ARCO Profile

ARCO
Action Research
for CO-Development

www.arcolab.org

Fondazione PIN
Polo di Prato
dell'Università di Firenze

www.pin.unifi.it

Fondazione PIN
ARCO
Action Research for CO-development

ARCO - At a Glance

We support organisations that want to have a positive impact on society

ARCO (Action Research for CO-development) is a **research, training and consulting centre** that helps organisations design, implement, and evaluate policies, strategies and initiatives for **sustainable human development**. Based in Prato (Italy) within the **Fondazione PIN - Polo di Prato dell'Università di Firenze**, ARCO bridges academic knowledge with practical application.

Since 2008, ARCO has delivered over **400 projects** in **100 countries**, working with a diverse range of clients and partners including international donors, UN agencies, ministries, local authorities, CSOs, foundations and private for profit and non-profit companies. Its interdisciplinary team of over **35 in-house experts** offers tailored support across areas such as **circular innovation and sustainable commodities, social economy and sustainability management, local development, behavioural economics, inclusive development, monitoring & evaluation and impact evaluation**. health equity

ARCO's approach is grounded in **action-research** and **mixed methods (quantitative, qualitative and participatory)**, with a strong track record in **grant-funded projects**, notably EU programmes, as well as the **tender market** and **commissioned assignments**. As a trusted partner, ARCO brings methodological rigour, cross-sector experience, and a shared commitment to drive innovation, inform policy, and create meaningful, evidence-based change.

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Fondazione PIN

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Fondazione PIN

PIN is an innovative hub in Prato (Italy), integrating 3 different areas: higher education and vocational training, university campus, applied research and innovative services for organisations

PIN's Certifications & Compliance

> UNI EN ISO 9001:2015
> Quality procedures
> Ethical Code
> Gender Equality Plan
> Child Protection Policy
> Organisational, Management, and Control Model (in compliance with Italian Legislative Decree 231/2001)
> Compliance with Legislative Decree 81/2008 (Unified Text on Workplace Safety)
> Compliance with the National Commercial Collective Bargaining Agreement (Work Policy)

Fondazione PIN - Prato Campus of the University of Florence - based at Polo Universitario "Città di Prato" (Italy), is a **Participation Foundation**, a **private non-profit entity** engaged in activities of collective interest across multiple sectors.

It was established as an Association in 1992, transformed into a Limited Liability Consortium Company (S.c.r.l.) in 1999 and, in November 2024, it adopted the new legal form of a Participation Foundation with the University of Florence and the Municipality of Prato among the founding members. PIN is also a recognised **research organisation** as per European Commission Communication no. 2006/C 323/01.

PIN is dedicated to fostering the development of **advanced knowledge** and **practical expertise** to meet the needs of **public administrations, businesses, and the third sector**. Its mission spans innovation in scientific, technological, and humanistic fields, as well as the enhancement of professional skills and training programmes.

The Foundation also supports the creation and growth of educational and scientific initiatives of the University of Florence, both within the Florence-Prato-Pistoia metropolitan area and beyond. Projects are carried out by over **40 laboratories** (including the ARCO research centre), with teams composed of professionals from specific consulting and research sectors, as well as members of the academic community. These labs combine expertise and resources to provide tailored support to private companies and public administrations.

With 22 permanent staff providing administrative and logistical support and 200 collaborators working in its laboratories, PIN has successfully managed over 1,500 research projects in the past 30 years. Funded by entities such as the European Commission, national ministries, and public authorities, some of these projects involve 40+ international partners and budgets exceeding €10 million.

PIN sustains its operations through revenue from research and training activities, strategic partnerships, and both public and private contributions. This diversified funding model, combined with robust management capacity, enables PIN to ensure the seamless execution and successful delivery of project objectives, setting a benchmark for excellence in collaborative research and development.



