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Corporate-level evaluation of IFAD's decentralization experience

Approach paper

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Contents

Abbreviations and acronyms	ii
I. Introduction	1
II. Evolution of IFAD's decentralization approach	2
A. Conceptual evolution	2
B. Policy framework for IFAD's decentralization	4
C. Progress to date	5
III. Decentralization in comparator organizations	6
IV. Evaluation objectives and methodology	6
A. Objectives	6
B. Methodology	6
C. Data collection and information sources	9
V. Evaluation process	12
Annexes	
I. Evolution of IFAD's decentralization	13
II. IFAD's country offices	14
III. Review of decentralization experience in other development organizations	15
IV. Evaluation framework	18
V. Evaluation process	21
VI. Bibliography	23

Abbreviations and acronyms

AfDB	African Development Bank
APR	Asia and the Pacific
ADB	Asian Development Bank
CLE	corporate-level evaluation
COSOP	country strategic opportunities programme
CPM	country programme manager
ESA	East and Southern Africa
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FPPP	Field Presence Pilot Programme
ICO	IFAD country office
ICT	information and communications technology
IOE	Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
MDB	multilateral development bank
NEN	Near East and North Africa
PMD	Programme Management Department
WCA	West and Central Africa
WFP	World Food Programme

I. Introduction

1. Background. The Executive Board of IFAD adopted the Field Presence Pilot Programme (FPPP)¹ in 2003 for three years. Until that point in time and in line with the Agreement Establishing IFAD, the organization did not have any form of permanent presence in its developing Member States. The FPPP entailed the establishment of "field presence" in 15 of these states (three in each of the five geographical regions), with the overall aim of enhancing the development effectiveness of IFAD activities.
2. The Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD (IOE) undertook an evaluation of the FPPP in 2006/2007. Based on the findings and recommendations of the evaluation,² the Board adopted IFAD's first country presence strategy in 2011. The strategy underlined the need to consolidate the offices in the 15 pilot countries and further expand IFAD's country presence through the establishment of new IFAD Country Offices (ICOs).
3. The Board adopted a further country presence strategy in 2013, covering the period 2014-2015. This strategy went further, with the Board approving the establishment of 50 ICOs by the end of 2015. In addition to setting up and staffing the ICOs, IFAD adopted management, financial, human resource and administrative policies, practices and procedures to support the organization's decentralization process.
4. The formative evaluation. As decided by the IFAD Executive Board in December 2015, IOE will conduct a formative corporate-level evaluation (CLE) of IFAD's decentralization experience in 2016. The evaluation will be undertaken within the overall framework of the Revised IFAD Evaluation Policy (2011),³ and will follow the broad methodological fundamentals set out in the second edition of the Evaluation Manual (December 2015).⁴
5. The overarching purpose of the CLE is to undertake an independent assessment of IFAD's decentralization experience since 2003. It seeks to generate findings and recommendations to further strengthen IFAD's organizational decentralization with a view towards better development effectiveness on the ground.
6. This will be the first formative CLE, and thus represents a methodological innovation by IOE. Such evaluations are normally conducted before or during the implementation of a policy or a project, with the aim of supporting investment decisions, or informing further enhancements to design, process, priorities and implementation modalities, with the ultimate aim of achieving better performance.
7. A key distinguishing feature of formative evaluation is that particular attention will be devoted to learning and promoting dialogue with IFAD Management and other concerned stakeholders at key stages in the evaluation process. For example, IOE will provide feedback to Management on the CLE's emerging findings at an early stage in the process, so that these findings may appropriately inform the development of IFAD's decentralization plan.
8. This formative evaluation will also include a summative character, in particular with the aim of assessing the contribution of IFAD decentralization towards better operational performance and development results. The CLE recommendations will therefore be based on thorough triangulation of evidence and are expected to cover different dimensions of IFAD's decentralization, including in the areas of organizational architecture, delegation of authority, ICO models, and related budget and human resource implications.

¹ FPPP design document: www.ifad.org/gbdocs/eb/80/e/EB-2003-80-R-4.pdf.

