
High-level preview of IFAD's 2025 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 2025 and indicative plan for 2026–2027

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Action: The Executive Board is invited to take note of the high-level preview estimates for 2025 and the main elements of the programme of work and regular and capital budgets of IFAD for 2025 as well as the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD's work programme and budget for 2025 and indicative plan for 2026–2027.

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Executive summary

1. The Thirteenth Replenishment of IFAD’s Resources (IFAD13) recognized the significant challenges involved in transforming food systems and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Increased investments are needed to address the root causes of poverty and food insecurity, and to achieve resilience in the face of shocks and crises. As a result, IFAD13 sets an unprecedented ambition to mobilize US\$2 billion in new funding to deliver a programme of work of US\$10 billion. This will build the resilience of over 100 million rural people.
2. In addition to this record level of programme of work, Management agreed with Members the priorities and targets for the IFAD13 period (2025–2027). These priorities include sharpening the focus on fragile contexts, increasing investments in biodiversity and climate resilience of small-scale producers, increasing engagement with the private sector and ensuring inclusivity, particularly for marginalized groups. Potential cost-saving measures also agreed during IFAD13 will be assessed to partially offset incremental priority requirements.
3. In alignment with the IFAD13 priorities, the primary cost drivers for the 2025 budget relate to delivering on IFAD’s core mandate through operations and strengthening IFAD’s work in three areas: fragility, climate change and biodiversity, and leveraging the private sector to deliver on the SDGs. These priorities are critical in 2025, not only as the first year of IFAD13, but also as a year in which the global community will convene for critical events such as the United Nations Food Systems Summit +4 Stocktaking Moment, COP30 and the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development.
4. The proposed 2025 budget aims to resource corporate priorities while also focusing on minimizing budget growth. A real increase of 1.2 per cent is proposed, resulting in a 2025 high-level nominal budget proposal of US\$189.83 million. This amount also incorporates a 2.3 per cent net price increase based on an initial assessment of inflation trends and exchange rate adjustments.
5. This document integrates Management’s aim to enhance results-based budgeting. As a result, a preliminary linkage of resource allocations to deliverables has been included in the document with the aim of enhancing transparency, accountability and overall effectiveness and efficiency.
6. As requested by IFAD’s governing bodies, a budget trajectory for the next three years is provided in this document. The IFAD medium-term budget outlook for 2025–2027 is set out in table 1.

Table 1
2025–2027 IFAD regular budget outlook
(Millions of United States dollars)

<i>Fiscal year</i>	2025	2026	2027
Projected budget	189.83	195.81	199.73
Real growth	1.20%	0.85%	0.00%
Price adjustment	2.30%	2.30%	2.00%

7. The proposed budget for 2025 includes a capital budget for cyclical expenditures and major corporate information and communications technology (ICT) projects. An assessment of needs is currently under way and is not expected to exceed a capital budget envelope of US\$5.5 million.

Part one - High-level preview of IFAD's 2025 results-based programme of work, regular and capital budgets

I. Introduction

1. This document presents Management's proposal for IFAD's 2025 preview of results-based regular and capital budgets.
2. The 2025 budget is the first one of the IFAD13 cycle (2025–2027) and, as a result, will focus on delivering the programme of work and ensuring the agreed IFAD13 commitments are funded.
3. Similar to prior years, the 2025 budget process will separate budgets on a cost classification basis. In addition, the 2025 budget will link programme delivery outputs and deliverables to resources. Furthermore, as requested by the Executive Board, this preview provides a medium-term outlook in terms of budget trajectory.

IFAD13 priorities

4. In addition to the delivery of the core programme of work, the following priorities were identified during IFAD13 Consultation.
5. **Fragility.** During IFAD13, IFAD commits to enhancing its support to countries in fragile contexts to address the unique challenges of instability, conflict and climate shocks, ensuring tailored and resilient development interventions that contribute to sustainable growth and stability in vulnerable regions. In accordance with IFAD's updated approach to engagement in fragile situations (2024), this will include the establishment of a fragility unit with dedicated experts, enhanced fragility assessments, adoption of a flexible and adaptive approach in project design and supervision, and dedicated resources for capacity-building and monitoring.
6. **Enhancing resilience and promoting climate action and biodiversity.** A key IFAD13 priority is to enhance the resilience of rural communities to climate and economic shocks. This involves significant investments in climate-smart agriculture and other adaptive measures, including integration of core additional climate contributions into core funding to provide increased and more predictable climate finance. IFAD will also pursue improved biodiversity management through promoting nature-based solutions and scaling up technical and financial innovations tailored to rural economies that will ensure long-term food security.
7. **Amplifying private sector engagement.** In the context of IFAD13, private sector engagement is a critical priority to leverage additional resources, foster innovation and create sustainable rural livelihoods. Key initiatives that IFAD will undertake to amplify its engagement with the private sector include:
 - (i) **Enabling environments.** IFAD will work with governments to promote a conducive environment for private sector collaboration. This includes investments in capacity-building for farmers, rural financial systems and public sector agencies, and business development services for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises.
 - (ii) **Catalysing investments.** The Fund will provide financing to private sector intermediaries to unlock investments and financial services for small-scale producers. This will be facilitated through rural finance instruments and the Private Sector Financing Programme and by investing directly through borrowing resources that will come from the IFAD-only balance sheet.
 - (iii) **Assembling investment platforms.** IFAD13 will support large-scale investment platforms to attract private sector businesses and financiers as co-investors or parallel financiers. A particular focus will be crowding in funds from institutional and impact investors.

Programme of work

8. In 2025, Management is planning on delivering a programme of loans and grants (PoLG)¹ pipeline amounting to US\$1.56 billion, comprised of 13 investment projects designed in 2024 with 2024 budget resources, and 28 new investment projects and 4 additional financing operations funded through 2025 budgetary resources. The 2025 budget also includes funding to commence design work on 10 new projects (i.e. 3 concept notes and 7 designs) and 6 additional financing operations to be presented to the Executive Board in 2026. The final 2025 PoLG amount is subject to change and will become clearer once the IFAD13 performance-based allocation system (PBAS) allocations are confirmed and IFAD engages directly with countries.
9. It is estimated that the IFAD-financed active portfolio will be approximately US\$8 billion² by the end of 2025 and the overall programme of work, including domestic and international cofinancing, will amount to an estimated US\$23.3 billion.
10. The scope and complexity of IFAD's portfolio is changing: of the estimated IFAD-financed active portfolio in 2025, US\$2.01 billion (51 projects), or 25 per cent, are in fragile contexts, which is an increase from just under 19 per cent in 2016. This increase requires IFAD to enhance its capacity to achieve results, given the increased complexity of working in fragile situations.
11. While delivering its programme, IFAD will intensify its commitment to inclusivity and diversity, recognizing that these efforts are essential for transforming rural economies and creating sustainable development. Through capacity-building and robust monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems to effectively address the unique needs of these diverse groups, IFAD will ensure effective implementation and impact assessment of its programme and activities.
12. Furthermore, as reported in the Report on IFAD's Development Effectiveness (RIDE) 2024, the proactivity rate of IFAD's portfolio has seen an increase in performance, with 93 per cent of problem projects exiting "project at risk" status within 12 months. This is a result of IFAD's intensive supervision and implementation support efforts.

II. 2023 and 2024 budget utilization and carry forward

13. Actual 2023 regular budget expenditures amounted to US\$171.7 million or 97.7 per cent of the approved budget. The utilization rate was slightly higher than in 2022 and was driven by increased 2023 delivery costs and additional supervision and implementation support missions, including in fragile contexts, to address projects at risk. As a result, a 2023 carry forward of approximately US\$4 million (2.3 per cent of the regular budget) was available in 2024.
14. The 2024 budget usage is projected to amount to US\$181.58 million or 99 per cent, which would result in a carry forward of only 1 per cent (see table 2). The high budget utilization levels are likely driven by increased programmatic and depreciation costs, and robust budget monitoring and reprioritization. This is attributable in part to the reallocation of funds from vacant positions and decentralization costs that have not yet materialized.³ An updated forecast on utilization levels will be provided in the final budget document.

¹ Based on available data as of 28 June 2024.

² IFAD corporate stocktake as of 17 July 2024, includes all projects approved and not completed.

³ The APR and LAC regional offices are being established as planned, with slight delays in the initial timelines. Both are expected to open in early 2025.

Table 2
Regular budget utilization – actual 2022-2023 and forecast 2024
(Millions of United States dollars)

	2022 full year		2023 full year		2024 forecast	
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Forecast
Regular budget	166.93	162.53	175.71	171.70	183.41	181.58
Percentage utilization		97.4		97.7		99.0

III. 2025 cost drivers and budget proposal

A. 2025 cost drivers

15. The 2025 budget priorities align with the comprehensive IFAD13 approach of tackling rural poverty, enhancing food security, and promoting sustainable and inclusive rural development.
16. The implementation of the Decentralization 2.0 plan has been pivotal in ensuring results on the ground. The budget implications of setting up the regional offices for the Asia and the Pacific Division (APR) and Latin America and the Caribbean Division (LAC) were included in the 2024 budget baseline. Despite slight delays in the establishment of the regional offices, decentralization is not expected to have an impact on the 2025 budget.
17. The cost drivers in the first year of IFAD13 result from prioritization of initiatives aligned with the IFAD13 commitments, including:
 - (i) **Programme delivery and management of portfolio**
 - (a) Increased funding is needed for programme management in fragile contexts to provide for additional supervision and implementation support missions, as well as additional funding for supervision and monitoring of problem projects to ensure they are proactively managed. This increase in funding for delivery directly addresses the issue raised by the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD in the corporate-level evaluation of IFAD's 2023 decentralization experience, which pointed out that a decrease in the budget allocated for country programme delivery was a potential contributing element to a declining trend in project effectiveness in the period 2019–2021.
 - (b) Comprehensive fragility assessments will be conducted during project design to identify vulnerabilities and tailor interventions accordingly.
 - (c) Management aims to enhance climate resilience in agriculture and strengthen operations in fragile contexts to boost sustainable productivity and expand market access for rural producers, which will require additional resources.
 - (d) The growth in scope and complexity of IFAD's operations and overall active portfolio also calls for more technical support, country-specific expertise, and policy advice and engagement, coupled with increased M&E efforts.
 - (ii) **Private sector and partnerships:**
 - (a) There is an increased focus on strengthening partnerships and fostering new collaborations, and promoting private sector investment through supportive policies and public-private partnerships in infrastructure, technology and services benefiting smallholder farmers.
 - (b) A new Private Sector Operations Division has been established under the 2024 recalibration process and located in the Programme Management Department. In 2025, additional resources in terms of staff and

operating costs are being planned to further strengthen IFAD's private sector operations, such as: (i) capacity-building investments in training and development for farmers and public sector agencies; (ii) allocation of funds for guarantees, subordinated debt and other financial instruments to reduce investment risks; and (iii) resources directed towards establishing and managing large-scale investment platforms to attract significant private sector involvement.

