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Enabling poor rural people  
to overcome poverty

## **Minutes of the seventy-second session of the Evaluation Committee**

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## **Minutes of the seventy-second session of the Evaluation Committee**

1. These minutes cover the deliberations of the Evaluation Committee during its seventy-second session, held on 17 July 2012. Nine agenda items were included in the provisional agenda: (i) election of the Chair of the Evaluation Committee; (ii) draft minutes of the seventy-first session of the Evaluation Committee; (iii) preview of the results-based work programme and budget for 2013 and indicative plan for 2014-2015 of IOE; (iv) country programme evaluation of Jordan; (v) project performance assessment of the Community-Based Rural Development Project in Kampong Thom and Kampot in Cambodia; (vi) President's Report on the Implementation Status of Evaluation Recommendations and Management Actions (PRISMA), with IOE comments; (vii) draft report of the Chairperson on the Committee's country visit to Ghana; (viii) IFAD Partnership Strategy, with IOE comments; and (ix) other business.
2. All Committee members attended the session (Brazil, Canada, Egypt, Finland, India, Indonesia, Luxembourg, Nigeria and Norway). Observers were present from China and the United States of America. The Committee was joined by IFAD's Associate Vice-President, Programmes, Programme Management Department (PMD); the Director of the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD (IOE); the Secretary of IFAD; the Chief Development Strategist; and other IFAD staff. Dr Basel al Kayed, Counsellor, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and Mr Inder Sud, Consultants' Team Leader of the Jordan Country Programme Evaluation (CPE) joined the discussions later in the day for the pertinent agenda item.
3. The Committee decided to defer discussion of the project performance assessment of the Community-Based Rural Development Project in Kampong Thom and Kampot in Cambodia to the seventy-third session of the Committee in October 2012, to allow Committee members to discuss the other items on the agenda in more depth. It also decided that, with regard to the Draft Report of the Chairperson on the Committee's country visit to Ghana, those Committee members who had participated in the visit should send their comments to the Chairperson of the Committee via e-mail by 23 July; such comments would be reflected in the final version of the document to be submitted to the 106<sup>th</sup> session of the Executive Board in September 2012.

### **A. Election of the Chair of the Evaluation Committee**

4. The Committee unanimously elected India as Chair of the Evaluation Committee. India will remain Chair of the Committee until April 2013, after which Indonesia will act as Chair of the Committee until the end of its mandate in April 2015.

### **B. Draft minutes of the seventy-first session of the Evaluation Committee**

5. The Committee discussed the minutes of the seventy-first session of the Evaluation Committee, presented for approval by members. The Committee approved the minutes of its seventy-first session, with a change proposed by Canada to clarify the reason for their absence at that session.

### **C. Preview of the results-based work programme and budget for 2013 and indicative plan for 2014-2015 of IOE**

6. The Committee discussed the Preview of the results-based work programme and budget for 2013 and indicative plan for 2014-2015 of IOE.
7. The Committee expressed its broad agreement with IOE's proposed objectives, divisional management results, work programme and budget for 2013. IOE informed the Committee that, although the division's work programme was developed independently, it drew on interactions with operations and with Management. The document also reflected feedback that had been provided by the

Committee and the Board. In addition, the current preview had taken into account evolving strategic directions within IFAD, such as the IFAD-wide job audit, the commitments made under the Consultation on the Ninth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD9) and developments in the external context.

8. The Committee also supported the proposal regarding the human resource requirements of IOE. As requested, clarification was provided regarding the gender balance among professional staff in IOE.
9. Discussions took place on the possible joint evaluation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) of the Committee on World Food Security in 2014-2015. The Committee reflected on the value of undertaking such an evaluation and asked for more information. IOE will conduct further research and come back with a more definite proposal in October, following consultations with the Evaluation Office of FAO.
10. With regard to the evaluation of the achievements of the replenishment process, IOE noted that similar evaluations have been conducted by the independent evaluation departments in other organizations, including the African Development Bank and the World Bank. The overall objectives and scope of such an evaluation would be determined in consultation with, and with inputs from, the Evaluation Committee before IOE embarked on this important evaluation in 2013, while ensuring that the results were made available in time for IFAD10 in 2014.
11. IOE provided clarifications on the methodology it currently used for impact evaluations, as well as its plans to support Management in undertaking impact evaluations in the future. Such evaluations were important in gaining an understanding of the number of poor people assisted by IFAD operations.
12. The Committee requested further information on the breakdown of the budget, such as the percentages of funds allocated for consultants. In this regard, IOE would provide the necessary information in the next submission in October 2012.
13. IOE explained how the key performance indicators in its results management framework were developed, including the baselines and targets. IOE would report before the end of 2012 on progress made in moving towards the 2014 targets, and, in the process reconsider any key performance indicator baselines or targets as needed.
14. Upon the recommendation of the Committee, it was decided that IOE would prepare an evaluation synthesis on the topic of youth, before the planned synthesis on pastoral development. The Committee also welcomed the preparation by IOE of the Gender Synthesis Report of the Evaluation Cooperation Group (ECG) and requested IOE to share the report with Committee members when it became available.
15. The Committee suggested that a mechanism be developed to follow up on commitments and action to be taken by the Evaluation Committee.

