

# **Independent Evaluation of the International Trade Centre (ITC)**

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**Final Report**

Annex V

**SAANA CONSULTING**

## **ANNEX V: The Evaluation approach and methodology**

### **A. Plan and Actual Implementation**

The agreed Inception Report for the Independent Evaluation included a full outline of the approach and method to be followed. In order to give a full and transparent picture of how this worked in practice, this Annex reproduces the relevant section of the original Inception Report in full below, with a brief report on actual implementation in the grey boxes inserted at the end of each section. To complete the picture of how the evaluation process unfolded in real time, attached at the end are the texts of two progress reports provided to the Evaluation Manager, the Head of the Evaluation and Monitoring Unit in ITC. The agreed arrangements for quality assurance of the Evaluation by the Evaluation Manager are also in place.

## **3. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Approach**

The central principles guiding and shaping the approach to the evaluation are usefulness, credibility and independence. The inception phase has demonstrated that this Evaluation will call for a particular combination of tested approaches and creative adaptation to fit the particular characteristics of the ITC. As a “progress report” it is more a ‘formative’ evaluation than a ‘summative one’, but it is still expected to draw together a tracking and assessment of results as well as offering guidance for the future. Responding to the important questions around organization and management has called for the adaptation of organizational assessment approaches. ITC’s overall goal of managing for development results has helped shape the evaluation approach, applying the lessons of development evaluation in general about the possibilities and limits of linking development assistance interventions and development impacts.

A rigorous and tested methodology for this type of evaluation will be applied. It is centred on a structured, transparent and verifiable approach to answering the evaluation questions, reporting and synthesizing findings, drawing well-founded conclusions, and producing solid and useful recommendations. The approach will apply the specified evaluation criteria – of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and potential impact. - through mixed method approaches, combining quantitative and qualitative sources and techniques.

Key components of the evaluation approach and design will be:

- a. Encouraging a growing ITC focus on results by clustering the assessments of the use and results of projects and products according to the expected accomplishments in the Centre’s approved logical framework;
- b. Preparing and following a detailed evaluation matrix as the spine of the evaluation that shows how the core questions will be answered, where data will come from, what data collection methods will be used, and how data will be analysed;
- c. Making clear how the evidence emerging from the different lines of data collection and analysis will be used to draw conclusions and shape recommendations;
- d. Ensuring clear opportunities for stakeholder participation, not only in the process of data collection but also in the validation of findings and the shaping of conclusions and recommendations;
- e. Operating to a practical workplan and budget enabling the Team to cover the ground, build findings progressively and ensure adequate time and resources for stakeholder participation.

**Actual implementation:** The principle of evaluation independence has been fully maintained and respected by all concerned. This has contributed to upholding to the principle of credibility, together with the experience and effort of the Team and its candour in acknowledging limitations encountered and differentiating its findings according to the strength of underlying evidence. The principle of usefulness has led to adopting an approach that aims to be realistically and pragmatically geared to the opportunities, capacities and constraints of the organization, and applies standards for assessment and proposals that fall within the realm of the possible. It also attempts to be direct and arrive at clear statements, with appropriate cautions where needed, to provide a base for useful discussion, debate and follow up by ITC and its stakeholders.

The “lean, progress report” character of the Evaluation is clear and the expected combination of tested and innovative and adapted approaches has been applied. As discussed in more detail in the sections below, so has the methodology, centred on a structured, transparent and verifiable approach to answering the evaluation questions, reporting and synthesizing findings, drawing well-founded conclusions, and producing solid and useful recommendations. The approach did apply the specified evaluation criteria – of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and potential impact - through mixed method approaches, combining quantitative and qualitative sources and techniques.

With respect to the components specified:

- a. This attempt proved to be neither feasible nor meaningful since the expected accomplishments of the Centre’s logical framework had not begun to have any coherent effect in organizing ITC information or effort until 2011, and then only to a limited extent.
- b. Implemented fully.
- c. Implemented fully.
- d. Implemented to date and still underway in the discussion processes for the draft and final Evaluation reports.
- e. The workplan and budget had underestimated the complexity of the tasks but the work has covered the ground, built findings progressively and presumably ensured adequate time and resources for stakeholder participation.

## 3.2 Evaluation Process

The basic process being followed by the Evaluation is depicted in the figure below, amplified in the following section on Methodology and in Figure 2 below. This section outlines the planned steps in the Evaluation and focuses on building the linkages between the objectives of the assignment, the approach and the main Evaluation activities. More detail on the timing and division of labour for the tasks is found in the plan of work and the timetable and deliverables.

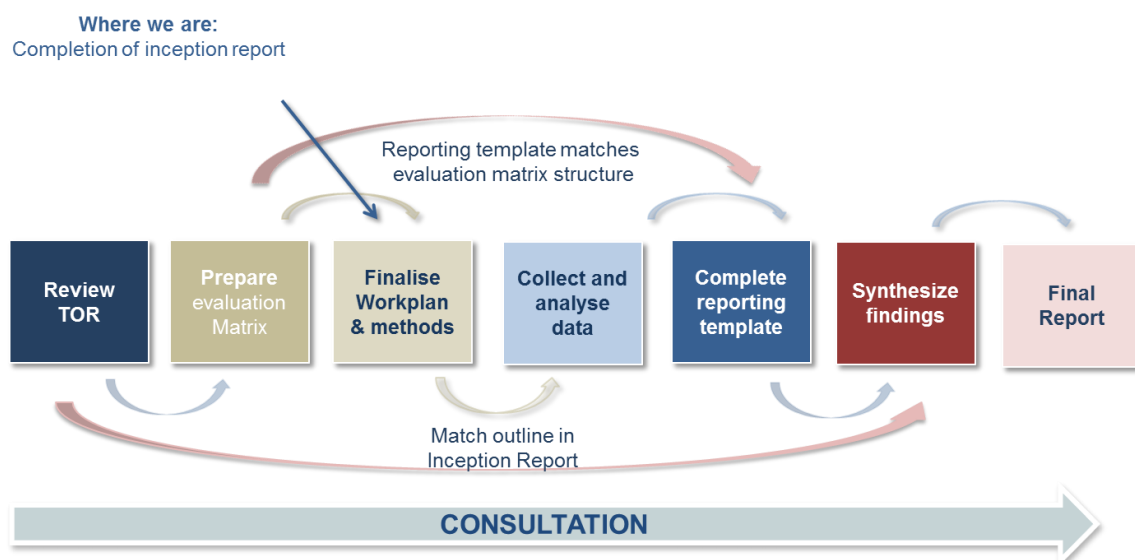
With this Inception Report the first three major preparatory tasks will have been completed (review of the terms of reference and “evaluability” assessment, preparation of the matrix and finalization of the work-plan and schedule) and the ground will be prepared for full implementation of the Evaluation. In this Evaluation, the initial research and consultation carried out in the Inception phase has been more important than in many evaluations, revealing some of the unique complexities of the ITC and its dispersed activities, especially considering that it is a relatively small

programme. This has called for substantial adjustments as indicated in the section below on “evaluability.”

The diagram below indicates the envisaged process of the Evaluation:

**Figure 1: The process of the Evaluation**

1.



2.

**Actual implementation:** This process has proceeded according to plan, with one exception being that the wider consultation opened up in an introductory session with the Geneva missions of all eligible beneficiary countries has not continued to bear fruit, with very limited responses to requests for input or contacts in countries. Consultation during country missions and with ITC management and staff has been effective, as has that with the Evaluation Steering Committee.

### 3.3 Methodological design

#### 3.3.1 Results of the “Evaluability” assessment

As part of the inception phase of the Evaluation, the Team completed an assessment to verify where the programme meets the preconditions for conducting a robust evaluation, and how the evaluation should be designed to ensure a) credibility and b) maximum utility.

The first finding was that the importance given in this Evaluation to the state of the organization and management of the ITC and changes made since 2006 called for a special approach. The task is a large and complex one, but will be aided by adapting and using an accepted framework or checklist of key elements for organizational assessment which is developed in the Evaluation matrix in Annex I.1 This assessment is also assisted by the fact that there has been a great deal of attention,

<sup>1</sup> Lusthaus, Charles, Adrien, Marie-Hélène et al., Organizational Assessment: A Framework for Improving Performance. 2002, Inter-American Development Bank, Washington, D.C. and International Development Research Centre, Ottawa, Canada. “IDRC first published this framework in 1995. The IDB very quickly became involved in applying and using it, and has been instrumental in the field-testing. This greatly updated and expanded framework has grown from our combined experiences. IDRC and Universalis have applied these tools in organizations in West Africa, South Asia, and, along with the IDB, in Latin America.” Foreword, p. x

and documentation, around organizational and management issues in ITC over the evaluation period and that there was fairly clear baseline data and evaluation recommendations around some of these issues.

However, one important finding during the evaluability check was that there are strong differences of views on what the "change management process" in ITC since 2006 actually implied. It will therefore be most productive for the Evaluation's framework for assessment to set aside that label to focus instead on specific changes made or attempted on their merits. Finally, it is important to reiterate that as part of a "lean, progress report", the Evaluation will bring an informed and objective outside assessment but will not constitute an exhaustive management and organizational study.

On the other hand, the inception work has found major challenges in assessing the overall results of ITC's activities against the accepted evaluation criteria, beginning with the difficulty of actually identifying and categorizing all of ITC's numerous and dispersed product lines, and then finding meaningful and strategic ways of aggregating them and their results in corporate level assessments. ITC's own systems for attempting to aggregate this information are just now taking shape and the Evaluation must both draw on them to the extent possible while at the same time assessing the validity and useability of these budding systems. Different operational Divisions are currently updating their information on the range of products and services offered and the Evaluation Team has already been working with them, testing as an early user of this information.

