



**IFAD**  
**INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT**  
**Executive Board – Sixty-Eight Session**  
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**TERMS OF REFERENCE AND RULES OF PROCEDURE**  
**OF THE EVALUATION COMMITTEE**

1. Based on a proposal made in 1987 by the United States, a committee to deal with evaluation matters was established by the Executive Board at its Thirty-First Session. The first session of the Evaluation Committee adopted organizational principles, which state that the rules of procedure of the Executive Board should be applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to the work of the Evaluation Committee. No specific terms of reference were drawn up for the committee.
2. The Evaluation Committee has been operating for more than eleven years, and several Executive Board Directors (“Directors”) have expressed the wish that the committee be revitalized and take a more proactive role. On several occasions some Directors have proposed that evaluation issues be discussed more frequently in the Executive Board, in addition to the April sessions when evaluation appears systematically on the agenda. Other Directors would like to see a reorientation of the discussions in the Evaluation Committee along lines and themes regarded as a priority by the Executive Board.
3. Some Directors see a main role for the Evaluation Committee in reporting to the Board on whether IFAD’s evaluations produce useful recommendations and lessons, and whether these lessons are actually used, leading to desired changes and qualitative improvement in the way IFAD’s projects are conceived, implemented and supervised. In addition, other Directors would favour a more strategic role for the evaluation function, and would welcome discussion by the Evaluation Committee of more thematic, country and strategic evaluations and reviews. For these reasons, in the Sixty-Sixth Session of the Executive Board it was decided that the Evaluation Committee would review its role and its practices in reporting to the Executive Board.
4. With the above objective in mind, between June and September 1999 the Evaluation Committee reviewed its overall scope, objectives and modalities of operation.



5. **Objectives of the Evaluation Committee.** According to the 1987 proposal, the Evaluation Committee was “to study and report on the evaluation activities of the Fund”. The two main objectives of the Evaluation Committee were: (a) “to enhance the ability of IFAD’s Executive Board to assess the overall quality of projects through a review of selected completion and ex-post evaluations of Fund projects”; and (b) “to fortify the Board’s knowledge of lessons learned in IFAD’s projects and to enable Member States to better assess the Fund’s role in the pursuit of a global development strategy...”.

6. The review concluded that these objectives are still relevant and valid, although section (a) needs to be expanded to include other evaluation instruments and activities developed by the Office of Evaluation and Studies to meet the demands of its clients and other work exigencies. Thus objective (a) should be rewritten as follows: “(a) to enhance the ability of IFAD’s Executive Board to assess the overall quality and impact of programmes and projects through a discussion of selected evaluations and reviews conducted by the Office of Evaluation and Studies.”

7. **Scope of work of the Evaluation Committee.** The Board’s decision to establish an Evaluation Committee states that “the Board would, each year, select from the list of available completion evaluation reports (CERs) of completed IFAD-financed projects approximately three CERs, together with any cross-cutting evaluation study that may be available, which would be referred to the Evaluation Committee for its study, in-depth review and report to the Executive Board”. The decision to emphasize completion evaluations was based on the assumption that IFAD would increasingly shift its evaluation focus from design and mid-term evaluations to completion and ex-post evaluations. In fact, partly due to the introduction of a number of new evaluation instruments, IFAD’s evaluation process has evolved quite differently. Annex III provides an explanation of the various evaluation instruments used by the Office of Evaluation and Studies.

8. Given this evolution, the Evaluation Committee proposes to consider all types of evaluation for discussion, including interim and mid-term evaluations (IEs and MTEs). These evaluations will give the committee a “real-time” picture of programme performance during implementation and will document the inclusion of emerging lessons and recommendations in ongoing programmes and in the design of new programme proposals. The Evaluation Committee also proposes to review more thematic and country evaluations. Any policy evaluation undertaken by the Office of Evaluation and Studies upon the request of the Executive Board and/or the Evaluation Committee or IFAD management may also be considered by the committee. Finally, the annual work programme of the Office of Evaluation and Studies will be discussed by the Evaluation Committee during its December sessions.

