

Document: EC 2020/110/W.P.4  
Agenda: 5  
Date: 5 August 2020  
Distribution: Public  
Original: English

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Investing in rural people

## **2020 President's Report on the Implementation Status of Evaluation Recommendations and Management Actions (PRISMA)**

### **Volume I: Main report**

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

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Office of Evaluation of IFAD to the report should be  
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Evaluation Committee – 110<sup>th</sup> Session  
Rome, 2 September 2020

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**For: Review**

Document: EB 2020/130/R.11  
Agenda: 7  
Date: 5 August 2020  
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Executive Board — 130<sup>th</sup> Session  
Rome, 8-11 September 2020

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**For: Review**

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## **Abbreviations and acronyms**

ARRI	Annual Report on Results and Impact of IFAD Operations
CLE	corporate-level evaluation
COSOP	country strategic opportunities programme
CSPE	country strategy and programme evaluation
ESR	evaluation synthesis report
IE	impact evaluation
IOE	Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD
M&E	monitoring & evaluation
PPE	project performance evaluation
PRISMA	President's Report on the Implementation Status of Evaluation Recommendations and Management Actions
RIDE	Report on IFAD's Development Effectiveness

## Executive summary

1. The President's Report on the Implementation Status of Evaluation Recommendations and Management Actions (PRISMA) tracks Management's follow-up on recommendations made by the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD (IOE). The 2020 PRISMA covers a total of 16 evaluations (with 67 recommendations), 15 of which are new evaluations and one is for historical follow-up.
2. The key messages from the 2020 PRISMA are the following:
  - (i) **Management's follow-up and uptake of IOE recommendations continues to be strong with 99 per cent** of the recommendations either fully followed up (60 per cent) or ongoing (39 per cent). Follow-up on country strategy and programme evaluations in new country strategic opportunities programmes and on project performance evaluations in new projects continues to be strong, with the recommendations fully embedded in new strategies and project designs.
  - (ii) **Recommendations that are specific and action-oriented have more concrete follow-up to report.** Examples include introducing performance-based contracts for project management units, limiting the geographic spread of IFAD's activities and conducting specific thematic studies. At the same time, Management notes that not all recommendations made by IOE contain specific actions. This is particularly true for recommendations on areas such as non-lending activities, where IOE suggests strengthening non-lending activities or adopting programmatic approaches without indicating specific actions. The follow-up on such recommendations consists of ongoing processes that will inevitably remain in ongoing status.
  - (iii) **Portfolio-level evaluations are context specific and, as noted in the 2019 PRISMA, have an optimal period for follow-up and internalization of lessons.** This has implications on two fronts. First, the time lag between the availability of evaluations and completion of the portfolio should be minimized, while ensuring that the time between availability of evaluation and a new country strategic opportunities programme or project should be sufficient to allow teams to adequately reflect on the lessons. There is a lag of two years for the project level evaluations included in this PRISMA, whereas follow-on projects are usually designed earlier than that. Second, following up on recommendations at the portfolio level in the PRISMA three years or more after project closure does not help with either accountability or learning. Therefore, Management believes that follow-up reported on in the PRISMA should be limited to thematic/corporate or strategic evaluations rather than portfolio-level evaluations, as in the practices of other organizations such as the World Bank.
  - (iv) **As the evaluations included in each PRISMA are undertaken on projects designed and completed over a similar time frame** (in this case, on average designed before 2009 and completed in 2017), there is a degree of repetition in recommendations that gives the impression that Management has not taken action on key areas. However, as the PRISMA notes, citing evidence from the ongoing and newly designed portfolio, actions on recurring areas have been taken in the form of new policies, guidelines, strategies, etc. Improvements as a result of these changes are most evident in the newly designed and ongoing portfolio.
  - (v) **In the context of recommendations from the peer review, Management believes there is scope for IOE to** revisit the format and

structure of recommendations in order to ensure value addition beyond actions already initiated by Management. Management will work with IOE by conducting a mapping of action-oriented recommendations made in corporate/thematic/strategic evaluations in recent years against Management's follow up to date, in order to identify gaps or further action areas.

# **2020 President's Report on the Implementation Status of Evaluation Recommendations and Management Actions (PRISMA)**

## **Introduction**

1. This is the seventeenth edition of the President's Report on the Implementation Status of Evaluation Recommendations and Management Actions (PRISMA) and the first for the Eleventh Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD11) period. In the PRISMA, Management reports on the follow-up to recommendations from selected evaluations conducted by the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD (IOE).
2. The PRISMA is divided into two volumes. The first provides an overview of the status of follow-up actions and a synthesis of emerging findings and recurrent themes drawn from the evaluations included in the report. The second volume (attached as an addendum) lists individual recommendations and the specific follow-up actions taken in response to each of those recommendations.
3. Section I provides an overview of the report's objectives and methodology. Section II focuses on the PRISMA as an accountability tool. It outlines the coverage of evaluations included in this edition of the report and the overall implementation status of independent evaluation recommendations. Section III focuses on the learning dimension of the PRISMA. In particular, this section highlights thematic trends emerging from evaluations at the portfolio level and provides an overview of the actions being taken in those areas. Section IV presents the report's conclusions.