- (iii) **Inclusivity and diversity.** In 2025 and in line with the IFAD13 commitments, IFAD will embed and integrate into newly designed projects inclusive financial services, approaches to achieve transformative outcomes for gender equality and women's empowerment, and youth-sensitive and nutrition-sensitive value chains, with a strong focus on Indigenous Peoples, ensuring robust monitoring and high-impact operations. An enhanced focus on inclusivity and diversity will require increased investment for specific outreach to these groups, coupled with targeted capacity-building and robust M&E systems to ensure effective implementation.
18. Potential savings and activities to be recalibrated to partially offset the above costs include:
- (i) **Consolidation and enhanced project pipeline planning.** The IFAD13 commitments to reduce the overall number of ongoing IFAD-funded investments to 200 projects and adopt larger multiphased adaptive programme approaches should free up administrative resources to allow more resource allocation for fragile and complex situations. IFAD will also aim to enhance its project pipeline to ensure a more evenly phased delivery, providing a flexible framework for agile responses and long-term commitments within the portfolio and an efficient use of administrative resources.
- (ii) **Prioritization.** Staff and budgetary resources will be channelled to concentrate more on project delivery while policy formulation, research and knowledge management activities will be focused only on areas with a direct impact on IFAD's operations.
19. The net real increase in the budget as a result of the above cost drivers is estimated at 1.2 per cent.

B. Price-related cost drivers and exchange rate

20. A net price increase of approximately 2.30 per cent has been applied to the budget and is based on a preliminary assessment of price trends and the consumer price index (CPI) trend. In line with the approved methodology,⁴ IFAD will apply differentiated price factors to the various expenditure categories. The proposed approach for adjusting the 2025 regular budget for inflation and price increases is outlined in annex I.
21. This price increase assumption will be revisited in the final budget document. Given the current trends, it is expected that some price factors, affecting operational requirements and PoLG delivery in specific countries, may result in an increase in the overall inflationary adjustment applicable to the 2025 budget.
22. As in previous years, price-related cost drivers will be partially absorbed whenever possible to achieve minimal nominal growth of the budget.
23. 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 0.925:US\$1.

⁴ [AC 2015/136/R.6](#).

24. Given the current exchange rate trends, this rate is likely to be revised, 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.

C. 2025 budget proposal

25. Based on current assumptions, IFAD's net regular budget is estimated at US\$189.83 million. Table 3 provides a summary breakdown of IFAD's 2025 preliminary budget estimate between real and price increases.

Table 3

Net regular budget

(Millions of United States dollars)

<i>(A) 2024 approved budget</i>	<i>(B) 2025 estimated real increase (1.2% of A)</i>	<i>(C) 2025 price increase (2.30% of A)</i>	<i>(D) 2025 nominal budget (A+B+C)</i>
183.41	2.20	4.22	189.83

26. The envisioned 1.2 per cent real increase estimated on a preliminary basis will be channelled entirely into finance resources requirements linked to IFAD13 priorities and related cost drivers as described above.

IV. Linking budget to outputs

27. The 2025 budgeting process introduces a preliminary linking of resource allocations to specific outputs. Linking budget to outputs enhances transparency, accountability and the overall effectiveness and efficiency of resource allocations in each year of a three-year replenishment cycle.
28. Budgeting by pillars was introduced in 2017, as the first step to enhance the effectiveness of corporate planning. Starting with the 2023 budget process, institutional output groups were mapped to direct and indirect costs (i.e. programmatic and administrative resources) and linked more closely to strategic priorities.
29. In the 2025 budget, IFAD is commencing the cascade to planned outputs under each respective pillar. Annex II sets out a high-level indication of main outputs for each result pillar. This is an indicative list and estimated resource requirements will be further refined and adjusted during the budget preparation process and embedded in the final document and in future budget cycles.
30. In 2025 and in line with the IFAD13 priorities and related cost drivers, IFAD will start to channel more resources towards direct costs (i.e. towards activities directly linked and traceable to a programme or project and to benefits derived by programme or project beneficiaries). Table 4 compares the 2024 approved budget and the 2025 high-level estimate of cost classification and relevant allocation by pillar.
31. In addition to the current corporate efficiency ratios (existing indicators from the IFAD12 Results Management Framework), for IFAD13 it is proposed to adopt new efficiency ratios that differentiate between direct and indirect costs, such as:
- (i) Administrative expenses / active PoLG portfolio, calculated as the indirect costs of the IFAD's administrative budget over the active project portfolio for the year; and
 - (ii) Administrative expenses / total programme expenses, calculated as indirect budget expenditures over direct budget expenditures + PoLG disbursements for the year.
32. The final budget document will include these new proposed ratios.

Table 4
Indicative breakdown of regular budget by direct and indirect costs and by results pillar, 2024 approved and 2025 proposed
(Millions of United States dollars)

Cost classification	Pillar description	2024 budget	2024 %	2025 high-level estimate	2025 %
Direct	Pillar 1: Country programme delivery	105.00	57.25	109.02	57.43
Indirect	Pillar 2: Knowledge-building, dissemination and policy engagement	14.21		14.60	
	Pillar 3: Financial capacity and instruments	10.12	42.75	10.43	42.57
	Pillar 4: Institutional functions, services and systems	54.08		55.78	
Grand total		183.41	100.00	189.83	100.00

V. 2025–2027 budget outlook

33. In response to requests from IFAD’s governing bodies, Management is also providing in this high-level budget preview a three-year estimated budget trajectory for 2025–2027.
34. IFAD’s regular budgets in 2026 and 2027 will continue to align with the organization’s shared ambitions and its commitment to delivering on the IFAD13 priorities and targets. This approach will provide an opportunity for delivering investments at the scale and quality that are needed to contribute to achieving the 2030 Agenda while transitioning to a fully fledged results-based budget.
35. The preliminary identified cost drivers that might impact IFAD’s budget trajectory in 2026–2027 are as follows:
 - (i) Finalization of decentralization is expected to result in some staff position savings in Rome in 2026, and additional staff and new office costs in 2027.
 - (ii) Channelling resources to IFAD13 commitments, with a particular focus on:
 - (a) Further strengthening engagement with the private sector through leveraging additional resources to be channelled to lower-income countries, lower-middle-income countries and upper-middle-income countries;
 - (b) Enhancing internal staff capacity and operational systems, to better support work and operations in fragile contexts; and
 - (c) Boosting technical expertise for programme delivery, private sector engagement and development finance.
36. Although Management is committed to exploring ways to move towards a flat real budget growth trajectory by 2027, some challenges may materialize. These include a potential need to revisit staffing metrics in the field due to increased active project portfolio size and complexity, increasing costs arising from United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) cost-sharing due to IFAD’s decentralized business model, and the potential costs following the assessment in the period 2026/2027 of offices in fragile situations, currently on hold.
37. Based on current assumptions at this high-level preview stage, the forecast represents a real increase of 0.85 per cent for 2026 with a zero real growth budget estimated for 2027 on the basis that estimated incremental costs will be offset by savings.
38. Table 5 outlines the indicative budget trajectory for the period 2025–2027.

Table 5
2025–2027 budget trajectory
(Millions of United States dollars)

	2024 <i>Approved budget</i>	%	2025 <i>proposed budget</i>	%	2026 <i>projected</i>	%	2027 <i>projected</i>
Real growth		1.20	2.20	0.85	1.61	0.00	-
Price adjustment		2.30	4.22	2.30	4.37	2.00	3.92
Nominal <u>increase/(decrease)</u>			<u>6.42</u>		<u>5.98</u>		<u>3.92</u>
Grand total	183.41		189.83		195.81		199.73

VI. 2025 capital budget

39. As in prior years, the 2025 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.
40. For 2025, a capital budget not exceeding US\$5.5 million is expected to be proposed, which will encompass ICT and non-ICT cyclical and business continuity capital expenditures as well as major corporate ICT developments linked to IFAD13 priorities.
41. Management will seek the optimization of these investments, taking into account the needs of the organization, compliance demands and the emergence of new areas of activities as well as budgetary pressures.

Part two – Preview of the results-based work programme and budget for 2025 and indicative plan for 2026-2027 of the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD

I. Introduction

1. This document reviews the status of activities conducted by the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD (IOE) in 2024 and outlines IOE priorities in 2025 and beyond. The document was informed by extensive consultations with IFAD's governing bodies and Management, including the Programme Management Department (PMD) and the Strategy and Knowledge Department (SKD). This document is aligned with the multi-year evaluation strategy presented to the Evaluation Committee at its 114th session and approved by the Executive Board at its 134th session in December 2021.⁵ The multi-year strategy helps operationalize the 2021 Revised IFAD Evaluation Policy.⁶ Based on the feedback received from the Audit Committee, Evaluation Committee and Executive Board at their respective sessions in September 2024, IOE will prepare a revised proposal for its work programme and budget for 2025 and indicative options for 2026 and 2027.

II. Activities in 2024

2. This section provides an update on the progress made in 2024, budget utilization through June 2024 and projected 2024 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

3. The progress made in selected evaluation activities is outlined below:
 - The corporate-level evaluation (CLE) on knowledge management and the thematic evaluation on gender equality were finalized in the first quarter of 2024 and presented to the Evaluation Committee at its 125th session in June 2024 and to the Executive Board at its 142nd session in September 2024.
 - The CLE on the Eleventh Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD11) and IFAD12 started in 2024 and the approach paper is set for discussion with the Evaluation Committee at its 126th session in September 2024. Its completion is planned for 2025.
 - The thematic evaluation on food and nutrition security started in 2023 and the approach paper was discussed with the Evaluation Committee at its 124th session in March 2024. Country case studies are being conducted with data collection to conclude in October 2024 and the report finalization is planned for early 2025.
 - The subregional evaluation on the Dry Corridor of Central America was completed in January 2024 and presented to the Evaluation Committee at its 124th session in March 2024.
 - The evaluation on IFAD's experience in small island developing states started in mid-2024, with country missions fielded from June 2024. It is planned for completion in 2025.
 - **Country strategy and programme evaluations (CSPEs).** The CSPEs in India, Mauritania, Rwanda and Türkiye were completed in the first part of 2024. The main missions for the CSPEs in Argentina, the Dominican Republic

⁵ <https://webapps.ifad.org/members/eb/134/docs/EB-2021-134-R-36.pdf>.

⁶ <https://webapps.ifad.org/members/eb/132/docs/EB-2021-132-R-5-Rev-1.pdf>.

and Ghana were conducted in March and May 2024, and they are planned for completion in 2024. The CSPEs in Egypt and Lao People's Democratic Republic have started and country missions were conducted in July 2024. The CSPE for the Plurinational State of Bolivia will start in late 2024, with data collection and report writing planned for 2025. The CSPE for Zimbabwe, originally scheduled to start in 2024, will start in 2025, given that the country strategic opportunities programme (COSOP) for this country has been extended through 2026. IOE will instead start preparatory activities in the fourth quarter of 2024 for a new CSPE in Viet Nam.

