
High-level preview of IFAD's 2024 results-based programme of work, regular and capital budgets, and the preview of the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD's results-based work programme and budget for 2024 and indicative plan for 2025-2026

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Action: The Executive Board is invited to take note of the high-level preview estimates for 2024 and the list of the main elements of the programme of work and regular and capital budgets of IFAD for 2024 as well as the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD's work programme and budget for 2024 and indicative plan for 2025-2026.

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Executive summary

1. Global hunger today, measured by the prevalence of undernourishment,¹ is still far above pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels.² IFAD's unique role and value addition in strengthening food systems to be inclusive and resilient against future shocks remain critical to effectively combat global poverty and hunger. IFAD's 2024 budget is geared to enabling IFAD to amplify its impact through adequate internal capacity and financial and human resources.
2. IFAD's budget utilization in 2022 and 2023 has been high, which reflects a welcome move towards a post-pandemic normalization of work levels. In 2024 – the final year of the Twelfth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD12) – the elements of continuity and transition will coincide: the focus will remain on the key priority areas, namely delivery and impact, while preparations will begin to ensure readiness for the IFAD13 cycle (2025–2027).
3. To strengthen its operations, IFAD is consolidating its learning from evaluations and its experiences into action plans and guidance tools. One such example is the approach paper on engaging in countries with fragile situations to address the root causes of fragility and conflict. The corporate-level evaluation on decentralization undertaken by the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD has also informed IFAD's plans on decentralization to achieve greater impact, and IFAD has adapted its financial model to expand its work while maintaining financial sustainability.
4. The 2024 budget preparation process and final proposal will follow the approach used for the 2023 budget, which was highly appreciated by the Executive Board. Management is reaffirming its commitment to containing administrative budget increases and, in doing so, will continue to proactively seek options for cost reduction and trade-offs to contain budget growth. Preliminary assessments of 2024 budget needs suggest the need for a limited real budget increase of 1.9 per cent in 2024. Considering inflation and price increases, IFAD's nominal budget for 2024 is projected to be US\$183.5 million, subject to further refinement.
5. The high-level budget envelope presented incorporates the set-up of the new Asia and the Pacific Division (APR) regional office in Thailand, the establishment of the new IFAD Country Office (ICO) in Benin and the upgrade of existing offices in Cambodia and the United Republic of Tanzania.
6. The proposed budget for 2024 is between US\$5.4 million and US\$6.2 million. It includes a capital budget for cyclical expenditures and major corporate ICT projects. Approved and unused one-time budgets from prior years will be used for ICO set-up. No new one-time budget requests are foreseen at this time.
7. Looking ahead to 2025-2026, IFAD's regular budgets will reflect the shared ambition of delivering the IFAD13 commitments. Areas of focus include building rural resilience and food security by addressing fragility, boosting climate and biodiversity financing, and strengthening engagement with the private sector.

¹ Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Indicator 2.1.1.

² State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI 2023) report.

Part one - High-level preview of IFAD's 2024 results-based programme of work, regular and capital budgets

I. Introduction

1. At the 137th session of the Executive Board, members welcomed the well justified, transparent and cohesive budget proposal for the IFAD 2023 programme of work, which recorded real growth of 2.9 per cent.
2. The increased administrative resources have provided much needed investment for the corporate priorities of programme delivery, decentralization, IFAD's financial architecture, external engagement and visibility, and institutional change.
3. While ensuring that the 2023 priorities contributing to IFAD12 commitments are adequately resourced, Management continues to seek opportunities for trade-offs and efficiencies to ensure that resources are used as effectively as possible.
4. The 2024 budget proposal will follow the same approach. It will be prepared in accordance with Management's commitment to contain administrative budget increases. Management will ensure strategic prioritization through a review of institutional processes, procedures and priorities to ensure that – to the greatest extent possible – resources are channelled towards operations and high-impact initiatives on the ground, and wherever necessary, appropriate trade-offs are identified and made.
5. Based on an initial assessment of cost drivers, Management has elaborated estimates for IFAD's 2024 regular budget that will ensure support for the implementation of priorities and commitments along the three operational pillars of the IFAD12 business model, and in particular programme delivery for the last year of IFAD12 estimated at US\$1.5 billion; financial architecture; and institutional change. In addition, investment in preparatory activities for the IFAD13 cycle will also be required in 2024.
6. Based on the needs assessed, Management presents an indicative 2024 budget proposal of US\$183.5 million, which incorporates a real increase of 1.9 per cent.
7. The 2023 budget process was based on the principles of enhanced efficiency and resource management, encompassing the separation of budgets on a cost classification basis. Approximately US\$97 million, or 55 per cent, was allocated to cover direct costs, i.e. directly linked and traceable to a programme or project and to benefits derived by programme or project beneficiaries, evidencing IFAD's strong capacity to invest administrative resources in operations and impactful activities.
8. In 2024, IFAD will continue to improve the direct and indirect costs allocation process, with the aim of increasing the portion of IFAD's administrative resources allocated to direct costs.
9. This document is organized as follows. Section II outlines the 2022 and 2023 budget utilization and carry-forward levels. Section III discusses the planning context and provides an overview of the reforms and commitments approved in recent years that have implications for IFAD's strategy and budget. Section IV presents the main drivers of the IFAD 2024 budget proposal and the related scenarios. Section V highlights 2025-2026 budget outlook, and section VI provides the 2024 capital budget estimate.

II. 2022 and 2023 budget utilization and carry forward

10. In 2022, regular budget utilization reached US\$162.53 million or 97.4 per cent of the approved regular budget. The higher execution rate compared to 2021 is mainly due to the gradual return to pre-pandemic business levels with increased programme delivery and operation-related costs. The resulting 2022 carry-forward

envelope was set at approximately US\$4.34 million (2.6 per cent of the 2022 regular budget), which is in line with the Executive Board’s request to return to carry-forward levels of no more than 3 per cent. In 2023, budget utilization is projected to reach US\$171.75 million or 97.7 per cent (see table 1). An updated forecast will be provided in the final budget document.

Table 1

Regular budget utilization – actual 2021-2022 and forecast 2023

(Millions of United States dollars)

	2021 full year		2022 full year		2023 forecast	
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Forecast
Regular budget	159.41	151.95	166.93	162.53	175.71	171.75
Percentage utilization		95.3		97.4		97.7

III. 2024 Planning context: a year of transition

A. Global environment

11. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI 2023) report reaffirms that global hunger, measured by the prevalence of undernourishment,³ remained relatively unchanged from 2021 to 2022 but is still far above pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels, affecting around 9.2 per cent of the world’s population in 2022 compared with 7.9 per cent in 2019; it thus calls on organizations to redouble and better target their efforts towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
12. Small-scale farmers in rural areas, who produce half of the world's food calories, are particularly susceptible to food insecurity during crises. With over 3.1 billion people residing in the rural areas of developing countries, they are essential in creating a resilient, sustainable, stable and secure world. Strengthening food systems to be inclusive and resilient against future shocks relies on the contributions of these rural populations. This is where IFAD’s support comes in. To effectively combat poverty and hunger and amplify its impact, IFAD requires adequate internal capacity and resources.

B. Implementing IFAD12 and preparing for IFAD13

13. In 2024 IFAD is set to embark on a series of key activities to finalize delivery of the IFAD12 commitments and lay the groundwork for IFAD13. This will be critical for reaching IFAD’s targets for the 2030 Agenda, given the implementation duration of its programmes (6-8 years) and the associated time lag to see results.
14. Progress achieved in the three transformational pillars of the IFAD12 business model is fully tracked, with 24 completed monitorable actions out of the 41 planned, or 59 per cent.

Transformational country programmes

15. With a focus on inclusive and sustainable rural transformation, IFAD has approved policies, strategies and operational guidance tools to enhance its impact, particularly in fragile contexts - which also represent the focus area of 2024 operations. In order to strengthen weaker operational areas, further efforts will be made to bolster the culture of results in country programmes and promote data use, transparency and alignment. One area for improvement is increasing the incorporation of the findings of IFAD’s impact assessments into operational learning and to provide useful, relevant and timely advice to countries.
16. With the overall objective of improving resilience, IFAD aims to adopt a revamped and more structured approach to fragility by undertaking frequent and in-depth assessments of fragile systems and results reviews; building internal dedicated

³ SDG indicator 2.1.1.

expertise to sharpen the understanding of fragility and increasing support to country teams in operational delivery.

17. IFAD has updated the Social, Environmental and Climate Assessment Procedures to promote its mainstreaming agenda for climate, biodiversity, nutrition, gender and youth. Evidence syntheses and South-South and Triangular Cooperation have been integrated into country strategic opportunity programmes and country strategic notes and further emphasis placed on building partnerships, engaging in policy dialogue, and generating and using innovations and knowledge related to the mainstreaming themes.

Transformational institutional change

18. IFAD's decentralization plan has made progress. A significant portion of staff positions are now established in country offices. Some 44 per cent of total staff positions are in country offices against a target of 45 per cent by 2024, and significant gains in terms of efficiency have been achieved through the notable effects of the People, Processes and Technology Plan, particularly on loan disbursement and project procurement.
19. As IFAD strives to enhance its reach and value for money by increasing its proximity to its clients for greater impact, Management has decided to open a new Regional Office for APR in Bangkok. This office will house the APR regional team, as well as colleagues from the Communications Division, Corporate Services Department, Financial Management Services Division and Strategy and Knowledge Department (with enhanced human resource capacity) in a crucial milestone in IFAD's decentralization journey.
20. Management has recalibrated the decentralization plan and respective budget needs, taking into consideration lessons learned from the decentralization process to date and recommendations from the corporate-level evaluation on decentralization. The recalibrated plan will not impact the overall decentralization timeline, and the 45 per cent target of staff positions in the field will continue to apply. However, the recalibrated plan considers a revised total number of field offices, due in part to the deferral of IFAD's presence in high-intensity conflict-affected countries.
21. Management will seek to build organizational capacity and effectiveness and improve institutional efficiency through a process of organizational reengineering that will seek to ensure that IFAD headquarters is fit for purpose in a decentralized context. The report of the Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) assessment of IFAD and related recommendations, once issued, will be a critical point of reference and opportunity for Management to undertake concrete actions to further enhance organizational effectiveness during IFAD13.
22. The Office for Strategic Budgeting will also be strengthened in 2024, by incorporating oversight of all financial flows for overall enhanced resource management: as supplementary funds become more central to IFAD's operations as an assembler of financing for its clients, including an increasing number of staff positions financed by these fees, effective resource management becomes ever more critical.

Transformational financial framework

23. IFAD has adapted its financial model to expand its work while maintaining financial sustainability. Strengthening the financial and legal architecture, and adopting and implementing the Integrated Borrowing Framework (IBF) have improved IFAD's financial flexibility. In 2023 and based on early lessons learned, the IBF was revised to increase flexibility and reduce funding risk.
24. Significant progress has also been made in the area of assets and liabilities management, which is accompanied by a robust and operationalized risk

management framework. These developments are also contributing to IFAD's ambition to strengthen the level of engagement with private sector entities.

25. Mobilization of cofinancing and supplementary funds has performed strongly in recent years. Cofinancing is slightly above the IFAD12 target, with US\$1.65 mobilized for each IFAD dollar. The establishment of the Private Sector Financing Programme and enhanced Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme (ASAP+) allows for additional resource mobilization and sharper focus on private sector involvement and climate resilience, two key factors for operational impact and sustainability.