PIN Foundation - Prato Campus University of Florence

PIN's Activities

Higher Education & Vocational Training courses

PIN offers **higher education and vocational training courses** on demand, attentively responding to the evolution of the labour market and economic development trends. The constant research activities of its laboratories and the established ties with the University of Florence ensure the high scientific quality of the educational offering and an interdisciplinary approach. Its courses target graduates, companies and public institutions as well as managers and workers. Moreover, the qualified presence of experts from the professional world and the direct involvement of companies - through internships, guest lectures, company visits, and project work - give the training programmes a strong professional orientation. The latter include higher education courses, seminars and workshops, TVET courses, conferences and ad hoc courses for companies in areas such as Digital marketing, ICT, supply chain, fashion industry, quality & environment, agri-food sector, marketing & communication.

University Campus

For over 25 years, PIN has hosted several Degree Courses of the University of Florence at its **Prato Campus**, including: School of Economics and Management, School of Human Health Sciences, School of Humanities and Education, School of Architecture. Its academic offering includes first-cycle degrees (BA, BS), second-cycle degrees (MS, MA), and specialised postgraduate Master programmes offered by the University of Florence.

Applied research & Innovative services for organisations

For over three decades, PIN has been delivering **top-tier services** across various domains and sectors, engaging in consultancy for **private enterprises**, **public companies** and **public administrations**, as well as spearheading projects focused on **applied research and innovation**. These endeavours are undertaken by PIN's over **40 laboratories** (including the ARCO research centre) comprised of skilled professionals coming from the consultancy and academic spheres, each dedicated to specific areas of expertise.

PIN provides several services to its research labs, including:

> Dedicated services: rooms, infrastructures, technical equipment
> General services: reception, cleaning, maintenance
> Administrative services: accounting, procurement, contract management
> Support to research and training activities: contracting with private and public bodies, call selection and project planning, project management, administration and accounting, communication and networking, business and institutional liaison, technology transfer support.

ARCO
Action Research for CO-Development

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ARCO Action Research for CO-development

We support organisations that want to have a positive impact on society

ARCO - Action Research for CO-development stands out as the largest and most dynamic among PIN's research laboratories[1].
ARCO research centre was established in 2008 with the mission of supporting all organisations aiming to have a positive impact on society.
In just over a decade, ARCO has collaborated with more than **170 organisations** on **400 projects** spanning over **100 countries**.

Why "**action-research**"?
ARCO's researchers strongly believe that one of the main objectives of their work is to have a positive impact on sustainable and inclusive well-being by affecting various policies and actions.

Action-research is a **collaborative** and **participatory** approach to research that combines practical problem-solving with academic inquiry. It involves working closely with stakeholders to identify real-world challenges, implement solutions, and continuously refine them through cycles of reflection and evaluation.
As an action-research centre, ARCO bridges theory and practice to drive innovation, inform policy, and create meaningful, evidence-based change across sectors.

One of the key foundations of ARCO's research is the **Capability Approach** developed by the Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen, which redefines development by focusing on individuals' and communities' **well-being** and real **opportunities** rather than on economic growth alone. For this reason, ARCO embraces a **Sustainable Human Development** vision and is committed to foster the wellbeing of all people of current and future generations, and of the planet. By integrating this approach into its research activities, ARCO consistently adopts a **multidimensional and participatory perspective** that deals with economic, social, and environmental dimensions in an integrated manner.

ARCO'S APPROACHES

ARCO adopts internationally recognised approaches that place human development and participation at the centre. Our work is grounded in:

> Action-research
> Amartya Sen's Capability Approach
> Human Rights-Based Approach
> Stakeholder engagement & participatory approaches
> Multidimensional perspective
> Co-design /co-creation approaches
> Evidence-based approach
> "Leave no one behind"

[1] *ARCO is one of the research labs of PIN Foundation, and therefore all contracts, projects, and agreements with ARCO are issued and signed by PIN Foundation.*

ARCO’s Services

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ARCO's services

Action-research constitutes ARCO's core activity. ARCO oversees **all stages of the research process**: from developing the methodology and collecting data, to formulating policy recommendations and fostering the uptake and use of results.