## **I. Objectives and methodology**

### **A. Objectives**

4. The PRISMA is an important tool within the self-evaluation architecture. It has the following two main objectives:
  - (i) Promote accountability through rigorous follow-up with the relevant teams and consolidated reporting to the Evaluation Committee and Executive Board on Management's actions in response to independent evaluation recommendations; and
  - (ii) Internalize learning by identifying recurrent issues at the portfolio and corporate levels that require targeted attention from Management in order to enhance development effectiveness.

### **B. Methodology**

5. The 2020 PRISMA follows the same format as in previous years and analyses the nature, level, regional distribution and extent of follow-up to independent evaluation recommendations. A detailed description of the methodology used to prepare the report can be found in annex I. In response to IOE comments on previous editions of the PRISMA, and to avoid excessive granularity, the 2020 PRISMA does not unbundle recommendations but rather reports on the follow-up to recommendations as a whole as presented by IOE. Following the practice established in the 2019 PRISMA, the report presents a disaggregated thematic analysis at the portfolio level.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The portfolio level includes the country programme and project levels.

## II. Promoting accountability

### A. Evaluation coverage and classification of recommendations

6. The 2020 PRISMA covers a total of 16 evaluations (with a total of 67 recommendations) jointly selected by Management and IOE, of which 15 are new evaluations finalized in 2018 and 2019 and one is for historical follow-up (covered in the 2018 PRISMA).
7. For historical follow-up, the PRISMA includes only outstanding recommendations that Management had agreed to but in previous editions had not fully followed up on. There are five outstanding recommendations from the corporate-level evaluation (CLE) on IFAD's decentralization experience that are therefore included in this edition.

Table 1  
2020 PRISMA: first-round and historical follow-up\*

New evaluations 2020		Evaluation recommendation actions					
Evaluation level	Evaluation type	CLE	CSPE	ESR	IE	PPE	Total
<b>Portfolio</b>							
Asia and the Pacific	1 CSPE + 2 PPEs	-	6	-	-	7	13
East and Southern Africa	1 CSPE + 2 PPE + 1 IE	-	4	-	4	8	16
Latin America and the Caribbean	2 PPEs	-	-	-	-	8	8
Near East, North Africa and Europe	2 CSPEs + 1 PPE	-	7	-	-	3	10
West and Central Africa	1 CSPE + 1 PPE	-	5	-	-	4	9
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>14</b>	-	<b>22</b>	-	<b>4</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>Corporate</b>							
CLE on IFAD's engagement in pro-poor value chain development	1 CLE	6	-	-	-	-	6
CLE on IFAD's decentralization experience	1 CLE	5	-	-	-	-	5
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>2</b>	-	-	-	-	-	<b>11</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>22</b>	-	<b>4</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>67</b>

\* For a detailed breakdown, see table 1 of annex II.

Legend; CSPE = country strategy and programme evaluation;

ESR = evaluation synthesis report; IE = impact evaluation; PPE = project performance evaluation.

8. Management appreciates IOE's efforts to streamline recommendations and notes that, on average, both project level and country level evaluations contain four recommendations. The CLE on IFAD's engagement in pro-poor value chain development contains a total of six recommendations that Management had agreed to, and there are five outstanding recommendations from the CLE on IFAD's decentralization experience that are included for historical follow-up in the 2020 PRISMA.
9. Management also notes that the 2020 PRISMA contains fewer evaluations and actions to follow up on than previous editions (31 in the 2019 PRISMA, with 187 actions). This is primarily due to two factors. First, a reduction in the number of evaluations for historical follow-up (the 2019 PRISMA contained 11 evaluations for historical follow-up). As agreed with IOE and the Evaluation Committee, at least a two year lag should be allowed for CLEs between the follow-up and PRISMA reporting, given the longer lead time needed to adopt strategy and policy recommendations. Management also believes that historical follow-up should be limited to corporate and thematic level evaluations and not employed for evaluations at the portfolio level given the narrow scope of recommendations and time bound follow-up at the portfolio level. Second, as noted in the methodology section, recommendations have been presented as stated by IOE in the evaluation report (i.e. they are not unbundled).



10. **Level for follow-up and nature of recommendations.** Given the large number of evaluations at the portfolio level (CSPEs, PPEs and IEs), 81 per cent of the recommendations are related to operational areas and 19 per cent are strategic. The strategic level evaluations at the portfolio level stem mostly from CSPEs. The CLE on pro-poor value chain development resulted in more operational than strategic recommendations such as enhancing capacity or strengthening partnerships.
11. Almost 85 per cent of the recommendations are assigned to IFAD at the country level for follow-up. It is also important to note that IFAD and governments follow up jointly on all recommendations at the portfolio level, regardless of the specific entity they are assigned to, through their joint formulation of new country strategic opportunities programmes (COSOPs) and projects and through supervision and implementation support. Only one recommendation from the PPE in Nepal was specifically addressed to government authorities (ensuring greater involvement in IFAD activities at the state and local level), and one from the PPE in Sri Lanka was specifically addressed to a follow-up project (to consolidate and strengthen community-based organizations from the previous project rather than create new ones).
12. Eleven per cent of the recommendations are addressed at the corporate level, most of which are from the CLE on IFAD’s engagement in pro-poor value chain development. The CSPE Georgia, however, contains a recommendation on decentralization and enhancing country presence, which was a recommendation for follow-up at the corporate level.

