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Enabling poor rural people
to overcome poverty

Draft Minutes of the Sixty-sixth session of the Evaluation Committee

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Evaluation Committee — Sixty-seventh Session
Rome, 19-20 April 2011

For: Approval

Draft Minutes of the Sixty-sixth session of the Evaluation Committee

1. These minutes cover the deliberations of the Evaluation Committee during its sixty-sixth session held on 3 March 2011. The eight agenda items for discussion were: (i) the election of the Evaluation Committee Chairperson; (ii) the draft minutes of the Evaluation Committee sixty-fifth session; (iii) the annual country visits of the Evaluation Committee for the period 2011-2013; (iv) the draft approach paper on the Corporate-level evaluation (CLE) on efficiency; (v) the progress report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Peer Review of IFAD's Office of Evaluation (IOE) and Evaluation Function; (vi) the draft revised IFAD Evaluation Policy; (vii) IFAD's Engagement with Middle-Income Countries, with IOE's comments thereon; and (viii) other business.
 2. All Committee members attended the session (Burkina Faso, Canada, France, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Mexico, Netherlands and Nigeria). Observers were present from Brazil, China, Egypt and Sweden. The Committee welcomed Mr Jean-Baptiste Kambire and Mr. Laurent Couliadiati from Burkina Faso, which has replaced Egypt as a member of the Committee.
 3. The Committee was joined by IFAD's Associate Vice-President, Programmes, Programme Management Department (PMD); the Director of the IFAD Office of Evaluation (IOE); the Secretary of IFAD; and other IFAD staff. As requested by the Committee, Mr Bruce Murray, consultant, also joined the session via videoconference for the discussion on the draft revised IFAD Evaluation Policy.
 4. The Committee approved the proposal made by IFAD Management at the beginning of the session to postpone the discussion of the item on IFAD's Engagement with Middle-Income Countries, which will instead be included in the agenda for the planned Evaluation Committee session of 19-20 April 2011.
- A. Election of the Chairperson of the Evaluation Committee.**
5. The Committee unanimously elected India as Chairperson of the Evaluation Committee, represented by Mr. Shobhana Kumar Pattanayak, Alternate Permanent Representative of the Republic of India to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Agencies in Rome. India will remain as Chair until the end of the term of the current Evaluation Committee.
 6. During the deliberations, Burkina Faso expressed its interest to serve as Chairperson of the Evaluation Committee in the future.
- B. Draft minutes of the sixty-fifth session of the Evaluation Committee.**
7. The Committee discussed the minutes of its sixty-fifth session (EC 2011/66/W.P.3) presented for approval. The minutes were approved by the Committee without further changes.
- C. Annual Country Visit of the Evaluation Committee.**
8. The Committee discussed proposed options for its annual country visits for the period 2011-2013 as outlined in document EC 2011/66/W.P.4.
 9. The Committee agreed with the suggested proposal and dates in 2011 to visit Brazil. It also agreed to include Ghana in its visits in 2012. Concerning its visit in 2013, it was decided to defer the decision to a later stage.
 10. The Committee welcomed the interest of other Board members not part of the Evaluation Committee to visit IFAD-funded interventions, on an individual basis.

D. Draft Approach Paper on the Corporate-level Evaluation on Efficiency.

11. The Committee considered document the draft approach paper for the corporate-level evaluation on efficiency (EC 2011/66/W.P.5) prepared by IOE.
12. Committee members expressed their appreciation for a well prepared document. At the same time, they noted that this evaluation, being large in scope, may require substantial amount of time and resources for the exercise to be carried out in greater depth.
13. It was decided that Committee will discuss the related Inception Report once it has been prepared by IOE.
14. In addition, Committee members recommended that the following aspects of the scope and methodology be further developed while preparing the Inception Report: (i) the managerial efficiency of IFAD, including management decision-making processes at the corporate, departmental and divisional levels; (ii) IFAD partnerships and how they effect efficiency; (iii) the IFAD administrative budget structure and components thereof; (iv) the composition of the Core Learning Partnership should be expanded to include representatives of the IFAD Governing Bodies; (v) the assessment of transparency and accountability; and (vi) the need for streamlining activities.
15. Moreover, the Committee underlined there are risks involved in undertaking this evaluation and recommended to include in the Inception report a section on risk mitigation, which should include also the estimated budget and the composition of the evaluation consultants' team.
16. The Committee appreciated that throughout the evaluation there will be constant interactions to capture the views of IFAD member states. The evaluation will also take into account ongoing developments within IFAD and events that are likely to unfold during the course of the evaluation.

E. Progress report on the action plan for the implementation of the findings and recommendations of the Peer Review of IFAD's Office of Evaluation and Evaluation Function.

