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Investing in rural people

Framework for Operational Feedback from Stakeholders: Enhancing Transparency, Governance and Accountability

Note to Executive Board representatives

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For: Review

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Abbreviations and acronyms

BFPF	beneficiary participation and feedback process
COSOP	country strategic opportunities programme
CSO	civil-society organization
FAFO	Farmers Forum
FPIC	free, prior and informed consent
IFAD11	Eleventh Replenishment of IFAD's Resources
IPF	Indigenous Peoples Forum
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
PDR	project design report
PIM	project implementation manual
SECAP	Social, Environmental and Climate Assessment Procedures
UNPFII	United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

Recommendation for review

The Executive Board is invited to review the Framework for Operational Feedback from Stakeholders.

Executive summary

1. Building on IFAD's well-recognized comparative advantage in advancing inclusive and participatory development, the Framework aims to ensure that key stakeholders' needs, priorities and feedback are better heard and taken into account by IFAD and governments in the formulation, implementation, assessment and evaluation of national programmes for sustainable rural transformation. In this context, the Framework's key objectives are to enhance transparency, good governance and accountability across IFAD's country operations, and ultimately to improve the quality and accessibility of services delivered to rural people – especially vulnerable and marginalized groups.
2. The Framework sets out the way forward and guiding principles for strengthening stakeholder participation and feedback throughout IFAD-supported country programme and investment project lifecycles.

Ways forward

- Country level: promoting enabling institutional environments and partnerships for enhanced transparency and accountability; fostering increased participation of organizations representative of IFAD's target groups throughout country programme management processes; and launching the revamped IFAD stakeholder survey.
- Project level: improving the design and quality of beneficiary participation and feedback processes; promoting meaningful project target group engagement throughout the project cycle; stronger integration of feedback processes in project monitoring and evaluation systems; and, increased attention to the development and implementation of tailored capacity-building programmes enabling project target groups and other key stakeholders to sustainably engage in and manage participation and feedback processes.

Guiding principles

- Results focus, context sensitivity, proactive social inclusion, mutual benefit, proactive public information disclosure and "closing the loop".

I. Introduction

1. IFAD's experience and that of others shows that inclusive and meaningful engagement with key stakeholders – especially rural poor people and their organizations – is instrumental to achieving sustainable rural transformation, good governance, social accountability and empowerment. The importance of these goals is echoed by the 2030 Agenda, which calls for action at all levels to ensure: accountable and transparent institutions; responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision making; and a substantial reduction in corruption and bribery.¹
2. IFAD's growing attention to these goals is reflected in its successive strategic frameworks, development policies and guidelines, as well as the establishment of the Farmers Forum (FAFO) in 2005 and the Indigenous Peoples Forum (IPF) at IFAD in 2012. The IFAD Strategic Framework 2016-2025 reaffirms their importance through the following principle of engagement and outcome:²
 - Empowerment: promoting policies and investments that strengthen the individual and collective ability of poor rural people to access the productive resources, goods and services they require to increase their earnings, and at the same time participate meaningfully in decision making that affects their livelihoods.
 - Improved country-level capacity for rural policy and programme development, implementation and evaluation: strengthening the capacity of national stakeholders (including government agencies, NGOs, private-sector service providers and poor rural people's organizations) to increase transparency, responsiveness and accountability in the planning, financing and provision of public-sector services.
3. While IFAD's performance in these areas is strong and well recognized, there is scope to reinforce it. To this end, IFAD committed to prepare a Framework for Operational Feedback from Stakeholders (hereafter referred to as the "Framework").³ The Framework complements other commitments to the Eleventh Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD11) to accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals and fulfil the pledge to leave no one behind. It leverages knowledge based on both evidence and practice from internal and external sources.

II. Purpose

4. Building on IFAD's well-recognized comparative advantage in advancing inclusive and participatory development, the Framework aims to ensure that key stakeholders' needs, priorities and feedback are better heard and taken into account by IFAD and governments in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of national programmes for sustainable rural transformation.
5. The Framework's medium-term objective is to enhance the governance – characterized as participation, transparency, and accountability – of IFAD-supported country programmes and projects. By meeting this objective IFAD's target groups and other stakeholders will be empowered to have a greater say in – and influence over – decisions regarding the development, delivery and adaptation of IFAD-supported country programmes and projects. Ultimately, this should lead to

¹ These are three of the targets for Sustainable Development Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

² IFAD Strategic Framework 2016-2025, accessible at <https://www.ifad.org/en/web/knowledge/publication/asset/39369820>.

