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Investing in rural people

## **Revised Draft Action Plan for the Implementation of the Main Actions and Recommendations of the Peer Review of IFAD's Evaluation Function**

### **Note to Evaluation Committee members**

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Evaluation Committee — 108<sup>th</sup> Session  
Rome, 1 April 2020

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### Note to Executive Board representatives

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Executive Board — 129<sup>th</sup> Session  
Rome, 20-21 April 2020

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For: **Information**

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## I. Background

1. As commissioned by the Executive Board, the Evaluation Cooperation Group of the multilateral development banks undertook a Peer review of IFAD's Evaluation Function in 2018/2019. This was the second peer review of the evaluation function; the first took place in 2009/2010. At its 127<sup>th</sup> session in September 2019, the Board discussed the draft final report together with the comments of IFAD Management and the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD (IOE).
2. The Executive Board reviewed the report with appreciation and took note of the recommendations contained therein. In considering the report, the Board mandated the Evaluation Committee to take forward the implementation of recommendation 2 on the Terms of Reference (ToRs) of the Evaluation Committee. The Board further requested Management and IOE to prepare a joint draft action plan to be reviewed by the Evaluation Committee at its 107<sup>th</sup> session in October 2019 and subsequently by the Board at its 128<sup>th</sup> session in December 2019.
3. A draft action plan has been prepared jointly by Management and IOE and serves as a basis for the implementation of the findings and recommendations of the peer review report. Based on comments received from the Evaluation Committee in its October 2019 session and from the Executive Board in its December 2019 session, the draft action plan has been revised and submitted to the Evaluation Committee session of April 2020 for their review.

## II. Document structure

4. The purpose of the document is to outline the plan to address all the recommendations and key issues raised by the External Peer Review. These include the production of specific documents, as well as other deliverables and sub-actions. The action plan specifies timelines and responsibilities for all stakeholders involved in the implementation of the recommendations and actions proposed. The document is organized in three parts. Section III provides an overview of the main documents that need to be produced for consideration first by the Committee and thereafter by the Executive Board. The same section outlines the roles and responsibilities of the Executive Board, Evaluation Committee, Management and IOE. Section III also includes a brief discussion on any external professional advisory support that may be required. Finally, annex I presents the draft action plan that sets out the milestones to be achieved under each recommendation, the respective roles and responsibilities and the deadlines for each milestone. Annex II contains a summary of the recommendations of the External Peer Review.

## III. Main documents to be produced, roles and responsibilities

5. **Documents.** Three main documents will need to be produced in order to implement the findings and recommendations of the peer review. These are (i) a revised Evaluation Policy; (ii) revised Terms of Reference of the Evaluation Committee; and (iii) a new Evaluation Manual. A new harmonization agreement may be drawn up, if necessary. These documents will incorporate most of the recommendations and findings of the peer review. Following a thorough review by the Evaluation Committee, the first two documents will be submitted for the approval of the Executive Board.
6. Management and IOE may need to prepare additional papers when producing the three main documents and as a follow on from the aforementioned deliverables (e.g. reviews of the independent and self-evaluation product mix).
7. **Roles and responsibilities.** As noted by the peer review, in order for evaluation to contribute to superior institutional performance, it needs to be a shared responsibility, with specific roles and responsibilities clearly set out for IOE,

Management, the Evaluation Committee and the Executive Board. The roles and responsibilities should be as follows (details are provided in annex I):

