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IFAD

INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Executive Board – Eightieth Session

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**SECOND STATUS REPORT ON THE PROGRESS OF THE
INDEPENDENT EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF IFAD**

**SUBMITTED BY THE
DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF EVALUATION**

I. BACKGROUND

1. At its Seventy-Eighth Session in April 2003, the Executive Board adopted the Report of the Chairman of the Evaluation Committee on the Independent External Evaluation of IFAD (document EB 2003/78/R.45) and endorsed the organizational arrangements, governance structure and other provisions set out therein. The Board also decided that the Director of the Office of Evaluation (OE) should submit a progress report to each session of the Executive Board while the independent external evaluation (IEE) is under way. The first such report, the Status Report on the Progress of the Independent External Evaluation (IEE) of IFAD was tabled at the Seventy-Ninth Session of the Board in September 2003 (document EB 2003/79/R.6).

II. RECAPITULATION OF THE FIRST PROGRESS REPORT

2. The first progress report submitted by OE covered the following aspects of the IEE:
- (a) The process of preparing the IEE terms of reference (TOR) and their endorsement by the IEE Steering Committee on 15 July 2003.
 - (b) The constitution of the IEE Steering Committee and identification of two senior independent advisers to advise the Director, OE, in supervising the IEE.
 - (c) The elaboration of an international competitive bidding process for engaging a service provider to conduct the IEE.
 - (d) Progress on implementation of the procurement process up to the shortlisting of six service providers, for which IFAD requested the submission of requests for proposals (RFPs).
 - (e) A summary of the main steps planned as part of the procurement process up to and including the planned deployment of the evaluation team.
 - (f) Brief information on the IEE budget submitted by the Director, OE, to the Executive Board Session in September 2003.

III. APPROVAL OF THE DETAILED INDEPENDENT EXTERNAL EVALUATION BUDGET

3. At its September 2003 Session, the Executive Board discussed the detailed IEE budget contained in the Resource Requirements for the Independent External Evaluation document (EB 2003/79/R.7) submitted by the Director, OE. The Board approved a budget of USD 1 702 030 for the IEE as a one-time below-the-line cost in IFAD's Budget for 2003. The approved budget includes an amount of USD 1 517 750 for all costs that are expected to be reflected in the evaluation team contract.

IV. COMPLETION OF THE PROCUREMENT PROCESS

4. As stated in document EB 2003/79/R.6, IFAD received expressions of interest from 16 potential service providers, and six were shortlisted after the completion of technical and commercial reviews. One of the six shortlisted organizations, however, decided not to submit a proposal. The other five organizations submitted technical and financial proposals, on schedule, by 8 September 2003.

5. The five above-mentioned proposals were evaluated in detail by a technical evaluation panel (TEP) constituted by the Director, OE, and comprising four experts with a good understanding of the IEE, and a representative of the IFAD office responsible for procurement. The TEP ranked the proposals on the basis of detailed evaluation criteria discussed earlier with the Steering Committee and

provided to the proposers as part of the RFP. Upon completion of the technical ranking, IFAD invited the first three ranked proposers to make presentations in Rome on 6-8 October 2003.

6. On the basis of these presentations and the technical evaluation of proposals, OE recommended that Information, Training and Development (ITAD) Ltd of the United Kingdom be appointed as the service provider for the IEE. ITAD specializes in the monitoring and evaluating of agricultural and rural development policies, strategies, programmes and projects, and it has a reputation for and experience in undertaking complex institutional evaluations. For example, ITAD recently led a large consortium for the Five-Year Global Evaluation of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, an assignment that spanned 18 months with multiple strands of analysis among the eight United Nations cosponsoring agencies, donors and civil society, and included visits to nine country programmes. In 1998, ITAD was entrusted with undertaking the evaluation of the United Nations Capital Development Fund. ITAD has a diverse range of clients and sectoral experience, and solid experience in evaluation with international financial institutions and multilateral development organizations.

7. The ITAD core team consists of a team leader, three senior experts and a pool of 12 other experts from which ITAD will assign specific responsibilities during the course of the IEE. The core team comprises persons of six nationalities from four continents, and includes five women. It also covers the required range of language expertise and experience across IFAD regions. The core team will be backed up by country evaluation teams for field work, to be recruited from the ten countries where the in-depth independent validation will be undertaken.

8. The OE recommendation to select ITAD, accompanied by a report from IFAD's office responsible for procurement and relevant documents on the procurement process, was considered by the IFAD Contracts Review Committee (CRC) on 16 October 2003. The CRC, which is chaired by the Assistant President, Finance and Administration Department, complimented OE on the work it had carried out, on the transparency of the process and the accuracy and completeness of the documentation provided. The CRC authorized OE to negotiate and sign a contract with ITAD Ltd on behalf of IFAD. The IEE Steering Committee endorsed the selection of the service provider on 24 October 2003.

9. The Office of the General Counsel, assisted by OE and the IFAD office responsible for procurement, drew up a draft contract between IFAD and ITAD Ltd. Several versions of the contract, as well as a number of technical and financial issues, were discussed between IFAD and ITAD Ltd in Rome and the United Kingdom and via electronic mail. The contract was finally signed on 1 December 2003 for an amount of USD 1 333 333. In anticipation of contract signing, the ITAD team arrived in Rome to start work on 26 November 2003, in line with the timetable prepared in June 2003.