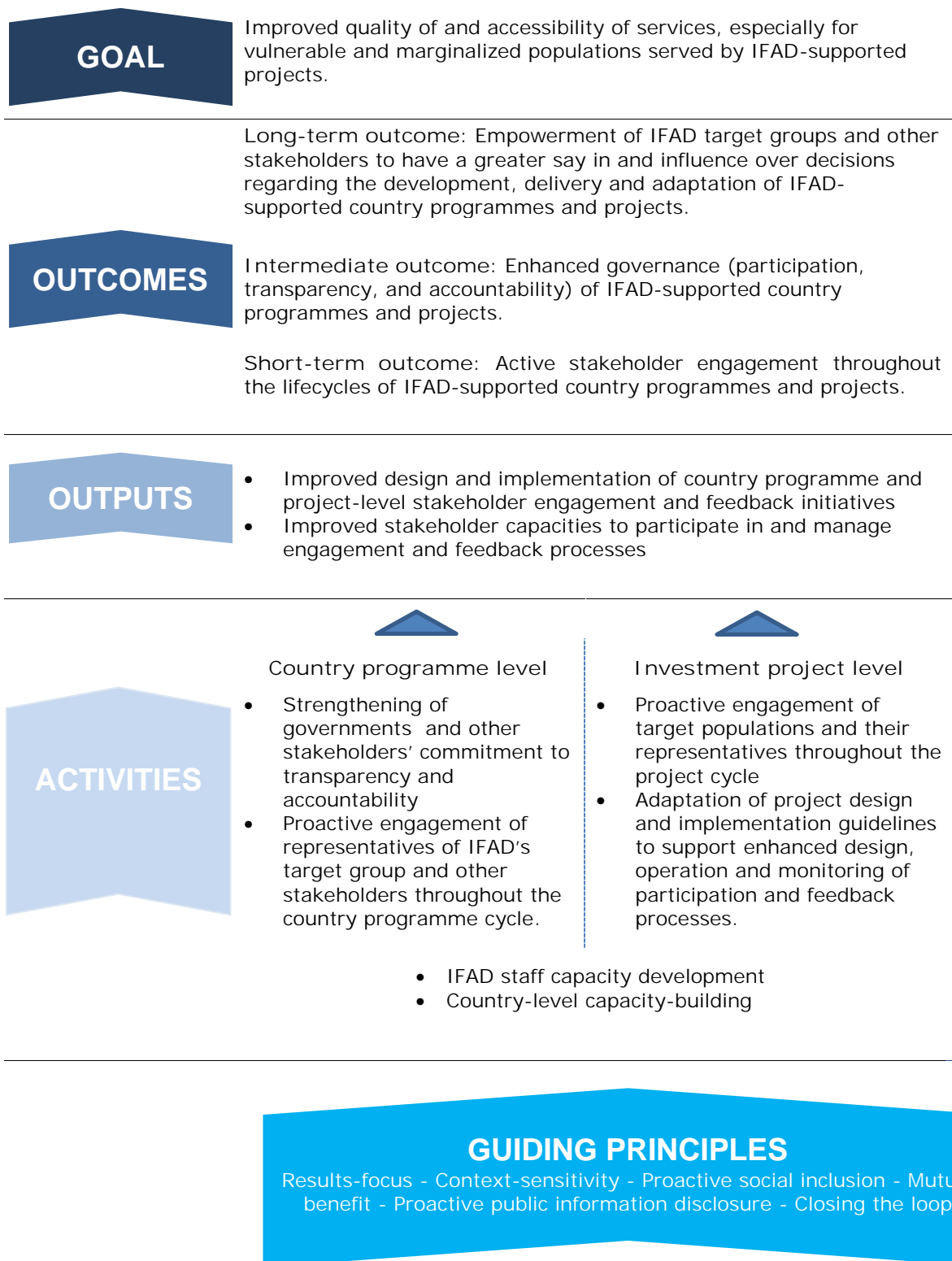
³ The Framework fulfills the IFAD11 commitment "Develop a framework for timely operational feedback from stakeholders, including a revamped client survey and an approach to beneficiary feedback/engagement." (GC 41/L.3/Rev.1).

improved quality and accessibility of services, especially for vulnerable and marginalized populations served by IFAD-supported projects (see figure 1).

6. It must be emphasized that governments are the primary owners of country-level stakeholder engagement and feedback processes. IFAD will play a proactive role in facilitating, supporting, and advising them in these endeavours. Through its Transparency Action Plan and the IFAD11 Results Management Framework,⁴ IFAD has committed to help governments become more transparent, an important element of which is a strong feedback loop between them and stakeholders, including rural poor people and their organizations.

⁴ The IFAD11 Results Measurement Framework includes a target for operations that advance transparency (indicator 3.9.3).

Figure 1
Theory of change



III. Scope

7. The Framework will reinforce stakeholder participation and feedback throughout the development, implementation monitoring, adaptation, assessment and evaluation of country strategic opportunities programmes (COSOPs) and projects. In order to enhance transparency, governance and accountability, particular emphasis is placed on strengthening “feedback loops”, i.e. opportunities for stakeholders to provide feedback, which is in turn analysed and acted on, with actions taken communicated back to feedback providers. Best practice is for such feedback loops to be in place throughout the entire lifecycle of country programmes and projects.⁵
8. At the country level, the Framework focuses on strengthening participation and feedback by stakeholders including: government authorities; private-sector entities; bilateral and multilateral partners; research institutions; and local and national representatives of IFAD’s target groups (such as civil society and farmers, rural producers, indigenous peoples’ and youth organizations). Stakeholders are typically engaged at key stages of the COSOP cycle and through the IFAD stakeholder survey.
9. At the project level, the Framework focuses on enhancing target populations’ participation and feedback in choosing, designing and regularly monitoring the quality of interventions and services delivered to them and in holding organizations accountable for implementing them. Processes employed to this end take different forms depending on country and local context and project and target group characteristics, and are generically referred to here as beneficiary participation and feedback processes (BPFs).⁶

IV. Guiding principles

10. Efforts to enhance stakeholder participation and feedback within IFAD operations will be guided by the following principles:
 - Results focus. Clarity of purpose is critical to the successful design of stakeholder engagement initiatives. It is also important to ensure these initiatives’ integration into country programme and project-level monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems so that data and insights can feed into performance monitoring and decision making in a timely manner. Stakeholder participation and feedback initiatives should be a well-planned, adequately resourced and agreed element of all IFAD-supported country programmes and projects.
 - Context sensitivity. Evidence shows that the outcomes of stakeholder engagement are highly context specific and sensitive to social, political, economic and cultural factors, including gender dynamics.⁷ In all settings, but especially in fragile and conflict-affected ones, the introduction of such initiatives requires examining and understanding the local socio-political environment and power structures, and the extent of supportive governance institutions.
 - Proactive social inclusion. There are significant risks that stakeholder participation and feedback initiatives may be captured by powerful elites, local authorities or service providers who have vested interests in reinforcing the status quo – in turn exacerbating social marginalization. Vulnerable groups that could be excluded from these initiatives should be identified and measures put in place to secure their engagement.

⁵ It is however recognized that this ideal cannot realistically be achieved in every country programme or project given countries’ differing degrees of transparency and accountability, and differing stakeholder capacities to engage in and implement feedback initiatives sustainably.

⁶ The term “beneficiary” refers to populations expected to participate at project design or who actually participate in IFAD-funded projects during their implementation.

⁷ World Bank, *Strategic Framework for Mainstreaming Citizen Engagement in World Bank Group Operations* (2014).

