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Approach Paper – External Peer Review of IFAD’s Evaluation Function

Note to Executive Board representatives

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Abbreviations and acronyms

ECG	Evaluation Cooperation Group
EPR	external peer review
EPRP	external peer review panel
IOE	Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - Development Assistance Committee
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group

Revised Approach Paper – External Peer Review of IFAD’s Evaluation Function

I. Background

1. IFAD’s Executive Board approved an external peer review (EPR) of the Fund’s evaluation function in December 2017, to commence in 2018 and conclude in 2019. As was the case for a previous EPR (completed in 2009), oversight of this exercise was entrusted to the Evaluation Cooperation Group (ECG) of which the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD (IOE) is a member.
2. An external peer review panel (EPRP) was established consistent with the ECG’s Review Framework for the Evaluation Function in Multilateral Development Banks (2008).¹ The EPRP developed a draft approach paper, which includes terms of reference and a timetable for the review. The draft approach paper was reviewed by the Evaluation Committee at its session in June 2018. In addition, comments have been received from IOE and IFAD Management; the revised approach paper will be presented to the Evaluation Committee for review in September 2018 and to the Executive Board for approval in September 2018. Members of the EPRP and the timeline for its work are presented in sections IX and X of this document.
3. The scope of the 2009 EPR included: IFAD’s Evaluation Policy; IOE’s performance and decisions based on its work; the effectiveness of the Evaluation Committee; and Management’s self-evaluation system. The exercise resulted in a set of recommendations.
4. Since then, a number of important changes have been made affecting evaluation at IFAD, including: (i) the approval of a revised Evaluation Policy in 2011; (ii) Executive Board approval of changes to the Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the Evaluation Committee; and (iii) IOE’s revision of the IFAD Evaluation Manual in 2015, including its treatment of process and methodological issues. Separately, Management strengthened IFAD’s results management system to include important new operational procedures. In 2017, IOE and Management agreed on a new arrangement for harmonizing the Fund’s self-evaluation and independent evaluation systems.
5. The current EPR will be undertaken in the context of broader institutional-level changes under way in IFAD, which will affect the Fund’s evaluation function in the future. These include the IFAD decentralization process, the overall Operational Excellence for Results (OpEx) reform agenda, the business model for the Eleventh Replenishment of IFAD’s Resources (IFAD11), the IFAD11 commitments and the Development Effectiveness Framework.
6. The preparation of this approach paper and the implementation of the EPR are guided by:
 - The ECG’s 2008 Review Framework for the Evaluation Function in Multilateral Development Banks;² and
 - The guidelines of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC), the 2007 DAC-United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) framework for peer review³ and the 2016 UNEG Norms and Standards⁴ (given IFAD’s hybrid nature as both an international financial institution and a United Nations specialized agency).

¹ As listed in the appendix.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

II. Objective and scope

7. Objective. The EPR is intended to provide an external assessment of IFAD's evaluation function, encompassing the independent evaluation function, management-led evaluation and engagement of the Executive Board. Its main objective is to strengthen the evaluation function's contribution to the Fund's development effectiveness and institutional efficiency. The peer review also seeks to: enhance knowledge of, confidence in and use of evaluations by governing bodies and IFAD senior managers; improve evaluation policy and practice; build internal capacities; and support greater use of evaluation findings in IFAD's performance management system.
8. Scope. The EPR will cover the period 2010-2018. Its scope will include:
 - The 2009 EPR final report and related documentation, including recommendations and comments from IFAD's Management and Evaluation Committee;
 - IOE performance across the full range of its activities and objectives, including IOE's evaluation methodology and the quality of its evaluation processes, reports and evaluation products;
 - Feedback mechanisms and learning loops, including management responses, agreements at completion point, President's reports on the implementation status of evaluation recommendations and management actions, and review processes for evaluation reports by the Evaluation Committee and Executive Board;
 - IFAD's self-evaluation system, including managing for results;
 - IOE independence in the context of wider institutional evaluations; and
 - The content and application of the 2011 IFAD Evaluation Policy, and related changes.