In terms of basic data, apart from the important issue noted above, a relatively strong and well-organized base of other evaluations and institutional documentation has been made available to the Team by the Evaluation and Monitoring Unit at the outset of this Evaluation, enhancing its prospects for success in some key areas.

The indications from the inception stage are positive. In terms of the conduciveness of the evaluation context - i.e. assuring the necessary engagement, accessibility and confidence of key stakeholders and intended users, and clarity on how the findings of the Evaluation will be employed by the key intended users. Team missions to Geneva in September and October 2013, involving some 35 meetings with a range of stakeholder groups and program staff indicated that the "progress report" Evaluation is seen by ITC senior management and program staff interviewed, steering committee members and a wide group of beneficiary representatives as timely and appropriate, coming seven years after the major evaluation of 2006 and after a period of substantial internal and external change. Its independent character, as distinct from the donor-driven effort of 2006, is welcomed by all. A first informal all-staff briefing attracted an interested cross-section from different parts of the Centre, with expectations around further consultation on both programmatic and organizational issues.

As had been noted in the selected Team's proposal, the original list of possible evaluation questions in the Terms of Reference was unmanageably long, often repetitive, and included questions of very different orders and some that were simply not likely to be evaluable. These issues were documented and discussed during the inception phase and using the preliminary set of evaluation questions as a starting point, the questions were further structured, refined, and focused in consultation during the inception mission to Geneva and confirmed in this inception report. The questions are then amplified in the working matrix which still allows for dealing with all the original suggested questions.

**Actual implementation:** The framework adapted for the organizational and management study proved effective, with the understanding that as part of the lean progress report evaluation it was not expected to not constitute an exhaustive

management and organizational study. On the other hand, the challenges in assessing the overall results of ITC's activities against the accepted evaluation criteria proved even more difficult than expected in the Inception Report, for the anticipated reasons. The data issues, especially around the essential milestones of projects and project cycle management, are documented in the Report and because of their importance for the Centre itself they are reflected in major conclusions and recommendations.

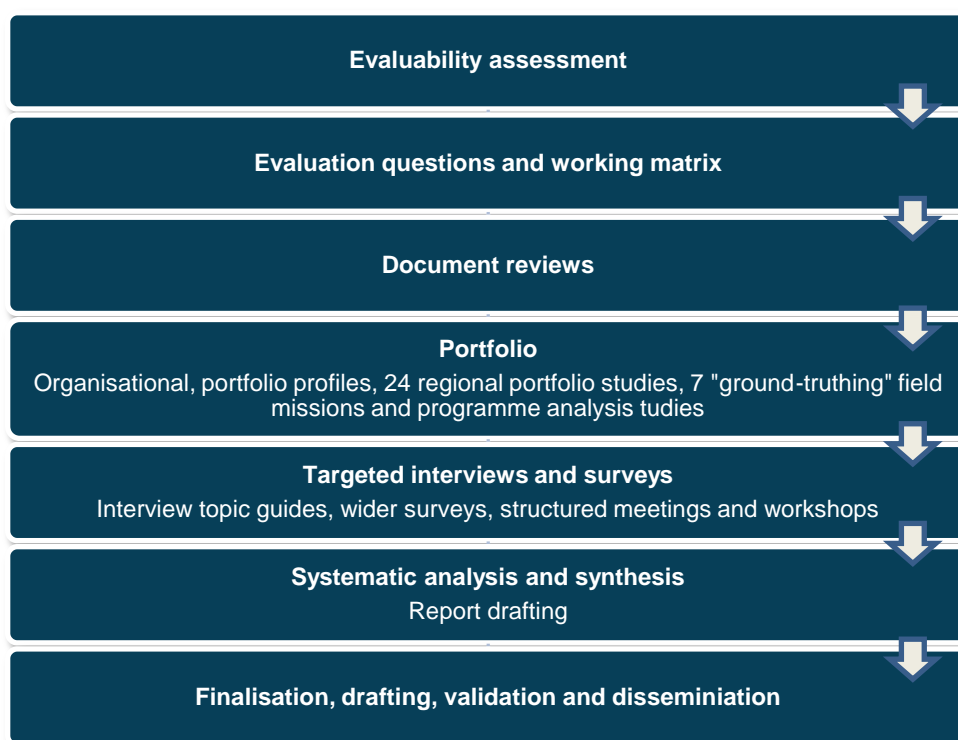
Internally, with Steering Committee members and (to a lesser extent in mission countries) the context has been conducive to a progress report evaluation, but the difficulties of finding and engaging beneficiaries, especially but not only among enterprises have been an important limitation.

With respect to the evaluation questions, even the re-formulated lists in the agreed Matrices proved excessively long and detailed for the time and knowledge of many informants, at least on the operational side. This required successful improvisation to ensure that the most essential ground would be covered but it did result in lesser findings or strength of evidence in some areas, as signalled in the Report.

### 3.3.2 The main Evaluation questions and Matrix

The diagram below sets out the main building blocks of the methodology

**Figure 2: Building blocks of the methodology**



The methodology is centred around the main questions to be answered in the Evaluation. As noted, after preliminary examination, the Inception Report has opted to organize the main evaluation questions differently for the organizational and management assessment and the assessment of ITC's projects, products and activities. All will refer as applicable to the specified evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and potential impact.

The Team has ensured that the subject-matter of all the questions originally suggested in the Terms of Reference will be covered by these topics and will re-check that the relevant findings are apparent in the final Evaluation report.

In the Implementation phase, the largest share of time and effort will be devoted to the collection and analysis of data, all closely geared to the guiding questions and evaluation matrix. This will be followed by systematic reporting and synthesizing of the data collected through all methods (once again against the Matrix framework) in order to arrive at the draft Evaluation report for validation and eventual dissemination.

To guide data collection and analysis, and to ensure a fully rigorous and systematic approach, the Evaluation Team have developed two key matrices. These are geared to the respective evaluation questions; serve as the analytical ‘spines’ for the respective components, and will also form the reporting framework for outputs.

**Institutional assessment:** With the systematic approach adapted to ensuring coverage of the key organizational and management aspects of ITC the Evaluation will focus this part of the study on four major questions. These are centred on:

1. The **enabling environment** for organizational performance in ITC and how has it changed since 2006;
2. ITC’s **organisational capacity** to carry out its mandate effectively and how has it changed since 2006;
3. ITC’s **organizational motivation** to carry out its mandate effectively and how has it changed since 2006; and
4. ITC’s **organizational performance** in carrying out its mandate and how has it changed since 2006 (these issues are also covered extensively, from the delivery and project level up, in Matrix 2)

Matrix 1 (see Annex I) sets out the key dimensions of each of these four headline questions which will be explored. It disaggregates these into relevant key issues and lines of enquiry identified through preliminary documentation analysis and early meetings in Geneva, such as ITC’s results orientation. The matrix does not constitute a full institutional analysis, but sets out some focused parameters to guide data-gathering against the relevant evaluation questions. It also recognises that there will be some intersection with portfolio and project analysis and survey work.

Matrix 2 (see Annex II) is designed for evaluating progress and results in ITC’s **delivery of its products and services**. It is geared to ITC’s strategic objective areas (the "expected accomplishments" for the 2008-9 biennium have been taken as the base best reflecting changes since 2006 and remaining fairly constant since). This framework for the Evaluation, which has to be correlated with ITC’s organizational structures, is intended to both test and encourage the strategic results orientation to which ITC has committed itself. These questions will be pursued first at the level of the full portfolio analysis through a documentary and statistical evidence survey, then progressively deepened in the sample of 24 more detailed portfolio studies and finally seven country-based “case studies” (both distributed across regions and types of programs) in order to ground the findings in the concrete experience of main intended beneficiaries.

**Actual implementation:** The expected building blocks have been successfully applied as planned, with the one important exception that the planned surveys, particularly intended to elicit input from wide groups of actual and intended ITC partners and beneficiaries, were almost entirely impossible to administer to those groups, in spite of the combined efforts of the Evaluation Team and ITC staff. The main reason is that ITC does not yet have a useable central base of information on

such contacts, although it is working hard to build one, nor was there any prospect of building one up around the Evaluation sample, beyond the extremely useful 182 direct interviews carried out in the six mission and two virtual mission countries. The general survey was fully designed and geared up and received significant levels of response from ITC staff and JAG members, with a small additional response from 19 promising beneficiary and partner contacts that had been identified.

### 3.3.3 Specific methods

Finalising the Evaluation matrices has confirmed the methods to be employed. As shown in the Matrices, the Team expects to call on the full arsenal of evaluation methods enumerated in the ITC Evaluation Policy and other documents, geared to the particular questions and issues involved. For example, we see possible scope for deploying quantitative and qualitative content analyses, contribution analysis to a limited extent (particularly in dealing with questions of attribution of results and impacts to ITC interventions) and benchmarking in areas where it may be appropriate.

It is important to be clear from the outset on the Evaluation's ability and limits in establishing causal links between activities and specific outcomes and impacts in the programme's target areas and sectors, ideally as reflected in pre-defined indicators. The ITC's logical framework at the corporate level reflects an evolving approach, underpinned to some degree by lower level log-frames, but it is clear that this results framework is still not robust enough to support such a structured evaluation. The Evaluation will analyse the relevance and effectiveness of logical framework in ITC and provide guidance for improvement by examining both "bottom-up" evidence on how the corporate results framework relates to project and program level results, and "top-down" findings on the needs, expectations and uses for measuring results and impact at the corporate level.

This methodological approach is well-grounded in evaluation theory and practice<sup>2</sup>, and can be readily implemented through the proposed workplan and Team structure. The focus on evaluation building blocks and associated tools provides a clear and practical framework for delegating tasks within the Team and for relating the data and evidence collected back to the evaluation objectives and key questions, and in turn to ITC's strategic objectives.