- **Annual Report on the Independent Evaluation of IFAD (ARIE).** IOE prepared its twenty-second ARIE for presentation to the Evaluation Committee at its 126th session and the Executive Board at its 142nd session. In addition to the traditional time series analysis of ratings from project-level evaluations, the 2024 ARIE contains an analysis of the relation between cofinancing and project performance, a summary of findings on rural finance from recent evaluations and a summary of findings on the implications of COVID-19 for projects and country programmes recently evaluated.
- **Project performance evaluations (PPEs)** 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, CLEs and the ARIE. PPEs are progressing as planned. Approach papers have been prepared for PPEs in Cabo Verde, Lesotho, Montenegro and Sri Lanka and the related field missions were completed by July 2024.
- **Evaluation Advisory Panel.** The Director of IOE has formed a new Evaluation Advisory Panel to further IOE's independence, credibility and utility. This panel will comprise Mr Juha Uitto, former Director of the Independent Evaluation Office of the Global Environment Facility (Chair), Ms Doha Abdelhamid, Independent Consultant, Egypt, and Ms Mita Marra, Associate Professor at the University of Naples, Italy. IOE will hold the annual workshop for the advisory panel in October 2024. Panel members will meet with representatives of the Evaluation Committee, Senior Management and IOE staff.
- **Knowledge management and communication.** Between 1 June 2023 and 31 May 2024, IOE published and disseminated 11 evaluation reports, 4 infographics, 38 news items, 28 event pages, 9 Coffee Talk fact sheets and 2 evaluation reviews. It also published 3 issues of Independent Magazine and 3 newsletters. In addition, it created 4 blog posts, 4 episodes of the "60 Seconds with the Director" video series, 5 feature promotional videos, 2 video podcast interviews, 2 episodes of the IOE video interview series, 8 instalments of the remote participatory video evaluation pilots and the IOE knowledge management toolbox.
- **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 2023 and 31 May 2024, IOE held learning workshops for the CLE on knowledge management practices in IFAD, Türkiye CSPE, Rwanda CSPE, CLE on IFAD's decentralization experience 2023, project cluster evaluation on rural finance in East and Southern Africa, China CSPE and Ethiopia CSPE.
- **Cooperation with evaluation networks, academic institutions and think tanks.** IOE participated in and contributed to: Evaluation Cooperation Group (ECG) meetings (fall 2023 and spring 2024); African evaluation week

2024; the 2024 European Bank for Reconstruction and Development Evaluation Week; the 4th Conference on Evaluating Environment and Development; the 10th Middle East and North Africa Evaluation Network Annual Meeting and First National Egyptian Association for Evaluation; United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Evaluation Week 2024; Food and Sustainability Certificate Programme; COP28; Global Evaluation Initiative Partnership Council Meeting 2023; Evaluation Symposium of the Islamic Development Bank titled "The Future of Development Evaluation: Adapting to a Changing Landscape"; Asian Evaluation Week 2023; 2023 Canadian Evaluation Society Conference; and Peer-to-Peer Career Advisory Sessions for Young and Emerging Evaluators.

- In addition, IOE made substantive contributions to the academic debate through presentations at renowned institutions, including the University of Arizona, the Wits University School of Governance and the University of KwaZulu-Natal School of Education.

B. 2023 and 2024 budget utilization

4. Table 1 shows IOE budget utilization in 2023 and up to June 2024, and the projected rate at year-end. In 2023, IOE utilized 99.1 per cent of its non-staff budget to implement its work programme.

Table 1

IOE budget utilization in 2023 and projected utilization in 2024 (as of end-June 2024)

(United States dollars)

<i>Evaluation work</i>	<i>Approved budget 2023</i>	<i>Budget utilization 2023</i>	<i>Approved budget 2024</i>	<i>Commitment as of end-June 2024</i>	<i>Expected utilization as of year-end 2024</i>
Non-staff costs					
Travel costs		403 933		306 173	420 000
Consultant fees		1 803 293		1 232 091	1 850 000
Evaluation outreach, staff training and other costs		260 881		69 378	219 200
Subtotal	2 490 000	2 468 107	2 540 000	1 607 642	2 489 200
Non-staff budget utilization		99.1%		63.29%	98.00%
Staff costs	3 481 000	3 116 811	3 604 000	3 354 000	3 243 600
Total	5 971 000	5 584 918	6 144 000	4 961 642	5 732 800
Total budget utilization		93.53%		80.76%	93.31%

III. IOE 2025 work programme

A. Proposed work programme for 2025

5. The IOE multi-year evaluation strategy helps guide the choice of evaluative work to be undertaken in 2025 and the detailed consultation with all division heads in PMD and SKD, 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 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;

- (c) 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.
6. In terms of contributing to IFAD's position as a transparent, learning-oriented and accountable organization, in 2025 IOE will complete the CLE on IFAD11 and IFAD12. This is a comprehensive institutional evaluation and will assess: (i) the evolution of IFAD's corporate strategy under IFAD11 and IFAD12, including the changes and innovations made over the path marked by the IFAD Strategic Framework 2016-2025; (ii) the available evidence on operational results achieved during the replenishment period including under the thematic focus areas of natural resource management and climate change adaptation, gender, nutrition, youth and the targeting of vulnerable groups; (iii) the organizational structure, including the decentralization process and the recalibration initiative; and (iv) the support of IFAD's financial architecture to furthering the new strategic directions. The findings and recommendations of this CLE will help orient the IFAD14 Consultation.
 7. IOE will start an independent corporate-level rapid review of IFAD's Human Resources Policy and its application. The rapid review is a new type of evaluation product introduced by IOE in 2023 that allows assessing corporate-level items, with more focused scope and reduced resource requirements compared to a CLE, while maintaining solid methodological rigour. The review will address both the relevance of IFAD's Human Resources Policy and its actual application and the implications for IFAD's capacity to fulfil its developmental mandate.
 8. In 2025, IOE will also complete the evaluation on IFAD's experience in the small island development states, covering the period 2014–2024, during which IFAD prepared a paper on its approach in small island developing states (2014)⁷ and a Strategy for Engagement in Small Island Developing States (2022–2027).⁸
 9. The report of the thematic evaluation on IFAD-funded interventions on nutrition will be finalized in early 2025 and a learning event will be held. The evaluation will include, inter alia, case studies in Africa, Asia and Latin America.
 10. IOE will continue to issue the ARIE, which will retain the ratings analysis while providing more information on the full range of IOE activities. As in the past, the ARIE will present an annual topic that reflects findings from recent evaluations. IOE will select the topics, taking into consideration the discussions with the governing bodies and IFAD Management
 11. In terms of improving evaluation coverage to reflect the scale and scope of IFAD operations, IOE will complete the CSPEs in Egypt, the Plurinational State of Bolivia and Viet Nam, and will start new ones in Chad, Djibouti, Honduras, Zimbabwe (originally planned to start in 2024)⁹ and Zambia. The CSPEs in Chad, Djibouti, Honduras and Zimbabwe will be the first for IOE.
 12. In 2024, IOE will conduct PPEs for the following projects: in Asia and the Pacific (APR), the Accelerating Inclusive Markets for Smallholders Project in Cambodia; in East and Southern Africa (ESA), the Sustainable Agricultural Production Programme

⁷ <https://www.ifad.org/documents/38714170/39135645/IFAD%27s+approachin+Small+Island+Developing+States+-+A+global+response+to+island+voices+for+food+security.pdf/9b62896e-10e3-420a-804a-5fffaa8821d2?t=1510322602000>.

⁸ <https://www.ifad.org/en/-/ifad-strategy-for-engagement-in-small-island-developing-states-2022-2027>.

⁹ As noted, the COSOP for Zimbabwe has been extended through 2026.

in Malawi; in West and Central Africa (WCA), the Value Chain Development Programme in Nigeria; and in the Near East, North Africa and Europe (NEN), the Community-Based Agricultural Support Project in Tajikistan.

13. Following standard practices, IOE will conduct project completion report validations (PCRVs) of the available completion reports. Ratings from the PCRVs are reported in the ARIE time series. PCRVs are also a source of evidence for country-level, subregional and thematic evaluations, to be triangulated with other sources (e.g. stakeholder interviews, field visits).
14. 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 (such as the recent work on neurosciences) as needed. Based on requests from Member States, IOE is available to organize ad hoc seminars on evaluation practices and evaluation methodology, offering practical examples on how to design, report, present and use evaluations. IOE will continue to support the Global Evaluation Initiative, led by the World Bank's Independent Evaluation Group, in collaboration with the Independent Evaluation Office of the United Nations Development Programme. IOE will also contribute to the National Evaluation Capacities Conference, which will be organized in Beijing, China in October 2024 and, in collaboration with PMD, is exploring the option of supporting the participation of key government representatives in borrowing countries that have management and monitoring and evaluation responsibilities for IFAD-funded programmes.
15. 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 the International Research Group for Policy and Programme Evaluation (IntEVAL). Some of these activities will result in co-authorship of published articles and books. IOE will continue to contribute actively to evaluation events and discussions at the country, regional and global level. In 2025, IOE will chair the ECG and host two meetings of the group in Rome.
16. IOE will engage with its Evaluation Advisory Panel to help refine its methodological approaches, fine-tune the design of its evaluation product and enhance the utility of its work for IFAD's strategy and operations. To this end, the annual workshop with the Evaluation Advisory Panel will be held in 2025 at IFAD headquarters.
17. **Preparation for the third external peer review of IFAD's evaluation function.** According to the 2021 evaluation policy, an external review of the implementation of the evaluation policy is to be conducted every seven years. The latest review (second external peer review of IFAD's evaluation function)¹⁰ was completed in 2019. Subject to the approval of the Executive Board, the third external peer review of IFAD's evaluation function will be conducted in 2026 (terms of reference, data collection, analysis and reporting) but preparatory activities (identification of the review panel members, agreement on the key areas of analysis, consultation with IFAD's governing bodies) will be initiated in the second part of 2025. It is proposed that, as in the past, the external peer reviews of the evaluation function be led by ECG, of which IFAD is a member. ECG elaborated a framework for this type of peer review. Members of other prominent international evaluation networks, such as UNEG and the Evaluation Network of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development may also integrate the review panel. Also, as in the past, the scope of the review will include both the independent and self-evaluation functions of IFAD. This is particularly important because the 2021 evaluation policy covers both independent and self-evaluation and encourages collaboration between the

¹⁰ The first peer review of the evaluation function by IFAD was conducted in 2019, led by ECG.

two functions. IOE and Management will interact regarding their respective responsibility (independent and self-evaluation part of the peer review).

18. The proposed list of IOE evaluation activities for 2025 is presented in annex II and the indicative plan for 2026–2027 appears in annex III.