In addition, ARCO offers a **wide variety of services**, including support to designing and planning interventions, project implementation, evaluating results and communication. This **one-stop shop approach** allows clients and partners to reduce the costs of coordinating with more than one service provider, and to strengthen the quality of interventions.

The research centre works in **seven strategic Units** operating in close synergy with each other to provide high-level **services**.

- Research
- Consultancy
- Technical Assistance
- Evaluation
- Training

Strategic Units

> Social Economy & Sustainability Management Unit

> Local Development Unit

> Circular Innovation and Sustainable Commodities Unit

> Inclusive Development Unit

> Monitoring and Evaluation & Impact Evaluation Unit

> Behavioural Insights Unit

> Health Equity Unit

The seven Units operate at both **national** and **international** levels, consisting of highly qualified researchers who employ a strong **interdisciplinary approach**.

ARCO's researchers specialise in both **quantitative** and **qualitative** research methods, consistently employing a **participatory approach** that actively engages relevant stakeholders.

This ensures that its interventions are **needs-driven** and tailored to the **specific context**, and deliver meaningful **impact**.

Methods & Methodologies

ARCO uses a diverse toolbox of qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods to deliver actionable insights. Such methods include, but are not limited to:

> Applied economic/econometric research
> Scenario analysis & micro-simulation
> Spatial analysis & GIS - Geographic Information Systems
> Social Network analysis
> Cost-Effectiveness Analysis
> SROI Impact Analysis - Social Return on Investment
> EHD Impact Analysis - Evaluating Human Development
> Experimental & Quasi experimental impact evaluation methods
(es. counterfactual impact assessments, RCTs - Randomised Controlled Trials, Before-After, Difference in Difference)
> Theory-based impact evaluation methods including MSC - Most Significant Change, Outcome Harvesting, Contribution Analysis
> Participatory methods
> Emancipatory research
> Observational methods
> SWOT analysis

Academic Publications

Alongside its qualified consultancy services and extensive fieldwork, ARCO maintains a strong and consistent academic presence. Our researchers actively contribute to the scientific community through high-quality publications and their participation to international conferences.

Peer-reviewed articles and conference papers published in leading academic journals such as:

- World Development
- Journal of Human Development and Capabilities
- European Journal of Development Research International Journal of Health Policy and Management
- Social Enterprise Journal
- Cambridge Journal of Education
- Journal of Cleaner Production
- Regional Studies, Regional Science
- Technological Forecasting and Social Change
- Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society
- VOLUNTAS
- Social Science and Medicine

Books and book chapters published with respected academic publishers including:

- Routledge
- McGraw-Hill Education
- Palgrave Macmillan
- Elsevier
- Springer Nature
- Edward Elgar

Explore the full list of ARCO's publications:
https://www.arcolab.org/en/publications-arco/

ARCO's experts

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ARCO's experts

Comprising a team of 35+ **in-house experts**, ARCO integrates the high-level expertise and skills of economists, statisticians, political scientists, sociologists, commodity scientists, anthropologists, among others, as well as technical professionals.

Thanks to its close connection with the **University of Florence**, particularly with its Department of Economics and Management and the Department of Statistics, Informatics, and Applications "Giuseppe Parenti", ARCO also benefits from a distinguished **Scientific Committee**, consisting of professors from the University of Florence, representing a wide range of backgrounds and disciplines. In addition to its core team, ARCO draws on a group of external fellows and a broad network of consultants and academic collaborators to support its work both in Italy and internationally.

Commitment to people

ARCO is distinguished by a dynamic team and pays particular attention to the well-being of its experts, monitored through dedicated surveys and supported by a range of welfare measures designed to ensure an equitable, inclusive, and sustainable work environment.

ARCO also adopts a careful approach to internal gender balance and the use of inclusive language, supported by dedicated guidelines.