² Evaluation report: www.ifad.org/gbdocs/eb/91/e/EB-2007-91-R-6.pdf.

³ www.ifad.org/gbdocs/eb/102/e/EB-2011-102-R-7-Rev-2.pdf.

⁴ www.ifad.org/evaluation/process_methodology/doc/manual.pdf.

9. It is timely that IOE evaluate IFAD's decentralization efforts and experience in 2016: (i) decentralization is an important area of organizational reform during the Tenth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD10) period (2016-2018); and (ii) in December 2016, Management is planning to present a corporate decentralization plan to the Executive Board, which will document IFAD's overall approach and future actions related to the Fund's decentralization in the medium term. The findings of this evaluation will thus inform the preparation of the corporate decentralization plan.
10. The evaluation will be conducted in record time for similar CLEs and will be fully completed this year. Its results will be presented to the Executive Board in December 2016.

II. Evolution of IFAD's decentralization approach

A. Conceptual evolution

11. The term "decentralization" can have multiple interpretations. The World Bank, Asian Development Bank and African Development Bank have similar definitions. For these organizations, decentralization is a process that involves transfer of the authority and power to plan, make decisions and manage resources from higher to lower levels of the organizational hierarchy, in order to facilitate efficient and effective service delivery.⁵
12. In the IFAD context, as it emerges from the various country presence strategies approved since 2011, decentralization is generally understood to be the process of redistributing or dispersing functions, powers, people and some decision-making authority from headquarters to ICOs. The concept of decentralization at IFAD has evolved since the field presence initiative launched in the early 2000s. Key events in the evolution of IFAD's decentralization are briefly discussed below (see also annex I).
13. Field presence (2003-2007). During consultations on IFAD5 (2002) and IFAD6 (2005) of IFAD's Resources, the lack of an institutional presence in IFAD's developing Member States was recognized as a key constraint on achieving greater impact on rural poverty. Member States thus requested Management to conduct a detailed study of the possibility of an IFAD presence in the field and to identify options for enhancing IFAD's role and capacity at the country level. The findings and recommendations of that study⁶ were presented to the Executive Board in December 2002.
14. As mentioned earlier, after thorough consultation, in December 2003 the Board approved a dedicated programme for field presence, the FPPP, for a three-year period (2004-2006). The FPPP was designed with the main aim of strengthening project performance by focusing on four interrelated dimensions: project implementation, policy dialogue, partnership-building and knowledge management.
15. The FPPP was largely managed under the responsibility of the Programme Management Department (PMD). The offices set up under the FPPP were mainly seen as an "extension" of PMD, to enable the Fund to better respond to its programmatic needs in the countries concerned. All 15 field presence pilots were staffed by nationally recruited officers, though, at the time, outside the FPPP, IFAD had two country programme managers (CPMs) outposted to the Plurinational State of Bolivia and Panama in the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) region.

⁵ Within this broad definition, three main forms of decentralization can be identified: (i) de-concentration: the transfer of some authority to lower bureaucratic levels within central government agencies; (ii) delegation: responsibility and resources for implementing specific tasks and delivering specific services are transferred to a public agency, a local government, a private enterprise, etc.; (iii) devolution: local institutions have both high autonomy from the central government and high accountability to local service users.

⁶ www.ifad.org/gbdocs/eb/77/e/EB-2002-77-R-9-REV-1.pdf.