IV. 2025 resource envelope

A. Staff resources

19. In 2025, IOE proposes to maintain the same staff complement as in the year 2024, per Executive Board approval in December 2023, in line with the expected workload (table 2). IOE evaluations are led by IOE staff, who design the evaluation approach, conduct data collection in collaboration with a team of specialists, and are in charge of report writing, presentation, finalization and dissemination of findings and recommendations to IFAD’s governing bodies, Management, counterpart government and other stakeholders. This ensures consistently high quality of evaluation processes and documents and helps preserve knowledge and historical memory. Staff leadership of evaluation is a common model adopted by independent evaluation departments of international financial institutions.
20. In line with trends in recent years, Management’s demand for evaluations is high and CLEs have been particularly in demand. IOE is committed to ensure discipline in the use of its human and financial resources and does not envisage a significant increase in its budget. For this reason, it is selective in formulating the work programme proposed in this document and has consulted systematically with the relevant divisions of PMD and SKD, as well as with Senior Management.
21. In collaboration with the Planning, Organizational Development and Budget Division (POB) of IFAD, IOE elaborates specific estimates of its standard staffing costs, which are different (lower in 2024) than standard across the board IFAD staffing costs because IOE staff are all located at headquarters and do not receive the allowances and entitlements that apply to international staff posted in country offices.

Table 2
Staffing in 2024 and proposed staffing in 2025

<i>Category</i>	<i>2024</i>	<i>2025 (proposed)</i>
Professional staff		
Director	1	1
Deputy Director	1	1
Lead evaluation officers	3	3
Senior evaluation officers	5	5
Senior evaluation knowledge and communication officer	1	1
Evaluation officers	4	4
Evaluation research analyst	1	1
Subtotal - Professional staff	16	16
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	23	23

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 2025 budget will be as follows: (i) IOE staff costs are provisionally estimated at the same level as for 2024, and revised estimates will be prepared in collaboration with POB in September 2024; (ii) inflation will be absorbed insofar as possible; and (iii) the US\$:EUR exchange rate follows IFAD assumptions.

Table 3

Proposed budget for 2025 by type of activity and comparison with previous budgets

Type of activity	Approved 2022 budget (US\$)	Approved 2023 budget (US\$)	Approved 2024 budget (US\$)	Proposed 2025 budget (US\$)	Absolute number 2024	Absolute number 2025
Non-staff costs						
ARIE, CLE, thematic evaluation, evaluation synthesis and corporate-level reviews	570 000	625 000	630 000	678 000	4	4
SREs and CSPEs	950 000	975 000	1 080 000	1 020 000	10	9
Project-level evaluations (PCEs, PPEs, PCRVs and impact evaluations)	420 000	360 000	320 000	330 000	40	40*
Evaluation Manual	30 000	-	-	-		
Knowledge-sharing, publication, communication, evaluation outreach and partnership activities	270 000	290 000	280 000	278 000		
Evaluation capacity development, training and other costs	200 000	220 000	210 000	214 000		
Buffer for unforeseen evaluation work	20 000	20 000	20 000	20 000		
Total non-staffing costs	2 460 000	2 490 000	2 540 000	2 540 000		
Staffing costs	3 388 338	3 481 000	3 604 000	3 633 000		
Total budget	5 848 338	5 971 000	6 144 000	6 173 000		

* 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 2025, including both staffing and non-staffing costs, against IOE's strategic objectives.

Table 4

Proposed 2025 budget allocation by strategic objective

Strategic objective	Budget	% of total budget
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	1 647 754	27
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	3 280 925	53
Engage with Management, Member States and external partners to support evaluation capacity and use within and outside IFAD	675 628	11
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	568 694	9
Total	6 173 000	100

Note: percentages are rounded up.

25. **Gender-sensitive budget.** IOE evaluations placed a strong 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). The estimates presented in table 5 are based on historical figures on the time dedicated by IOE staff to assessing operational outcomes on gender equality and women’s empowerment, as well as budget used for data collection analysis, presentation and sharing of findings with the stakeholders. The estimates also include IOE’s contribution to IFAD’s working groups on gender equality and to United Nations-supported initiatives such as the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP), a system-wide accountability framework that reviews progress towards the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women.¹¹

Table 5
IOE 2025 gender-sensitive budget

<i>Type of activity</i>	<i>Proposed 2025 budget</i>	<i>Gender component (percentage)</i>	<i>Gender component (US\$)</i>
Non-staffing costs			
ARIE, CLE, thematic evaluation, evaluation synthesis and corporate-level reviews, including UN-SWAP	678 000	15	101 700
SREs and CSPEs	1 020 000	14	142 800
Project-level evaluations (PCEs, PPEs, PCRVs and impact evaluations)	330 000	12	39 600
Knowledge-sharing, publication, communication, evaluation outreach and partnership activities	278 000	10	27 800
Evaluation capacity development, training and other costs	214 000	10	21 400
Buffer for unforeseen evaluation work	20 000	10	2 000
Subtotal non-staffing costs	2 540 000	13.2	335 300
Staffing costs			
Gender focal point and alternate gender focal point*	325 000	15.0	48 750
Other evaluation staff members	3 308 000	11.0	363 880
Subtotal staffing costs	3 633 000	11.4	412 630
Total	6 173 000	12.1	747 930

* Assuming the collaboration of one P-4 and two P-3 staff members.

V. IOE budget proposal and considerations for the future

26. **Current proposal.** The total proposed 2025 budget is US\$6.173 million, which is slightly higher than the approved budget for 2024 (US\$6.144 million). 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), thanks to efficiency gains (e.g. rationalizing the conduct of missions, optimizing the use of remote interviews, conducting virtual workshops at the conclusion of CSPEs, prioritizing attendance of international events). The main data collection missions are conducted in person.

¹¹ <https://gendercoordinationandmainstreaming.unwomen.org/un-swap>.

Figure 1
IOE budget (2010-2025)
(Millions of United States dollars)

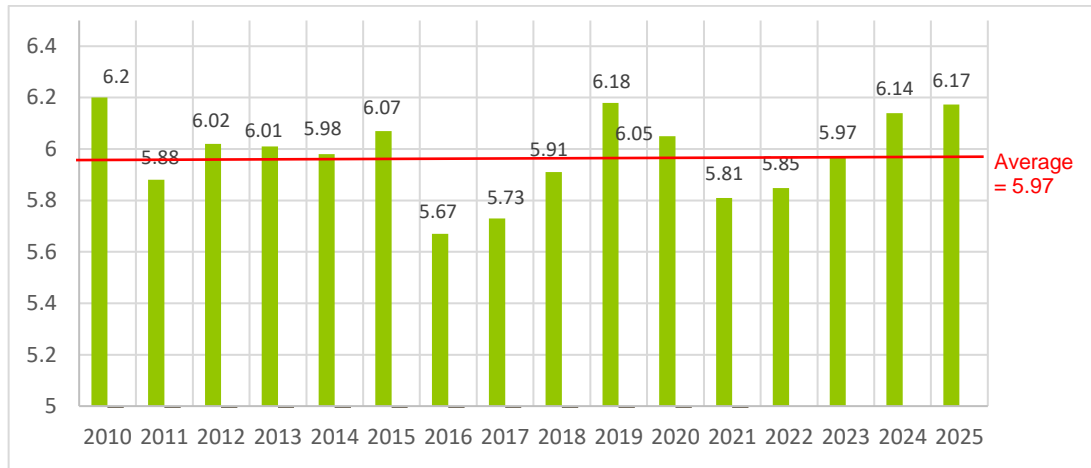
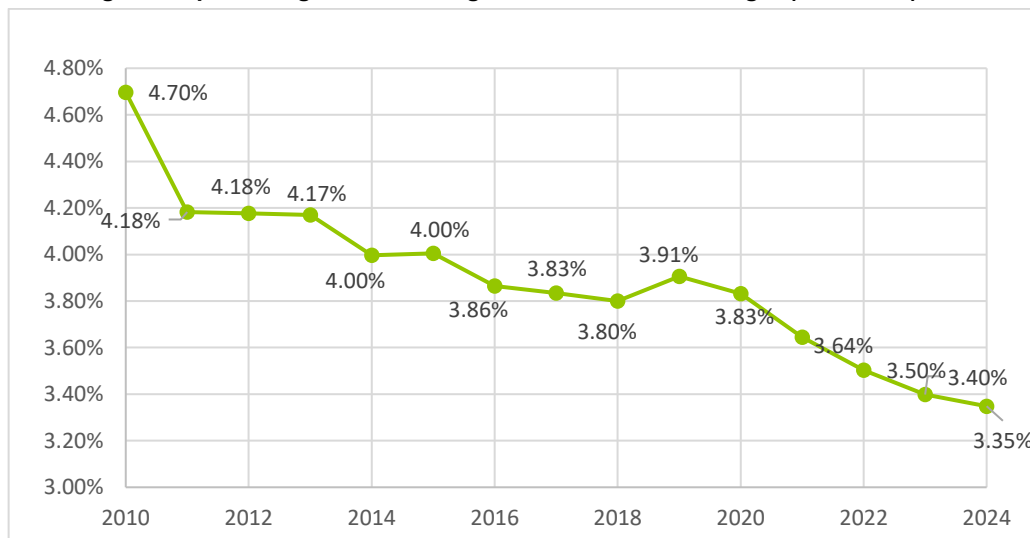


Figure 2
IOE budget as a percentage of IFAD's regular administrative budget (2010-2024)



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 the three years of a given replenishment period. At the time of preparation of this document, the expected total size of the PoLG for the IFAD13 period (2025–2027) was assumed to be US\$3.354 billion, the same as for IFAD12. When spread over three years, this comes to US\$1.118 billion annually. Thus, IOE's proposed budget of US\$6.173 million represents approximately 0.55 per cent of IFAD's PoLG, well below the cap. Revised estimates will be included in the next iteration of this document to be presented to the Evaluation Committee in October 2024 and then to the Audit Committee and Executive Board in November and December 2024, respectively.
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 2025

1. As in previous years, IFAD will apply differentiated price factors for the 2025 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 strengthened euro on the foreign exchange rate (based on the 12-month average of the United Nations EUR:US\$ exchange rate) will have a slight upward effect on the expected price increase to be embedded in the revision of standard costs. Additionally, the expected slight increase in post adjustments and other salary components could lead to an increase in the standard staff costs. At the planning stage, it is proposed to use a price factor of 1.5 per cent for the adjustment of staff costs.
 - **Consultancy costs.** Management analysed existing contract data for all consultants, ranging from 2023 to mid-2024, 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 4.22 per cent price increase for this expenditure category.
 - **Travel costs.** While an extensive analysis will be conducted by the travel management company on travel industry prices and trends, which will inform the final budget document, a projected 2.5 per cent price increase for this category is being applied based on preliminary data.
 - **IT services costs.** For this category, and as per the approved methodology, the average of the world CPI published by the International Monetary Fund¹² and the Italian CPI published by the Italian National Institute of Statistics¹³ has been applied. Using the most recent available data, this leads to a weighted inflation adjustment of 3.35 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 3.35 per cent increase to all subcategories within the "other costs" category, with the exception of "other staff costs" to which a 1.5 per cent price increase has been applied, in line with the price adjustment applicable to staff costs.

¹² Related to May 2024.