17. The Committee considered the Progress report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Peer Review of IFAD's Office of Evaluation and Evaluation Functions (EC 2011/66/W.P.7).
18. As decided at the Committee's sixty-fifth session on 25-26 November 2010, the progress report contained a matrix showing the implementation status of each recommendation, together with more detailed information about action taken so far and with changes tracked against the previous version.
19. The Committee noted with satisfaction that there had been progress across many of the elements of the Action plan, with few delays. It also welcomed the additional information provided and the inclusion of the Committee's suggestions at previous meetings.
20. The Committee requested further information on the status of Recommendation 10 related to the Costed Action Plan for Further Development of the Self-Evaluation System and was informed that work was taking place and that it was on track for meeting its September 2011 deadline.
21. Finally, the Committee requested further information on the status of Recommendation 6(c), "Harmonize the Results and Impact Management System (RIMS) with the self-evaluation and independent evaluation system" and was informed that the methodology for harmonization had been agreed and that the 2011 report on IFAD's development Effectiveness (RIDE) would reflect this

harmonization. Further discussion on the RIMS would take place in the Consultation on the ninth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources in June 2011.

F. Draft revised IFAD Evaluation Policy.

22. The Committee considered document EC 2011/66/W.P.8, the Draft revised IFAD Evaluation Policy, together with document EC 2011/66/W.P.8/Add.1, the Consistency of the Draft Evaluation Policy and the Report of the Peer Review of IFAD's Office of Evaluation and Evaluation Function and document EC 2010/65/W.P.2/Add.1, the Legal Issues raised in the Report of the Peer Review of IFAD's Office of Evaluation and Evaluation Function.
23. The Committee was joined via video-link by the Consultant, Mr Bruce Murray to support the Committee's discussion of this item.
24. The Committee welcomed this first draft of the Evaluation Policy.
25. The General Counsel did not see any inconsistency with the Policy as currently drafted and therefore did not foresee the need for a further written legal opinion.
26. On paragraph 58 (f), the Committee requested the merging of (i) and (ii) and the deletion of the second part of (ii) referring to the President. Instead, the Committee requested that the decision-making role of the Executive Board be emphasized, as the President's opinion would be expressed in the Executive Board and a re-start to the process would therefore be in the event of the Executive Board disagreeing with the recommended candidate.
27. The Committee requested paragraph 59 (vi) to be deleted as Director IOE is not a position that can be filled by a loan or exchange.
28. On paragraph 65, the Committee requested that reference to the President in (a) be removed. In (c), requested that the wording be changed from "should" to "must" with regard to the Chairperson's consultation with the Evaluation Committee. Sub-paragraph (d) be edited, to read: "The Chair of the Evaluation Committee must consult with the President of IFAD who would provide his/her feedback in written format".
29. On paragraph 71 (c), the Committee agreed that the timing of the due diligence should be revised in order to be undertaken prior to a final recommendation being made by the Director, IOE. It also requested that specific reference be made to the Committee's oversight role in the Evaluation Policy, which would be further elaborated in the revised Terms of Reference of the EC.
30. In conclusion, the Committee decided that the draft Policy would be revised accordingly and presented to the next meeting of the Evaluation Committee in April. In order to enable Committee members to fully study the document, it will be distributed two weeks prior to the meeting. In the meantime, members of the Committee would have the opportunity to study the presented documents in more detail and make any further relevant comments to the Office of the Secretary and IOE.

G. Other business

31. Two topics were discussed under the other business agenda item. Firstly, the Committee was first presented with some of the emerging findings from the corporate-level evaluation on IFAD's Private Sector Development and Partnership Strategy.
32. The Committee members appreciated the opportunity to review the preliminary findings related to the Evaluation of the Private Sector Strategy and welcomed the timeliness of this evaluation given the ongoing discussion of IFAD's Strategic Framework 2011-15.

33. The Committee highlighted that, by its nature, agriculture is primarily a private sector activity and that working with it is at the core of IFAD's activities.
34. Committee members requested IOE to ensure that the following points are addressed in the final evaluation report: i) further clarity on the definition of private sector and of the various levels (micro, small and medium enterprises) at which IFAD engages the private sector; ii) thorough reflection on whether the development of a new dedicated strategy may be required; and iii) assessment of IFAD's existing architecture and instruments to allow the Fund to effectively engage the private sector in its activities.
35. The Committee also discussed under Other Business the point raised by the President of IFAD at the December 2010 session of the Executive Board on the possible conflict of interest in the selection of Mr. Bruce Murray as the consultant to support the Committee.
36. The Committee underlined that the selection of the consultant was carried out carefully in a free and fair manner, and that no conflict of interest could be discerned. The consultant was not engaged in implementing the Peer Review's recommendations, which is the task of IOE and IFAD Management, but to provide guidance to the Committee to facilitate the follow-up to the Peer Review of IFAD's Evaluation function.
37. The Committee noted that, in the future, issues of this nature should be addressed by the IFAD President with the Chairperson of the Evaluation Committee instead of being raised at Executive Board sessions. It was also decided to reflect this last point in the minutes from the Sixty-sixth session of the Evaluation Committee, but not in the related Report of the Chairperson to the Executive Board that will be submitted to the Board in May 2011.