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Enabling poor rural people  
to overcome poverty

## Report of the Chairperson on the sixty-sixth session of the Evaluation Committee

### Note to Executive Board representatives

#### Focal points:

#### Technical questions:

**Luciano Lavizzari**  
Director, Office of Evaluation  
Tel.: +39 06 5459 2274  
e-mail: l.lavizzari@ifad.org

#### Dispatch of documentation:

**Deirdre McGrenra**  
Governing Bodies Officer  
Tel.: +39 06 5459 2374  
e-mail: gb\_office@ifad.org

Executive Board — 102<sup>nd</sup> Session  
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For: **Review**

## Report of the Chairperson on the sixty-sixth session of the Evaluation Committee

1. This report covers the deliberations of the Evaluation Committee during its sixty-sixth session held on 3 March 2011.
2. All Committee members attended the session (Burkina Faso, Canada, France, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Mexico, Netherlands and Nigeria). Observers were present from Brazil, China, Egypt and Sweden. The Committee welcomed Mr Jean-Baptiste Kambire and Mr. Laurent Couliati from Burkina Faso, which has replaced Egypt as a member of the Committee. The Committee was joined by IFAD's Associate Vice-President, Programmes, Programme Management Department (PMD); the Director of the IFAD Office of Evaluation (IOE); the Secretary of IFAD; and other IFAD staff. As requested by the Committee, Mr Bruce Murray, consultant, also joined the session via videoconference for the discussion on the draft revised IFAD Evaluation Policy.
3. There were eight agenda items for discussion, which included: (i) the election of the Evaluation Committee Chairperson; (ii) the minutes of the Evaluation Committee's sixty-fifth session; (iii) the annual country visits of the Evaluation Committee for the period 2011-2013; (iv) the draft approach paper on the corporate-level evaluation of efficiency; (v) the progress report on the action plan for the implementation of the findings and recommendations of the Peer Review of IFAD's Office of Evaluation and Evaluation Function; (vi) the draft revised IFAD Evaluation Policy; (vii) IFAD's engagement with middle-income countries, with IOE's comments thereon; and (viii) other business.
4. The Committee approved the proposal made by IFAD Management at the beginning of the session to postpone the discussion of the item on IFAD's engagement with middle-income countries. The request was based on the fact that the proposal for IFAD's engagement with middle-income countries was discussed on 2 March at the informal seminar of the Board on the topic. Therefore, sufficient time should be allowed for the incorporation of comments made by Board members in the document prior to its discussion by the Evaluation Committee. It was therefore decided that this item will be included in the agenda for the Evaluation Committee session planned for 19-20 April 2011.
5. **Election of the Chairperson of the Evaluation Committee.** The Committee unanimously elected India as Chairperson of the Evaluation Committee, represented by Mr Shobhana Kumar Pattanayak, Alternate Permanent Representative of the Republic of India to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Agencies in Rome. India will remain as Chair until the end of the term of the current Evaluation Committee.
6. During the deliberations, Burkina Faso expressed its interest to serve as Chairperson of the Evaluation Committee in the future.
7. **Draft minutes of the sixty-fifth session of the Evaluation Committee.** The Committee discussed document EC 2011/66/W.P.3 which contained the draft minutes of the sixty-fifth session of the Evaluation Committee for approval by members. The Committee approved the minutes of its sixty-fifth session without further changes.
8. **Annual country visits of the Evaluation Committee.** The Committee discussed proposed options for its annual country visits for the period 2011-2013 as outlined in document EC 2011/66/W.P.4.
9. The Committee agreed with the suggested proposal and dates in 2011 to visit Brazil. It also agreed to include Ghana in its visits in 2012. Concerning its visit in 2013, it was decided to defer the decision to a later stage.

