
IFAD Data Governance Policy

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Useful references: Information and Communication Technology for Development (ICT4D) Strategy ([EB 2019/128/R.5](#)); and Development Effectiveness in the Decade of Action: An Update to IFAD's Development Effectiveness Framework ([EB 2021/134/R.24](#)).

Action: The Executive Board is invited to review and approve the IFAD Data Governance Policy to guide the ways in which IFAD uses, processes and disseminates data, including operational and administrative data.

Technical questions:

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Executive summary

1. Recognizing the importance of data to IFAD as an essential asset to underpin decision-making, and in line with the United Nations Secretary-General's Data Strategy for Action by Everyone, Everywhere with Insight, Impact and Integrity, IFAD committed to the development of a data governance policy under the action plan of the Information and Communication Technology for Development (ICT4D) Strategy (2020-2030).
2. The policy will govern the ways in which IFAD uses, processes and disseminates data, including operational and administrative data.
3. The principles guiding the policy are as follows: it should be people-centred to generate benefits for rural people through data use, and do no harm; all data should be systematically assessed for quality and integrity; data should be findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable, and ensure accountability and transparency; data management should be proportional and minimally burdensome; and IFAD should promote a data-driven culture of decision-making.
4. This document describes the data governance structure at strategic, tactical and operational levels for the optimal organization and use of data in IFAD. The document also covers risks and mitigation measures related to the policy and provides high-level guidance on the implementation and monitoring and evaluation of the policy.

IFAD Data Governance Policy

I. Introduction

1. Reliable, timely and granular data is needed to support achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), to monitor where progress is being made and where goals are lagging behind. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic and recent global price shocks have resulted in an unprecedented need for timely data to enable decision-making and to inform policies and planning for managing risks and crises. Data also has an integral role to play in long-term strategic decision-making, and to address the pressing issues of climate change, dysfunctional food systems, fragility and conflict.
2. The importance of data to deliver the SDGs is underscored in the United Nations Secretary-General's Data Strategy for Action by Everyone, Everywhere with Insight, Impact and Integrity (2020-2022), which aims to unlock the full potential of data throughout the United Nations system. To this end, several prerequisites such as sound data governance need to be in place to enable good practices and use of data as a strategic asset throughout its life cycle from data collection through to dissemination. IFAD seeks to align its Data Governance Policy with the Secretary-General's data strategy by creating a data-driven organizational culture while leveraging the United Nations data ecosystem to deliver on the SDGs, primarily SDGs 1 and 2.
3. IFAD is dependent on data – including project-level data, indicators, and operational, administrative and financial data – for purposes of transparency, accountability to donors, project design, country programme implementation support, and results monitoring and reporting. Data management systems maintained by IFAD can be categorized as either administrative or operational in nature. Administrative data systems cover corporate financial and accounting data (contracts, general ledger, commitments, financial reporting); banking and treasury data; and human resources management (workforce administration, recruitment, performance management), payroll, salaries and benefits, medical records and health data. Operational data encompasses the management of IFAD's sovereign loans and grants, including loan and grant agreements, financing agreements, project finance tracking and management, implementation, supervision and completion reports, results reported to governing bodies and Member States, and project impact assessments results; and data related to investments and activities implemented under non-sovereign operations, supplementary funds, facilities, initiatives, grants and non-lending activities.
4. Corporate systems that host most operational data are centrally managed in a secure way and are generally well integrated and easy to locate, with data accessible through well-designed interfaces and dashboards to meet the needs of internal and most external users. There remain, however, other datasets, such as impact assessment results, activities of supplementary funds, initiatives and facilities data (e.g. the Indigenous Peoples' Assistance Facility and the Rural Poor Stimulus Facility assessment data) that are presently not managed centrally within corporate systems. Additionally, information on costs and resources in flow data on supplementary funds is fragmented. Some of this information is maintained in silos within IFAD where it is not easily accessible by IFAD personnel outside of the specific group of data owners. Administrative data on IFAD's internal processes, such as administrative services provided and associated vendors, is available but with minimal usability in the absence of codification and comparability.

