



IAG Report 1/2021e

Evaluation of the ISSA Academy – using logic models

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Summary

The International Social Security Association (ISSA) is a global association of social security organizations. One of their offers is the ISSA Academy, which is part of the ISSA's Centre for Excellence. The ISSA offers it's approximately 322 members in 156 countries access to problem solving, learning and exchange platforms as well as the opportunity to acquire knowledge and develop personnel. The ISSA Academy also collaborates with internationally recognized training centres all over the world, which offer diploma training courses on the ISSA Guidelines. An evaluation, based on a logic model was carried out to determine the performance of the Academy and to identify possible optimization options. A mix of quantitative and qualitative methods was used to assess these aspects: document analysis, telephone interviews and a moderated workshop.

The results show that the concept of the Centre for Excellence with its four parts is functional. There are no competitors on the market when it comes to the ISSA Guidelines, the network, the experience and the member database. In addition, the separation between the workshops and the diploma training courses is a practical solution. Because of the personal contact, the Academy offers the possibility to engage members and to find out about their needs. Furthermore, the Academy provides tangible value to the members and practical support. Although the results of the evaluation are quite positive, there is room for improvement.

Résumé

L'Association internationale de la sécurité sociale (AISS) est la principale organisation de sécurité sociale mondiale. L'un des services qu'elle propose est l'Académie de l'AISS, qui est l'un des volets de son Centre pour l'Excellence. L'AISS propose ainsi à ses quelque 322 membres de 156 pays un accès à des plateformes d'échange, d'apprentissage et de résolution de problèmes, ainsi que la possibilité d'acquérir des connaissances et de progresser personnellement. Les cours de l'Académie de l'AISS sont également proposés en collaboration avec des instituts de formation reconnus au niveau international et répartis partout dans le monde, qui proposent des cours de formation diplômante sur les Lignes directrices de l'AISS. Une évaluation, basée sur un modèle logique, a été effectuée pour déterminer les performances de l'Académie, et pour identifier des options d'optimisation

possibles. Pour évaluer ces aspects, on a eu recours à un mélange de méthodes quantitatives et qualitatives : analyse de documents, entretiens téléphoniques et un atelier modéré. Il ressort des résultats que le concept du Centre pour l'Excellence, avec les quatre volets qui le composent, est fonctionnel. Il n'existe aucun concurrent sur le marché quand il s'agit des Lignes directrices de l'AISS, de son réseau, de son expérience et de la base de données de ses membres. De plus, la séparation entre les ateliers et les cours de formation diplômante est une solution pratique. Grâce au contact personnel, l'Académie offre la possibilité de mobiliser les membres et de connaître leurs besoins. L'Académie apporte en outre aux membres une valeur tangible et un soutien pratique. Bien que les résultats de l'évaluation soient tout à fait positifs, des améliorations sont encore possibles.

Resumen

La Asociación Internacional de la Seguridad Social (AISS) es una asociación mundial de organizaciones de seguridad social. Entre sus prestaciones se cuenta la Academia de la AISS, que forma parte del Centro para la Excelencia de la AISS. La AISS ofrece a sus aproximadamente 322 instituciones miembros de 156 países acceso a plataformas de resolución de problemas, aprendizaje e intercambio, así como la posibilidad de adquirir conocimientos y desarrollar las capacidades de los profesionales de la seguridad social. La Academia de la AISS también colabora con instituciones de formación de prestigio internacional repartidas por todo el mundo, que ofrecen cursos de formación de diploma acerca de las Directrices de la AISS. Se llevó a cabo una evaluación sobre la base de un modelo lógico para determinar el rendimiento de la Academia e

identificar posibles opciones de optimización. Para esta evaluación se recurrió a una mezcla de métodos cuantitativos y cualitativos: análisis de documentos, entrevistas telefónicas y un taller con moderador. Los resultados demuestran que el concepto del Centro para la Excelencia, con sus cuatro partes, es funcional. No hay competencia en el mercado cuando se trata de las Directrices de la AISS, la red, la experiencia y la base de datos de miembros. Además, la separación entre los talleres y los cursos de formación de diploma es una solución práctica. Gracias al contacto personal, la Academia ofrece la posibilidad de conectar con los miembros y descubrir sus necesidades. Es más: la Academia les proporciona un valor tangible y asistencia práctica. Aunque los resultados de la evaluación son sin lugar a dudas positivos, aún se puede mejorar.

Zusammenfassung

Die IVSS ist eine global agierende Vereinigung von Organisationen der sozialen Sicherheit. Eines ihrer Angebote ist die IVSS-Akademie, die Teil des IVSS Exzellenzzentrums ist. Die IVSS-Akademie hat zum Ziel, die Leistungsfähigkeit der rund 322 Mitgliedsinstitutionen in 156 Ländern zu verbessern und auszubauen und bietet ihnen Zugang zu Lösungen für ihre Fragestellungen, Lernmöglichkeiten und Austauschplattformen auf der Grundlage der Leitlinien der IVSS. Die IVSS-Akademie arbeitet mit international anerkannten Ausbildungszentren auf der ganzen Welt zusammen, die Diplomausbildungskurse zu den IVSS Richtlinien anbieten. Ziel der vorliegenden Untersuchung war es, die IVSS-Akademie zu evaluieren und potentielle Optimierungsmöglichkeiten zu identifizieren. Für die Evaluation wurde ein Mix aus quantitativen und qualitativen Metho-

den angewandt, so fanden Dokumentenanalysen, Telefoninterviews und ein moderierter Workshop statt. Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass das Konzept des Exzellenzzentrums funktional ist. Was die Richtlinien für die soziale Sicherheit angeht, so gibt es kaum Mitbewerber auf dem Markt, auch das Netzwerk, die Erfahrung und die Mitgliederdatenbank der IVSS sorgen für ein Alleinstellungsmerkmal. Darüber hinaus ist die Trennung zwischen den IVSS Workshops und den Diplomausbildungskursen, welche von den Trainingszentren ausgerichtet werden eine praktikable Lösung. Durch die selbstorganisierten Workshops bleibt die IVSS in persönlichen Kontakt mit ihren Mitgliedern und kann sich so über deren Bedarfe informieren. Trotz der durchweg positiven Beurteilung konnten in der Untersuchung einige Verbesserungspotentiale aufgezeigt werden.

