

**NOTE ON  
THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN  
INTERNAL EVALUATION SYSTEM  
IN THE INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION**

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Table of Contents

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
I. ORIGINS OF THE STUDY	1 - 11	1
II. PROPOSALS FOR AN INTERNAL EVALUATION SYSTEM	12 - 67	3
A. Terminology	12 - 13	3
B. Purposes and interrelation of design and evaluation	14 - 16	4
C. Evaluation: An analytical process	17 - 22	4
1. The focus of evaluation	17	4
2. The evaluation process	18	5
3. Types of evaluation	19 - 21	5
4. Monitoring versus evaluation	22	6
D. Prerequisite to evaluation: the design document	23 - 30	7
1. The information required	23 - 24	7
2. The design hierarchy	25 - 28	7
3. Indicators	29	9
4. Advantages of good design documentation	30	9
E. Internal (self-) evaluation and the work of IMO	31 - 47	9
1. The pros and cons of systematic internal (self-) evaluation	33 - 40	10
2. The applicability of the proposed system to IMO's six Divisions	41 - 47	12
F. Introducing the system into IMO	48 - 56	13
1. Forms and guidelines	51 - 53	14
2. Training personnel	54 - 55	14
3. Outside expertise for the start-up phase	56	15
G. Institutionalizing the system	57 - 60	15
1. The role of the evaluation unit	57 - 59	15
2. Responsibilities	60	16
H. Implications of institutionalization	61 - 67	16

## I. ORIGINS OF THE STUDY

1. During the past decade the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) has issued a series of reports on evaluation. Reports in 1977, 1981, and 1985 reviewed the status of internal evaluation system development in individual organizations as well as patterns of evaluation activity in the United Nations system as a whole. A glossary of evaluation terms was issued in 1978 and a set of initial guidelines for internal evaluation systems in 1979. Other reports have dealt with particular units, organizations and areas of activity, and with special topics such as United Nations system co-operation in developing evaluation by governments.

2. The Secretary-General of IMO, in his comments on the first JIU evaluation report in late 1977, stated that because of its small size IMO did not appear to need an elaborate evaluation system (other than the evaluation procedures required of it as an executing agency for technical co-operation projects funded by the UNDP). He observed that IMO and other small organizations could undoubtedly refine their techniques based on experience elsewhere in the system, and that IMO would seek, where appropriate, JIU advice on the establishment of a simple, effective and economical evaluation system.

3. In 1984 JIU issued a report on IMO (JIU/REP/84/4). This report observed inter alia that IMO had devoted increasing attention to technical co-operation activities, and that its technical co-operation programme had grown threefold in the past decade without any corresponding increase in programme support staff. Since IMO had no systematic process for the evaluation of projects or of the technical co-operation programme as a whole, the Inspectors noted that evaluation might be expanded in any strengthening of technical co-operation functions.

4. The Secretary-General proposed to the IMO Council in June 1984 that evaluation be introduced as part of an initiative to strengthen technical co-operation support. Initially, he suggested that evaluation be carried out as part of the responsibilities of the Director of his Office, with assistance from a full-time principal administrative assistant and other staff as needed. The Council approved these proposals and a series of initial evaluation studies.

5. The third JIU status report on evaluation, in 1985, found that evaluation was being used more widely than ever before in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/85/11). Whereas in 1977 only two of the 13 organizations which the JIU surveyed had established some type of evaluation system, by 1985 21 out of 24 organizations covered had done so. Moreover, this growing evaluation experience provided many patterns of substantive use of evaluation to improve both field and headquarters activities, along with steadily growing demand for evaluation from secretariat and governing body users.

