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Investing in rural people

Country visits of the IFAD Executive Board 2017-2018

Note to Executive Board representatives

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Executive Board — 116th Session
Rome, 16-17 December 2015

For: Approval

Recommendation for approval

The Executive Board is requested to consider and subsequently approve the proposed destinations for the 2017 and 2018 Executive Board country visits as well as the revised criteria for selecting countries for Executive Board visits.

Country visits of the IFAD Executive Board 2017-2018

1. The Office of the Secretary, with the assistance of the Programme Management Department, is responsible for managing the field visit programme for the Executive Board as per the recommendation contained in the Peer Review of IFAD's Office of Evaluation and Evaluation Function, which was endorsed by the Executive Board at its ninety-ninth session (EB 2010/99/R.6).
2. In December 2012, the Executive Board approved a new modality for country visits, which required the Board to decide on the destination of future annual visits. Under the new procedures, country visits would be open to participation by Executive Board members who were not members of the Evaluation Committee. Nine members would participate in the visits: four from List A, two from List B and three from List C. The Lists would decide on the participation. The visits would be fully funded by IFAD. The Board also stipulated that a maximum of three additional members of the Executive Board who were not members of the Evaluation Committee could join the country visits on a self-financing basis. These new rules were to be applied for the annual country visits from 2014 onwards.
3. In identifying the destination until now, two criteria have been used: (i) the presence of a relatively large country programme; and (ii) whether the country has been subject to a recent evaluation. The application of these criteria results in a very limited set of potential countries for the country visit in a given year. Furthermore, in Management's consultations with Evaluation Committee members and Convenors and Friends, it was emphasized that least developed countries and fragile states should be prioritized when selecting countries for the visit.
4. In September 2015, Management presented a rolling plan for the Executive Board's country visits for 2016-2018. The Executive Board approved Brazil as the destination for the 2016 country visit and, for the following two years, recommended a revision of the country selection criteria to include a higher number of least developed countries in future proposals.
5. Based on the above, Management recommends adopting the following criteria in selecting destinations for Board visits, in order to widen the range of potential countries: (i) the presence of an ongoing country programme (ideally with a mix of lending and non-lending activities); (ii) the country has been subject to a country-level evaluation or a completion report has been produced on the the results-based country strategic opportunities programme (RB-COSOP) within the previous two years; (iii) at least two out of three country visits over a replenishment period should be to a least developed country or fragile state; and (iv) adequate regional rotation must be ensured in country selection.

6. In light of the above, the plan for country visits in 2017-2018 is given below.

Year	Region	Country	Recent evaluation	IOE remarks
2017	West and Central Africa	Democratic Republic of the Congo	Country programme evaluation (CPE) (2016)	Adjust if a more recent CPE becomes available
2018	Asia and the Pacific	Bangladesh	CPE (2015)	Adjust if a more recent CPE becomes available

7. Of the countries proposed in the table above, the Democratic Republic of the Congo has the following characteristics: it has two ongoing projects with funding from IFAD of US\$91.7 million; a CPE is scheduled for 2016 and an RB-COSOP is foreseen in 2017; it is a fragile state and is also categorized as a least developed country. The Democratic Republic of the Congo is therefore proposed for the 2017 visit.
8. Bangladesh is the destination proposed for 2018. The country has six projects in its current portfolio with funding from IFAD of US\$254.75 million. A CPE will be completed in 2015. Furthermore, Bangladesh is a fragile state and belongs to the least developed countries category.
9. Accordingly, the Executive Board is invited to approve the proposed destinations for 2017 and 2018, as well as the revised criteria for selecting countries for future Executive Board visits.