Table 2  
**2020 PRISMA: number of recommendations, by type of level assigned and nature of recommendation**

Level	Nature of recommendations			Percentage
	Operational	Strategic	Total	
<b>Corporate</b>	5	2	7	<b>11</b>
CLE	5	1	6	
CSPE	-	1	1	
<b>Portfolio</b>				
<b>Country</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>85</b>
CSPE	12	9	21	
PPE	26	2	28	
IE	4	-	4	
<b>Government authorities</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
PPE	1	-	1	
<b>Project</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
PPE	1	-	1	
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>62</b>	
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>19</b>		

## **B. Implementation status: extent of follow-up**

13. Overall, Management’s uptake of IOE recommendations continues to be high with 99 per cent of the recommendations either fully followed up or with concrete actions taken in the direction of the recommendations. It is important to highlight that the COVID-19 pandemic may cause some challenges in following up on certain recommendations for next year’s PRISMA at the corporate level, given the prioritization of response and recovery in the aftermath of the pandemic and the need to reprioritize.
14. At the portfolio level, 64 per cent of the recommendations have been fully followed up. This is because CSPEs are usually followed up on by new COSOPs in which the

CSPE recommendations are addressed. In the case of project-level evaluations, new projects have embedded the recommendations in the design of new operations. It is important to highlight that at the country programme level a number of IOE recommendations relate to areas such as strengthening non-lending activities – strengthening partnerships or engaging more at the policy level – where actions are inevitably ongoing with no immediately identifiable output.

Table 3  
**2020 PRISMA: implementation status of evaluation recommendations, by evaluation type (first-round follow-up)\***

	<i>Full follow-up</i>	<i>Ongoing</i>	<i>Not applicable</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>Corporate</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>		<b>11</b>
CLE on IFAD's engagement in pro-poor value chain development		6		6
CLE on IFAD's decentralization experience (historical follow-up)	4	1		5
<b>Portfolio</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>2</b>	
CSPE	10	11	1	22
IE	3	1		4
PPE	23	7		30
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>1</b>	

\* For a detailed breakdown, see volume II.

15. In addition to the detailed follow-up against each recommendation listed in volume II of the PRISMA, below are some examples of actions taken by Management.
16. **Recommendations that have been fully followed up.** In the evaluation of a project in Belize, IOE recommended conducting performance evaluations for project management unit (PMU) staff and basing contract renewal on the outcomes of those evaluations. In line with that recommendation, in the new project in Belize, performance evaluations are carried out at the end of probationary periods and before contract renewals of PMU staff. In the CSPE for Burkina Faso, IOE had suggested limiting the geographic spread of the country programme to three or four areas. In the new investment in the country, the geographic scope has been limited to four target areas. In the PPE in the Republic of Moldova, IOE had suggested focusing on agro-business and agro-processing development in value chain projects. The new value chain development project in the Republic of Moldova has taken this into consideration and focuses on such an approach, while also putting in provisions for technical expertise both for recruitment of an agribusiness specialist in the consolidated programme implementation unit and for a specialized marketing firm to provide support to producer organizations and entrepreneurs.
17. **Ongoing recommendations.** The CSPE in Sri Lanka recommended that IFAD should invest in more analytic work and have a more focused programme with scaling up pathways. Management agrees with the recommendation and will, in the preparation of the new COSOP, conduct stronger economic and financial analysis to guide the discussions and formulation of IFAD's country strategy in partnership with the Government. In Tunisia, IOE recommended that project implementation should be anchored in the decentralized structures. In response to that recommendation, newly elected local authorities will be involved in implementation of the new project at the local level.
18. **Recommendations that are not applicable.** Only one recommendation was classified as not applicable: the recommendation in the CSPE for Georgia to increase country presence in the context of decentralization. IFAD's

decentralization follows a corporate approach, with a hub model that takes into consideration resource constraints and strategic priorities.