- Mutual benefit. An essential condition for participation and feedback initiatives to be sustainable is for the stakeholders involved to feel that taking part in them is mutually beneficial. Stakeholders – especially beneficiary communities – are increasingly solicited by multiple parties with little return on the investment of their time and opportunity costs. Thus, it is important to identify ways to reduce costs and increase the benefits of their participation.
- Proactive public information disclosure. Public disclosure of information is a cornerstone of transparency and an integral quality in effective stakeholder engagement. In compliance with IFAD policies and national laws, IFAD will encourage public disclosure throughout all the stakeholder participation and feedback initiatives it supports in ways that are appropriate to local contexts.
- Closing the loop. “Closing the feedback loop” is critical to the success of any feedback initiative. It is the process of communicating actions taken based on feedback back to the feedback providers. Empirical literature provides robust evidence that giving a tangible response to stakeholder feedback is fundamental for producing results, sustaining participation and improving trust.⁸

V. Current state of play

11. The premium IFAD places on stakeholder engagement and feedback is explicitly reflected in COSOP and project-related guidelines and procedures, and thematic policies and action plans.

A. Country programme level

12. At the country programme level, IFAD actively promotes participation and feedback by multiple stakeholders, mainly in the context of COSOPs (see box 1). Following the Revised Guidelines and Procedures for COSOPs⁹ adopted by the Executive Board in December 2018, the revised COSOP design process places increased emphasis on consultations by IFAD and the government with organizations that represent IFAD’s target groups, and COSOP documents include a dedicated section on beneficiary engagement and transparency.

⁸ World Bank, *Engaging Citizens for Better Development* (2018).

⁹ Document EB 2018/125/R.24, <https://webapps.ifad.org/members/eb/125/docs/EB-2018-125-R-24.pdf>

Box 1

Farmers Forum, Indigenous Peoples Forum at IFAD, and Rural Youth Council: Enhancing accountability to rural poor people and their organizations

IFAD has long supported the efforts of rural producers' and indigenous peoples' organizations to contribute to policy and programming processes at the local, national, regional and global levels. With the creation of the FAFO (annex I) and IPF (annex II) in 2005 and 2012 respectively, IFAD has significantly reinforced these organizations' engagement in its operations. Through both forums, IFAD and governments are required to make substantive commitments, to which they are held accountable. The forums draw on extensive grassroots consultations supported through IFAD grant programmes, supplementary funds from partners and the Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility (a dedicated facility to respond to indigenous peoples' needs and priorities through IFAD funded projects) to build target groups' capacities to engage in related processes. The forums' national and regional activities build towards global meetings that are held every two years for the IPF and every four years for the FAFO in conjunction with IFAD's Governing Council, to champion issues of strategic importance. The institutional assessment of IFAD by the Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN)¹⁰ noted that these forums are effective platforms for improving IFAD's and governments' accountability to beneficiaries, and have demonstrable influence on the design and implementation of country programmes and projects.

Leveraging the experience and achievements of the FAFO, IPF and Youth Advisory Councils established by other United Nations Agencies, IFAD recently established its own Rural Youth Advisory Council.¹¹ The Council will support the engagement of youth-led organizations in IFAD's operations as well as local, national and global policy processes. It also aims to support the development of partnerships among rural youth associations and networks. In addition, the Council will play a role in developing the capacities of rural young people.

13. Results reviews are conducted at the mid-term of the COSOP implementation cycle. Any restructuring of a COSOP or recommendations for extension require validation by in-country stakeholders. At COSOP completion, stakeholders are engaged to reflect on programme performance and inform IFAD's future strategy in the country. Country strategy and programme evaluations conducted by the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD (IOE) draw on feedback from representatives of IFAD target groups, who are also invited to the final stakeholder workshops to discuss findings and recommendations for the new COSOP.
 14. Since 2008, IFAD has regularly surveyed in-country stakeholders to assess the performance of its operations. Over time, a number of valuable lessons have emerged that have prompted a major review of its approach. As part of IFAD11, the Fund committed to revamping the existing survey to make it more robust, transparent and reliable.
- B. Investment project level**
15. Effectively all the projects IFAD funds – many of which are community-driven development projects – aim to build the capabilities of rural poor people and strengthen their institutions and organizations to foster their participation in local governance processes, and empower them to shape the decisions, services and policies that affect their lives. Successive IOE Annual Reports on Results and Impact of IFAD Operations underscore IFAD's comparative advantage and impact in this area, as consistently demonstrated by the strong results achieved against the evaluation criterion human and social capital and empowerment.
 16. IFAD's project design and supervision procedures explicitly call for beneficiary participation and feedback throughout the project cycle. This includes: (i) formal consultations with and consent of project-affected populations (see box 2); (ii) attendance at project start-up workshops; (iii) participatory monitoring of project activities; and (iv) consultations with IFAD supervision teams to share perspectives on project implementation, suggestions for improvement and feedback on the extent of their participation in project activities. As part of project supervision (undertaken at least once a year for each project), the "quality of beneficiary participation" is assessed and rated in supervision reports, which are

¹⁰ Accessible at <http://www.mopanonline.org/assessments/ifad2017-18/IFAD%20Report.pdf>.

¹¹ See the IFAD Rural Youth Action Plan 2019-2021 (EB 2018/125/R.11).

publicly disclosed.¹² Quality of beneficiary participation is one of the best performing indicators across IFAD's ongoing project portfolio.

Box 2

Free, prior and informed consent from project-affected populations and redress of grievances

Several IFAD policies¹³ and the Social, Environmental and Climate Assessment Procedures (SECAP) require that free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) be sought during the design and implementation of the projects it funds. FPIC empowers local communities to give or withhold their consent to proposed projects that may affect their rights, access to land and resources, and livelihoods. FPIC also ensures that beneficiaries and institutions endorsed by communities participate in project-related decision making.¹⁴

The SECAP also require governments to provide an easily accessible grievance process to facilitate resolution of complaints arising in connection with IFAD-supported projects. Existing formal and informal processes will be used and strengthened as needed to mitigate the social and environmental risks and impacts of each project. IFAD's 2018 Policy on Preventing and Responding to Sexual Harassment, Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, which provides guidance on reporting and managing sexual exploitation and abuse, is being integrated into the SECAP risk-assessment process.