**Systematic document review:** Document review checklists and interview topic guides will be derived directly from the evaluation questions. The types of documents that will be reviewed for this Evaluation include organisational documents (strategic plans, annual reports etc.), project documents (proposals, progress reports etc.) and background materials. With access to the full body of ITC documentation, and the cooperation of the EMU and the operating sections involved the portfolio review will include an analysis of all available information on the processes in different types of ITC project at all stages in the cycle. To the extent possible with such diverse activities, the portfolio review will attempt to use a mapping approach for the key processes and decision-points in the whole ITC system. The document review will also look at the key strategies, policies and programs of other providers of trade-related assistance in order to situate ITC within this overall constellation.

**Organizational analysis** needs to generate a comprehensive overview of ITC's strategic direction, operating model and resources, and particularly to report on changes since 2006. Time and resourcing does not permit a full institutional analysis,

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<sup>2</sup> Quinn Patton, M (Ed) (2012) Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation, Volume 27 No 3, Special Issue 2012 Evaluation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness



but the key lines of enquiry in the revised evaluation questions can be substantively covered. To ensure a systematic approach, an adapted version of the IDRC organisational assessment tool will be applied, tailored to the evaluation questions and to reflect ITC's operating conditions. This builds on the preliminary enquiry conducted during the first mission to Geneva; and applies relevant lines of enquiry, data collection methods and sources.

At analysis stage, the findings from the HQ perspective can be 'stress-tested' against field level enquiry, to highlight areas of coherence / differences or tensions arising between ITC's corporate-level intentions, and their playing out in practical terms at ground level.

**Portfolio and programme analyses** will be an especially critical part of this Evaluation, since it must cover properly a substantial number of projects, services and activities operating at very different levels. The factual documentation on each is expected to be relatively good, but a manageable number of key analytical and explanatory questions first need to be pursued in order to understand and assess how the very diverse project types and portfolios actually operate. To meet this need the Team has already tested a "project story"<sup>3</sup> technique during early program staff interviews, and it has proved very helpful. This will be continued and the results will be cross-checked in stakeholder interviews and wider surveys. For main phase analysis, systematic tools will be developed which will allow data to be gathered against agreed fields linked to the indicators in the relevant Evaluation matrix. This should allow for robust comparison at analysis stage.

**Interviews, surveys and field missions:** Interviews and field missions will be carried out by the team members individually. To ensure that the Evaluation captures the information accurately, and to ensure a fully systematic approach to data collection, the following tools will be developed and applied to support the methods outlined in the Matrix to answer the evaluation questions:

- a. *Interview topic guides* will provide a semi-structured format for interviews. They will apply the lines of enquiry / indicators of the relevant matrix, but grouped and targeted according to the organisation or individual being interviewed at either the programme or country level. This tool will ensure systematic coverage of the central topics by Team members consulting with stakeholders at different times, while retaining the flexibility to pursue important unforeseen avenues of enquiry as they arise in the Evaluation.
- b. *Structured meetings and workshops:* The Evaluation will call for a considerable number of key informant interviews. These will mostly be managed on an individual face-to-face basis, but where appropriate groupings exist, Team members will also conduct focus group discussions; and where there is a particular need to validate or triangulate findings, structured meetings or workshops can also be used with a range of stakeholders both at the global, regional and country levels.
- c. *Wider surveys:* It will be important to go beyond the number of interviews that will be possible in order to secure the informed input and participation of a much wider group of ITC stakeholders. It will be a priority task for the Team from the outset to identify the key intended respondents and prepare the appropriate questionnaires for them, together with strategies and techniques to engage their interest and cooperation. With these elements in place it may be possible to use a cost-effective web survey for this purpose and the Team has used and adapted such tools on a number of assignments under comparable conditions.

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<sup>3</sup> The tool devised for drawing out these structured stories on ITC products and projects is called a "product story board" and the template is attached in Annex III for information. A similar tool was also employed for early familiarization with the roles of ITC's Geographic Sections, and it is also attached in the Annex.

**Actual implementation:** With the important note on general implementation above, particularly about the major disappointment around the wider surveys, these specific methods and tools have been applied as planned to good effect. The implementation of the coverage of the regional portfolios is outlined in the progress report at the end of this Annex. The country missions (including two virtual missions in the place of one of the physical field missions that proved unfeasible) assumed an even greater importance than anticipated, as the most important means of consulting beneficiaries and partners in the ground.

## Box 2: Portfolio Performance Analyses

As originally proposed, the approach for assessing the performance of the ITC's activities will be a four-stage one, but it will have to take account of some important factors highlighted during the inception phase. The ITC's activities are highly dispersed, by type of activity, by level (global, regional, and national) by types of intended beneficiary (policy-makers, trade support institutions and enterprises) and among countries. Country programs, as understood in larger development cooperation agencies, do not really exist as such. Rather the management of activities within ITC is also dispersed on a functional basis, while reportedly different services are often deployed in somewhat coordinated forms. These arrangements particularly affect the first stage of the portfolio study.

**Full portfolio survey:** (Begun in the inception phase, carrying on through to December 2013.) Taking into account the current effort by ITC to develop an up-to-date listing of all to services and products, this exercise will proceed on two fronts. The first is a major organizational and data-gathering task of trying to clearly identify all ITC's products, their purposes, volume, distribution, management arrangements and existing results information on them. This will involve analysing across the full portfolio through structured desk and statistical research and targeted headquarters inquiries and arriving at synthesised profiles. The second task, being conducted in parallel, aims at making sense of how ITC's dispersed products (the latest count is a total of some 50) are actually called upon and used in projects. This part of the work has so far involved one Team member selecting a largely random sample of some 20 projects/product uses, drawn fairly equally from the portfolios of different Sections of the Centre, and through HQ interviews structured around some of the central Evaluation themes/questions, drawing out the essential "project stories" of each. A parallel exploration has been launched on the roles and activities of geographical sections.

**Regional portfolio study:** (From acceptance of Inception Report until December 2013) Drawing on the lessons of the first stage, seven Team members will have responsibility for extending the portfolio analysis to the full portfolio in their designated region of responsibility. They will also prepare a total of over 60 further project "stories" structured against a standard format and distributed representatively in at least three countries in each region/sub-region across all the main product lines. This structured story approach is the best way to capture the highly diverse style of ITC's operations, while also answering the key evaluation questions. Global services and projects (and to the extent that they are not covered sufficiently through country studies, regional projects) will be analysed against separate templates that will also reflect the relevant

evaluation questions.

**Widening inputs:** (From acceptance of Inception Report until January 2014) Simultaneously, targeted surveys and focus groups will be launched, asking the key questions of ITC's clients (and potential clients) as well as its other stakeholders, including partner (and potential partner) institutions, beneficiary and donor country representatives, staff and others. If the work is sufficiently advanced in this period it may permit the testing of emerging hypotheses in several small focus groups, with mixed participation from ITC's stakeholders both at headquarters and through virtual linkages. Parallel measure will be taken to secure inputs from informed respondents among ITC's potential beneficiaries who have not yet been involved in its activities. (See 'Consulting ITC's Potential Beneficiaries' below)

**Country level "ground-truthing":** (November 2013 to January 2014) A final stage of data-gathering will be a more in-depth level of examination of ITC's projects in countries –national, regional, and to the extent possible global. The objective will be one of "ground-truthing" the Evaluation's findings and conclusions through a set of seven targeted country missions, selected against the same criteria for representativeness as the wider sample of 20+ countries, and seeking the maximum representativeness of country and ITC-product-mix types among the seven. The aims at this stage will be to cross-check and triangulate more in-depth country and program findings against the cumulative hypotheses from the previous steps, viewed from the 'other end of the telescope' – the processes and demonstrable outcomes, impacts and perspectives of ITC beneficiaries, in particular trade support institutions and enterprises in the field and other potential beneficiaries, partners and stakeholders on the ground.

### 3.3.4 Triangulation and validation

To ensure full triangulation and validation, all findings – from institutional review, portfolio and country level - will be cross-checked by comparative analyses and targeted interviews and surveys across the portfolio, and by findings from the perspectives of staff, other agencies, donors, and knowledgeable analysts. These different streams and perspectives will then be brought together through a systematic process of triangulation at the synthesis stage, in order to arrive at overall findings and conclusions on the performance of ITC at different levels.

**Actual implementation:** These processes have taken place as planned, with one exception in that the numbers and responses of informants in different categories, particularly in the essential country missions did not yield meaningful categories for systematic triangulation, which could have been important to check for significant differences of perspective. A systematic breakdown in two countries did not yield any marked or consistent differences between groups, and this finding was corroborated by other Team members. Overall, with HQ inputs included, it is clear that the total group of direct informants for the Evaluation was as much as one-third comprised of ITC management and staff members. The confidentiality of inputs and the engagement of these informants in a frank assessment and search for improvement was evident to the experienced Team, and triangulated against other documentary inputs (including more specific evaluations) field mission inputs and other informed sources.