¹³ Related to June 2024.

Indicative sample of planned outputs of 2025 proposed regular budget by results pillar

(Millions of United States dollars)

<i>Pillar description</i>	<i>Planned outputs</i>	<i>Budget component</i>	<i>2025 high-level estimate</i>
Pillar 1. Country programme delivery	Country strategic opportunities programmes (COSOPs) and country strategy notes (CSNs):	Staff	64.29
	(i) 23 new COSOPs and 3 CSNs (including fragility assessments where applicable)	Non-staff	44.73
	(ii) 9 COSOP midterm reviews, 13 COSOP completion reviews and 4 CSN completion reviews		
	(iii) 39 COSOP annual reviews		
	Project design:		
	(iv) 28 new project designs approved and 4 additional financing operations funded from the 2025 budget; 8 approved projects funded by 2024 budget		
	(v) 4 non-sovereign operation (NSO) designs		
	(vi) 3 new NSO due diligence missions		
	(vii) 1 NSO farmers' organization platform		
	Project supervision and implementation support:		
	(viii) Total of approximately 500 supervision and implementation support missions, with a special focus on Social, Environmental and Climate Assessment Procedures (SECAP) compliance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 45 project start-ups • 188 full supervisions • 25 partial supervisions • 11 midterm project reviews • 188 implementation support missions • 38 project completion missions 		
	Sample of non-lending outputs and enabling costs:		
	(ix) 1 new action plan on youth is delivered		
	(x) 1 new 2025 gender policy is delivered		
	(xi) Approximately 150 operational policy review outputs provided for country operations		
(xii) Production of 495 detailed aides-memoires and performance/completion reports			
(xiii) Active contribution to 82 policy studies, forums and strategic engagement processes to ensure comprehensive project monitoring and policy support			
(xiv) SECAP, procurement, IFAD's Operations Academy and other operational delivery training			
(xv) IFAD country office and liaison offices rent/common services are provided and host country agreements with relevant governments are established, including the establishment of APR and LAC regional offices			
Subtotal pillar 1. Country programme delivery			109.02
Pillar 2. Knowledge-building, dissemination and policy engagement	Sample of knowledge management related outputs and enabling costs:	Staff	10.76
	(i) Rural Development Report 2025 with a focus on finance is disseminated in the lead-up to the Forum on Financing for Development	Non-staff	3.84
	(ii) IFAD at COP30 in Brazil aligned to IFAD13 commitment on climate change		
	(iii) Indigenous Peoples' Forum organized		
	(iv) 10 IFAD13-related impact assessments delivered		
	(v) All IFAD12 impact assessments completed and disseminated		
	(vi) 1 ecological impact indicator related IFAD13 commitment developed		
	(vii) Strategy and policy insight notes produced, including knowledge management products on the private sector, information and communications technologies for development (ICT4D) and other thematic areas including research and impact assessments		
	(viii) Global, regional and country-level knowledge events organized, including mainstreaming themes related events		
	(ix) 1 fisheries stocktake completed		
	(x) Innovation guidelines prepared		
Subtotal pillar 2. Knowledge-building, dissemination and policy engagement			14.60

Pillar 3: Financial capacity and instruments	Sample of finance related outputs and enabling costs:	Staff	9.00
	(i) Support to implement financial strategy action plan items resulting from the 2030 Agenda and beyond, and financial strategy strategic discussion with the Executive Board in September 2024	Non-staff	1.43
	(ii) Complete preparatory work for efficient use of derivatives		
	(iii) Collateral function for funding and investment activities		
	(iv) Fully implement the asset and liability management function		
	(v) Ensure compliance with evolving International Financial Reporting Standards		
	(vi) Set up financial and system arrangements for new supplementary funds and initiatives, including improving existing payroll and payments systems		
	(vii) Expand the TRACE Blockchain project for disbursement traceability		
	(viii) Pilot new financial products (e.g. partial credit guarantees) with various support activities		
	(ix) Engage in strategic topics like rechanneling special drawing rights, setting up a single donor financing facility, and IFAD's accreditation to the Pandemic Fund		
	(x) Attend United Nations, international financial institution and thematic networks conferences and meetings		
Subtotal pillar 3: Financial capacity and instruments			10.43
Pillar 4: Institutional functions, services and systems	Sample of corporate and enabling costs:	Staff	29.20
	(i) Organization and delivery of IFAD's governing body meetings and dialogue	Non-staff	26.58
	(ii) UNDSS jointly financed security services are provided to IFAD worldwide		
	(iii) Administrative and corporate services are provided to headquarters and IFAD offices worldwide		
	(iv) Vacancy rate is reduced		
	(v) Corporate operational and non-operational systems are maintained, technically supported and upgraded, including relevant licensing		
	(vi) Occupational health services are provided and medical related systems supported		
	(vii) Production of web/graphic and video content for multiple channels communication purposes		
	(viii) Coordination and editing of corporate IFAD publications and documents (Annual Report, country donor factsheets, IFAD at a glance, Rural Development Report, etc.)		
	(ix) Effective implementation of foundations and philanthropic partnerships action plan		
	(x) 1 strategic framework, 1 high-level preview and 1 final budget document		
Subtotal pillar 4: Institutional functions, services and systems			55.78
Grand total			189.83

IOE Results Management Framework for 2024¹⁴

Table 1
IOE key performance indicators for 2024

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 (2023) self-reporting: 100% agreement (97% of recommendations were fully agreed to and the remaining 3% 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 2023: 53% of the recommendations were fully implemented, 41% were under implementation, 3% were not fully addressed and 3% were not yet due	Based on biannual verification by IOE on higher-plane evaluations ¹⁵
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	7	Computed on an annual basis
4. Proportion of active countries covered through subregional and country-level evaluations, project performance evaluations (PPE), impact evaluations and project cluster evaluations (PCEs) on a two-year basis	25% (2019-2020) ¹⁶	28%-33%	37% (2023-2024) ¹⁷	Computed on a biannual basis
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 V)	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 V)	To be reported on in quantitative and qualitative terms
8. Number of visits to the IOE website	77 380 (2019)	80 000	109 000	Quantitative data tracked by IOE

¹⁴ Drawn from IOE's multi-year strategy.

¹⁵ In fact, the verification has been done annually since 2022 and is based on IOE comments on the PRISMA report.

¹⁶ Countries covered by CSPEs: 10; Countries covered by PPEs: 13; Average active countries in 2019-2020: 92.

¹⁷ 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.

9. Number of learning events (co-)organized by IOE	8 (2019)	10	12	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 ¹⁸		Score equal to or above 9.0/12 (the threshold for exceeding requirements)	Score obtained in 2023: 11.6 (exceeds requirements)	Score from UN-SWAP, based on 10 IOE evaluations assessed in 2023
Utilization of resources and cost-effectiveness				
11. Percentage of non-staffing budget utilized	98.7% (2020)	95%-100%	99.1% (2023)	
12. Ratio of IOE budget to the programme of loans and grants	0.62% (2020)	≤0.90%	0.55% (2024)	The 0.90% cap was set by the Executive Board in 2008
13. Ratio of IOE budget to IFAD administrative budget	3.64%	Tracked	3.35% (2024)	

¹⁸ 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 2025

Table 1
Proposed IOE work programme for 2025 by type of activity

<i>Type of work</i>	<i>Proposed activities for 2025</i>	<i>Start date</i>	<i>Expected completion date</i>
1. CLEs and reviews	Corporate-level evaluation on institutional and operational performance under IFAD11 and IFAD12	Jan-24	Dec-25
	Corporate-level rapid review of IFAD's Human Resources Policy	Oct-25	Sep-26
2. Thematic evaluations	IFAD-funded interventions in human nutrition	Sep-23	Feb-25
3. SREs	IFAD's strategy and operations in small island developing states	June-24	Sep-25
4. CSPEs	Egypt	June-24	Jun-25
	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Nov-24	Nov-25
	Viet Nam	Jan-25	Dec-25
	Zambia	Jan-25	Dec-25
	Honduras	Jan-25	Dec-25
	Chad	Feb-25	Feb-26
	Djibouti	Jan-25	Dec-25
	Zimbabwe	Sep-25	Sep-26
5. Project completion report validations (PCRVs)	Validation of all project completion reports (PCRs) available in the year	Jan-25	Dec-25
6. PPEs	Asia and the Pacific (APR): Cambodia, Accelerating Inclusive Markets for Smallholders Project	Feb-25	Oct-25
	East and Southern Africa (ESA): Malawi, Sustainable Agricultural Production Programme	Feb-25	Oct-25
	Near East, North Africa and Europe (NEN): Tajikistan, Community-Based Agricultural Support Project	Feb-25	Oct-25
	West and Central Africa (WCA): Nigeria, Value Chain Development Programme	Feb-25	Oct-25
7. Engagement with governing bodies	Review of implementation of IOE's results-based work programme and budget for 2025 and preparation of results-based work programme and budget for 2026 and indicative plan for 2027-2028	Jan-25	Dec-25
	Third external peer review of IFAD's evaluation function	Oct-25	Oct-26
	Annual Report on the Independent Evaluation of IFAD (ARIE)	Jan-25	Sept-25
	IOE comments on the PRISMA	Jun-25	Sept-25
	IOE comments on the Report on IFAD's Development Effectiveness (RIDE)	Jun-25	Sept-25
	IOE comments on Management policies and strategies	Jan-25	Dec-25
	Participation in Evaluation Committee, Executive Board and Governing Council sessions, selected Audit Committee meetings and the 2025 Board country visit	Jan-25	Dec-25

<i>Type of work</i>	<i>Proposed activities for 2025</i>	<i>Start date</i>	<i>Expected completion date</i>
	IOE comments on country strategic opportunities programmes (COSOPs), when related CSPEs are available	Jan-25	Dec-25
8. Communication and knowledge management activities	Evaluation reports, IOE website and communication activities	Jan-25	Dec-25
	Communicate the evaluation findings, disseminate the lessons and promote the utilization of evaluations	Jan-25	Dec-25
	EvalForward and other knowledge management platforms	Jan-25	Dec-25
9. Partnerships	Evaluation Cooperation Group (ECG), United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG); Rome-based agency (RBA) collaboration	Jan-25	Dec-25
	Global Evaluation Initiative (GEI)	Jan-25	Dec-25
	Collaboration with universities, think tanks and IntEVAL	Jan-25	Dec-25
	Contribution as external peer reviewer to evaluations by other multilateral and bilateral organizations, as requested	Jan-25	Dec-25
10. Methodology	Updating of new Evaluation Manual and electronic annexes	Jan-25	Dec-25
	Annual workshop of the Evaluation Advisory Panel	May-25	Oct-25
11. Evaluation capacity development (ECD)	Engagement in ECD in the context of the Global Evaluation Initiative	Jan-25	Dec-25
	Organization of workshops in partner countries on evaluation methodologies and processes, as requested	Jan-25	Dec-25