5. Externally, IFAD provides information about ongoing and past operations by region and country,¹ the loans and grants pipeline, and ongoing operational performance through a dedicated external dashboard,² and project and grant webpages.³ In addition, while IFAD does not currently have its own data portal, extensive project information is published online through external dashboards and supervisory reports, and on the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) website. This is an outcome of IFAD's transparency initiative, which was at the heart of changes in IFAD's sharing of data with IATI in 2017, pursuant to Member States' interest in greater transparency at IFAD.⁴ With ever greater ambition for transparency in a changing world, and informed by new approaches and technologies on data that are emerging, IFAD is seeking to build on its past transparency initiative through further investments and efforts on data governance.
6. In December 2019, the Executive Board approved the first IFAD Information and Communication Technology for Development (ICT4D) Strategy (2020-2030).⁵ This was followed by the development of an ICT4D action plan wherein Management committed to developing a data governance policy, recognizing the importance of data in IFAD's activities and various forms of engagement, including on ICT4D, as well as in terms of external accountability and transparency. The adoption of a data governance policy will provide the necessary framework to enshrine all data-related initiatives at IFAD.
7. The benefits of a data governance policy include: (i) efficient and timely use of high-quality data for data-driven and evidence-based decision-making to support operation design and implementation that deliver measurable impact; (ii) ensuring interoperability, consistency between datasets and accessibility of data; (iii) promoting the standardization and harmonization of data content and improvements in existing documentation and metadata; (iv) reducing IFAD's risk exposure, given the growing use of public and other external data sources as described in the Enterprise Risk Management Policy⁶ covering strategic, operational, financial, programme delivery and cross-cutting legal and reputational risks; and (v) increasing the value of data as a strategic asset for enhancing IFAD's impact.
8. The Data Governance Policy contained herein will govern the ways in which IFAD generates, uses, processes and disseminates data. The policy also provides guiding principles on engagement with data. The policy applies to the IFAD workforce, who will manage and handle data in accordance with such principles. The policy covers end-to-end data processing, which refers to all data entered into IFAD systems and processed by IFAD personnel, including operational and administrative data. The responsibility and accountability of IFAD personnel for such data will depend on the degree of their control over the data in question (for example, whether it is produced by IFAD or externally sourced). In general, different levels of responsibility and accountability in relation to data by IFAD and IFAD personnel will be attributed according to the sensitivity of the respective data and the degree of control that can be exercised by IFAD.
9. "Data" in the policy refers to information, facts, statistics and figures collected or sourced by IFAD as part of operational and administrative activities, for subsequent processing and analysis by IFAD or other authorized parties on behalf of IFAD. The term here also covers documents, reports, audio, images and video content, which can be sources of information, facts, statistics and figures. Sensitive personal data, including personally identifiable information, while included in the scope of this

¹ <https://www.ifad.org/en/web/operations/regions>.

² <https://www.ifad.org/en/web/operations/operations-dashboard>.

³ For example, <https://www.ifad.org/en/web/operations/-/project/2000002247>.

⁴ For details, see document EB 2017/122/R.29, Increasing Transparency for Greater Accountability – Action plan

⁵ [ICT4D strategy](#).

⁶ [Enterprise Risk Management Policy](#).

policy, is to be treated in accordance with the internally issued President's Bulletin PB/2021/15 – Updated Personal Data Protection and Privacy Guidelines for IFAD. In general, data protection and data privacy issues are covered by other IFAD policies and are fully integrated with and reflected in the text of this policy.⁷

10. The target audience of the policy is IFAD's workforce. Internally, the policy will guide IFAD personnel on how they should manage data throughout its life cycle, from collection to use and dissemination, to ensure data quality, reliability, accessibility, findability and interoperability. The policy will also provide guidance on how IFAD engages with external parties on data issues.
11. The policy addresses risks associated with data management and processing that could negatively affect IFAD's reputation and credibility (see annex IV).

II. Lessons learned

12. A review of international data governance best practices was conducted during the development of this policy. This included interviews with data officers in 15 United Nations organizations and international financial institutions (IFIs), as well as a desk review of key policies and documents (see annex VI). Key lessons and findings are as follows: (i) most international agencies focus on fairness, transparency, accountability and international standards (see annex V) where statistical standards and harmonized metadata classifications are concerned, including data quality, data access and interoperability – these are important elements of any data governance policy; (ii) it is important to separate governance of personal data and privacy issues from governance of non-personal data, as these different types of data expose the organization to different types of risks and require distinct approaches and tools; and (iii) necessary actions to ensure successful implementation of such a policy include creating a data culture within the organization, investing in the necessary information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure and building human resources capacity on data use and data governance for impact.
13. An internal problem analysis was also conducted to inform the development of the data governance policy. This identified the main concerns for data users in IFAD to be data quality, locating data, data interoperability, unclear data standards and harmonization, silo-oriented data management practices and unclear data accountability. A separate review of IFAD data management systems identified the need for enhanced linkages between operational and administrative data, and for structural stability to achieve data interoperability. These are critical aspects for inclusion in a data governance policy to modernize IFAD's data systems and data use.

III. IFAD Data Governance Policy

A. Vision

14. The vision for the policy is that IFAD becomes a data-driven organization that uses data in the design, delivery and reporting of its operations and administrative activities, for scaling up and for measuring impact while promoting open data principles, minimizing risks and ensuring data protection so that data can be used and reused in a secure manner, thereby increasing its value and usefulness as well as overall replicability and accountability.

B. Objectives

15. Data is central to IFAD's work and underpins the decision-making process. As such, it is an essential asset. The policy emphasizes the value of all operational and administrative data that IFAD generates and processes, and of making it accessible

⁷ The policy integrates with and adheres to IFAD's existing personal data protection framework under PB/2021/15 Updated Personal Data Protection and Privacy Guidelines.

in a secure and efficient manner while adhering to the necessary protections and controls, in line with the principle of doing no harm to any data subject.⁸ The objectives of the policy are thus to:

- (i) Better leverage data for decision-making in operations and administrative functions to achieve impact on the SDGs, primarily SDGs 1 and 2;
 - (ii) Improve the quality and accuracy of data produced and used by IFAD;
 - (iii) Guide IFAD's management of data throughout its life cycle, in a fair and transparent manner;
 - (iv) Provide access to data as a public good, in standard and interoperable formats to facilitate data and metadata exchange and sharing, ensuring that data is easily findable and accessible while adhering to IFAD's policies on the disclosure of documents;⁹ and
 - (v) Ensure overall measurability, replicability and use of data for a transparent and accountable organization.
16. The policy will foster and guide IFAD's efforts in collecting, analysing and using data to meet its strategic objectives and mission, including on agriculture, climate, gender, youth, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples and vulnerable groups in its operations, in such a way that they are inclusive and representative of all.
17. The policy encourages IFAD to harness recent strides in technology to improve data quality, data interoperability, findability, ICT infrastructure, processes and human resources, and to facilitate a more modern, interlinked data production and processing environment considering the needs of IFAD while rightsizing, given available resources.