17. Various approaches are used to mobilize participation and feedback from expected or actual beneficiary communities and their organizations throughout the project cycle (annex IV).¹⁵ Participatory planning approaches are an integral part of any IFAD-supported project (i.e. through village development planning processes that are aggregated to produce overall project annual work plans and budgets). Participatory M&E is also a common practice. At project mid-term and end-term, and at shorter intervals as needed, surveys are used to ask beneficiaries to assess progress, gauge their satisfaction with services delivered, and evaluate project results. In several projects a higher degree of beneficiary influence over decision making is achieved by including beneficiary representatives or civil-society organizations (CSOs) as members of project steering committees.
18. Ensuring that successes in strengthening beneficiary participation and feedback are realized more consistently across the portfolio will require closer attention to the following issues:
 - Descriptions of planned project beneficiary participation and feedback initiatives provided in project design reports (PDRs) and project implementation manuals (PIMs) are at times vague and not integrated, potentially undermining their successful operationalization during project implementation.
 - The frequency of beneficiary participation and feedback activities tends to be higher in the initial period from project design to early implementation, but diminishes as implementation progresses.
 - There is a tendency to rely on informal, no-tech modalities for collecting feedback, such as focus groups and consultations with community organizations. While appropriate in some contexts, these methods involve significant time commitments, costs and travel, and inhibit more frequent and anonymous interaction with larger numbers of beneficiaries.
 - In part due to the prevalent use of no-tech modalities, documentation of feedback can be irregular, with the risk of the feedback going unheeded and dampening beneficiaries' commitment to engagement.

¹² The rating assesses: (i) the existence of consultation mechanisms for the choice and sequencing of project activities; (ii) the degree to which activities are demand driven; use participatory methods for project M&E, including beneficiaries' evaluation of service providers performance; and (iii) beneficiaries contributions (cash and in-kind) to project financing.

¹³ These include policies on Improving Access to Land and Tenure Security, Engagement with Indigenous Peoples, and Environment and Natural Resource Management.

¹⁴ How to do Note: Seeking Free, Prior and Informed Consent, <https://www.ifad.org/en/web/knowledge/publication/asset/39181253>.

¹⁵ Community organizations may be formal or informal, including: self-help groups; water users' associations; community organizations for managing rangelands, forests or fisheries; marketing and business groups; and savings and credit groups.

- Analysis and building of target group and project/programme management unit staff capacities to sustainably participate in and manage BPFs should receive greater attention.

VI. Way forward

A. Country programme level

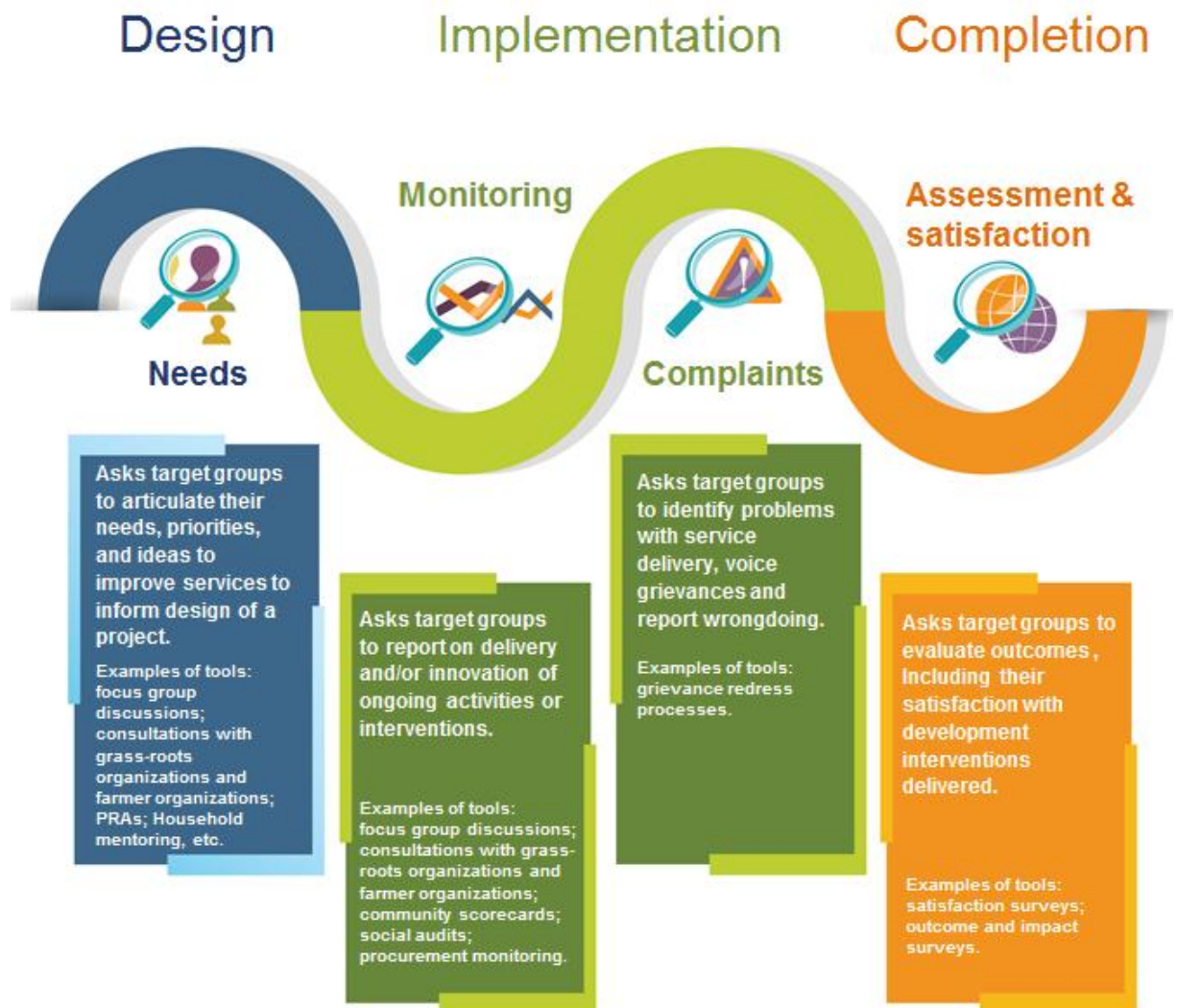
19. This Framework reinforces the recently adopted Revised Guidelines and Procedures for COSOPs, which place increased emphasis on inclusive stakeholder consultation, beneficiary engagement and transparency. It will complement other IFAD11 commitments including IFAD's Rural Youth Action Plan, the Action Plan for Mainstreaming Gender-transformative Approaches, the Operational Guidelines on Targeting and the new Partnership Framework.
20. Enabling institutional environment and partnerships. IFAD will actively pursue opportunities to reinforce governments and other stakeholders commitments to enhancing transparency and accountability. To this end, it will build partnerships with actors interested in advancing these agendas in agriculture and rural development. Furthermore, it will promote South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives and leverage the FAFO, IPF, Rural Youth Advisory Council, International Land Coalition and other inclusive global platforms and networks.
21. Inclusiveness of IFAD's target groups. Proactive efforts will be made to increase the participation of organizations representing IFAD's target groups throughout COSOP-related dialogues. In this context, FAFO and IPF activities will be expanded at the country level in tandem with the newly established Rural Youth Advisory Council.
22. Launch of the revamped IFAD stakeholder survey. Building on its experience and that of other international development organizations, the redesigned IFAD stakeholder survey will be launched in 2020 (annex III). Efforts will be made to ensure that it produces credible and reliable information on IFAD's performance, relevant insights into areas of improvement and strategic directions for future engagement.