16. As requested by the Executive Board in 2003, IOE assessed the FPPP at the end of the pilot. The evaluation found that, on the whole, project performance was better in countries with field presence, as compared with countries without. However, it also underlined that, inter alia, the effectiveness of the programme was constrained by lack of training of the field presence officers, insufficient IT support – resulting in lack of access to key IFAD loan and portfolio management systems – and limited delegation of authority.
17. Country presence (2007-2013). The FPPP evaluation presented to the Board in September 2007 recommended that, among other issues, IFAD should:
 - (a) Embark on an expanded country presence programme. In particular, it recommended that the FPPP be transformed into a new programme called the IFAD Country Presence Programme, which would aim to consolidate the evidence behind emerging positive results and to determine the most cost-effective form of IFAD country presence to adopt in the future to enhance overall development effectiveness.
 - (b) Develop a country presence policy after 2010. The evaluation noted that it was crucial that IFAD develop such a policy, given that the Fund was created as a headquarters-centric institution. Establishment of country presence would represent a fundamental change in the overall structure and operations of the Fund. The evaluation also recommended an evolution in the concept from "field presence" to "country presence" to promote a more comprehensive, integrated engagement of the Fund at the country level.
18. Since then, the term "country presence" has been widely used in IFAD. For instance, in the Activity Plan and the IFAD Country Presence Policy and Strategy introduced in 2011, it was anticipated that country offices, apart from providing support to project design and supervision and implementation support, would also work on partnership-building, policy dialogue, knowledge management, innovation, and resource mobilization, and would undertake activities to strengthen IFAD's visibility and identity in the country.
19. IFAD country offices and decentralization (2014 onwards). The term "IFAD country office" and the concept of "decentralization" were first used in the IFAD Country Presence Strategy (2014-2015), approved by the Board in December 2013. The term aimed to underline the importance of pursuing country presence as an IFAD-wide, rather than a PMD-centric, initiative.
20. Similarly, recent emphasis on decentralization is an explicit recognition that ICOs are an integral part of IFAD's broader organizational architecture, and that attention is also needed to systematically decentralizing key administrative and support functions. This will ensure that IFAD – with its headquarters in Rome and a number of ICOs in the five regions – can function effectively and efficiently and in an integrated manner to deliver its mandate.
21. Thus, in addition to "programmatic" decentralization (e.g. by tasking ICOs to take on lead roles in project supervision and implementation support), much more attention is now being devoted simultaneously to "administrative" decentralization (e.g. in human resources management, safety and security, information and communications technology [ICT], travel and other services). To support this administrative decentralization, IFAD established the Field Support Unit in 2013 within the Corporate Services Department (CSD), with the mandate to manage field security operations, host country- and service-level agreements and provide coordination and advisory services aimed at strengthening the functionality of ICOs.
22. As a further reflection of the more corporate approach to IFAD's decentralization, the Fund has established an interdepartmental steering committee, the Country Presence Coordination Group. This group was established about eight years ago

and was previously chaired only by the Associate Vice-President (AVP), PMD. Since 2013, however, it has been co-chaired by the AVP, PMD and the AVP, CSD, so that IFAD's decentralization can be better coordinated across the entire organization.⁷

B. Policy framework for IFAD's decentralization

23. Following the FPPP evaluation, the Executive Board approved a number of key documents providing a framework for implementation of IFAD's decentralization. The first, the Activity Plan for Country Presence, was discussed by the Board in December 2007. It set out the plan used by Management as a roadmap for integrating country presence initiatives into IFAD's administrative and budgetary processes with a view to greater efficiency and effectiveness.
24. From 2008 to 2010, Management presented annual progress reports to the Board. The reports followed a similar format summarizing progress made in strengthening institutional arrangements, results achieved in programmatic activities (e.g. policy dialogue, knowledge management, reporting and monitoring), financial management (e.g. ICO budgets), etc.
25. Considering the recommendation of the FPPP evaluation, and as committed to in the Executive Board session of September 2007, Management undertook a self-assessment in 2010 to evaluate overall performance and lessons learned since inception of IFAD's country presence initiative. On the basis of the findings of the assessment and the experience of other international financial institutions, the Executive Board approved the IFAD Country Presence Policy and Strategy in the September 2011 session (hereafter referred as the "2011 policy") to establish country offices to enhance IFAD's development effectiveness and cost efficiency.
26. The 2011 policy set up a midterm strategy from 2011 to 2013, objectives for country offices and criteria for opening these offices, among other features. It further stated that more country offices, with a cap of 40, would be established by the end of IFAD8 (2013), which would cover about "two thirds of the number of projects in the portfolio under implementation and three quarters of the value of the portfolio under implementation". An "exit strategy" was also introduced in the 2011 policy, according to which IFAD would close offices that had become less relevant to the country programme or those that were judged as not contributing to the objectives of the policy.
27. In 2013, based on a review of the 2011 policy – and while the overall policy framework approved by the Executive Board remaining unchanged – IFAD Management proposed several revisions to be implemented in an IFAD Country Presence Strategy (2014-2015).⁸ The objective of this updated strategy is to "continue to strengthen existing offices and establish new country offices in recipient countries where they can contribute to improving the development effectiveness and cost efficiency of IFAD's operations". In particular, in view of IFAD's field presence experience and considering the changing circumstances of its borrowing/recipient Member States, the relationship between ICOs and headquarters is further explored to ensure that human resource arrangements, the connectivity of ICOs and the delegation of authority to ICOs are adequate to enable ICO staff to perform its "representative role" as expected.
28. This strategy proposed that a total number of 50 ICOs be established by 2015. These 50 ICOs would cover a group of countries containing 89 per cent of the world rural population, 70 per cent of the total number of IFAD-funded projects, 83 per