Transitioning from IFAD12 to IFAD13

26. IFAD12 has already planted many seeds of transformative change to achieve IFAD's mandate and increase the food security and incomes of rural people. In IFAD13, IFAD will build upon the transformative changes initiated during IFAD12 to deepen and expand its impact, ensuring long-term sustainability. The focus will be on IFAD's core mandate, universality and areas of comparative advantage, which are vital in the current global context.
27. By prioritizing its core mandate in IFAD13, IFAD aims to address climate and food security challenges while building resilience in different country contexts. Through the remainder of IFAD12 and into IFAD13, IFAD will continue to pursue these ambitious and essential goals and to secure the necessary resources to achieve them.
28. From 2016 to 2021, IFAD effectively delivered on a growing and increasingly complex portfolio under a zero real-growth budget trajectory, with a nominal increase of approximately 1.7 per cent every year. Moreover, the size of IFAD's active portfolio increased by 22 per cent, from US\$7.05 billion in 2016 to US\$8.6 billion in 2022.
29. The share of IFAD's active project portfolio in fragile and conflict-affected situations also increased from 18.6 per cent in 2016 to 29.3 per cent in mid-2023, which represents a total programme of work volume of US\$5.9 billion.
30. Moreover, the scope and complexity of IFAD's regional operations, climate finance and programmatic delivery have also increased. Such growth has called for more technical support, country-specific expertise and policy advice and engagement, increased monitoring, and an overall shift towards adaptive management.
31. The 2022 and 2023 administrative budgets, crafted in high inflationary contexts, recorded real increases of 3.2 per cent in 2022 and 2.9 per cent in 2023, which were needed to support IFAD's ambition over the medium term. This budget growth was mainly channelled towards country programme design and delivery, and towards a sustained decentralization process, which has proved to be a crucial element of IFAD's increased impact on the ground.
32. Cost reductions and trade-offs were sought to reduce the extent of real growth and a strong prioritization process has allowed IFAD to effectively respond to the increasing demands placed on it.
33. Noting that it is not possible to rely solely on efficiencies to address the current business needs in a context of rising costs, the 2024 budget trajectory will contain real growth levels to the extent possible. The additional resources will be fully directed towards IFAD12 programme design and delivery, activities aiming at ensuring a successful completion of IFAD13 mobilization, and a continued decentralization process aimed at further deepening operational impact and bringing IFAD closer to the people it serves.
34. Budget resources for 2024 will also prioritize improved institutional initiatives with particular attention to the findings of the 2022 Global Staff Survey. There will be a strong focus on addressing the steady expansion of IFAD's commitments and

reforms that, in the absence of adequate resources and staffing, has resulted in an often unmanageable increase in staff workload.

IV. 2024 cost drivers and budget scenarios

35. Management has developed preliminary estimates for the 2024 regular budget, prioritizing completing delivery of the IFAD12 commitments.
36. With regard to the programme of loans and grants (PoLG)⁴ and related project pipeline, for the last year of IFAD12, the planned PoLG comprises US\$1.5 billion in support of 39 new investment projects, US\$117 million in additional financing for 11 ongoing projects (including support to regional lending operations) and US\$10 million in regular grants for a grand total of US\$1.6 billion.
37. The proposed investments will contribute to ensuring IFAD's mainstreaming and climate financing targets are met and will fulfil the commitment to allocating 100 per cent of core resources to low-income countries (LICs) and lower-middle-income countries (LMICs), and at least 25 per cent to countries with fragile and conflict-affected situations.
38. The high volume of delivery expected in 2024 is partly attributable to global events – the continuing effects of COVID-19, the economic crisis and the war in Ukraine – that are beyond the control of IFAD and its borrowing countries, which have led to delays in project approvals that were originally planned in 2022/2023.

A. 2024 cost drivers

39. The recalibrated decentralization plan proposes adjustments to the original field presence implementation path. These entail revising the total number of country offices to between 46 and 50, depending on the deferral of the country offices in the high-intensity conflict-affected countries and upgrading some existing offices.
40. The plan will also embed changes in field-based positions directly stemming from IFAD's operational needs. Any resulting incremental positions will be evaluated and prioritized based on operational and functional requirements. The plan also foresees a fit-for-purpose assessment of the role of IFAD headquarters in the context of an increasingly field-based organization.
41. Priority will also be given to initiatives aimed at improving workplace culture. Management is committed to implementing actions to reduce excessive workload, foster cross-divisional and cross-departmental work with streamlined business processes, and reduce or eliminate duplication of activities across the house. While this area would not embed major budget resourcing, investments could be prioritized towards: (i) capacity-building and support mechanisms for IFAD's decentralized offices as well as internal communications; (ii) continued implementation and expanded delegation of authority, and process automation; and (iii) continued efforts to accelerate the recruitment process and reduce the vacancy rate.
42. Although estimates are based on a preliminary assessment, in order to compensate and offset the increased cost implications of the 2024 key priorities, Management is looking carefully at areas that could be deprioritized and opportunities for further trade-offs in order to maximize containment of real budget growth.
43. Preliminary options currently being explored to accommodate incremental budget requirements include the following recalibrated business areas and related cost categories:
 - (i) **Reductions in consultancy costs.** These are primarily targeted at consultants engaged in administrative and corporate activities and would allow redirection of saved resources to project-related requirements. These

⁴ Based on available data as of 8 August 2023.

reductions are mainly envisaged to be realized through recalibrated IFAD research and knowledge management activities and related products including advisory services and corporate services.

- (ii) **Reducing travel costs.** Similar considerations will guide adjustments in travel costs, emphasizing reductions in non-essential and non-project-related travel. This should be achieved through more selective and rationalized participation in global policy forums, partnership and network events, and other formal and informal conferences.
- (iii) **Reducing other budget categories such as other administrative costs related to corporate services and business areas.** While the potential additional savings may not be as significant as the savings already realized in these areas in recent years, IFAD will continue to seek efficiency gains in facilities management, training, interpretation and translation services, and administrative activities. These savings would be mainly pursued through (i) continued efforts to reduce the number and volume of documents presented to IFAD's governing bodies, (ii) more efficient and streamlined arrangements of formal and informal meetings and events, (iii) prioritization of collective and corporate training aimed at boosting staff capacity and skills, and (iv) completion of a decentralized ticketing process with a reduction of costs generated by the headquarters global travel agent service provider.

B. 2024 budget proposal

- 44. Depending on variables in the recalibrated decentralization plan, mainly linked to the timing of the establishment of regional offices for APR and the Latin America and the Caribbean Division and related staffing, the 2024 budget proposal envisages limited real budget growth, up to 1.9 per cent, which will be entirely channelled to adequately resource the staffing complements and incremental – i.e. not already offset and absorbed by savings and trade-offs – recurrent costs of the decentralization plan.
- 45. As in previous years, price-related cost drivers will be absorbed, whenever possible, to achieve minimal nominal growth of the budget. However, it should be noted that over the past two years, high inflationary contexts have had significant implications for IFAD and other international financial institutions: budgeting in such an environment becomes challenging as the purchasing power of funds allocated to support projects and programmes diminishes rapidly. Following recent trends, global inflation is expected to fall from 6.6 per cent in 2023 to 4.3 per cent in 2024 but will still remain above pre-pandemic (2017–19) levels of about 3.5 per cent.⁵
- 46. In line with the approved methodology,⁶ IFAD will apply differentiated price factors to the various expenditure categories. The proposed approach for adjusting the 2024 regular budget for inflation and price increases is outlined in annex I.
- 47. For the high-level preview, and based on the 12-month historical average of the United Nations monthly exchange rate, IFAD has adjusted the EUR:US\$ exchange rate to EUR 0.945:US\$1.⁷ Given the current exchange rate trends, it is likely that there will be a revision of this rate, which could result in a slight nominal increase due to the higher value of the euro-denominated portion of the IFAD budget and euro components of staff salaries and allowances.
- 48. Based on current assumptions with a net price increase of approximately 2.53 per cent⁸ (compound inflation applied to the 2024 budget), it is projected that IFAD's

⁵ [World Economic Outlook Update – Jan 2023 - International Monetary Fund.](#)

⁶ [AC 2015/136/R.6.](#)

⁷ The exchange rate for the 2023 budget was EUR 0.923:US\$1.

⁸ The net price adjustment, based on updated figures and the consumer price index trend that IFAD is closely watching, will be calculated in the final budget document. Given the current trends, it is expected that some price factors, particularly affecting operational requirements and PoLG delivery in determined countries, may arise thus causing a slight increase in the overall inflationary adjustment applicable to the 2024 budget.

net regular budget would amount to US\$183.5 million. Table 2 provides a summary breakdown of IFAD’s 2024 preliminarily assessed budget trajectory.

Table 2

Net regular budget

(Millions of United States dollars)

(A) 2023 approved budget	(B) 2024 estimated real increase (1.9% of A)	(C) 2024 price increase (2.53% of A)	(D) 2024 nominal budget (A+B+C)
175.71	3.34	4.45	183.50

V. 2025-2026 budget outlook

49. IFAD’s regular budgets in 2025 and 2026 are expected to support shared ambitions and ensure that the organization is fit for purpose to deliver against the IFAD13 commitments. The Fund will further align budget planning and monitoring processes with organizational, strategic and performance goals, enabling the organization to deliver investments at the scale and quality needed to contribute to the 2030 Agenda.
50. While constant efforts will be made within the IFAD13 Consultation to define and adequately cost the agreed commitments, Management is setting overarching principles around IFAD’s structural proposals, with clear budget implications, by shifting to a rolling forecast approach based on replenishment cycles to better plan and utilize budgets for operations.
51. In the first years of IFAD13, impact through programme delivery will remain the highest corporate priority in the allocation of limited resources around the operational pillars of the IFAD13 business model. The preliminary identified cost drivers that might impact IFAD’s budget trajectory in the replenishment period are:
 - (i) **Addressing drivers and impacts of fragility linked to IFAD’s work.** This will require incremental resources to cover the higher costs of operating in fragile contexts (design, supervision, field expenses, fragility assessment, third-party implementation, fragility-associated flexibility), as well as enhancing internal staff capacity and operational systems to work better in fragile situations.
 - (ii) **Boosting climate and biodiversity financing, leveraging IFAD’s comparative advantage to mobilize more climate finance for smallholder producers.** This would embed additional investments, both in staff and in non-staff requirements to mobilize additional climate finance resources and to design, supervise and deliver climate- and biodiversity-related programmes while also providing countries with high-demand support on financial modalities.
 - (iii) **Strengthening engagement with the private sector.** Incremental resources will be invested for a comprehensive reform of the Private Sector Financing Programme mechanism, aiming at materially leveraging additional resources to be channelled to LICs, LMICs, upper-middle-income countries and fragile situations.
52. Mindful of repeated recommendations for stronger budget discipline and with the aim of enhancing resource management over the short to medium term, barring exceptional circumstances and provided there are constant efforts to strengthen institutional effectiveness and maximize resource allocations towards IFAD’s programmatic activities, Management will continue striving to contain real budget growth.
53. Management is exploring business areas that could be descoped and/or deprioritized, along with internal and external synergies to offset, to the greatest extent possible, any incremental budget requirement of IFAD13 key cost drivers.

54. In recent years, increased resource mobilization efforts have boosted supplementary fund resources and donor contributions considerably, with a significant rise in the fee income generated from the management of supplementary funds.
55. While supplementary fund management fees primarily finance related indirect incremental work through enhanced resource management, these resources will also support investments in operational areas of IFAD13, and thereby reduce incremental demands on IFAD’s administrative budgets.
56. A step towards increased institutional efficiencies and containment of administrative costs is clearly demonstrated by the recalibrated decentralization plan, which has materially reduced the incremental costs envisaged in 2025. Table 3 compares the decentralization recurrent incremental costs for 2024 and 2025 pertaining to the original and recalibrated plan.
57. The incremental recurrent costs of the proposed recalibration plan in 2025, i.e. over and above the 2024 proposed budget, amount to US\$0.2 million, whereas the original plan’s incremental cost for 2025 amounted to US\$2.0 million. The recalibration plan results in an estimated staff and non-staff cost avoidance of approximately US\$1.8 million.