B. Investment project level

23. Building on the solid foundations already in place, the Framework will promote enhanced quality and sustainability of BPFs throughout the project cycle.
24. Getting the BPF mix right. BPFs should be developed with a view to ensuring meaningful engagement of target groups in project design, implementation and evaluation, noting that they will evolve during the project cycle (figure 2). BPFs should be developed in consultation with stakeholder representatives in order to strengthen stakeholders ownership, commitment and capacity to participate in and manage them.
25. While the current approaches and tools for BPFs may continue to be relevant, new options should be considered if they have a comparative advantage and are appropriate to the local political, socio-economic, and cultural context. Modalities such as third-party monitoring and procurement monitoring, which are new for IFAD, may be piloted to provide additional transparency and accountability (see annex V).
26. Combinations of no-, low- and high-tech modalities should be considered. In addition to no-tech tools, technology-driven tools such as mobile phones, internet and social media should be explored to expand the reach and increase the frequency and efficiency of BPFs. It should be noted however that limited accessibility can potentially exacerbate inequities by underrepresenting or excluding more remote, poor and less literate groups.

Figure 2

Types of beneficiary participation and feedback, tools and relevance in the project cycle



27. Paying closer attention to design and quality of beneficiary participation and feedback. PDRs and PIMs should include a dedicated section describing the planned beneficiary participation and feedback architecture and associated BPFs and capacity-building requirements, noting however that these plans will likely require some adaptation based on experience gained during implementation. The quality and consistency of plans will be assessed as part of the internal project design review process, while the functioning of BPFs will be assessed during project supervision, completion and evaluation (annex VI).
28. The definition of a project's beneficiary participation and feedback architecture and BPFs will primarily be based on analysis carried out during project design to address targeting, institutions, SECAP and M&E requirements. PDRs and PIMs should reflect any detailed information available on planned BPFs at the project design stage.¹⁶ The PDR and PIM should also include a description of applicable

¹⁶ Plans should describe: (i) the purposes of the planned BPFs; (ii) who will manage them; (iii) how beneficiaries will be selected to participate in them; (iv) approaches for including marginalized groups; (v) how feedback will be collected, and how frequently; (vi) how feedback will be integrated into project management and decision-making processes; and (vii) what data and information will be publicly disclosed, how frequently, and by what means.

grievance-redress processes.¹⁷ By project start-up, the details of planned BFPs should be elaborated in the PIM.

29. Integration with M&E systems. In support of broader efforts to strengthen M&E, BFPs should be embedded in M&E systems. Data and information collected through these systems and other sources should feed into project performance management and decision-making processes.
30. Proactive public information disclosure. In compliance with IFAD's Policy on Disclosure of Documents,¹⁸ national data-privacy laws and safeguards for confidentiality and anonymity, information on BFPs, supervision reports and other project performance and stakeholder feedback reports should be easily accessible to the public, including beneficiary communities. Likewise, information regarding project, government and IFAD whistle-blower protection measures, and confidential reporting channels should be widely accessible in order to receive and address grievances appropriately, including allegations of fraud and corruption, and sexual exploitation and abuse. Complementing no- or low-tech modalities to disseminate this information at local level, project websites should also be used to expand public outreach and increase transparency.
31. Capacity-building. Participation and feedback initiatives that fail tend to do so because of limited commitment or lack of capacity among beneficiaries, project management units or service providers. Greater attention should be given to analysing constraints and barriers, and developing and supporting tailored capacity-building programmes that enable target groups and other stakeholder to engage in and manage BFPs sustainably.

VII. Risks

32. The expected benefits of this Framework are noted in section II. At the same time, the challenges and risks to realizing these benefits should be recognized. Implementing stakeholder participation and feedback initiatives in the poor, remote and disadvantaged areas where IFAD operates is challenging. In these contexts: failures in service delivery and lack of accountability for service provision may be acute; and soliciting stakeholder participation and feedback, and monitoring the performance of service providers is especially difficult.
33. At the project level, improving the quality and frequency of beneficiary engagement may require additional resources for designing and implementing BFPs, and building capacity, otherwise such initiatives run the risk of becoming "box-ticking" exercises. Policy dialogue with governments and other country partners to mobilize buy-in and commitment to transparency, social accountability and implementation of BFPs should contribute to mitigating this risk.
34. Realizing the benefits of social accountability initiatives can be challenging. Authorities, service providers and better-off community members may have vested interests in maintaining the existing political or socio-economic status quo, resulting in "elite capture".¹⁹ Furthermore, marginalized groups may be reluctant to engage since giving feedback may be seen as going against the interests of elites or local authorities, or may invite retribution or retaliation. Building pro-transparency and pro-accountability alliances with policy makers and strategic partners should contribute to mitigating this risk. Enacting grievance-redress processes and whistle-blower protection measures should mitigate the risk of retribution from providing feedback.