19. **Historical follow-up on the CLE on IFAD's decentralization experience.** The CLE on IFAD's decentralization experience concluded in 2016 prior to IFAD10. Since then the Fund's decentralization ambitions and plans have changed significantly, with a move from country presence to consolidation under a hub model. IFAD has also increased the proportion of decentralized staff from 17 per cent to 32 per cent currently, with plans to further decentralize up to 45 per cent in IFAD12. Therefore, while the recommendations of the evaluation are more relevant to IFAD's previous decentralization model, Management has embedded relevant aspects of the recommendations into the current hub model. Of the five outstanding recommendations from the CLE on IFAD's decentralization experience, two related to putting in place a new delegation of authority framework. Meeting an IFAD11 commitment, an accompanying delegation of authority framework was put into place and has since been refined. The delegation of authority framework was also accompanied by a comprehensive package of training and support on budgeting for relevant and concerned staff. For non-lending activities, IOE had suggested close collaboration between technical staff and country offices and dedicated budgets for these activities at the country level. Under IFAD's decentralized business model, technical staff are also based in the field to provide greater and closer support to country teams.
20. **CLE on IFAD's engagement in pro-poor value chain development.** Of the seven recommendations in this CLE, Management disagreed with one to develop a corporate strategy, partially agreed with two and fully agreed with four.<sup>2</sup> Management felt that developing operational guidelines would provide more concrete guidance to teams in charge of designing and implementing projects rather than a strategy. IFAD has finalized new operational guidelines on IFAD's engagement in pro-poor value chain development. The guidelines will help experts in charge of project design and implementation deliver more pro-poor value chain projects. The guidelines pay particular attention to strengthened inclusivity, targeting, governance and capacity for the development of inclusive pro-poor value chains.
21. Of the four recommendations that Management fully agreed with, three did not have specific actions. This included: adopting a programmatic approach, strengthening partnerships for value chain development, promoting outreach to poor and very poor groups, and enhancing gender equality. These are all areas where follow-up will remain ongoing, as these aspects need to be embedded in individual country strategies and project designs. In this context, the follow-up in IFAD's Management response remains relevant. The fourth agreed recommendation was to enhance the capacity of both IFAD and project staff on value chain development. Management had proposed the IFAD operations academy as an entry point for IFAD staff capacity-building. However, with the COVID-19 pandemic, IFAD has not been able to hold the operations academy sessions as planned in 2020, and plans to hold virtual sessions. At the project level, IFAD is working on sensitizing government counterparts during design and implementation on the need for value chain development expertise. Again, this level of follow-up is better suited to the individual value chain development project level.
22. **Follow-up on recommendations from the 2019 Annual Report on Results and Impact of IFAD Operations (ARRI) and IOE comments on the 2019 Report on IFAD's Development Effectiveness (RIDE).** Last year, the ARRI addressed five overall recommendations to Management. Of these recommendations, Management fully agreed with four and partially agreed with one. None of the recommendations contained any additional specific actions

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<sup>2</sup> The PRISMA only follows up on recommendations agreed to by Management in the management response.

beyond the areas where Management had already taken action and initiated reforms. The status of follow-up against those actions can be found in annex V.

### III. Internalizing learning

#### A. Action areas: identifying and addressing recurring themes

23. Based on the thematic tagging and analysis of portfolio-level recommendations from evaluations included in the 2020 PRISMA, the following themes have emerged.

Table 4

**2020 PRISMA: portfolio-level recommendations classified under broad thematic blocks<sup>3</sup>**

<i>Thematic area</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Ongoing</i>	<i>Full follow-up</i>
Targeting and gender	8	14	2	6
Technical areas (natural resource management, private sector, rural finance, value chains etc.)	19	34	7	12
Project management (monitoring and evaluation [M&E], etc.)	9	16	2	7
Non-lending activities (partnerships, policy engagement, knowledge management)	8	14	5	3
Cross-cutting (grants, design, sustainability, COSOPs, etc.)	11	20	3	8
Corporate (decentralization, human resources)	1	2		
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>100</b>		

24. Overall, as seen in the table above across all thematic areas, strong follow-up has been undertaken by Management, with more recommendations fully followed up on than ongoing. Nonetheless, as mentioned earlier, for areas such as non-lending activities where recommendations require regular and ongoing follow-up, it is harder to reach a status of fully followed up.
25. As can be seen in the table above, the majority of portfolio-level recommendations fall under technical areas, which are generally relevant to the specific technical aspects of a country programme or project (e.g. continuing to support rural finance in a certain country, or engaging more with the private sector as suggested in the CSPE for Sri Lanka). Therefore, the follow-up actions for such recommendations need to be project or country specific. Nonetheless, the decentralized structure also includes technical staff mapped to hubs who are able to provide closer technical support in these areas.
26. Follow-up to portfolio-level evaluations can best be tracked through newly designed projects and country strategies where recommendations have been taken into account. Management's progress on the thematic blocks is outlined below. Management looks forward to IOE's new product mix, with more cross cutting, cluster and thematic evaluations, which will allow greater space for cross fertilization of lessons.
27. **Targeting.** As part of an IFAD11 commitment, Management revised the targeting guidelines. Furthermore, the gender and youth action plans were developed to provide teams with guidance on how to embed these aspects in COSOPs and projects. At the portfolio level, 14 per cent of the recommendations based on evaluations are related to strengthening both geographical and poverty targeting. Furthermore, evaluations also call for a stronger focus on gender and youth. Based on the assessments of new projects at design undertaken by the quality at entry reviews, 93 per cent of new projects in 2019 were rated moderately satisfactory or better on targeting, 94 per cent on gender and 86 per cent on youth. Supervision

<sup>3</sup> Disaggregated data by thematic areas can be found in annex III, table 1 and 2.

ratings assessing targeting in the ongoing portfolio show that 91 per cent are currently moderately satisfactory or above.