Table 3

Estimated incremental decentralization recurrent costs: original and recalibrated plan
(Millions of United States dollars)

<i>Cost item</i>	<i>Original plan</i>		<i>Recalibrated plan</i>	
	<i>2024 budget</i>	<i>2025 budget</i>	<i>2024 budget</i>	<i>2025 budget</i>
RO/ICO running costs	1.79	0.30	1.62	0.23
Staff costs	2.23	1.00	2.41	(0.75)
UN costs	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7
Total	4.72	2.00	4.74	0.18

VI. 2024 capital budget

59. As in prior years, the 2024 capital budget is split into:
 - (i) Capital expenditures that are cyclical or regular in nature, and have an economic lifetime of more than one year (e.g. annual replacement of computers, and replacement of vehicles in IFAD country offices); and
 - (ii) Major corporate ICT and other investment projects, subject to available capacity and prioritization.
60. IFAD units are progressing well on cyclical upgrades. Major ICT investment projects and other crucial initiatives, such as phase one of the end-to-end project procurement system have been successfully completed and implemented.
61. For 2024, a capital budget of between US\$5.4 million and US\$6.2 million is expected to be proposed, which is in line with the 2023 capital budget envelope of US\$6.5 million. Due to the Fund’s gradual transition to cloud solutions, a shift from capital expenditures to recurring operational expenditures continues to be expected. Management continues to explore approaches to manage this transition to mitigate pressure on future recurrent costs.

VII. Way forward

62. This document is expected to facilitate strategic dialogue with the Executive Board over the coming months to assess priorities and trade-offs and reach an agreed level of ambition for IFAD’s regular budget in 2024. Those discussions will inform the final proposal to be presented. The feedback provided by the Audit Committee will also be taken into account.

63. Management will present the proposal for IFAD's 2024 results-based programme of work and regular and capital budgets at the 140th session of the Executive Board in December 2023, together with the results-based work programme and budget for 2024 and indicative plan for 2025-2026 of the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD. The progress reports for the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative, the performance-based allocation system and the Borrowed Resource Access Mechanism will also be presented during that session.

Part two – Preview of the results-based work programme and budget for 2024 and indicative plan for 2025-2026 of the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD

I. Introduction

1. **Return to in-person evaluations.** Since 2022, most evaluation missions have been conducted in person, as this was the norm prior to COVID-19. However, as already foreseen in 2020, some practices tested under the pandemic will continue and are now integrated in the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD (IOE) work process and allow for some reduction in evaluation costs.⁹ These include remote interviews, use of geo-based tools (based on satellite imaging) and in some cases, training beneficiaries to make videos and take pictures, documenting their experience with IFAD-funded development initiatives. These complement, but are no substitute for, the physical presence of IOE staff and its consultants in the field.
2. **Emerging priorities.** This document reviews IOE activities in 2023, outlines IOE priorities in 2024 and beyond and their relevance to the IOE multi-year evaluation strategy 2022-2027¹⁰ and resource implications. The document was informed by extensive consultations with IFAD's governing bodies and Management, including the Programme Management Department and the Strategy and Knowledge Department. This document is aligned with the multi-year evaluation strategy presented to the Evaluation Committee at its 114th session and with the Executive Board at its 134th session in December 2021. The multi-year strategy helps operationalize the 2021 Revised IFAD Evaluation Policy.¹¹

II. Activities in 2023

3. This section provides an update on the progress made in 2023, budget utilization through June 2023 and projected 2023 year-end budget utilization. In line with the 2021 evaluation policy, the IOE budget is prepared independently of IFAD's administrative budget.

A. Key evaluations and related initiatives

4. The progress made in selected evaluation activities is outlined below:
 - **Corporate-level evaluation (CLE) of IFAD's decentralization experience.** The CLE was finalized in January 2023, taking Management's comments into account. The report was presented to the Evaluation Committee at its 120th session in April 2023 and the Executive Board at its 138th session in May 2023.
 - The approach paper for both the **CLE on knowledge management** and the **thematic evaluation on gender equality** was discussed with the Evaluation Committee at its 120th session in April 2023. Data collection has taken place, including country case studies. These two evaluations are slated for completion in late 2023.
 - **The thematic evaluation on food and nutrition security** will begin in September 2023. It will carry forward and complete in 2024.
 - **The subregional evaluation on the Dry Corridor of Central America** began in the first part of 2023, and the country case studies were conducted between June and July. The focus is on four countries – El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua – and agroecological areas characterized

⁹ <https://www.ifad.org/en/web/ioe/-/the-experience-of-the-independent-office-of-evaluation-of-ifad-in-conducting-evaluations-during-covid-19-learning-note>.

¹⁰ <https://webapps.ifad.org/members/eb/134/docs/EB-2021-134-R-36.pdf>.

¹¹ <https://webapps.ifad.org/members/eb/132/docs/EB-2021-132-R-5-Rev-1.pdf>.

not only by vulnerability to natural shocks and climate change but conflicts, violence and emigration as well. This subregional evaluation will help: (i) identify development challenges and strategic opportunities for IFAD in the Dry Corridor; (ii) assess the performance and results of intervention approaches supported by IFAD; and (iii) based on the analysis, formulate recommendations to boost effectiveness and collaboration with national authorities and subregional and international organizations working in the Dry Corridor. The plan is to finalize the evaluation in the first quarter of 2024.

- **Country strategy and programme evaluations (CSPEs).** The CSPEs in China and Ethiopia (begun in 2022) were completed in the second quarter of 2023. In-person workshops were held in Addis Ababa and Beijing in June 2023. IOE began new CSPEs in India, Mauritania, Türkiye and Rwanda. The CSPE in the Dominican Republic will begin in the last quarter of 2023, with data collection slated for 2024. The CSPE for Haiti is on hold, due to security concerns in the country. CSPEs are a key IOE product, covering an extended period of IFAD cooperation with the country in question (in many cases around 10 years) and informing the preparation of new strategies (country strategic opportunities programmes).
- **Annual Report on the Independent Evaluation of IFAD (ARIE).** IOE prepared its twenty-first ARIE for presentation to the Evaluation Committee at its 122nd session and the Executive Board at its 139th session. The ARIE contains a time series analysis of ratings from project-level evaluations, as well as ratings for non-lending activities generated by country-level evaluations. The 2023 edition of the ARIE covers findings from recent evaluations on IFAD's institutional efficiency, rural enterprise development and agricultural advisory services, further contributing to institutional learning.
- **Project cluster evaluations (PCEs).** These are project-level evaluations conducted on a group of projects that share similar characteristics in several countries. PCEs can cover ongoing, as well as closed, projects and include field visits. In 2023, IOE has completed PCEs on rural finance projects in the East and Southern Africa region, focusing on projects in Ethiopia, Kenya and Zambia. It held a learning event in July 2023.
- **Project performance evaluations (PPEs).** These are project-level evaluations that include country missions with field visits and are key to understanding IFAD's performance at a granular level. They are building blocks for country-level evaluations, evaluation syntheses, corporate-level evaluations and the ARIE. PPEs are progressing as planned. Approach papers have been prepared for all PPEs in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chad and the Solomon Islands. International missions have already been carried out in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Solomon Islands. The country mission to Chad is planned for the third quarter of 2023.
- IOE has also conducted **independent reviews of:** (i) Management follow-up on the CLE on financial architecture, and (ii) the Results Management Framework of the Twelfth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD12). The independent review is a new type of evaluation activity envisaged by the IOE multi-year evaluation strategy that allows for an assessment on specific, carefully defined topics within a short time frame. The two reviews will be presented to the 123rd session of the Evaluation Committee in October 2023.
- IFAD has applied the **2022 Evaluation Manual** to all its evaluations. The manual covers self- and independent evaluations and reflects recognized international good evaluation standards and practices, such as those of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD-DAC), the Evaluation Cooperation

Group (ECG) and the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG). In 2023, the translation of the manual into Arabic was completed, and the document is now available in all the official languages of IFAD. IOE is also planning to prepare a module to enhance evaluation engagement, building on neuroscience literature, holding training activities to disseminate it. In 2023, IOE has also produced guidance on geospatial tools and applications to enhance the evidence base of its evaluations.¹²

- **Evaluation Advisory Panel.** The Director of IOE has formed an Evaluation Advisory Panel to further IOE's independence, credibility and utility. IOE will hold the second workshop for the advisory panel in November 2023. Panel members will meet with representatives of the Evaluation Committee, Senior Management and IOE staff.
- **Knowledge management and communication.** Between 1 June 2022 and 31 May 2023, IOE published and disseminated 13 evaluation reports, 1 infographic, 45 news items, 35 event pages, 14 Coffee Talk fact sheets, 1 learning note, 2 research papers and 2 evaluation briefs to internal and external audiences. It also published 2 issues of *Independent Magazine* and 3 newsletters. In addition, it created 1 blog post, 2 episodes of the "60 Seconds with the Director" video series, 2 feature promotional videos, 8 fully live learning event videos and 13 video event excerpts from the Innovation Talk.
- **Learning events in collaboration with IFAD Management.** Pursuant to the commitment to ensuring learning as part of the evaluation process, IOE has worked in partnership with Management to organize a series of learning workshops. These have maximized engagement by bringing in diverse country stakeholders to reflect more deeply on its work. Between 1 June 2022 and 31 May 2023, IOE held online learning workshops for the Guinea-Bissau CSPE, Colombia CSPE, Kyrgyzstan CSPE, the PCE on rural enterprise development, the subregional evaluation of countries with fragile situations within the West and Central Africa Division of IFAD, and an IOE thematic evaluation workshop on IFAD's support for gender equality and women's empowerment.
- IOE also hosted the IFAD Innovation Talk "Evaluation through the lens of brain science: Building a humanized approach for better results". Management collaborated in these events as keynote speakers, presenters and panellists.
- **Cooperation with evaluation networks, academic institutions and think tanks.** IOE participated in and contributed to: (i) ECG meetings (fall 2022 and spring 2023); (ii) the third dialogue in the Wilton Park series on transformational change; (iii) Asian Evaluation Week 2023; (iv) the 2022 IDEAS Conference and Global Assembly, and Award on Evaluation for Transformational Change; (v) the 2022 National Evaluation Capacities Conference (NEC); (vi) the UNEG Annual General Meeting 2023; (vii) the European Investment Bank's high-level conference "Picking up the pace: Evaluation in a rapidly changing world"; (viii) the gLOCAL Evaluation Week; and (ix) two UNEG Evaluation Practice Exchange Seminars.
- IOE hosted the 2023 Annual Meeting of the International Research Group for Policy and Programme Evaluation (IntEVAL), held at IFAD headquarters in May. A report was produced on the event. As a part of its engagement with the group, IOE contributed to co-editing the book *Policy Evaluation in the Era of COVID-19*, published in 2023.

¹² <https://ioe.ifad.org/en/w/geospatial-tools-and-applications-to-support-ioe>.

- In addition, IOE made substantive contributions to the academic debate through presentations at world-renowned institutions, including the Yale School of Management, the European Institute of Innovation for Sustainability and the Graduate School of Public Administration of Seoul National University. Looking ahead, the Initiative for Agency and Development at the University of Arizona and IOE are co-organizing a conference on targeting the poor at the University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona, in November 2023.

B. 2022 and 2023 budget utilization

5. Table 1 shows IOE budget utilization in 2022 and in 2023, up to June, and the projected rate at year-end. In 2022, IOE utilized 94 per cent of its non-staff budget to implement its work programme. Total budget utilization in 2022 was adversely affected by lengthy vacancies in four staff positions during the year. In addition, in consultation with its Office of Strategic Budgeting (OSB), IFAD is considering a downward revision of its staff budget estimate, as its current standard figures seem to be on the higher side when applied to IOE. This item is explained further below.