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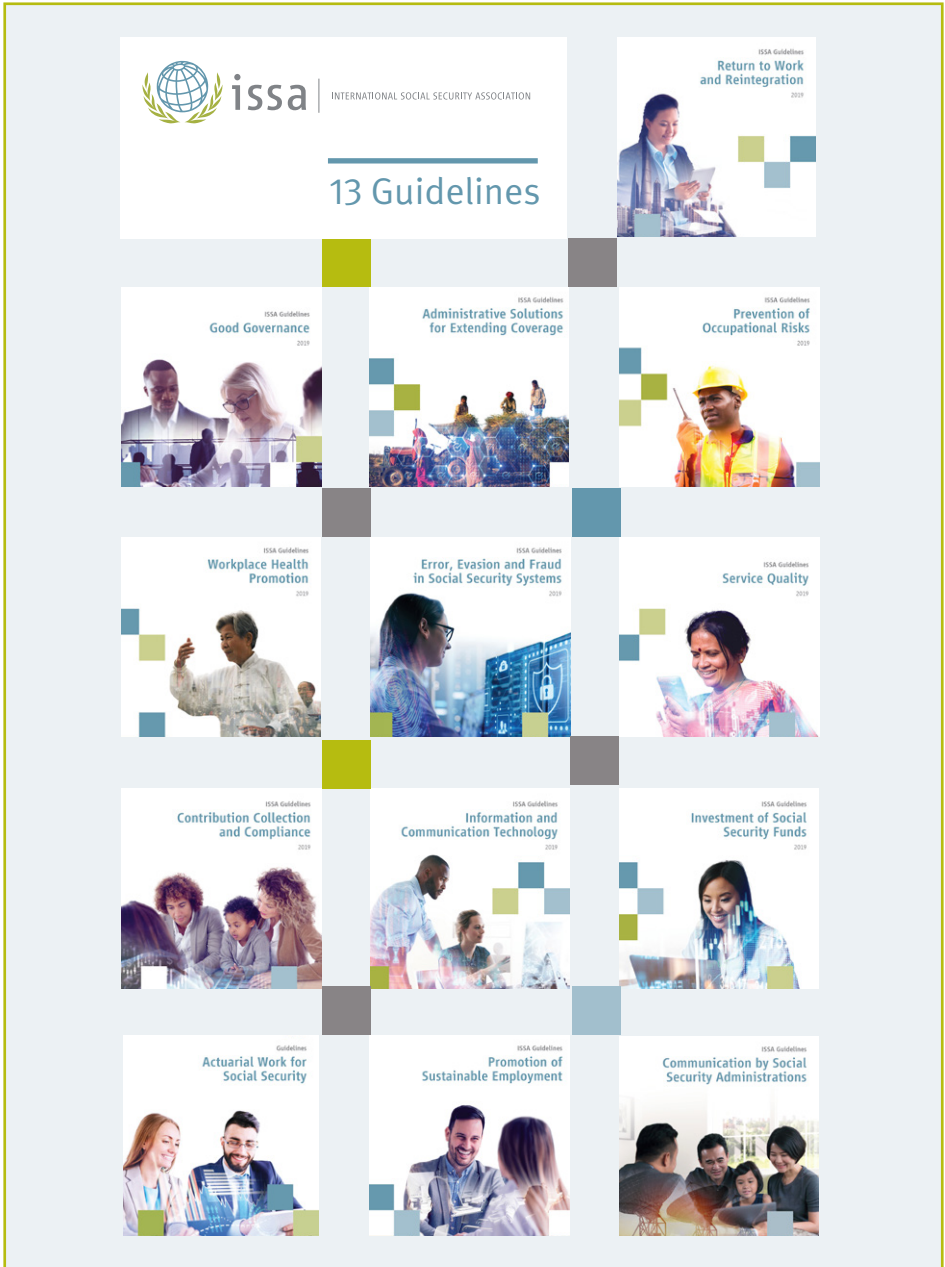
1 About the ISSA Academy

The preservation and expansion of human capital is essential for organizations to survive in the market and to prepare for the future. Also in the area of social security, especially in occupational safety and health protection, the exchange of experiences and further education play a major role, particularly against the background of rapid economic, social and technological change. Hence, the ISSA has founded a Centre for Excellence to support their member organizations. The overarching goal is the improvement of social protection administration around the world. To that end, the designed training programme aims to introduce solid processes and structures within the social security institutions. The International Social Security Association (ISSA), founded in 1927, has its headquarters in Geneva under the auspices of the International Labour Organization (ILO).

The ISSA is the leading international association, a community for social security institutions, departments and agencies, promoting excellence in social security administration. Social security is a human right, protecting individuals and their families when faced with the contingencies of life. There is a global consensus on the positive economic and social impact. In 2013, the ISSA launched its Centre for Excellence that aims to offer tangible products and services for the member institutions and thus better fulfill their needs. The Centre for Excellence is a flagship initiative to promote excellence by offering ISSA Guidelines, good practices and knowledge for social security organizations around the world, as well as training, technical support and a global Recognition programme. The components of the Centre for Excellence are displayed in table 1.

Centre for Excellence			
 <p>Guidelines</p>	 <p>Academy</p>	 <p>Technical advice & support team</p>	 <p>Recognition programme</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internationally recognized standards in the core areas of social security administrations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops • Diploma training courses • Customized trainings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to additional knowledge, guidance and expertise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal evaluation and recognition for implementing the Guidelines

Table 1. Overview of the services



1.1 ISSA Guidelines

At the heart of the Centre for Excellence, the ISSA Guidelines represent internationally recognized professional standards in 13 core areas of social security administration. The ISSA Guidelines are created by technical commissions, which are divided into financing & management and social security branches. A comprehensive knowledge base provides support for managers to implement the ISSA Guidelines. Each set of Guidelines is complemented by additional resources, references and good practice examples, to provide supporting information and practical examples of application.

1.2 ISSA Academy

The goal of the Academy is to provide tangible value to the members and to offer practical support by offering the member institutions workshops, diploma training courses and customized trainings. The Academy started at the end of 2014 offering firstly workshops and subsequently from 2015 diploma training courses. The Academy offers members access to problem solving, learning and exchange platforms as well as capacity-building and human resource development opportunities. The foundation are the ISSA Guidelines. The Academy was created to promote the Guidelines and to show added value to the members. Further, the Academy is designed to engage with the members and to find out about their needs through personal contact.

Academy workshops

The workshops are practical collaborative problem-solving opportunities based on the Guidelines. The ISSA offers workshops for members in four different regions (Americas, Africa, Europe and Asia-Pacific) and five different languages (English, French, Spanish, Arabic and Russian). Workshops form part of the Academy for the staff of the member institutions by exchanging experiences and strategies during two to three days. They are free of charge to members (only traveling and accommodation costs need to be covered by attendees). Each workshop focuses on challenges related to the implementation of a set of Guidelines. The scope of each workshop is narrowed to specific priority topics within a given set of Guidelines, reflecting the needs expressed by the workshop participants. The Academy team provides the content and training materials for the course, they take care of the logistics, administrative tasks and so on. Technical experts conduct the workshops and one manager from the ISSA is onsite. The Academy manager closely cooperates with the regional coordinators and the liaison officers working at the member institutions for the planning, coordination and implementation of the programme.