10. The Committee welcomed the interest of other Board members not part of the Evaluation Committee to visit IFAD-funded interventions on an individual basis.
11. **Draft approach paper on the corporate-level evaluation on efficiency.** The Committee considered document EC 2011/66/W.P.5 prepared by IOE on this subject.
12. Committee members expressed their appreciation for a well-prepared document. At the same time, they noted that this evaluation may require a substantial amount of time and resources for the exercise to be carried out in greater depth, because of its large scope.
13. It was decided that the Committee will discuss the related Inception Report once it has been prepared by IOE.
14. In addition, Committee members recommended that the following aspects of the scope and methodology be developed further while preparing the Inception Report: (i) the managerial efficiency of IFAD, including decision-making processes at the corporate, departmental and divisional levels; (ii) IFAD partnerships and how they affect efficiency; (iii) the IFAD administrative budget structure and components thereof; (iv) the composition of the Core Learning Partnership should be expanded to include representatives of IFAD's Governing Bodies; (v) an assessment of transparency and accountability; and (vi) the need for streamlining activities.
15. Moreover, the Committee underlined that there are risks involved in undertaking this evaluation and recommended including in the Inception report a section on risk mitigation, which should include a budget estimate and the composition of the evaluation's consultant team.
16. The Committee appreciated that throughout the evaluation there will be constant interactions to capture the views of IFAD member states. The evaluation will also take into account ongoing developments within IFAD and events that are likely to unfold during the course of the evaluation.
17. **Progress report on the action plan for the implementation of the findings and recommendations of the Peer Review of IFAD's Office of Evaluation and Evaluation Function.** The Committee considered document EC 2011/66/W.P.7.
18. In line with the decision taken by the Committee at its session of 14 October 2010, this report does not contain a summary of the discussion on the implementation of the findings and recommendations of the Peer Review, for which a separate Chairperson's report will be produced for consideration by the Board at its 102<sup>nd</sup> session.
19. **Draft revised IFAD Evaluation Policy.** The Committee considered document EC 2011/66/W.P.8, the draft revised IFAD Evaluation Policy, together with document EC 2011/66/W.P.8/Add.1, the Consistency of the Draft Evaluation Policy and the Report of the Peer Review of IFAD's Office of Evaluation and Evaluation Function and document EC 2010/64/W.P.2/Add.1, the Legal Issues Raised in the Report of the Peer Review of IFAD's Office of Evaluation and Evaluation Function.
20. The Committee was joined via video-link by the consultant, Mr Bruce Murray to support the Committee's discussion of this item.
21. The Committee:
  - (a) Welcomed this first draft of the Evaluation Policy;
  - (b) The General Counsel did not see any inconsistency with the policy as currently drafted and therefore did not foresee the need for a further written legal opinion;
  - (c) In paragraph 58 (f), requested the merging of (i) and (ii) and the deletion of the second part of (ii) referring to the President. Instead, requested that

the decision-making role of the Executive Board be emphasized, as the President's opinion would be expressed in the Executive Board and a re-start to the process would therefore be in the event of the Executive Board disagreeing with the recommended candidate;

- (d) Paragraph 59 (vi) was requested to be deleted as Director IOE is not a position that can be filled by a loan or exchange;
  - (e) In paragraph 65, requested that reference to the President in point (a) be removed; point (c), requested that the wording be changed from "should" to "must" with regard to the Chairperson's consultation with the Evaluation Committee; point (d) be edited to read: "The Chair of the Evaluation Committee must consult with the President of IFAD who would provide his/her feedback in written format.";
  - (f) In paragraph 71 (c), agreed that the timing of the due diligence should be revised in order to be undertaken prior to a final recommendation being made by the Director, IOE; and
  - (g) Requested that specific reference be made to the Committee's oversight role in the Evaluation Policy, which would be further elaborated in the revised Terms of Reference of the EC.
22. In conclusion, the Committee decided that the draft policy would be revised accordingly and presented to the next meeting of the Evaluation Committee in April. In order to enable Committee members to fully study the document, it will be distributed two weeks prior to the meeting. In the meantime, members of the Committee would have the opportunity to study the presented documents in more detail and make any further relevant comments to the Office of the Secretary and IOE.
  23. **Other business.** Two topics were discussed under this item. Firstly, the Committee was presented with some of the emerging findings from the corporate-level evaluation on IFAD's Private-Sector Development and Partnership Strategy.
  24. The Committee members appreciated the opportunity to review the preliminary findings related to the Evaluation of the Private-Sector Strategy and welcomed the timeliness of this evaluation given the ongoing discussion of IFAD's Strategic Framework 2011-2015.
  25. The Committee highlighted that by its nature, agriculture is primarily a private-sector activity and that working with it is at the core of IFAD's activities.
  26. The Committee members requested IOE to ensure that the following points are addressed in the final evaluation report: (i) further clarity on the definition of private sector and of the various levels (micro, small and medium enterprises) at which IFAD engages the private sector; (ii) thorough reflection on whether the development of a new dedicated strategy may be required; and (iii) assessment of IFAD's existing architecture and instruments to allow the Fund to effectively engage the private sector in its activities.
  27. The Committee also discussed under Other Business the point raised by the President of IFAD at the December 2010 session of the Executive Board on the possible conflict of interest in the selection of Mr Bruce Murray as the consultant to support the Committee.
  28. The Committee underlined that the selection of the consultant was carried out carefully in a free and fair manner, and that no conflict of interest could be discerned. The consultant was not engaged to implement the Peer Review's recommendations, which is the task of IOE and IFAD Management, but provide guidance to the Committee to facilitate the follow-up to the Peer Review of IFAD's evaluation function.