28. **Non-lending activities.** All CSPEs included recommendations to strengthen the synergies between lending and non-lending activities at the country programme level. Non-lending activities continue to be a recurrent theme in the ARRI as an area that needs strengthening. Management believes that the hub structure with decentralized technical staff – together with streamlined portfolios containing fewer and larger projects – will allow the country team more time to focus on non-lending activities, and thus further improve performance in this area. Moreover, it should be kept in mind that as non-lending activities are hard to measure and quantify, not all their results and impact can be fully captured – although Management is making greater standalone resources available for policy engagement. In a follow-up evaluation on decentralization in the future Management encourages IOE to focus on the performance of non-lending activities at the country level.
29. **Project management.** Implementation capacities of governments continue to be a constraining factor for good project performance. IOE evaluations and Management's self-evaluations point to the need for strengthened capacities in PMUs, as noted in the 2020 ARRI. Management is making efforts to ensure merit-based contracts are used in PMUs, and has developed a number of initiatives at the corporate level to enhance capacities in financial management, procurement and M&E. Nonetheless, capacity gaps and constraints remain. While project designs are increasingly taking into consideration the institutional context and implementation capacities (as observed in the quality at entry reviews of projects designed in 2018 and 2019), greater efforts are needed to systematize work in this area. Management recently conducted a study on M&E at the project level to better understand the constraints and help develop an action plan to address persistently weaker areas.
30. **Project design.** A number of recommendations highlight the need for better quality project design. It is important to note that most of the projects included in the 2020 PRISMA were designed before 2009. Since then Management has made efforts to strengthen quality at entry. The quality at entry reviews note that the overall quality at entry for recent designs (2019) were the highest on average since 2013, with 93 per cent of projects rated 4+ at entry. At the same time, as noted in the 2019 ARRI, a strong project design alone is not sufficient and should be used as a living blueprint, to be adjusted proactively during implementation. Since the approval of the restructuring policy in 2018, teams have been actively using this tool to adjust project implementation.

#### **IV. Conclusions**

31. Management appreciates the important accountability and learning role that independent evaluation plays in strengthening IFAD's institutional effectiveness and efficiency. In an effort to enhance the learning dimension of evaluations (as recommended in the peer review), Management believes that the utility of recommendations made by IOE could be enhanced by making them more action oriented, and in that context the PRISMA itself could evolve.
32. First, in an effort to enhance the evaluation architecture, Management is conducting a review of self-evaluation products. In this context, Management will also revisit the PRISMA to make it a more strategic tool. As the PRISMA relies on the evaluations included in the report, Management believes that the updated evaluation product mix will help in this regard. Going forward, Management believes that the PRISMA should cover evaluations that are corporate, thematic or strategic in nature, rather than individual portfolio-level evaluations such as CSPEs, PPEs and IEs. Given the specific nature of the recommendations that emerge from such individual evaluations, they have limited continued relevance to the design of new country strategies or projects.

33. Second, Management would like to highlight that not all recommendations made by IOE are action-oriented. Management believes that only action-oriented recommendations should be included as recommendations. In this context, Management believes that as part of the revision of the IOE product mix and the Evaluation Manual, there will be scope to revisit the format of recommendations, including the potential inclusion of a template as suggested previously. This will facilitate follow-up and also identify areas where further resourcing may be needed to implement recommendations.
34. Third, in many IOE recommendations there is a sense of “d  j   vu” and repetition,<sup>4</sup> for two reasons. First, Management’s follow-up actions on certain themes may not be adequately reflected upon prior to the formulation of the recommendations. Second, given that these evaluations are conducted on projects that were designed, implemented and completed within a similar period, the issues may be recurrent during that period but not necessarily reflective of the current portfolio. It would be helpful if in the formulation of recommendations IOE could better indicate whether follow-up has been sufficient, or whether there are remaining gaps to be addressed.
35. Finally, Management believes IOE could play a role in facilitating tracking for follow-up. Management proposes to work with IOE by conducting a mapping of action-oriented recommendations made in corporate/thematic/strategic evaluations in recent years against Management’s follow-up to date. This would help identify gaps and areas where further actions may be needed.

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<sup>4</sup> For example, Kenya impact assessment and the CLE on IFAD’s engagement in pro-poor value chain development contain similar recommendations.