Diploma training courses

Diploma training courses form part of the Academy and offer capacity building by providing an in-depth training during five days on a set of Guidelines for the staff of the member institutions. They are offered by the training partners. The ISSA has a con-

sortium of five trainings partners around the world (Italy, France, Lebanon, Mexico and Germany). The cost for each attendee is about 2000 €. The diploma training courses are structured in three phases total around 50 hours of work. Prior to the training, participants complete a set of online activities related to the set of Guidelines. The on-site training usually takes five days and is an intensive and interactive training for a group of up to 25 participants. In the post-training the participants develop and submit an assignment that is assessed. A diploma is awarded to the individual participant based on the satisfactory completion of the post-training assignment.

Customized trainings

The ISSA also offers customized services to their members. This is a new product. The parameters are not yet completely defined. The idea is that these services will be shaped to the needs of the members and designed together with them. The members will have to pay the costs (for example external experts, travel, food and accommodation). Currently the ISSA is developing a concept on offering customized training.

1.3 Technical advice and support

The ISSA technical advice and support enables member institutions to access additional knowledge, guidance and expertise in support of their administrative improvements. Technical advice and support in this context means referring to social security administration. The ISSA can give informa-

tion about other institutions from different countries, which the member institution might use for benchmarking purposes. The member organizations might want to get in touch with another member institution or an expert with certain experience that the member is seeking. The ISSA helps to set up twinning projects between member institutions.

1.4 Recognition programme

The ISSA Recognition programme offers formal evaluation and recognition for institutions that have implemented the Guidelines. Following an assessment of the level of compliance with the Guidelines, an institution will be able to receive recognition of its administration achievement. The Recognition programme offers a desk based independent evaluation of the implementation of a set of Guidelines. The programme is an additional service for the ISSA members and is charged at 4600 € per Guideline to cover the costs of the expert and ISSA staff time. The Recognition programme consists of four levels. At first, there is a query whereby a member expresses an interest. The second level is the commitment, in level three there is an evaluator review (a desk based review, conducted by an external expert), and in the fourth level the results will be communicated. This evaluation is done by an external independent evaluator. A certificate is valid for three years and will be issued in case of compliance. Other organizations also offer evaluation programmes, for example the ISO certification (quality management).

2 Purpose of the evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation was to give recommendations for improvement, as well as strategic responses to underlying critical issues. Therefore, it was of interest what the needs and requirements of the target group are, how known the Academy and their offers are and how they are perceived by the members. Furthermore, conclusions for optimization and improvement should be derived. These three areas were backed up with further questions, which are now presented here.

Insights and discovery

- How known is the ISSA Academy and its services?
- How do participants learn about workshops and trainings (access to the products)?
- How satisfied are the participants with the products? How are they rated?
- Which impact and benefit do the products have for the members?
- What is the added value of the Academy to the Centre for Excellence?

Needs and requirements

- Why do members sign up for workshops or diploma trainings?
- What is the perceived unique selling proposition?
- What do members need in order to promote the products of the ISSA Academy to their employees and staff?
- What are the needs of the members, when it comes to further training?

Optimization and improvement

- What kind of support do the partners of the Academy need?
- How could the products and processes be optimized and improved?
- How can member engagement be improved through the ISSA Academy?
- In which direction should the ISSA Academy develop in the future?

3 Methodological approach

To evaluate the Academy, different methods were used. First, existing documents, including event statistics, old records, workshop evaluations and data from the last two member surveys were analyzed.

Additionally 19 structured interviews with workshop experts and managers, liaison officers and trainings partners were conducted. An overview of the methods can be found in table 2. The individual methods will be described in the following.

The target group of the Academy are 322 member institutions in 156 countries. The ISSA works with a regional structure, dividing the member institutions in four regions: Africa (including North Africa, Southern Africa, Central Africa, West Africa and East Africa), Americas (including North and Central America, Southern cone of the Americas, the Andean countries and the Portuguese speaking countries), Asia and the Pacific (including the Arab countries, South Asia, South East Asia, East Asia, China and the Pacific Island countries) and Europe (including Europe and Eurasia).

Methods	Sample
Primary analysis	
Structured telephone interviews	5 workshop managers 5 experts 5 liaison officers 4 leaders of the training centers
Secondary analysis	
Event information & statistics	662 participants in workshops 333 participants in diploma trainings
Member surveys	266 members (2015) 156 members (2018)
Feedback meeting	5 members of the ISSA team 4 leaders of the training centers and 2 members 2 experts 1 liaison officer

Table 2. Overview of the methods used for the evaluation

3.1 Primary analysis

During the summer of 2018, 19 telephone interviews were conducted among four training centers, five liaison officers, five workshop managers and five experts. Each interview lasted for between 30 minutes to one hour on average. The interviews were semi-standardized. A guideline with pre-formulated questions was used. This guideline was sent via mail to the interview partners, which allowed them time for reflection. The evaluation indicators of the telephone interviews included:

- needs of the member organizations and their staff,
- interest in topics and formats, access to products,
- assessment of products,
- perceived unique selling proposition,
- impact and benefits of the products,
- improvements of products and materials, improvements of processes,
- development of the Academy in the future,
- improvement of member engagement,
- value of the Academy for the Centre for Excellence,
- advertising and marketing ideas for the ISSA Academy, and
- support of member organizations to promote products.

The interviews were mainly conducted in English, only one was done in Spanish.

3.2 Secondary analysis

Secondary analysis of existing data was used to answer the questions of the evaluation as well. The secondary data analysis included information about the workshops and the diploma training courses, data about the Recognition programme and data from the last two member surveys. The member surveys took place in 2015 (Weber Shandwick) and 2018 (Ipsos Public Affairs, 2019).

Information on workshops and diploma training courses

Information on the workshop included facts and data about the participants and their organization (needs, key challenges, next steps). The answers on these forms enable the Academy to tailor the workshop accordingly to the needs of the member organization. The evaluation results were obtained from online questionnaires, which were sent to the participants after the workshops or trainings. Existing records were analyzed from the year 2014 to 2017 about the number of events per year, the coverage of the workshops concerning region, language and ISSA Guidelines. In addition, the participation in the Recognition programme was analyzed.