C. Guiding principles

18. The policy sets out a number of guiding principles for data governance. These principles are in line with the Secretary-General's data strategy and with data governance principles adopted by other United Nations agencies and international organizations. The guiding principles cover risk mitigation and good practice principles for data use within the global landscape.¹⁰ All of IFAD's engagement with data will strive to produce outcomes that are centred on the well-being of people and society, doing no harm to any individuals and entities. The guiding principles apply solely to IFAD and to all data managed and processed by IFAD, once entered into IFAD data systems and repositories.

D. Guiding principle 1 – Integrity and quality

19. All IFAD data will be systematically assessed for quality along the dimensions of relevance, accuracy, credibility, timeliness, accessibility, interpretability and coherence. The quality of IFAD data depends on the quality of data it receives from countries and other partners, the quality of data created within the organization, and the quality of internal processes for collection, validation, storage, processing, analysis and dissemination of data and metadata. The necessary standards and data taxonomies, in line with international standards (see annex V), as well as roles and responsibilities, will need to be in place to ensure data quality and the integrity of data systems used by IFAD.

E. Guiding principle 2 – Accountability and transparency

20. Specific data management roles will be defined to ensure accountability and transparency; to systematically assess data quality; to be answerable for issues that may arise concerning data; to accurately report what data IFAD has, how it is

⁸ Data subject: any individual who can be identified, directly or indirectly, via an identifier.

⁹ [IFAD Policy on the Disclosure of Documents](#).

¹⁰ [Risks and good practice principles for data use within the public sector](#).

being used, and where it is stored or shared; and to ensure that data is being used with integrity, lawfully, fairly and traceably, and for valid purposes. IFAD will strive to make its data findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable in line with the Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable (FAIR) Data Principles:¹¹

- (i) **Findable:** data will be well described with rich metadata and the same metadata will be indexed and registered in a searchable source, in line with best practice, to facilitate the process of finding data.
- (ii) **Accessible:** data will be accessible such that it can be obtained by users with the appropriate level of authentication and authorization.
- (iii) **Interoperable:** data needs to interoperate with applications or workflows for analysis, storage, processing, preservation and dissemination.
- (iv) **Reusable:** to achieve the reuse of data, metadata and data will be well described so that they can be replicated and/or combined with other data.

F. Guiding principle 3 - Proportionality

21. Collecting and analysing data is costly and labour-intensive for IFAD, partners and providers of the data. Collecting or accessing and collating datasets, and processing them, will be carried out in the least burdensome ways possible to minimize fatigue and unnecessary costs for both IFAD and partners. Such methods include the use of efficient and proportional data management methods across various divisions and units to ensure that only the necessary information is collected or accessed and processed, leveraging technology and alternative data sources such as administrative data, geographic information system (GIS) data or big data. Proportionality will be applied to minimize the amount of storage space and services to secure the data. Similarly, reporting of analytics and statistics needs to be measured to ensure that it focuses only on relevant aspects and is as concise as possible.

IV. Implementation of the policy

A. Implementation approach

22. Implementing the policy will create the conditions for data to be more interoperable and findable. The policy will guide IFAD processes to enhance the quality and accuracy of data the Fund engages with and to make more data available online and through other channels, so as to increase the use and visibility of IFAD data.
23. A number of guidelines will have to be developed or updated to help drive implementation of the policy. Implementation will also require investments in systems capacity, including upgrading ICT infrastructure, human resources upskilling, recruitment of new roles in the longer term and development of various frameworks, in line with international data standards. All of these investments have been costed as part of this policy's development. Where possible, these guidelines will be incorporated into existing operational guidelines, which may need to be revised from time to time. Human resources talent management and related activities will need to be resourced and adjusted to ensure that IFAD is fit for purpose from a human resources point of view for effective implementation of the policy.
24. An action plan will be prepared by Management to implement the policy and will support action-oriented knowledge and capacity development to ensure adoption at all levels of IFAD. The action plan will specify activities to be carried out by various divisions and units, and will be phased and aligned with each replenishment period. The plan will be consistent with the IFAD Strategic Framework 2016-2025¹² and the

¹¹ The FAIR Guiding Principles for scientific data management and stewardship were published in *Scientific Data* in 2016.

¹² [IFAD Strategic Framework 2016 - 2025](#).

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and will be sufficiently practical and tactical to ensure operational and organizational efficiency and impact. The action plan will identify the resources needed and timelines for various key task areas.