¹⁷ Grievance-redress processes should be defined in line with the: (i) SECAP (for social and environmental grievances); (ii) Revised IFAD Policy on Preventing Fraud and Corruption in its Activities and Operations; and (iii) IFAD's Policy on Preventing and Responding to Sexual Harassment, Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.

¹⁸ Document GC 34/INF.2/Rev.1.

¹⁹ UNDP, *Citizen Engagement in Public Service Delivery: The Critical Role of Public Officials* (2016).

VIII. Implementation responsibilities, timelines and resources

35. This section provides further details on the responsibilities and timelines for implementing the Framework (table 1). As noted above, the Framework's implementation has resource implications. Incremental costs related to the design and operation of BFPs, and related capacity-building will largely depend on the ambition of planned BFPs, and should be reflected in project costs.
36. For IFAD, there will be additional costs related to implementation of the IFAD stakeholder survey and development of guidance materials, toolkits, and training for staff and consultants to design and assess the quality of BFPs.

Table 1
Implementation responsibilities and timelines

Commitments & actions	Responsibility	Timeline
<i>Investment project level</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adapt project design, supervision and costing guidelines to incorporate requirements for enhanced BFPs 	OPR & FMD	Q2 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requirements for enhanced BFPs addressed in new projects 	PMD regional divisions	Q3 2020 onwards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen IFAD staff capacity (guidance materials, training, knowledge exchange and learning) and create a community of practice for social accountability 	ECG, PMI & OPR	Q3-Q4 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a methodology to assess outcome-level core indicators, which includes assessments of performance and satisfaction by beneficiaries 	PMD & RIA	Q2 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add a module on BFPs in phase II of the Programme in Rural M&E (PRIME) 	OPR	Q2 2020
<i>Country programme level</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reinforce governments' and other country partners' commitment to transparency and social accountability 	PMD regional divisions	Q1 2020 onwards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance inclusiveness of stakeholder feedback in COSOP processes, including through FAFO, IPF, and the Rural Youth Council 	PMD regional divisions, ECG & PMI	Q1 2020 onwards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch IFAD Stakeholder Survey 	OPR	Q1 2020 onwards

Note: Operational Policy and Results Division (OPR), Financial Management Services Division (FMD), Programme Management Department (PMD), Research and Impact Assessment Division (RIA), Environment, Climate, Gender and Social Inclusion Division (ECG), Sustainable Production, Markets and Institutions Division (PMI).

IX. Implementation monitoring and reporting

37. The Framework's implementation will largely be monitored through processes for COSOP and project design quality review, supervision, completion assessment and evaluation. Related documents are all publicly disclosed. Implementation of the Framework will also contribute to achievement of the IFAD11 Results Management Framework target for operations that advance transparency (indicator 3.9.3), which will be reported on annually through the Report on IFAD's Development Effectiveness.

The Farmers Forum Consensus²⁰

(February 2005, amended in February 2016)

1. The participants share IFAD's fundamental objective of overcoming rural poverty through the economic, social and political empowerment of rural poor people themselves and their organizations. They agree with and support the overall project of creating a Farmers Forum for consultations and dialogue on ways to "enable the rural poor to overcome poverty".

The Farmers Forum is:

- An ongoing, bottom-up, process – not a periodic event – spanning IFAD-supported operations on the ground and policy dialogue;
- A tripartite process involving farmers' organizations, governments and IFAD;
- A space for consultation and dialogue focused on rural poverty reduction and the centrality of smallholders and family farming development in this process;²¹
- An instrument for accountability of development effectiveness, in particular in the area of empowerment of rural poor people and their organizations; and
- An interface between pro-poor rural development interventions and the process of enhancing the capacity of farmers' and rural producers' organizations (including organizations of artisanal fishers, pastoralists and landless rural workers).²²

The Farmers Forum:

- Is guided by the principles of inclusiveness, pluralism, openness and flexibility;
- Is built on existing forums where possible, avoiding duplication;
- Respects existing organizations and creates new spaces where needed;
- Is a joint dialogue platform steered – at global and regional levels – by joint and inclusive Steering Committees of representative membership-driven producers' organizations and IFAD. Steering Committees have clear mandates, rules of procedures and codes of conduct; and
- Includes autonomous spaces for consultation and preparation among producers' organizations before meeting with IFAD.²³

Conditions

- The forum process starts with national-level consultations that feed into regional or sub-regional meetings. The latter shape the content of, and participation in, the Farmers Forum at the IFAD Governing Council;
- The forum process should feed into IFAD's governing bodies;
- The forum's success depends on IFAD's capacity to enhance country-level consultation with farmers' organizations and contribute to their capacity-building needs; and

²⁰ From the concluding statement of the Workshop "Towards a Farmers Forum at IFAD's Governing Council" (Rome, February 2005), endorsed by IFAD Management and 34 representatives of farmers' organizations from all continents, including the International Federation of Agricultural Producers, *La Via Campesina* and the Network of Farmers Organizations and Agricultural Producers of Western Africa.

²¹ The second part of this bullet point was added by a decision of the FAFO Steering Committee in February 2016 at the sixth global meeting of the FAFO.

²² An initial reference to indigenous peoples in this list was withdrawn in February 2016 following the creation of an Indigenous Peoples Forum at IFAD in 2012.

²³ This paragraph was added by decision of the FAFO Steering Committee in February 2016.

- Participants recommend, in particular, institutionalizing engagement with farmers' organizations in key IFAD operational processes (projects, and country and regional strategies).

