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Enabling poor rural people
to overcome poverty

Support to IFAD's governance: Measures and implementation plan for achieving greater efficiency

Note to Executive Board representatives

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Rome, 12-13 December 2012

For: Approval

Recommendation for approval

The Executive Board is invited to endorse the recommendation contained in paragraph 13.

Support to IFAD's governance: Measures and implementation plan for achieving greater efficiency

I. Background

1. The Consultation on the Ninth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD9) set two targets for cluster 4¹ for the period 2013-2015:
 - (a) a 25 per cent budget reduction; and
 - (b) a 27.8 per cent reduction in staff positions.
2. At the 106th session of the Executive Board, Management presented a paper (document EB 2012/106/R.3) containing a set of broad proposals along the following lines: (a) reduce the overall volume of documentation presented to governing bodies; (b) expand the range of documentation presented to the Board in only one IFAD official language; (c) reduce the range of meetings of governing bodies and their committees for which simultaneous interpretation is currently provided; and (d) introduce other cost reductions associated with the governance cluster. The set of measures proposed, which are consistent with the directions agreed under the IFAD9 Consultation, seek to increase efficiency without undermining the Board's capacity to perform its functions. In addition, these measures are designed to provide a strategic approach to servicing IFAD's governing bodies.
3. The IFAD9 Consultation stated that actions to achieve these targets should be "identified and implemented in close consultation with the Executive Board".² Therefore, Management has been requested to prepare a comprehensive set of proposals for adoption by the Board, pursuant to rule 27 of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Board, which stipulates that "The Board may, from time to time, consider and prescribe, with a view to its most effective operation, guidelines for the interpretation of speeches and for the translation of proposals, decisions and documents."
4. In discussing the framework document, the Executive Board requested Management to follow a phased approach in implementing the proposed measures.
5. Accordingly, an implementation plan is proposed below, which takes account of the feedback received from Board representatives during the September session.
6. The plan follows a phased approach, which – if approved – will enable the Executive Board to assess the results achieved at the end of 2013, while allowing Management to act, as appropriate, within a medium-term time frame. As indicated in the previous paper, both the measures and the implementation plan will require institution-wide coordination and strong support from Executive Board members.

¹ Cluster 4 includes the cost of holding meetings of the governing bodies (Executive Board, Governing Council and subsidiary committees, etc.), and the associated documentation, translation, interpretation and other services. It also includes support services provided by other divisions. The administrative budget of the Office of the Secretary presently accounts for about 80 per cent of cluster 4.

² Document GC35/L.4

II. Proposed measures

7. Four measures, to be implemented over a period of three years, are proposed for the Executive Board's approval:

- (a) **Setting limits on the length of governing body documents**, which will continue to be translated into all four official languages, as follows:
- (i) Country strategic opportunities programmes (COSOPs): 5,500 words, equivalent to approximately 16-18 pages;
 - (ii) Results-reporting documents (such as the Annual Report on Results and Impact of IFAD Operations [ARRI], the Report on IFAD's Development Effectiveness [RIDE], the President's Report on the Implementation Status of Evaluation Recommendations and Management Actions [PRISMA], the Medium-term Plan and corporate-level evaluations): 5,500 words, equivalent to approximately 16-18 pages;
 - (iii) Progress reports (e.g. on human resource issues and similar): 5,500 words, equivalent to approximately 16-18 pages;
 - (iv) Project/programme proposals: 5,000 words, equivalent to approximately 14-16 pages;
 - (v) Policies and strategies: 5,000 words, equivalent to approximately 14-16 pages;
 - (vi) Management responses to evaluation reports: 3,000 words, equivalent to approximately 8-10 pages;
 - (vii) Financial documents (excluding the budget and financial statements, which would be exempted from this word limit): 3,000 words, equivalent to approximately 8-10 pages;
 - (viii) Grant proposals: 2,000 words, equivalent to approximately 4-6 pages;
 - (ix) Miscellaneous documents (e.g. committee reports, planned project activity reports and grants approved by the President): 2,000 words, equivalent to approximately 4-6 pages;
 - (x) Information documents: 2,000 words, equivalent to approximately 4-6 pages.

This measure – once fully implemented – will achieve a reduction of about 50 per cent in the overall volume of documentation presented to governing bodies.

- (b) **Discontinuing translation** of the following Executive Board documents or parts of documents:
- (i) Information documents (such as arrangements for the session, status report on arrears, progress report on IFAD Initiative for Mainstreaming Innovation, etc.);
 - (ii) Addenda and corrigenda to projects/programmes³;
 - (iii) Annexes (such as tables to the budget, background information to ARRI or RIDE, etc.);

At a later stage, **discontinuing translation** of the following documents:

- (iv) Financial documents (excluding the budget and financial statements, which would continue to be translated as per current practice);

³ However, the information contained in these documents will be translated into all four languages after the session and included in the final revised version made available on the IFAD Member States Interactive Platform.