## Methodology

### A. Extraction of recommendations

1. The President's Report on the Implementation Status of Evaluation Recommendations and Management Actions (PRISMA) tracks Management's follow-up to recommendations made in the following independent evaluation products:
  - For corporate-level evaluations (CLEs), evaluation synthesis reports (ESRs), impact evaluations (IEs) and project performance evaluations (PPEs), commitments are made in IFAD Management's responses to those evaluation reports;
  - For country strategy and programme evaluations (CSPEs), the agreements at completion point signed by IFAD and government representatives are used to track follow-up actions that signatories have agreed to implement; and
  - The current PRISMA also follows up on recommendations from the 2019 Annual Report on Results and Impact of IFAD Operations<sup>5</sup> and IOE's comments on the Report on IFAD's Development Effectiveness for 2019.<sup>6</sup>

### B. Classification of recommendations

2. In order to facilitate the analysis, and in line with the practice in previous years, this report classifies the recommendations according to the following criteria:
3. **Evaluation level.** This refers to the entity which is targeted by the recommendation and is primarily responsible for implementation. The levels are:
  - **Corporate level;** and
  - **Country level** (including IFAD, government authorities or the project).
4. **Nature.** This categorizes the recommendation as per the revised IFAD Evaluation Policy:
  - **Operational,** if the recommendation proposes a specific action;
  - **Strategic,** if it suggests an approach or course of action; and
  - **Policy,** if it is related to the principles guiding IFAD.
5. **Theme.** Recommendations are categorized under broad thematic blocks comprising 32 sub-themes. The sub-themes are listed in annex III.

### C. Process

6. Once the country teams (and cross-departmental resource people in the case of CLEs and ESRs) communicate the latest status, the degree of compliance is assessed using the following criteria:
  - **Full follow-up:** recommendations fully incorporated into the new phase/design of activities, operations or programmes and the relevant policies or guidelines;
  - **Ongoing:** actions initiated in the direction recommended;
  - **Partial:** recommendations followed up partially, with actions consistent with the rationale of the recommendation;
  - **Not yet due:** recommendations that will be incorporated into projects, country programmes or country strategic opportunities programmes or policies yet to be designed and completed;

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<sup>5</sup> See EB 2019/127/R.14/Rev.1.

<sup>6</sup> See EB 2019/127/R.15/Add.1.

- **Not applicable:** recommendations that have not been complied with because of changing circumstances in country development processes or IFAD corporate governance contexts, or for other reasons;
- **Pending:** recommendations that could not be followed up; and
- **Not agreed upon:** recommendations that were not agreed to by Management or the respective country team or government.



## Evaluation coverage of the 2020 PRISMA

Table 1  
Evaluations for first-round follow-up included in the 2020 PRISMA

	<i>CLE</i>	<i>CSPE</i>	<i>ESR</i>	<i>IE</i>	<i>PPE</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>Portfolio</b>	-	<b>22</b>	-	<b>4</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>Asia and the Pacific (APR)</b>	-	<b>6</b>	-	-	<b>7</b>	<b>13</b>
Nepal – Western Uplands Poverty Alleviation Project	-	-	-	-	3	3
Sri Lanka	-	6	-	-	-	6
Sri Lanka – Smallholder Plantations Entrepreneurship Development Programme	-	-	-	-	4	4
<b>East and Southern Africa (ESA)</b>	-	<b>4</b>	-	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>16</b>
Eswatini – Rural Finance and Enterprise Development Programme	-	-	-	-	4	4
Kenya	-	4	-	-	-	4
Kenya – Smallholder Horticulture Marketing Programme	-	-	-	4	-	4
Rwanda – Kirehe Community-based Watershed Management Project	-	-	-	-	4	4
<b>Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>
Belize – Rural Finance Programme	-	-	-	-	4	4
Mexico – Community-based Forestry Development Project in Southern States	-	-	-	-	4	4
<b>Near East, North Africa and Europe (NEN)</b>	-	<b>7</b>	-	-	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>
Georgia	-	3	-	-	-	3
The Republic of Moldova – Rural Financial Services and Agribusiness Development Project	-	-	-	-	3	3
Tunisia	-	4	-	-	-	4
<b>West and Central Africa (WCA)</b>	-	<b>5</b>	-	-	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>
Burkina Faso	-	5	-	-	-	5
Côte d'Ivoire – Agricultural Rehabilitation and Poverty Reduction Project	-	-	-	-	4	4
<b>Corporate</b>	<b>6</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>6</b>
CLE on IFAD's engagement in pro-poor value chains	6	-	-	-	-	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>22</b>	-	<b>4</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>62</b>

Table 2  
Evaluations for historical follow-up included in the 2020 PRISMA

	<i>CLE</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>Corporate</b>	-	<b>5</b>
CLE on IFAD's decentralization experience	5	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	-

## Evaluation recommendations, by sub-theme

Table 1  
Portfolio-level evaluation recommendations in the 2020 PRISMA, classified by sub-theme