⁷ A January 2016 President's bulletin further reinforced the corporate nature of IFAD's decentralization by formally defining the responsibilities of the renamed Corporate Decentralization Coordination Group (CDCG).

⁸ Document EB 2013/110/R.5/Rev.1.

cent of total IFAD financing and 79 per cent of the indicative PBAS allocation for IFAD9.⁹

29. Costs. Cost considerations related to decentralization have been at the core of discussions between IFAD and its governing bodies. In this regard, there are two key dimensions: (i) phasing out, from 2007 onwards, of the outsourcing of project supervision and implementation support to cooperating institutions, in particular to the United Nations Office for Project Services; and (ii) moving from a light-touch country presence approach to a full corporate decentralization plan with more delegation of authority and responsibility.
30. The discontinuation of supervision and implementation-support outsourcing allowed, initially, for absorption of costs related to the country presence approach within existing overall administrative budget levels.
31. Once IFAD embarked on its full corporate decentralization plan, it became more evident from experience and information obtained during the initial set up of country offices that prior assumptions of a comprehensive decentralization initiative being cost-neutral were unsubstantiated, given the expected allocations needed towards the setting up of ICOs and continuing undertaking of direct supervision, implementation support, additional policy dialogue and knowledge management activities. IFAD's decentralization process is now considered one of the cost drivers of the Fund's 2016 administrative budget.¹⁰

C. Progress to date

32. Models for country presence. By 2011, there were two main models of country office. Under the first model, a national staff member, recruited as the country programme officer (CPO), led the country office to support a Rome-based CPM. The level of delegated authority to the country office was minimal in this model. Under the second model, an outposted CPM takes full management responsibility for the office, with the support of a nationally or internationally recruited CPO. This model was later strengthened, with short-term technical expertise recruited as needed and additional administrative support provided by local General Service (GS) staff and GS staff at headquarters. With regard to outposting, of the 55 CPMs in total, 19 are currently outposted to recipient countries (annex II).
33. A third type of country office subsequently emerged in which a CPM- or CPO-led ICO provides services to a neighbouring country. A fourth model is the regional office, which has only been established in Kenya. It is a regional service centre for the East and Southern Africa (ESA) region, including outposted staff of the Controller's and Financial Services Division serving both ESA and the West and Central Africa (WCA) region. The head of the ESA regional office is also the CPM for Kenya. More recently, a variation of the outposted CPM model is emerging in which a larger ICO functions as a subregional hub in LAC and the Asia and the Pacific (APR) region, and provides support to and oversees multiple countries in the subregion. In sum, the CLE will analysis the contribution of ICOs to better performance, taking into account the different models rather than drawing conclusions from the average performance of all models.
34. Established ICOs. As indicated in table 1, of the 50 ICOs approved by the Executive Board, 41 have been established and 40 are currently functional (see annex II for further detail). Of the 40 functioning ICOs, 11 are in APR, 9 in ESA, 5 in LAC, 4 in the Near East, North Africa and Europe (NEN) region and 11 in WCA. The ICO in Panama was closed in 2015. Of the 50 host country agreements required, 32 have been signed and 9 are in the process of negotiation.¹¹

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ See paragraph 48 of the 2016 IFAD programme of work and budget document.