6. The JIU report concluded that evaluation was demonstrating its value in improving organizational operations to best meet Member State needs, at a time when the organizations' tasks were more challenging than ever before. It recommended that each organization work steadily to improve evaluation coverage and quality, and to strengthen related design, monitoring, and training efforts.
7. The accompanying JIU report on evaluation in individual organizations (JIU/REP/85/10) concluded that the actions taken by the Secretary-General to establish the IMO Evaluation Unit and launch the first evaluation studies, together with the support expressed in the Council, were very positive initiatives to help ensure the effectiveness and quality of IMO technical co-operation activities. The JIU encouraged IMO to continue to consider evaluation ideas, approaches and techniques in use in other United Nations system organizations, in order to find and adapt those which it could simply and effectively apply.
8. In April 1986 the IMO Secretariat issued the first two desk evaluations, on the IMO fellowship programme and on technical advisory services, for consideration and comment by the Technical Co-operation Committee. In addition, in September 1986, the Secretary-General responded to the request of the Council that he submit proposals for widening the scope of evaluation activities to include all aspects of IMO work.
9. The Secretary-General's presentation (document C 57/12(b) of 29 September 1986) observed that although the Secretariat was functioning satisfactorily, there must always be a continuing search for enhanced efficiency. He therefore proposed the introduction of built-in self-evaluation in each division, including clearly-defined divisional objectives, and criteria and methodology to ensure requisite objectivity.
10. The Secretary-General also stated that each new IMO technical co-operation project (and on-going projects where possible) would provide for regular monitoring and periodic evaluation, under the responsibility of the Director of the Technical Co-operation Division but with a role as well for the Evaluation Unit. Furthermore, he stated that he would seek to increase the modest staffing of the Evaluation Unit by adding a full-time professional officer (preferably from existing Secretariat staff resources) to the G.8 Principal Administrative Assistant already working full-time under the Director in the Office of the Secretary-General. (This professional staff member joined the Evaluation Unit in February 1987).
11. In December 1986 the Secretary-General requested JIU's advice and guidance on the methodology for setting up systematic self-evaluation in IMO. In this note the Inspectors submit to the Secretary-General their proposals for a pragmatic approach to such a system, taking into account IMO's size, needs, capabilities, and his request. They wish to thank the Secretary-General and his staff for the frank discussions, positive ideas, and documentation which they provided during the course of this study.

## II. PROPOSALS FOR AN INTERNAL EVALUATION SYSTEM

### A. Terminology

12. Monitoring and evaluation have been practiced in the United Nations system, in one way or another, for many years. During this time there have existed a wide variety of definitions of these and related terms, occasionally reflecting differing perceptions and approaches. However, publication of the JIU's "Glossary of Evaluation Terms" (JIU/REP/78/5) in 1978 established common definitions and thereby facilitated the development of common methodologies and the exchange of evaluation information throughout the system.

13. The following are a few of the key terms which have a bearing on this report. Some of the definitions have been modified slightly from those in the JIU Glossary, but in all instances the original definitions are still equally applicable.

- Project - An undertaking which is designed to achieve certain specific objectives within a given budget and within a specified period of time. Thus, the term "project" could refer to a technical co-operation activity, a research activity, specific administrative functions, or the tasks of secretariat staff in support of an inter-governmental body.
- Objective - What the project or undertaking will be expected to achieve if completed successfully and on time (as opposed to activities and outputs, which pertain to what the project staff does and what it produces).

- Evaluation - An analytical process which attempts to determine as systematically and objectively as possible the effectiveness, efficiency and relevance of projects in light of their objectives.
- Monitoring - The continuous oversight of the implementation of a project, which seeks to ensure that the necessary implementation activities (input deliveries, work plan, production of outputs, etc.) are adhered to according to plan.

#### B. Purposes and inter-relation of design and evaluation

14. As indicated above, evaluation is the process of discovering how successful the project is in achieving its objectives - and for what reasons. It is an analytical process which compares project plans with accomplishments and seeks to explain significant differences. Evaluation can help to:

- improve the management of current projects;
- improve planning of future projects;
- provide information for use in broader evaluations, such as those of programmes (which usually consist of a collection of individual projects).

15. The project design, often in a formal project document, establishes in advance the objectives, the work plan, the means of ascertaining progress and the underlying assumptions on which the project is based. A good design document is a prerequisite not only for evaluation but also for sound management, and critically affects the project's implementation.

