

Document: EC 2020/111/W.P.5
Agenda: 7
Date: 24 September 2020
Distribution: Public
Original: English

E

Note on Revised Evaluation Products of the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD

Note to Evaluation Committee members

Focal points:

Technical questions:

Fabrizio Felloni
Interim Officer in Charge
Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD
Tel.: +39 06 5459 2361
e-mail: f.felloni@ifad.org

Hansdeep Khaira
Evaluation Officer
Tel.: +39 06 5459 2261
e-mail: h.khaira@ifad.org

Dispatch of documentation:

Deirdre Mc Grenra
Chief
Institutional Governance and
Member Relations
Tel.: +39 06 5459 2374
e-mail: gb@ifad.org

Evaluation Committee — 111th Session
Rome, 22 October 2020

For: Review

Contents

Acknowledgements	ii
I. Background and key principles	1
II. IOE products	3
III. Proposed changes to the products	4
IV. Improving the evaluation process to promote learning and closer collaboration with stakeholders	8
V. Consultative evaluation planning	10

Appendices

Appendix I: IOE Response to the External Peer Review of IFAD's Evaluation Function, concerning product range	1
Appendix II: Evaluation product range, benchmarking with peers	3
Appendix III: Summary of key features of each product	4
Appendix IV: Indicative Framework for Evaluation Prioritization	10

Acknowledgements

This note was prepared under the leadership of Fabrizio Felloni, Interim Officer-in-Charge, Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD (IOE), who was supported by Hansdeep Khaira, IOE Evaluation Officer, and Suppiramaniam Nanthikesan, IOE Lead Evaluation Officer. The contribution of external senior consultant Dorte Kabell to its preparation is gratefully acknowledged. All other IOE staff also provided valuable feedback. Norah de Falco and Sarah Pasetto, members of the Evaluation Communications Team, provided assistance with the graphics, and administrative support was provided by Manuela Gallitto, IOE Evaluation Assistant.

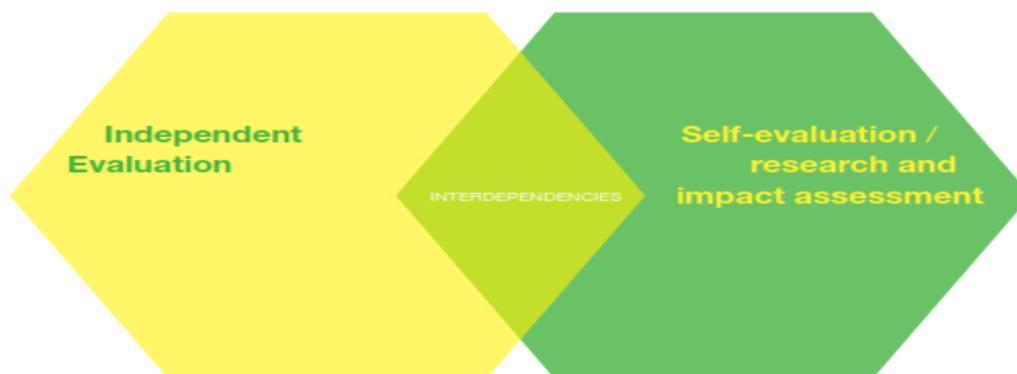
This note also benefited from the feedback and advice of numerous peers. Appreciation is extended to IFAD Management and staff who provided valuable insights throughout the process. IOE presented an earlier proposal at an informal seminar held with the IFAD Executive Board in May 2020, and the comments of members concerning that proposal were duly taken into account.

I. Background and key principles

1. The revision of evaluation products is one of the key deliverables of the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD (IOE) under the action plan agreed upon with the Evaluation Committee in October 2019 for the implementation of the main actions and recommendations of the external peer review (EPR) of IFAD's evaluation function.
2. Following substantive consultations with Management and engagement with the working group on the revision of the IFAD Evaluation Policy, IOE gave a presentation on the revision of its products at an informal seminar held with the Executive Board in May 2020.
3. The EPR conducted in 2019 prompted IOE and Management to explore ways of ensuring that IFAD's self- and independent evaluation products are of optimal effectiveness in addressing the changing context and priorities of rural development across the globe and in guiding IFAD's response to these changes. It also suggested that a revision was called for. The EPR did not prescribe the exact form and shape that IFAD's evaluation products should take, and it left considerable latitude for further reflection, piloting and consultation based on broad recommendations. Appendices I and III of this document explain how IOE has responded to the EPR recommendations by, inter alia, piloting new products and revising and adjusting existing products to meet the new needs of the Fund.
4. The revisions proposed in this note are consistent with the EPR recommendations. They also reflect IOE's internal review of its experiences with the present evaluation products, broad consultations with IFAD Management, interactions with the Evaluation Committee and with the Executive Board and an examination of their evolving learning needs. While IOE was preparing this note, IFAD Management prepared a review of its self-evaluation products that will be presented to the Evaluation Committee at its 111th session in October 2020. IOE and Management have reviewed each other's documents.
5. This note also takes into account the ongoing revision of the IFAD Evaluation Policy, the evolving evaluation practices of international financial institutions (IFIs) and the United Nations system, and the recent revision of evaluation criteria conducted by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD/DAC).
6. In addition to proposals that touch upon specific IOE products, this note offers a proposal on the way forward for IFAD Management and IOE to work together to improve the way that the institution-wide evaluation system functions in order to boost IFAD's development impact.
7. A number of core principles have guided the development and piloting of the revised and new products. These are:
 - **Strategic relevance:** Strategic relevance is to be achieved through the use of new higher-level products that will more fully capture aspects of IFAD's work not previously covered to a sufficient extent.
 - **Coverage:** Coverage will be broadened to capture a wider spectrum of issues of importance for the Fund.
 - **Timeliness:** New "on-demand" products will be planned and piloted in order to respond to emerging needs. Steps will also be taken to strengthen current evaluation practices relating to the timely presentation of relevant evidence regarding existing programming arrangements for IFAD operations. For example, project-level evaluations will continue to assess the implementation arrangements for operations and to gauge how well they accommodate the required design changes. Country- and higher-level evaluations will place greater emphasis on assessing the performance of ongoing operations.

- **Complementarity:** Steps will be taken to ensure product complementarity.
 - **Learning:** Processes and new products will be designed to promote learning.
 - **Value for money and cost effectiveness:** Selection, planning, implementation and feedback loop processes will reflect value-for-money principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness in upholding the values espoused by the organization.
8. Taken together, self- and independent evaluation products should address the accountability and learning needs of the Fund at the project, country and corporate levels and should therefore evolve in tandem. Further to this note and discussions with the Evaluation Committee, as recommended by the EPR, IOE will prepare a multi-year evaluation strategy in 2021 and lead the preparation of a revised version of the Evaluation Manual, in consultation with Management, to be presented to the Evaluation Committee in 2022.
 9. The composition and design of IOE products address three distinct priorities: (i) providing the necessary evidence for accountability at the project, country and corporate levels; (ii) contributing to learning through the provision of sufficient knowledge to IFAD Management and relevant stakeholders to strengthen organizational and development effectiveness; and (iii) strengthening the credibility and quality of self- and independent evaluation products while promoting synergies across all processes and products.
 10. The IOE products will support the revised evaluation policy in promoting a results-oriented culture across IFAD and evidence-based planning and management to encourage a focus on development effectiveness, learning and continuous quality improvement.¹ IFAD's evaluation architecture is designed to meet these objectives (figure 1).