Table 1

IOE budget utilization in 2022 and projected utilization in 2023 (as of end-June 2023) (United States dollars)

<i>Evaluation work</i>	<i>Approved budget 2022</i>	<i>Budget utilization 2022</i>	<i>Approved budget 2023</i>	<i>Commitment as of end-June 2023</i>	<i>Expected utilization as of year-end 2023</i>
Non-staff costs					
Travel costs		302 445		294 755	330 000
Consultant fees		1 748 630		1 300 932	1 890 000
Evaluation outreach, staff training and other costs		271 241		60 017	220 200
Subtotal	2 460 000	2 322 316	2 490 000	1 655 703	2 440 200
Non-staff budget utilization		94%		66%	98%
Staff costs	3 388 338	2 705 572	3 481 000	3 299 917	3 299 917
Total	5 848 338	5 027 888	5 971 000	4 955 620	5 740 117
Total budget utilization		86%		83%	96%

III. IOE 2024 work programme

A. Proposed work programme for 2024

6. The IFAD Executive Board approved an IOE multi-year evaluation strategy in 2021, which helped guide the choice of evaluative work to be undertaken in 2024 and the detailed consultation with all division heads in the Programme Management and Strategy and Knowledge Departments, as well as the department heads. The objectives established in the multi-year strategy 2022-2027 are to:
- Contribute to forging IFAD's corporate culture as a **transparent, learning-oriented and accountable organization** by providing IFAD governing bodies, Management, governments and national development partners with assessments and knowledge that are critical to fulfilling the commitments made under the Eleventh Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD11), IFAD12 and IFAD13;
 - Improve evaluation **coverage** and promote transformative evaluations reflecting the scale and scope of IFAD operations, ensuring methodological rigour, attention to inclusiveness and cultural responsiveness, flexibility and cost-effectiveness;
 - Engage with Management, Member States and external partners to support **evaluation capacity** and use within and outside IFAD; and

- (d) Retain and deepen IOE's position as an **internationally recognized leader** in the evaluation of rural development programmes, policies and strategies by further strengthening the relevance of its work, promoting innovative approaches and the adoption of technology for evaluation and enhancing collaboration with evaluation functions in other organizations and with think tanks and universities.
7. In terms of contributing to IFAD's position as a **transparent, learning-oriented and accountable organization**, in 2024 IOE will complete a thematic evaluation on IFAD-funded interventions on human nutrition. The latter initially became an explicit part of IFAD's strategic agenda under IFAD10 and was further emphasized under IFAD11 and IFAD12, leading to two action plans (2016-2018 and 2019-2025). The evaluation will assess progress made at the strategic, policy and operational levels. The evaluation will also review selected pre-IFAD11 projects to assess their degree of impact on nutrition. Nutrition-sensitive projects designed under IFAD11 and IFAD12 are at the midterm review stage and thus may not allow for a full impact assessment. The desk review for this evaluation will begin in September 2023, and the approach paper will be presented to the Evaluation Committee in 2024.
 8. In 2024, IOE plans to begin a CLE on IFAD11 and IFAD12, to be completed in 2025, in line with the first objective of the IOE multi-year strategy. This evaluation will cover the implementation period of the two replenishment cycles (2019-2021 and 2022-2024). Similar "comprehensive" institutional evaluations have been or are being conducted in other international financial institutions – for example, the Asian Development Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank and the Global Environment Facility. In 2013, IOE conducted a CLE on IFAD Replenishment focusing on the replenishment consultation process. The proposed new CLE will assess: (i) the strategic directions promoted by IFAD11 and IFAD12 Consultations; how they interfaced and supported the longer-term directions adopted by the IFAD Strategic Framework 2016-2025; (ii) the progress of IFAD-funded operations in furthering the replenishment agenda, the results achieved thus far, the lessons learned and the extent to which they have been incorporated in the IFAD13 Consultation; (iii) the specific progress made in thematic areas such as natural resource management and climate change adaptation, gender, nutrition, youth and the targeting of vulnerable groups; (iv) organizational adjustment (including human resource matters) that have taken place at IFAD and the extent to which they support IFAD's engagement with its Member States and other development partners; and (v) the evolution of IFAD's financial architecture and how it helps IFAD meet rural development needs in the countries in which it operates.
 9. The evaluation will provide recommendations that can pave the way for the IFAD14 Consultation and can be completed in time to submit the main findings to IFAD's Management and governing bodies to enable them to prepare for the consultation. IOE will engage with the governing bodies and Management in the preparation of the approach paper to ensure that this CLE responds to their needs and to facilitate the use of its findings and recommendations.
 10. IOE will continue to issue the Annual Report on the Independent Evaluation of IFAD (ARIE) – a revamped version of the Annual Report on Results and Impact of IFAD Operations (ARRI) – which was introduced in 2022. The ARIE will retain the ratings analysis while providing more information on the full range of IOE activities. The 2024 ARIE will include an analysis of cofinancing, with special attention to international cofinancing of IFAD-funded projects.
 11. In terms of **improving evaluation coverage to reflect the scale and scope of IFAD operations**, IOE will complete the CSPEs in Argentina and Türkiye, begun in 2023, work on data collection for new CSPEs in Egypt, the Dominican Republic, Ghana and Lao People's Democratic Republic, and conduct preparatory activities for

a CSPE in the Plurinational State of Bolivia and Zimbabwe (with data collection and reporting planned for 2025). It should be noted that this is the first time that country-level evaluations are being conducted for the Dominican Republic, Lao People's Democratic Republic and Zimbabwe.

12. In 2024, IOE will complete a subregional evaluation (SRE) on the Dry Corridor of Central America and begin an evaluation of IFAD operations in small island developing states, to be completed in 2025. In 2014, IFAD prepared a paper on its approach in small island developing states.¹³ In 2022, IFAD presented a new Strategy for Engagement in Small Island Developing States, covering the period 2022-2027.¹⁴ This evaluation will take stock of the evidence on IFAD's experience since 2014, its trajectory in more recent years and the changes that have occurred since approval of the recent strategy. The evaluation will include country case studies conducted through in-person missions.
13. In 2024, IOE will conduct PPEs for the following four projects: (i) Cabo Verde Rural Socio-economic Opportunities Programme; (ii) Lesotho Wool and Mohair Promotion Project; (iii) Montenegro Rural Clustering and Transformation Project; and (iv) Sri Lanka Smallholder Tea and Rubber Revitalization Project. The PPE in Cabo Verde will support IOE's planned evaluation on small island developing states by providing empirical evidence at the project level. The PPEs in Cabo Verde and Montenegro are the first in these countries.
14. As in the past, IOE will conduct ongoing project completion report validations (PCRVs). Ratings from the PCRVs are used for time series analyses of ratings presented in the ARIE. Furthermore, substantive findings from the PCRVs are used as evidence for country-level, subregional and thematic evaluations, which is triangulated with other sources (e.g. stakeholder interviews, field visits).
15. In terms of **evaluation capacity development**, IOE will continue to support the capacity of IFAD staff for self-evaluation, based on the 2022 Evaluation Manual, in collaboration with Management. The Evaluation Manual is a living document, and IOE will add new modules linked to relevant material (on methodology and evaluation management skills) as further reference material for staff interested in improving their knowledge about evaluation. IOE will also continue to support the Global Evaluation Initiative, led by the World Bank's Independent Evaluation Group, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Independent Evaluation Office. In particular, as part of this initiative, a proposal to support monitoring and evaluation capacity in the International Strategic Centre for Agri-food Development of the Republic of Uzbekistan is under review.
16. In terms of **furthering IOE's leadership role in evaluation**, IOE plans to continue engaging with international evaluation networks and related international initiatives, including international evaluation associations and IntEVAL. IOE will continue to contribute actively to evaluation events and discussions at the country, regional and global level.
17. IOE will continue engaging with its Evaluation Advisory Panel to improve the quality of its work and remain at the cutting edge of the rural development evaluation field. To this end, the annual workshop with the Evaluation Advisory Panel will be held in 2024 at IFAD headquarters.
18. The proposed list of IOE evaluation activities for 2024 is presented in annex III and the indicative plan for 2025-2026, in annex IV.

¹³ <https://www.ifad.org/documents/38714170/39135645/IFAD%27s+approach+in+Small+Island+Developing+States+-+A+global+response+to+island+voices+for+food+security.pdf/9b62896e-10e3-420a-804a-5ffaa8821d2?t=1510322602000>.

¹⁴ <https://www.ifad.org/en/-/ifad-strategy-for-engagement-in-small-island-developing-states-2022-2027>.

IV. 2024 resource envelope

A. Staff resources

19. In 2024, IOE proposes to maintain the same staff complement as in 2023, in line with the expected workload (table 2). IOE evaluations are led by IOE staff, who are responsible for scoping the evaluation; designing the methodology; and leading, drafting, finalizing and presenting documents to Management, governing bodies, government representatives and other external stakeholders. While IOE hires consultants to cover specific thematic areas, IOE staff leadership ensures high-quality evaluation processes and reporting that adhere to the evaluation policy. Moreover, the knowledge generated through evaluation will remain in IFAD. The staff leadership model is common in the evaluation departments of other international financial institutions and is cost-effective.
20. Similar to what was observed in 2022, Management’s demand for evaluations, particularly country-level, subregional and thematic evaluations, has been high in 2023, exceeding the capacity of IOE’s current human resources. The work programme proposed in this document is the result of a selection informed by the multi-year evaluation strategy, recognizing that Management will also need time and financial resources to collaborate in the evaluation process and follow up on the recommendations.
21. So far, IOE budgeted staffing costs have followed IFAD standards per category and grade level. However, as discussed with OSB, the IFAD standard costs for Professional staff and above are currently higher than required by IOE. The reason is that IFAD overall standard costs for the Professional-and-above staff grade category encompass and reflect changes in salary components typical of a decentralized staff population, such as higher post adjustments, indemnities and allowances for mobility, relocation and hazard duty stations. These do not apply to IOE, since its Professional staff are based in Rome only. In collaboration with OSB, IOE will produce an updated estimate of its staffing costs that better reflects the actual needs. While this estimate will not be available until September 2023, for the purposes of this preview, IOE has cut its staffing cost estimates for the Professional-and-above category by 2.5 per cent with respect to the standard costs applied across the board at IFAD. Revised figures will be provided in the full work programme and budget proposal to be reviewed by the Evaluation Committee in October 2023 and submitted thereafter to the Audit Committee and Executive Board in November and December 2023, respectively.

Table 2

Staffing in 2023 and proposed staffing in 2024

<i>Category</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>2024 (proposed)</i>
Professional staff		
Director	1	1
Deputy Director	1	1
Lead evaluation officers	3	3
Senior evaluation officers	4	4
Evaluation officers	4	4
Evaluation research analyst	1	1
Evaluation knowledge and communication officer	1	1
Subtotal - Professional staff	15	15
General Service staff		
Administrative associate	1	1
Associate to Director	1	1
Assistant to Deputy Director	1	1
Evaluation assistants	4	4
Subtotal - General Service staff	7	7
Grand total	22	22

B. Budget requirements

22. Table 3 presents the proposed budget by type of activity, and table 4, by strategic objective. Table 5 contains the IOE gender-sensitive budget, which indicates the budget distribution for gender-related activities.
23. **Assumptions.** The parameters used to develop the current proposed 2024 budget will be as follows: (i) IOE staff costs provisionally estimated at 97.5 per cent of IFAD standard staff costs (i.e. a reduction of 2.5 per cent), as explained above; (ii) inflation will be absorbed insofar as possible; and (iii) the US\$:EUR exchange rate follows IFAD assumptions.