Some of the Clients & Partners ARCO works with

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Some of the Clients & Partners ARCO works with

ARCO takes part in **grant-funded projects**, both as a lead partner and as a member of national and international consortia. The research centre is an experienced partner in **European projects**, actively involved in programmes such as Horizon Europe, Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme (CERV), Erasmus+, Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) - Global Europe, EU4Health Programme, Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF), Single Market Programme.

Beyond grants, ARCO is engaged in the competitive **tender market** and also regularly carries out **commissioned works** for a diverse range of clients. These include national and international non-profit organisations, NGOs, universities, banking foundations, private companies, public administrations, municipalities, ministries, governments and international institutions and donors.

Below is a non-exhaustive list of ARCO's clients and partners.

International donors

Austrian Development Agency
German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ)
European Union
United Nations
> UNICEF-IRC
> UNDP
> IOM
> UN-Habitat
> UNIDO

Italian ministries & national governmental Agencies

AICS - Italian Agency for Development Cooperation
Bank of Italy
Italian Ministry of the Interior
MAECI - Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
MASE - Italian Ministry of the Environment and Energy Security
MFP - Italian Ministry of Public Administration
MLPS - Italian Ministry of Labour and Social Policies
MUR - Italian Ministry of University and Research

Italian Regions & Regional entities

ANCI Toscana - Tuscany branch of the National Association of Italian Municipalities
ESTAR - Regional Technical and Administrative Support Agency - Tuscany
IRPET - Regional Institute for Economic Planning of Tuscany
Tuscany Region
Umbria Region

> > >

Italian Local Authorities

Metropolitan City of Florence
Metropolitan City of Rome Capital
Municipality of Cantagallo
Municipality of Castelnuovo Val di Cecina
Municipality of Florence
Municipality of Fucecchio
Municipality of Lucca
Municipality of Milan
Municipality of Monteverdi Marittimo
Municipality of Pomarance
Municipality of Prato
Union of Municipalities of Valdisieve and Valdarno

Civil Society Organisations

ActionAid
AIFO
Associazione A Sud
CELIM ONLUS
CISV
CISP
COSPE
COSV
CUAMM
EducAid
Emergency
IBO ITALIA
INTERSOS
LVIA
Oxfam Italia
Oxfam Lebanon
Plan International
Plan Italia
Progetto Sud
Salesiani per il Sociale
Save the Children
Slow Food
Soleterre
SOS Children's Village International
SOS Children's Village Italia
Vento di Terra
WeWorld

For profit companies

Intesa Sanpaolo Per il Sociale
Federazione Toscana Banche di Credito Cooperativo
GIDA SpA
ICStudio Srl - Management Consulting
InvestiRE
LeRoy Merlin
Nathan Consulting
Oxford Policy Management
Sammontana
WeSchool

Foundations

Adecco Foundation
Bocelli Foundation
Cariplo Foundation
Cassa di Risparmio di Pistoia Foundation
Cassa di Risparmio di Prato Foundation
Community Foundation of Brescia
Community Foundation of Bergamo
Community Foundation of Lodi
Edoardo Garrone Foundation
Ethical Finance Foundation
Il Cuore si Scioglie Foundation
Intesa Sanpaolo Charity Fund
Meyer Foundation
Opera Santa Rita Foundation
Ronald McDonald House Charities Italy
Social Cohesion Foundation - Onlus
Stiftung Mercator
Unipolis Foundation
Un Raggio di Luce Foundation - Onlus

Cooperatives, consortia & social enterprises

Altromercato
CO&SO Consortium
Con I Bambini
Confcooperative Toscana
ConOpera Consortium
COOB Consortium
FA Consortium
Pane e Rose
Scuola COOP
Società Dolce Social cooperative
Unicoop Florence

Universities & research institutes

CiMET - Centro Universitario Nazionale di Economia Applicata
European University Institute (EUI)
The Hague Academy for Local Governance
University of Florence
University of Modena and Reggio Emilia

ARCO’s Networks

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ARCO's Networks

ARCO and its researchers are actively involved in renowned academic and professional networks, including:

