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Enabling poor rural people
to overcome poverty

Report of the Chairperson on the seventy-second session of the Evaluation Committee

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Executive Board — 106th Session
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For: Review

Report of the Chairperson on the seventy-second session of the Evaluation Committee

1. This report covers the deliberations of the Evaluation Committee during its seventy-second session held on 17 July 2012.
2. All Committee members attended the session (Brazil, Canada, Egypt, Finland, India, Indonesia, Luxembourg, Nigeria and Norway). Observers were present from China and the United States of America. The Committee was joined by IFAD's Associate Vice-President, Programmes, Programme Management Department (PMD); the Director of the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD (IOE); the Secretary of IFAD; the Chief Development Strategist; and other IFAD staff.
3. Dr Basel al Kayed, Counsellor, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and Mr Inder Sud, consultants' Team Leader of the Jordan Country Programme Evaluation (CPE) joined the discussions later in the day for the pertinent agenda item.
4. There were nine agenda items for discussion: (i) election of the Chair of the Evaluation Committee; (ii) draft minutes of the seventy-first session of the Evaluation Committee; (iii) preview of the results-based work programme and budget for 2013 and indicative plan for 2014-2015 of IOE; (iv) country programme evaluation of Jordan; (v) project performance assessment of the Community-Based Rural Development Project in Kampong Thom and Kampot in Cambodia; (vi) President's Report on the Implementation Status of Evaluation Recommendations and Management Actions (PRISMA), with IOE comments; (vii) draft report of the Chairperson on the Committee's country visit to Ghana; (viii) IFAD Partnership Strategy, with IOE comments; and (ix) other business.
5. The Committee decided to defer discussion of the project performance assessment of the Community-Based Rural Development Project in Kampong Thom and Kampot in Cambodia to the seventy-third session of the Committee in October 2012, to allow Committee members to discuss more in depth the other items on the agenda.
6. It was also decided that, with regard to the Draft Report of the Chairperson on the Committee's country visit to Ghana, those Committee members who participated in the visit should send their comments to the Chairperson of the Committee via e-mail by 23 July; such comments will be reflected in the final version of the document to be submitted to the 106th session of the Executive Board in September 2012.
7. **Election of the Chair of the Evaluation Committee.** The Committee unanimously elected India as Chair of the Evaluation Committee. India will remain Chair of the Committee until April 2013, after which Indonesia will act as Chair of the Committee until the end of its mandate in April 2015.
8. **Draft minutes of the seventy-first session of the Evaluation Committee.** The Committee discussed document EC 2012/72/W.P.3, minutes of the seventy-first session of the Evaluation Committee, for approval by members.
9. The Committee approved the minutes of its seventy-first session, with a change proposed by Canada to clarify the reason for their absence at the 71st session, which the country had in fact announced in advance.
10. **Preview of the results-based work programme and budget for 2013 and indicative plan for 2014-2015 of IOE.** The Committee discussed document EC 2012/72/W.P.4, preview of the results-based work programme and budget for 2013 and indicative plan for 2014-2015 of IOE.
11. The Committee expressed its broad agreement with IOE's proposed objectives, divisional management results, work programme and budget for 2013. The Committee also supported the proposal regarding the human resource requirements of IOE. As requested, clarification was provided regarding the gender balance among professional staff in IOE.

12. Discussions took place on the possible joint evaluation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) of the Committee on World Food Security in 2014-2015. The Committee reflected on the value of undertaking such an evaluation and asked for more information. IOE will conduct further research and come back with a more definite proposal in October, following consultations with the Evaluation Office of FAO.
13. With regard to the evaluation of the achievements of the replenishment process, IOE noted that similar evaluations have been conducted by the independent evaluation departments in other organizations, including the African Development Bank and the World Bank. The overall objectives and scope of such an evaluation will be determined in consultation with, and with inputs from, the Evaluation Committee before IOE embarks on this important evaluation in 2013, ensuring that its results can be made available in time for IFAD10 in 2014.
14. IOE provided clarifications on the methodology it currently uses for impact evaluations, as well as its plans to support Management in undertaking impact evaluations in the future, which are important in gaining an understanding of the number of poor people assisted by IFAD operations.
15. The Committee requested further information on the breakdown of the budget, such as the percentages of funds allocated for consultants. In this regard, IOE will provide the necessary information in the next submission in October 2012.
16. IOE explained how the key performance indicators in its results management framework were developed, including the baseline and targets. IOE will report before the end of 2012 on its progress in moving towards the 2014 targets, and in that process, will reconsider any key performance indicator baselines or targets as needed.
17. Upon the recommendation of the Committee, it was decided that IOE will prepare an evaluation synthesis on the topic of youth, before the one on pastoral development.
18. The Committee welcomed the preparation by IOE of the Gender Synthesis report of the Evaluation Cooperation Group (ECG) and requested IOE to share the report with Committee members soon after it becomes available.
19. The Committee suggested development of a mechanism for following up on the commitments and actions to be taken by the Evaluation Committee.
20. **President's Report on the Implementation Status of Evaluation Recommendations and Management Actions (PRISMA).** The Committee considered document EC 2012/72/W.P.7, the President's Report on the Implementation Status of Evaluation Recommendations and Management Actions (PRISMA) with comments by IOE. The document was considered by the Committee prior to its scheduled consideration by the Executive Board in September 2012.
21. The Committee welcomed the preparation and presentation of this report by IFAD Management, as well as the constructive comments provided by IOE, as it represents a central tool in improving the learning loop between evaluation and operations over time.
22. The Committee recommended that, in the future, recommendations stemming from higher-plane evaluations, in particular corporate-level evaluations, be highlighted in the PRISMA report in a section dedicated to such evaluations.
23. The Committee also requested that recommendations formulated in evaluation reports and not agreed to by Management be tracked in the PRISMA report.
24. With regard to the outposting of the India country programme manager (CPM), the Committee underlined that Management should make the necessary efforts to ensure that the CPM is posted to India on a priority basis, taking especially into account that India represents the largest IFAD portfolio globally.