- (i) The Evaluation Committee will be responsible for reviewing and revising the ToRs of the Evaluation Committee.
  - (ii) Management and IOE will jointly revise the Evaluation Policy, while the Committee will be responsible for reviewing and commenting on the revised Evaluation Policy.
  - (iii) IOE will take the lead in revising its product mix, the Evaluation Manual and a multi-year strategy and share early drafts for inputs and comments from Management.
  - (iv) Management will be responsible for a parallel review of its self-evaluation products and share early drafts with IOE for comments and inputs.
  - (v) The Executive Board will be responsible for approving the revised Evaluation Policy and the revised ToRs of the Evaluation Committee, once the Evaluation Committee has reviewed these documents and reached consensus on their content.
8. In addition to taking the lead in the review and revision of its ToRs, the Evaluation Committee will have a central role in overseeing the implementation of the recommendations.
  9. The Committee will also be responsible for keeping the Board informed on the follow-up to the action plan. This will be done through the oral reports of the Chairperson of the Evaluation Committee to the Executive Board. These oral reports are based on the minutes of Committee sessions, which are shared with the Board for information. Management and IOE will be responsible for providing a periodic update on the implementation status of the action plan to the Evaluation Committee.
  10. Finally, external advisory support may be needed to comment on draft deliverables produced, particularly with respect to the revised Evaluation Policy and Evaluation Manual. This may consist of a small panel of international evaluation experts. These experts could be hired by IOE and financed through the additional budget requested for this purpose by IOE in the budget for 2020. These consultants will support both IOE and Management and will provide a written report to the Evaluation Committee at the conclusion of their engagement.

## Draft action plan for the implementation of the Main Actions and Recommendations of the Peer Review Report

<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>Milestone</i>	<i>Lead Responsibilities for preparation</i>	<i>Approving entity</i>	<i>Timeline</i>
<b>1. Revise the Evaluation Policy.<sup>1</sup></b>		<b>Management and IOE jointly</b>	<b>Executive Board</b>	
	a. IOE-Management task force to revise the Evaluation Policy established	IOE and Management		October 2019
	b. Internal stakeholder consultations	IOE and Management		January 2020
	c. Informal seminar with the Executive Board and Evaluation Committee and presentation of progress on: (i) revision of evaluation policy; (ii) Terms of Reference of Evaluation Committee; and (iii) product mix (see also under recommendations 2 and 4)	IOE, Management, Evaluation Committee, and Executive Board		May 2020
	d. Zero draft revised policy prepared	IOE and Management		March-September 2020
	e. Submission to 111 <sup>th</sup> session of Evaluation Committee (October 2020)	IOE and Management		September 2020
	f. Submission to 131 <sup>st</sup> session of Executive Board (December 2020)	IOE and Management		October 2020
<b>2. Revise the role (Terms of Reference) of the Evaluation Committee.</b>		<b>Evaluation Committee</b>	<b>Executive Board</b>	
	a. Informal meeting of Evaluation Committee to discuss scope of the changes to the ToRs	Evaluation Committee		January 2020
	b. Follow-up discussion at the 108 <sup>th</sup> Evaluation Committee session	Evaluation Committee		February 2020
	c. Informal seminar with the Executive Board and Evaluation Committee and presentation of progress on: (i) revision of evaluation policy; (ii) ToRs; and (iii) product mix	IOE, Management, Evaluation Committee, and Executive Board		May 2020
	d. Revised draft ToRs discussed at the 111 <sup>th</sup> Evaluation Committee session (October 2020)	Evaluation Committee		September 2020
	e. Revised ToRs submitted to 131 <sup>st</sup> Executive Board session (December 2020) for approval	IOE and Management		October 2020

<sup>1</sup> This is the current planned time frame but which may be subject to change on the basis of the follow up to recommendations 4 and 5.

<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>Milestone</i>	<i>Lead Responsibilities for preparation</i>	<i>Approving entity</i>	<i>Timeline</i>
<b>3. Substantially simplify IOE internal processes and procedures.</b>	a. Internal discussions to simplify IOE processes and procedures starting from an office retreat in October 2019	IOE	IOE	Ongoing
	b. Oral update by the IOE Director to the 111 <sup>th</sup> session of the Evaluation Committee (October 2020)	IOE	IOE	October 2020
<b>4. IOE should revise its product mix.</b>		<b>IOE</b>	<b>Executive Board through the Evaluation Policy</b>	
	a. Zero draft note on IOE revised product mix prepared internally and discussed with Management	IOE		March 2020
	b. Draft note on IOE revised product mix revised after IOE-Management consultations	IOE		April 2020
	c. Informal seminar with the Executive Board and Evaluation Committee and presentation of progress on: (i) revision of evaluation policy; (ii) ToRs; and (iii) product mix	IOE, Management, Evaluation Committee, and Executive Board		May 2020
	d. Note on IOE product mix submitted to 111 <sup>th</sup> Evaluation Committee (October 2020) for approval	IOE		September 2020
<b>5. Management should conduct a parallel review of its self-evaluation products.</b>	a. Benchmarking with comparator organizations	Management		March 2020
	b. Internal consultations including with IOE			April 2020
	c. Draft IFAD12 RMF prepared			June 2020
	d. Revised self-evaluation product note prepared			September 2020
	e. Self-evaluation product note submitted to 111 <sup>th</sup> Evaluation Committee (October 2020)			September 2020
<b>6. IOE should prepare a multi-year strategy to implement the Evaluation Policy.</b>		<b>IOE</b>	<b>Executive Board</b>	
	a. Joint consultation involving IOE, Evaluation Committee, Executive Board and Management	IOE		March 2021
	b. Informal consultations with Evaluation Committee and Executive Board	IOE		July 2021