- ACPN - Advances in Cleaner Production Network
- ACR+ - Association of Cities and Regions for sustainable Resource management)
- AIDEA - Accademia Italiana di Scienze Aziendali
- AISME - Accademia Italiana di Scienze Merceologiche
- AIV - Associazione Italiana di Valutazione
- ASviS - Italian Alliance for Sustainable Development
- CiMET - Centro Nazionale Universitario di Economia Applicata
- EMES International Research Network
- Forum Nazionale per lo Sviluppo Sostenibile
- HDCA - Human Development and Capability Association
- IRIS Network - Istituti di Ricerca sull'Impresa Sociale
- Social Value Italia
- TCBL - Textile & Clothing made Sustainable

Where we have worked

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Where we have worked



Africa

Northern Africa
Algeria
Egypt
Libya
Morocco
Tunisia

Western Africa
Burkina Faso
Cape Verde
Ghana
Liberia
Mali
Niger
Nigeria
Senegal

Eastern Africa
Ethiopia
Kenya
Madagascar
Mauritius
Mozambique
Sudan
South Sudan
Tanzania
Uganda

Americas

Central America & Caribbean
Costa Rica
Cuba
Dominican Republic
El Salvador
Guatemala

Southern America
Argentina
Bolivia
Brazil
Chile
Colombia
Ecuador
Paraguay

Asia

Central Asia
Kazakhstan
Kyrgyzstan
Tajikistan
Turkmenistan
Uzbekistan

South Asia
Bangladesh
Nepal
Pakistan
Sri Lanka

Southeast Asia
Brunei Darussalam
Cambodia
Indonesia
Laos
Malaysia
Myanmar
Philippines
Singapore
Thailand
Viet Nam

East Asia
Taiwan

West Asia
Afghanistan
Armenia
Azerbaijan
Georgia
Iraq
Israel
Jordan
Lebanon
Palestine
Yemen
Syria

Europe

Western Europe
Austria
Belgium
France
Germany
Luxembourg
Netherlands
Switzerland

Eastern Europe
Albania
Armenia
Belarus
Bosnia and Herzegovina
Bulgaria
Croatia
Czechia
Estonia
Hungary
Moldova
Montenegro
Poland
Romania
Serbia
Slovakia
Slovenia

Northern Europe
Denmark
Estonia
Finland
Ireland
Latvia
Lithuania
Norway
Sweden
United Kingdom

Southern Europe
Cyprus
Greece
Italy
Malta
Portugal
Spain

ARCO’s research Units & their Services

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Social Economy & Sustainability Management Unit

KEY SECTORS OF EXPERTISE

- Social economy
- Social innovation
- Social & sustainability accounting/ reporting (ESRS, GRI standards)
- Corporate sustainability (ESG strategies)
- Social impact
- Third sector, non-profit & cooperatives
- Microcredit & microfinance
- Ratings
- Outcome contracts
- Strategic & organisational consultancy

KEY METHODS, METHODOLOGIES & STANDARDS

Materiality analysis (double materiality)

Reporting in compliance with Italian legislation (July 4, 2019, Decree of the Italian Ministry of Labour and Social Policies), **European policies** (CSRD), and **international standards** (GRI)

SROI Analysis - Social Return On Investment

EHD Analysis - Evaluating Human Development

Tools to design and model **impact-oriented business** (including Social Business Model Canvas, Customer Journey Map, Value Proposition Design)

LPRA methodology - Localised Participatory Research Agenda

Social Economy & Sustainability Management Unit

EXAMPLE OF SERVICES

Development and implementation of companies' and organisations' **ESG strategies**: elaboration of their sustainability vision, objectives, KPIs and actions

Development of **Social reports**, in line with the Italian Ministerial Guidelines for the Preparation of the Social Report of Third Sector Entities

Development of **Sustainability reports** for private companies and social economy organisations, in reference or in accordance with GRI Standards (Global Reporting Initiative), ESRS (European Sustainability Reporting Standard) or VSME (Voluntary Sustainability Reporting Standard for non-listed SMEs)