B. Reporting, monitoring and assessment

25. Data governance is an ongoing and iterative process. Management will monitor progress on the policy's implementation and will report to the Executive Board accordingly. As per international best practice, IFAD will also conduct a midterm review of the policy after five years of implementation.
26. The policy will become effective in the fourth quarter of 2023, in order to ensure the necessary steps are taken to update key internal documents. The policy will be communicated and explained to both IFAD personnel and relevant external stakeholders. Training initiatives will be organized to facilitate operationalization of the policy.¹³

V. Risks and mitigation measures

27. The risks related to this policy have been broken down and described according to the IFAD risk taxonomy below (see annex IV for the main mitigation strategies planned to address these risks).
 - (i) **Strategic risk** of data refers to the Fund's exposure to damage caused by limitations in the ability to acquire, store, transform, disseminate and use overall data assets.
 - (ii) **Financial risk** of data relates to the Fund's exposure to damage caused by the inability to produce quality data to efficiently and economically manage financial resources and satisfy financial commitments.
 - (iii) **Operational risk** of data refers to the risk that IFAD's data in internal processes and controls is unreliable, inadequate or improperly executed and disseminated, resulting in business disruption, potential financial loss and/or reputational damage.
 - (iv) **Programme delivery risk** of data is the risk that project/programme data, including support tools, are insufficient or inadequate to permit a comprehensive assessment at design and/or implementation, thereby undermining the expected results in Fund-supported projects, programmes or strategies.

VI. Conclusion

28. This policy will inform IFAD's engagement with data, including operational and administrative data, for informed decision-making, enhanced operational efficiency and impact on the SDGs, particularly SDGs 1 and 2. By adopting this policy, IFAD will optimize the value of all data it engages with, modernizing the institution's approach to data management while minimizing risks.

¹³ Different levels of training will be required depending on the different roles IFAD staff and consultants play in data management when carrying out their functions and assignments.

Definitions

Big data: Datasets generated by business transactions, social media, phone logs, communication devices, web scraping and sensors that are too large or complex to be dealt with by traditional data-processing application software.

Data access: The means and conditions under which data can be viewed or used. Access also refers to terms, copyright issues and confidentiality constraints related to how the data can be used (UNdata Glossary).

Data analysis: The process of transforming raw data into usable information, often presented in the form of a published analytical article, in order to add value to the statistical output (UNdata Glossary).

Data dissemination: The distribution or transmitting of data to end users, in this context in common open formats via the IFAD website using internet protocols.

Data governance: The set of rules, policies and procedures for managing data throughout its life cycle, from collection to dissemination, to ensure data quality, reliability, compliance and security.

Data interoperability: A feature in a set of data that allows the data to be connected or merged with other compatible data and facilitates sharing or exchange of data as well as processing across multiple data systems.

Data owner: The role concerned with managing risk and granting the appropriate access to a dataset, and is ultimately accountable for the quality of that data.

Data processing: The operation performed on data in order to derive new information according to a given set of rules (UNData Glossary).

Data quality: The degree of completeness, correctness (accuracy), timeliness and availability of data. (UNdata Glossary)

Data scientist: An analytical expert with technical skills to use data for identifying and solving complex problems as well as optimizing value from data.

Data steward: The role concerned with ensuring the fitness for purpose and the correct usage of data.

Data subject: Any individual person who can be identified, directly or indirectly, via an identifier.

Data transfer: The exchange of data between systems or organizations using international standards.

Data user: Recipient of statistical information, who transforms it into knowledge needed for decision-making or research. (UNdata Glossary)

Data-driven culture: The principle established in the process of social practice that requires all staff and decision makers to focus on the information conveyed by the existing data, and make decisions and changes according to these results, rather than on the basis of experience in a particular field.

Financial data: Facts and figures on loans, disbursements, grants, cofinancing, debt, interest rates, repayments, payment periods, borrowing, credit ratings and rates of return on investments.

Metadata management: The overarching process that applies to the management of metadata.

Metadata: Data that defines and describes other data. (UNData Glossary)

Open data: Freely available data without restrictions from copyright, patents or other control mechanisms.

Personal data: Any information relating to an identified or identifiable individual (data subject).

List of IFAD's operational and administrative datasets and data platforms

<i>Data/platform</i>	<i>Data function</i>	<i>Data use category</i>	<i>Data or platform</i>
Committee on World Food Security policy database	Operational	Reporting, accountability	Platform
Disbursements for IFAD projects (Oracle)	Operational	Accountability	Data
Financial indicators and trends webpage	Indicators (macroeconomic and financial)	Reporting	Platform
Financial Management Dashboard / FLEXCUBE data	Operational; Financial	Reporting, accountability	Platform
Financing Facility for Remittances financed projects data	Financial	Reporting	Data
GIS Portal (IFAD Geonode)	Operational	Analytics	Platform
Grants and Investment Projects System (GRIPS)	Operational	Reporting, analytics	Data
Grant status report tool	Operational	Reporting	Platform
KiT (Keep it Tracked)	Administrative and operational	Monitoring	Platform
IFAD Electronic Records Management System (HERMES)	Administrative and operational	Reporting, analytics, accountability	Platform
IFAD Client Portal	Operational	Reporting	Platform
IFAD country pages	Operational	Analytics	Platform
IFAD external dashboard	Operational	Analytics	Platform
IFAD debt page	Financial	Analytics	Platform
Impact assessment datasets	Operational	Reporting, analytics	Data
Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility projects database; Database of IFAD projects targeting Indigenous Peoples	Operational	Reporting, analytics	Data
No Objection Tracking Utility System – NOTUS	Operational	Reporting, analytics	Platform
OmniData (Beta version); data warehouse; data lake	Financial, operational, administrative, all data sources internal and external in original or remodelled format	Analytics	Platform
Operational Results Management System (ORMS)	Operational	Reporting, analytics	Platform
Oracle Business Intelligence dashboards: various operations dashboards; Associate Vice-President (AVP) Management dashboard; AVP Strategy and Knowledge Department dashboard; supplementary funds analytics	Project, financial, operational	Analytics	Platform
External dashboard – International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI)	Operational	Reporting	Platform
Rural Poor Stimulus Facility rapid assessments survey data	Operational	Reporting	Data
Smallholder and Agri-SME Finance and Investment Network (SAFIN) database	Operational	Reporting	Data
Withdrawal application tracking system	Operational	Reporting, analytics	Platform

