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Enabling poor rural people
to overcome poverty

Minutes of the eightieth session of the Evaluation Committee

Note to Evaluation Committee members

Focal points:

Technical questions:

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

Dispatch of documentation:

Deirdre McGrenra
Head, Governing Bodies Office
Tel.: +39 06 5459 2374
e-mail: gb_office@ifad.org

Evaluation Committee — Eighty-first Session
Rome, 29 November 2013

For: **Approval**

Minutes of the eightieth session of the Evaluation Committee

1. These minutes cover the deliberations of the Evaluation Committee during its eightieth session held on 18 November 2013.
2. Present were members from Germany, Finland, India, Indonesia, Japan, Mexico and Norway. Observers were present from China and France. The Committee was further joined by: the Secretary of IFAD; the Director, Human Resources Division; the Officer-in-Charge, Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD (IOE); and the Senior Portfolio Manager, Programme Management Department (PMD).

Adoption of the agenda

3. The provisional agenda contained the following items for discussion: (i) opening of the session; (ii) adoption of the agenda; (iii) minutes of the seventy-eighth and seventy-ninth sessions of the Evaluation Committee; (iv) revision of the procedures for selecting and appointing the Director, Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD contained in the IFAD Evaluation Policy; (v) provisional agenda of the Evaluation Committee for 2014; and (vi) other business.
4. **The Committee considered and approved the agenda, subsequent to the inclusion of two items under other business, namely discussion of: (i) the 2014 country visit; and (ii) logical frameworks.**

Minutes of the seventy-eighth and seventy-ninth sessions of the Evaluation Committee

5. **The minutes of the seventy-eighth and seventy-ninth sessions of the Evaluation Committee were adopted without amendment.**
6. Clarification was sought regarding minor differences between the Chairperson's report to the Executive Board and the minutes of the session. It was indicated that the minutes tend to contain a higher level of detail. **Members requested that all decisions be reflected in the Chairperson's Report to the Executive Board and that reports and minutes be clear and concise in reflecting deliberations and that every effort be made to avoid misinterpretation.**
7. In answer to a request for clarification on the possibility of **a joint meeting of the Evaluation and Audit Committees**, the Committee was informed that the Office of the General Counsel had been consulted and had advised that a formal meeting of the two Committees would require Executive Board approval. Members indicated that it was not their intent to create a new meeting modality, and it was further clarified that the Chairpersons and members of each Committee were welcome to attend each other's meetings. **The Secretariat would share the advice provided by the Office of the General Counsel with Committee members.**

Provisional agenda of the Evaluation Committee for 2014

8. The Committee considered the provisional agenda of the Evaluation Committee for 2014. IOE indicated that, subsequent to discussions with PMD, item 2 on the emerging findings of the corporate-level evaluation on the IFAD Policy on Grant Financing would be removed from the agenda for the eighty-second session, to ensure that Management had the opportunity to comment on a draft report prior to the presentation of emerging findings. Furthermore, depending on the final schedule of the Consultation on the Tenth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD10) the review of the evaluation synthesis on IFAD's engagement in middle-income countries may need to be brought forward to ensure its timely consideration in advance of deliberations on this topic during the IFAD10 Consultation. Members were also advised that an additional session(s) of the Committee may be required to consider the appointment of the Director, IOE.

9. The importance of an active Evaluation Committee was underscored. Some members made proposals for additional agenda items for consideration during 2014, including the: IFAD Private-Sector Strategy; IFAD's financing policies; IFAD's contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals; and IFAD's engagement with the post-2015 agenda. Considering the effect that this could have on IOE's future work programme, it was proposed that, for next year, the IOE work programme and the Evaluation Committee work programme be considered at the same session. In this regard, IOE recalled that, in accordance with the Committee's Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure, Evaluation Committee agendas focused on discussing evaluation-related reports and documents as well as reviewing new policies, which could draw on lessons learned from previous evaluations, prior to their submission to the Executive Board, rather than on dealing with broader issues on an ad hoc basis. IOE further recalled that it was operating with a reduced budget and, as such, the availability of resources should be borne in mind. Management welcomed the opportunity for bilateral dialogue should members wish to reconsider their positions with respect to IFAD's Private-Sector Strategy and advised that a synopsis of IFAD's impact since 2001 and its engagement in the post-2015 agenda could be prepared for the information of the Evaluation Committee at a future session.
10. **In conclusion, the Committee adopted the provisional agenda of the Evaluation Committee for 2014, revised to exclude item 2 from the agenda for the eighty-second session, and noted that additional meetings could be organized during the year, in accordance with the Committee's mandate and responsibilities, and taking into consideration financial implications.**

Revision of the procedures for selecting and appointing the Director, Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD contained in the IFAD Evaluation Policy

11. The Committee considered the revision of the procedures for selecting and appointing the Director, Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD contained in the IFAD Evaluation Policy and IOE's comments thereon. **The Committee endorsed the proposed text for the section of the Evaluation Policy pertaining to the procedures for selecting and appointing the IOE Director as presented and agreed to recommend the Board's approval thereof.**
12. There was engaged discussion with respect to the proposed amendments to paragraphs 64 and 82 concerning the procedures for handling corrective or disciplinary measures following integrity investigations of the IOE Director or IOE staff. All members agreed that this was an important issue and needed to be addressed. However, while some members wished to make a proposal to the Board in December, others called for additional time to allow for consultation with capitals. Some members also noted that information on best practices in use at other independent evaluation offices of international financial institutions would assist in deliberations.
13. **In conclusion, the Committee agreed that the amendments to paragraphs 64 and 82 of the Revised IFAD Evaluation Policy, taking into consideration the concerns raised by IOE, would be considered by the Evaluation Committee at its eighty-second session in March 2014, to allow time for members to consult with capitals. Subsequent to this review, the Evaluation Committee would submit, in April 2014, a final proposal to the Executive Board for revisions to paragraphs 64 and 82, as appropriate, prior to the appointment of the new Director, IOE.**
14. With respect to the financial implications of the recruitment process, it was clarified that these costs would be borne by IOE. A number of members advised that they would be reluctant to see an increase in IOE's budget submission and would prefer that the related costs be absorbed into the existing budget envelope by identifying

some activities that might be delayed to 2015. It was clarified that the financial impact would also depend on whether the search panel decided to engage a professional headhunting firm or not. **The Committee requested IOE to present to the forthcoming Evaluation Committee session possible adjustments to the budget submission to absorb recruitment-related costs, bearing in mind the input from Committee members.**

Other business

15. **The Chairperson indicated that subsequent to discussions at the 8 November informal meeting, the Committee had agreed not to pursue the idea of an annual report of the Evaluation Committee.**
16. With respect to the **2014 country visit**, members requested clarification on the role of the Evaluation Committee with respect to the choice of the destination. Committee members expressed the wish that the process be participatory and transparent, noting that they would welcome the opportunity to provide their views. Members requested that priority be given to least developed countries and fragile states when selecting the destination country. It was agreed that these views would be recorded in the Chairperson's report to the Executive Board for the Board's consideration. The Committee also requested the Secretary to convey these views to the forthcoming meeting of Convenors and Friends at which the 2014 country visit was to be discussed.
17. With respect to **logical frameworks**, IOE indicated that this issue would be a point of discussion in the preparation of the revised Evaluation Manual, particularly as regards the application of the complexity theory and how this affects evaluations, the assessment of effectiveness and impact, and the assessment of causality and attribution. One member expressed appreciation for the FailFair workshop, at which the complexity theory was among the issues discussed and requested that any additional information be shared with the Evaluation Committee, if available.