16. It follows that design and evaluation are inter-related. A meaningful evaluation is usually feasible only if the design clearly conveys the desired objectives and the conditions which constitute "success". It is for this reason that both project design and evaluation are addressed in some detail in this document.

#### C. Evaluation: An analytical process

##### 1. The focus of evaluation

17. Evaluation examines whether:

- the project has achieved, or is likely to achieve, its objectives (effectiveness);

- the objectives are being achieved at the anticipated cost, and if the expected benefits continue to justify the cost (efficiency);
- the situation/problem which made it desirable to undertake the project in the first place continues to exist or whether it has in the meantime changed so as to make the project less relevant (relevance/significance);
- the project benefits are reaching, or are likely to reach, the intended beneficiaries (usually applicable only to technical co-operation projects); and
- the project is having any important - positive or negative - effects which were not foreseen when the project was initially proposed.

Finally, the evaluation is expected to shed some light on what specific factors contributed to the success - or failure - of the project.

## 2. The evaluation process

18. Regardless of the specific methodology employed, the evaluation process normally consists of the following four basic steps:

- review the project design and compare the actual inputs, activities, and outputs (as collected through project monitoring) with plans;
- analyze the information collected and information pertinent to effectiveness (such as on indicators) to determine effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, etc;
- decide whether, on the basis of the first and second steps there are actions to be taken or proposed, and prepare a summary report; and
- disseminate the evaluation results, as appropriate.

## 3. Types of evaluation

19. In terms of timing, there are three categories of evaluation:

- On-going evaluation, carried out while the project is in progress, provides management and decision makers with the data necessary to assess, and if necessary adjust, implementation procedures and strategies, institutional arrangements and, in exceptional circumstances, objectives.

- Terminal evaluation, at the end of the project (or of a distinct phase), provides decision makers and planners with lessons learned and information needed for the formulation of policies, planning of new projects and future programme evaluations.
- Ex-post evaluation, the retrospective examination of a project some time after its completion, can provide more definite information on project effectiveness, lessons to be taken into consideration in planning and the impact of policies.

20. In terms of participants in the evaluation process, at least four distinct groups can be identified:

- project staff (conducting internal self-evaluations);
- central evaluation unit staff;
- officials from within the same organization, who are neither members of the central evaluation unit nor involved in the planning or implementation of the project being evaluated; and
- external consultants.

In actual fact, with the exception of those carried out by the project staff, evaluations often are conducted by teams consisting of two or more persons chosen from the above groups.

21. There are, in addition, significant differences among evaluations due to such factors as the sophistication and extent of data-gathering and analytic techniques, field visits, or the examination of related projects. The scope and intensity of an evaluation normally is not determined primarily by who does the evaluation but rather by the terms of reference established.

#### 4. Monitoring versus evaluation

22. Monitoring and evaluation are different, though complementary. Monitoring oversees the physical implementation to verify that inputs are made available on time and properly utilized, activities are undertaken, and outputs are produced as planned. Evaluation, on the other hand, looks at objective achievement in order to maximize the impact of projects and to provide guidance for the planning of new ones.



D. Prerequisite to evaluation: The design document

1. The information required

23. The design serves several distinct purposes. It is a planning document which establishes in advance what is to be accomplished and how. It is usually a form of contract, spelling out the obligations and responsibilities of each of the parties involved (such as the funding, executing and recipient organizations in the case of technical co-operation projects). It is also a tool for managing the project. Finally, it establishes the criteria on the basis of which the project performance can be monitored and the achievement of the objectives can be evaluated.

24. In order to play its proper role, the project design document will need to contain the following information:

- Why is the project being undertaken? What is the project's underlying rationale?
- What is the project expected to accomplish, if completed successfully and on time?
- Who are the intended beneficiaries of the project? (This is usually required only for technical co-operation and research projects).
- How is the project to be implemented? What needs to be done in order to achieve the objective(s)?
- Who is primarily responsible for project implementation?
- Within what period of time is the project to be carried out and the objective(s) to be achieved?
- What resources are necessary to achieve the objective(s)?
- What external factors are necessary for project success (but over which project management has little or no control)?