Member surveys

Every three years, the ISSA conducts a member survey. Telephone interviews are used based on a comprehensive questionnaire. The ISSA Global Membership Survey was designed to evaluate the



Feedback meeting in Geneva

ISSA's performance and impact. It is of interest to understand which services are most relevant to the members, how they judge the quality, the use of the ISSA Guidelines and what their needs and expectations are. The evaluation helps guide the future development of the Centre for Excellence and the ISSA programme of activities. 266 member institutions participated in 2015. This equals a response rate of approx. 80%. Some of the information from the Member survey could be used for the evaluation. In 2018, 156 (from approx. 322) member organizations took part in the survey. This equals a response rate of 48%.

Feedback meeting

In May 2019 a meeting took place for one and half days to review the results of the evaluation. It included six training partners, two experts, one liaison officer, five members of the ISSA staff and two people of the evaluation team. The goal of the workshop was to discuss the results of the evaluation (strengths and potentials) and to derive conclusions and the next steps. An action plan with deadlines was developed.

4 The design of a logic model

To demonstrate the impact of an intervention a logic model can be used, which describes cause-and-effect relations. Kaplan and Garrett (2005) describe a logic model as a “graphic display or a map of the relationship between a program’s resources, activities, and intended results, which also identifies the program’s underlying theory and assumptions.” (p. 167).

A logic model should answer the question of how the defined objectives will be reached and therefore what needs to be done to achieve that (Millar, Simeone, & Carnevale, 2001). Most logic models contain the four elements context analysis, inputs, outputs and outcomes. Figure 1 displays the logic model for the workshops.