<i>Block</i>	<i>Sub-theme</i>	<i>CSPE</i>	<i>IE</i>	<i>PPE</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Targeting and gender	Targeting	4	1	2	-	-
	Gender	-	-	-	-	-
	Youth	-	-	-	-	-
	Beneficiaries	-	-	1	8	14
Technical areas	Private sector	2	-	2	-	-
	Markets and value chains	1	1	3	-	-
	Natural resource management	-	-	1	-	-
	Analysis, studies and research	-	-	-	-	-
	Government	-	-	1	-	-
	Rural finance	2	-	3	-	-
	Infrastructure	-	1	-	-	-
	Nutrition	-	-	-	-	-
	Climate change adaptation	1	-	1	-	-
	Land tenure	-	-	-	19	34
Project management	Project management and administration	1	-	4	-	-
	Results measurement, monitoring and evaluation	1	-	-	-	-
	Training and capacity-building	-	1	2	9	16
Non-lending activities	Partnerships	2	-	-	-	-
	Policy engagement	1	-	1	-	-
	Knowledge management	1	-	2	-	-
	Other non-lending activities	1	-	-	8	14
Cross-cutting	Sustainability	1	-	1	-	-
	Fragility and conflict	-	-	-	-	-
	Project design and formulation	1	-	5	-	-
	Innovation	-	-	1	-	-
	Grants	1	-	-	-	-
	Replication and scaling up	1	-	-	-	-
	COSOPs	-	-	-	-	-
	Strategy	-	-	-	-	-
	Organizations, groups, institutions and collective approaches	-	-	-	-	-
Supervision	-	-	-	11	20	
Corporate	Restructuring	-	-	-	-	-
	Decentralization	1	-	-	1	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>22</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2  
Portfolio-level evaluation recommendations in the 2020 PRISMA, classified by regional distribution

<i>Block</i>	<i>Sub-theme</i>	<i>APR</i>	<i>ESA</i>	<i>LAC</i>	<i>NEN</i>	<i>WCA</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Targeting and gender	Targeting	1	2	-	3	1	-	-
	Gender	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Youth	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Beneficiaries	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
							8	14
Technical areas	Private sector	2	1	1	-	-	-	-
	Markets and value chains	-	2	1	1	1	-	-
	Natural resource management	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Climate change adaptation	-	-	1	-	1	-	-
	Government	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
	Analysis, studies and research	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Rural finance	1	1	1	2	-	-	-
	Nutrition	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Land tenure	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Infrastructure	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
							19	34
Project management	Project management and administration	1	1	1	1	1	-	-
	Results measurement, monitoring and evaluation	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
	Training and capacity-building	-	2	-	-	1	-	-
							9	16
Non-lending activities	Partnerships	-	-	-	2	-	-	-
	Policy engagement	1	-	-	-	1	-	-
	Knowledge management	-	1	1	-	1	-	-
	Other non-lending activities	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
							8	14
Cross-cutting	Sustainability	1	-	1	-	-	-	-
	Fragility and conflict	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Project design and formulation	2	3	1	-	-	-	-
	Innovation	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
	Grants	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Replication and scaling up	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
	COSOPs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Organizations, groups, institutions and collective approaches	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Strategy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Supervision	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
							11	20
Corporate	Restructuring	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Decentralization	-	-	-	1	-	1	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>13</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>100</b>

## List of project-level evaluations by date of effectiveness, loan closing date, project completion report date and evaluation date

<i>Name of project</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Date of effectiveness</i>	<i>Loan closing date</i>	<i>Project completion report date</i>	<i>Evaluation date</i>
Western Uplands Poverty Alleviation Project	Nepal	Jan-03	Mar-17	Mar-17	Oct-19
Smallholder Plantations Entrepreneurship Development Programme	Sri Lanka	Nov-07	Jun-17	Apr-17	Feb-19
Rural Finance and Enterprise Development Programme	Eswatini	Sep-10	Mar-17	Mar-17	Apr-19
Kirehe Community-based Watershed Management Project	Rwanda	Apr-09	Dec-16	Nov-16	May-19
Rural Finance Programme	Belize	Sep-09	Mar-17	Mar-17	Jul-19
Community-based Forestry Development Project in Southern States	Mexico	Mar-11	Sep-16	Sep-16	Jan-19
Rural Financial Services and Agribusiness Development Project	The Republic of Moldova	Jul-11	Mar-17	Mar-17	Jun-19
Agricultural Rehabilitation and Poverty Reduction Project	Côte d'Ivoire	Dec-09	Mar-17	Apr-17	Oct-19
<b>Average</b>		<b>Jul-09</b>	<b>May-17</b>	<b>May-17</b>	<b>Jun-19</b>

## Follow-up to recommendations from the 2019 ARRI and IOE comments on the RIDE

1. The 2019 ARRI made five recommendations to Management, of which Management agreed with four and partially agreed with one. Management's follow-up actions on the 2019 ARRI recommendations are outlined below.

(i) **Dedicate more resources to country programme delivery – specifically project design, supervision and implementation – to achieve the improved quality needed for a "better" IFAD.**

Management partially agreed with this recommendation as Management's own analysis did not show declining trends in supervision budgets. Nonetheless, in essence Management agrees that sufficient budget resources should be allocated to country programme delivery. Quality Assurance Group (QAG) ratings show that quality of design remains high with the highest average ratings since 2013. During implementation, Management is moving to a continuous supervision model by leveraging on the proximity to partners through IFAD's hub model. COVID-19 is likely to have an impact on the physical implementation support and supervision that the Fund can carry out in 2020. However, to the extent possible IFAD is conducting design, supervision and implementation support missions remotely. Ensuring quality in delivery remains at the heart of IFAD's reform agenda.