25. **Country programme evaluation of Jordan.** The Committee considered document EC 2012/72/W.P.5, the CPE of Jordan.
26. The Committee expressed appreciation for an incisive evaluation and made a number of observations, which are summarized below, together with additional clarifications provided by IOE and IFAD Management.
27. The Committee recognized that the last two country strategic opportunities programmes (COSOPs) of 2000 and 2007, and in particular the latter, may have been overambitious, poorly constructed and not well implemented, in particular in the areas of policy dialogue, knowledge management and partnerships – the so-called “non-lending” activities. It also noted the need for safeguards to avoid such situations in the future. Management highlighted that, owing to questions of portfolio performance and the lack of realism of the COSOP, no new projects were provided. All projects, but one, were closed. Moreover, there is no allocation under the performance-based allocation system (PBAS) for the 2010-2012 cycle and there will not be an allocation under the Ninth Replenishment of IFAD’s Resources (IFAD9).
28. The Committee noted IOE’s clarification that the assessment of non-lending activities was undertaken against the objectives clearly embedded in the two Jordan COSOPs, where such activities were treated comprehensively.
29. The Committee noted that, although the CPE was conducted recently, signals of poor performance and of inappropriate targeting were available already in the year 2000. In this regard, the new CPM underlined that direct supervision has helped address implementation issues in a more appropriate and timely manner.
30. The Committee noted that it is not in a position to recommend to IFAD whether to disengage or not from lending to Jordan, although the evaluation recommendation to gradually do so is well grounded. It also recognized that conducting “business as usual” is not an option, especially given the country context and the implications for IFAD’s institutional efficiency in general. In fact, the Associate Vice-President, PMD, underlined that for the time being, unless the situation changes dramatically, IFAD has no plans to provide further loans to Jordan.
31. The Committee took note of PMD’s concerns on some aspects of the methodology, to which IOE provided the required clarifications. It was agreed that IOE make a presentation in the future on assessing the performance of country strategies and projects designed several years before the time of independent evaluation.
32. **IFAD Partnership Strategy.** The Committee discussed document EC 2012/72/W.P.9, the IFAD Partnership Strategy, together with IOE comments, for members’ review.
33. The Committee welcomed the report and expressed appreciation for the well-prepared IOE comments. It also thanked IFAD for tackling this central aspect of IFAD activities.
34. The Committee noted that it would be useful to prioritize partnerships, in particular improving collaboration among the Rome-based agencies and with governments. The Committee was also pleased to note that, in the strategy, IFAD is seen as a positive and constructive partner and as a broker of partnerships.
35. The Committee agreed with IOE on the need to find ways and means to cost implementation of the strategy and to develop exit strategies should there be a need to end a partnership.
36. **Other business: Procedure for the selection and appointment of the Director, IOE.** The Committee reviewed document EC 2012/72/W.P.10, Procedure for the selection and appointment of the Director, IOE.
37. Recalling that the current Director, IOE, will complete his second and final term of office at the end of April 2013, the Secretary of IFAD briefed the committee on the procedures for the selection and appointment of the Director as set out in the

revised IFAD Evaluation Policy approved by the Executive Board. It was agreed that the following activities would be concluded by the end of July 2012:

- (a) Lists A and B should nominate a representative to the search panel entrusted with leading the selection process. List C will be represented by the Chair of the Committee;
 - (b) The Chair of the Evaluation Committee will contact the IFAD President in writing to elicit a nomination from the President of a representative of IFAD's Management to the search panel; and
 - (c) The Evaluation Committee Chair will invite Committee members, Management and the IOE Director to suggest evaluation experts from the ECG, United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) and other sources to serve on the search panel, in accordance with paragraph 58(a) of the Revised IFAD Evaluation Policy (EB/2011/102/R.7/Rev.1). The three representatives of the Evaluation Committee on the search panel will review the list of names provided and make a proposal to the Evaluation Committee, which will agree on a "no objection" basis on two independent experts to sit on the search panel.
38. The members of the search panel, thus fully constituted, will select the chair of the search panel.