IOE's indicative plan for 2026–2027

Table 1

IOE indicative plan for 2026–2027, by type of activity*

Type of work	Indicative plan for 2026–2027	Year	Remarks
1. CLEs	IFAD's engagements supported by supplementary funding	2026–2027	To review the 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.
	Use of information and communications technology for corporate processes and programmatic support	2028	To review the effectiveness and efficiency of IFAD's investment in information and communication technology for its business processes, as well as the progress made in harnessing the capabilities of digital technologies to better serve the needs of smallholder farmers and to provide Member States and IFAD with sharper tools for monitoring and evaluation and periodic in-depth assessments.
2. Thematic evaluations (TEs)	IFAD's engagement with the private sector	2027	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	2026–2027	To review processes for internal quality 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	2026	
5. CSPEs	Mozambique	2026	
	Uganda	2027	
	Côte d'Ivoire	2026	
	Togo	2027	
	Tunisia	2026	
	Jordan	2027	
	Paraguay	2026	
	Peru	2027	
	Brazil	2028	
6. PCRVs	Validate all PCRs available in the year	2026–2027	
7. PCEs	Water management in the NEN region	2026–2027	
	Agroecology practices in LAC	2026–2027	
8. PPEs	ESA: Burundi, Project to Support Agricultural and Rural Financial Inclusion in Burundi	2026	
	ESA: Comoros, Family Farming Productivity and Resilience Support Project	2027	
	WCA: Central African Republic, Project to Revitalize Crop and Livestock Production in the Savannah; or Sierra Leone, Agricultural Value Chain Development Project	2026	

<i>Type of work</i>	<i>Indicative plan for 2026–2027</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
	WCA: Niger, Family Farming Development Programme in Maradi, Tahoua and Zinder Regions, or Project to Strengthen Resilience of Rural Communities to Food and Nutrition Insecurity; or The Gambia, Resilient Organizations for Transformative Smallholder Agriculture Project	2027	
	LAC: Nicaragua, Nicaraguan Dry Corridor Rural Family Sustainable Development Project	2026	
	LAC: Belize, Resilient Rural Belize Programme	2027	
	APR: China, Sustaining Poverty Reduction through Agribusiness Development in South Shaanxi	2026	
9. Engagement with governing bodies	Annual Report on the Independent Evaluation of IFAD	2026–2027	
	Ex post review of implementation of the recommendations of selected strategic evaluations	2026–2027	
	Preparation of the results-based work programme and budget for 2026 and indicative plan for 2027–2028	2026–2027	
	IOE comments on the PRISMA	2026–2027	
	IOE comments on the RIDE	2026–2027	
	IOE comments on selected IFAD operational policies and strategies prepared by Management for consideration by the Evaluation Committee	2026–2027	
	Participation in all sessions of the Evaluation Committee, Executive Board and Governing Council, and the annual country visit of the Board	2026–2027	
	Annual workshop with the Evaluation Advisory Panel	2026–2027	
	IOE comments on COSOPs when related country programme evaluations/CSPEs are available	2026–2027	
10. Communication and knowledge management activities	Evaluation reports, IOE website and communication activities	2026–2027	
	Communicate the evaluation findings and disseminate the lessons	2026–2027	
	Promote utilization of evaluations	2026–2027	
	EvalForward and other knowledge management platforms	2026–2027	
11. Partnership	ECG, UNEG	2026–2027	
	Global Evaluation Initiative	2026–2027	
	RBA collaboration on evaluation	2026–2027	
	Contribute as external peer reviewer to key evaluations by other multilateral and bilateral organizations, as requested	2026–2027	
	Collaborate with universities and think tanks, contribute to IntEVAL	2026–2027	
12. ECD	Capacity-building for Member States	2026–2027	

* The topics and number of TEs, CLEs, CSPEs, PCEs, SREs and evaluation synthesis reports are tentative; actual priorities and number of activities to be undertaken in 2026 and 2027 will be confirmed or determined in 2025 and 2026, respectively.

IOE products

1. This annex presents the spectrum of IOE products between 1 January and 31 December 2023 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 UNEG.

A. Improve evaluation coverage

2. As per the multi-year evaluation strategy of IOE, one of the strategic objectives of the Office during the period 2022–2027 is to improve evaluation coverage and promote transformative evaluations that reflect the scale and scope of IFAD operations, ensuring methodological rigour, attention to inclusiveness and cultural responsiveness, flexibility and cost-effectiveness.
3. In this context, between 1 January and 31 December 2023, IOE finalized 47 reports. Of these, 35 are publicly available on the IOE website, and 12 were pending final publication as of 31 December 2023.

Reports published

- **Annual Report on the Independent Evaluation of IFAD.** The ARIE for 2023 is the twenty-first version of the report to be published. It analyses performance ratings from 288 project-level evaluations and 45 country strategy and programme evaluations, as well as findings from corporate-level, thematic and project cluster evaluations. The report confirms many observations made in previous years. For example, performance varies across the evaluation criteria, with the strongest being registered in environment and natural resources management and climate change adaptation, and the worst in efficiency. The report found that performance in terms of effectiveness and rural poverty impact have declined considerably since 2018, especially in projects under conditions of fragility.
- **Corporate-level evaluation on IFAD's decentralization experience.** This 2023 report follows the evaluation conducted by IOE covering IFAD's decentralization efforts and experience during the period 2003–2015. The evaluation concludes that decentralization is necessary to improve the development results achieved on the ground. However, decentralization needs to be done right and realize this potential. Decentralization efforts since 2016 have enjoyed strong support and commitment from IFAD's Senior Management. However, there is a clear need for more strategic planning, careful resource allocation and fit-for-purpose country presence of IFAD.
- **Subregional evaluation of countries with fragile situations in West and Central Africa: Learning from experiences of IFAD's engagement in the G5 Sahel countries and northern Nigeria.** IOE conducted its first subregional evaluation (SRE) to assess how IFAD's engagement and support have addressed common rural development challenges in six countries in WCA: Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and the northern area of Nigeria. As fragility was the central theme, the SRE identified five categories of fragility drivers: socioeconomic issues, social disruption, environmental/climate change issues, institutional weaknesses/weak social contracts, and insecurity and conflict issues.
- **Project cluster evaluation on rural enterprise development.** This is the first PCE to be conducted by IOE. The choice of rural enterprise development as the topic reflects the focus areas laid out in the IFAD Strategic Framework 2016–2025, which include diversified rural enterprise and employment opportunities. The PCE reviewed four ongoing projects focusing on rural

entrepreneurship, enterprise and business development, and employment creation in Bangladesh, Cameroon, Ghana and Nepal.

- **Project cluster evaluation on rural finance in East and Southern Africa.** The PCE on rural finance in ESA covers three projects: the Programme for Rural Outreach of Financial Innovations and Technologies in Kenya; the Rural Finance Expansion Programme in Zambia; and the Rural Financial Intermediation Programme II in Ethiopia. All three projects aimed to reduce poverty rates among smallholder farmers and improve food security and nutrition of rural households by increasing the provision of financial services, although with different strategies.
- **Evaluation synthesis note: Targeting in IFAD-supported projects.** IOE prepared its first evaluation synthesis note (ESN) on targeting in IFAD-supported projects. The ESN consolidated evidence from IOE evaluations on IFAD's achievements and challenges in targeting poor rural people, in order to provide timely inputs to the updating of the IFAD Poverty Targeting Policy. The ESN confirms that targeting poor rural people is central to IFAD's mandate and to realizing its comparative advantage. IFAD's updated 2019 Revised Operational Guidelines on Targeting are more in line with the 2030 Agenda and its mandate to "leave no one behind".
- **Country strategy and programme evaluations.** 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 the preparation of the next country strategy. Its main users are divisional and country directors, country teams and governments. During the reporting period, IOE published four CSPE reports:
 - Uzbekistan CSPE
 - Eswatini CSPE
 - Malawi CSPE
 - Indonesia CSPE
- **Project performance evaluations.** 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 advisors, operational staff and government counterparts. During the reporting period, IOE published four PPE reports:
 - Promotion of Rural Incomes through Market Enhancement Project (Egypt)
 - National Rural Entrepreneurship Project (Togo)
 - Smallholder Productivity Promotion Programme (Zambia)
 - Cooperative Rural Development Project in the Oriental Region (Cuba)
- **Project completion report validations.** 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 21 PCRV reports:
 - National Programme for Food Security and Rural Development in Imbo and Moso (Burundi)
 - Participatory Natural Resource Management and Rural Development Project in the North, Centre-North and East Regions (Burkina Faso)
 - Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Project (Congo)
 - Rural Youth Vocational Training, Employment and Entrepreneurship Support Project (Mali)
 - Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture Project (Angola)

- Agriculture Services Programme for Innovation, Resilience and Extension (Cambodia)
- Agricultural Recovery Project (Angola)
- Project for Financial Inclusion in Rural Areas (Uganda)
- Fisheries, Coastal Resources and Livelihood Project (Philippines)
- Rural Markets Promotion Programme (Mozambique)
- Livestock Marketing and Resilience Programme (Sudan)
- Productive Partnerships in Agriculture Project (Papua New Guinea)
- Support Programme for Rural Microenterprise Poles and Regional Economies (Madagascar)
- Project to Strengthen Rural Actors in the Popular and Solidary Economy (Ecuador)
- Value Chain Development Programme – Phase II (Burundi)
- Rural Development Programme in the Mountain Zones – Phase I (Morocco)
- Semi-arid Sustainable Development Project in the State of Piauí (Brazil)
- Adapted Rural Financial Services Development Project (Benin)
- Jharkhand Tribal Empowerment and Livelihoods Project (India)
- Agropastoral Development and Local Initiatives Promotion Programme in the South-East – Phase II (Tunisia)
- National Agriculture Project (Eritrea)

Reports completed

- Country strategy and programme evaluations:
 - Guinea-Bissau
 - Ethiopia
 - Kyrgyzstan
 - China
 - Colombia
- Project performance evaluations:
 - Southern Laos Food and Nutrition Security and Market Linkages Programme (Lao People’s Democratic Republic)
- Project completion report validations:
 - Kinshasa Food Supply Centre Support Programme (Congo)
 - Public Services Improvement for Sustainable Territorial Development in the Apurimac, Ene and Mantaro River Basins Project (Peru)
 - Rural Community Finance Project (Liberia)
 - Strategic Support for Food Security and Nutrition Project (Lao People’s Democratic Republic)
 - Infrastructure and Rural Finance Support Programme (Armenia)
 - Upper Tana Catchment Natural Resource Management Project (Kenya)

B. Engage strategically with IFAD governance and Management

4. As per the multi-year evaluation strategy of IOE, one of the strategic objectives of the Office during the period 2022–2027 is to engage with Management, Member States and external partners to support evaluation capacity and use within and outside IFAD.
5. In this context, during the reporting period, IOE has placed increasing emphasis on engagement with Member States and IFAD Management, with a view to further

promoting learning, accountability and reflection through independent evaluation. These efforts have taken shape through a series of corporate learning workshops, country learning workshops and an Executive Board field mission, in addition to engagement across IFAD's governance structure, including in the Governing Council, Executive Board, Evaluation Committee and Audit Committee.