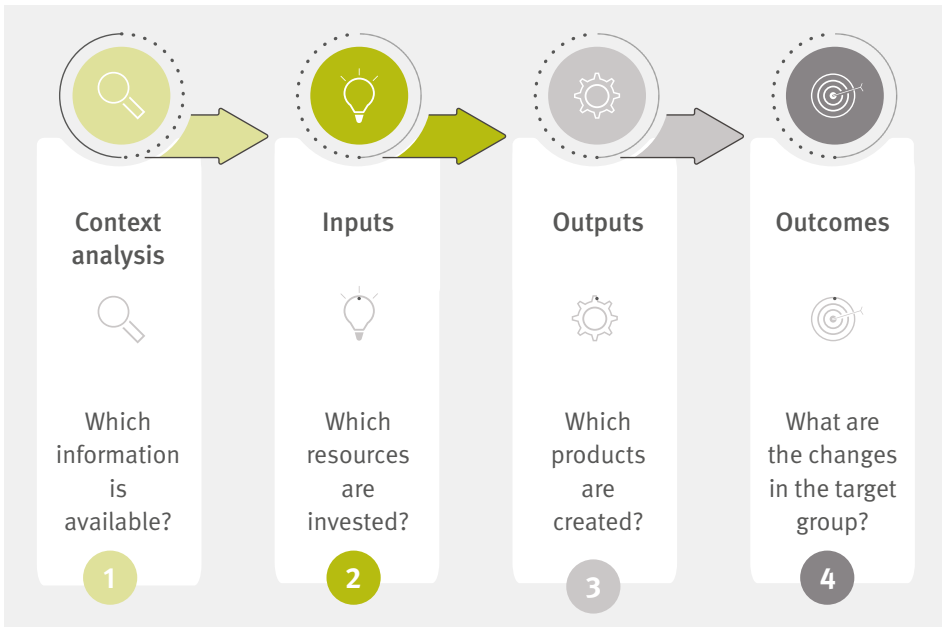


Figure 1. Structure of a logic model

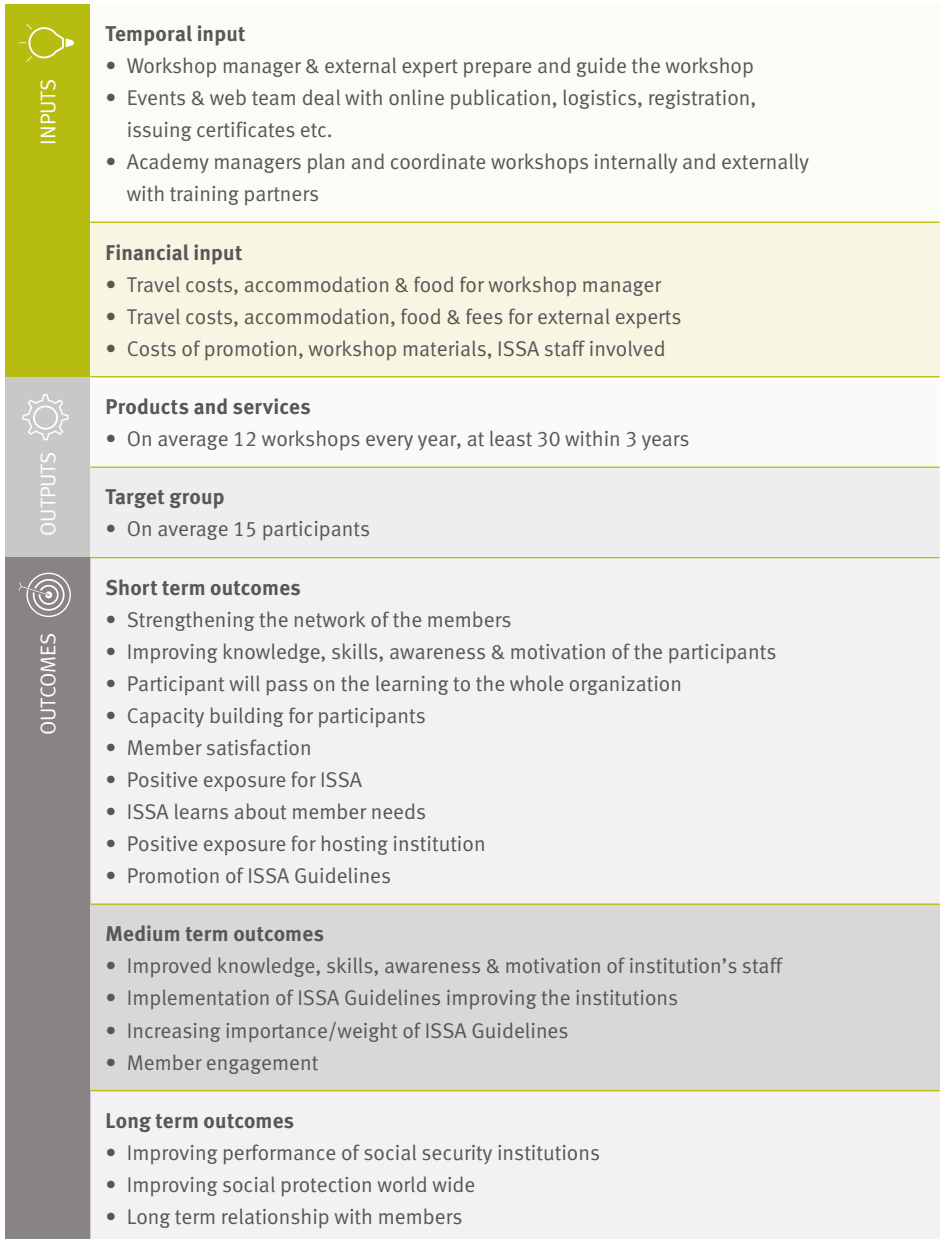


Figure 2. Logic model for the workshops

Different models can vary in their composition. In the beginning, there is always a need or a problem, for example too many accidents, hazards or diseases, which need to be reduced or even better prevented. Therefore, interventions are created, like campaigns, consulting, investigations, inspections, or training programmes, like the ISSA Academy. To evaluate the ISSA Academy within the Centre for Excellence an impact model was created for each service and one that combined the services with each other. This model was reflected with the ISSA staff. In a first step, it was discussed who the target group is, what their needs are, which other stakeholders there are and if there are similar products on the market (competitors). For the input all the invested resources were identified (time, money, partners, equipment, facilities, etc.). The outputs are the services created by the ISSA (Guidelines, workshops, trainings, advice and support group, the Recognition programme, etc.). Here it is of interest, who was reached by this and if the target group used the services. The outcomes can be divided into short-, medium- and long-term outcomes. Short-term results can be a change in awareness, motivation, knowledge, skills and attitude. Medium-term results can be changes in behaviors, practices, policies and procedures. Long-term outcomes result from the behavior and are changes in the situation and structures.

Context analysis



Before designing a new prevention measure, an analysis of the context and the situation is required. Therefore, the following questions should be discussed: Who is the target group and what are their needs? Are there already other measures on the market and which goals did they achieve? Who are the stakeholders that need to be involved? Once this information is collected and a conclusion is drawn, that this measure is capable to achieve the desired results, then the measure can be designed. One important piece of information was that because of the ISSA Guidelines are unique, there is hardly any competition on the market, because nobody knows the business of social security systems better than the ISSA. The member needs are:

- to exchange ideas, experiences and possible solutions with colleagues and experts,
- to establish framework and structured methods,
- to improve methodological approaches and processes,
- the automation of processes,
- benchmarking with other institutions,
- learning about the Guidelines,
- knowledge on adopting and implementing the Guidelines,
- examples of good practices,
- returning with possible solutions for their challenges, and
- to build networks.

The stakeholders are the training centers, the liaison officers, the experts and other partners of the ISSA.

pays for the facilities, catering, and so on. There is always one workshop manager from the ISSA there to help and support, and one hired expert on the guideline topic. The ISSA hosts about 12 workshops per year. The diploma training courses are carried out by one of their training centers. They take care of the facilities, the catering, materials, experts and trainers. The ISSA provides the basic material in the needed language and has liaison officers in the area to help promote the training courses. The trainings consists of a pre-phase, the onsite part of five days and a post training phase. The training centers provide approx. 18 trainings per year.

Input 

In order to create an intervention or to design a measure, resources are required. The input describes what is being invested; this can be for example time, money, partners, equipment and facilities (as can be seen in table 3). The workshops are free of charge for the participants; they only have to pay traveling cost and accommodation. A workshop takes two and a half to three days. The ISSA member host

	Workshops resources	Diploma training resources
 amount of workshops	12 per year conducted by the ISSA	18 per year conducted by the training centers
 costs for participants	- workshops are free of charge for the participants - travel costs	- participant pay 2000 € to training center - travel costs
 partners	- ws manager - external expert - ISSA team	- experts & trainers - liaison officers
 money	- catering and travel costs - accommodation - expert and translation costs	- ISSA translates material - ISSA promotes training - ISSA develops the content
 time	2,5 days	5 days = 50 hours
 equipment	training material	- online material - videos and handouts
 premises	workshop rooms	training center

Table 3. Invested resources for the workshops and the diploma trainings

Outputs



Products and services that have been created are the outputs. Here it is of interest what the volume is, who has been reached and how many people. In figure 3 it can be seen, that 39 workshops took place with 662 people between the years of 2014 and 2017. It was also of interest, if members would only attend once or rather a couple times at a workshop. It was found that 175 members used the workshops. Therefore, almost every second member of the ISSA participated already in a workshop. By looking at the participant numbers it is visible that most of them visited more than

one workshop. The training courses show a similar picture: 21 trainings took place, mostly African members participated and they joined more than once (89 members). While the number of workshops with 12 on average per year is staple (see figure 4), the number of training courses (see figure 5) increased each year (from four in 2015 to 16 in 2018) as intended by the ISSA.