¹¹ Data retrieved from Field Support Unit (as of January 2016).

Table 1
Status of ICOs

Region	ICOs approved by 2015	ICOs established by 2015
APR	13	11
ESA	10	9
NEN	6	4
LAC	7	6
WCA	14	11
Total	50	41

Source: IFAD Country Presence Strategy (2014-2015) and data retrieved from PowerPoint presentations prepared by each regional division in November 2015.

* The Panama ICO closed in 2013. Thus the current number of operational ICOs is 40.

III. Decentralization in comparator organizations

35. Many other development organizations have decentralized before IFAD. Thus their experience and lessons would be useful to the Fund, taking carefully into account, however, the specific organizational architecture, mandate and operating model of IFAD.
36. In preparing this approach paper, IOE undertook an initial review of the approaches and experience of selected comparator organizations in their decentralization efforts (annex III). This review was conducted by analysing publicly available documentation, including evaluations by comparator organizations of their decentralization processes – with a view towards an initial understanding of their approach to and experiences with the topic.

IV. Evaluation objectives and methodology

A. Objectives

37. The overarching objectives of the CLE are to assess:
 - (i) IFAD's decentralization experience and efforts, including the underlying assumptions;
 - (ii) The contribution of IFAD decentralization to better operational performance and development results on the ground; and
 - (iii) Costs of the decentralization process in relation to the results achieved.
38. In addition to the above three core objectives, the CLE will generate findings and recommendations to further strengthen IFAD's organizational decentralization.

B. Methodology

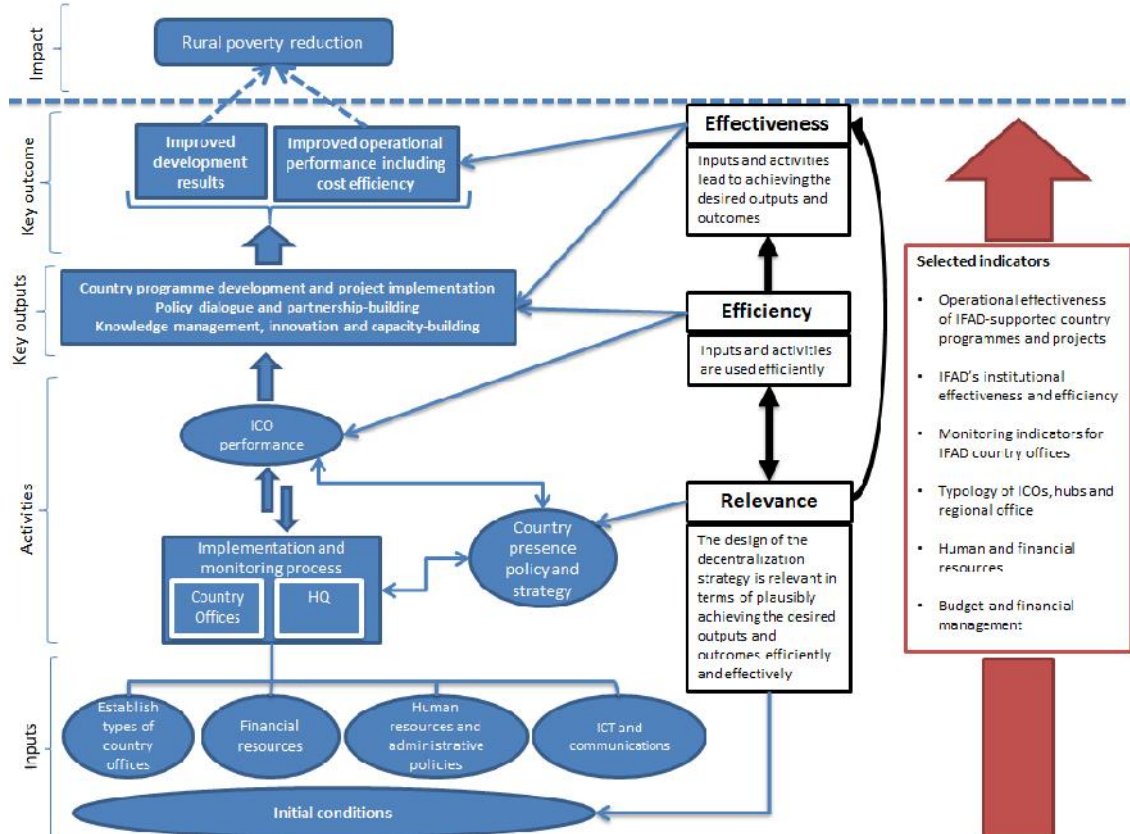
39. Evaluation coverage. The evaluation will cover IFAD's decentralization experience in the five regions in which IFAD operates, from 2003 – when IFAD initiated the FPPP – through end-2015. However, in line with its formative nature, the CLE will also assess the main elements and directions of the forthcoming update on IFAD's country presence strategy that Management will present to the Executive Board in April 2016.
40. Although IOE conducted a CLE of the FPPP in 2006/2007, it is important to clarify that the 2016 CLE on decentralization is much more comprehensive and broader in