Figure 1
IFAD's evaluation architecture



11. Two elements are key in ensuring that IFAD's evaluation architecture functions properly: (i) the organizational and functional independence of IOE as stipulated by the Evaluation Policy; and (ii) robust collaboration between IOE and all key IFAD stakeholders, especially in terms of identifying and meeting evaluative demands, ensuring quality of evidence and internalizing learning.
12. Independence is essential to ensure the collection of credible, impartial evidence that is produced in a transparent manner in accordance with international norms and standards of evaluation and with the principles set out in IFAD's Evaluation Policy. A key aspect of independence is the ability to determine what to evaluate, when to evaluate it and how to evaluate it. This latter point, the "how to evaluate", relates specifically to the evaluation products concerned, as each product entails the use of particular methods, approaches and techniques to meet particular

¹ Draft dated 3 June 2020.

evaluative needs. Taken together, these evaluation products provide a flexible range of options that enable IOE to fully respond to the diverse evaluation demands identified in the course of the planning process. IOE will furthermore be guided by the Evaluation Committee and the Executive Board and will closely consult with Management to ensure that evaluations meet the needs of the Fund and are conducted in a timely manner. The Executive Board will retain the final decision-making authority as to the scope and content of the evaluation plan.

13. At the same time, collaboration is key to ensuring the relevance, timeliness, quality and utility of evaluative evidence. Enhanced collaboration between IOE and Management is pivotal for the credibility and utility of both self- and independent evaluations. Such collaboration is embodied in the processes for preparing evaluation plans and strategies, developing evaluation designs and products, and conducting evaluations and ensuring appropriate follow-up and internalization of lessons learned. These processes will be outlined in the revised version of the Evaluation Manual.

II. IOE products

14. The EPR recognized that "the range and number of individual products delivered by IOE is impressive and comparable to that of evaluation units in much larger organizations". Nonetheless, given the dynamic context in which IFAD operates, IOE needs to ensure that it can provide the Fund with a judicious mix of evidence at the project, country, regional, thematic and corporate levels on a continuing basis.
15. The menu of existing IOE evaluation products includes:
 - At the project level, project completion report validations (PCRVs), project performance evaluations (PPEs) and impact evaluations
 - At the country level, country strategy and programme evaluations (CSPEs)
 - At the corporate level, corporate-level evaluations (CLEs), evaluation synthesis reports (ESRs) and Annual Reports on Results and Impact of IFAD Operations (ARRIs)
16. This note outlines the steps taken to rethink the range of IOE evaluation products with a view to making them more flexible and responsive to the changing development context and organizational needs, including with respect to new instruments or new areas in which IFAD will venture in the future (not least of which is engagement with the private sector). This flexibility will also be mirrored in the revised version of the Evaluation Manual, which will be in electronic form and will be a living document so that products, methodologies and processes can be readily revised to respond to the above situations.
17. As the first step in this reconceptualization process, IOE reviewed the evaluation products of peer evaluation offices in a number of IFIs² to map related peer practices and identify areas of common reflection and improvement. It became apparent that many IFIs have very similar evaluation products. (A summary table is provided in Appendix II.) For instance, 100 per cent validation by independent evaluation offices of the equivalent of IFAD's project completion reports (PCRs) is common practice, and the product range generally comprises corporate, sector and thematic evaluations, cluster evaluations (sector, theme or country clusters), country-level evaluations and impact evaluations, as well as various types of syntheses.
18. These IFIs also publish an annual evaluation review of corporate performance that is similar to the ARRI. These reviews, which vary in terms of their formats and

² The World Bank Group, Asian Development Bank, African Development Bank and Inter-American Development Bank.

depth, are sometimes complemented by an annual report on evaluation activities and key lessons.

19. There is a general trend among peer organizations towards having a strengthened focus on higher-level, strategic evaluations, although it is recognized that these exercises are founded upon the project-level evaluations that underpin all evaluation efforts.
20. In a few IFIs (e.g. the Inter-American Development Bank [IDB] and the Asian Development Bank [ADB]), impact evaluations (IEs) are conducted by the independent evaluation function for both learning and accountability purposes. In addition, specialized research units also conduct impact assessments.³

III. Proposed changes to the products

21. In revising its product range, IOE is retaining the strengths of its current products that were identified by the EPR and confirmed by comprehensive IFAD-wide consultations. It is also introducing, on a pilot basis, new products in order to respond to the evolving demands for evidence and knowledge identified through its own assessment and consultations with Management, the Executive Board and the Evaluation Committee.
22. IOE, with its revised product range, aims to independently:
 - (i) Assess the performance and development results of IFAD-funded operations on a corporate-wide basis;
 - (ii) Identify the factors determining performance at the project and country levels and generate lessons for improved project and programme designs;
 - (iii) Aggregate and analyse information on performance and results in order to identify trends and issues at all levels;
 - (iv) Drive policy and corporate effectiveness and strategic direction through a systematic analysis of evidence and lessons, including from peers;
 - (v) Inform and facilitate evidence-based decisions on operations and on issues relating to corporate effectiveness and processes of high priority and strategic relevance for the organization.

A. Introducing new products

23. While IOE's products have thus far met the needs of the organization, it has become clear that there are some gaps in coverage and that existing products could generate more value. As a first step, three new products are proposed to address these gaps: thematic evaluations, subregional evaluations and project cluster evaluations. These new products also fit in well with the new decentralized structure of IFAD, in particular in the case of subregional evaluations. A preliminary detailed description is provided in Appendix III.
24. **An increased number of products means more flexibility, not an increased number of evaluations.** It is important to note that, while the range of products is broadening, the aim is not to conduct more evaluations per year. Rather, the aim is to provide a wider selection of evaluation products so that the best fit for the specific organizational need is made available. IOE is aware of the importance of using resources in a judicious manner.
25. **Thematic evaluations (TEs).** TEs will provide evidence on the performance and results of IFAD-funded operations in a thematic or sectoral area (e.g. climate adaptation, natural resource management, gender equality, irrigation). Unlike existing evaluation syntheses, they will be based mainly on primary evidence

³ The World Bank's Development Impact Evaluation (DIME) group is one example: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/research/dime/overview>.

(country field studies). By analysing results achieved on the ground and comparing the approaches of other actors, TEs will provide learning opportunities for managers that will enable them to identify effective development solutions in the selected thematic area. TEs are also expected to inform the corporate strategy and policies relating to the selected themes.

26. Thematic areas have previously been addressed through CLEs, but to provide more choices for the Fund and to more effectively address specific needs, IOE will now distinguish between two types of evaluations at the corporate level: CLEs will focus primarily on organizational effectiveness (policies, strategies, organizational structure, resources), i.e. “how the Fund works”, while TEs will focus primarily on IFAD’s development effectiveness, i.e. “what the Fund does and with what results”. Further details on the methodological and process-related differences between these two products will be provided in the revised version of the Evaluation Manual.
27. **Subregional evaluations (SREs).** This new product is being proposed on a pilot basis in response to emerging demands following from IFAD's more decentralized business model based on hubs, subregional offices and country clusters. SREs can provide a clear subregional perspective and assessment of the commonality of development challenges, programmatic initiatives and opportunities that cannot be observed by simply looking at individual countries (e.g. via CSPEs).
28. SREs will provide an assessment of the strategy, common intervention approaches supported by IFAD and the IFAD organizational set-up (e.g. hubs and coordination between Country Offices) in a group of countries that share salient characteristics. Given that many development phenomena are not restricted to individual countries, this product will open up a learning opportunity. SREs are not a substitute for CSPEs but will allow IOE to build knowledge around countries with a smaller portfolio that are not likely to be the object of a CSPE.
29. **Project cluster evaluations (PCEs).** The purpose of a PCE is to enhance the learning aspect of existing project-level evaluations through comparative analyses. The clustering of projects that have common features (e.g. region, thematic focus, type of country) is thus a way to enhance the effectiveness of the evaluation process and augment the potential for learning, as findings and insights from multiple projects can then be aggregated and generalized. PCEs can cover a number of countries in the same or different regions. They can also cover ongoing projects so as to provide real-time evaluations. (PPEs cover only completed projects.) As noted in Management’s document on the revision of self-evaluation products, PCEs could help generate learning and knowledge feedback loops in ongoing projects. PCEs will not replace the current stand-alone PPEs, which, since they are conducted after project completion, make a particularly important contribution to the evaluation of the sustainability of an operation’s benefits. The choice of PCEs will be made based on the learning needs of Management and IOE.