2. The design hierarchy

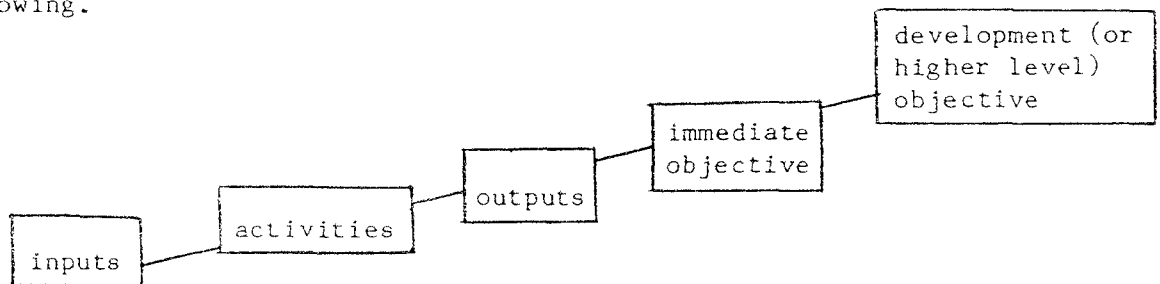
25. To establish a framework for the above information, many organizations within the United Nations system (including UNDP, UNEP, ILO, UNIDO ) have adopted or are in the process of adopting a design methodology which requires the identification of the following:

- Development (or higher level) objective - the reason for the project, the impact towards which the project efforts are directed and for whose benefit. Normally, progress

towards the development or higher level objective will depend on a number of different projects, each with its own immediate objective.

- Immediate objective - the effect which the project itself is expected to achieve, if completed successfully and on time.
- Outputs - the products that can reasonably be expected from good management of the inputs and activities.
- Activities - the actions necessary to change inputs into outputs. This category should, for example, answer the question "what will the staff actually be expected to do?"
- Inputs - the resources, goods or services to be provided for the project.

26. The result is a "logical hierarchy" of "means-ends" or "cause and effect" connecting the various levels, each level being necessary for advancement to the one following.



27. There is an additional factor which needs to be taken into consideration in the preparation of a project design.

- External factors - conditions which are necessary for the successful implementation of a project and the achievement of the project objectives, but which are largely or completely beyond the control of project management.

28. Individually, each step of the hierarchy (inputs, activities, outputs, etc.) is necessary for progress to the next level. However, only with the addition of the external factors are the necessary and sufficient conditions for progress identified. It helps to clearly spell out these external factors in advance, e.g. at a time when the project design can still be modified. Listing them in explicit and operational terms helps establish the practical limits of managerial responsibility by separating manageable elements from factors over which management has little or no control.

### 3. Indicators

29. To bring about the degree of specificity necessary for evaluation, organizations of the United Nations system are increasingly turning to the use of indicators (also called "success criteria"). With this approach, the objective is broken down into smaller, measurable components. For example, a project designed to "improve" the performance of a certain unit needs to describe specifically which aspects are to be improved, by how much, and how one will be able to ascertain that the desired change has indeed taken place. UNDP's "short" project document format is an example of such an approach which can, however, be readily adapted to other than technical co-operation projects.

### 4. Advantages of good design documentation

30. As noted previously, a good design document greatly facilitates implementation and evaluation. But beyond that, detailed and well-defined objectives make it possible to use the design itself as the standard against which evaluation takes place rather than having the evaluators establish their own, perhaps more ambitious, interpretations of the objectives as the basis for deciding on the success or failure of the project.