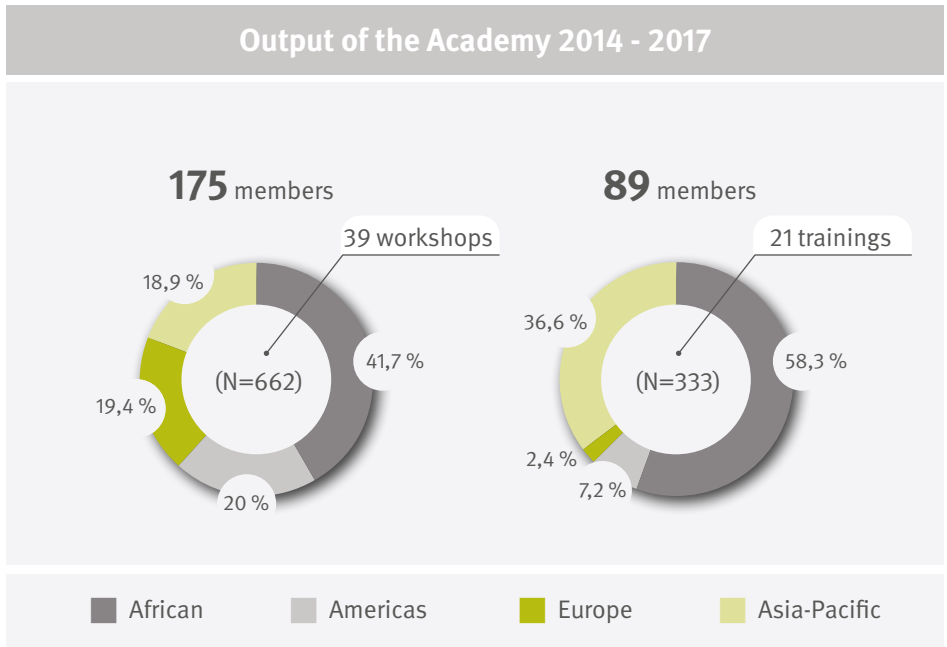


Figure 3. Members reached in the years 2014-2017



Figure 4. Number of workshops held in the years 2014 to 2018

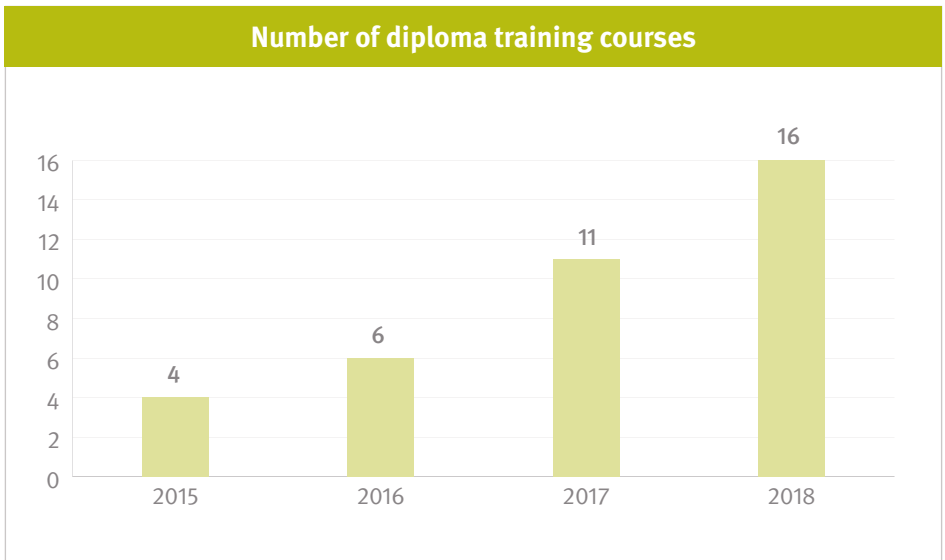


Figure 5. Number of diploma training courses held in the years 2015 to 2018

Outcomes



As mentioned before, outcomes can be divided into short-, medium- and long-term outcomes. The outcomes of the Academy can be seen in table 4. In the Academy participants improve their problem solving skills, they gain knowledge and they can exchange their experience, they can strengthen their network and increase their motivation to transfer the matters learned. The evaluation results revealed that out of 361 workshop participants approx. 90% said that the practical learning experience was either “excellent” or “good”. 93% of the participants said the same for networking opportunity and 95% for the relevance of the workshop for their organization. The ISSA on the other hand can strengthen their relationship with the members and learn about their needs through this personal contact. It is expected that this will also result in an image gain for the ISSA. In addition, the training center might benefit from future business opportunities.

For the medium outcomes it can be said that approx. 30% of the members, who participated in a workshop are now enrolled in the recognition programme. Some might also just use the ISSA Guidelines, without being recognized for it. The result of the Member survey from 2018 shows which of the Guidelines are being used. The top three are good governance, service quality and information and communication technology.

What can be expected for the long-term outcomes? For the members who implemented the Guidelines and achieved recognition, it can be assumed that this improved their performance. This means for the ISSA that they improved social security administration for some institutions and that the Academy contributes to a long-term relationship with the members. If so, the ISSA has improved the performance of social security institutions and therefore improved social security administration around the world, which is their goal. This way they are also able to establish a long-term relationship with the members.




	 Short term outcomes	 Medium outcomes	 Long term outcomes
participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improved problem solving skills • knowledge gain • strengthening the network through exchange • increased motivation to transfer the matters learned & implement the Guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • passing on the matters learned to the organization • improved knowledge and skills of the staff • implementation of the Guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implemented Guideline • improved performance
ISSA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strengthens the relationship (members come back) • learn about the needs of the members • business opportunity & image gain for hosting training center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 % of the members which participated in the workshops and diploma trainings are enrolled in the Recognition programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improved performance of social security institutions • improved social protection around the world • long term relationship with member

Table 4. Short, medium and long term outcomes of the ISSA Academy

During the Member survey 2018 it was investigated which products and services were used in the last three years by the members. The ISSA Guidelines were used by 78% of the members (156 participants), workshops by 60%, technical support and advice by 48%, diploma training courses by 36% and the Recognition programme by 36%.

Existing records of events were analyzed. In the following, the usage of the workshops will be described. A total of 175 member institutions participated in the workshops between 2014 and 2017. Out of this, 41.7% were from the African region, followed by almost identical distributions for the other regions with 20% in the Americas, 19.4% for Europe and 18.9% for Asia-Pacific. On average and across all regions, 47.9% of the members went to only one workshop. This number is especially high for Europe (76.5%), where most members do not come back for another workshop.

The secondary analysis revealed that 96% of the 361 workshop participants, who took part in the evaluation, rated the workshops as “excellent” or “good”. In the evaluation forms, it was found that also 94% of the 333 participants rated the diploma trainings with “excellent” or “good”.

In 2018 the researchers conducted 19 telephone interviews. The interviewees were asked how participants were affected by the workshops and diploma trainings. The majority (13 people) answered that the benefit is knowledge sharing, networking and capacity building. It was also said that bringing the ISSA Guidelines into implementation is the benefit of the Academy within the Centre for Excellence.

The implementation of the ISSA Guidelines is one medium goal of the workshops and the diploma training courses. Therefore, the status of the Recognition programme was assessed. As can be seen in the figure 7, seven organizations had shown interest at this point, seven were committed to the programme, two were at the stage of the evaluator review and eight organizations have had completed the programme by the time of the evaluation.