<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>Milestone</i>	<i>Lead Responsibilities for preparation</i>	<i>Approving entity</i>	<i>Timeline</i>
	c. Present multi-year strategy to 115 <sup>th</sup> Evaluation Committee (October 2021)	IOE		September 2021
	d. Present multi-year strategy to 134 <sup>th</sup> Executive Board (December 2021)	IOE		October 2021
<b>7. A new Evaluation Manual should be prepared</b>		<b>IOE</b>		
	a. IOE and Management review their respective Implementation Procedures and Arrangements	IOE and Management		March 2021
	b. Consultations between IOE and Management on the draft manual	IOE and Management		June 2021
	c. Present revised IFAD Evaluation Manual to 116 <sup>th</sup> Evaluation Committee (March 2022) and 135 <sup>th</sup> Executive Board (April 2022) for review	IOE and Management		February 2022
	d. Develop Harmonization Agreement <sup>2</sup>	IOE and Management		July 2022
	e. Present the Harmonization Agreement to the 118 <sup>th</sup> Evaluation Committee (September 2022) and 136 <sup>th</sup> Evaluation Board (September 2022)	IOE and Management		July 2022
<b>8. IOE's budget should be significantly simplified and harmonized in terms of overall structure with IFAD's overall administrative budget.</b>		<b>IOE</b>	<b>Executive Board/ Governing Council</b>	
	a. Present revised IOE pilot budget for 2021 to September Evaluation Committee and September Executive Board (2020)	IOE		July 2020
	b. Present streamlined budget for 2022 to September Evaluation Committee and September Executive Board (2021)	IOE		July 2021

<sup>2</sup> The development of the Harmonization Agreement is to be confirmed.



## **Recommendations from the External Peer Review of the Evaluation Function in IFAD**

1. Revise the Evaluation Policy to focus more strongly on strategic issues, provide greater institutional utility and value, and establish appropriate roles and responsibilities across the multiple components of IFAD's Evaluation System.
2. Revise the role (Terms of Reference) of the Evaluation Committee to ensure full oversight of evaluation and results reporting functions IFAD-wide. Secretariat services should be provided on the same basis as for other Board Committees.
3. Substantially simplify IOE internal processes and procedures to reduce their resource intensity, increase internal delegation and scope for initiative and encourage constructive engagement between IOE and Management. This should include product specific processes, designated methodologies, and engagement between IOE staff and Management.
4. IOE should revise its product mix based on accurate resource requirements for individual products, and a detailed survey of the views of all key audiences on existing and prospective products, including intended purposes and perceived value.
5. Management should conduct a parallel review of its self-evaluation products to clarify objectives and responsibilities, and ensure value and utilization.
6. IOE should prepare a multi-year strategy to implement the Evaluation Policy, in consultation with Management and for Board approval, setting out short to medium term objectives and responsibilities. Coordination with the IFAD replenishment cycle should be explored.
7. A new Evaluation Manual should be prepared. It should encompass evaluation-related issues, products and processes institution-wide and ensure extended cover of evaluation issues such as gender and rights. Clarity and simplicity should be guiding objectives. IOE should lead the process but it must be engaged and consultative with Management.
8. IOE's budget should be significantly simplified and harmonized in terms of overall structure with IFAD's overall administrative budget. The current high rigidity and over-specification should be reduced to allow more flexible and effective resource management by IOE.