### E. Internal (self-) evaluation and the work of IMO

31. IMO has in the past undertaken, and is continuing to undertake, certain desk evaluation activities covering selected areas. These studies, however, can cover only a small part of IMO's many varied activities, which include standard-setting, negotiation, expert meetings, technical assistance and administration and common services. The Secretary-General's decision to introduce systematic internal (self-) evaluation, particularly given the diversity of IMO activities and its relatively limited size and resources, provides an opportunity to make good design and evaluation findings integral components of IMO's management and decision-making processes.

32. Internal (self-) evaluation, as the concept has developed in recent years, involves the collection and analysis of monitoring (implementation) data and of impact and effectiveness measures (indicators), followed by comparison of results with the plans contained in the project document. Then a report outlines the findings and identifies actions taken or being requested on the basis of this analytic process. The scope and intensity of evaluations made by people who are not project staff members normally are determined by the terms of reference prepared for their evaluation studies. The scope and intensity of internal (self-) evaluations, however, are determined by a detailed standard evaluation form which leads the respondent through the entire procedure.

1. The pros and cons of systematic internal (self-) evaluation

33. Occasional studies have proved to be largely unsatisfactory as the sole evaluation approach in United Nations system agencies. Since evaluation resources are almost always very limited, ad hoc evaluations must usually concentrate on broad programmes, but then encounter difficulties because of the absence of information on specific projects within these programmes. Furthermore, occasional evaluations often focus on projects which are in trouble (and thus have in effect already been "evaluated" and found wanting). Either of these approaches is unlikely to help identify project problems before they become obvious - one of the distinct advantages of systematic evaluation. In addition, they foster the feeling that evaluation is basically a control or inspection function rather than a normal management tool.

34. The idea that the project staff can or should be asked to evaluate their own projects is a relatively recent one. No argument is made here that evaluations by project staff are preferable to in-depth evaluations conducted by qualified and disinterested outsiders. But in the absence of such evaluations, systematic evaluations by project staff are much to be preferred to no evaluation at all. In recognition of the high cost of in-depth evaluations, UNDP requires that they normally be conducted only for projects with budgets in excess of \$US 1 million and then only once during the life of the project. In order to cover smaller projects and carry out regular evaluations at shorter intervals, UNDP and most organizations of the United Nations system have introduced internal (self-) evaluation systems.

35. Even though they are relatively inexpensive, the design and evaluation procedures proposed here do have a cost. It is therefore necessary to keep in mind the balance between the costs involved and the benefits likely to be attained. Organizations need to identify criteria (minimum size of budget, likelihood that the type of project will be done again, experimental nature of the project, etc.) which will signal the need to apply the more formal design and evaluation requirements.

36. Several factors speak for internal (self-) evaluations:

Coverage

- The low cost allows many more projects to be evaluated systematically than would otherwise be the case.

Direct  
feedback

- The information gathered during the evaluation goes directly to the individual(s) who can utilize the findings.

Ready

acceptability - Findings by the project staff in the course of the evaluation are much more acceptable than those of outsiders, whose findings are often dismissed with arguments that they do not really understand the problems of the project or the context in which it operates.

37. There is, of course, also the question of objectivity. The inference often made is that project staff cannot always be counted on to provide a true picture of the project's performance. However, the experience of a number of United Nations system and national development organizations has revealed a surprising degree of frankness and candour on the part of the project staff. They are often anxious to call the attention of top management and other parties to the problems they have encountered.

38. Furthermore, the existence of a required evaluation form, addressing the key aspects of the project from implementation to measures of actual or potential achievement of the objectives, goes a long way toward systematically eliciting answers to the most important questions. (A recent survey by one agency has shown that because of the detailed questionnaire, evaluations by project staff are more likely to address the most important questions than reports prepared by outside evaluation teams.)

39. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, doubts about the ability of project staff to evaluate objectively their own projects are usually based on the existence of very imprecise objectives which can be interpreted in any manner desired. However, when project objectives and measures of their success are clearly spelled out, project management has much less subjective leeway in assessing progress and results. If one then adds the fact that the evaluation reports are reviewed by various internal review mechanisms (and by formal Tripartite Reviews in the case of UNDP-funded technical co-operation projects), the problem of objectivity becomes much less of an issue.