scope. It will, however, draw on evidence generated during the FPPP evaluation and will assess the extent to which its recommendations were internalized by the Fund, but will not aim to re-evaluate the pilot programme per se.

41. Methodology. The formative CLE will be anchored in three internationally recognized evaluation criteria: relevance, effectiveness and efficiency. A key dimension that will distinguish this formative evaluation – as reflected later in the approach paper in subsection C on data collection and information sources – is that added attention will be devoted to stakeholder engagement and learning at key stages of the evaluation.
42. The CLE will adopt a mixed-method approach, using qualitative and quantitative data collection tools and analysis, to provide a thorough assessment of IFAD's decentralization efforts and experience to date. In particular, and as outlined in subsection C of this section, the evaluation will assess IFAD's operational performance¹² and development results in countries "with and without" ICOs, as well as "before and after" the establishment of the respective ICOs.
43. The broad aim of this analysis will be to determine the contribution of ICOs to furthering IFAD's mandate on the ground, while recognizing that enhanced country presence is but one contributing factor to better results. In this regard, careful attention will be devoted to establishing credible counterfactuals, for instance by considering country contexts and the fact that, in some countries without ICOs, IFAD has at times contracted national consultants to perform the functions that are normally discharged by country programme officers in ICOs.
44. Results chain. In line with international good practice in enhancing the transparency and clarity of the subject being evaluated, figure 1 presents a simplified version of the CLE's results chain. The figure maps the results chain to the evaluation criteria that will be used to assess the performance of IFAD's decentralization efforts. However, its purpose is not to illustrate explicitly how all other associated corporate policies (e.g. direct supervision and implementation support, or human resources policy) contribute to fulfilling IFAD's decentralization objectives.
45. The CLE is designed to assess initial conditions underlying the decentralization framework and issues at the input, activity, output and outcome levels in the results chain. Outputs and outcomes are affected by many country factors other than the work of ICOs (e.g. local beneficiaries, climate, harvests, price movements, macroeconomic conditions, security conditions, governance, institutional capacity issues and availability of counterpart funds). The CLE will focus on contribution rather than on attribution at this level. The impact of the work of ICOs in reducing rural poverty at the aggregate level would be difficult to measure objectively. Thus the CLE is not designed to assess achievements at the impact level. The same applies to sustainability of benefits.