Corporate learning workshops

- Learning event on the subregional evaluation of IFAD's engagement in the G5 Sahel countries and northern Nigeria
- Learning event on the project cluster evaluation on rural enterprise development
- Learning event on the project cluster evaluation on rural finance in East and Southern Africa
- Learning event on the corporate-level evaluation on IFAD's decentralization experience 2023

Country learning workshops

- Kyrgyzstan, 1 March 2023
- Colombia, 21 March 2023
- Ethiopia, 6 June 2023
- China, 23 June 2023

Executive Board field mission

6. The IOE Director joined a high-level delegation of IFAD's Executive Board members and IFAD senior staff for a working visit to Uganda, from 27 November to 2 December 2023. During the mission, the delegation met with high-level government officials, and travelled to IFAD-supported projects in the country to see progress and meet with community members and rural farmers.

IFAD governance

- Governing Council:
 - On 15 February, the IFAD Governing Council approved the IOE results-based work programme and budget for 2023 and indicative plan for 2024–2025, during its forty-sixth session.
- Executive Board:
 - On 10 and 11 May the 138th session of the Executive Board took place. Items discussed included the CLE on IFAD's decentralization experience. Board members also discussed the new IFAD policy on targeting, which benefited from the IOE synthesis note on targeting.
 - On 12 and 13 September, the 139th session of the Executive Board took place. Items discussed included the preview of IOE's results-based work programme and budget for 2024 and indicative plan for 2025–2026, and the 2023 ARIE.
 - On 11 and 12 December, the 140th session of the Executive Board took place. During the event, IOE's results-based work programme and budget for 2024 and indicative plan for 2025–2026 was approved.
- Evaluation Committee:
 - On 4 April, the 120th session of the Evaluation Committee took place. Items discussed included: approach paper for the thematic evaluation of IFAD support for gender equality and women's empowerment; CLE on IFAD's decentralization experience 2022; and approach paper for the CLE on knowledge management practices in IFAD.
 - On 21 June, the 121st session of the Evaluation Committee took place. During the meeting, the following reports were presented and well

received: Kyrgyz Republic CSPE; Guinea-Bissau CSPE; and Colombia CSPE.

- On 5 September, during the 122nd session of the Evaluation Committee, the following documents were presented and well received: China CSPE; IOE comments on the PRISMA; the ARIE 2023; and preview of the results-based work programme and budget for 2024, and indicative plan for 2025–2026 of IOE; and IOE comments on the RIDE.
- On 6 October, the 123rd session of the Evaluation Committee took place. Items positively received included: Ethiopia CSPE; review of IFAD12 Results Management Framework; provisional agenda of the Evaluation Committee for 2024; review of the implementation of Management response to the 2018 CLE on IFAD’s financial architecture; and the results-based work programme and budget for 2024 and indicative plan for 2025–2026 of IOE.
- Audit Committee:
 - On 20 November, the 171st session of the Audit Committee took place. During the meeting, the results-based work programme and budget for 2024 and indicative plan for 2025–2026 of IOE was presented and received positive feedback.

C. Expand and deepen IOE’s leadership role in building global evaluations

7. As per the multi-year evaluation strategy of IOE, one of the strategic objectives of the Office during the period 2022–2027 is to 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 enhancing collaboration with other organizations, and with think tanks and universities.
8. In this context, during the reporting period, a set of initiatives seeking to overall advance the quality of evaluations in IFAD were completed, each of which introduces an element to support effective planning and a common terminological and methodological understanding, and advance the capacity of staff.
 - **Improvement of IOE evaluation quality - IFAD Evaluation Manual. Annex for communicating evaluation findings.** IOE has published an annex to the third edition of the IFAD Evaluation Manual. In just over 10 pages, the publication successfully articulates the rationale for applying brain science to the field of evaluation in order to increase the effectiveness of communication. The main insights and perspectives of this complex subject matter are woven together through the use of simple language and intuitive arguments. With an eye on the practicality and applicability of the concepts discussed, the document offers concrete actions and implementation steps at the end of each short chapter.
 - **Brain science online training course.** IOE has launched a fully interactive online training course, to accompany the aforementioned ‘annex for communicating evaluation findings. Through an audio-visual immersive experience, users will learn about how to leverage neuroscience-based principles to enhance the effectiveness of communication efforts. The course may benefit IFAD and IOE staff and consultants, external evaluation and rural development practitioners, and national authorities and implementing agencies.
 - **IOE Evaluation Advisory Panel.** The IOE Evaluation Advisory Panel held its second annual workshop on 14 and 15 November 2023. The panel affirmed that they believe the IOE evaluation processes to be among the best in

international development organizations. The event featured presentations on the formulation of IOE recommendations and follow-up, on “leaving no knowledge behind”, and on climate change adaptation funding. Distinguished country representatives of the IFAD Evaluation Committee attended the event, alongside representatives of IFAD Management.

- **Research publications.** IOE improves the quality of evaluative products through the production of a suite of new substantive research publications. Each of these publications aims to improve the conceptual and methodological underpinnings of independent evaluation at IFAD. Pieces produced during 2023 include the following:
 - **Research paper series.** Geospatial tools and applications to support IOE;
 - **Learning notes series.** Technical note on the use of geographical information systems from the Ethiopia CSPE.
- **IOE staff.** The professional development of IOE staff has been enhanced through the hiring of new staff and a process of continuous training and skills building.

Professionalization

- **ECG.** On 27 and 28 March 2023, IOE participated in the ECG spring meeting in Washington, D.C. IOE contributed to the event in several ways by engaging in different sessions at multiple levels. Dr Naidoo, IOE Director, delivered a presentation on the first theme of the session, “opportunities and challenges to improve evaluation influence”. Mr Felloni, IOE Deputy Director, delivered a presentation on the fourth theme of the session, “innovative methods in evaluation”. In addition, on 29 March 2023, Dr Naidoo acted as session chair and Mr Felloni as a panellist during the ECG spring webinar series. The session was titled “Food security and broader resilience using an evaluation lens”. On 18 and 20 October 2023, IOE participated in the ECG fall meeting in Abidjan. Dr Naidoo attended in person and was joined remotely by Mr Felloni and Dr Nanthikesan, IOE Lead Evaluation Officer, who delivered presentations online.
- **GEI.** On 24 May 2023, IOE participated in the GEI Partnership Council that took place in Paris. Mr Felloni briefed the Council members on a new initiative to build monitoring and evaluation capacity in Uzbekistan. On 16 November, Dr Naidoo attended the second yearly GEI Partnership Council that took place in Paris.
- **UNEG.** On 24–26 January 2023, Dr Naidoo and Mr Felloni attended the UNEG Annual General Meeting. Items discussed during the meeting included, among others: evaluating during times of crisis; use of artificial intelligence in evaluation; review of the UNEG Strategy 2020–2024 and preparation for the Strategy 2025–2029; and drafting the UNEG workplan 2023. On 23 March 2023, Dr Lomeña-Gelis, IOE Senior Evaluation Officer, delivered a presentation during a UNEG evaluation practice exchange seminar, titled “Evaluation of transformational change for agricultural development”. On 29 March 2023, Dr Nanthikesan delivered a presentation during a UNEG evaluation practice exchange seminar, titled “Evaluating sustainable pathways to climate resilience: Recent experiences from UNEG evaluations”.

Participation

- **Global invitations.** IOE staff have been invited to deliver presentations and participate in 16 international events, including: European Investment Bank high-level conference: “Picking up the pace: Evaluation in a rapidly changing world”; two UNEG evaluation practice exchange sessions; the ECG spring webinar series; a lecture at the Yale University School of Management; a talk

at the European Institute of Innovation for Sustainability; the 2023 Annual Meeting of the International Research Group for Policy and Program Evaluation (INTEVAL); the event titled "Project cluster evaluations – sharing lessons from AfDB, FAO, IFAD and UNODC";¹⁹ a peer-to-peer career advisory session for young and emerging evaluators; the 2023 Canadian Evaluation Society Conference; a lecture at the Wits University School of Governance; a lecture at the University of KwaZulu-Natal; the Asian Evaluation Week 2023; the Evaluation Symposium of the Islamic Development Bank titled "The Future of Development Evaluation: Adapting to a Changing Landscape"; COP28; and the event titled "What did we learn? Policy evaluation in the era of COVID-19".

- **IOE-led seminars and events.** IOE organized and co-hosted two international seminars and events: the 13th issue of the IFAD Innovation Talk series, titled "Evaluation through the lens of brain science - Building a humanized approach for better results"; and the "Targeting of the Poor" conference, held at the University of Arizona.
- **INTEVAL.** IOE hosted and funded the 38th annual meeting of INTEVAL. The event took place at IFAD headquarters, in Rome. INTEVAL is a multidisciplinary constellation of world-renowned expert evaluation leaders and distinguished authors. INTEVAL's members addressed the key strategic issues that define the evolution of the evaluation function, shaping the international debate and advancing the discipline within the context of the ever-changing global landscape.
- **Coffee Talk series.** IOE hosted 11 sessions of its Coffee Talk series, aimed at providing an informal forum in which to address a variety of evaluation-related topics. Sessions featured a mix of internal and external speakers, including Tomasz Bartos, Associate Director, Evaluation Department, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

Publication

- The book "Policy Evaluation in the Era of COVID-19" has been published and is now available online, including through open access. Published by Routledge and financially supported by IFAD, the book was co-edited by the IOE Director with Pearl Eliadis, Associate Professor at McGill University, and Ray Rist, former Director of the International Program for Development Evaluation Training. The book is the first to offer a broad canvas that explores government responses and ideas to tackle the challenges that evaluation practice faces in preparing for the next global crisis.

D. Enhance IOE strategic communication, outreach and knowledge management

9. 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.

Public resources

- **IOE website.** The website, for which IOE maintains full intellectual ownership, is structured to best meet the specific needs of IOE, with the adoption of dynamic functionalities that maximize opportunities for user engagement. It also ensures an intuitive, easy navigation experience as the Office moves forward in building evaluation capacity across IFAD, advancing the IOE conduct model, and building bridges through evaluation dialogues to

¹⁹ AfDB = African Development Bank; FAO = Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; UNODC = United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

enhance understanding and improve performance. Following the launch of the website in March 2022, an independent Google Analytics tracking dashboard was finalized in April 2022. Since the launch of the dashboard, the website has totalled 206,000 views from 83,000 users across 217 countries and territories, as of 31 December 2023.