40. When contemplating the introduction of systematic internal evaluation, it must be kept in mind that this approach does have certain short-comings as it pertains to the work of IMO. Thus, to take one example, the evaluation of individual training activities/fellowships is difficult and expensive under normal circumstances and may prove to be virtually impossible using the self-evaluation approach. Evaluation of training which is part of a series of project activities is feasible within the context of the overall project, as is the evaluation of training for a group of persons from the same organization or unit (by ascertaining changes in the performance of the organization or unit). Some low-cost

techniques are available to measure the potential and actual effectiveness of training (such as before/after questionnaires, or assessing whether the fellow's level of management responsibilities would enable him/her to introduce new approaches or policies) but are only of limited value. In this connection, IMO may wish to consider other techniques, such as the utilization of some of its regional advisers and consultants to gather data on the experience of its fellows in the course of visits on other official business.

## 2. The applicability of the proposed system to IMO's six Divisions

41. All of IMO's Divisions will need to be involved in self-evaluation, because all of them have activities in at least one and often two of the three broad categories into which IMO's work can be divided. First, the general methodology outlined above is most readily applicable to IMO's technical co-operation projects and technical assistance activities (symposia, workshops, and other methods for "non-project" technical information interchange among IMO Member States). Not only the Technical Co-operation Division, but also the Maritime Safety, Marine Environment, and Legal Affairs and External Relations divisions have this type of activities.

42. Procedures and formats have been developed and tested by other United Nations system organizations which lend themselves to adaptation to IMO's requirements in this area. IMO will of course be obliged to apply the new UNDP internal (self-) evaluation concepts to its UNDP-funded projects. The Secretary-General has already decided, however, that monitoring and evaluation procedures will be established for all new technical co-operation projects (UNDP and other) and for ongoing projects where possible. Coverage of technical co-operation projects in the self-evaluation system will therefore be quite systematic and will extend beyond the Technical Co-operation Division per se. The application of the proposed evaluation techniques to technical co-operation activities is also likely to bring the most immediate benefits in terms of improvements in project implementation.

43. Second, the application of self-evaluation procedures to IMO administrative and common service functions would be useful, although the experiences of other organizations in this area are less extensive. Basically, it will be necessary for the Administrative, Conference, and Legal Affairs and External Relations divisions first to identify specific priority functions or problems (such as the recruitment of interpreters and other temporary staff, the distribution of reports to Member States, particular aspects of office systems modernization, indexing of the IMO Conventions, etc), and then to design them as "projects" (see paragraph 13) with specific objectives to be achieved within a given period of time and with a specified commitment of resources, against which performance can subsequently be measured.

44. Third, the work and servicing of intergovernmental bodies is a final major area where IMO Divisions (Maritime Safety, Marine Environment, Legal Affairs and External Relations, Technical Co-operation, Conference) might consider applying the proposed evaluation procedures. However, the nature of this work suggests that the proposed evaluation approach may have only limited applicability. The work of the intergovernmental bodies can itself be viewed from three distinct vantage points. One can look at the performance of individual committees or sub-committees on the basis of the objectives which they set for themselves,

comparing aims and accomplishments. One can also attempt to evaluate the performance of the relevant Divisions in carrying out the decisions of the committees or sub-committees. Finally, there is the more limited objective of evaluating the performance of the Secretariat Divisions in preparing for the committee meetings, including advance planning, physical arrangements, reports to be presented, etc.

45. The initial possibility, evaluating the performance of the committees or sub-committees on the basis of the objectives they have set for themselves, would in effect mean the evaluation of these official bodies on the part of the Secretariat. As such, it presumably would not be appropriate.