B. Revising existing products

30. Existing products are also undergoing modifications based on comprehensive feedback from Fund-wide consultations to ensure their relevance, effectiveness and value for money. In addition to the specific changes in each product outlined below, products will offer more flexibility in the selection of evaluation criteria in order to strengthen relevance and allow for more effective and in-depth evaluations. The details of this will be spelled out in the revised version of the Evaluation Manual. (An outline is provided in Appendix III.)
31. **Project completion report validations (PCRVs).** PCRVs will be maintained, with full coverage of completed projects. This is necessary in order to: (i) obtain a sufficient number of project observations to prepare the ARRI; (ii) provide information for other evaluations (e.g. CSPEs, TEs, CLEs and evaluation syntheses). It is to be noted that, in most other IFIs, it is common practice for the independent evaluation office to validate all project completion reports. However,

with the aim of enhancing efficiency and effectiveness, efforts will be made to reduce drafting and review times for IOE and the Programme Management Department (PMD). A shortened and streamlined format will enhance the usefulness and visibility of PCRVs for evaluators and project managers. The PCRV database will be integrated with the PCR database in the Operational Results Management System (ORMS).

32. **Project performance evaluations (PPEs).** The main proposed changes relate to: (i) expanding the population of projects eligible for evaluation (to include ones closed a few years earlier) in order to provide an opportunity to undertake a more thorough examination of sustainability ex post; and (ii) selecting PPEs based on demand as expressed by PMD and the Strategy and Knowledge Department (SKD), questions and issues stemming from evaluative work and the need for them as a source of evidence for forthcoming CSPEs, CLEs, TEs and ESRs. As in the case of other project-level evaluations, IOE may also review the number and type of criteria to be assessed, taking into consideration the recent revision of criteria completed by OECD/DAC.⁴ Finally, the number of annual PPEs may be reduced to five, on average.
33. **Impact evaluations (IEs).** While IOE will maintain IEs in its product range, it will not necessarily conduct one every year. These evaluations will be conducted where there is a need to collect extensive primary data at the household and community levels in order to inform another strategic-level evaluation (e.g., CSPEs, TEs, CLEs, ESRs) or to test innovative methodologies for evaluating development outcomes and impact as part of IOE's mixed method approach. Thus, IE selection criteria will be tightened up to provide real value added. The value added by an IE includes its focus on the sustainability of an operation and, where feasible, an IE can be conducted a few years after project completion in line with the proposal made by Management in its revision of self-evaluation products. Similarly, Management's proposal that, in IFAD12, Management and IOE work together to set up the background framework and the general approach to conduct impact assessments is welcome.
34. **Country strategy and programme evaluations (CSPEs).** The CSPE format will be streamlined in order to: (i) give more prominence to strategic and thematic issues; and (ii) avoid repetitions and reduce the average length of reports. The timeliness of CSPEs as an input for the preparation of new country strategic opportunities programmes (COSOPs) will be maintained. Further, as part of the revision of self-evaluation products, IOE will work with Management to review the best options for timing in-country workshops on CSPEs in coordination with Management initiatives in the same country (e.g. the launch of an initiative to prepare a new COSOP).
35. **Evaluation synthesis reports (ESRs).** Syntheses are a cost-effective and flexible evaluation product. They are primarily based on a desk review and analysis of evidence from past evaluations conducted at IFAD, combined with a review of other evaluative evidence. More options will be offered under this product to ensure value for money. These options will be tailored to meet organizational needs, and the time and resources invested in them will be commensurate with the specific need to be met. Three options are proposed to meet the following three types of needs: (i) a synthesis note that consolidates findings from evaluations in a concise manner (a brief note to be prepared in a short amount of time as an "on-time/on-demand" product); (ii) a synthesis evaluation, which entails a more extensive analysis that draws on a desk review complemented by interviews, focus group discussions, surveys and, where appropriate and necessary, country visits; and (iii) a systematic review based on a stricter protocol and a meta-analysis of

⁴ The new set of OECD/DAC evaluation criteria includes: relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/dacriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

existing evaluations and studies. The choice of the type of ESR will depend on the nature of the topic, what evaluative evidence is available and the nature of the knowledge demand on the part of IFAD.

36. **Corporate-level evaluations (CLEs).** PMD and IFAD's governing bodies have underscored the critical role played by CLEs in improving IFAD's performance and have endorsed the approach and methodologies used for their preparation. In the past, CLEs covered a broad range of topics. As discussed in the section on TEs (see paragraph 26), however, moving forward, CLEs will focus on organizational and corporate effectiveness (policies, strategies, organizational structure, resources and business processes), while TEs will cover thematic areas and focus on the development effectiveness of IFAD in the thematic area being evaluated.
37. **Annual Reports on Results and Impact of IFAD Operations (ARRIs).** In line with the practices of other IFIs, the ARRI provides an independent assessment of IFAD's development performance based on evidence from independent evaluations of its operations. It reviews IFAD's recent performance based on a 3-year moving average together with a trend analysis covering at least the past 10 years that is also based on a 3-year moving average. By analysing country- and corporate-level evaluations, the ARRI provides evidence from ongoing operations. The analysis of operations on the basis of project-level evaluations provides evidence on recent implementation arrangements and the Fund's flexibility in adapting project designs to changing contexts. In addition to providing an evidence-based assessment of the results achieved by IFAD operations, the ARRI furnishes additional evidence that is critical to an understanding of the Fund's performance.⁵ This allows the Fund to position its contribution not only to Sustainable Development Goals 1 and 2 but also to Goals 5, 9, 10, 13 and 15.⁶
38. The ARRI complements Management's Report on IFAD's Development Effectiveness (RIDE), which reviews the progress made under the Results Management Framework of IFAD and its organizational and development performance on the basis of selected indicators. Although their approaches differ, the RIDE and ARRI appraise similar project cohorts. The complementary roles and focus of the RIDE and ARRI will need to be strengthened in the future.
39. The ARRI will continue to be produced annually. Its contents and format will be revised so that it will: (i) be more concise; (ii) address factors that help to account for implementation performance and results in a clearer manner; and (iii) draw more content from strategic evaluations (CLEs, TEs, CSPEs) than in the past. In 2020, IOE has piloted an ARRI without recommendations, a common practice in other IFIs that emphasizes the learning value of the document. In the future, the ARRI will include a standard section (analysis of evaluation rating trends) and other sections that will change year by year depending on evaluation findings, analyses and corporate learning needs. IOE has consulted with Management on the production of the 2020 ARRI in order to reap the full benefit of the considerable evidence that is made available to IOE by independent evaluations.
40. To strengthen the complementarities and synergies of the ARRI and the RIDE, IOE and Management could work towards harmonizing the two reports to ensure consistency in their findings. This would include aligning certain methods (e.g. reporting time frame, consistent use of moving averages) and sources of performance ratings in keeping with the practices of other IFIs.⁷

⁵ In particular, the ARRI analyses the overall sustainability, efficiency and innovativeness of development results and the extent to which they empower women and strengthen climate adaptation and sound environmental management based on ratings from independent evaluations.

⁶ Sustainable Development Goals: 1 – No poverty; 2 – Zero hunger; 5 – Gender equality; 9 – Innovation, infrastructure and industry; 10 – Reduced inequality; 13 – Climate action; 15 – Life on land.