Linkages with other IFAD policies and strategies

1. The Data Governance Policy is informed by the IFAD policies and strategies set forth below.

I. Enterprise Risk Management Policy

2. The [Enterprise Risk Management \(ERM\) Policy](#) establishes the IFAD risk management structure and sets out the minimum requirements and expectations for the active management of risk in IFAD's operations and enterprise activities. The ERM Policy establishes a formal, integrated and principles-based approach to identifying, managing and monitoring risks in IFAD. It is linked to the Data Governance Policy by the need to establish governance roles and responsibilities, guidelines and mechanisms to mitigate risks associated with engaging with data, in particular in the operational risk taxonomy section covering information technology and cybersecurity risk. The policy will be aligned with the ERM's three lines of defence model, composed of: (i) risk owner; (ii) independent risk oversight such as the Office of Enterprise Risk Management; and (iii) independent functions such as the Office of Audit and Oversight and the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD. This model establishes the oversight, roles and responsibilities to enable the efficient management of risk across the Fund, in accordance with the ERM Policy and the Internal Control Framework for IFAD.

II. ICT4D Strategy

3. The IFAD [Information and Communication Technology for Development \(ICT4D\) Strategy](#) provides a framework for leveraging information and communications technology (ICT) to increase development impact and improve the economic and the social conditions of rural people. It is aligned to the Data Governance Policy in the sense that new developments must take into account the principle of data interoperability. The policy can contribute to the implementation of the ICT4D strategy in: (i) enabling interoperability of data between silo-based tools and connecting digital capabilities that are scattered throughout the organization; (ii) enhancing ICT4D knowledge management and sharing by promoting more accurate and timely data collection and analysis; and (iii) promoting data quality, security and ethics in project design and implementation.

III. IFAD Evaluation Policy

4. The IFAD Evaluation Policy provides for an objective assessment of IFAD's results that identifies lessons learned from experience, lays the foundations for enhanced consultation and collaboration, and ensures that evaluations help IFAD account to its governing bodies, programme countries, donors and beneficiaries for organizational and development effectiveness. It is aligned with the Data Governance Policy in that it reflects IFAD's increasing focus on embracing a culture of evidence-based management to maximize development effectiveness, in particular in the drive for improving data quality.

IV. IFAD Innovation Strategy

5. The [IFAD Innovation Strategy](#) defines what is needed to create an innovation-friendly environment and to support staff in achieving the expected results. It is aligned to the Data Governance Policy, in particular concerning the innovative aspects of using new data sources by developing partnerships with other organizations to seek best practices and gain know-how in using new data sources, analytics and working with alternative data providers to leverage innovation in IFAD for impact.

V. IFAD Knowledge Management Strategy

6. The IFAD Knowledge Management Strategy (2019-2025) is part of the organization's approach to increase its development effectiveness. Knowledge management concerns how collective information, knowledge and expertise can be used to improve organizational effectiveness. It covers knowledge generation, knowledge use, and building the enabling institutional environment for evidence-based learning and knowledge-sharing. This strategy is aligned to the Data Governance Policy in that both share the principles of evidence-based decisions and the sharing of information.

VI. IFAD Private Sector Engagement Strategy

7. The [IFAD Private Sector Engagement Strategy 2019-2024](#) has the objectives of mobilizing private funding and investments in rural micro, small and medium-sized enterprises and small-scale agriculture, expanding markets, and increasing income and job opportunities for IFAD's target groups. It assesses and mitigates all risks stemming from engaging with the private sector, including reputational and financial risks, and those related to mission drift and institutional capacity. It is aligned to the Data Governance Policy in that any data collected from the private sector should meet IFAD's data quality standards.

VII. Internal Control Framework

8. The IFAD [Internal Control Framework](#) is a process designed to provide reasonable assurance regarding the achievement of objectives relating to operations, reporting and compliance. The Internal Control Framework is designed to establish institutional standards and accountability for operating the internal control system. Its objective is to integrate several control mechanisms into one coherent and comprehensive framework. It is aligned to the Data Governance Policy in that control mechanisms will be a key part of ensuring data quality, in particular the IFAD Control Self-Assessment Manual that provides tools and related references to help identify control gaps and key risk indicators.

VIII. Policies on the disclosure of documents

9. IFAD's Policy on Disclosure of Documents (2010) and Policy on Disclosure of Documents for Non-Sovereign Private Sector Operations (2022) stipulate that IFAD will continue to operate under the principles of transparency and accountability. In line with these policies and principles, the Data Governance Policy will promote IFAD's disclosure of data for public use to further transparency and accountability. IFAD may decide not to disclose certain data if it is deemed sensitive or confidential, or should not be disclosed under the policy.