### 3.3.5 Selections for portfolio studies and country missions

Bearing in mind that separate assessments will be needed for the substantial share of ITC's projects and services that are global in character, and that ITC does not really have "country programs" in the same sense as many larger agencies, it is still important to assess national, multi-national and regional projects in a representative range of country contexts. It should be stressed to all stakeholders, especially beneficiaries, that these country selections are only samples for purposes of retrospective evaluation and should not have any effect, positive or negative, on the future allocations of ITC support by countries

The approach to assessing the portfolio of ITC's activities in countries can be compared to a kind of narrowing funnel. At the widest end of the funnel, the entire ITC portfolio of projects will be generally surveyed and profiled as part of the Evaluation. But especially because of the spread and diversity of projects it will be essential for more in-depth assessments to work with limited samples that are as representative as possible. To ensure the credibility of the Evaluation findings, it has been very important for the independent Team to set the sampling criteria and control the selection of cases for examination, taking into account specified inputs from ITC program staff.<sup>4</sup>

The terms of reference and proposal required that both Francophone and Anglophone Africa would receive special attention, while maintaining sufficient coverage across the other regions served. Consistent with this, as shown in the Table below, at the middle level of the funnel, the plan is to carry out a total of 24 portfolio analyses in individual countries distributed across the regions, and at the narrow, most-focused end to carry out seven country-missions (as allowed for in the Evaluation budget), similarly distributed. These missions are intended to "ground-truth" the overall findings by more direct beneficiary consultation and observation on the ground.

**Table 1: Geographical coverage**

Geographic Region	Number of countries included in Portfolio Analysis	Number of Field Missions
<b>Africa (East and Southern)</b> 6 Anglophone	6	2
<b>Africa (West and Central)</b> 5 Francophone / 1 Lusophone	6	2
<b>Latin America &amp; Caribbean</b>	3	1
<b>Asia &amp; Pacific</b>	3	1
<b>Arab States</b>	3	1
<b>Eastern Europe &amp; Central Asia</b>	3	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>7</b>

<sup>4</sup> The sampling process set out represents a combination of quota sampling, i.e., a set of specified categories in which cases will be selected, "distributional" sampling across those categories, and then randomised sampling among the remaining clusters of cases.

To ensure the credibility of the Evaluation findings, it has been very important for the independent Team to set the criteria and control the selection of cases for examination. The basic threshold criteria for selecting countries for second and third level examination are to ensure representation across the range of regions served with sufficient recent country-level ITC activity to make the deeper examination feasible and worthwhile. Meeting this dual test, from the documentation that has been provided the Team identified 61 countries<sup>5</sup> where ITC country-level projects have been active from 2010 to 2012<sup>6</sup>, with the understanding that in the selected countries older projects may also be examined. Beyond these thresholds, the Team has applied the following criteria to arrive at the most representative possible selection distribution of countries for closer examination between and within regions (see box below).

### Box 3: Country case selection criteria

#### Basic variables:

- Income group (per capita GDP)
- Size of economy (GDP)
- Number and value of ITC projects
- Range of ITC products and services in use (including some regional and some large projects)

#### Variables specified in ITC terms of reference:

- LDC, LLDC, small-island state or land-locked status
- Special attention to sub-Saharan Africa
- Coverage across ITC's geographic regions, and levels of development

#### Trade-related variables (reflecting different strengths, profiles and conditions in trade and Aid for Trade):

- Exports in Goods/Services (% of GDP)
- Manufactures export (% of merchandise exports)
- Agricultural raw materials, ores and metal exports (% of merchandise exports)
- Logistics Performance Index (2012)
- Trading across Borders Score (2013) ("Distance to frontier" i.e. measured against best score)
- WTO membership
- Scale of per capita Aid for Trade assistance from all sources

#### Practical considerations (for country missions):

- Availability of sufficient networks of informed sources on ITC work
- Accessibility/ cost of mission

<sup>5</sup> The Team was provided a spreadsheet by the SPPG of all projects active since 2006, narrowing down to projects active from 2010 to 2012 the Team identified 61 countries with individual-country level projects. The Team is relying on the accuracy of this information, and for the present purposes of sample selection only very substantial errors or omissions would make a material difference.

<sup>6</sup> These three years were selected to be able to examine significant country project activity (alongside multi-country and regional projects where applicable) where the work is likely to have progressed far enough to allow for assessing outputs and outcomes, and recent enough to be sufficiently well-remembered by potential informants.

- Current access/ security situation

Applying these criteria to select among the 61 possible countries the Team has arrived at the 24 highlighted below to provide a wide range of country cases for detailed study. Within this selection of some 40% of the total group it has selected the seven countries indicated with an asterix (\*). These are once again selected to provide a representative mix of country and program types across regions for the third, most detailed level of examination through country missions. Each of these seven meets the additional practical criteria of having enough ITC activity to justify the investment of a mission and, all other things being equal, a discretionary factor based on the relative knowledge and ease of access by the Evaluation Team.

At the Team's request the regional sections of DCP provided their rapid assessments on how criteria on the range of ITC products and services, availability of sufficient networks, and current access / security situations would apply in the proposed selection of countries. This consultation resulted in one change of a proposed country mission, due to the fact that there have been other recent Aid for Trade evaluations in the originally-selected country so that an ITC Evaluation mission would result in unreasonable, duplicative demands on ITC's partners on the ground. The country has been retained for portfolio analysis which should be enriched by the other evaluation results.

**Table 2: Selection of countries**

3.	4. Region	5. Country	6.	7. Region	8. Country
5.	6. Africa (East and Southern)	8. Ethiopia*	9. 3	10. P A	11. Bangladesh
12.		13. Kenya	14. 4		15. Cambodia*
16.		17. Malawi	18. 5		19. Fiji
20.		21. South Africa	22. 6	23. AC L	24. Haiti*
25.		26. Tanzania*	27. 7		28. Peru
29.		30. Uganda	31. 8		32. Uruguay
33.	34. Africa (West and Central)	35. Benin	36. 9	37. Arab States A	38. Egypt
39.		40. Cape Verde	41. 0		42. Jordan
43.		44. Congo Dem Rep	45. 1		46. Tunisia*
47. 0		48. Côte d'Ivoire*	49. 2	50. ECA E	51. Albania
52. 1		53. Mali	54. 3		55. Tajikistan
56. 2		57. Senegal*	58. 4		59. Turkey

### 3.3.6 Consulting ITC's Potential Beneficiaries

There are several major reasons why it is especially important for the Evaluation to reach beyond ITC's existing groups of beneficiaries:

60. They are small sub-groups of the potential beneficiaries (e.g. recently only in 61 of some 150 eligible countries) and the rationales/processes for the existing selections and distributions of activities are not yet clear;
61. While it is important to assess the satisfaction of existing clients, they will tend to have a vested interest and/or built-in positive bias toward the activities they are involved with. They will not necessarily be well-placed to shed on the relative priority of those trade promotion activities or how ITC responds to overall demand in its field;
62. There is evidence of unmet requests, and dissatisfaction from some stakeholders with the apparent inability of ITC to respond; and
63. Looking to the future, it is important to assess ITC's potential to respond to a wider set of clients and what it would take for the Centre to do so.

**Actual implementation:** This careful selection process was found in practice to have yielded a suitably diverse set of country situations and ITC country "portfolios" over the Evaluation period. Even complemented by the wider regional portfolio studies, it remains very much a sample, which must be borne in mind by readers and users of the Evaluation. As noted, the planned country mission to Haiti, known from the outset to present special challenges, ultimately proved at a late date impossible to arrange satisfactorily, and in dialogue with EMU and the Mission of Uruguay the Team arranged and carried out "virtual" missions with both Haiti and Uruguay instead.

For the Evaluation to actually identify and reach these wider groups of potential beneficiaries is not a simple challenge. We are proposing the following steps:

64. To seek out evidence of past requests to ITC management and analyse and explain how they have been handled;
65. To identify appropriately-placed policy-makers, trade support institutions and enterprise representatives in potential beneficiary countries and test their awareness, need and interest in ITC's services, mainly through a brief targeted survey (on-line, supplemented by hard versions as necessary). In the 48 least-developed countries where the EIF is active, the EIF focal points and National Implementation Unit Coordinators should be natural informants. Respondents to the OECD /WTO questionnaires for the Global Review of Aid for Trade would be another logical group of informed respondents if access to them can be provided. Trade promotion organizations and/or chambers of commerce in a sample of countries not currently served by ITC country projects may be another group to be approached, both for their own possible inputs and for leads particularly to interested enterprise respondents.

**Actual implementation:** As noted earlier, even locating and securing inputs from actual ITC beneficiaries proved nearly impossible, except in country missions. Special measures, such as briefing and surveying "Geneva Week" participants and those at a major TSI gathering in Latin America yielded very little input. The broader findings suggest very strongly that the slender level of knowledge of ITC beyond those who have already dealt with it would not at this point carry them beyond a first question or two in any survey of its performance or potential.

### 3.3.7 Analysis and synthesis of Evaluation results

**Analytical processes:** In order to successfully analyse the material within the tight timeframe of the study, and to help meet some of the challenges above, the Team will prepare a standard reporting template for analysis. This will require Team members to identify and analyse findings from individual portfolio analyses and country missions and other sources along the parameters of the Matrix.

Simultaneously, to ensure that the findings being sifted out are adequately supported by evidence, reviewers will assess both the quality of the evidence presented and the clarity of the analysis. This is a necessary requirement for calibrating findings to the strength of the evidence and ensuring their robustness. It will enable a composite template per question and sub-question to be developed, also identifying where gaps and weaknesses in the evidence remain.

The analytical tool will include rating scales on the following parameters:

**Table 3: Analytical tool**

66. For findings	67. For conclusions
68. Data transparency and coverage	69. Extent to which questions were answered
70. Data reliability and accuracy	71. Clarity of analysis

**Aggregating emerging findings.** To bring together the diverse material available at this stage the drafting the Team will apply the following process:

72. Extracting the first emerging findings in the filter templates alongside a first check of evidence, using a rating system that will be developed in the desk phase;
73. Cross-checking templates between drafting Team members to ensure rigour and completeness (each completed filter will be verified / quality assured by a second member of the Team);
74. Assembling findings from all reports into a compilation by question and sub-question; and
75. Analysing assembled findings across reports and categorising responses, at this stage with references to specific individual reports.