III. Approach

9. Key elements of the EPR methodology include the following:
 - The goal is to help IFAD to improve its operational performance and policy making, adopt best practices and comply with established standards and principles.
 - The review will be conducted on a non-adversarial basis, relying heavily on mutual trust among the institutions and their shared confidence in the framework.
 - Through this reciprocal evaluation process, the EPR is designed to create a system of mutual accountability and an independent external review mechanism that serves Executive Board representatives and Member States.
 - The review extends to all IFAD evaluation activities including self-evaluation.
 - The review will include a comparison with other institutions with a mandate, basic principles, policies and ways of working that are similar to those of IFAD.
 - Its four pillars are set out in ECG guidelines: independence, credibility, utility and management.
 - The Executive Board, through the Evaluation Committee, will be the main point of contact for the EPR and the recipient of the final report.
 - The EPR will include recommendations for consideration by the Evaluation Committee, IOE and Management.

IV. Evaluation questions

10. Evaluation questions drawing upon the OECD/DAC Framework for Assessment include the following:
 - Are IFAD's evaluation policy, processes and instruments delivering effectively on expectations for learning and accountability, leading to improved institutional performance?
 - What has the performance of IFAD's evaluation components and systems been relative to the 2011 Evaluation Policy and operational commitments?
 - What is the assessment of key stakeholders regarding the credibility and utility of evaluation in IFAD?
 - To what extent have evaluation recommendations been implemented and what has been the outcome of their implementation?
 - What is the status of implementation of the 2009 EPR recommendations?
 - To what extent are ECG good practice standards being used?
11. A detailed evaluation framework will be developed by the EPRP following the approval of this approach paper.

V. Methodology

12. The Review will include:
 - An evaluation framework specifying evaluation questions, judgement criteria, indicators and data sources;
 - A desk review of relevant documents and policies, and sample independent evaluation and self-evaluation reports;
 - Interviews with and/or surveys of IFAD staff and Management, IOE staff, IFAD's Evaluation Committee, Member State representatives and other external stakeholders to be further identified during the review; and
 - Special-purpose meetings as determined useful.

VI. IOE and Management Input

13. IOE and IFAD Management will each prepare their own assessments of evaluation function components they believe are relevant for the EPR. The purpose is to provide observations and analysis from the perspectives of active participants in IFAD's evaluation function. The ECG's Review Framework does not provide specific guidance on the structure or content of these assessments, and a variety of approaches have been used in ECG member institutions. However it would be most useful for the self-assessment to take into account: the issues and questions identified in this approach paper; the four principles of the IFAD Evaluation Policy; and experience with the evaluation function since completing the 2009 EPR, including implementation of its recommendations.

VII. Process and Timing

14. The ECG's Review Framework calls for a four-phase process.
 - Preparation: The EPRP is established, the approach paper prepared and approved, and consultants selected to provide support. A draft approach paper is prepared by the EPRP, with inputs by IOE and IFAD Management, and finalized after receiving feedback from the ECG Chairperson. The approach paper is reviewed by the Evaluation Committee and recommended for approval by the Executive Board.

- IOE and Management input: IOE and Management self-assessments are submitted to the EPRP by 31 July 2018.
- Consultation: The EPRP undertakes a detailed assessment and consultations with IFAD stakeholders and Member State representatives via interviews carried out in IFAD headquarters and conference calls. The EPR will not entail country visits.
- Synthesis: The EPRP prepares a draft report that is shared with IFAD Management and IOE for comment and factual corrections.
- Assessment: The Evaluation Committee and Executive Board review the final report and take any decisions they consider appropriate.

VIII. Governance

15. The EPR has been approved by IFAD's Executive Board. The Evaluation Committee will discuss the review as presented in the approach paper and endorse it for final approval by the Executive Board. It will also review the final EPR report before its presentation to the Executive Board.

IX. Panel Membership

16. Panel membership comprises:
- Joseph Eichenberger, Chief Evaluator, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Panel Chair;
 - Rakesh Nangia, Evaluator General, African Development Bank;
 - Susanne Frueh, Director of Internal Oversight Service, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and Chairperson, United Nations Evaluation Group; and
 - Lars Christian Oxe, Chief Technical Advisor, Evaluation and Research, Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
17. The EPRP will select one or two external consultants to provide support.

X. Timeline

18. Key steps to date and the proposed EPR timeline are below. A final timeline will be approved by the Executive Board in September 2018.