Table 3

Proposed budget for 2024 by type of activity and comparison with previous budgets

Type of activity	Approved 2021 budget (US\$)	Approved 2022 budget (US\$)	Approved 2023 budget (US\$)	Proposed 2024 budget (US\$)	Absolute number 2023	Absolute number 2024
Non-staff costs						
ARRI/ARIE, CLE, thematic evaluation, evaluation synthesis and corporate-level reviews	400 000	570 000	625 000	630 000	7	4
SREs and CSPEs	1 140 000	950 000	975 000	1 080 000	8	10
Project-level evaluations (PCEs, PPEs, PCRVs and impact evaluations [IE])	340 000	420 000	360 000	320 000	40*	40*
Evaluation Manual	80 000	30 000	-	-		
IOE multi-year strategy	10 000	-	-	-		
Knowledge-sharing, publication, communication, evaluation outreach and partnership activities	270 000	270 000	290 000	280 000		
Evaluation capacity development, training and other costs	120 000	200 000	220 000	210 000		
Buffer for unforeseen evaluation work	70 000	20 000	20 000	20 000		
Total non-staffing costs	2 430 000	2 460 000	2 490 000	2 540 000		
Staffing costs	3 388 338	3 388 338	3 481 000	3 412 100		
Total budget	5 818 338	5 848 338	5 971 000	5 952 100		

* This number is indicative, as the number of PCRVs depends on the number of project completion reports that IOE receives each year. The actual number of PCRVs conducted may differ.

24. **Budget by divisional goals.** Table 4 shows the allocation of IOE’s total proposed budget for 2024, including both staffing and non-staffing costs, against IOE’s strategic objectives.

Table 4
Proposed 2024 budget allocation by strategic objective

<i>Strategic objective</i>	<i>Budget</i>	<i>% of total budget</i>
Contribute to forging IFAD’s corporate culture as a transparent, learning-oriented and accountable organization by providing IFAD governing bodies, Management, governments and national development partners with assessments and knowledge that are critical to fulfilling the commitments made under IFAD11, IFAD12 and IFAD13	1 476 121	24.8
Improve evaluation coverage and promote transformative evaluations reflecting the scale and scope of IFAD operations and ensuring methodological rigour, attention to inclusiveness and cultural responsiveness, flexibility and cost-effectiveness	3 279 607	55.1
Engage with Management, Member States and external partners to support evaluation capacity and use within and outside IFAD	541 641	9.1
Retain and deepen IOE’s position as an internationally recognized leader in the evaluation of rural development programmes, policies and strategies, by further strengthening the relevance of its work, promoting innovative approaches and the adoption of technology for evaluation, and enhancing collaboration with evaluation functions in other organizations and with think tanks and universities	654 731	11.0
Total	5 952 100	100

Note: percentages are rounded up.

25. **Gender-sensitive budget.** Historically, IOE evaluations have placed a heavy emphasis on examining gender-related issues in IFAD operations. The central transformative principle of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, “Leave No One Behind,” is reflected in the 2022 Evaluation Manual and IOE’s multi-year strategy. IOE thus conducts a thorough review of gender equality in its evaluations (including the issue of transformational change and intersectionality).

Table 5
IOE 2024 gender-sensitive budget

<i>Type of activity</i>	<i>Proposed 2024 budget</i>	<i>Gender component (percentage)</i>	<i>Gender component (US\$)</i>
Non-staffing costs			
ARIE, CLEs, thematic evaluations, evaluation synthesis and corporate-level reviews	630 000	20	126 000
SREs and CSPEs	1 080 000	13	140 400
Project-level evaluations (PCEs, PPEs, PCRVs and IEs)	320 000	11	35 200
Knowledge-sharing, communication, evaluation outreach and partnership activities	280 000	8	22 400
Evaluation capacity development, training and other costs	210 000	8	16 800
Buffer for unforeseen evaluation work	20 000	8	1 600
Total non-staffing costs	2 540 000	13.5	342 400
Staffing costs			
Gender focal point and alternate gender focal point	360 750*	15	54 113
Other evaluation staff members	3 051 350	7	213 595
Total staffing costs	3 412 100	7.8	267 707
Total	5 952 100	10.3	610 108

* Assuming a P-3 and a P-4 staff member.

V. IOE budget proposal and considerations for the future

26. **Current proposal.** The total proposed 2024 budget is US\$5.952 million, which is slightly below the approved budget for 2023 (US\$5.971 million), due to a lower provisional re-estimation of the budget for staffing costs, offsetting a small increase in non-staffing costs for subregional and country programme evaluations. The requested budget envelope is just at the level of the average IOE annual budget for the period 2010-2024 (figure 1). In nominal and real terms, IOE’s total budget has declined since 2010 (figure 1).
27. IOE’s budget as a percentage of IFAD’s administrative budget has declined over the past decade (figure 2). IOE has streamlined both processes and products. Learning from the experience of limited international travel during the COVID-19 pandemic, IOE has revised its approach to several types of evaluations to generate efficiency gains. This includes, for example, conducting virtual preparatory missions, online consultations and online learning events in most cases. The main missions are conducted in person.

Figure 1
IOE budget (2010-2024)
(Millions of United States dollars)

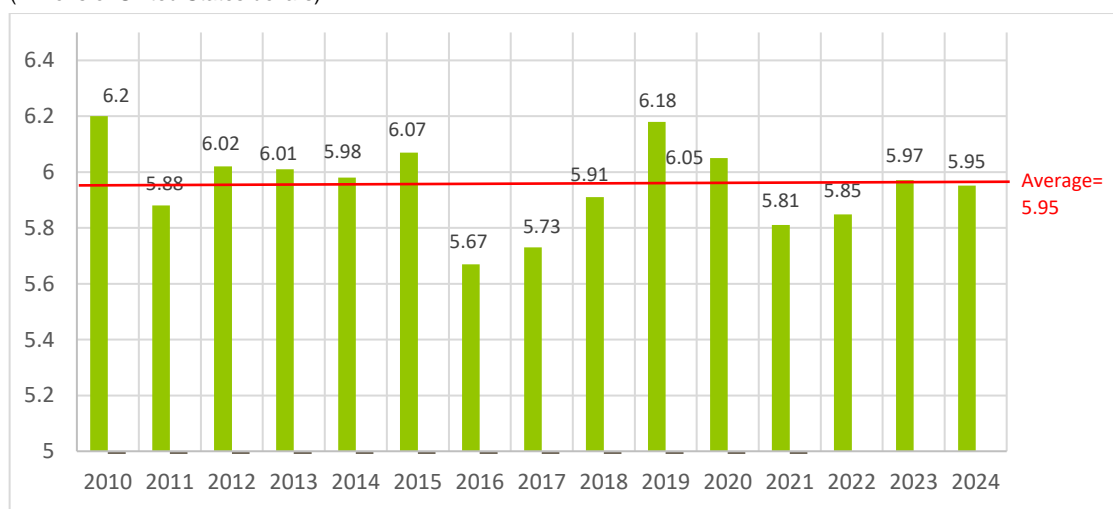
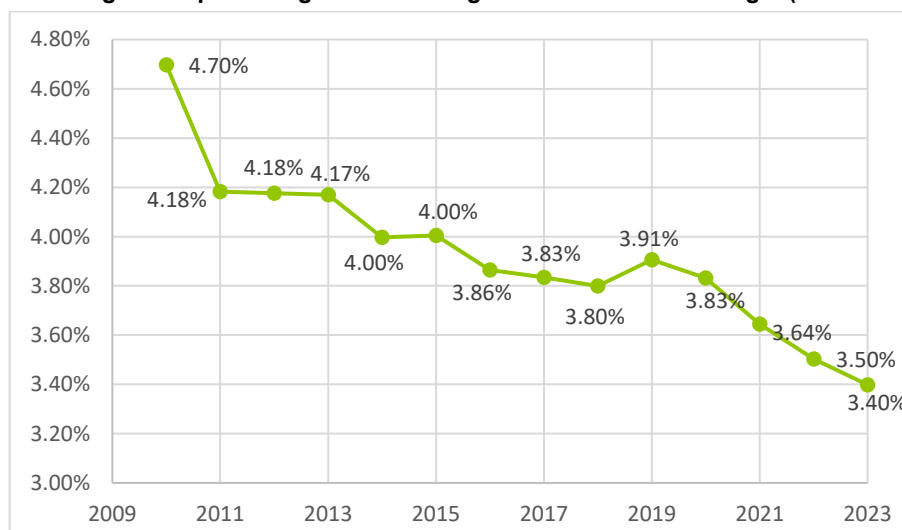


Figure 2
IOE budget as a percentage of IFAD’s regular administrative budget (2010-2023)



28. IOE's budget cap is fixed at 0.90 per cent of IFAD's programme of loans and grants (PoLG). As decided by the Executive Board at its 131st session, the ratio of the budget to the average PoLG, as a percentage, is calculated over three years of a given replenishment period. For the IFAD12 period (2022-2024), IFAD's total PoLG is expected to be US\$3.5 billion, which, when spread over three years, comes to US\$1.16 billion annually. Thus, IOE's proposed budget of US\$5.952 million represents approximately 0.51 per cent of IFAD's PoLG, well below the cap.
29. IFAD's budget rules allow for a limited carry-over of the IFAD administrative budget and IOE budget from one year to next. IOE's level of carry-over will reflect the agreement made for IFAD's administrative budget, and its utilization will be in line with the relevant organizational guidelines.

Inflation assumptions for 2024

1. As in previous years, IFAD will apply differentiated price factors for the 2024 budget since inflation will have varying effects on different expenditure categories.
2. The price increase assumptions and corresponding rationale are outlined below:
 - **Staff costs.** The effect of the weakened euro on the foreign exchange rate (based on the 12-month average of the United Nations US\$:EUR exchange rate) will slightly reduce the expected price increase to be embedded in the revision of standard costs. However, the rise of post adjustments, other salary components and staff entitlements, will produce an increase in the staff standard costs. A significant increase is also produced by higher graded existing positions (due to 2023 job audit exercises). Therefore, it is proposed to use a price factor of 1.1 per cent.
 - **Consultancy costs.** Management analysed existing contract data for all consultants, ranging from 2021 to 2023, and calculated the average daily fee increase based on the fee changes for every individual that worked for IFAD in at least two of the three years. As a result, Management is proposing a 3.5 per cent price increase for this expenditure category.
 - **Travel costs.** While an extensive analysis is being conducted by the travel management company on travel industry prices and trends, based on preliminary data a projection of a 4.8 per cent price increase for this category is applied.
 - **IT services costs.** For this category, and as per the approved methodology, the average of the world consumer price index published by the International Monetary Fund and the Italian consumer price index published by the Italian National Institute of Statistics has been applied. Following latest data available, this is leading to a weighted inflation adjustment of 5.1 per cent for these cost components.
 - **Other costs.** This expenditure category is comprised of the following subcategories:
 - Facility management;
 - Other staff costs;
 - Training costs;
 - Interpretation and translation costs;
 - Administrative costs; and
 - Cooperating institutions costs.

Management has applied a 5.1 per cent increase to all six subcategories within the "other costs" category.

