
2022 President's Report on the Implementation Status of Evaluation Recommendations and Management Actions (PRISMA)

Comments by the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD

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Action: The Evaluation Committee is invited to review the comments of the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD on the 2022 President's Report on the Implementation Status of Evaluation Recommendations and Management Actions (PRISMA).

Technical questions:

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2022 President’s Report on the Implementation Status of Evaluation Recommendations and Management Actions (PRISMA)

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2022 President's Report on the Implementation Status of Evaluation Recommendations and Management Actions (PRISMA)

Comments by the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD

1. In accordance with the Revised IFAD Evaluation Policy,¹ the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD (IOE) provides comments on the President's Report on the Implementation Status of Evaluation Recommendations and Management Actions (PRISMA) for consideration by the Evaluation Committee and the Executive Board.
2. Evaluation recommendations aim to strengthen IFAD's ability to achieve development results in an effective, efficient and sustainable manner. Implementing evaluation recommendations is an important milestone in IFAD's use of evaluations to fulfil its accountability for achieving development results. IOE welcomes the PRISMA as an important instrument within IFAD's evaluation architecture for promoting accountability. The PRISMA analyses the status of implementation of evaluation recommendations and organizational learning by identifying recurring findings emerging from these evaluations.
3. **The 2022 PRISMA presents a sound analysis** of the action taken in response to IOE recommendations. IOE appreciates the PRISMA's analysis of the implementation status of recommendations, the clear explanation of how the recommendations were used to improve project and country strategies and the update on the status of efforts to implement IOE comments on the 2020 PRISMA to improve the PRISMA system. It takes particular note of the analysis provided in section B.2, which presents a brief description of how each evaluation was used by IFAD, and section III, which outlines the learning strategy from evaluation recommendations. Both are good practices that IOE hopes to see recurring in future PRISMAs.
4. IOE particularly welcomes the action taken by Management in response to IOE comments on the 2020 PRISMA to transform PRISMA into a dynamic tool for adaptive management during the period of the Twelfth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources. These changes will provide information on the implementation status of all evaluation recommendations in real time to all interested staff, which will have significant implications for the coverage and scope of analysis of PRISMA in 2023 and beyond.
5. **Coverage of the 2022 PRISMA.** The 2022 PRISMA presents the implementation status of 69 recommendations stemming from 13 evaluations (see table 1). These include: (i) the recommendations from all 11 new IOE evaluations completed during the period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021; and (ii) the recommendations from three earlier IOE evaluations whose implementation status was not reviewed recently, namely the country strategy and programme evaluations (CSPEs) for Mexico and Sierra Leone and the project performance evaluation (PPE) for Sierra Leone. The 2022 PRISMA also includes follow-up on IOE's comments on the 2021 Report on IFAD's Development Effectiveness (RIDE).

¹ Document EB 2021/132/R.5/Rev.1.

Table 1
Evaluation coverage of the 2022 PRISMA

<i>Evaluation</i>	<i>Year of completion</i>	<i>Number of recommendations</i>
1 Corporate-level evaluation (CLE) on IFAD's support to innovations for inclusive and sustainable smallholder agriculture	Sept 2020	6
2 CSPE Ecuador	March 2021	5
3 CSPE Madagascar	Dec 2020	14
4 CSPE Mexico ^a	April 2020	2
5 CSPE Sierra Leone ^a	May 2020	4
6 CSPE Sudan	Dec 2020	8
7 PPE Bangladesh (Coastal Climate-Resilient Infrastructure Project)	March 2021	3
8 PPE China (Hunan Agricultural and Rural Infrastructure Improvement Project)	July 2020	4
9 PPE Dominican Republic (Rural Economic Development Project in the Central and Eastern Provinces)	May 2021	4
10 PPE India (Tejaswini Women's Empowerment Programme)	July 2020	4
PPE Sierra Leone (Rehabilitation and Community-based Poverty Reduction Project) ^b	March 2020	3
11 PPE Tajikistan (Khatlon Livelihoods Support Project)	Apr 2021	3
12 PPE Türkiye (Ardahan-Kars-Atvin Development Project)	Sept 2020	6
13 PPE Uganda (Agricultural Technology and Agribusiness Advisory Services Project)	June 2021	3
Total recommendations		69

^a Historical follow-up – CSPE (recommendations included in the analysis).

^b Historical follow-up – PPE (recommendations not included in the analysis).

Source: The 2022 PRISMA, Volume II.