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

16. The Committee considered the President's Report on the Implementation Status of Evaluation Recommendations and Management Actions (PRISMA) with comments by IOE. The document was considered by the Committee prior to its scheduled submission to the Executive Board session in September 2012 for consideration by Board members.
17. The Committee complemented the preparation and presentation of this report by IFAD Management, as well as the constructive comments provided by IOE, as it represented a central tool in improving the learning loop between evaluation and operations over time. It was also noted that preparation of a report such as PRISMA to support the work of the Executive Board was unique to IFAD among the Rome-based agencies.

18. The Committee recommended that, in the future, recommendations stemming from higher-plane evaluations, in particular corporate-level evaluations, be highlighted in the PRISMA report in a section dedicated to such evaluations. The Committee also requested that recommendations formulated in evaluation reports and not agreed to by Management be listed in the PRISMA report.
19. In response to a point raised by the Committee, it was noted that IFAD Management and IOE agreed on a new harmonized process for the agreement at completion point, that included discussion also of disagreements.
20. With regard to the outposting of the India country programme manager (CPM), the Committee underlined that Management should make the necessary efforts to ensure that the CPM is posted to India on a priority basis, particularly given the fact that India represented the largest IFAD portfolio globally.

## **E. Country programme evaluation of Jordan**

21. The Committee considered the CPE of Jordan and expressed appreciation for an incisive evaluation; it also made a number of observations, which are summarized below, together with additional clarifications provided by IOE and IFAD Management.
22. The Committee recognized that the last two country strategic opportunities programmes (COSOPs) of 2000 and 2007, and in particular the latter, may have been overambitious, poorly constructed and not well implemented. This was especially applicable in the areas of policy dialogue, knowledge management and partnerships – the so-called “non-lending” activities. It also noted the need for safeguards to avoid such situations in the future. Management highlighted that, owing to questions of portfolio performance and the lack of realism of the COSOP, no new projects had been provided after 2004. All projects, but one, were closed. Moreover, there was no allocation under the performance-based allocation system (PBAS) for the 2010-2012 cycle and there would not be an allocation under the Ninth Replenishment of IFAD’s Resources (IFAD9), unless the situation in Jordan improves.
23. The Committee noted IOE’s clarification that the assessment of non-lending activities was undertaken against the objectives clearly embedded in the two Jordan COSOPs, where such activities were treated comprehensively.
24. The Committee noted that, although the CPE had been conducted recently, signals of poor performance and inappropriate targeting were already evident in 2000. In this regard, the new CPM underlined that direct supervision had helped address implementation issues in a more appropriate and timely manner.
25. The Committee noted that it was not in a position to recommend whether or not IFAD should disengage from lending to Jordan, although the evaluation recommendation to gradually do so was well founded. It also recognized that conducting “business as usual” was not an option, especially given the country context and the implications for IFAD’s institutional efficiency in general. In fact, the Associate Vice-President, PMD, underlined that for the time being, unless the situation changed dramatically, IFAD had no plans to provide further loans to Jordan.
26. The Committee took note of PMD’s concerns about some aspects of the methodology, to which IOE provided the required clarifications. It was agreed that IOE would make a presentation in the future on assessing the performance of country strategies and projects that had been designed several years before the time of the independent evaluation (contemporary standards being used for old projects), and there would be a full response from PMD.

## **F. IFAD Partnership Strategy**

27. The Committee discussed the IFAD Partnership Strategy, together with IOE comments, submitted for members’ review.

28. The Committee welcomed the report and expressed appreciation for the well-prepared IOE comments. It also thanked IFAD for tackling this central aspect of IFAD activities.
29. The Committee noted that it would be useful to prioritize partnerships, in particular improving collaboration among the Rome-based agencies and with governments. The Committee was also pleased to note that, in the strategy, IFAD was seen as a positive and constructive partner and as a broker of partnerships.
30. The Committee agreed with IOE on the need to find ways and means to cost the implementation of the strategy and to develop exit strategies should there be a need to end a partnership. The Committee also agreed on the need to include more qualitative elements in the results measurement framework to capture the outcomes and impact of the strategy. Moreover, it agreed that the strategy would benefit from more clarity on addressing the type of risks posed by partnerships and related measures to counter such risks.

#### **G. Other business: Procedure for the selection and appointment of the Director, IOE**

31. The Committee reviewed the Procedure for the selection and appointment of the Director, IOE.
32. Recalling that the current Director, IOE, would complete his second and final term of office at the end of April 2013, the Secretary of IFAD briefed the Committee on the procedures for the selection and appointment of the Director as set out in the Revised IFAD Evaluation Policy.
33. It was agreed that the following activities would be concluded by the end of July 2012:
  - (a) Lists A and B should nominate a representative to the search panel entrusted with leading the selection process. List C would be represented by the Chair of the Committee;
  - (b) The Chair of the Evaluation Committee would contact the IFAD President in writing to elicit a nomination from the President of a representative of IFAD's Management to the search panel; and
  - (c) The Evaluation Committee Chair would invite Committee members, Management and the IOE Director to suggest evaluation experts from the ECG, United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) and other sources to serve on the search panel, in accordance with paragraph 58(a) of the Revised IFAD Evaluation Policy (EB/2011/102/R.7/Rev.1). The three representatives of the Evaluation Committee on the search panel will review the list of names provided and make a proposal to the Evaluation Committee, which will agree, on a "no objection" basis, on two independent experts to sit on the search panel.
34. The members of the search panel, thus fully constituted, would select the chair of the search panel.