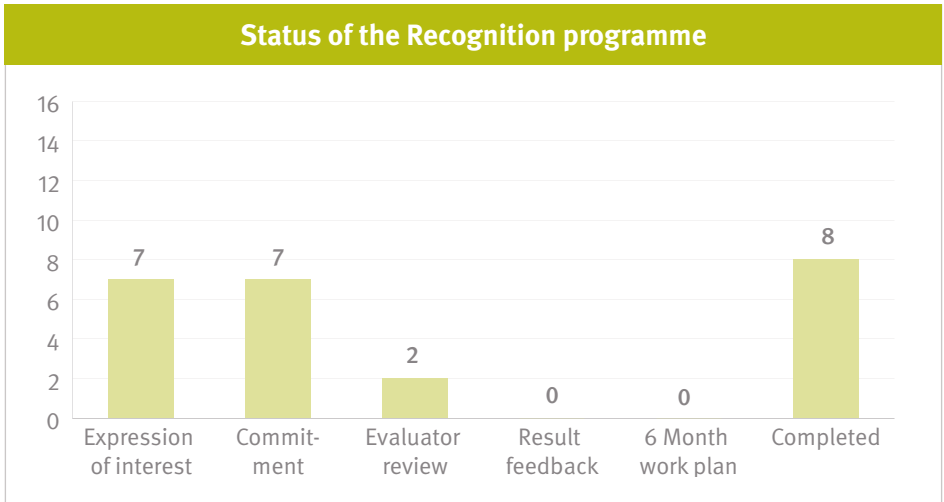


Figure 7. Participant numbers for the Recognition programme

5.2 Needs and requirements

The reasons that participants made the decisions for signing up for a workshop or a diploma training course were multi-dimensional. According to the 19 telephone interviews, participants made comments (33 mentions) in terms of the unique selling propositions of the trainings. Most participants were motivated by the ISSA Guidelines, this was assumed by 7 people. There were various reasons for participants to sign up for a workshop or a

diploma training such as their general interest of increasing the institutional capacity (2), acquiring specific knowledge about social security system, finding out how the Guidelines can help their work in practice, share experiences (5), networking (4) or the high quality of the experts (4). In addition, for some participants it was quite prestigious to be chosen (5) to come to the courses because they can gain extra knowledge. The results can be seen in the figure 8.

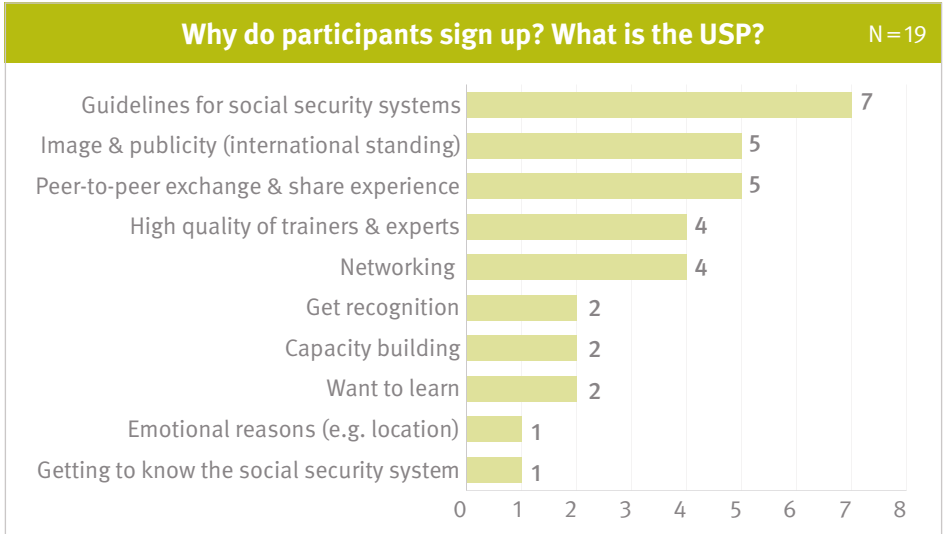


Figure 8. Reasons for participants to sign up mentioned in the interviews

In the telephone interviews, it was asked for suggestions for how to support the member organizations when promoting products to their employees. One idea was a strategy with two-communication channels. Specifically, in some way, the head of the organization should be informed and there should be a contact person who promotes the ISSA Academy activities within the member organizations. In this case, it is necessary to raise the awareness of the human resource department concerning the importance of the ISSA Guidelines. Besides that, the interviewees asked for testimonials (3), tailored promotion (2) for example using the customer relation management system better and to make use of the database (2). The interview partners were asked about the needs and requirements of the

member organizations with regard to further training. The most pronounced comment was customized trainings (5). It was also mentioned that e-learning courses (2) could be utilized in combination with onsite trainings, networks should be created (2) and follow-up measures should be monitored. According to the Member survey 2015, the ISSA Guidelines are too theoretical and abstract. The member organizations would prefer short summaries or reviews with key points. That way the organization can decide quickly, if they are relevant or not. Besides, member organizations would prefer a training design, which supports the implementation. This point was also mentioned in the feedback meeting. The participants asked for explanatory videos of the Guidelines.

5.3 Optimization and improvement

In order to improve the concept of the Academy it was explored in the interviews what support the partners need (training center, experts, liaison officers). The partners want more workshop promotion (2 mentions), better time planning (2), to strengthen the role of liaison officers (2), a better structure of the website (2), better communication with the ISSA (2) and more support in the organizational process. They see most potential for improvement in the organizational process itself (5) and in creating a better follow-up phase (3). It was also asked, how member engagement could be improved further. Again, better communication and follow up (3) was mentioned, but also to offer a nice personal experience (3) and to keep reaching out and listening to the needs of the members (3).

There were suggestions concerning how the Academy is going to progress in the long term as well. In regard of customized training, it was suggested that the Academy needed to consider defining the organizational and administrative parameters first before initiating in-house trainings. The details are to be discussed (3) in terms of duration, costs et cetera. One solution could also be to develop more local experts (3). The interviewees also proposed that it would be crucially important for the Academy to keep evolving and stay updated to remain competitive in the area of social security training (5) in order to gain more membership engagement as well as recognitions (see figure 9).

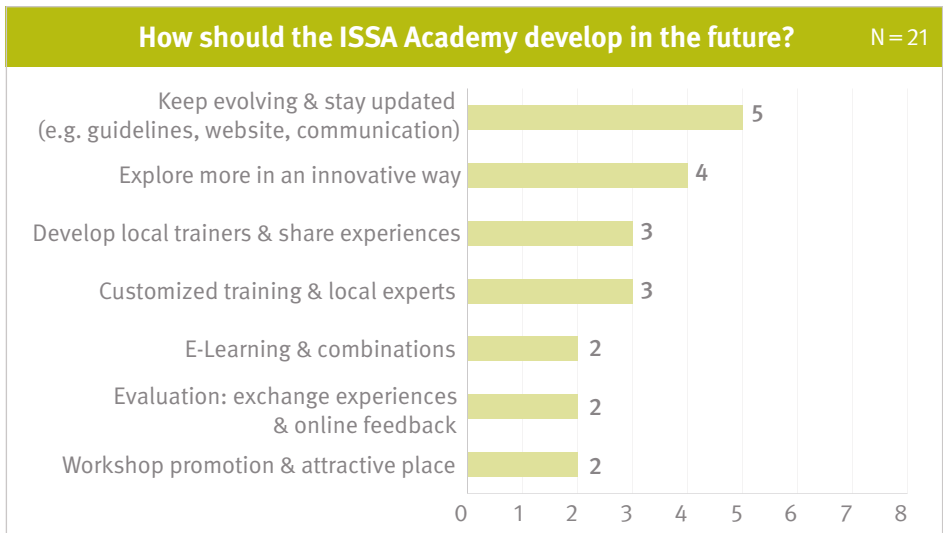


Figure 9. Ideas for the future development of the ISSA Academy mentioned in the interviews

In the table 5, the results of the evaluation are summarized. They are sorted by the purpose of the evaluation: Insights and discovery of the Academy, needs and requirements of the members and improvement and optimization of the Academy.