This systematic approach, which includes an ongoing emphasis on triangulation and validation of data, will ensure that the analytical process is as rigorous as possible – and consequently that the findings arising are fully robust.

**Synthesis:** This stage will require the Team to synthesise the results of all the component inputs and supplementary materials, in a major policy-oriented synthesis report systematically covering the evaluation purposes, the agreed questions, and the specified criteria (relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability). In assessing the range of performance, the Team will also super-impose the four additional “perspectives of ITC performance” set out in the Statement of Work and will need to be alert to possible emerging categories or trends and their explanations.

In terms of aggregate judgements for the synthesis report on the pace of change and the distance remaining to achieve the expected follow-up to the 2006 evaluation and other ITC objectives the Team will recognise that this is a “progress report” Evaluation, with incomplete and uneven results to be expected. Within that



perspective, the standard of judgement applied on the intended outcomes will be a dual one, blending absolute and relative standards, taking account of important contextual differences.

**Report drafting process:** The process of drafting the synthesis report will need to be grounded systematically and demonstrably in the data, findings, and conclusions emerging from the general analyses, the country mission reports and the other agreed inputs. The report will need to refer to them and be able to account for the evidence on which it is based, without becoming a heavy, densely footnoted document.

The drafting process for the main synthesis report will involve a number of steps:

76. Against the composite evidence base in the matrix and question-linked templates, extracting key themes for findings.
77. Tracking back to ensure the logical derivation of the themes from the evidence.
78. Once themes have been verified, drawing these together in narrative form.
79. Once the findings narrative is in place, drawing out conclusions.
80. Tracking back to ensure that conclusions are logically derived from the findings.
81. Distilling key conclusions, lessons and recommendations arising from the findings. Recommendations will be focused on clear challenges identified, set at a strategic level, addressed specifically to those who can take the recommended actions, and in some cases may include options for different solutions.
82. Raising the level of the report, to ensure that the text is appropriately policy-oriented and accessible. During the drafting process, particular attention will be paid to the usefulness of the report. This will include an ongoing process of checking whether the material being developed meets the criteria of relevance and usefulness to the ITC management and stakeholders as well as country and international policymakers and practitioners. It will at the same time aim to remain comprehensible and interesting to a wider interested public.”

**Actual implementation:** These steps have been implemented as planned.

## B. Evaluation Progress Update (March 4, 2014)

### INTRODUCTION

This update, which can be accompanied by an oral briefing, was specified as a deliverable in the Inception Report for the Evaluation. Since the Team had on its own added a “stocktaking and progress update” submitted on 6 December, 2013, this report integrates that earlier one, adding separate sections to report on progress and adjustments since, and allowing the reader to track progress step-by-step. Another informal oral update was provided to the EMU Evaluation Management Team on 3 February during the Team Leader’s mission to Geneva. It is proposed to annex this combined update report to the Evaluation report, with EMU comments if provided, as a transparent detailed supplement on the methodology applied in “real time”, without overloading or cluttering the substantive Report itself.

### PURPOSE

<b>December update</b>	This stocktaking and progress update on the Evaluation comes one month after the final presentation and agreement on the Inception Report, and just over two weeks since the conclusion of the intensive data-gathering mission by almost the entire Team to ITC HQ <sup>7</sup> . It is designed for the Evaluation Team and ITC’s evaluation management team to monitor how the work-plan is developing in practice, take note of significant adjustments and issues arising, and be fully prepared for the next steps. The update is thus organized around the steps set out in the agreed work-plan.
<b>March update</b>	This update gives the account of the steps completed and remaining, as the Evaluation moves from the data gathering into the analysis, synthesis and report drafting stages.

<sup>7</sup> One Team member, based in the Dominican Republic, had earlier spent an intensive week at HQ gathering data and interviews around ITC’s range of products and services to help orient and prepare the whole Team, as well as preliminary contacts on programmes in Latin America and the Caribbean. He will subsequently pursue his geographical data gathering through separate contacts or a follow-up visit.

## OVERALL STOCKTAKING

<b>December Update</b>	<p>The early Implementation Phase work has been progressing largely as planned, after a slightly uncertain start to the programme analysis work as a result of the late confirmation of initial appointments with the managers of the sample projects. Time was not wasted, however, and the intensive working week for the Team as a group succeeded in solidifying a common approach to the methodology, extensive data-gathering and preparing all the component elements to feed into the final evaluation report.</p> <p>There are limitations: It is already clear that at least two of the main risks identified in the Inception Report<sup>8</sup> will call for adjustments and they will be signalled here. Exhaustive coverage of the total volume of information around ITC's complex activities is obviously beyond the scope of the Evaluation and the level of effort contracted. On the operations side this reality underpinned the sampling strategy, but it is still proving extremely ambitious in practice. Documentation is more organized and transparent on most individual projects, at least in recent years, than on key corporate level issues. In both cases, important information has on occasion come to light almost by accident. It is a general limitation that organized and accessible documentation, as well as the availability and recollection of key informants both decline rapidly as the inquiry is pushed further back toward 2006. To date the Team has now conducted a total of over 120 interviews with informed respondents at the HQ level. This has been done while successfully minimising multiple demands on different respondents, a notable accomplishment in ITC with its relatively small size and complex matrix of operations.</p>
<b>March Update</b>	<p>The data-gathering phase has been completed, with the exception of the evaluation survey results - the deadline for which has been extended to give a further chance for improved response rates – additional work on Uruguay, requiring new responses, and a small number (see 4.3) of project reports where further detail is still being sought. These outstanding items will require further work to adjust, and will cause a limited delay the remaining analysis, synthesis and drafting phases. After the further detailed work on the sample country portfolios and the completion of six country missions and extensive preparatory work on Haiti, the key limitations to the Evaluation noted in the previous update have been strongly re-confirmed. The implications of these obstacles for ITC itself are significant enough that they will be treated as findings in the Evaluation report, and possible remedial steps will be explored.</p>

## PROGRESS ON DIFFERENT PLANNED ELEMENTS

### The organizational and management analysis

<b>December Update</b>	<p>This part of the evaluation work has proceeded in an efficient and timely fashion, with good cooperation from the HQ participants required, and a short second mission to Geneva added as it proved necessary. As expected, this work needs to generate a comprehensive overview of ITC's strategic direction, operating model and resources and particularly to report on changes since 2006. As expected as well, time and resourcing do not permit a full institutional analysis, but the key lines of enquiry in the evaluation questions in Matrix 1 can be substantively covered. An internal first draft of findings in this area will be submitted to the Team Leader by year end for review and refinement, and ultimately for meshing with the operational findings.</p>
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<sup>8</sup> These are: "1. Different expectations around comprehensiveness, depth and a lean, simple strategic level "progress report" evaluation, and 3. Difficulties in engaging informed respondents on ITC projects, especially among beneficiaries."

<b>March Update</b>	After a further added mission by the specialized Team member with primary responsibility, the full analysis of the organizational and management issues, structured around the Evaluation’s Matrix 1, was submitted to the Team Leader in January, together with initial drafting suggestions. The Team Leader completed a review of these documents and a validation round, on which he was able to report orally to the EMU team on 3 February. These materials – which contain extensive confidential input from interviewees - are now ready for eventual triangulation with operational findings and integration into the Evaluation report.
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## Full portfolio review and profile

<b>December Update</b>	It was important, if difficult, for the Evaluation Team to work toward its own independent profiles rather than using only materials pre-digested by ITC, mainly prepared for its reporting and information/ promotional materials. The structured desk and statistical data-gathering research and targeted headquarters inquiries have laid the initial base, and the Team will now progress to the challenges of tracing patterns and trends in the funding, use, distribution and available results information on products. It is already clear that organizing the findings against the ITC’s three “expected accomplishment” areas set out in Matrix 2 is likely to be even more difficult than originally anticipated, but that exercise in itself will be an important test of the robustness of the ITC’s approved Logical Framework and performance management systems.
<b>March Update</b>	<p>Managing the systematization and analysis of the ITC portfolio at this “wide end of the funnel” has proved to be one of the most difficult challenges in the data-assembly phase. The ITC’s “projects portal” apparently offered the virtue of completeness, listing as it did every spending operation launched, with additional details on dates, sources and amounts of funding, etc. In practice, however, this source quickly became unmanageable since it contained 786 “operations” over the 2006-2013 period, a large number of which were merely preparatory or feasibility studies or project extensions, with others being regional or global projects triggering all eligible countries (often several dozens) without clear indications of actual country operations, which needed to be tracked individually through multiple inquiries to different technical sections. These inquiries were then often frustrated by the loss of corporate memory through the departure of informed personnel and/or minimal records on small operations. As a result of these problems, the Team was eventually obliged to use ITC Annual Report summaries to sift out projects for examination in the 24 country portfolio studies, discussed below.</p> <p>As expected in December, the Centre’s planning and results-reporting systems did not attempt to group projects according to the Centre’s “expected accomplishments” prior to 2011, so that framework could not yet be used in profiling. A further obstacle to the kind of profiling originally planned is that there is no accepted “catalogue” of ITCs different products. An effort to assemble one was in fact underway late in 2013 led by DBIS and some additional material was produced by DMD and DCP and provided to the Evaluation Team generating a draft (but still incomplete) list of some 50 products and the Evaluation Team has not received any final confirmation or further listing. This experience also leads to a finding that will be addressed in the Evaluation Report.</p> <p>Prior to bringing together its analysis, the Team will finalize its review and profile of the full portfolio as far as the available facts will support In spite of all these constraints. The limitations here have served to increase the importance of the targeted regional sample portfolio reviews and especially the country missions.</p>