⁷ As noted, in other IFIs, managers use ratings from independent evaluations (not self-evaluation ratings) when reporting on portfolio performance.

41. Table 1 provides a synoptic overview of the salient characteristics of the proposed new product range (e.g. focus, application of evaluation criteria, frequency of production, presence of recommendations).

Table 1
IFAD's new product range: key dimensions

<i>Product</i>	<i>Focus</i>	<i>Pages</i>	<i>Evaluation criteria</i>	<i>Typical frequency</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>
PCRv	Project	10	Project-level criteria	Annual coverage of all PCRs through PCRvs	No
PPE	Project	25	Project-level criteria	Annual	Yes
CSPE	Country	60	Selective	Five per year	Yes
CLE	Organizational effectiveness	50-60	Selective	One every year and a half, on average	Yes
ESR	Topical, flexible on-demand/real-time review of evaluative evidence	10-60 depending on type	Selective	One or two per year	Optional
IE	Quasi-experimental	40	Selection of project-level criteria	Needs based	Yes
TE	Development effectiveness	60	Selective	Needs based	Yes
PCE	Project/operational	35-40	Selection of project-level criteria	Needs based	Optional
SRE	Strategic/organizational and regional	60	Core and others, as relevant	Needs based	Yes
ARRI	Corporate	35 plus annexes	Not applicable	Annual	Optional

IV. Improving the evaluation process to promote learning and closer collaboration with stakeholders

42. IOE is taking steps to deepen the learning focus of its products and ensure a relevant, cooperative and demand-driven evaluation function and process.
43. IOE will strive to enhance collaboration with key IFAD stakeholders in the following areas: (i) the design of IFAD self- and independent evaluation products; (ii) evaluation planning, the development of multi-year evaluation strategies and annual plans, and improvements in the process for selecting topics and planning evaluations; and (iii) the identification of opportunities to conduct quasi-real-time evaluations. This will be further explored and developed as part of the revision of the Evaluation Manual.
44. While a great deal of joint learning with stakeholders and beneficiaries already takes place as part of the evaluation process (e.g. asking questions, discussing the interpretation of data, considering scenarios), there is still scope for improving collaborative learning with Management by: (i) improving the way in which findings, conclusions and recommendations are discussed with stakeholders; (ii) multiplying and enhancing the content of learning events (including virtual learning events); and (iii) strengthening practices for internalizing and tracking lessons learned.
45. IOE and IFAD Management will jointly explore good practices used by peers based on further consultations through the Evaluation Cooperation Group. Some examples of promising practices employed by peer organizations are presented in box 1.

46. One particular area where IOE may adopt common practices used in other IFIs is in the review and analysis of management responses to evaluations (as in the case of the President's Report on the Implementation Status of Evaluation Recommendations and Management Actions [PRISMA]). Other IFIs publish an annual review of management's implementation of evaluation recommendations. At the World Bank, the annual Report on Results and Performance⁸ published by the Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) contains an analysis of management's acceptance and implementation of evaluation recommendations. Starting in 2020, this is to be complemented by an IEG validation report on management's progress in addressing past IEG recommendations. This is part of a revision of the entire Management Action Record process.⁹ The Independent Evaluation Department (IED) of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) publishes an Annual Evaluation Review which contains a chapter on "ADB responses to IED Recommendations".¹⁰ Two years ago, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) initiated an annual validation of the full IDB Group's recommendation tracking system, and in 2020 it issued the first self-standing report that assesses whether recommendations have been addressed.
47. In its review of self-evaluation products, IFAD Management has proposed making PRISMA more impactful and strategic. This proposal could be discussed jointly moving forward.

Box 1

Innovative practices in improving collaboration

Innovative practices employed by peer organizations include the recent introduction by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) of a joint technical review by evaluators and management that is to be undertaken before recommendations are finalized. It also holds joint learning workshops designed to draw out and discuss lessons in order to ensure full internalization and learning.

The African Development Bank (AfDB) organizes capitalization workshops, together with the relevant operations departments, to discuss the findings of cluster evaluations in order to facilitate the learning and uptake of lessons by colleagues in operational areas.

At the World Bank, interactive workshops are used to solicit early feedback from management counterparts on the approach papers and evaluation recommendations of its Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) and to increase management's ownership of recommendations. In addition, a working group comprising IEG and Bank Group managers is currently identifying options for streamlining the recommendation, management response and follow-up process and making it more effective and for enhancing uptake and learning from IEG evaluations. Proposals are now being considered that would shift to a new approach involving fewer, more strategic recommendations and more effective accountability for their implementation.

Taking the follow-up to the implementation of recommendations a step further, ADB aims to assess the changes that recommendations have led to after their implementation has been completed. In 2018 ADB's Independent Evaluation Department (IED) and management jointly piloted a learning activity dealing with after-action reviews of recommendations and their implementation based on jointly developed and operationalized protocols for monitoring both performance and the results of the actions taken pursuant to recommendations.

48. New approaches proposed by IOE will include more joint learning opportunities to enhance mutual understanding through more face-to-face engagement, technical meetings at the staff level with Management and more face-to-face discussions on the development of terms of reference, concept notes and approach papers. This is intended to strengthen the emphasis on learning and build a stronger mutual

⁸ Results and Performance of the World Bank Group 2018, August 2019.

⁹ Concept Note: Results and Performance of the World Bank Group 2020, January 2020.

¹⁰ 2020 Annual Evaluation Review, Asian Development Bank, March 2020.

understanding of the issues faced by IFAD operations and the corresponding options, choices and trade-offs.

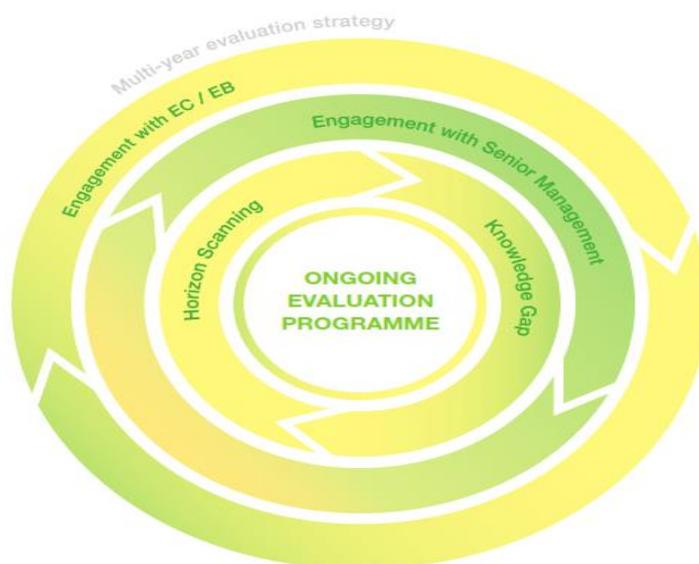
49. IOE will increase its engagement with operational counterparts throughout the evaluation life cycle to enrich its content and usefulness. At the beginning of the evaluation process, this engagement is intended to provide evaluators with informed, context-specific inputs. By its completion, the increased collaboration is expected to have boosted uptake and allowed evaluators to see their lessons applied, providing more insights for future evaluations.
50. To support this reorientation, the use of core learning partnerships or groups will be strengthened, in consultation with Management, to take into account past experience and new emerging needs and to explore how new practices can be introduced at different stages of the evaluation process by building on the roles and strengths of each partner. Specifically for CSPEs, more flexibility in the format of national workshops and in the finalization of the evaluation (including the agreement at completion point) will be considered in order to take into account the country context more fully.