9. **Evaluation Committee agenda.** The agenda is based on the committee’s organizational principles, which have provided the framework for the type of issues to be discussed during committee meetings. Although the 1987 proposal specified that the Office of Evaluation and Studies would inform the committee of its plans for the next calendar year with regard to the agenda at the September Evaluation Committee sessions, the actual practice has been that the Office of Evaluation and Studies has proposed the agenda items on a session-by-session basis. This process has impeded the planning of an annual programme of work for the Evaluation Committee. It has also limited the proactive role that committee members could play in the selection of evaluation work to be discussed.

10. The committee agreed, therefore, that they will draw up a tentative agenda for the year’s sessions at the December committee session, drawing on the annual work programme of the Office of Evaluation and Studies. However, the Evaluation Committee will retain the flexibility to adjust its agenda during the course of the year according to its workload and changing priorities. This process is expected to provide all concerned with an opportunity to plan and organize Evaluation Committee sessions in a more orderly and interactive manner.



11. **Reporting to the Executive Board.** In the past, evaluation has appeared on the Executive Board agenda only at April sessions. On this occasion, two items covering the previous year have been discussed: the Progress Report on Evaluation (PRE) and the Report of the Evaluation Committee (REC). The PRE deals with evaluation issues and activities, while the REC provides a summary of the deliberations and work of the Evaluation Committee. While the PRE is dispatched to Directors according to established Executive Board schedules, the REC is tabled at the Board session.

12. The Evaluation Committee was established to assist the Executive Board by undertaking in-depth reviews of a selected number of evaluations and studies, relieving the Board of those duties. Nevertheless, some Directors have supported the proposal to discuss important evaluations and related issues at Board meetings and to reserve a regular Board agenda item for this purpose, in addition to the yearly discussion of the PRE and REC. There have been suggestions that the Board should, for example, consider key evaluation reports on such strategic evaluations as a review of IFAD's participatory approaches or innovative and replicable aspects of the Fund's projects and programmes, as well as review and discuss their policy implications for IFAD. Since the Evaluation Committee was established with the specific purpose of assisting the Board in considering evaluation issues, it would seem improper to reserve for Board discussions evaluation issues that can be dealt with more efficiently and extensively in the committee.

13. It might be more appropriate for evaluation issues to be referred by the Evaluation Committee to the Board for discussion when the committee feels that it is important for the Board to be informed on certain evaluation issues of exceptional importance – issues that cannot wait to be addressed in the PRE – and on which the Executive Board's guidance is required. In such cases, the Evaluation Committee may wish to avail itself of its prerogative to request a Board discussion on extraordinary evaluation issues and reports. There seems, however, to be no necessity for the introduction of a permanent evaluation item onto the Board agenda.

14. The Evaluation Committee suggests that the PRE be redesigned as a vehicle to draw the Board's attention to, and, if necessary, seek the Board's guidance on, key policy and strategic issues emerging from the evaluation process. Given the complementarity between the REC and PRE, the Evaluation Committee feels that a unique document outlining those evaluation issues requiring Board consideration and guidance would be more appropriate and would remove potential redundancies. The Evaluation Committee proposes, therefore, that the REC be amalgamated with the PRE and that the document be dispatched to Board Directors in a timely manner for their consideration during April Executive Board sessions.

15. **Information requirements and field visits of Evaluation Committee members.** In order to allow Evaluation Committee members to gain a better understanding of IFAD's work at the field level and to exchange knowledge and experiences with various stakeholders, some members have participated in evaluation missions, country-level round tables and workshops to discuss evaluation findings and recommendations. Both committee members and the Office of Evaluation and Studies have found these field visits useful, and they have enhanced the quality of dialogue within the Evaluation Committee.

16. Committee members' participation in field visits has usually been decided on an ad hoc basis. There is a consensus within the Evaluation Committee that these arrangements have by and large worked well and should be maintained. However, it was also agreed that during December committee sessions, in the context of elaborating its agenda for the subsequent year, the committee would discuss and select options for suitable field visits to be undertaken during the year, which would enable the Office of Evaluation and Studies to plan ahead and make timely, appropriate arrangements.



17. **Evaluation summaries.** In order to expedite the sharing of evaluation results, it was suggested that the EC be informed of all executive summaries of evaluation reports prepared by OE upon finalization. The summaries will be made available in their original language to EC members upon request. In addition, the EC proposes that, in the future, all OE executive summaries contain a section that captures the outcomes agreed upon by the various stakeholders, in terms of the main recommendations, lessons and related follow-up generated through the evaluation process.”

