Strengthening the strategic role of Executive Board subsidiary bodies

Evaluation Committee
23 March 2018

Office of the Secretary (SEC)
Executive Board retreats: particular attention to the manner in which subsidiary committees report to the Board (EB121)

EC98/EC99 discussed issues of relevance to the Evaluation Committee:
- need to agree on critical messages from sessions and package succinctly for the Board.
- for greater ownership, EC members and the Chairperson should prepare key messages for the Board
Benchmarking study – 9 organizations

3 Aspects
- Structure of subsidiary body meetings
- Decision making
- Reporting to the board

8 out of 9 Responses
- **UN**
  - WFP, FAO, UNESCO and WHO
- **IFI**
  - AfDB, ADB, WB/IDA and IDB
- No response from EBRD

➢ All IFIs in the study have resident boards
# Structure of meetings

- Up to 7 subsidiary bodies per organization with a range from 5 to 10 members per body.

- Meetings are held from twice a year to ten per month, from 1 to 3 weeks prior to the board.

- Chairperson is involved in agenda setting but the level of involvement varies.

- Committees discuss operational and strategic issues and preparatory meetings are held with management and the Chair – ADB is the only exception.

- Time limit for interventions are set in 4 organizations at between 4 to 7 minutes each.
Decision-making role

All subsidiary bodies of comparators DO NOT have decision-making powers

The functions include:
- Elect Chairperson/Vice Chairperson
- Review documents and report to the Board
- Decide on proposals to be submitted to the Board
- Approve agenda for their meetings and their work program

For one comparator: the committee also approves country portfolio performance reviews

For three comparators: the Board may modify proposals by subsidiary bodies except for the election of their Chairpersons and approval of the work program
Reporting and official records take various forms:

- Minutes (3)
- Report of the Chairperson (3)
- Summaries/Notes/Green sheets (2)

Good practices in addressing members’ comments to ensure consistency:

- Sharing draft with members for comments
- Follow-up action table for discussion at subsequent meetings
- Chairperson’s oral summary at the end of each discussion item

- Six comparators have a timeline for processing official records and this varies
Reporting and official records

- In one case, approval of the official records is entirely the responsibility of the Chairperson – UNESCO

- Reports/records are usually shared with the Board for information 3-14 days before the Board – 6 comparators

- In most cases, chairpersons present reports/records to the Board orally
Contributions to the strategic governance role of the Board

- 4 comparators, some subsidiary bodies provide inputs to the performance evaluations of some Unit Heads in the Organisation

- 6 comparators provide input to work plans of respective units

- 6 comparators submit annual reports of their activities to the Board
Take-aways

- **Responses to the survey show that:**
  - IFAD practices are in line with best practices in comparator organizations.

- **Opportunities for improvement:**
  - Role of the Chairperson in summarising agreed points or differing views at the end of each agenda item
  - Bodies could review their effectiveness at least once in the three year period (2 comparators)
  - Reporting to the Board, as already noted by the EC, can be improved: more focused, strategic and full ownership by the members of issues raised at the Board
Next steps

- The results of the benchmarking study will be included in a discussion paper for the Board retreat in April 2018.

- The Evaluation Committee will need to agree on specific next steps to take in implementing some of the ideas discussed: preparation, format, and content of the Chairperson’s report to the Board.

- Further to the retreat, a consolidated paper for consideration at the September Board.