V. Consultative evaluation planning

51. Strong evaluation planning is essential in order for the Fund to meet the objectives of evaluations set out in the Evaluation Policy. In this respect, as recommended by the EPR, IOE will prepare a multi-year evaluation strategy in 2021. The strategy will map out the type and timing of evaluative evidence required for IFAD to manage for development results over a multi-year period. The strategy will be informed by horizon scanning, evidence and knowledge gap assessments and by close consultation across IFAD, as well as with the Evaluation Committee and Executive Board. It will also take into account how identified needs may best be addressed through self-evaluation and independent evaluation, respectively (figure 2).
52. The strategy will ensure improved relevance and timing of evaluations that address anticipated issues, as well as emerging needs such as those associated with IFAD's response to the COVID-19 crisis or the outcome of replenishment exercises.

Figure 2

Evaluation planning and optimization

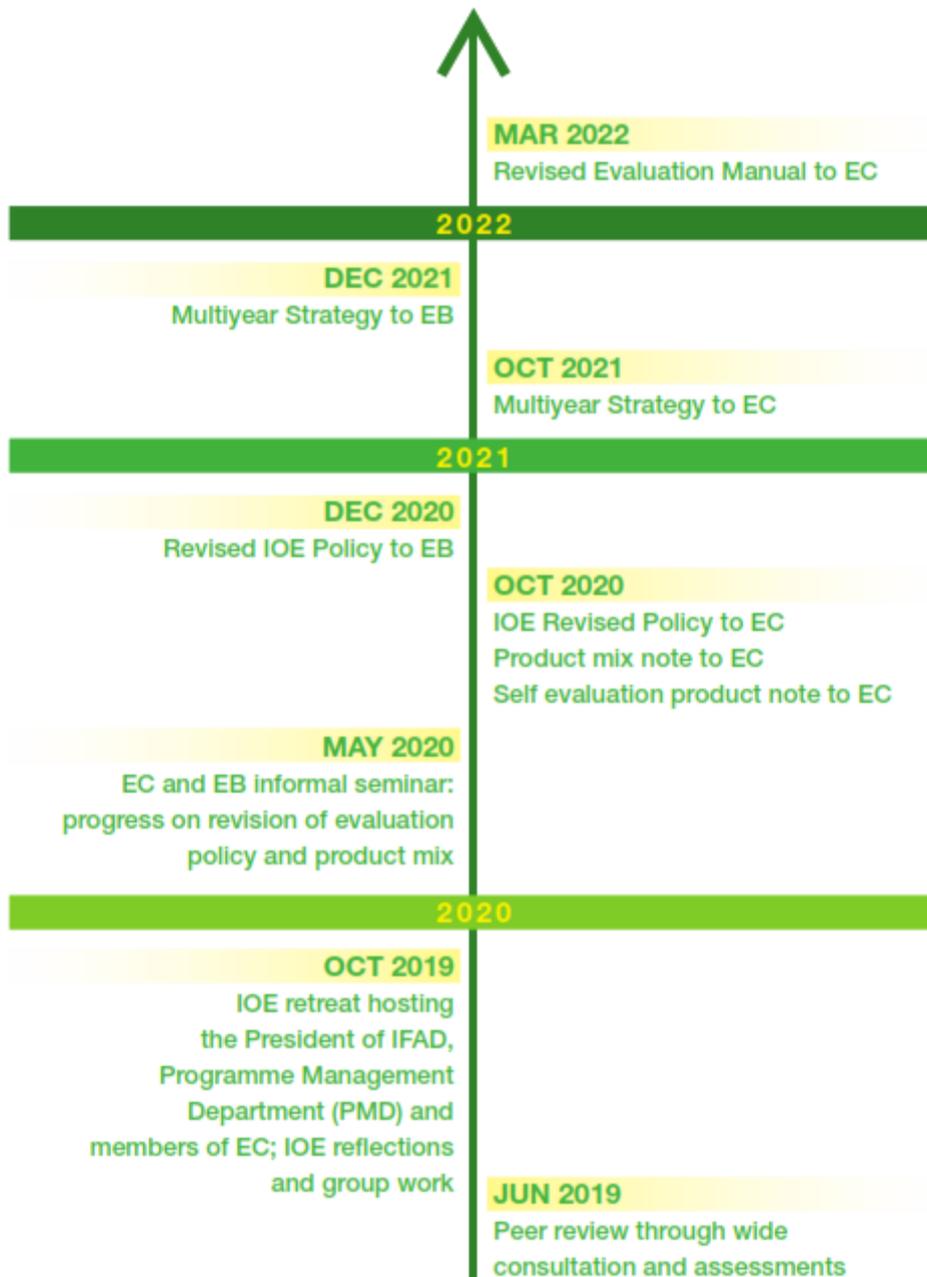


53. This multi-year strategy will be "annualized" to guide annual planning on a rolling basis. Annual planning will be based on IOE's own horizon scanning and close consultation with IFAD stakeholders, the Evaluation Committee and the Executive

Board as an ongoing process. The annual planning process will be flexible enough to permit the development of new tools to capture important dimensions of IFAD's work, such as the private sector, where investment is currently too limited to warrant the development of specific project-based tools but could be addressed using current tools such as an ESR or a TE.

54. The use of the existing selectivity framework is being reconsidered. An appropriate consultation process and criteria for selecting and prioritizing the evaluation plan within the available budget will be developed. Specific criteria will be applied, and a checklist has been developed to support the application of these criteria (see Appendix IV). Most of the work involved in formulating the evaluation products and preparing the revised version of the Evaluation Manual will take place in 2021. A timeline for this undertaking is presented in figure 3.

Figure 3: Timeline for the key deliverables of IOE’s revision of evaluation products and other related commitments



Appendix I: IOE Response to the External Peer Review of IFAD's Evaluation Function, concerning product range

Q1: How has IOE addressed the overall recommendation on product range?

"IOE should review and revise its product mix. Key inputs should include more 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. Key stakeholders should be consulted closely. Flexibility to respond to demand and opportunity should be built in."

Response:

- ✓ IOE has undertaken a thorough revision of the product mix, both addressing areas of improvement identified in existing products and developing and piloting new products to fill the identified gaps.
- ✓ Given the importance of the revised product range, IOE believes that dialogue is better than a one-way survey and therefore has conducted a thorough consultation throughout IFAD canvassing the views of many different stakeholders. In addition a detailed survey had already been conducted by the External Peer Review.
- ✓ A new and more consultative evaluation planning process based on a revised selectivity framework is being introduced which will provide more flexibility.
- ✓ Resource aspects will be addressed through the budget process, which is also being improved and revised.

Q2: How has IOE responded to the specific recommendation on product range?

"The Panel's specific recommendations on product mix are: redesign and reduce substantially the number of project-specific evaluations; shift the balance toward more forward-looking, thematic or regional analysis likely to be of higher value to the Board and Management; introduce a means to provide real-time evaluation feedback for projects in execution; and, deepen the "learning and advisory" focus of IOE work, versus its current more dominant "accountability" focus."

Response:

IOE has undertaken a number of steps towards revising its product range. This includes re-designing to make some products succinct and user-friendly, piloting new products, reducing the number of some products prepared annually, clustering some products to use resources more effectively, reflecting timeliness in planning and in piloting new "on-demand" products to respond quickly to emerging needs and introducing forward-looking, strategic-level products to augment learning. Evaluation processes are being reviewed as part of the work on the update of the evaluation manual and will provide the detail on how learning aspects of IOE products are being enhanced through closer collaboration with management

Q3: How has IOE addressed the key issues raised in the EPR on individual existing products?

Response:

Project Completion Report Validations (PCRv):

IOE maintains 100% coverage, consistent with peer practice, and to ensure adequate, solid evidence for the more strategic evaluations. The format is streamlined and use

improved through integration of the PCRV database with the PCR database in the Operational Results Management System (ORMS).