¹² IFAD's operational performance includes several aspects, including, for instance: rate of loan disbursement, time taken from loan approval to entry into force, project implementation duration (including time overrun), time taken to design new investment projects, etc. Better operational performance is expected to be a key driver of achieving better development results.

Figure 1
Results chain for the CLE of IFAD's Decentralization Experience



Source: IOE.

46. Evaluation framework. Annex IV contains the CLE's evaluation framework, which includes the three criteria (relevance, effectiveness and efficiency) that will be used in the evaluation, key questions and sub-questions by criterion, sources of data, and instruments for data and information collection.
47. The framework will be further developed and fine-tuned at the outset of the evaluation process. One key feature is inclusion of the monitoring framework for ICOs, including indicators and targets adopted by the Executive Board in the context of IFAD's country presence strategy. In this regard, the CLE will assess the robustness of the indicators, as well progress against targets. Moreover, pertinent indicators from IFAD's corporate Results Measurement Framework will also be included in the evaluation framework.
48. Evaluation criteria and key questions. The following paragraphs present the main evaluation questions and sub-questions, by evaluation criterion, that will be covered by the CLE.
49. Relevance. The evaluation will analyse: (i) the relevance of the objectives of the decentralization strategy in relation to IFAD's mandate and corporate policies, as well as to the needs of poor people in developing member countries; and (ii) the design and assumptions underlying IFAD's decentralization approach.
50. The key questions in assessing relevance are:
 - How relevant were the design and assumptions of the decentralization and country presence strategy to enhancing IFAD's operational performance, results and cost efficiency?
 - How relevant are the criteria adopted for establishing ICOs?

- How have decentralization efforts contributed to strengthening IFAD's overall institutional architecture, for example in the area of human resource management?
 - How relevant is the results framework of the strategy, including its monitoring and reporting system?
 - Did IFAD put an organizational structure, systems and processes in place that ensure smooth implementation of the decentralization strategy?
51. Effectiveness. The overarching question is the extent to which IFAD's decentralization has led to better results on the ground.
- To what extent has decentralization contributed to better performance of country strategies, lending and non-lending activities, and alignment and coordination?
 - Has decentralization enabled IFAD to better inform its corporate policies and strategies based on enhanced knowledge and lessons from the field?
 - Has decentralization enhanced cooperation with government authorities, as well as with international development partners, including the Rome-based agencies?
 - Has decentralization enabled better engagement of non-governmental actors, notably the civil society and private sector organizations?
 - How has decentralization affected IFAD's capacity for resource mobilization, including cofinancing from both international and domestic sources?
 - What are the results in terms of country-level scaling up?
52. Efficiency. The evaluation will review the administrative resources used in the design, implementation, monitoring and overall management of the decentralization model. It will answer the following key questions:
- What has been the overall cost of decentralization and its implications for IFAD headquarters?
 - What are the costs of IFAD's decentralization in relation to the benefits accrued (e.g. in terms of operational performance and development results)?
 - What are the main cost drivers associated with the decentralization process?
 - What are the costs and internal organizational arrangements at headquarters for managing the decentralization process (including arrangements for host country agreements)?
 - What are the cost savings and efficiency gains in the decentralization of core functions such as financial and human resource management, ICT, administrative services? Are other lower-cost alternatives available?
 - Are country offices and staff adequately supported by headquarters and by the existing corporate policies, including human resource policies? Is there sufficient delegation of authority? Are country offices provided with adequate resources to support the lending portfolio and to engage in non-lending activities?

C. Data collection and information sources

53. The evaluation will use mixed methods and collect both quantitative and qualitative information and data from a range of sources (e.g. document reviews; semi-structured interviews of key informants; regional/country consultations; quantitative analysis of data available in various IFAD information systems; analysis of relevant evaluations; an electronic survey of stakeholders; case studies;

and examination of comparator organizations). The major information sources are described in the following paragraphs.