IX. Records Management Policy

10. The IFAD Records Management Policy describes the requirements, policy and procedures for managing IFAD records created or received in the course of IFAD business by IFAD workforce. It applies to all IFAD records and offices, including IFAD country offices and the liaison offices. It is linked to the Data Governance Policy in that it will be aligned with new guidelines concerning data storage, access restrictions and security.

X. Regular Grants Policy

11. The [Regular Grants Policy](#) (2021) identifies three pathways by which IFAD's strategic objectives will be achieved, including improving the policy and investment environment (including analytical work at country level), and improving the availability and uptake of relevant knowledge, and promoting innovation for enhanced impact and sustainability. The latter will entail use of innovative pro-poor research and technology as well as a focus on testing, piloting and adapting innovations targeting the poor. These aspects will require the use of quality data

and the Data Governance Policy will provide the necessary guidance and support in this respect. In addition, grant recipients often collect and analyse data as part of their grant activities, and will be able to benefit from the Data Governance Policy in order to leverage such data effectively for the rural poor.

XI. Updated Personal Data Protection and Privacy Guidelines

12. The IFAD Personal Data Protection and Privacy Guidelines promote adequate, consistent practices, pursuant to a balance between: (i) IFAD's business, institutional, operational and administrative needs to process personal data; and (ii) the rights of individuals to appropriate use of their personal data, specifically the right to privacy. The guidelines are aligned with the United Nations Personal Data Protection and Privacy Principles and are based on similar policies and guidelines of peer institutions. Furthermore, the guidelines are consistent with existing IFAD rules, policies and procedures, including the IFAD Policy on the Disclosure of Documents, the Policy on Management of Records, and the Code of Conduct. The guidelines highlight the eight key principles for personal data protection at IFAD: (i) legitimate, fair and transparent processing; (ii) purpose limitation; (iii) data minimization; (iv) data accuracy; (v) storage limitation; (vi) security; (vii) transfer of personal data; and (viii) accountability and review. The guidelines are linked to the policy in that although protection and privacy are an important part of data governance, the policy does not cover data protection and data privacy issues specifically.

Mitigation strategies to address risks associated with the policy

<i>Risk</i>	<i>Mitigation</i>
Strategic: Lack of alignment to existing IFAD strategic objectives and policies; lack of overall use of all data as an asset	Identify linkages with other IFAD policies and strategies to ensure alignment and to avoid contradiction or inconsistency. Enable data interoperability to ensure use of all data assets to inform IFAD strategic direction.
Financial – implementation: Insufficient budget	Define clear budgetary needs in the action plan. A preliminary costing has been performed as part of the policy development and will be updated regularly to assess budget needs.
Operational – implementation: Lack of data control standards as to how and where data is used, and managing data access appropriate to different roles	Develop data control standards and guidelines on data access according to the IFAD Control Self-Assessment Manual.
Operational – implementation, technology: Lack of ICT resources	Establish with the Information and Communications Technology Division the technology needs for each of the action areas and agree that resources will be available for each phase of the action plan.
Programme delivery – implementation: Project not fully implemented	Establish realistic targets in action plan on areas of data quality and validation; data standards, metadata and classification; data access, interoperability, sharing and transfer; data dissemination; data-driven culture; and relevant technical skills and capacity for effective data use and governance that are agreed by Senior Management
Programme delivery – implementation: Lack of buy-in of IFAD workforce	Ensure Senior Management support and communication of the policy. Raise awareness among staff around the importance of data governance. Develop capacity of staff in data use and data governance
Reputational: Lack of data quality (due to duplication, lack of clear metadata etc.)	Fully implement quality framework, ensure data managers are trained and necessary ICT infrastructure is in place.
Reputational: Misuse of administrative, financial or operational data	Develop guidelines and mechanisms associated with engaging with non-personal data. The amount and type of non-personal data engaged with will be taken into account accordingly.
Reputational: Perceived lack of transparency due to non-availability of IFAD data	Put in place procedures to ensure all publishable IFAD data are made available and easily findable on the web in a timely manner.
Reputational: Lack of visibility of IFAD data	Put in place procedures to ensure all publishable IFAD data are made available and easily findable on the web in a timely manner.

International standards

- (i) [United Nations Global Inventory of Statistical Classifications](#)
- (ii) [Statistical Data and Metadata eXchange \(SDMX\)](#)
- (iii) [United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Guidelines for the Modelling of Statistical Data and Metadata](#)
- (iv) [United Nations Standards and Guidelines for Statistical Surveys](#)
- (v) [United Nations National Quality Assurance Frameworks Manual for Official Statistics](#)
- (vi) [Data Documentation Initiative \(DDI\)](#)
- (vii) [DublinCore metadata definitions](#)
- (viii) [Common Statistical Production Architecture](#)
- (ix) [Generic Statistical Business Process Model \(GSBPM\)](#)
- (x) [Generic Statistical Information Model \(GSIM\)](#)

Benchmarking data governance policies and practices as part of developing IFAD's Data Governance Policy

1. The list below shows the United Nations agencies, organizations and international financial institutions that were included in the benchmarking exercise. It is important to note that data governance is implemented in a range of different ways with or without an actual policy or strategy as many organizations are only recently grappling with these challenges. In addition, the organizations are at varying levels of maturity in terms of data governance.