46. Evaluating the Secretariat on the basis of its ability to carry out the decisions of the committees also poses some difficulties. On the positive side, such an approach would shed considerable light on the effectiveness and efficiency of the Divisions of the Secretariat and would, over time, provide considerable information regarding the effect of the committees. On the negative side, such an approach is clearly dependent on the assumption that the requests made for IMO Secretariat actions by the committees (a) fully take into account the resources available to the Divisions, and (b) are sufficiently specific to permit subsequent measurement. A further, though lesser, problem posed by this approach is that unless the requests normally carry a target date by which they are to be completed, the evaluations may be delayed indefinitely, or in any event for an unreasonable period of time.

47. In view of these considerations, evaluating the performance of the Secretariat in carrying out the decisions of committees and sub-committees does not appear to be practical. This means that only the evaluation of the performance of the Secretariat in preparing for committee and sub-committee meetings will be feasible at this time.

#### F. Introducing the system into IMO

48. Because IMO resources are already tightly stretched, the introduction of the self-evaluation system - for other than technical co-operation projects - will have to be gradual. Instead of trying to establish objectives, indicators and careful design criteria for all its activities at once, each Division should begin by selecting several key administrative and common service, technical assistance, or meetings servicing functions to be included under the self-evaluation process. The Division heads, who are the most expert and knowledgeable about the priority concerns, resource availabilities, urgent needs, and stresses within their programmes, are in the best position to identify these areas and determine the objectives to be attained and the indicators and strategies to be used.

49. Through these initial self-evaluation "projects", each Division can learn to successfully apply the self-evaluation methodology and gradually expand it to other areas of its activity, in accordance with the idea that evaluation should be a tool to encourage more efficient management rather than hinder it by imposing excessive new workload burdens. The evaluation procedures for these priority projects should be as clear and simple as possible, and not overly ambitious in either scope or methodology. They should be consonant with the basic idea of self-evaluation as a questioning frame of mind and a learning approach to steadily improve IMO operations.

50. At the outset, a clear distinction must be made between the operation of the proposed system and the process of its introduction. While the operation of the proposed system is low-cost, thanks to the self-evaluation feature, and will require no or only limited additional staff resources, the process of introducing the system will necessitate substantial and time-consuming personnel inputs. In addition, unless there is someone on the staff with appropriate experience, the start-up phase is likely to require the engagement of experienced outside assistance.

#### 1. Forms and guidelines

51. Establishing the system will require preparing and introducing new forms and suitable guidelines for design and evaluation. While it would be inappropriate (and in the long run counter-productive) indiscriminately to utilize materials developed for use elsewhere without taking cognizance of IMO's special needs and requirements, it should be possible to adapt most of those materials from elsewhere in the United Nations system.

52. Specifically, it will be necessary to:

- prepare (adapt) design, monitoring and evaluation forms for all types of projects, regardless of the source of funding;
- prepare (adapt) guidelines for staff, consultants, and others, fully explaining design, monitoring and evaluation procedures as they pertain to the work of IMO;
- prepare measures/checklists for the review of design and evaluation documents.

53. The preparation of suitable internal guidelines tailored to the specific needs of IMO will be especially important and will substantially facilitate the introductory process and the subsequent operation of the system. IMO may also wish to begin at an early stage to identify suitable technical and administrative indicators for use in IMO project documents.

#### 2. Training personnel

54. Introducing the system requires substantially more than preparing or adapting forms and guidelines. Staff need to become fully acquainted with the procedures and their practical application through hands-on training. More importantly, most of the technical staff who will be expected to apply the guidelines and prepare the forms, and most of the managers who will be expected to use the results, will need to reorient their conceptual approach to projects.

55. It has been the experience of other United Nations system organizations that at least three days of training are required to teach the correct application of the design format and evaluation procedures. More time will be required for those who will be expected to operate the system by training newcomers, briefing consultants, assisting staff in the preparation of project designs, providing guidance in the evaluation process, exercising quality control over evaluative reports (and perhaps designs) and other system support functions.



### 3. Outside expertise for the start-up phase

56. IMO would be well advised to obtain outside expertise for the introductory phase, including the development of an internal work programme which will in time lead to the complete institutionalization of the evaluation process and the all-important use of evaluation results. However, the purpose of the outside assistance should be to introduce a system which can then be operated by the IMO staff without further external help.