- **Independent Magazine.** As IOE’s flagship communication product, Independent Magazine brings to the forefront of the global development dialogue the major efforts undertaken by IOE, while seeking to advance IFAD’s vision of vibrant, inclusive and sustainable rural economies where people live free from poverty and hunger. In 2023, IOE published three editions of the magazine and the cumulative total number of readers reached 27,800 across 116 countries as of 31 December 2023.
- **Social media.** IOE has a strong, active and vibrant social media presence, which allows the Office to keep its stakeholders updated in real time on its latest endeavours, while ensuring that its stakeholders are able to interact with the Office in an ongoing and fluid fashion. In 2023, IOE has continued to grow its following on Twitter, reaching 3,436 followers [@IFADeval]; LinkedIn, reaching 5,967 followers; and YouTube, reaching 570 subscribers, as of 31 December 2023.
- **IOE newsletter.** 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. The broad readership of the newsletter ensures that IOE stakeholders have quick access to the latest outputs of the Office. In 2023, IOE published three issues of the newsletter.
- **News items.** The IOE news items capture the undertakings of the Office, highlighting key take-home messages. The breadth of issues addressed by the items ranges from the publishing of reports, to meetings, events, new products and opportunities for engagement with the Office. In 2023, IOE published a record-breaking 48 news items – an average of almost one every week of the year.
- **Video series.** In 2023, IOE published 23 videos. This reflects a broadened list of video products, which now include five separate formats:
 - **60 seconds with the Director.** The video series offer easy-to-digest insights into the IOE Director’s perspectives on a number of salient, evaluation-related issues. In 2023, IOE published two instalments in the series.
 - **Promotional videos.** Through its promotional videos, IOE provides enhanced visibility to key substantive issues at the heart of the international evaluation debate, while bringing to the forefront important new outputs produced by the Office. In 2023, IOE produced four promotional videos.
 - **Video interview series.** Through one-on-one interviews, each episode offers the opportunity to delve into specific evaluation issues. Discussions focus on key areas of interest, which are addressed through open and candid conversations, during which interviewer and interviewee exchange thoughts, opinions and perspectives. The use of accessible language, complemented by an informal setting, create a welcoming atmosphere where seemingly complex topics are presented in a user-friendly fashion. In 2023, IOE published two video interviews.
 - **Events.** Event videos present corporate learning workshops, with the involvement and participation of IFAD Senior Management, regional and

country directors, and other staff members. The series also features country learning workshops on a select basis. In 2023, IOE published three event videos.

- **Evaluation pills.** The evaluation pills offer succinct, one-minute takeaways on select topics related to the practice of evaluation and how it can be enhanced through the tailored application of neuroscience principles. The pills feature the IOE Director and Dr Srini Pillay. In 2023, IOE published 12 instalments.
- **Evaluation briefs.** Evaluation briefs are ad hoc publications that document and provide insights on specific events, topics, themes and issues pertaining to IOE's work. In 2023, IOE published four briefs.
- **IOE Coffee Talk series.** Each instalment of the previously presented talk series is captured through new fact sheets. In 2023, IOE published 11 Coffee Talk sheets.
- **IOE blogs.** Blogs advance IOE's critical thinking vis-à-vis issues at the heart of the international evaluation debate, stimulating thought-provoking dialogue and debate. In 2023, IOE staff published two blogs.
- **Infographics.** IOE's re-envisioned infographics offer an invaluable compendium to its evaluation reports. Each infographic presents soundbite report extracts, packaged in visually appealing solutions.

Internal resources

- **Media coverage reports.** IOE issued two media coverage reports, in June 2023 and January 2024, covering the first and second semester of the year, respectively. The reports present the latest data, statistics and trends relative to the Office's website, social media platforms and select IOE products. Findings include IOE's continued leadership role in methodological and strategic debates at the international level, and IOE's strong presence in the spotlight at critical decision-making times for IFAD.
- **Director's bulletin.** The bulletin responds to the IOE Director's personal commitment to transparent and proactive internal communication. The Bulletin serves as a valuable resource to record IOE outputs, engagements and activities. In 2023, IOE issued nine editions of the Bulletin.

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

Table 1

Examples of feedback from governing bodies

141st session of the Executive Board [24 April 2024]

“Canada also welcomes the new COSOP for Colombia and we commend IFAD for implementing the lessons learned and the recommendations from the previous evaluation into this new programme.”

- **Representative of Canada**

“We note very much the way that IFAD has responded to the evaluation findings and recommendations.”

- **Representative of United Kingdom**

“I also want to highlight IOE’s contributions to the document. [...] Additionally, as highlighted by IOE’s evaluation, it is also necessary to improve communication with the community about the fruits of IFAD’s joint work with the Colombian Government.”

- **Representative of Brazil**

CSPE Rwanda [5 March 2024]

“So we are happy to be part of this workshop and hear about the findings from the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD [‘s colleagues] who are presenting us the evaluation that was carried out on IFAD’s programme and projects here in Rwanda. We are looking forward to the discussion of findings and methodology [...]. I think the purpose [of this discussion] is to ensure better implementation in the future and, most importantly, sustainability of our projects; and then I think this informs both the design, the implementation and the long-term planning looking ahead.”

- **Honourable Dr Ildephonse Musafiri, Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources of Rwanda**

122nd session of the Evaluation Committee [5 September 2023]

The Evaluation Committee welcomed the country strategy and programme evaluation (CSPE) for the People’s Republic of China [...], which provides important inputs that will facilitate the consultations between IFAD and the People’s Republic of China. [...] Members noted that the CSPE was the first such report on one of the eight IFAD Member States in the process to approach graduation, and together with other such reports would generate important lessons learned.

- **Evaluation Committee Chair**

“First, I would like to express our gratitude to IOE and the evaluation team. We appreciate the professionalism and expertise they have demonstrated in this excellent evaluation work, which generates fruitful and insightful findings as well as recommendations. [...] China welcomes the fruitful evaluation outcomes. [...] We welcome the five recommendations proposed in this report to inform the upcoming COSOP. [...] These five recommendations are based on China’s national conditions and IFAD’s comparative advantages and will be conducive to deepen China-IFAD cooperation. China expects to work jointly with IFAD to translate them into pragmatic actions through the proposed follow-up agreed in the ACP.”

- **Mr Mei Hongyong, Counsellor and Deputy Permanent Representative of the People’s Republic of China to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture in Rome**

“The reason for which I think this is an important document is because, as has been said, since 1981, China has been the main country where IFAD actions have taken place. [...] This is also a remarkable document because it covers a 10-year lifespan which spreads over two COSOPs. [...] This is also an important document because it is the first country assessment which has to do with one of the eight Member States of IFAD which looked at a process of graduation mechanism. These are all the reasons for which I believe that this is an important document and should very much inform our discussions within the Committee, within the Executive Board and in IFAD13 as well.”

- **Representative of France**

“I think this is really exemplary of what a CSPE should look like. [...] We should all learn from this CSPE.”

- **Representative of Indonesia**

“I personally believe this is one of the key reports for the 139th session. It contains, in my opinion, very relevant information that can be used to support IFAD and also to guide IFAD into the future.”

- **Evaluation Committee Chair**

“Many thanks to IOE for this ARIE report, which, of course, as usual, has exceptionally high-quality standards.”

- **Representative of Ireland**

Table 2
Examples of feedback from Management

CSPE Rwanda [5 March 2024]

"I always look forward to reading the country strategy and programme evaluation reports, as they provide rich and constructive insights, that not only provide lessons, but also hold us collectively to account for the performance of the portfolio and improve our effectiveness. [...] I would also like to thank IFAD's Independent Office of Evaluation for, as ever, their high-quality evaluation report, and the learning from which we will inform the future direction of our collaboration with the Government of Rwanda. And I appreciate the effort to deliver this evaluation in time to make sure it can properly inform the new country strategy we are going to develop with the Government. [...] IFAD Management is very committed to ensure that the recommendations from this evaluation are incorporated in the new COSOP, working with the Government".

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

"First of all, I would like to appreciate the contribution and the richness of the discussion on the CSPE. I think evaluations in general are [needed] to give a fresh look and eyes at what we are doing, what is working well or what areas we can improve. We might not always agree with all the assessments, but I think it really helps us to see through and understand how we can improve our impacts and do better. I want to thank the team leading this CSPE, I think the overall feedback was positive. Over the past years I have been in the country, and I have seen the extent of the positive work and the impact our colleagues have done through IFAD's programme, so thank you for that."

- **Mr Dagmawi Habte-Selassie, Country Director for Rwanda, East and Southern Africa Division, IFAD**

CSPE Türkiye [16 April 2024]

"I would also like to thank IFAD's Independent Office of Evaluation for the rigorous evaluation, and for ensuring that its timing is aligned with the design of the new country strategic opportunities programme (COSOP) which will be developed later this year for 2025–2030."

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

"So, with this [vision going forward], and with a diversified portfolio, I think we will be definitely in a position to respond to the evaluation's recommendations on the one hand, but also increase the impact of our operations in the country, working hand in hand with the Government at all levels, and with our development partners."

- **Mr Liam Chicca, Head of IFAD Multi-country Office/Country Director, Near East, North Africa and Europe Division, IFAD**

"We will use this evaluation to build a more effective and efficient IFAD country programme, ultimately delivering the best possible development impact for the rural people of Türkiye."

- **Ms Dina Saleh, Regional Director, Near East, North Africa and Europe Division, IFAD**

122nd session of the Evaluation Committee [5 September 2023]

"Management welcomes the second country strategy programme evaluation for China. It provides many useful insights and lessons for the new COSOP. [...] Going forward, we will continue to work closely with the Government to ensure that lessons emerging from this evaluation and the agreed recommendations will feed into the current and future programmes in the next COSOP."

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

"As the Management response said, there are a number of really important issues in the CSPE which we will be taking to the new COSOP. [...] As we move forward, and where this CSPE will be very helpful is the challenge for us under the new COSOP."

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

"Thank you to Indran and to Joanna for this evaluation, which I found really useful, and on behalf of Management, we found it very useful. [...]. I really want to credit the evaluation on noting the extent to which innovation has been taken on board."

- **Ms Jyotsna Puri, Associate Vice-President, Strategy and Knowledge Department, IFAD**

"Management very much appreciates the improved format and learning perspective in the 2023 ARIE, like the 2022 one. [...] This obviously helps inform the design and implementation of our projects and country strategies. [...] Management looks forward to strengthening the ongoing collaboration with IOE on the ARIE, as on other evaluation products under its multi-year strategy."

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

Summary infographic

2023



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

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Annual Report on Independent Evaluation 2023

Corporate-level evaluation of IFAD's decentralization experience 2023



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



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4 Country learning workshops



EVALUATION QUALITY



On-line training course



Communication of evaluation findings based on brain science



Research publications



IOE staff development



Evaluation Advisory Panel

EVALUATION PROFESSIONALIZATION



Membership of global networks



IOE staff invited to deliver presentations in international events

16



2 International seminars hosted by IOE

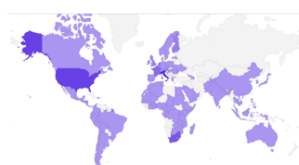
3 Corporate learning events

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION



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n. countries* **> 217**
n. views **> 206,000**



Independent Magazine

n. countries **> 116**
n. readers **> 27,800**



x3



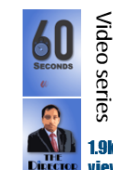
Evaluation briefs **x4**



x48



x11



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