Project Performance Evaluations (PPE)

Recommendation to seek to cluster PPEs is being implemented and further improved through a new product: Project Cluster Evaluation. The free standing PPE is maintained to be able to respond to specific knowledge needs (governing bodies, IOE, Management) and demands from regional divisions. PPEs may also focus on ex-post assessment of sustainability. IOE plans to reduce the number of PPEs per year from ten (in the past) to about five.

Corporate Level Evaluations (CLE)

New more inclusive planning process will address selection of topic and approach.

Evaluation Synthesis Report (ESR)

ESR is being developed as a flexible tool to respond to a range of different types of demand. Recommendations will be optional and applied on a case by case basis.

Impact Evaluations (IE)

IE will be conducted based on knowledge need, including in terms of the need to test innovative methodologies for evaluating development outcomes and impact as part of IOE's mixed method approach. IEs may also cover ex-post assessment of sustainability.

The Annual Report on Results and Impact (ARRI)

The 2020 ARRI presents a new format and approach on a pilot basis and is expected to be of more strategic value than in the past. In addition to a section on the portfolio performance and results (based on IOE ratings), it will include thematic discussion on "wider institutional performance issues to which IOE can bring unique insights" as recommended by the EPR. In the future, the ARRI may draw more from Corporate-level, Thematic evaluations, Country Strategy and Programme Evaluations and Evaluation Syntheses. Further reviews of the ARRI content and methodology will take stock of practices and lessons learned from other IFIs where similar documents are produced. Finally, ARRI will continue to be complementary to RIDE, given that both reports rely on very similar project cohorts.

Appendix II: Evaluation product range, benchmarking with peers

Table 2
Evaluation product mix - Benchmarking with peers

Type of evaluation	IFAD	WBG/IEG	ADB /IED	AfDB/IDEV	IADB/OVE
Validation					
Project	100%	100% Under review	100% Public sector 100% Private sector Technical assistance completion validation	100% public sector 50% private sector 10% with field visits	100% Public sector 100% Private sector
Evaluation					
Project	✓	Under review ✓	✓	✓	✓
Technical Assistance		Under review ✓	✓		
Country/ regional programme	✓	Under review ✓	✓	Country and regional strategy evaluations. Mid-term evaluations introduced on a pilot basis	✓
Cluster	new	Cluster CPE Pilot/under review	✓	Project cluster evaluations are designed and timed to contribute to broader thematic or sector evaluations	
Thematic/ Sector		✓	✓	✓	✓
Corporate	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Synthesis/ Systematic Reviews	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Impact	✓/RIA	DIME	✓	✓	
Other ¹¹	ARRI	Report on the Results and Performance of the WBG (RAP report) Under review	Annual evaluation reviews (AER)	Annual Synthesis report of Validations Annual report for IDEV	Annual Report of Validations

¹¹ Using only the ratings provided by the independent evaluation office for the criteria based ratings of operations. Not the self assessed ratings.

Appendix III: Summary of key features of each product

1. Project Completion Report Validation (PCR/V)

Audience	IOE and PMD
Coverage/number per year	100% coverage of PCRs (the average number of PCRs per year is 30-35).
Rationale	To provide accountability through validating the PCR ratings, which also feeds into the ARRI and generates a database for other evaluations (CLEs, CSPEs etc.).
Approach and methodology	Desk based document review, based on secondary sources only. Should be read together with the PCR.
Evaluation criteria	All IFAD criteria.
Format of report	Page length: 10 pages, plus annexes.
QA/QE	The quality enhancement (QE) process is: IOE PCR/V coordinator and Deputy Director IOE, with final clearance (quality assurance, QA) by Deputy Director IOE.
Core Learning partnership	N.A.
Change from past practice	<p>A web-based system will be designed with an annotated outline (and word limit) of the PCR/V (tabular format). Evaluators will be able to input the text directly into the system. This will help attain standardization of the report and facilitate easy linking with the ORMS.</p> <p>The PCR/V will be more concise and to the point, with the analysis more focused on validating the narrative of the PCR. For criteria where there is a rating disconnect with PCRs this will be clearly justified and the narrative text may therefore be longer.</p> <p>The PCR/V database will be integrated with the PCR database in the ORMS to increase the visibility and use of PCR/Vs by evaluators and project managers.</p>

2. Project Performance Evaluation (PPE)

Audience	PMD, country and project managers, Government officials, project managers.
Coverage/number per year	Five to six PPEs annually (number subject to whether or not Project Cluster Evaluations are undertaken), reduced from the previous ten per year.
Rationale	<p>PPEs fill important information gaps and inform IFAD project development, ensuring lessons are learned from past project experience.</p> <p>Deepening the evaluative understanding from the PCR- PCR/V; PPEs contribute evidence to other evaluation products.</p> <p>Projects selected for evaluation for one of the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ When there is insufficient evidence in the PCR/PCR/V to fill knowledge gaps (internal and external) or countries that otherwise would not be covered ✓ Required input for a higher-level IOE evaluation (e.g., Thematic Evaluation, Country Strategy and Programme Evaluation, Evaluation synthesis) ✓ Specific demand from PMD or SKD ✓ Where the second phase of a project is planned ✓ To assess sustainability ex post
Approach and methodology	<p>Based on PCR, desk review and field visits.</p> <p>Ensuring representativeness (good and poor performance examples, geographical) and avoiding selection bias (over-reporting of a country or portfolio).</p>
Evaluation criteria	IFAD evaluation criteria
Format of report	<p>Page length: 25-30 pages.</p> <p>The Approach Paper will not be included in the annexes. Space for discussing key issues.</p>
QA/QE	<p>Designated peer reviewer, PPE coordinator and Deputy Director IOE.</p> <p>PPE coordinator will check final draft before it is sent to the Director IOE for clearance.</p>
Core Learning partnership	Regional director, country director, country office (if it exists), senior government counterpart, former project director. Others as relevant.
Change from past practice	Number of PPEs reduced and format changed.

	A stronger focus on fewer criteria and more focus on drawing lessons that can inform future design and implementation of similar projects as well as underpin Thematic Evaluation, Evaluation Synthesis or other products.
--	--

3. Impact Evaluations (IE)

Audience	IFAD Governing Bodies/committees i.e. EB and EC, and IFAD management. In addition, IEs also benefit governments and policy makers, the development community, and to some extent, the academia.
Coverage/number per year	No fixed number of impact evaluations in a given year. Frequency to depend on evaluability of evidence base in the projects, suitable timing, capacity of local evaluation providers, and the need to provide evidence for other forthcoming evaluations (e.g., CSPE, TE, ESR, etc.)
Rationale	<p>Generates robust evidence on the causal pathways in a programme. Builds capacity in IFAD/IOE to generate evidence-based on a rigorous method.</p> <p>Provides evidence shared with the global impact evaluation community.</p> <p>Contributes to methodological development and innovation. Projects could be selected based on foreseen higher-level evaluation product (see above). Overlapping with SKD on the same project will be avoided.</p> <p>Alternatively, selection of project could be based on a theme or topic. In this regard, selection could be based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Evidence gap mapping. ✓ Opportunities for methodological innovation. ✓ Theme emanating from a thematic evaluation; ESR; etc. ✓ Topic selected from the multi-year strategy (through horizon scanning). ✓ Focus could be on a specific component within a project. ✓ Opportunities to assess impact and sustainability issues ex post.
Approach and methodology	Quasi experimental (ex post). In addition to desk review and field visits, impact evaluation are based on primary data collection through large quantitative surveys, complemented by qualitative data collection.
Evaluation criteria	Impact and selection of IFAD criteria.
Format of report	<p>Page length: 40 pages max, with emphasis on Rural Poverty Impact criterion.</p> <p>The executive summary will continue to be published in all three UN languages.</p>
QA/QE	Internal peer review before document sent to the Deputy Director IOE and Director IOE.
Core Learning partnership	Regional director, country director, country office (if it exists), senior government counterpart, former project director. Others as relevant.
Change from past practice	The cycle of the IE would be changed: beginning January and ending December (as opposed to the current July to June) and would be conducted on a needs basis in a non-fixed frequency.