The Indigenous Peoples' Forum at IFAD

1. IFAD recognizes indigenous peoples as valuable partners in its work at the international, national and local levels to fulfil its mandate. Through its experience, IFAD has learned that development activities with indigenous peoples need to be guided by a holistic vision that encompasses economic growth, empowerment, sustainable management of natural resources, and recognition and protection of social, economic, and cultural rights. To achieve this vision, it is necessary to ensure the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples at all levels. The processes and instruments set forth by IFAD in the past decade have been developed – and are being implemented – with the direct participation of indigenous peoples' leaders and organizations. The IFAD Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples (2009) was developed in close cooperation and full consultation with indigenous leaders, including members of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII). In 2011, IFAD, in consultation with indigenous peoples' leaders, established IPF at IFAD, an international platform for consultation and dialogue with indigenous peoples, which aims to improve IFAD's accountability to its target groups and its development effectiveness, and to exercise leadership among international development institutions.
2. The objectives of the IPF are to: (i) monitor and evaluate implementation of IFAD's Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples, including its contribution to realizing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and share and discuss the findings with IFAD staff, Member States and representatives of indigenous peoples; (ii) build and strengthen partnerships between IFAD and indigenous peoples in order to address poverty and sustainable development in a way that reflects culture and identity, taking into account the perspectives and aspirations of indigenous peoples; and (iii) promote the participation of indigenous peoples' organizations in IFAD activities at the country, regional and international levels, at all stages of project cycles, and support capacity-building of indigenous peoples' organizations.
3. The Forum meets every two years in February in conjunction with IFAD's Governing Council. It brings together 20 to 30 indigenous peoples' representatives, including board members of the IFAD Indigenous Peoples' Assistance Facility (IPAF), selected members of UNPFII, representatives of indigenous peoples' communities involved in IFAD-supported programmes and representatives of national and regional indigenous peoples' organizations. The Forum is governed by a steering committee whose membership consists of: seven representatives of indigenous peoples' organizations (two each from Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean, and one from the Pacific); one representative of the IPAF Board; one representative of UNPFII; and one representative of IFAD. The Forum's deliberations are reported to the IFAD Governing Council, which hosts panel discussions on indigenous peoples' issues. Action plans agreed upon by the Forum and IFAD are implemented at the regional and country levels.
4. The global meetings of the IPF at IFAD are informed by regional consultations in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Pacific, and led by regional- and country-level indigenous peoples' organizations.
5. As a further example of its engagement with indigenous peoples and farmers' organizations, IFAD consulted members of the Steering Committee of the FAFO and IPF at IFAD during preparation of the IFAD Strategic Framework 2016-2025.

New IFAD stakeholder survey

1. Surveys are an important mechanism for soliciting feedback from IFAD's stakeholders. Such feedback tools are vital for transparency, validation, benchmarking and learning. On the one hand, a perception survey furthers IFAD's commitment on transparency by actively involving stakeholders in assessing the Fund's performance. On the other hand, the survey can also be used to understand different stakeholder groups' evolving priorities in order to design the most effective tailored support in line with the Fund's transition framework.
2. As part of IFAD11, the Fund committed to revamping its existing client and partner survey to make the tool more robust and reliable in soliciting feedback from in-country partners and stakeholders. Building on its experience in administering the survey and benchmarking with other international development organizations, the new IFAD stakeholder survey adheres to the following best-practice standards employed by other international organizations:
 - Matrix questions: It uses similarly structured sub-questions presented in a grid format so that respondents can quickly assess statements on a four-point scale to maximize space and efficiency by capturing more information with fewer questions.
 - Measurable metrics: It breaks down abstract concepts such as effectiveness, policy engagement and partnership building into discrete measurable components for more meaningful analysis.
 - Holistic view: It captures feedback on the different roles IFAD plays – including a provider of knowledge, financing and technical assistance – which allows it to assess whether and how its performance diverges across these functions.
 - Benchmarking: Rather than asking about IFAD's performance in isolation, respondents can assess IFAD alongside other multilateral institutions, which provides useful intelligence about the Fund's relative performance.
 - Concrete action questions: It includes questions that allow an understanding of how respondents view IFAD's strengths, weaknesses and areas to focus on in the future, enabling IFAD to pinpoint actionable areas for improvement.
3. With these principals in mind, the following guiding questions have been elaborated in designing the new survey:

Constructing the sampling framework. Who should receive the survey?
4. To create the sampling framework, country teams will be asked every two years in alternating groups to identify individuals from in-country partner organizations that will receive invitations to participate. In submitting names for consideration, teams should ensure representation across the stakeholder groups of interest to IFAD, including governments, NGOs, the private sector and donor representatives. The threshold for participation in the survey will be increased in line with the practices of other comparative multilateral institutions conducting similar surveys, allowing for more meaningful and reliable analysis. Every country in IFAD's portfolio will be required to participate in the survey.

Constructing the survey questionnaire. How can we collect the most useful feedback?
5. The revamped survey collects nearly 50 pieces of information from each respondent. Given IFAD's interest in a clean analysis of its favourable versus unfavourable qualities, the questionnaire will now use a consistent four-point scale, which elicits a more measurable range of views. This design avoids a reversion to the mean that is common with other rating scales (i.e. 10-point scales). The survey is divided into the following sections:

- Country context
- Relevance of IFAD's country programme
- IFAD's performance in partnership building
- Effectiveness of IFAD's country programme
- IFAD's performance in country-level policy engagement
- IFAD's performance in knowledge management
- IFAD's performance in promoting transparency
- Future of IFAD's engagement in the country
- Demographics

Survey management. How do we field the survey to get the maximum response rate?