Timeline overview

<i>Item</i>	<i>Date</i>
Executive Board approves EPR exercise	11-12 December 2017
Evaluation Committee reviews approach paper	27 June 2018 and 4 September 2018
Executive Board approves approach paper	12-13 September 2018
Evaluation Committee reviews final EPR report	19 June 2019
Executive Board considers final EPR report	11-12 September 2019

XI. Financing

19. Based on previous experience, the cost of the exercise is estimated at US\$300,000. These costs will be financed by IFAD through a one-time contribution in the IOE budget comprising: US\$100,000 for EPR preparatory activities and data collection activities conducted by the Panel as supported by external consultants in 2018; and US\$200,000 for further analysis, drafting, revision, finalization and presentation of the EPR in 2019.

Provisional list of documents to be reviewed

- ECG's Review Framework for the Evaluation Function in Multilateral Development Banks (November 2008).
<https://wpqr4.adb.org/LotusQuickr/ecg/Main.nsf/9bd8546fb7a652c948257731002a062b/50790b09d3b1b6cd48257731002a065d/?OpenDocument>
- 2011 IFAD Evaluation Policy
www.ifad.org/documents/10180/3360f12f-4750-4df4-93c3-7af62d8ee0e0
- Evaluation Manual. Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD. Second edition, 2016.
www.ifad.org/documents/10180/bfec198c-62fd-46ff-abae-285d0e0709d6
- Harmonization Agreement between IFAD's self and independent evaluation systems
<https://webapps.ifad.org/members/ec/96/docs/EC-2017-96-W-P-4.pdf>
- 2011 Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the Evaluation Committee of the Executive Board
www.ifad.org/documents/10180/8bf5dc2e-ad32-4564-96d3-8d6661613829
- UNEG Norms and Standards www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1914
- UNEG-DAC framework for peer review
www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/103
- Approach paper and Final report of the 2009 Peer Review
<https://webapps.ifad.org/members/ec/58/docs/EC-2009-58-W-P-2.pdf>
<https://webapps.ifad.org/members/eb/99/docs/EB-2010-99-R-6.pdf>
- Deliberations of the Evaluation Committee in its March 2017 session
<https://webapps.ifad.org/members/ec/96>
- 2017 Annual Report on Results and Impact of IFAD Operations
www.ifad.org/documents/38714182/39709977/ARRI2017_web.pdf/98a9b688-b397-46e0-b122-a3f458059b00
- 2017 Report on IFAD Development Effectiveness
<https://webapps.ifad.org/members/eb/121/docs/EB-2017-121-R-10-Rev-1.pdf>
- 2016 Annual Report on Results and Impact of IFAD Operations
www.ifad.org/documents/38714182/39709860/ARRI_2016_full.pdf/569bcea7-a84a-4d38-867f-89b3bb98e0e4
- 2016 Report on IFAD Development Effectiveness
<https://webapps.ifad.org/members/eb/118/docs/EB-2016-118-R-8.pdf>
- 2017 <https://webapps.ifad.org/members/eb/121/docs/EB-2017-121-R-11-Rev-1.pdf>
- 2016 President's Report on the Implementation Status of Evaluation Recommendations and Management Actions
<https://webapps.ifad.org/members/eb/118/docs/EB-2016-118-R-10.pdf>
- 2016 IFAD's Annual Report
www.ifad.org/documents/38714170/39309732/AR2016.pdf/1f1a0e1e-6ebb-4480-a321-1da169f46198
- IFAD Strategic Framework 2016-2025
www.ifad.org/documents/10180/edb9b9d4-664e-42dc-a31e-db096e6a71b5
- IFAD Strategic Framework 2011-2015
<https://webapps.ifad.org/members/eb/102/docs/EB-2011-102-R-2-Rev-1.pdf>
- IFAD's Results Measurement Framework for IFAD10
<https://webapps.ifad.org/members/repl/10/4/docs/IFAD10-4-R-2-Rev-4.pdf>

- 2018 IFAD's programme of work and budget
<https://webapps.ifad.org/members/eb/122/docs/EB-2017-122-R-2.pdf>
- Revised guidelines for Project Completion Reports and Country Strategic Opportunities Programme Completion Reviews by Management.
<https://asia.ifad.org/enrap/resources/documents/Guidelines%20for%20Project%20Completion/Project%20completion%20report>