IOE Results Management Framework for 2023¹⁵

Table 1
IOE key performance indicators for 2023

Key performance indicator	Baseline	Target	Achievement	Notes
Adoption of evaluation findings and recommendations				
1. Percentage of recommendations partially or fully agreed to	99% (2020 President's Report on the Implementation Status of Evaluation Recommendations and Management Actions [PRISMA])	95%	According to Management PRISMA (2022) self-reporting: 100% agreement (94% of recommendations were fully agreed to and the remaining 6% partially agreed to)	Available via PRISMA
2. Percentage of agreed recommendations on higher-plane evaluations implemented satisfactorily and in a timely manner	n.a.	90%	According to the IOE comments on the PRISMA 2022: 64% of the recommendations were fully implemented, 33% were under implementation and 3% were not fully addressed	Based on biannual verification by IOE on higher-plane evaluations ¹⁶
Coverage of IFAD programmes				
3. Number of higher-level evaluation reports (corporate-level evaluations [CLEs], thematic evaluations, evaluation syntheses, country strategy and programme evaluations [CSPEs] and subregional evaluations [SREs]) published during the year	6	7-8	8	Computed on an annual basis
4. Proportion of active countries covered through subregional and country-level evaluations, project performance evaluations (PPE), impact evaluations (IE) and project cluster evaluations (PCEs) on a two-year basis	25% ¹⁷ (2019-2020)	28%-33%	34.4% (2022-2023) ¹⁸	Computed on a biannual basis

¹⁵ Drawn from IOE's multi-year strategy.

¹⁶ In fact, the verification has been done annually since 2022 and is based on IOE comments on the PRISMA report.

¹⁷ Countries covered by CSPEs: 10; Countries covered by PPEs: 13; Average active countries in 2019-2020: 92.

¹⁸ Countries covered by SREs: 10; Countries covered by CSPEs: 12; Countries covered by PPEs: 8; Countries covered by PCEs: 7, removing 5 duplications; Number of countries with an active portfolio in 2021-2022: 93.

Engagement, outreach and feedback received				
5. Feedback received from the Executive Board and subsidiary bodies	n.a.	Tracked	Feedback is recorded in Evaluation Committee and Executive Board minutes and includes supportive remarks (examples in annex VI)	To be reported on in qualitative terms
6. Feedback received from the Evaluation Advisory Panel on evaluation quality	n.a.	Tracked	To be presented in the Evaluation Advisory Panel's annual report	To be reported on in qualitative terms
7. Engagement events with Management and governments and feedback received	n.a.	Tracked	Per statements made at learning events (examples in annex VI)	To be reported on in quantitative and qualitative terms
8. Number of visits to the IOE website	77 380 (2019)	80 000	127 000	Quantitative data tracked by IOE
9. Number of learning events (co-)organized by IOE	8 (2019)	10	16	Includes event at IFAD and those open to the public
10. Score assigned IOE by the United Nations System-wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP) on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women annual review ¹⁹		Score equal to or above 9.0/12 (the threshold for exceeding requirements)	Score obtained in 2022: 10.5 (exceeds requirements)	Score from UN-SWAP, based on 13 IOE evaluations assessed in 2022
Utilization of resources and cost-effectiveness				
11. Percentage of non-staffing budget utilized	98.7% (2020)	95%-100%	94.40% (2022)	
12. Ratio of IOE budget to the programme of loans and grants	0.62% (2020)	≤0.90%	0.51% (2023)	The 0.90% cap was set by the Executive Board in 2008
13. Ratio of IOE budget to IFAD administrative budget	3.64%	Tracked	3.40% (2023)	

¹⁹ The UN-SWAP on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women is a United Nations system-wide accountability framework designed to measure, monitor and drive progress toward a common set of standards to aspire and adhere to for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women. It applies to all United Nations entities, departments and offices.

IOE proposed evaluation activities for 2024

Table 1
Proposed IOE work programme for 2024 by type of activity

<i>Type of work</i>	<i>Proposed activities for 2024</i>	<i>Start date</i>	<i>Expected completion date</i>
1. Corporate-level evaluations and reviews	Corporate-level evaluation of institutional and operational performance under IFAD11 and IFAD12	Jan-24	Dec-25
2. Thematic evaluations	IFAD-funded interventions in human nutrition	Sep-23	Dec-24
3. SREs	Dry Corridor in Central America	June-23	June-24
	IFAD's strategy and operations in small island developing states	June-24	Dec-25
4. CSPEs	Argentina (completion)	Oct-23	Oct-24
	Türkiye (completion)	Jun-23	Jun-24
	Dominican Republic	Dec-23	Dec-24
	Lao People's Democratic Republic	Jan-24	Dec-24
	Ghana	Jan-24	Dec-24
	Egypt	Jan-24	Dec-24
	Zimbabwe	Nov-24	Nov-25
	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Nov-24	Nov-25
5. Project completion report validations (PCRVs)	Validation of all project completion reports (PCRs) available in the year	Jan-24	Dec-24
6. PPEs	Cabo Verde Rural Socio-economic Opportunities Programme	Jan-24	Dec-24
	Lesotho Wool and Mohair Promotion Project	Jan-24	Dec-24
	Montenegro Rural Clustering and Transformation Project	Jan-24	Dec-24
	Sri Lanka Smallholder Tea and Rubber Revitalization Project	Jan-24	Dec-24
7. Engagement with governing bodies	Review of implementation of IOE's results-based work programme and budget for 2024 and preparation of results-based work programme and budget for 2025 and indicative plan for 2026-2027	Jan-24	Dec-24
	Annual Report on the Independent Evaluation of IFAD (ARIE)	Jun-24	Sept-24
	IOE comments on the PRISMA	Jun-24	Sept-24
	IOE comments on the Report on IFAD's Development Effectiveness (RIDE)	Jun-24	Sept-24
	IOE comments on Management policies and strategies	Jan-24	Dec-24
	Participation in Evaluation Committee, Executive Board and Governing Council sessions, selected Audit Committee meetings and the 2024 Board country visit	Jan-24	Dec-24

<i>Type of work</i>	<i>Proposed activities for 2024</i>	<i>Start date</i>	<i>Expected completion date</i>
	IOE comments on country strategic opportunities programmes (COSOPs), when related CSPEs, are available	Jan-24	Dec-24
8. Communication and knowledge management activities	Evaluation reports, IOE website and communication activities	Jan-24	Dec-24
	Communicate the evaluation findings, disseminate the lessons and promote the utilization of evaluations	Jan-24	Dec-24
	EvalForward and other knowledge management platforms	Jan-24	Dec-24
9. Partnerships	Evaluation Cooperation Group (ECG), United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG); Rome-based agency (RBA) collaboration	Jan-24	Dec-24
	Global Evaluation Initiative	Jan-24	Dec-24
	Collaboration with universities, think tanks and IntEVAL	Jan-24	Dec-24
	Contribution as external peer reviewer to evaluations by other multilateral and bilateral organizations, as requested	Jan-24	Dec-24
10. Methodology	Updating of new Evaluation Manual and electronic annexes	Jan-24	Dec-24
	Annual workshop of the Evaluation Advisory Panel	May-24	Oct-24
11. Evaluation capacity development (ECD)	Engagement in ECD in the context of the Global Evaluation Initiative	Jan-24	Dec-24
	Organization of workshops in partner countries on evaluation methodologies and processes, as requested	Jan-24	Dec-24

IOE's indicative plan for 2025-2026

Table 1
IOE indicative plan for 2025-2026, by type of activity*

Type of work	Indicative plan for 2025-2026	Year	Remarks
1. CLEs	IFAD external engagements	2025-2026	To review international global partnerships and initiatives in which IFAD is involved, as well as related funding sources, their management arrangements and their contribution to further IFAD's mandate.
2. Thematic evaluations (TEs)	IFAD's support to the private sector	2025-2026	IFAD's private sector engagement strategy was approved in 2019. This thematic evaluation will provide an assessment of IFAD's private sector operations.
3. Independent rapid review	IFAD ex ante quality-at-entry processes for country strategies and operations	2025-2026	To review processes for assessment of COSOPs, loans, grants and other operations before submission to IFAD's governing bodies
4. Subregional evaluations	Conflict-affected states in the Near East and North Africa region	2025	
	Viet Nam	2025	
	Cameroon/Chad	2025	
5. CSPEs	Jordan	2025	
	Honduras	2025	
	Democratic Republic of Congo/Togo/Sierra Leone	2026	
6. PCRVs	Validate all PCRs available in the year	2025-2026	
7. PCEs	Water management in the NEN region	2025-2026	
8. PPEs	About 4-6 PPEs per year	2025-2026	
9. Engagement with governing bodies	Annual Report on the Independent Evaluation of IFAD	2025-2026	
	Ex post review of implementation of the recommendations of selected strategic evaluations	2025-2026	
	Preparation of the results-based work programme and budget for 2025 and indicative plan for 2026-2027	2025-2026	
	IOE comments on the PRISMA	2024-2025	
	IOE comments on the RIDE	2025-2026	
	IOE comments on selected IFAD operational policies and strategies prepared by Management for consideration by the Evaluation Committee	2025-2026	

<i>Type of work</i>	<i>Indicative plan for 2025-2026</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
	Participation in all sessions of the Evaluation Committee, Executive Board and Governing Council, and the annual country visit of the Board	2025-2026	
	Annual workshop with the Evaluation Advisory Panel	2025-2026	
	IOE comments on COSOPs when related country programme evaluations/CSPEs are available	2025-2026	
10. Communication and knowledge management activities	Evaluation reports, IOE website and communication activities	2025-2026	
	Communicate the evaluation findings and disseminate the lessons	2025-2026	
	Promote utilization of evaluations	2025-2026	
	EvalForward and other knowledge management platforms	2025-2026	
11. Partnership	ECG, UNEG	2025-2026	
	Global Evaluation Initiative	2025-2026	
	RBA collaboration on evaluation	2025-2026	
	Contribute as external peer reviewer to key evaluations by other multilateral and bilateral organizations, as requested	2025-2026	
	Collaborate with universities and think tanks, contribute to IntEVAL	2025-2026	
12. ECD	Capacity-building for member countries	2025-2026	

* The topics and number of TEs, CLEs, CSPEs, PCEs, SREs and evaluation synthesis reports (ESRs) are tentative; actual priorities and number of activities to be undertaken in 2025 and 2026 will be confirmed or determined in 2024 and 2025, respectively.

IOE products

1. This annex presents the spectrum of IOE products between 1 January and 31 December 2022 and documents progress in the areas of leadership and strategy, the advancement of established outputs, the generation of new products and the improvement of staff capability and communications. The work has focused both internally and externally, noting that IOE operates within a global oversight architecture with the independent evaluation and oversight functions of other international financial institutions and the United Nations Evaluation Group.

A. Expand and deepen IOE's leadership role in building global evaluations

2. A series of initiatives seeking to improve the quality of evaluations in IFAD overall were completed, each introducing an element to support effective planning, common terminological and methodological understanding and staff capacity-building.

Improvement of IOE evaluation quality

- **Evaluation Manual, third edition** [[here](#)]. The third edition of the IFAD Evaluation Manual was published on 17 June 2022. The manual implements IFAD's 2021 evaluation policy, with which it is aligned. It seeks to revamp, update and consolidate current guidelines. The manual provides a comprehensive institution-wide approach under which self- and independent evaluation will be planned, conducted and used. IOE interacted and coordinated with Management in the preparation of the manual, which covers self- and independent evaluation.
- **Online training course** [[here](#)]. For the first time in its over 40-year history, IOE has launched a fully interactive online training course that is also available to users outside IFAD. Through an immersive audiovisual experience, users will learn about the principal contents of part 1 of the 2022 IFAD Evaluation Manual. The training was officially launched on 10 October.
- **IOE Evaluation Advisory Panel** [[here](#)]. The IOE Evaluation Advisory Panel held its inaugural annual meeting on 12-14 July 2022. Panel deliberations confirmed that IOE is on the right path and that it is important for the Office to continue striving for constructive engagement with stakeholders. The panel has brought a wealth of global expertise and remains a valuable sounding board for IOE and IFAD, as it advances the evaluation culture and practice. The meeting benefited from extensive participation by members of the IFAD Executive Board and Senior Management, as well as the heads of Rome-based evaluation offices.

The panel also provided comments on key evaluation reports during 2022, including the thematic evaluation of IFAD's support to smallholder climate change adaptation and the corporate-level evaluation on knowledge management.