## Analysis of targeted regional sample (24 countries)

<b>December Update</b>	<p>Here too, the approach of selecting a manageable number of representative countries and projects recently active in them according to objective criteria was adopted to guard against biases that could have arisen from other sampling methods such as focusing on organizational units or “programmes”. From an initial list of 81 denominated “projects” across the 24 countries – taken directly from the ITC Projects Portal – the data-gathering and analysis to this point has confirmed that some 65 are in fact free-standing projects that can be individually assessed, with others being phased activities, pre-projects or in some cases possibly very limited applications of standard tools in the countries to which they were attributed. Evaluations will be able to shed light on about one-third of these project cases (to be cross-checked with EMU). In almost all cases except those in Latin America and the Caribbean (still to come) documentary research and interviews have been well-launched, and a standard reporting format has been worked out to consolidate the findings on each project from the diverse documentary and interview sources. A follow-up mission to HQ has been arranged for one Team Member in mid-December to fill gaps.</p> <p>It is clear from the documentation and HQ respondents that project-specific beneficiary and partner interviewees are going to be difficult to locate and engage at a distance for many completed projects, so that a small number will have to suffice. On the other hand, the documentary sources for most, though not all, of these recent projects are relatively complete and accessible, now that remote access to the ITC sources has been successfully arranged for the Team.</p> <p>The experience so far with using the Team’s interview guide/ questionnaire has been that it is very demanding in terms of time and recall, even when the Team secures the basic factual information from documentary sources. This limitation is being taken into account in the design of beneficiary questionnaires and different survey instruments to come for use with other groups. An implication of this is that the informed respondent interviews are not going to be exhaustively replicated for triangulation purposes, but the Team will explicitly identify the findings where triangulation had been stronger and weaker. The 60-plus consolidated project reports from this targeted sample will be submitted by mid-January as the foundation blocks for the consolidated project analysis, with supporting materials retained.</p> <p>Global services and projects (and supplementing coverage through country studies, regional projects) will be analysed against separate templates that will also reflect the relevant evaluation questions. Key inputs to these analyses will include existing client surveys, relevant results from evaluations and dedicated coverage in the Evaluation’s questionnaires, surveys and country missions.</p>
<b>March Update</b>	<p>The planned follow-up mission to HQ for one Team Member on portfolios in the LAC region was completed successfully in January. The prescribed project reports are now completed for 45 projects from the qualified sample of 58<sup>9</sup>, leaving 11 with further inputs to be completed, and 2 which have had to be dropped because of insufficient information. The remaining sample is sufficiently distributed among regions and types of projects to provide a robust coverage at this “middle of the funnel” level, with the repeated and re-confirmed December caveat – also identified as a key risk in the Inception Report - about the possible difficulty of locating and engaging project-specific beneficiary and partner interviewees for many completed projects. It also remains to see what response rate will be achieved to the relevant survey questionnaire to a total of 124 such beneficiaries and partners identified across this sample who have been asked and reminded to respond. These difficulties already point to possible findings and recommendations for the Evaluation.</p>

<sup>9</sup> Following further consolidation of projects (e.g. combining sub-components of global projects)

## Country “ground-truthing” missions (7 countries)

### December Update

The destinations and feasibility of these planned missions have been confirmed, with one possible exception, noted below. In all cases, principal focal points have been enlisted (with the help of EMU), and some preliminary interviews as well as documentary preparations launched. The dates for the missions have not yet been scheduled but must be by 15 December in order to ensure that they can be carried out in January 2014 or early February at the latest. Taking into account their longer time frames and deeper contextualization, it is now planned to organize these country mission analyses around a framework that emphasizes the five development evaluation criteria across the range of ITC involvements, and hinged less directly on the framework of the Expected Accomplishments and primary client groups set out in the Logical Framework. This will also provide a test for the structuring of the final Evaluation report.

One country mission destination – Haiti – now requires careful monitoring, and may call for change, because an increasingly volatile political situation could lead to the mission being unproductive or even unsafe. In consultation with key Haitian contacts, ITC and other sources it is proposed to confirm or change this destination by 15 December. In case it should need to be changed, the Team has been preparing a contingency plan for an alternative mission, possibly shifting from the general criteria for selecting such mission countries to take into account the particular situation of the region in ITC’s programmes. Should the Haiti mission be reconfirmed in December and then become unfeasible in January, it will probably be necessary to forego a mission to the region.

Six country missions were successfully scheduled and carried out as follows:

Cambodia (Jan 20-25)

Cote d'Ivoire (Jan 27 - Feb 1)

Tunisia (Jan 27 - Feb 1)

Ethiopia (Feb 10-15)

Senegal (Feb 10-15)

Tanzania (Feb 2-7)

These country missions, although few in number were found, as had been hoped, to represent a range of different types of ITC activities as well as a range of countries and regions. Their “ground-truthing” function for the Evaluation was successful and even more important than anticipated, given the limitations on data available from the other levels of operational assessment. Country mission reports in the common format have now been drafted, validated and completed for these six country missions, and the process of compiling, comparing and analysing the results in a common template is underway. In total, the physical field missions have included informed respondent interviews or focus groups with 142 representatives of government, TSIs, beneficiary groups, donors, CSOs and other informed observers on the ground. As the compilation and analysis of these reports is completed, the breakdown by different respondent groups will be provided for the final report, but it is not too early to note that all of the country missions encountered difficulties in locating and contacting direct beneficiaries, especially at the enterprise level, to obtain their input - a fact which has a bearing on the findings of the Evaluation as well as on the process.

As foreseen in the December update, a Haiti mission remained problematic from the point of view of securing sufficient contacts on the ground, even though the possible safety concerns had eased. In spite of repeated efforts down to the last possible moment – with all possible cooperation from OLAC in ITC – it was concluded with EMU that a useful physical country mission to Haiti would not be feasible. Even without the physical mission, it was decided to retain a country report since the Team member responsible had already carried out a great deal of research and got significant input from a good number of informants. Moreover, it had been clearly recognized by all from the outset that Haiti would be a difficult case, and might therefore offer particular lessons, which will be important to capture.

At the same time the Evaluation and Management Teams agreed that it would be important that something more should be done in the OLAC region to balance out this lesser depth in the Haiti coverage. Consideration was given to other countries and sub-regions of special interest but it was decided to maintain the integrity of the original sample by staying with the countries selected in the Inception Report. Thus work has gone ahead with a more intensive portfolio study in Uruguay, without a physical field mission (which would require additional time and resources) but applying the same methods and range of sources as in the physical country missions, adapted to the requirements of telephone and Skype interviews around the same interview guides/questionnaires applied elsewhere. In the case of the OLAC region, this option of covering Haiti and Uruguay will actually produce more in-depth coverage.

## ITC and stakeholder consultations (in Geneva and through surveys and possibly focus groups)

<b>December Update</b>	<p>As noted, well over 100 internal interviews have now been conducted on both the organization and management and operational matrices. Gap-filling and clarification interviews will continue as needed, prior to the stage when a draft report will be available for review and comment. The present and former JAG chairs have both been interviewed as well as, during the Inception Phase, the members of the Evaluation Steering Committee and representatives of WTO and UNCTAD. Additional interviews are planned with the parent institutions at the point where the emerging evaluation findings around the relevant governance and programmatic issues will allow for well-focused input on their part. It is not yet clear what the scope will be for focus group consultations, although the Team will be alert to possibilities and these will be encouraged during the country missions.</p> <p>Targeted surveys are being planned and prepared for the following groups<sup>10</sup>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JAG Members (differentiated by donors and potential donors, beneficiaries and potential beneficiaries, and other JAG members);</li> <li>ITC's other clients (and potential clients) policy-makers (e.g. ministries responsible for trade and SME issues, national export agencies, etc.), advisors, TSIs, SME stakeholders, trade and business associations;</li> <li>Partner (and potential partner) institutions, including donor representatives on the ground;</li> <li>ITC staff and consultants;</li> <li>Other Aid for Trade providers, experts and interested civil society groups;</li> </ul>
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<sup>10</sup> Opportunities have been taken to identify and ask for the cooperation of such groups including Permanent Missions of potential beneficiary countries, Geneva Week participants from other eligible countries, TSI representatives at the REDIBERO in Bogota. Other opportunities are being sought.



## March Update

The Team has now carried out five more missions to ITC Geneva than originally planned and engaged with a total of over 150 ITC staff, management, stakeholders and partners in structured interviews and focus groups, all built around the Evaluation matrices. This was in addition to substantive introductory sessions on the Evaluation with the Steering Committee, present and past JAG chairs, developing country Permanent Missions in Geneva, Geneva Week participants from countries without Permanent Missions, and an open session to which all staff were invited. A special joint session was arranged with ITC's key collaborators from WTO and UNCTAD, as "parent" institutions, and focus groups with the EIF and SDTF as important users of ITC services. Gap-filling and clarification interviews and discussions have continued as needed, while the Team has generally succeeded in avoiding excessive or duplicative requests to informed respondents.

Focused electronic surveys, keyed to the Evaluation Matrices and designed to produce a comparable picture across groups were launched on 14 February to the following categories of informed respondent, to be tabulated and interpreted separately:

- a) Requests to all JAG Members (to 302 contacts who can be differentiated by donors and potential donors, beneficiaries and potential beneficiaries, and other JAG members): A special survey on governance and organizational questions together with the stakeholder survey administered to other groups;
- b) Mainly on the basis of identification through the Evaluation's portfolio reviews and country missions, 124 requests were sent to ITC clients (and some potential clients) policy-makers (e.g. ministries responsible for trade and SME issues, national export agencies, etc.), advisors, TSIs, SME stakeholders, trade and business associations, partner (and potential partner) institutions, as well as identified donor representatives on the ground: the stakeholder survey administered to other groups;
- c) 368 requests to ITC staff in all categories: the stakeholder survey administered to other groups together with a special survey on internal issues keyed to the baseline framework used for the Dalberg staff Survey in 2012.