6. IFAD will field the revamped survey in each country within its portfolio once every two years within the same implementation cycle in order to facilitate more meaningful comparisons across countries. Any country that receives technical, financial, or knowledge assistance from IFAD should participate in the survey regardless of the nature of IFAD's presence (i.e. large, small or no country office). In order to maximize responses to the survey, IFAD will field the survey over eight weeks and send up to four email reminders prior to closing the survey, since these reminders are known to boost response rates substantially. In order to avoid overburdening respondents, the survey will be conducted in each country every other year. Countries will be divided into two groups, allowing data on IFAD's partners to be available every year. For example, countries in group A will take the survey in 2018 and re-take the survey in 2020. Countries in group B will take the survey in 2019 and re-take the survey in 2021.

Survey analysis. How will IFAD analyse the survey to get the best insights?

7. Upon completion of each survey, IFAD staff will clean and analyse the data in order to produce actionable insights for both headquarters and field-based staff on the Fund's performance, and inform future course corrections. In order to maximize the utility of the analysis for the broadest range of stakeholders, the results will be analysed at the following levels: (i) an aggregate of the results will feed into the indicators in the IFAD Results Management Framework (3.3, 3.3.1, 3.3.4, 3.3.5 and 3.3.6) and will be reported on annually through the Report on IFAD's Development Effectiveness; (ii) a more detailed internal report for Senior Management will be prepared to assess trends in IFAD's performance by area, stakeholder group, country context (i.e. type of government, income level, geographic region), summarize findings and make recommendations from the analysis; and (iii) fact sheets will be produced to summarize the country-specific results in each country.

Selected success stories

Ethiopia: Pastoral Community Development Project III

This project promotes broad participation and community decision making in local development based on initial sensitization and social mapping along with situation analysis, articulation of a development vision and development of a community development plan at the kebele (community) level with representatives of different community groups, including women. The project rolled out the community-driven development approach by building community institutions that engage in planning and resource mobilization, implement small public-investment projects and participate in the oversight of service delivery. In addition, the project introduced community level self-monitoring and learning. The project therefore promotes active participation and sharing of responsibility by government and communities.

Jordan: Rural Economic Growth and Employment Project

The overriding principle of participation in this project is demand by the beneficiaries. Smallholder farmers participate in farmer field schools – a proven, low-cost methodology for delivering agricultural extension services and building the foundations for farmer groups. While farmers decide on their participation in farmer field schools, a partner NGO undertakes regular beneficiary surveys with participants and records their level of satisfaction with the various interventions.

Kenya: Upper Tana Catchment Natural Resource Management Project

The project uses a participatory rural appraisal process based on sensitization of community leaders, and mobilization of communities to attend public meetings. At these meetings, beneficiaries are informed about the project and assisted in preparing community action plans and recording community development priorities. The project relies on a bulk text-messaging service provider that has established a cost-efficient platform for passing notifications to community members.

Kyrgyzstan: Agricultural Investments and Services Project

This project provides an excellent example of long-term sustainable human and social capital development, empowerment, and inclusiveness. For example, it supported the implementation of inclusive pasture reform, which fostered enhanced equality in access to pastures and pasture users' participation in decision making. Social mobilization and capacity-building activities underlying pasture reform set in motion a dynamic process, which resulted in the coordination of pasture-management planning processes by community-level organizations. The project's enabling framework for community empowerment ensures the sustainability of the benefits of enhanced community-based pasture management.

Uruguay: Rural Inclusion Pilot Project

To ensure broader and deeper social inclusion of its target groups, this project relies on rural development tables, which were created within the context of decentralization to encourage the participation of rural civil society in implementing rural development policies. These rural development tables are used to formulate and follow up on proposals by the project's target groups, who are also part of the decision-making process.

Annual outcome surveys

Piloted in the Asia and Pacific region, the annual outcome survey methodology is a simple, cost-effective IFAD monitoring and evaluation tool geared to local M&E capacities and sensitive to target groups' time constraints. The surveys allow project managers and stakeholders to: review a project's performance and outcomes at the household level; assess the efficacy of its targeting strategy and beneficiaries' satisfaction with services delivered; and provide early indication of the project's success or failure. Following the introduction of IFAD's core indicators, the annual outcome survey methodology is being adapted to make it more relevant for measuring outcome-level core indicators.

Third-party monitoring and procurement monitoring

Third-party monitoring provides an independent perspective on project or government performance. Conducted by parties that are external to the project target groups and management structure, it assesses: whether intended outputs, outcomes, and impacts have been achieved; and whether stakeholder feedback processes are functioning as intended. It can be conducted by CSOs, think tanks, academic institutions, media organizations or private firms. Third-party monitoring may also be used for on-site supervision, reporting and implementation support for projects in fragile and security-challenged situations that prevent IFAD staff from directly supervising them.

Procurement monitoring. Participatory procurement monitoring typically involves beneficiaries, communities or CSOs in independent monitoring of procurement activities, with the aim of ensuring adherence to the fundamental public procurement principles of transparency, accountability, fairness and competitiveness, along with applicable procurement guidelines and procedures. Studies have shown that citizen oversight of procurement activities can lead to reduced corruption, better service delivery and more savings. It also has the broader effect of mobilizing public opinion in favour of increased transparency, tackling corruption and influencing laws and policies.

Participatory procurement monitoring is recommended for high-value procurement and cannot be implemented across the entire spectrum a project's procurement activities.

Ensuring proper beneficiary or CSO involvement in these processes involves:

- The need for intensive training of beneficiaries or their representatives in order to cope with the complex technical issues common in procurement;
- Funds for transportation to key meetings such as bid openings and evaluation committee meetings; and
- Availability of appropriate grievance-redress channels to report complaints and issues arising during contract implementation.

Examples of participation and feedback indicators

Project-level indicators

Output oriented	Outcome oriented
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of beneficiaries and CSOs consulted on a regular basis • Number of beneficiary surveys completed • Number of functioning grievance processes with registry of complaints and recording of response times • Number of BFPs with measures for proactive social inclusion • Number of beneficiaries or CSOs participating in project steering committee meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of funds allocated based on BFPs • Changes to project activities because of consultations (yes/no) • Grievances registered that are addressed (percentage) • Percentage of beneficiaries satisfied with community involvement in project design and implementation • Percentage of beneficiaries that perceive their role in decision making has increased • Percentage of beneficiaries reporting improvements in project results and processes