Organisational development consultancy for companies and organisations: participatory development of sustainability strategies & Theory of Change, M&E systems and digitalisation of organisations' social impact assessment systems; elaboration of inclusive and customised policies, including Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DE&I) policies, elaboration of organisational climate and culture surveys, competency analyses, internal well-being assessments and studies on corporate welfare needs

Social impact assessment of companies and organisations' activities and interventions, as well as outcome contracts schemes

Elaboration of **ratings** to support decision making

Support for **social entrepreneurship** development at organisation (social enterprises), territorial (social entrepreneurship ecosystems) and macro levels (public policies on social entrepreneurship and social innovation)

External evaluation (OECD DAC criteria) **of local, international and multi-country projects** supporting social enterprises and promoting social economy ecosystems

Applied research on social economy, social innovation, third sector and non-profit organisations

Assessment of social and economic **impacts of microcredit and microfinance** initiatives

Technical support for the design of **innovative, inclusive and accessible financial instruments**

Training & capacity building on the Unit's sectors of expertise

Local Development Unit

KEY SECTORS OF EXPERTISE

- Local & territorial development, sustainability, resilience & well-being
- Socio-economic policies & services
- 2030 Agenda & SDG localisation
- Youth participation
- Global Citizenship Education
- Commons & public goods
- Urban development & regeneration, urban inequalities
- Inner, rural and remote areas
- Homelessness, housing & housing policies (including social housing, senior housing)
- Sustainable tourism
- Cultural heritage
- Local strategic planning
- Industrial policies
- Beyond-GDP frameworks and measurement
- Migration reception & integration systems

KEY METHODS, METHODOLOGIES & APPROACHES

Amartya Sen's Capability Approach

Participatory & co-creation methods

Spatial analysis & GIS - Geographic Information Systems

SROI Analysis - Social Return On Investment

EHD Analysis - Evaluating Human Development

Local Development Unit

EXAMPLE OF SERVICES

Well-being and quality of life assessment & measurement at the local level

Territorial & sectoral diagnosis and need assessment

Strategic **territorial planning** and **participatory governance processes**

Valorisation strategies of community assets & public goods

Technical support for **SDG localisation strategies**, SDGs Voluntary Local Reviews & Youth Local Reviews

Stakeholder engagement and co-creation processess

Youth activation

Research & assessment of **Socio-economic policies & services**

Research & policy guidelines for development measurement (moving beyond GDP)

Research and assessment of migration reception & integration systems

External evaluation (following the OECD DAC criteria) of local and international cooperation projects focusing on the Unit's key sector of expertise

Social impact assessment (EHD, SROI analysis) of organisations' activities and interventions

Training & capacity building on the Unit's sectors of expertise

Inclusive Development Unit

KEY SECTORS OF EXPERTISE

- Vulnerability and resilience
- Multidimensional poverty
- Disability and inclusion
- Child & youth protection and participation
- Gender equality and women's economic empowerment
- Gender-based violence
- Inclusive labour market
- Access to educational services and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)
- Access to social protection and social services
- Time-use research

KEY METHODS, METHODOLOGIES & APPROACHES

Amartya Sen's **Capability Approach**

Human Rights-Based Approach

Bio-psycho-social model of disability

Mixed Methods (qualitative & quantitative)

Econometric Analysis

Scenario Analysis and microsimulation

Machine Learning

Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Methods (e.g., counterfactual impact assessment)

Participatory Methods

Emancipatory research

Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices (KAP) studies

Inclusive Development Unit

EXAMPLE OF SERVICES

Social research on the unit's key sector of expertise

Labour market assessment

Employability & labour market insertion skill assessment

Inclusivity and accessibility audits and assessments

Impact and social impact assessment

Ex-ante and ex-post micro policy analysis (including microsimulations and policy impact research)

Design of inclusive policies, programmes and projects

Gender budgeting and **Gender mainstreaming** in local planning

Gender auditing and **Gender certification** for public, private and non-profit organisations