6. **Implementation status and IOE verification.** IOE is pleased to note that Management agreed with 65 of the 69 IOE recommendations (94 per cent) and partially agreed with the remaining four recommendations (6 per cent), and that it addressed all recommendations. Of these 69 recommendations, 23 (33 per cent) were deemed by IFAD as ongoing recommendations and the remaining 46 (67 per cent) were verified to be fully followed up. IOE deemed 44 of the latter to be fully implemented (64 per cent) and deemed the other 2 responses as not fully addressing the issues flagged by the recommendations (3 per cent).
7. With regard to the CLE of IFAD's support to innovations for inclusive and sustainable smallholder agriculture, one of the six recommendations was deemed fully implemented (17 per cent), while two were considered as not fully addressing the evaluation messages (for details, please refer to section II). The percentage of recommendations fully implemented was 53 per cent (19 of the 36 recommendations) for CSPEs and 89 per cent (24 of 27 recommendations) for PPEs.
8. A comparison of the 2022 PRISMA with the last two PRISMAs is presented in table 2. Each year, the PRISMA covers selected evaluations completed during the previous two years (the 2022 PRISMA covers evaluations from the period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021) and selected earlier evaluations for tracking follow-up. As can be seen in table 2, the share of management actions not aligned with the underlying messages of recommendations appears to be on the decline, while the percentage of recommendations that are fully implemented appears to be on the rise.

Table 2
Comparison of the 2020, 2021 and 2022 PRISMAs

		2020 PRISMA	2021 PRISMA	2022 PRISMA
1	Number of evaluations considered	16	12	13
2	Number of recommendations considered	67	48	69
3	Percentage of recommendations accepted	97	100	94
4	IFAD estimate of share of recommendations fully implemented (percentage)	60	65	67
5	IOE determination of share of recommendations fully implemented (percentage)	50	58	64
6	Percentage of recommendations not fully addressing the issues raised by the evaluation (IOE determination)	21	14.5	3

Source: Executive Board documents related to PRISMA reports and IOE comments on those reports.

9. **Online PRISMA.** In its multi-year strategy, IOE envisages conducting periodic systematic reviews of the online PRISMA to assess the quality and timeliness of Management response updates. In response to the 2020 RIDE, IOE recommended transforming PRISMA into a real-time online database accessible to all. Management agreed to that recommendation, recognizing that it would enrich the learning and accountability actions reported in the PRISMA and promote more broad-based use of evaluations. While IOE appreciates Management’s commitment to this endeavour and notes the progress reported in the 2022 PRISMA, it believes that it would be helpful to present an exact timeline indicating when this system will be ready for broad access and use, together with information on the actions under way to familiarize users with this system and provide them with training.
10. **In conclusion,** IOE recognizes Management’s efforts to view evaluation recommendations as a body of knowledge (rather than as isolated suggestions) that can be used to inform the design and implementation of IFAD operations and country strategic opportunities programmes. IOE thanks Management for this opportunity to provide feedback and urges it to speedily implement the online PRISMA, ensuring adequate training support.

I. Ongoing follow-ups that may require further review

A. Responses that partially address the issues raised by recommendations

11. IOE offers the following comments to strengthen the already strong self-analysis presented in the 2022 PRISMA.
12. At the corporate level, the CLE of IFAD’s support to innovations for inclusive and sustainable smallholder agriculture resulted in six recommendations, of which three were declared as fully implemented by IFAD and the remaining three were ongoing. IOE found that the implementation of recommendations 3 and 4 did not fully address the underlying message of the evaluation. For instance, the description of the follow-up action on recommendation 3 refers to the adoption of the United Nations Innovation Toolkit; however, the focus of the recommendation relates to transformative innovation. Accordingly, for this recommendation to be deemed as fully implemented, further elaboration is needed to demonstrate how the United Nations Innovation Toolkit enables the identification of transformative innovations, with examples of innovations that were identified and developed as a result of the use of the toolkit.
13. Similarly, recommendation 4 from the CLE calls for dedicated funds to support innovation challenges within IFAD. The follow-up action should therefore indicate what steps have been taken to ensure the sustained allocation of funds to support innovation. Without this information, the recommendation cannot be considered as fully implemented.

B. Responses that do address the issues raised by recommendations but need closer scrutiny during implementation

14. In the case of the PPE in Bangladesh, IOE would agree with the information presented in the 2022 PRISMA regarding the status of implementation of the three recommendations – i.e. that the first two have been fully implemented and the third is ongoing – with the following observations.
15. The underlying message of the first recommendation was that it is important to provide a more comprehensive package of support to beneficiaries – not only infrastructure development but also support for livelihood activities and connectivity to value chains, seeking complementarity with programmes funded by other agencies and avoiding working in isolation. The follow-up mentions vocational training, the Gender Action Learning System and flood early warning systems. These actions reflect a narrow interpretation of the recommendation. It is understandable that IFAD may not have a project in the pipeline to put the response to the recommendation in action. However, it could address the recommendation more broadly as a part of the updates to the IFAD country strategy in Bangladesh.
16. The third recommendation called for IFAD to engage with relevant central and local government bodies to enable a policy response and strategy to deal with systemic issues related to market leasing and market maintenance, and to ensure the long-term sustainability and viability of market infrastructure. The follow-up is a broad statement about IFAD engaging with the Local Government Engineering Department, but no specifics are provided on how this engagement will address the underlying issues identified in the recommendation. It is understood that follow-up on this recommendation is ongoing up and that IOE may have to wait for future updates.

C. Conclusion

17. This PRISMA puts forward original ideas for strengthening learning from IOE evaluations. IOE notes these improved efforts and encourages sustained in-depth reflection on evaluation recommendations to further strengthen IFAD's development effectiveness.