I. IFAD data governance landscape

- IFAD – President's Bulletin on Personal Data Protection and Privacy Guidelines
- IFAD Information and Communication Technology for Development (ICT4D) Strategy
- IFAD Policy on the Disclosure of Documents
- IFAD Enterprise Risk Management Policy

II. External United Nations data governance initiatives

- Secretary-General's Data Strategy 2020-2022
- United Nations Personal Data Protection and Privacy Principles
- Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation
- United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP): Data Privacy, Ethics and Protection: Guidance note on big data for achievement of the 2030 Agenda

III. United Nations specialized agencies: data governance policies and guiding principles

- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
- United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
- UNDP
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Data Transformation Strategy 2020-2025
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Policy on Personal Data Protection
- United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA)
- World Food Programme (WFP) Guide to Personal Data Protection and Privacy
- World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Unified Data Policy
- World Health Organization (WHO) Data Principles

IV. Other data governance policies and guiding principles

- European Union (EU) General Data Protection Regulation
- Data governance and data policies proposal for improved governance of FAO statistical activities
- International Monetary Fund (IMF) Overarching Strategy on Data and Statistics at the Fund in the Digital Age
- Inter-American Development Bank (ABD)
- Islamic Development Bank data governance policy
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) statistics and data governance

- World Bank Group Personal Data Privacy Policy; World Bank Policy on Access to Information

V. IFAD donor country national data governance policies

- United States Federal Data Strategy
- United Kingdom National Data Strategy

Table 1

Summary comparison of data governance policies of United Nations agencies, international financial institutions and national entities reviewed during development of IFAD's Data Governance Policy

<i>United Nations entity / IFI / national entity</i>	<i>Weblink and summary</i>	<i>Description of data governance policies and practices</i>	<i>Proposed elements to be adopted/considered in IFAD's Data Governance Policy</i>
1. UNHCR	<p>Evaluation of UNHCR's data use and information management approaches</p> <p>Describes the approaches and normative practices of UNHCR staff and partners in the collection, collation, processing, storing and management of operational data</p> <p>Data Transformation Strategy 2020-2025</p> <p>Operational information on delivery of protection and assistance of a given response to the situation</p>	<p>Normative practices and approaches for UNHCRU staff as well as partners</p> <p>Decentralized data management and information silos</p> <p>Limited interoperability</p> <p>Limited data-sharing platforms</p> <p>Has guiding principles</p> <p>Includes priority actions</p> <p>Governance structure includes high-level leadership and senior management</p> <p>Balance need for centralized data management standards, systems, processes and tools and regional/local needs</p> <p>Data culture and capacity strengthening of staff</p> <p>Data portal to disseminate data: UNHCR's Microdata Library and creation of new Joint Data Centre</p> <p>Centre in cooperation with the World Bank</p>	<p>To incorporate normative practices only for IFAD staff, consultant and interns</p> <p>To address data silos</p> <p>To promote interoperability of data</p> <p>To promote data-sharing and findability of data</p> <p>To include guiding principles in policy</p> <p>Action plan to be developed later</p> <p>To propose involvement of high-level leadership and senior managers</p> <p>To consider implications of decentralization</p>
2. UNDP	<p>Data Principles - UNDP Data Futures Platform</p> <p>8 principles on data governance at UNDP</p> <p>Data Center: Human development data</p>	<p>Refers to reuse of scientific data and interoperability to maximize value of data</p> <p>Has guiding principles</p> <p>Governance structure includes high-level leadership and senior management</p> <p>Hiring of new roles: data governance officer/technical data scientists/analysts/data stewards</p> <p>Data culture and capacity strengthening of staff</p> <p>Unified data architecture developed in collaboration with United Nations International Computing Centre: NextGen Data Hub</p> <p>Data portal to disseminate data: Data Futures Platform</p> <p>Human development data with thematic dashboards and reports</p> <p>Metadata in line with DDI standards</p>	<p>Promote reuse of IFAD data</p> <p>To include guiding principles in policy</p>