Consideration had been given to a much wider survey request to ITC's very large lists of contacts numbering in the tens of thousands, or to more restricted lists of training beneficiaries if they could be extracted from financial records. However, in discussion with EMU and other ITC staff now working to produce a higher-quality Client Relations Management (CRM) system, it was agreed that the old contact list would be of little or no value in generating reliable input to the Evaluation and the more restricted list could not be extracted. Meanwhile the new CRM system can only now begin to provide more reliable contacts for the past two years, so is of little help over the period of the evaluation. These challenges point toward another significant finding for the Evaluation.

In light of low early rates of response, in addition to sending reminders, it was agreed to extend the deadline for survey responses from 28 February to 6 March.

## **FURTHER STEPS UNDERWAY - COMPILATION, ANALYSIS AND SYNTHESIS OF EVALUATION RESULTS**

### **Operational findings**

The findings, from individual project reports, country missions, and each of the three surveys are being compiled into standard templates based directly on the original tools keyed to Matrix 2 (see Inception Report), to maximize the fidelity of the compilation and analysis.

These compilations include the reviewers' assessments of the quality of the evidence presented. This takes into account the transparency, coverage, reliability and accuracy of data, informed where available by the explicit "strength of evidence/level of confidence" measure in the questionnaires. Where applicable conclusions and suggestions for recommendations from each country mission report will be assessed for extent to which questions were answered and the clarity of analysis.

A composite template per question and sub-question will integrate and aggregate the results from these compilations, with aggregate ratings for the strength of evidence on each and identifying any general gaps and weaknesses. Templates will be cross-checked between drafting Team members to ensure rigour and completeness (each completed filter will be verified / quality assured by a second member of the Team). The assembled findings will then be analysed, across reports categorising responses, at this stage with references to specific individual country mission reports and selected project reports.

### **Synthesis**

This stage will require the Team to synthesise the results of all the component inputs – now fully integrating the results of the organizational and management assessment – and supplementary materials, in a synthesis report systematically covering the evaluation purposes, the agreed questions, and the specified criteria (relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability). It will also super-impose the four additional "perspectives of ITC performance" and possible emerging trends. While ensuring systematic coverage, at this stage, the materials will be integrated into an outline that will respond to the requirement for a policy-oriented, "leaner, clearer and simpler evaluation of high quality" than the 2006 report. It will touch all the key aspects sufficiently to support informed outside assessments, but as a progress report, it will not claim to go into them all in depth and not be a heavy, densely footnoted document.

### **Report drafting process**

This will involve the following steps:

Against the composite evidence base in the matrix and question-linked templates, extracting key themes for findings;

Tracking back to ensure the logical derivation of the themes from the evidence;

Once themes have been verified, drawing these together in narrative form;

Once the findings narrative is in place, drawing out conclusions;

Tracking back to ensure that conclusions are logically derived from the findings;

Distilling key conclusions, lessons and recommendations arising from the findings. Recommendations will be focused on clear challenges identified, set at a strategic level, addressed specifically to those who can take the recommended actions, and in some cases

may include options for different solutions. Suggestions or ideas on more specific points will be raised in the text but not featured as recommendations.

Raising the level of the report, to ensure that the text is appropriately policy-oriented and accessible, particular attention will be paid during the drafting process to the usefulness of the report. This will include an ongoing process of checking whether the material being developed meets the criteria of relevance and usefulness to the ITC management and stakeholders as well as country and international policymakers and practitioners. It will at the same time aim to remain comprehensible and interesting to a wider interested public.

## **DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF THE DRAFT EVALUATION REPORT**

Additional steps have been involved in the addition of a deeper Uruguay study and the delays have resulted from the extension of the survey response deadlines. Taking this into account, together with the volume and complexity of the materials that have just come together and will now have to be subjected to the rigorous processes set out in Section 5 above, the Team proposes to extend the date for submission of the draft report by up to two weeks if necessary, to 1 April, 2014.

## **STEPS AFTER DRAFT REPORT (AS SET OUT IN THE INCEPTION REPORT)**

Circulation for comments (April 1)<sup>11</sup>

Responses and necessary revisions (April 19)

Finalization (May 9)

Dissemination and communication (June)

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<sup>11</sup> Possible translation of draft report will be up to EMU

### C. Refining the Project Portfolio List

The full initial raw sample of “projects” from the project portal in the selected portfolio countries contained 81 projects/programs.

An important number of these 81 units referred to the development / implementation of the same global/regional project in different countries. The projects presenting these characteristics were thus clustered, on the basis that this would help draw out more comprehensive and comparable information on ITC activity.

Thus, in a first narrowing, the list of 81 was reduced to 66 projects, in other words 23 projects were absorbed into 8 large Global and Regional programmes. The incorporation can be illustrated as follows:

Access II – Ethiopia and Access II – Mali (from 81 to 80);

T4SD in Kenya, Bangladesh and Peru (from 80 to 78)

NTM in Malawi, Cote d’Ivoire, Cambodia, Egypt, Uruguay (from 78 to 74)

SCM in South Africa, Senegal, Jordan (from 74 to 72)

AAACP in Tanzania, Congo D.R., Fiji (from 72 to 70)

ITC Africa Network in Uganda and Benin (from 70 to 69)

PCTP in Uganda and Haiti (from 69 to 68)

PACT II in Kenya, Tanzania and Cape Verde (from 68 to 66).

In a second step, another 16 “projects” including different components or phases of the same project /program , were merged into 8, bringing the final project sample number to 58:

Ethiopia WTO Accession (from 66 to 65)

Kenya: Ethical Fashion and Pilot Centre Fashion Information (from 65 to 64)

Malawi SQAM (from 64 to 63)

Bangladesh Leather Export Centre I and II (from 63 to 62)

EnACT Egypt and Jordan (from 62 to 61)

Albania UN One : Development / Implementation (from 61 to 60)

Peru: Empowering WBES in Alpaca (from 60 to 59)

Uruguay: Trade Intelligence Ministry of Foreign Affairs (from 59 to 58).

The final list of 58 projects was the following:

1. ET - Fostering business support to the WTO accession process
2. ET - Ethiopian coffee quality project
3. KEN - NTF II Creating Sustainable Exporter Competitiveness in the Tree Fruit Sector
4. MLW - Technical Support for Improving the SQAM Infrastructure
5. SA - SADC Supply chain and logistics programme
6. TAN - Integrating Horticulture into Tourism Supply/Value chain (project dev.)
7. UG - NTF II Creating Sustainable Exporter Competitiveness in the Coffee Sector
8. UG - Project Development: Uganda Inclusive Tourism - Trade development for micro-enterprises in the value chain of tourism
9. BEN - Strengthening capacities of TSIs and enterprises for export development

10. CVI - Improving Cape Verde's productive capacities (One UN)
11. DRC - Access to finance for SMEs - Volet 2
12. DRC - Improvement in Business Environment - Amelioration de L'environnement des affaires en RDC- Volet 1
13. IVC - Ivory Coast - Institutional strengthening of economic policy and facilitation of regional and global integration
14. MLI - Expert meetings: Promotion and diversification of Malian Horticultural exports
15. MLI - Feasibility study on the creation of an Export Development Agency
16. MLI - Trade promotion and agricultural export markets diversification
17. SEN - IF Project for Community Tourism Development in Senegal
18. SEN - IF Project - Strengthening of IF National Focal Point for ASEPEX and TRTA
19. BGD - Leather service centre for export development (phase I was initiation and phase II was implementation)
20. BGD - NTF II Bangladesh
21. CMB - Cambodia - Partnership for gender equity (PGE)
22. CMB - Cambodia - Sector-wide silk project II
23. CMB - Cambodia - Support to the trade promotion department of the Ministry of Commerce (STPD)
24. CMB - Cambodia: Export diversification and expansion program (CEDEP) I: High value silk
25. FIJ - Improvement of key services to agriculture
26. FIJ - Project development: Fiji - supporting the horticultural sector
27. EGY - Egyptian Marketing Centre
28. EGY - HP-ITC Partnership for Micro Enterprise Acceleration
29. JOR - EnACT Jordan Enhancing Arab capacity for trade (EnACT)
30. TUN - Strengthening the Textile Value Chain approach in Tunisia (Inception Phase)
31. TUN - Strengthening the training department of Ecole Superieure de Commerce ESCT
32. TUN - Improving export capacities for Tunisian producers
33. ALB - One UN Coherence Fund
34. KYR - Enhancing the export competitiveness of the textile and clothing sector and improving the quality management infrastructure - Phase III
35. KYR - Needs assessment and programme development in the Kyrgyz Republic
36. KYR - Trade Promotion in Kyrgyzstan - Phase II
37. TAJ - Needs assessment and programme development in Tajikistan
38. TAJ - Implementation of WTO provisions and business awareness of WTO Accession (Component Two)

39. TAJ - WTO Negotiations of Accession - Policy Advice and Capacity Building (Component One)
40. HAI - Project development: Institutional strengthening of the Ministry of Trade and Industry in Haiti
41. HAI - Strengthening of national capacity for tropical fruit export / mango export-led poverty red initiative
42. PER - Empowering Peruvian Women Business Enterprises (WBES) in Alpaca to enter the US Market
43. PER - Peru - Programme development and support of the Peruvian national export plan
44. PER - Enabling TSIs in Peru's northern corridor to respond to the needs of exporters
45. URU - Programme development activities: National trade intelligence platform for Uruguay
46. URU - Trade Intelligence Programme for Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Uruguay
47. URU - Advisory to upgrade Ministry of Foreign Affairs' trade intelligence platform
48. R&G - ACP agricultural commodities
49. R&G - Cariforum creative industries
50. R&G - ITC Africa Network
51. R&G - NTM
52. R&G - PACT II
53. R&G - PACT II - Access II
54. R&G - PCTP Ethical fashion Haiti - Uganda
55. R&G - PCTP - Ethical Fashion Kenya
56. R&G - Supply Chain Management
57. R&G - T4SD (Peru + Kenya + Uganda)
58. R&G - Women and Coffee