18. **Composition and chairpersonship.** The Evaluation Committee is made up of nine members drawn from the thirty-six Executive Board members and alternate members: four countries from List A, two from List B and three from List C. Committee members are elected by the Executive Board for a three-year term of office, coinciding with that of the Executive Board. The term of office of the present Executive Board will expire in February 2000, at the Twenty-Third Session of the Governing Council. The September 1997 Executive Board Session decided that the chairpersonship of the Evaluation Committee would remain permanently with List B and C countries. During the Sixtieth Session, the Board endorsed a proposal to allow other Directors to sit in during committee sessions as observers. The Evaluation Committee considers all current arrangements to be satisfactory.

19. **Frequency and timing of Evaluation Committee sessions.** Three Evaluation Committee sessions are normally held in a calendar year, usually one day before Executive Board meetings for logistical reasons, but also to ease the participation of committee members not based in Rome. Informal Evaluation Committee sessions have been held occasionally and have proved useful in promoting additional consultation and dialogue, paving the ground for more formal discussions. The committee proposes to continue holding three sessions per year, with the opportunity for deliberations through informal meetings, called at appropriate intervals of time, if and when required.

20. The timing of the meetings has a direct implication on the modality and scope for reporting to the Executive Board. Since the report of the Evaluation Committee has usually been tabled at the April Board session, it has not contained a synthesis of the most recent deliberations of the Evaluation Committee that take place the day before the April Board.

21. Therefore, in order to make the reporting of the work of the Evaluation Committee more current, and to enable the inclusion in the annual report of major issues and conclusions arising from the two committee sessions of the previous year *and* the committee session held before the April Board, a consensus was reached in the committee to organize its first session of the year in conjunction with IFAD’s annual Governing Council session, on the day before or after, according to the convenience of committee members.

22. **Translation/interpretation cost implications.** For Evaluation Committee sessions, the Office of the Secretary arranges for translation of all executive summaries of evaluation reports and studies into the four official languages of IFAD and simultaneous interpretation of deliberations.

23. The Evaluation Committee examined the possibility of adopting one working language, which has been the practice of the Audit Committee since 1982, in order to save costs related to translation and interpretation. However, it was generally thought desirable to allow each member the opportunity to express himself/herself in the official language in which they are most comfortable, and thus to ensure higher quality deliberations. Consequently, the Evaluation Committee will continue to operate in all four languages, and the IFAD Secretariat will continue to make the executive summaries of all reports available in four languages, as well as other committee documentation. The main text and annexes of evaluation and related reports will be available upon request in the language of issuance only. The Secretariat is in a position to absorb the costs of translation and interpretation provided that sessions are held close to other governing body meetings, a practice that has been and will continue to be followed.



## **Recommendation**

24. Following the review of the role of the Evaluation Committee and its practices in reporting to the Board, the committee proposes to replace its organizational principles with the terms of reference and rules of procedures presented in Annexes I and II for the consideration of the Executive Board. The Board is invited to approve the proposed terms of reference and rules of procedures of the Evaluation Committee.



ANNEX I

**TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE EVALUATION COMMITTEE**

- (1) To enhance the ability of the Executive Board to assess the overall quality and impact of IFAD programmes and projects through a discussion of selected evaluations and reviews conducted by the Office of Evaluation and Studies, as well as to fortify the Board's knowledge of lessons learned in IFAD's programmes and projects and to enable Member States to better assess the Fund's role in the pursuit of a global development strategy;
- (2) to discuss with the Office of Evaluation and Studies the scope and contents of its annual work programme and strategic directions;
- (3) to satisfy itself that the Fund has an effective and efficient evaluation function;
- (4) to report to the Executive Board on the committee's work and, as appropriate, make recommendations and seek guidance on evaluation issues of policy and strategic importance; and
- (5) to undertake field visits, as and when required, and participate in evaluation missions, workshops, round-table meetings and related activities in order to assist the Evaluation Committee in conducting its duties.

ANNEX II

**RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE EVALUATION COMMITTEE**

The Rules of Procedure of the Executive Board shall apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the proceedings of the Evaluation Committee, except as specified below:

**Rule 1  
Convening of Meetings**

The Evaluation Committee shall hold three sessions in each calendar year. The first meeting shall be held the day before or after IFAD's annual Governing Council session, whichever is more convenient for committee members. The remaining two sessions shall be held on the day preceding the September and December Executive Board sessions, respectively. Additional informal meetings in the same calendar year may also be called on an ad hoc basis by the chairperson.