V. INDEPENDENT EXTERNAL EVALUATION WORKPLAN AND DELIVERABLES

10. As described in the TOR, the evaluation team will complete five main substantive tasks, each of which will result in a deliverable being submitted to IFAD. The deliverables are briefly described hereunder:

- **Deliverable 1: Inception Report.** The report will: develop a common understanding of the TOR of the IEE to determine the scope, focus, key questions, methodology and tasks of the evaluation; select, through random sampling, 20-25 countries, 40-50 loan projects (coming into effect between 1994 and 2002) and four-to-six technical assistance (TA) grants in the selected countries for desk study; and finalize the IEE timetable.
- **Deliverable 2: Desk Review.** The review will: assess IFAD's strategic framework, replenishment consultation reports, regional strategies and corporate policies developed since 1994, based on IFAD documents, interviews and meetings with IFAD staff; assess documents relating to country strategic opportunities papers, country programmes, loan

projects and non-lending activities such as TA grants; and include findings from interviews with relevant IFAD staff and management.

- **Deliverable 3: Verification of Findings at the Field Level.** The evaluations will: validate and supplement the desk review through original research in sample countries where IFAD projects and TA grant-funded activities are going forward; and include consultations and interviews with government representatives, civil society, the private sector, development agencies, and the rural poor and their organizations.
- **Deliverable 4: Draft Final Report.** This will pull the first three deliverables together into a synthesis report.
- **Deliverable 5: Final Report.**

11. The ITAD evaluation team is now working on the Inception Report, which will update ITAD's technical proposal submitted to IFAD, fine-tune and operationalize the TOR and timetable, and provide a complete platform for reference during the conduct of the IEE. Fruitful interaction among OE, the senior independent advisers and the ITAD team during the early stages of the inception phase has helped put the process on the right track. The Steering Committee is expected to meet with representatives of OE and the ITAD team on 22-23 January 2004 to provide comments on the draft Inception Report. The final version of the Inception Report will be available on 1 February 2004, following its approval by the Director, OE.

12. According to the TOR of the IEE, Annex II of the document Resource Requirements for the Independent Evaluation of IFAD (EB 2003/79/R.7):

Paragraph 13(b)

"OE will also provide written comments to the service provider on all its deliverables in order to facilitate and enhance the compliance of the evaluation with the agreed TOR and methodology. These comments will address any deviation from the requirements of the TOR, in addition to methodological issues and any factual issues or inaccuracies concerning IFAD that OE may consider relevant to the IEE. However, OE will neither support nor contest IEE findings and recommendations."

Paragraph 25

"The service provider will submit all the above-mentioned deliverables to the Director of OE. OE will share these deliverables, as described below, with the Executive Board, the steering committee and IFAD management, which will provide comments as follows:

- (a) The steering committee may comment on any aspect of all the deliverables that helps to ensure that the Evaluation Team conducts its work in accordance with its TOR.
- (b) On Deliverables 1-3, IFAD management will provide comments that relate exclusively to factual matters.
- (c) IFAD management will provide comments on factual matters as well as matters of judgment upon receipt of Deliverable 4 (the draft final IEE report). Upon receipt of Deliverable 5 (the final report), it will, in addition, provide a management response to the Executive Board that contains the management reaction to the IEE and sets forth its views on the feasibility or otherwise of the IEE recommendations. The management response will explain why certain recommendations, if any, are considered non-feasible and how management would propose to implement the recommendations that it finds acceptable. The management response will be included as an appendix to the final IEE report.
- (d) The Executive Board will receive, discuss and comment on the draft final IEE report (Deliverable 4)."

VI. INDEPENDENT EXTERNAL EVALUATION COMMUNICATION PLAN

13. The purpose of the communication plan is to ensure transparency and provide IEE stakeholders with easy access to the IEE process and products. Four different means serve this purpose: access through the IEE pages of the IFAD website; progress reports to the Executive Board; a periodic *IEE Newsletter*; and meetings between OE and IFAD staff. These are briefly described as follows:

- ***IEE pages of the IFAD Website/Internet.*** All IEE documents will be made available on the IFAD website. These include the TOR of the IEE, the curriculum vitae of the evaluation team, progress reports submitted to the Executive Board, the *IEE Newsletter*, and the reports (deliverables) of the evaluation team. IFAD staff will also have access to the IEE documentation through an intranet site.
- ***Reports by OE to the Executive Board of IFAD.*** OE provides progress reports on the status of the IEE to the Executive Board, as per the following schedule: September 2003, December 2003, April 2004 and September 2004. Once disclosed, these reports will be posted on the IEE pages of IFAD's website.
- ***Newsletters.*** OE will prepare a periodic *IEE Newsletter* as per the following schedule: December 2003, April 2004 and October 2004. These newsletters will be posted on the IFAD website and Intranet.
- ***Meetings.*** The Director, OE, will regularly inform the IFAD senior management team on the developments and progress of the IEE exercise. In addition, IFAD senior management will organize staff meetings, as required, both to introduce the evaluation team and to talk about the IEE and its products and workplan.