4. Project Cluster Evaluation (PCE) (New Product)

Audience	EC/EB and Senior management, IFAD regional divisions External audience: academia, other IFIs, UN agencies.
Coverage/number per year	Coverage depends on demand from Management and governing bodies and on IOE evidence needs for IOE's higher level evaluations.
Rationale	<p>PCE allows to assess the experience of several projects that have a common theme. This would provide additional cross-learning opportunities, compared to individual project evaluations. PCEs would allow reviewing ongoing projects, in addition to closed ones (PPEs only cover completed projects).</p> <p>PCE can generate synergy with other IOE evaluations (as a preparatory step for a thematic or corporate-level evaluation).</p> <p>PCEs are meant to complement, not to replace PPEs.</p>
Approach and methodology	<p>Both formative and summative the approach allows comparison between countries/regions - to provide lessons on the same model/approach in different countries or regions such as for example implementation modalities.</p> <p>PCEs are based on desk review, interviews with stakeholders and country missions, including field visits.</p>
Evaluation criteria	Core evaluation criteria (DAC) to be covered, while other criteria would be addressed as appropriate.
Format of report	Page length: max 50 pages.

	Structured around criteria or themes, rather than by project (i.e. there will be a synthesis of findings across the projects for each criteria/theme).
QA/QE	Peer review in the presence of the Deputy Director IOE, PPE. Coordinator and the supervisor of the Lead Evaluator. Final report to be cleared by the Coordinator and Deputy Director IOE, and sent to the Director IOE for final approval.
Core Learning partnership	Regional director, country director, country office (if it exists), senior government counterpart, former project director. Others as relevant.
Change from past practice	New product.
Value added	Comparisons between projects sharing a similar topic. Opportunities to review ongoing projects (contemporary issues).

5. Country Strategy and Programme Evaluation (CSPE)

Audience	IFAD-PMD, Governments and related institutions, other donors that contributed to financing the country programme and other national partners, including beneficiaries' organizations.
Coverage/number per year	Typically five per year.
Rationale	CSPEs assess the performance and results of the lending portfolio, non-lending activities and country strategy and inform IFAD country strategy and programme development, ensuring these are evidence-based. CSPEs lay the ground for the preparation of country strategies. Selection of countries is based on the link to COSOP development, the size of the portfolio in terms of total investments and number of operations. Typology of country (e.g. by income classification, lending terms, fragility situation) will be considered as well.
Approach and methodology	Theory based contribution analysis. Portfolio analysis including rating. Analysis and rating of non-lending and grants. Desk review, stakeholder interviews and country missions, including field visits.
Evaluation criteria	All IFAD evaluation criteria.
Format of report	Page length: max 60 pages. Strategic emphasis: country strategy (COSOP), evaluation of lending and non-lending activities. Attention will be given to reducing current duplications and repetitions in the report structure.
QA/QE	Internal IOE peer review with all staff attending. CSPE coordinator will check the document before it is sent to the Deputy Director IOE and Director IOE for clearance.
Core Learning partnership	IFAD programme division director, regional division, country director, project manager, government counterparts, and representative(s) of co-funding organization(s), major civil society organizations. Others as deemed relevant. To be further developed in the evaluation manual.
Change from past practice	Revised structure with great emphasis on the strategy aspect; and the contribution of lending and non-lending activities. All previous evaluation criteria may be nested under new OECD-DAC criteria.

6. Subregional Evaluations (SRE) (New Product)

Audience	EC/EB, IFAD Management, the relevant Regional Division and the concerned Governments
Coverage/number per year	No fixed number per year. It will depend on demand from Management or governing bodies of IFAD and on IOE learning priorities.
Rationale	Provides evidence on subregional initiatives, subregional development aspects and interactions between country programmes that can not be provided through the CSPEs. Responds to the new organizational model that has emerged at IFAD: hubs covering a cluster of countries.

	SRE have a strategic focus (instead, project cluster evaluations have an operational / project orientation).
Approach and methodology	<p>SREs have a strategic / thematic focus and cover organizational aspects (e.g., hubs, country offices, implementation support).</p> <p>They could take a comparative review of: (i) country strategies, common themes of engagement; (ii) multi-country and subregional activities (e.g., grants) supported by IFAD that are meant to provide public goods to the sub-region; and (iii) responses to subregional phenomena (e.g., related to climate change, extreme weather, or changes in the stocks of natural resources).</p> <p>Desk review of key documents of IFAD (and of other international organizations) and external literature on subregional background (including studies and peer-reviewed journal articles); interactions with key stakeholders at IFAD headquarters and concerned countries; country visits, including selected field visits; insights, knowledge-building and generating opportunities for stakeholders through inter-country stakeholder exchanges. Non-lending activities and some project portfolio performance may be included, within a subregional perspective.</p>
Evaluation criteria	Selection of IFAD criteria.
Format of the report	<p>Page length: 60 pages, tentative limit for the main part of the report.</p> <p>Introductory chapter: key questions, methodology and process; concise second chapter: subregional context relevant to IFAD's mandate and activities, as well as key features in the sub-region; third chapter: key analysis, special focus on strategic, thematic and common portfolio efficiency issues, review of IFAD's organizational / support system; fourth chapter: conclusions and recommendations.</p>
QA/QE	These evaluations would follow the same clearance process applied to CSPEs.
Core Learning partnership	<p>IFAD divisional director, country directors, regional economist and portfolio adviser, project managers, government counterpart directorates, and representative(s) of co-funding organization(s), major civil society organizations.</p> <p>Others as deemed relevant.</p> <p>To be further developed in manual.</p>
Change from past practice	New product

7. Evaluation Synthesis Report (ESR)

Audience	<p>EC/EB, IFAD Management and staff, and global audience.</p> <p>Audience will vary depending on the topic.</p>
Coverage/number per year	Demand based, depends on corporate needs and requests, but expectation is one or two per year.
Rationale	Presents evaluative knowledge on topics of strategic relevance. Provides systematic review of results and lessons. Informs future direction, strategic focus or decisions on broader types of engagement or investments.
Approach and methodology	<p>Synthesis would systematize evaluative evidence from IOE (and on a selective basis from other organizations). Syntheses may not require recommendations.</p> <p>Availability of timely and sufficient evidence of adequate quality a condition.</p> <p>Three alternative approaches to be applied depending on the foreseen purpose, use and data available:</p> <p><i>Synthesis note</i>: a short note presenting evidence on a specific topic in a succinct manner, in response of an ad-hoc request, or in preparation (or as follow-up) of a larger evaluation or to summarise the limited evidence available. It has the potential to provide near-real time feedback.</p> <p><i>Synthesis evaluation</i>: provides comprehensive analysis of evidence from evaluations/studies on a specific topic. Mainly desk-based; it collects evidence from IOE and other evaluations, complemented by limited interviews, group discussions and/or survey.</p> <p><i>Systematic reviews</i>: based on a strict protocol, it will identify and rigorously synthesize evidence from evaluations (including with meta-analysis techniques if applicable), likely including topics where a large number of evaluations or studies are available.</p>
Evaluation criteria	Core evaluation criteria to be used as appropriate, but not mandatory.
Format of report	<p>Page length for synthesis note: max 10 pages.</p> <p>Page length for synthesis evaluation: max 30-40 pages.</p> <p>Page length for systematic review: 50 pages.</p>

	Includes chapter on lessons learned; these can be used to highlight the good (and poor) practices. If the report does not include recommendations, it should flag open questions (knowledge gaps) or critical issues for consideration by IFAD staff and management.
QA/QE	Current process of internal peer review before document sent to the Deputy Director IOE and Director IOE will be maintained. IOE may engage one or more senior external advisers to review the approach paper and main report.
Core Learning partnership	As a minimum SKD, PMD and IOE.
Change from past practice	Range of approaches suggested providing flexibility to adjust to demand and needs.