**Table 1: Status of sample portfolio (March 5)**

Region	Country	Project ID	Project No	Title	Status
Africa ES	Uganda CK	IA26	INT/U1/65A	8. UG - Project Development: Uganda Inclusive Tourism - Trade development for micro-enterprises in the value chain of tourism	COMPLETED
Africa ES	Ethiopia TP	I998 / I942	INT/U1/20F ETH/58/08A	1. ET - Fostering business support to the WTO accession process	COMPLETED
Africa ES	Ethiopia TP	I248	ETH/61/86A	2. ET - Ethiopian coffee quality project	COMPLETED
Africa ES	Kenya TP	I929	KEN/47/111A	3. KEN - NTF II Creating Sustainable Exporter Competitiveness in the Tree Fruit Sector	COMPLETED
Africa ES	Malawi TP	I527	MLW/05/614A	4. MLW - Technical Support for Improving the SQAM Infrastructure	COMPLETED
Africa ES	South Africa CK	I938	SAF/17/05A	5. SA - SADC Supply chain and logistics programme	COMPLETED
Africa ES	Tanzania, CK	IA28	INT/U1/66A	6. TAN - Integrating Horticulture into Tourism Supply/Value chain (project dev.)	COMPLETED
Africa ES	Uganda CK	I928	UGA/47/110A	7. UG - NTF II Creating Sustainable Exporter Competitiveness in the Coffee Sector	COMPLETED
Africa WC	Benin BW	I750	BEN/07/140A	9. BEN - Strengthening capacities of TSIs and enterprises for export development	COMPLETED
Africa WC	Côte d'Ivoire BW	I956	IVC/75/25A	13. IVC - Ivory Coast - Institutional strengthening of economic policy and facilitation of regional and global integration	COMPLETED
AP	Bangladesh HB	I514	BGD/37/17A	19. BGD - Leather service centre for export development (phase I was initiation and phase II was implementation)	COMPLETED
AP	Bangladesh HB	I932	BGD/47/114A	20. BGD - NTF II Bangladesh	COMPLETED
AP	Cambodia HB	I858	CMB/09/795A	21. CMB - Cambodia - Partnership for gender equity (PGE)	COMPLETED
AP	Cambodia HB	I958	CMB/49/05A	22. CMB - Cambodia - Sector-wide silk project II	COMPLETED
AP	Fiji HB	IA76	FIJ/75/30A	25. FIJ - Improvement of key services to agriculture	COMPLETED
AP	Fiji HB	IA33	INT/U1/69A	26. FIJ - Project development: Fiji - supporting the horticultural sector	COMPLETED
AP	Cambodia HB	IA88	CMB/4B/02A	24. CMB - Cambodia: Export diversification and expansion program (CEDEP) I: High value silk	COMPLETED
Arab	Egypt MJC	I524	EGY/66/01A	27. EGY - Egyptian Marketing Centre	COMPLETED
Arab	Egypt MJC	I495	RAF/90/02A	28. EGY - HP-ITC Partnership for Micro Enterprise Acceleration	COMPLETED
Arab	Jordan MJC	I891	RAB/20/134A	29. JOR - EnACT Jordan Enhancing Arab capacity for trade (EnACT)	COMPLETED
Arab	Tunisia MJC	IA67	TUN/61/121A	30. TUN - Strengthening the Textile Value Chain approach in Tunisia (Inception Phase)	COMPLETED
Arab	Tunisia MJC	I854	TUN/36/05A	31. TUN - Strengthening the training department of Ecole Supérieure de Commerce ESCT	COMPLETED
EECA	Albania BW	IA80	ALB/1A/01A	33. ALB - One UN Coherence Fund	COMPLETED
Arab	Tunisia MJC	I777	TUN/61/120A	32. TUN - Improving export capacities for Tunisian producers	COMPLETED
LAC	Haiti JE	IA87	INT/U1/103A	40. HAI - Project development: Institutional strengthening of the Ministry of Trade and Industry in Haiti	COMPLETED
LAC	Haiti JE	I440	HAI/37/16A	41. HAI - Strengthening of national capacity for tropical fruit export / mango export-led poverty red initiative	COMPLETED
LAC	Peru JE	IA19 / IA18	INT/U1/61A and PER/71/10A	42. PER - Empowering Peruvian Women Business Enterprises (WBES) in Alpaca to enter the US Market	COMPLETED
LAC	Peru JE	I848	PER/61/122A	43. PER - Peru - Programme development and support of the Peruvian national export plan	COMPLETED
LAC	Peru JE	IA01	PER/61/129A	44. PER - Enabling TSIs in Peru's northern corridor to respond to the needs of exporters	COMPLETED

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LAC	Uruguay JE	I710	INT/W3/151A	45. URU - Programme development activities: National trade intelligence platform for Uruguay	COMPLETED
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## D. Criteria for Ratings

### Matrix 1: Organization and Management

Indicator	Rating scale					
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor	Can't say
Current fitness rating	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor	Can't say
Change assessed since 2006	Major positive	Some positive	Little or no change	Some regression	Major regression	Can't say
Strength of evidence/Confidence ranking scale	Very high {5}	High {4}	Medium {3}	Low {2}	Very Low {1}	-

#### Criteria:

#### *Current State of Fitness*

1. Meeting attributes in sub-questions/ issues
2. ITC or UN-defined objectives, where specified
3. Judgements expressed by informants
4. Results from JAG/CCITF Governance survey, WTO/UNCTAD meetings and relevant staff results
5. Evaluators' assessments vs. good practice (i.a., from 22 developing and 7 bilateral and multilateral donor systems in PDE, plus inside and external experience with dozens of individual countries and agencies)
6. Team's assessments vs. ITC's need's and means
7. Initial ratings
8. Cross-checking and validation among Team Members
9. Revision and finalization for draft report

#### *Change since 2006*

1. Examine reference baseline as far as possible (2006 Evaluation, other docs., informant views)
2. Progress against ITC or UN-defined objectives, where reported
3. Judgements expressed by informants
4. Results from JAG/CCITF Governance survey, WTO/UNCTAD meetings and relevant staff results
5. Team's assessments of reasonable progress vs. good practice (i.a., from 21 developing and 7 donor systems in PDE, plus inside and external experience with dozens of individual countries and agencies). All taking into account ITC's need's and means
6. Ratings offer wide range, including regression. The choice between "little or no change", "some positive" and "major positive" allows for clear Team dividing line, while inviting readers/users to refer to the evidence to know more, make their own assessments
7. Initial ratings
8. Cross-checking and validation among Team Members
9. Revision and finalization for draft report

#### *Strength of evidence/Confidence ranking*

1. Breadth/ comprehensiveness of coverage
2. Depth of coverage, sound information & logical analysis
3. Aggregate level of objectivity and disinterestedness among sources
4. Variety of sources/ perspectives for triangulation

5. Team's ability to link evidence to sub question/issue

## Matrix 2: Performance and Results

<b>Current fitness rating</b>	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor	Can't say
<b>Change assessed since 2006</b>	Major positive	Some positive	Little or no change	Some regression	Major regression	Can't say
<b>Strength of evidence/Confidence ranking scale</b>	Very high {5}	High {4}	Medium {3}	Low {2}	Very Low {1}	-

### *Current State of Fitness*

1. Attributes in sub-questions/ issues
2. ITC or UN-defined objectives, where specified
3. Results of existing programme and project evaluations
4. Judgements expressed by informants, built into our project reports and country mission reports
5. Team's assessments vs. good practice (i.e. from 21 developing country evaluations and 7 donor studies in PDE, plus inside and external experience with dozens of individual countries and agencies, and Team Leader's six years overview while heading the DAC Secretariat
6. Evaluators' assessments vs. ITC's need's and means
7. Initial ratings
8. Cross-checking and validation among Team Members
9. Revision and finalization for draft report

### *Change since 2006*

1. Examine reference baseline as far as possible (2006 Evaluation, other docs., informant views)
2. Progress against ITC or UN-defined objectives, where reported
3. Judgements expressed by informants
4. Results from JAG/CCITF Governance survey, WTO/UNCTAD meetings and relevant staff results
5. Team's assessments of reasonable progress vs. good practice (i.e., from xx developing and xx donor systems in PDE, plus inside and external experience with dozens of individual countries and agencies. All taking into account ITC's need's and means
6. Ratings offer wide range, including regression. The choice between "little or no change", "some positive" and "major positive" allows for clear dividing line by Team, while inviting readers/users to refer to the evidence to know more in detail, make their own assessments
7. Initial ratings
8. Cross-checking and validation among Team Members
9. Revision and finalization for draft report

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### ***Strength of Evidence***

1. Across-the-board limitations:
  - a. Overall size of active sample (portfolio sample and country missions) relative to total.
  - b. Overall weakness and inconsistency of comparable benchmark documents, numbers, performance information.
2. On individual Matrix 2 indicators/issues
  - a. Breadth/ comprehensiveness of coverage within the sample on this issue (e.g response rates, documentation)
  - b. Depth of coverage, sound information & logical analysis, incl. evaluative materials, logframe monitoring
  - c. Aggregate level of objectivity and disinterestedness among sources
  - d. Variety of sources/ perspectives for triangulation
  - e. Team's ability to link evidence to sub question/issue