- **Research publications.** IOE improves the quality of evaluation products through the production of a suite of new substantive research publications, each designed to improve the conceptual and methodological underpinnings of independent evaluation at IFAD. Publications produced in 2022 include the following:
 - Research paper series. Efficiency – Economic analysis for evaluation [[here](#)]
 - Learning notes series. Working in the context of decentralized policies [[here](#)]

Professionalization

- **Global evaluation networks.** IOE has formal membership in three global professional evaluation networks comprising the United Nations and international financial institutions, namely the [United Nations Evaluation Group \(UNEG\)](#), the [Evaluation Cooperation Group \(ECG\)](#) and the [Global Evaluation Initiative \(GEI\)](#).
 - **GEI.** On 3-4 May, IOE participated in the GEI Partnership Council, held in Paris, France. Key outcomes of the event include GEI members' endorsement of the overall direction of GEI's work, its new fundraising strategy and the proposed evaluation methods for each of GEI's business lines. Indran Naidoo attended the event [[here](#)].
 - **ECG.** On 10 June, IOE participated in the ECG spring meeting in Washington, D.C., contributing to the event in several ways in different sessions at multiple levels. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss how ECG members are finding new ways to support accountability and enhance learning in their institutions [[here](#)]. On 14-15 November, IOE attended the fall 2022 meeting of the ECG. IOE presented examples of transformative and impactful corporate-level evaluations that have made a significant contribution to IFAD's work in recent years [[here](#)].
 - **UNEG.** On 20 October, IOE hosted a meeting with Oscar Garcia, UNDP Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) Director (former IOE Director). Mr Garcia shared insights on the use and impact of artificial intelligence in evaluation. RBA evaluation office representatives attended the one-day hybrid meeting, which also included discussions on the future directions of UNEG and insights into the NEC 2022 Conference [[here](#)].
- **National Evaluation Capacities (NEC)** [[here](#)]. The 7th National Evaluation Capacities (NEC) Conference was held at the ITC-ILO Conference and Training Centre in Turin, Italy, from 25-28 October 2022. The conference was co-organized by the UNDP IEO and the GEI and benefited from the firm support of IOE. In addition to bursaries, IOE played an active role in the event by providing substantive input in various sessions.

Participation

- **Global invitations.** IOE staff have been invited to give presentations and participate in 19 international events, including: the second and third Wilton Park dialogue series on climate change [[here](#)] and [[here](#)]; the 3rd International Conference of the Asia Pacific Evaluation Association and EVALFEST [[here](#)]; the inaugural lunch of the Regent Business School Journal Club [[here](#)]; the 10th African Evaluation Association International Conference [[here](#)]; the Islamic Development Bank Group Evaluation Symposium entitled "Reshaping evaluation through the lens of recovery" [[here](#)]; the International Research Group for Policy and Programme Evaluation (IntEVAL) annual meeting [[here](#)]; two events during the gLOCAL Evaluation Week 2022 [[here](#)] [[here](#)]; four events during the 14th European Evaluation Society's biennial conference [[here](#)] [[here](#)] [[here](#)] [[here](#)]; the Czech Evaluation Society Annual Conference 2022 [[here](#)]; the evaluation practitioners network session at the UK Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy [[here](#)]; Asian Evaluation Week (AEW) 2022 [[here](#)]; 2022 IDEAS Conference and Global Assembly [[here](#)]; "Impact Evaluations: Lessons learned from IEU's Learning-Oriented Real-Time Impact Assessment and other international organizations" [[here](#)]; and the Centre for International Development Evaluation [[here](#)].
- **IOE-led seminars and events.** IOE organized and co-hosted two international seminars and events: "Insights from recent studies on targeting of the poor and the ultra-poor" [[here](#)]; "The 2022 IFAD Evaluation Manual as a new tool for rural development practitioners" [[here](#)].

- **Evaluation Advisory Panel seminars** [\[here\]](#). IOE hosted three seminar presentations delivered by members of the Evaluation Advisory Panel:
 - The revised evaluation criteria, delivered by Hans E. Lundgren on 3 March 2022.
 - Measuring multidimensional poverty, delivered by Gonzalo Hernandez Licona on 7 April 2022.
 - Indigenous evaluations, delivered by Bagele Chilisa on 17 June 2022.
- **Coffee Talk series** [\[here\]](#). IOE hosted 14 sessions of its Coffee Talk series, an informal forum for discussing a variety of evaluation topics. Sessions that featured external speakers included:
 - The importance of values in evaluation when goals collide. Talk by Ida Lindkvist, Senior Advisor, Department for Evaluation, Norad [\[here\]](#).
 - Evaluation in fluid and volatile contexts. Talk by Hur Hassnain (Senior Evaluation Advisor, European Commission) and Inga-Lill Aronsson (Senior Lecturer, Uppsala University, Sweden) [\[here\]](#).
 - Leveraging GIS for evaluation. Talk by Oliver Mundy, Athur Mabiso and Rakhat Zhanuzakov (IFAD, GIS specialists) [\[here\]](#)
 - Fast-tracking knowledge management - Experience from China. Talk by Bruce Boyes (Director of RealKM Magazine) [\[here\]](#)
 - Mindset Strategies for Post-Evaluation Transformation. Talk by Srin Pillay, M.D. (CEO and Founder NeuroBusiness Group) [\[here\]](#)
 - Transformational change for people and planet. Talk by Juha Ilari Uitto (Director of the Independent Evaluation Office of the Global Environment Facility) and Geeta Batra (Chief Evaluator and Deputy Director for evaluation at the Independent Evaluation Office of GEF) [\[here\]](#)

Publications

IOE staff members authored, co-authored and edited the following books, peer-reviewed journal articles and publications:

- *Transformational Change for People and the Planet*, book published by Springer. Indran Naidoo and Suppiramaniam Nanthikesan were among the co-authors [\[here\]](#)
- *Transformational Evaluation for the Global Crises of Our Times*, published by IDEAS. Fabrizio Felloni was among the co-authors [\[here\]](#)
- *Japanese Journal of Evaluation Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 2. Indran Naidoo authored an article [\[here\]](#)
- "Evaluations under COVID-19: how the pandemic affected the evaluation of the performance of the Coastal Climate Resilient Infrastructure project in Bangladesh, and what we learned", *eVALUation Matters* Vol. 2, 2021, co-authored by Fabrizio Felloni [\[here\]](#)
- *Evaluation through narratives: A practical case of Participatory Narrative Inquiry in women empowerment evaluation in Niger* Evaluation 1–20, Sage Publisher, co-authored by Fabrizio Felloni [\[here\]](#)
- "Combining participatory narrative methods with quantitative approaches to evaluate impact: Experiences in Cameroon and Niger"; *eVALUation Matters* Vol. 1, 2022, co-authored by Fabrizio Felloni [\[here\]](#)

B. Improve evaluation coverage

Between January and December 2022, the IOE Director oversaw the publication of 30 evaluation reports.

Evaluation reports published

- **2022 Annual Report on the Independent Evaluation of IFAD.** Since 2003, IOE has produced an Annual Report on Results and Impact of IFAD Operations. On the 20th anniversary of this flagship report, it was re-pitched and renamed as the Annual Report on the Independent Evaluation of IFAD (ARIE), reflecting upgraded contents and a broader scope. In providing an overview of the performance of IFAD-supported operations based on independent evaluations, the ARIE continues to be pivotal in ensuring accountability for results [[here](#)].
- **Evaluation synthesis reports (ESRs).** The primary objective of an ESR is to contribute to knowledge generation by consolidating findings from past evaluations. Its main users are Senior Management, Directors, regional and technical division staff and members of IFAD's governing bodies. During the reporting period, IOE published "Government performance in IFAD-supported operations (2010-2020)" [[here](#)].
- **Country strategy and programme evaluations (CSPEs).** The primary objective of a CSPE is to assess the performance and results of a country strategy and operations and provide lessons and recommendations to guide preparation of the next country strategy. Its main users are divisional and country directors, country teams and governments. During the reporting period, IOE published CSPE reports for Morocco [[here](#)], Pakistan [[here](#)] and Burundi [[here](#)].
- **Project performance evaluations (PPEs).** The primary objective of a PPE is to assess the performance and results of project-level operations funded by IFAD. Its main users are regional and country directors, technical advisers, operational staff and government counterparts. During the reporting period, IOE published five PPE reports: India [[here](#)], The Gambia [[here](#)], United Republic of Tanzania [[here](#)], Uzbekistan [[here](#)] and Indonesia [[here](#)].
- **Project completion report validations (PCRVs).** The primary objective of a PCRV is to validate the project completion reports prepared by IFAD Management. Its main users are IOE and IFAD Management for reporting and feedback. During the reporting period, IOE published 20 PCRV reports for Brazil [[here](#)], Georgia [[here](#)], Morocco [[here](#)], Nicaragua [[here](#)], Republic of Moldova [[here](#)], China [[here](#)], Ecuador [[here](#)], Congo [[here](#)], Plurinational State of Bolivia | ACCESOS [[here](#)], Argentina [[here](#)], India [[here](#)], Djibouti [[here](#)], Tajikistan [[here](#)], Plurinational State of Bolivia | VIDA-PEEP [[here](#)], Nigeria [[here](#)], Philippines [[here](#)], Kyrgyzstan [[here](#)], Côte d'Ivoire [[here](#)], India | Andhra Pradesh Drought Mitigation Project [[here](#)] and Brazil | Paulo Freire Project [[here](#)].

Reports completed

In addition to the reports already disseminated, listed above, IOE also completed the following 15 reports, which are pending publication.

- **Thematic evaluations.** The primary objective of a thematic evaluation is to provide evidence of the development effectiveness, performance and results of operations on a thematic topic. Its main users are Senior Management, directors, regional and technical division staff and members of IFAD's governing bodies. During the reporting period, IOE conducted a thematic evaluation of IFAD support to smallholder farmers' adaptation to climate change.

- **Subregional evaluation (SRE).** The primary objective of an SRE is to assess strategy, common intervention approaches and IFAD organizational arrangements in a set of countries that share salient characteristics. Its main users are regional and country directors, technical advisers, operational staff and government counterparts. During the reporting period, IOE conducted a subregional evaluation of fragile states in West and Central Africa.
- **Project cluster evaluation (PCE).** The primary objective of a PCE is to assess the experience of several projects with a common theme or common major component. Its main users are regional and country directors, technical advisers, operational staff and government counterparts. During the reporting period, IOE conducted a PCE on rural enterprise development.
- **Country strategy and programme evaluations (CSPEs):** Colombia; Eswatini; Indonesia; Malawi; Uzbekistan; and Guinea-Bissau
- **Project performance evaluations (PPEs):** Cuba; Zambia; Togo; Egypt
- **Project completion report validations (PCRVs):** India | JTELP; Tunisia; Eritrea

C. Engage strategically with IFAD governance and Management

IOE has increasingly emphasized engagement with Member States and IFAD Management, with a view to furthering learning, accountability and reflection through independent evaluation. These efforts have taken shape through a series of briefings, corporate and country learning workshops and an Executive Board field mission.

Corporate learning workshops

- IOE held two corporate learning workshops with the involvement and participation of IFAD Senior Management, regional and country directors and other staff: Thematic evaluation of IFAD support to smallholder farmer's adaptation to climate change [[here](#)]; and Evaluation synthesis on Government performance in IFAD-supported operations (2010-2020) [[here](#)]

Country learning workshops

- IOE held 5 country learning workshops with the involvement and participation of government representatives, national partner agencies, IFAD staff and international development agencies, including multilateral and bilateral partners: Eswatini, 28 January 2022 [[here](#)]; Uzbekistan, 24 February 2022 [[here](#)]; Indonesia, 18 March 2022 [[here](#)]; Malawi, 17 May 2022 [[here](#)]; and Guinea-Bissau, 12 December 2022 [[here](#)]

Executive Board field missions

- The IOE Director joined a high-level delegation of IFAD Executive Board members and senior staff for a working visit to Sierra Leone from 19 to 26 November 2022. During the mission, the delegation met with high-level government officials and travelled to IFAD-supported projects in the country to view progress and meet with community members and rural farmers [[here](#)].

