB data)
Stand alone performers better than co-location

Central Function Assessment - Average Scores for Stand-alone and Co-located Units

- Overall score
- Enabling Environment
- Relevance, Responsiveness, and Adaptability
- Independence, Impartiality, Inclusion (Credibility)
- Quality: Validity and Reliability (Credibility)
- Utility and Potential Impact

Average Level
## Interaction effects – Size and location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Small</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Large</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td>score</td>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stand Alone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNODC</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIDO</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>UNEP</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN Women</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-Located/with Management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITC</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>UNAIDS</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNCTAD</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN-Habitat</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-Located with Oversight/Audit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMO</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WMO</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>UNRWA</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICAO</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>WIPO</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>IAEA</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.0-4.9 = Below Average and Low
5.0-6.0 = Average
6.1-8.0 = Above Average and High
Variations among UN organizations

Level 1
ITU
UNOPS
UPU
UNWTO

Level 2
ICAO
UNHCR
IMO
WMO
UNRWA

Level 3
ITC
WHO
UNCTAD
UN-HABITAT
UNESCO
FAO
IAEA
UNEP
UNAIDS
UNODC
WIPO

Level 4
Transitioning to Level 4
ILO
WFP
UN Women
UNIDO
UNICEF
UN OIOS
UNFPA

Below Average and Low
46%

Average
25%

Above Average and High
29%
Independence - Structural, Functional, Stakeholder Inclusion, Professional/Technical, Behavioural
Quality: Competence, Quality Assurance, Quality conditions, and Report Quality
JIU maturity matrix - Way forward

* The Maturity Matrix - 24 Organizations of the UN system and Technical Note
* Benchmarking: Comparator Model
* [http://www.icao.int/safety/Pages/USOAP-Results.aspx](http://www.icao.int/safety/Pages/USOAP-Results.aspx)
* Other thoughts

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Maturity level

![Graph showing Maturity level and UN system average for components X and Y](image-url)

- Enabling environment
- Independence
- ...
Thank you!

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