Technical assistance for inclusive data collection systems, software and applications

External evaluation (following the OECD DAC criteria) of local and international cooperation projects focusing on the Unit's key sector of expertise

Training & capacity building on the Unit's sectors of expertise

M&E & Impact Evaluation Unit

KEY EVALUATION TOPICS

- Education & educational poverty
- Child poverty, child & youth protection & well-being
- Labour inclusion
- Gender equality & women economic empowerment, gender-based violence
- Food, nutrition & sustainable agricultural supply chains
- Sustainable livelihoods
- Humanitarian aid & emergency
- Social inclusion of vulnerable groups
- Migration and labour inclusion of migrants

KEY METHODS, METHODOLOGIES & APPROACHES

Learning approach to evaluation

Mixed methods (qualitative & quantitative)

Experimental & quasi-experimental impact evaluation methods

Theory-based impact evaluation methods (MSC - Most Significant Change, Outcome Harvesting, Contribution Analysis)

SROI Analysis - Social Return On Investment

Social Network Analysis

Cost-Effectiveness Analysis

Compliance analysis with OECD-DAC criteria (2019)

Compliance analysis with DCED standards (2017)

M&E & Impact Evaluation Unit

EXAMPLE OF SERVICES

Planning and conducting sample surveys, including large-scale (CAWI, CAPI, CATI)

Planning and implementation of qualitative and observational studies

Data management and analysis through dedicated software (statistical analysis and textual content analysis)

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) | monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL)

External evaluation (formative and summative) of local, international and multinational cooperation projects and programmes

Impact and social impact evaluation of programmes and projects

Technical assistance for the participatory reconstruction of the **theory of change** of projects, programmes and organisations

Technical assistance for the **digitalisation** of internal monitoring systems and Business Intelligence solutions for project and program monitoring

Training and capacity building on the Unit's areas of expertise

ARCO is a certified evaluator for:

> MAECI - Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation | Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS)

> Intesa San Paolo Charity Fund

> Impresa Sociale Con I Bambini

Circular Innovation and Sustainable Commodities Unit

KEY SECTORS OF EXPERTISE

- Circular economy
- Ecological transition
- Sustainable commodities & supply chains
- Agri-food, food safety (hygiene and sanitation) & food policy
- Agroecology & peri-urban agriculture
- Textile, leather & tanning
- Waste & waste-water management
- Plastic & micro-plastic
- Sustainable & circular tourism
- Urban agenda: urban regeneration & innovation
- Circular economy in mountain areas
- Environmental & quality management systems, labels & standards
- Integrated management systems

KEY METHODOLOGIES, APPROACHES & STANDARDS

Life-cycle approach

Living lab

Need analysis

SWOT analysis

International standards and ecolabelling

EU Better Regulation

Spatial analysis & GIS - Geographic Information Systems

Digital solutions

Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP)

Best Available Technologies (BAT)

Circular Innovation and Sustainable Commodities Unit

EXAMPLE OF SERVICES

Need analysis for the sustainability of supply chains and organisations

Laboratory product testing: chemical characterisation and quality control

Elaboration of **environmental & quality integrated management systems, certifications & labels**

Definition of **strategies, policies and policy recommendations** for circular transition & innovation at urban level

Design and implementation of **digital solutions and platforms** for circular economy practices

Gamified interventions for circular economy knowledge & awareness

External evaluation (following the OECD DAC criteria) of local and international cooperation projects focusing on the Unit's key sector of expertise

Training & capacity building on the Unit's sectors of expertise

Behavioural Insights Unit

KEY SECTORS OF EXPERTISE

- Behavioural & social change and interventions
- Ergonomics & user experience design
- Social marketing
- Literacy & educational services
- Health prevention & promotion strategies
- Environmental sustainability behaviours & practices
- Social inclusion behaviours & practices