(ii) **Design IFAD programmes and projects according to country capacities based on sound institutional analysis to ensure the most appropriate implementation arrangements for country delivery.**

The QAG reviews conducted on both COSOPs and projects in 2019 show that there has been an improvement in the overall quality at entry and in the institutional analysis carried out. For projects specifically, the QAG reviews ask two key questions: (i) to what extent have efforts been made to align the proposed project, including activities, with the country context; and (ii) to what extent can the design be implemented satisfactorily given the institutional capacities of the lead agency and intended implementing agencies. Among the projects designed and reviewed by QAG in 2018 and 2019, 95 per cent were rated 4+ and 81 per cent were rated over 4 on the first question; 94 per cent were rated 4+ and 44 per cent were rated over 4 on the second question. Given the centrality of this indicator, Management notes that more attention needs to be paid to ensuring that project design is realistic considering the institutional capacities of the implementing agencies, and will focus on increasing performance of projects to satisfactory from moderately satisfactory ratings.

(iii) **Develop government capacities to design and implement country programmes and projects in collaboration with other partners.**

Using grant resources, Management has invested in developing a suite of capacity-building initiatives to enhance country level capacities in M&E, project procurement, financial management and more recently results-based management. IFAD has also recently become a partner in the Global Evaluation Initiative spearheaded by the World Bank and United Nations Development Programme, which includes most of the multilateral, bilateral and United Nations agencies and is working to develop a common approach to enhancing country capacities in M&E. At the same time, it is important to recognize that capacity-building is not a silver bullet and needs to be accompanied by other initiatives to enhance performance. Furthermore, there is an inherent risk of staff turnover following capacity-building efforts. To the extent possible, these are being mitigated by means of the Faster Implementation of Project Start-up and other instruments to allow for staff

retention and continuity between projects. Finally, Management would like to seek IOE advice on what further actions it can take to enhance country level capacities beyond the initiatives already under way.

(iv) **Determine the need to adjust project designs earlier on in order to ensure their continued relevance to the country context.**

Since the approval of the restructuring policy, country teams have been using it actively to restructure projects. IFAD's proactivity index has improved, showing that projects are changing status and improving performance. This is being documented since the restructuring policy was put into place. As noted in the 2020 RIDE, an index measuring proactivity has increased from 50 per cent to nearly 77 per cent year-on-year, the highest ever (a direct result of incentives provided by the restructuring policy approved by the Executive Board in 2018), evidencing the fact that teams are proactively taking action to address and adjust issues arising during implementation.

(v) **A more comprehensive and integrated system is required to mitigate risks in IFAD projects and programmes.**

IFAD has strengthened its enterprise risk management and has adopted a structured approach to managing country programme delivery risk. This includes a revised risk taxonomy, a new risk rating scale and an assessment of risk appetites. The integrated project risk matrix is a part of country programme and project design, and is used to assess risks prior to and monitor them during implementation. The integrated project risk matrix is being rolled out across the portfolio in all regions, and an associated risk dashboard has also been set up.

2. **Management's follow-up to IOE's comments on the 2019 RIDE.** Overall, IOE appreciated Management's candidness and forward-looking approach in the 2019 RIDE and concluded that overall the 2019 RIDE succinctly presents an IFAD undergoing transformational change. IOE's specific comments on last year's RIDE related to the results presented in the report against the Results Management Framework targets, including good performance on disbursement, project completion report (PCR) results, mainstreaming results and project delivery. IOE had a few structural comments that merit follow-up.
3. Management would like to highlight that the RIDE is meant to provide a holistic and corporate analysis of IFAD's results and performance in line with the Results Management Framework (RMF). While it does provide an overview of the drivers of performance at the corporate level, due to word limit constraints it does not go into a detailed analysis on specific themes and underlying factors.
4. IOE commented on Management's sample of PCRs used and the shift from using completion date to closing date. This was done for all RIDEs during the IFAD10 period as the official due date for PCRs where ratings are derived from is the closing date and not the completion date. Therefore, in order to obtain a complete sample of projects that are due to report on in any given year, the project closing date is more accurate and relevant. Management will work with IOE to align the reporting period in the future; however, it is important to note that the ARRI and the RIDE are not comparable in any case due to the lag in evaluations. The 2019 ARRI includes 2015-2017 projects completed whereas the 2019 RIDE includes 2016-2018 projects closed.
5. IOE noted that the RIDE provided limited discussion on institutional performance and more on operational performance. It must be kept in mind that, given the word limit of 5500 words, the RIDE cannot provide a detailed discussion of all topics. At the same time, it is also important to recognize that for RMF level 5 – institutional efficiency – all targets have been met with the exception of replenishment targets, staff engagement at 1 per cent below target and women in P5 positions at 4 per cent below target. The RIDE is not the most relevant

document for a detailed discussion of resource mobilization, as dedicated reporting is done for each replenishment cycle separately in addition to regular updates provided to the Executive Board.