D. Enhance IOE strategic communication, outreach and knowledge management

A range of communication resources defines IOE's visual persona and brand identity, embodying its independent status. Through this assortment of products, IOE continues to build safe spaces for user interaction that invite its stakeholders to continuously reach out and engage with the Office's outputs in a more accessible manner.

- **IOE Media Coverage Report.** In September 2022, IOE issued its first Media Coverage Report, which came four months after the launch of the new IOE

website. The report, which will be issued biannually, presents the latest data, statistics and trends relative to our website, social media platforms and select IOE products, such as the 3rd edition of the Evaluation Manual, the 2022 Evaluation Policy and *Independent Magazine*.

- **Independent Magazine** [[here](#)]. As IOE's flagship communication product, *Independent Magazine* brings the major efforts of IOE to the forefront of the global development dialogue, while seeking to advance IFAD's vision of vibrant, inclusive and sustainable rural economies, where people live free of poverty and hunger. In 2022, IOE published two editions of the magazine, reaching over 11,000 readers in 76 countries across all continents during the reporting period. This brings the cumulative total number of readers since the launch of the magazine to 18,500 in 97 countries.
- **IOE website** [[here](#)]. The website, the exclusive intellectual property of IOE, is structured to best meet the specific needs of IOE, with dynamic functionalities that maximize opportunities for user engagement. It also ensures an intuitive, easy navigation experience as the Office moves towards building evaluation capacity across IFAD, advancing the IOE conduct model and building bridges through evaluation dialogues to increase understanding and improve performance. In 2022, 32,000 people accessed the website from 199 different countries a total of 122,000 times. IFAD has 177 Member States comprised of developing, middle- and high-income countries from every region in the world. This means that the IOE website has reached 22 countries more than those comprising IFAD's membership. It should be noted that the new IOE website was officially launched on 15 March 2022. On 28 April, an independent Google Analytics tracking dashboard was finalized. Thus, the data presented in this section refer only to an eight-month period – that is, 28 April 2022 – 31 December 2022.
- **Social media**. IOE has a strong, active and vibrant social media presence, which allows the Office to keep its stakeholders up to date on its latest endeavours in real-time, while ensuring that they can smoothly interact with the Office in an ongoing fashion. In 2022, IOE has continued to grow its following on Twitter, reaching 3,082 followers [[@IFADeval](#)]; on LinkedIn, reaching 3,875 followers [[here](#)]; and on YouTube, reaching 486 subscribers [[here](#)].
- **IOE Newsletter** [[here](#)]. The IOE Newsletter promotes transparency and shares knowledge with partners and stakeholders about key developments related to IOE's work. The Newsletter is aligned with IOE's visual identity and strategic approach to communications. Its broad readership ensures that IOE stakeholders have speedy access to the Office's latest outputs. In 2022, IOE published three issues of the Newsletter.
- **News items** [[here](#)]. IOE news items capture the work of the Office, highlighting key take-homes. The breadth of issues addressed by the items ranges from the publication of reports to meetings, events, new products and opportunities for engagement with the Office. In 2022, IOE published a record-breaking 40 news items.
- **Video series: 60 seconds with the Director** [[here](#)]. This video series offers easy-to-digest insights into the IOE Director's perspectives on a number of salient evaluation issues. In 2022, IOE published three instalments of the series.
- **Promotional videos** [[here](#)]. Through its promotional videos, IOE lends enhanced visibility to key substantive issues at the heart of the international evaluation debate, while bringing important new outputs produced by the Office to the forefront. In 2022, IOE produced three promotional videos.

- **Director’s Bulletin.** The Bulletin is a response to the IOE Director’s personal commitment to transparent, proactive internal communication, serving as a valuable resource to record IOE outputs, engagements and activities. In 2022, IOE issued nine issues of the Bulletin.
- **IOE Coffee and Gender talk series** [[here](#)]. Each instalment of this talk series is captured through new fact sheets. In 2022, IOE published 14 Coffee Talk sheets featuring 17 different presenters.
- **Advisory Panel Seminar series.** Each instalment of the aforementioned seminar series is captured through two new communication products, namely the fact sheets and re-live videos [[here](#)].
- **IOE blogs** [[here](#)]. Blogs advance IOE’s critical thinking on issues at the heart of the international evaluation debate, stimulating thought-provoking dialogue and discussions. In 2022, IOE staff published four blogs.

Examples of feedback from governing bodies and from Management received by IOE

Table 1

Examples of feedback from governing bodies

Evaluation Committee, 120th session [4 April 2023]

Corporate-level evaluation of IFAD's decentralization experience 2022

"To my prepared remarks, I wanted to say, from Ireland's perspective, that it is really hard to overstate the importance of this corporate-level evaluation on decentralization. The timing is really important, coming, as it does, so new into the tenure of President Alvaro Lario, and at a time when uncertainty is the prevailing backdrop of our conversation. Donal referenced COVID-19. I think it is worth keeping that in the frame. It has been a turbulent few years. As others have said, the decentralization project is fundamental to IFAD's ability to deliver on its mandate and as an Evaluation Committee member, today I really feel a great weight of responsibility as we dig this hole, as we get into these discussions. It is great to see that the report validates decentralization as the right thing to do in order to maximize IFAD's impact. And I propose that we strongly welcome this finding and dwell on it no more, really, beyond that."

- Representative of Ireland

"[...] As you said, Chair, I think that indeed if there is a merit to this document, it is to show that decentralization is not always effective in all contexts everywhere and in these identical forms. I do pay tribute to the quality of the analysis provided. I think that this confirms an intuition that we all have but it is supported by rather accurate data."

- Representative of France

Approach paper for the thematic evaluation of IFAD's support to gender equality and women's empowerment

"So I suppose just to start by saying we are delighted to see the evaluation, as others have mentioned, that the timing is wonderful. A lot has changed both for rural women and indeed in the global context since the last corporate level evaluation and of course IFAD has itself approved a number of documents. So, it is a really great time to take stock of the impact of IFAD's gender work, and of course the impact of wider trends, such as COVID 19 and climate change. I am particularly happy to see the comprehensive scope of the evaluation. It is good that it is going to look at IFAD's internal institutional framework, resourcing, culture, and the impact of projects. Something we have emphasized for a long time, as you know, is the impact of IFAD's broader influencing and capacity building of partners, and so it is really good that this evaluation will look at the value-added that IFAD brings on gender."

- Representative of Ireland

"We note the intention of IFAD to develop a thematic evaluation to support gender equality and women's empowerment. I am always happy to see work on how to improve gender equality and women's empowerment."

- Representative of Indonesia

Table 2
Examples of feedback from Management

Evaluation Committee, 120th session | Corporate-level evaluation of IFAD's decentralization experience 2022 [4 April 2023]

"I would like to begin by saying how much Management welcomes this corporate learning evaluation and we thank IOE for its comprehensive review, which has many useful insights. The report recognizes IFAD's successful shift from a country presence to a decentralized model in a short period but, clearly, there is always room for improvement. [...] Overall the report is very useful and especially the conclusions and recommendations. [...] As a result, IFAD is therefore recalibrating the D2.0 implementation plan based on our own lessons learned, based on the recommendations in this report and further on the Member State feedback, now and at the Board meeting, while continuing to look at the original targets and timelines. [...] Management welcomes the five recommendations addressed to Management and agrees to them, fully concurring with three and partially with the remaining two."

- Mr Donal Brown, Associate Vice-President, Programme Management Department, IFAD

CSPE Colombia [21 March 2023]

"We are here today to really be able to respond to the priorities of the countries that we are supporting; so this is why evaluations are so important, or standards are increasingly higher while we increasingly aim to attain the reality of the countries we work for. So, evaluations come at a very specific point in time; we are now working on a COSOP, and the recommendations and suggestions coming from this evaluation will be very helpful for the new strategy and programme, and I believe that all of your suggestions will be most welcomed in future programmes [...]"

(Translation provided by live interpreters)

- Ms Rossana Pollastri, Regional Director, Latin America and the Caribbean Division, IFAD

CSPE Kyrgyzstan [1 March 2023]

"Let me close by expressing the hope that together, we will use this evaluation to build an ever relevant, effective and efficient IFAD country programme that ultimately delivers the best possible development impact for the rural people of Kyrgyzstan".

- Ms Dina Saleh, Director, Near East, North Africa and Europe Division, IFAD (representing Donal Brown, Associate Vice President, Programme Management Department, IFAD)

PCE Rural Enterprise Development [31 March 2023]

"From the self-evaluation lens, we are really welcoming this new type of evaluation – the project cluster evaluation. We find it really enhances learning through comparative analysis and a shorter preparation process; and this learning event is a testament to that as well, and to the rich lessons that we were able to get from these different project evaluations. Secondly, and more on the content, the topic of rural enterprise development for this PCE is extremely relevant. It presents significant lessons to inform the design and implementation of future projects, as well as country strategic opportunities programmes, corporate as well as regional strategies. We also find the evaluation very useful in terms of IFAD's work with the private sector, which has been discussed heavily. But I want to highlight how important this is for our replenishment process, not just the current one – IFAD12, but also it is a key priority going forward in the future. As OPR, we are deeply involved in the development of our IFAD business model for our next replenishment cycle –IFAD13, and this is a priority area [...] We experienced a very participatory process and engagement with IOE in developing and preparing this PCE. So we really look forward to that, as we go towards the next PCE that is planned for the Eastern and Southern Africa region".

- Ms Chitra Deshpande, Lead Advisor, Results & Resources, Operational Policy and Results Division (OPR), IFAD

SRE Fragile States [27 February 2023]

"I just want to reiterate my sincere thanks to Indran, Max and the IOE team for organizing this event and for inviting me to deliver some perspectives in the closing session. I must say it has been a very interesting discussion, highly relevant for IFAD's future. The evaluation provides really valuable lessons to help us sharpen the approach, and also the tools, to work in fragile contexts, not just in WCA, but also in other regions where we have a large number of fragile contexts: particularly NEN, but also other regions, including APR. The recommendations in the evaluation are very pertinent, helpful, and indeed Management has agreed with all of them".

- Mr Nigel Brett, Director, Operational Policy and Results Division, IFAD

Summary infographic

2022



IOE | **IFAD**
Investing in rural people
Independent Office of Evaluation

Engage strategically with IFAD governance & management

Expand IOE learnership in building global evaluations

Improve evaluation coverage

45 Evaluation Reports

9 Country Strategy & Programme

9 Project Performance

22 Project Completion Report Validation

Government performance synthesis report

Annual Report on Independent Evaluation 2022

Thematic evaluation on climate change adaptation

5 Country learning workshops

Sub-regional evaluation of fragile states in West and Central Africa

2 Corporate learning events

Project cluster evaluation on rural enterprise

EVALUATION QUALITY

- On-line training course
- Research publications
- Evaluation Manual 3rd edition
- IOE staff development
- Evaluation Advisory Panel

EVALUATION PROFESSIONALIZATION

- Membership of global networks
- 2 International seminars hosted by IOE
- IOE staff authored, co-authored and edited **6** books, peer reviewed journal articles & publications
- IOE staff invited to deliver presentations in **19** international events

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

IOE Website

n. countries > **199**

n. views > **122,000**

Independent Magazine

n. countries > **76**

n. readers > **11,000**

Newsletter **x3**

On-line training **x40**

Coffee Talk **x14**

Video series **60**

1.9k views

News Items **x40**

3,875 followers

486 subscribers

3,082 followers