KEY METHODS, METHODOLOGIES & APPROACHES

Approach inspired by the Behavioural Insight model

Evidence-based approach applied to psycho-social research

Participatory approach & methods

Co-creation approach to design solutions with stakeholder engagement

Game-based and **gamification approach applied to social change**

Mixed methods (qualitative & quantitative)

Observational method

Experimental & quasi experimental impact evaluation methods (RCTs-Randomised Controlled Trials, Before-After, Difference in Difference)

Nudging solutions for social and health challenges

Psychometric analysis

Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices (KAP) studies

Behavioural Insights Unit

EXAMPLE OF SERVICES

Behavioural & social analysis of contextual and motivational barriers related to social challenges

Design and **impact assessment** of **behavioural interventions** for social change, including educational interventions, health promotion and prevention, gamified or game-based interventions, policy interventions

Ergonomic & user experience design & evaluation of objects, services and spaces to assess/test/influence user experience and behaviours

Social marketing interventions to promote specific healthy/sustainable behaviours (e.g., quitting smoking, vaccination, waste-reduction) and identify behavioural barriers or enablers

Design of digital tools (i.e., Apps and digital platforms) to drive behavioural change

Training & capacity building on the Unit's sectors of expertise

Health Equity Unit

KEY SECTORS OF EXPERTISE

- Health equity, health accessibility and social inequalities
- Social determinants of health
- Public health interventions and policies
- Gender, health and gender medicine
- Health coverage and financial protection, including community-based financial protection schemes
- Maternal and newborn health
- Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)
- Prevention and response to gender-based violence
- Prevention and health promotion
- Chronic conditions, ageing and non-communicable diseases
- Health, environment and climate change
- Social innovation, participation and co-creation in healthcare
- Healthcare innovation: artificial intelligence, digitalisation and personalisation of care and prevention

KEY METHODS, METHODOLOGIES & APPROACHES

"One Health" approach

Amartya Sen's Capability Approach

Multidimensional approach

Mixed methods (qualitative & quantitative)

Participatory approach and co-creation

EHD Analysis - Evaluating Human Development

SROI Analysis - Social Return On Investment

Cost-Effectiveness Analysis

Cost-Benefit Analysis

Quasi-Experimental Methods (e.g., counterfactual impact assessment)

Social Network analysis

Econometric Analysis

Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices (KAP) studies

Health Equity Unit

healthcare minuscolo

EXAMPLE OF SERVICES

Applied research on health equity and social determinants of health

Analysis of Healthcare service accessibility: identification of organisational, economic, cultural and relational barriers with a focus on inequalities related to socio-economic status, gender, age, disability, migration and ethnic background, and territorial characteristics

Analysis of issues of social acceptability, accessibility and inequalities connected to **Healthcare innovation** (artificial intelligence, digitalisation and the personalisation of care and prevention)

Gender medicine and gender inequality: analysis of biological, social and relational differences

Political economy-informed stakeholder mapping and governance analysis from a multi-level perspective, with a focus on coordination between health and social services

Support for the **design and implementation of public health policies and interventions**, including **co-creation of public health interventions** (i.E., Training courses, prevention campaigns and information tools)

Evaluation of health and social-health policies, programmes and services, including impact assessment and social impact assessment of public health policies and interventions

Pre-feasibility studies and design for community-based financial protection schemes

OECD DAC (maiuscolo)

External evaluation (following the oecd dac criteria) of local and international cooperation projects focusing on the unit's key sector of expertise

Unit's

Training and **capacity building** for health professionals, decision-makers, third sector organisations and communities

For any further information
please contact:

Enrico Testi
Executive Director
ARCO
enrico.testi@pin.unifi.it

Camilla Guasti
Grants&Tenders Coordinator
ARCO
camilla.guasti@pin.unifi.it

Antonio Giordano
Grants & Tenders
ARCO
antonio.giordano@pin.unifi.it

List of detailed references available upon request

ARCO
Action Research
for CO-Development

www.arcolab.org

PIN Foundation
Prato Campus University of Florence
Piazza dell'Università, 1
59100 Prato (PO) - Italy

www.pin.unifi.it