### G. Institutionalizing the system

#### 1. The role of the evaluation unit

57. In order to institutionalize the evaluation system within IMO, it will be necessary to establish the capability to (a) manage and support the systematic internal (self-) evaluation of technical co-operation projects and selected other functions; (b) conduct, manage or support ad hoc in-depth evaluations which may be decided on internally, required, or carried out by donors; and (c) collect, analyze and disseminate evaluation data and reports produced within IMO or obtained elsewhere.

58. JIU's third report on evaluation in the United Nations system of 1985 stated that the primary activities of established central evaluation units - after completion of the initial system design and testing - consisted of the following tasks in descending order of average staff time required:

- actual conduct of evaluations;
- further system development;
- oversight of evaluation system functioning;
- external reporting to governing bodies;
- internal reporting;
- project and programme design;
- informal counselling and advice;
- staff training;
- briefing and debriefing;
- liaison with other organizations.

59. While not every evaluation unit necessarily carries out each and every activity, there are certain activities - subsumed under the above list - which appear desirable in the case of IMO. They include:

- assisting Divisions in the identification of indicators;
- counselling informally on the correct preparation of project designs;
- reviewing evaluation reports and, as appropriate, commenting on the quality of reporting (but not on technical aspects) as a means of exercising quality control;
- initiating the process of collecting, storing, and disseminating evaluation data, including data available from other (national and international) sources.

Without attention to this set of ongoing activities, evaluation is unlikely to live up to its potential in the long run.

## 2. Responsibilities

60. Overall authority for managing and directing monitoring and evaluation activities in IMO rests of course with the Secretary-General, acting in most cases through the Evaluation Unit located in his Office. (The role of the evaluation Unit is spelled out in the three preceding paragraphs.) However, IMO's Division heads should have the direct responsibility for preparing project designs, identifying indicators and operating the process of self-evaluation generally, subject to the co-ordinating and standardizing role of the Evaluation Unit.

### H. Implications of institutionalization

61. If the experience of other organizations of the United Nations system is an indication, the introduction and institutionalization of systematic internal (self-) evaluation and the concurrent strengthening of design and evaluation awareness and capabilities is likely to have a number of beneficial effects on the operation of the organization. However, the process may also generate certain complexities and by-products which should be noted.

62. The methodology proposed, and especially the design methodology, is easier to describe than to implement. It is not enough to provide someone with a set of instructions and expect them to be followed correctly. Therefore, a formal training programme is necessary when the system is introduced.

63. Programme objectives are likely to be scaled down substantially when it is necessary to identify in some detail - through the use of indicators or success criteria - the specific changes which are to be brought about in order to demonstrate achievement of the objectives of the project. Although this is seen by some as an undesirable by-product of the proposed methodology, there is no evidence whatsoever that it has had a negative effect on the generation of outside resources.

64. The proposed design, monitoring and evaluation formats are interdependent, one providing the basis for the next. However, in the early stages it will be necessary to apply the new monitoring and evaluation procedures to old project designs, which is likely to create some temporary difficulties.

65. The introduction of a systematic approach to evaluation will almost certainly lead to the identification of less than successful projects, which otherwise might have been considered to be successful.

66. The organization must inevitably consider to whom the evaluation results are to be addressed, i.e., the unit concerned, the organization as a whole, top management, the relevant Committee, the Council and/or the Assembly. There are arguments in favour of any of the above or a combination. However, experience has shown that a relatively broad dissemination of findings, including negative ones, does not have unfavourable effects. One approach which has worked elsewhere is the preparation of short 1-2 page summary reports on a number of representative projects, which are then submitted to the governing body.

67. Above all, it is important to remember that proper design, monitoring and evaluation are not a panacea. They are only management tools. If applied correctly, however, they can contribute to successful projects and enhance the reputation of the organization as an active, problem-solving body concerned with steadily and systematically improving the quality of its work.