Evaluation questions	Results from different sources
Insights and discovery of the Academy	
How known is the ISSA Academy?	Well-known to approx. 79% of the members
How do participants learn about the trainings?	Through the website and personal contact
How satisfied are the participants with the products?	96% of the 361 workshop participants rated the workshops “excellent” or “good” 94% of the 333 participants rated the diploma trainings with “excellent” or “good”
Which benefits have the products for the members?	Knowledge sharing, networking, capacity building
What is the added value of the Academy?	Bring Guidelines into implementation
Needs and requirements of the members	
Why do members sign up for trainings?	Guidelines are unique (7), international standing (5), share experience (5), networking (4), high quality of experts (4), capacity building (2) etc.
What is the perceived USP?	Guidelines for social security systems
What do members need to promote the Academy?	Testimonial & good examples (3), tailored promotion (2), database of members (2) etc.
What are the members needs in terms of further training?	In-house trainings (5), in combination with e-learning (2), create & animate network (2) and Guidelines need to be more practical
Improvement and optimization of the Academy	
What support do the Academy partners need?	More promotion (2), better time planning (2), strengthen liaison officer (2), better website structure (2), better communication with ISSA (2)
How could the products and processes be optimized?	Organizational process (5), follow up phase (3), communicate more (2) etc.
How can member engagement be improved?	Better communication and follow up (3), offer nice personal experience (3), keep reaching out and listening to needs (3)
In which direction should the ISSA Academy develop?	Keep evolving (5), explore more innovative ways (4), customized trainings (3), develop local trainers (3) and e-learning (2)

Table 5. Overview of the answers to the evaluation questions (Note: The absolute frequency of the entries is in brackets)

The ISSA Academy with the workshops and the diploma training courses is a successful concept. The ISSA organizes and conducts the workshops themselves, which gives them direct access to the target group. Due to the assumption of costs, almost all members are able to participate, but the quantity seems to be at the maximum with approx. 12 workshops per year. The in-depth training courses were outsourced to the training centers and an increasing number are being organized. This is a win-win situation for the ISSA and the training partners as well. The consortia can handle larger volumes and can advertise that they are official partners of the internationally recognized ISSA. The good evaluation results of the workshops and trainings show that the participants are very satisfied with these courses. The popularity of the Academy at around 80% is also very satisfying. The results further show that the needs of the members are met. With direct access to the members, the ISSA will continue to be able to find out about emerging needs and developments and to adapt their offers accordingly. Overall, it can be said that the Academy and the associated Centre for Excellence achieved good results in the evaluation.

Nevertheless, there is always room for improvement. The communication with the training partners needs to be improved. Regular meetings are planned now and a communication plan has been drawn up. Even though the Centre for Excellence and the Academy are known to most of the members, new ways of promotion need to be discovered (tailored promotion etc.). In addition, it was mentioned that the ISSA Guidelines need to be more practical. One idea in the feedback meeting was to create a short video for each set of Guidelines.

Because the world of work changes, social security systems need to develop with new topics arising, therefore the Guidelines need to be constantly evolving as well. It was stated that approx. 30% of the members who participated in a workshop or diploma training course are now enrolled in the Recognition programme. This shows that the gained knowledge and skills are transferred into the field to change practices and procedures. Thereby social security administration will be improved. Besides; further support offers can be made for the members. It is planned, to initiate an alumni network so that exchanges can continue even after the diploma training courses.

6 Learnings from this evaluation regarding training programmes



In order to ensure the quality and degree of target achievement of training programmes, it is recommendable to evaluate them at regular intervals. This enables a continuous improvement process to take place. With complex measures of this type, it is advisable to use different methods and thus to obtain different perspectives in order to get a complete picture.

This evaluation analyzed partially data that already existed. On the one hand, there is always the risk that this data might be incomplete. In addition, one is dependent on the customer's courtesy. On the other hand, this is a very economical procedure, since not everything has to be collected all over again.

In addition, all stakeholders were involved in the evaluation from the start. The results of the interviews were communicated to the interviewees and next steps were explained. This contributes to the acceptance of the results and the overall evaluation. Some of the interview partners derived measures based on the evaluation results. This also helps to ensure that the measures are accepted. The use of logical models made it possible to understand how the ISSA Academy works. Establishing a logical model often helps to communicate with each other. It can be used to check whether everyone has the same understanding of the programme and how it is supposed to work. Therefore, it is suggested to create a logic model as one of the first steps to evaluate training programmes.

7 Conclusions and outlook

In the area of social security, the exchange of experiences and further education play a major role to improve social security administration. Because of rapid economic, social and technological change, social security systems also need to adapt. The internationally recognized ISSA Guidelines provide a comprehensive knowledge base for managers and their institution to improve their performance. The translation into practice can only work through consulting, capacity building, problem solving and the exchange of experience.

The ISSA training programme therefore acts as a bridge from the ISSA Guidelines into practice. The direct access to the target group makes it possible for the ISSA to find out the changing needs of their members in a world in which work is changing faster and faster. This will enable the ISSA to continue to respond to the needs of its members in the future and to keep an eye on the difficulties in practice. A recommendation for training programmes is therefore not to outsource all courses, but to maintain the direct contact.

Furthermore, it is very useful to include a certification of the practical efforts. This can also be used as an indicator of the degree of target achievement. If these certificates are valid for a certain period of time and then have to be acquired again, it is possible to estimate how sustainable the content of a training programme is. As a standard, individual courses should be examined for their quality and key figures on the output should be collected. Continuous monitoring makes it possible to use this data at a later point in time for a more extensive evaluation. In the sense of a continuous improvement process, this should be carried out every few years to see whether any adjustments need to be made to the training programme.



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