United Nations entity / IFI / national entity	Weblink and summary	Description of data governance policies and practices	Proposed elements to be adopted/considered in IFAD's Data Governance Policy
3. UNICEF	Good governance of children's data	<p>Refers only to "data related to children" – data focused on mandate</p> <p>Hiring of data governance and analytics officers (Chief - Data Governance and Strategy in Division of Data, Analytics, Planning and Monitoring)</p>	<p>Focus on data relevant to IFAD mandate</p> <p>Consider senior position to coordinate data governance at IFAD as well as technical positions to manage and process data (data scientists, stewards, GIS and artificial intelligence [AI]-machine learning specialists, etc.)</p>
		Have a separate UNICEF policy on the management of financial master data	To consider master data architecture
4. UNOCHA	OCHA Data Responsibility Guidelines	<p>The guidelines apply to all operational data managed directly by OCHA, managed on OCHA's behalf, or managed by humanitarian actors within activities coordinated by OCHA in different responses</p> <p>Refer to concept of data responsibility as opposed to governance, which has connotations of compliance and penalties</p> <p>Principles for data responsibility highlighted</p> <p>Data use culture and capacity-strengthening focus</p> <p>Human rights-based approach to data governance – people-centred and inclusive</p> <p>Data portal, including data from secondary sources</p>	<p>To include guiding principles</p> <p>To promote data culture in IFAD</p> <p>To be people-centred and inclusive</p>
5. WFP data protection principles	WFP Guide to Personal Data Protection and Privacy Digital foundations: digital transformation and our fight against hunger	<p>Scope of policy is limited to the processing, both manual and automated, of personal data of WFP beneficiaries and prospective beneficiaries. The guidelines apply to all programme activities regardless of distribution modality. The guidelines do not address anonymized aggregated information and statistics. Nor do they cover processing of human resources personal data or information relating to NGOs/implementing partners, vendors or suppliers</p> <p>Digital Foundations Report: Leverages ICT to harness data analytics</p> <p>Automation and connectivity upgrade</p> <p>High-level leadership (executive director)</p>	To specify scope and define boundaries of IFAD Data Governance Policy
6. WHO data principles	WHO data principles	<p>Refers only to "health data"</p> <p>Focused on mandate</p>	To focus on data relevant to IFAD mandate and define scope of policy
7. WMO Unified Data Policy	WMO Data Policy for the 21st Century	<p>Refers to weather and climate observations</p> <p>Policy links member states' data with ultimate aggregate data processed and disseminated by WMO</p> <p>Highly dependent on member states submitting quality data on time</p> <p>Addresses mainly challenges of coordinating data-sharing by member states</p>	Potential considerations for non-IFAD data from governments/project management units (PMUs)

United Nations entity / IFI / national entity	Weblink and summary	Description of data governance policies and practices	Proposed elements to be adopted/considered in IFAD's Data Governance Policy
8. EU General Data Protection Regulation	EU General Data Protection Regulation	Covers all types of personal data	Covered under President's Bulletin PB/2021/15
EU regulation on free flow of non-personal data	EU regulation on free flow of non-personal data EU Data Act European Strategy for Data	Focuses on non-personal data and sharing/transfer to facilitate maximization of value of non-personal data Encourages data availability, porting of data and access to non-personal data Focused on fair access to and use of data Clear distinction between personal and non-personal data and how they are governed	To consider clear distinction between personal and non-personal data and how they are governed
9. IMF strategy on data and statistics	Overarching Strategy on Data and Statistics at the Fund in the Digital Age	Operational data: Fund surveillance is based on a policy dialogue tailored to the specific circumstances and domestic realities of each member country. Country teams obtain the data utilized by the authorities for policy purposes ("operational data") Strategy focuses on 3 I's (integration, innovation and intelligence) Agility in identifying data needs Ambition to leverage big data and AI Also seeks to secure seamless access and sharing of data within IMF Greater cross-country data comparability Addressing data weaknesses	To consider separate approaches to governance of operational data versus administrative data To consider how to engage with data from external sources, especially governments/PMUs To consider approaches to enable data access and findability of data within IFAD To consider approaches to addressing data weaknesses and improving data quality
10. ADB	Access to Information Policy	Listed as an exception not covered: corporate administrative information. Information related to corporate expenses, including real estate, will not be disclosed, except in the case of the bank's annual budget programme document and as referenced in the quarterly business reports The World Bank's Access to Information Policy (AI Policy) governs public access to information, including data	To apply different regimes of data access and disclosure - special treatment of sensitive data To consider governing data dissemination and disclosure under IFAD's existing disclosure policies
11. World Bank Policy – data privacy policy	Personal Data Privacy Policy Data governance procedures document (not publicly available) Data Sharing and Use Protocol, Public Information, and Information Classification and Control (AMS 6.21A) Guides how the World Bank shares and uses data	Personal data: any information relating to an identified or identifiable individual. Standard practice on protection of personal data Structure has a high-level data governance body, which includes the four managing directors – leadership level Data governance steering committee with 12 vice presidents (9 members and 3 observers) who take direction from the governance body and direct implementation Two different data committees: One on development data and another on corporate data Harmonized standards for formatting, archiving and dissemination of data; aligned to DDI standards; Data Catalog Vocabulary standards to promote interoperability	Covered under President's Bulletin PB/2021/15 To propose involvement of high-level leadership and senior managers To promote use of data and metadata standards, in line with international standards

United Nations entity / IFI / national entity	Weblink and summary	Description of data governance policies and practices	Proposed elements to be adopted/considered in IFAD's Data Governance Policy
12. OECD statistics and data governance	Personal Data Protection at the OECD	Personal data	Covered under President's Bulletin PB/2021/15
13. United States Federal Data Strategy	United States Federal Data Strategy	<p>Focus on accountability and transparency</p> <p>Leveraging data as a strategic asset</p> <p>Contains 10 principles that serve as timeless guidance, practices (40 aspirational goals for a 5-10 year horizon) and action steps</p> <p>Emphasizes building a culture that values data and promotes public use of data</p> <p>Implementation guided by annual action plan with the action steps</p>	<p>To highlight the importance of data as a strategic asset including for transparency and accountability – link to International Aid Transparency Initiative</p> <p>To consider building a data use culture in IFAD</p> <p>To develop an action plan subsequently (consider annual milestones when developing action plan)</p>
14. United Kingdom National Data Strategy	United Kingdom National Data Strategy	The strategy covers administrative, operational and transactional data – that is, data collected in the process of running services or businesses – as well as analytical and statistical data.	Consider to what extent the IFAD policy can include both administrative and operational data, including financial data