8. Corporate Level Evaluation (CLE)

Audience	EC/EB and Senior management as well as operations managers at all levels in PMD and SKD.
Coverage/number per year	One every 18 months on average (may alternate with Thematic Evaluations).
Rationale	<p>Informs IFAD's strategic direction and business model development.</p> <p>Topics of CLEs relate to IFAD's organizational performance and institutional effectiveness (e.g. Financial Architecture, Decentralization, etc.). Topics will be selected based on inputs from the strategic orientation of the EB/EC, IOE's own analysis of organizational evidence needs, and consultations with IFAD Management. IOE will conduct horizon scanning and evidence gap emerging from analysis of available evaluations, to map IFAD's needs.</p> <p>The topic will be finalized through IOE discussions and consultations with EB/EC.</p>
Approach and methodology	Variety of methods and data collection tools. Common methods include: (i) desk review; (ii) interviews with Management and IFAD staff; (iii) country case studies; (iv) review of comparator organizations' experience; (v) survey of IFAD staff, governing bodies and country partners.
Evaluation criteria	The CLEs will use evaluation criteria in a selective manner.
Format of report	Page length: 60 pages, upper limit for the main part of the report.
QA/QE	<p>Quality Enhancement will be done by an IOE Peer Review, chaired by the Director and open to all IOE staff. External senior advisers or an advisory panel will also support the process, for example by reviewing the approach paper and main report.</p> <p>Quality assurance of final document by the Deputy Director IOE and cleared by the Director IOE.</p>
Core Learning partnership	Core Learning Partnership Group comprising of key users of evaluations in IFAD set at the beginning of the process: Senior management, selected division directors and IOE.
Change from past practice	CLE focus on corporate organization / process issues of high priority for the organization and examines issues related to organizational effectiveness, such as financial architecture, approaches to supervision, country presence and decentralization, for example.

9. Thematic Evaluations (TE) (Recent)

Audience	EC/EB; Senior management as well as IFAD Operations managers at all levels in PMD and SKD; Governments and related institutions; concerned donors.
Coverage/number per year	To be decided on a year to year basis (may alternate with Corporate-level Evaluations).
Rationale	Provide evidence of the development effectiveness and performance and results of IFAD-funded operations in a given operational thematic area (e.g., natural resource management, climate change adaptation gender equality) and generate lessons and recommendation to enhance IFAD's future design and implementation support and the results of its funded operations in the same topic.
Approach and methodology	<p>TEs focus on assessing the development effectiveness of IFAD in the selected thematic area. It has a summative component (IFAD's performance to date) and formative (organizational readiness to address challenges ahead and to deliver committed results).</p> <p>By analysing results achieved on the ground, and comparing the approaches of other actors, TE provides learning opportunities for managers to identify development effective solutions in the thematic area.</p>

	<p>A TE will also assess the fit-for-purpose of existing arrangements to deliver results in the thematic area, and hence, is also forward-looking and expected to inform the corporate strategy and policies on the select themes.</p> <p>The evaluation will be based on country case studies and a review of IFAD policies and practices as well as capacities related to the theme.</p> <p>In addition, depending on the theme, a brief comparative review of the experience of other organizations will be presented.</p>
Evaluation criteria	TEs will select few of the criteria (for example, effectiveness and sustainability)
Format of report	Page length: 60 pages, ideal upper limit, similar to that of CLEs.
QA/QE	<p>QE will be done by an IOE Peer Review, chaired by the Director and open to all IOE staff. External senior advisors or an advisory panel will also support the process, for example by reviewing the approach paper and main report.</p> <p>QA on final documents will be by the Deputy Director IOE and cleared by the Director of IOE.</p>
Core Learning partnership	Senior Management, technical division director(s) and IOE.
Change from past practice	New product.

10. Annual Report on Results and Impact (ARRI)

Audience	EC/EB. Management and staff. General public.
Coverage/number per year	Annual.
Rationale	Presents the EB and the public with an aggregate analysis of the performance and results of IFAD-funded operations based on independent ratings, as is the norm in other IFIs, and highlights the factors that explain such performance to provide IFAD with a better insight on pathways to improve performance and results.
Approach and methodology	<p>It is a form of meta-analysis of existing evaluations which consolidate findings; identifying trends and underlying explanatory factors, it presents the performance of all completed and evaluated IFAD Operations at the aggregate level as well as evidence from selected evaluations and historical trends and time series.</p> <p>The portfolio rating analysis and historical trends will appear in all ARRI reports. The content of the remaining ARRI chapters may change from one year to the other. In reviewing the ARRI methodology and contents, IOE will take stock of ongoing practices and lessons learned by other IFIs that produce similar documents.</p>
Evaluation criteria	Analysis of portfolio performance and trends covers all evaluation criteria.
Format of report	Page length: about 30 pages maximum of main body, to maximize absorption of messages and enhance user-friendliness.
QA/QE	<p>Prepare a Concept Note (clarify the methodology and approach and complementarities and synergies with RIDE). Quality enhancement on draft report through IOE peer review process and quality assurance by IOE Deputy Director and Director.</p> <p>Share and discuss the concept note with EC and IFAD Senior management.</p> <p>Quality enhancement on final draft by IOE and quality assurance by Deputy Director IOE and Director IOE.</p>
Core Learning partnership	IFAD operational staff and senior management will be consulted during the report preparation.
Change from past practice	Shorter report, structure change from one year to the other. Optional recommendations. More attention to learning topics.

Appendix IV: Indicative Framework for Evaluation Prioritization

Knowledge gap: Is the evaluation likely to close a critical knowledge (or evidence) gap for accountability and learning?

Informing other evaluative work: Will the evaluation contribute to ongoing or forthcoming evaluative or other analytical endeavours?

Informing decision-making: Will the findings be relevant and contribute to organizational decisions on ongoing and/or future work? Decisions may be at the project, country, regional, thematic or corporate levels.

Strategic Significance: Is the subject of the evaluation an issue of strategic significance for IFAD that contributes to the Organization's core mandate and priorities? Does it address issues that are on the public agenda?

Selection of countries: When selecting countries for evaluations or for case studies, IOE should take into consideration, in addition to the specific questions that an evaluation is addressing, elements such as: (i) IFAD regions; (ii) IFAD portfolio size; (iii) presence of elements of fragility; (iv) classification of countries by income or by IFAD lending terms; (v) when relevant, country's membership in trade agreement, monetary zones or other subregional agreements.

Timing: When was/is the last/next assessment of the evaluation subject, or the beginning of a new initiative (COSOP/Project/Programme/Policy)? Is it the right time to observe expected facts, changes or behaviours (e.g., at the level of processes, institution, strategies or at the field level)? Does the evaluation timeline take into account the envisaged organizational timeline for taking decisions? Does the timing consider any inherent risk for the evaluators and the stakeholders?

Evaluation typology, modality and coverage: Is the selected evaluation type, its scope and implementation modality likely to produce the type of information that is required and within a reasonable time frame and budget?

Risk: Does the evaluation pose any undue risk for those conducting it or for the main stakeholders? Will the evaluation findings feed into IFAD's assessment and mitigation of risk (to its mandate, operations, funding or reputation for example) as a result of projects or initiatives that may be deemed critical, sensitive or controversial?