**Rule 2  
Notification of Sessions and Agenda**

The IFAD Secretariat shall inform each committee member of the date and place of a session at least thirty days in advance. During its December session, the Evaluation Committee shall draw up a tentative agenda for all three sessions in the subsequent year. To facilitate this work, the Office of Evaluation and Studies shall provide the committee with its proposed work programme for the year. The committee retains the prerogative to revise by adding, deleting, defining or amending items on the agenda during the course of the year. The agenda shall be communicated by the Secretariat to all Evaluation Committee members along with the notification of sessions.

**Rule 3  
Membership and Terms of Office**

The composition of the Evaluation Committee shall consist of nine Executive Board members or alternate members: four members from List A, two from List B and three from List C. The term of office of the Evaluation Committee shall be three years and coincide with the term of office of the Executive Board.

**Rule 4  
Quorum**

The quorum for any meeting of the Evaluation Committee shall be constituted by five members.

**Rule 5  
Chairperson**

The committee shall elect its chairperson from List B and C committee members. In the absence of the chairperson during a scheduled meeting of the committee, the chair shall be temporarily assumed by another member from List B or C selected by the committee.



## ANNEX II

### **Rule 6 Decisions**

The committee shall make every effort to arrive at decisions by consensus. Where such efforts have been exhausted, the chairperson's rulings shall stand when supported by four other members.

### **Rule 7 Attendance at Meetings**

In addition to Evaluation Committee members and the Director of the Office of Evaluation and Studies, the said Director may designate members of his staff to participate in the deliberations of the committee. The Director shall also invite other IFAD staff members to provide, pursuant to the committee's request, such information as may be required in carrying out the committee's responsibilities. Other Executive Board members not members of the Evaluation Committee may also attend the meetings as observers.

### **Rule 8 Documentation, Records and Reports**

The proceedings of the committee, documents provided to the committee and the records of the committee's deliberations shall be restricted and available only to members of the committee and members of the Executive Board. The proceedings of the committee shall be reflected in the Minutes of the Evaluation Committee, unless the committee decides otherwise.

### **Rule 9 Reporting to the Executive Board**

The Evaluation Committee shall provide a written report of its deliberations to the Executive Board during the latter's April session. The report, which shall be included in the Office of Evaluation and Studies' Annual Progress Report on Evaluation, shall be dispatched to Board members according to established Board procedures. The chairperson of the committee may, in addition, provide an oral report during the April Executive Board session. The Evaluation Committee may also provide ad hoc written or oral reports to the Board during its September and/or December sessions.



### ANNEX III

## TYPE OF EVALUATION CONDUCTED BY IFAD

**Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE)** of project or programme: MTEs are undertaken towards the mid-life of project implementation. The timing is generally related to the 50% disbursement mark, but other factors might justify an earlier or later evaluation and disbursement rates do not often have a linear correlation to progress in implementation.

**Interim Evaluation (IE)** of project or programme: IEs are compulsory before embarking on a second phase of a project or launching another project broadly similar in the same region. In such cases findings, recommendations and lessons learned for IE become the basis for project design of the subsequent intervention.

**Completion Evaluation (CE)** and **Ex-Post Evaluation (EXP)** of project or programme: CEs are typically conducted after the finalization of the project completion report prepared by the Borrower (often with some help from the cooperating institution) or the cooperating institution itself (in the case of the World Bank). CEs are generally conducted 6-18 months after the project closing date, whereas EXPs are usually conducted three years after project closure.

**Country Portfolio Evaluation (CPE)**: CPEs aim at drawing lessons from all IFAD-financed projects in a given country. CPEs do not intend to evaluate each closed or ongoing project, but rather to provide comparative information on the most essential aspects of project performance and to develop strategic and operational orientations for IFAD's project pipeline in the country.

**Thematic Study (TS)**: TSs are intended to examine IFAD's experience regarding a specific aspect or theme of IFAD interventions. They may be region/subregion-specific or may cut across all IFAD interventions. Various TSs have been undertaken to date on credit, integrated rural development, IFAD's relationship with cooperating institutions, etc. In such evaluations, the Fund's accumulated experience across countries and regions is synthesized and analysed, and cross-cutting lessons are drawn.