- (v) Documents for presentation at meetings of subsidiary bodies of the Executive Board and Governing Council (excluding documents for Replenishment Consultations, which will continue to be translated into all four official languages).
- (c) Continuing to provide interpretation at sessions of the Governing Council, Executive Board and Replenishment Consultations, while meetings of subsidiary bodies of the Executive Board and Governing Council will be conducted in English only.
- (d) Introduction of other cost-reduction measures associated with the governance cluster, such as discontinuing the funding of travel and subsistence expenses for Board representatives and field visits.

III. Implementation plan

8. In order to achieve the required savings by end-2015, the measures indicated in section II will be introduced along a specific timeline.⁴ This gradual implementation approach will allow the Executive Board to review the various steps in December 2013.

2013

- Word limit imposed for COSOPs, project/programme and grant proposals, results-reporting documents, financial documents, information documents, progress reports and Management responses, which will continue to be translated into all four official languages;
- No translation of information documents and annexes.

December 2013

- The Executive Board reviews results achieved to date.

2014

- Word limit imposed for policies, strategies and miscellaneous documents, which will continue to be translated into all four official languages;
- No reimbursement of travel expenses to Executive Board representatives for field visits.⁵

December 2014

- The Executive Board is presented with a proposal to amend the By-laws for the Conduct of the Business of IFAD, for submission to the 2015 Governing Council for approval,⁶ in relation to reimbursement of travel expenses to Board representatives.

2015⁷

- No interpretation services for subsidiary bodies;
- No translation of documents for review by subsidiary bodies;
- No translation of financial documents (with the exception of the budget and financial statements);
- No translation of addenda and corrigenda to projects and programmes;

⁴ For ease of reference, the timeline is summarized in table form in the annex.

⁵ However, given the rich learning opportunity provided by field visits and pending the outcome of the Evaluation Committee's deliberations, consideration may be given to identifying alternative sources of funding – for example by earmarking a small portion of the savings achieved through corporate efficiencies.

⁶ Section 5 of the By-laws relates to the reimbursement of travel and per diem allowance to representatives attending an Executive Board session.

⁷ Implementation of these measures is not planned until 2015, to coincide with the election of Executive Board members and alternate members by the Governing Council in February 2015, thereby providing Member States with lead time to prepare for the new working environment for Board proceedings.

- No reimbursement of subsistence and travel expenses for Executive Board representatives.

IV. Financial and organizational implications

9. The financial impact of the measures planned in 2013 is already reflected in the 2013 programme of work and budget of the Office of the Secretary; these measures, over a period of three years, will result in savings of about US\$810,000.
10. Further substantial savings are expected for the following two years, subject to the successful implementation of the measures agreed in 2013 and the adoption of the successive steps indicated for 2014 and 2015; implementation of all the measures will enable the IFAD9 targets for cluster 4 to be met by the end of 2015.
11. The volume reduction will enable a new Language Services model to be put in place in 2013. Under this new model, which follows the practice of other international organizations, each language will be supported by one staff reviser/translator per language, who will continue to ensure the quality of the services provided. The adoption of the new model is an essential step to achieve, over three years, the targets set by IFAD9.
12. As indicated in the proposal presented to the Executive Board in September 2012 (paragraph 38 (a), document EB 2012/106/R.3), a charge-back system will be introduced for cost recovery in cases of noncompliance with approved guidelines on document length.

V. Conclusion

13. The Executive Board is invited to approve the proposed measures and the implementation plan contained in paragraphs 7 and 8, respectively, as the basis for achieving the IFAD9 targets set for the portion of cluster 4 relating to the work of the Office of the Secretary.
14. Management will provide a review of the status of measures adopted to date at the 2013 December Board session.

Table
Timeline of measures proposed

<i>Date</i>	<i>Action</i>
January 2013	Set word limits for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COSOPs • project/programme proposals • grant proposals • results-reporting documents • financial documents • progress reports • information documents • Management responses
January 2013	Discontinue translation of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information documents • annexes
January 2014	Set word limits for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • policies • strategies • miscellaneous documents
January 2014	Discontinue reimbursement of travel expenses to Executive Board representatives for field visits
January 2015	Discontinue interpretation services for subsidiary bodies
January 2015	Discontinue translation of documents for review by subsidiary bodies
January 2015	Discontinue translation of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • financial documents • addenda • corrigenda
April 2015	Discontinue reimbursement of subsistence and travel expenses for Executive Board representatives