54. Management self-assessment. In line with the IFAD Evaluation Policy, Management is normally required to conduct a formal self-assessment as an input to CLEs by IOE. However, no formal self-assessment will be required for this CLE because Management has undertaken several self-assessments in the past 5-7 years as inputs towards the development and updating of its country presence strategy. IOE will review the available self-assessments and will draw on them and the supporting material in lieu of a formal self-assessment. In addition, IOE will collect additional information and feedback through interviews and focus group discussions (see below) with IFAD Management and staff at key stages in the evaluation process.
55. Document review. The evaluation team will review all key documents available in IFAD on the topic. These include, inter alia, country presence strategies, management activity plans, self-assessments, final reports from selected IFAD replenishment consultations, the Fund's annual programmes of work and budget, President's bulletins on topics related to decentralization,¹³ human resource policies and procedures (e.g. related to delegation of authority to outposted staff), audit reports produced by the Office of Audit and Oversight and other pertinent documents.
56. Moreover, the evaluation team will mine IOE evaluation reports, which are key to performing the "before and after" and "with and without" analyses. In addition to the FPPP evaluation, many country programme evaluations include pertinent information on IFAD's decentralization. The Annual Reports on Results and Impact of IFAD Operations (ARRIs) and related CLEs (e.g. on IFAD's efficiency) will also be reviewed to extract relevant information. A structured approach to analysing the evaluation reports will be based on evaluation criteria and questions that the CLE is expected to cover.
57. Key informant interviews in IFAD. Semi-structured interviews will be a major source of information for the evaluation team. Interviews will be scheduled as necessary during the course of the evaluation. A wide range of partners will be interviewed at headquarters, including selected members of the Evaluation Committee and the Executive Board, Senior Management and key staff in PMD and other departments dealing with administrative matters, budget/finance, human resources, ITC, corporate support services and internal audit. While some interviews will focus on specific issues, others will be broader and designed to seek feedback on questions in the evaluation framework. Some will be one-on-one interviews and some will be in focus groups. Efforts will be made to supplement the headquarters interviews with teleconference interviews with selected staff of ICOs. Feedback collected through interviews will be treated as confidential and will not be disclosed in a manner that can be traced back to the source.
58. Analysis of IFAD's quantitative data. The evaluation will include quantitative analysis based on data available in IOE (such as the ARRI) and IFAD databases (such as the Grants and Investment Projects System (GRIPS), Flexcube). The main purpose of the analysis will be to assess whether IFAD's decentralization efforts, through the establishment of different types of ICOs, are contributing to better development effectiveness.
59. Data will be analysed for countries with and without ICOs, and within countries, before and after ICOs were established. Statistical analysis will be undertaken to determine whether differences are statistically significant. Data will also be

¹³ For example, a bulletin issued on 21 January 2016 reported on the Responsibilities of the Corporate Decentralization Coordination Group.

extracted from IFAD's financial, human resource and administrative systems to assess the issues highlighted in the evaluation framework. A dedicated assessment of the financial costs related to IFAD's organizational decentralization will be part of this analysis.

60. In particular, ratings generated by IOE in past evaluations will be a key source of information in assessing the contribution of ICOs to the organization's operational performance and results, including in terms of performance of the project portfolio, non-lending activities (i.e. policy dialogue, knowledge management and partnership-building) and country strategies (i.e. country strategic opportunities programmes [COSOPs]). Similarly, ratings generated through IFAD's self-evaluation system will also be drawn on where appropriate (project status reports, project completion reports, etc.), including those assigned by the Quality Assurance Group (for project design).
61. Electronic survey of IFAD staff and stakeholders. An electronic survey will be used to extend the reach of the evaluation team to seek feedback from many stakeholders (e.g. Executive Board members, Senior Management, IFAD staff at headquarters and in ICOs, key government officials, project staff, the local donor community and representatives of civil society). The evaluation team will design a web-based survey. Survey questions will be formulated to cover key issues identified in the evaluation framework. IOE will coordinate with PMD to ensure synergy between this CLE activity and the client surveys that will be done by IFAD Management in 2016.
62. Regional workshops and selected country visits to ICOs. The number of country visits will be limited by the time and resources available for the CLE. However, to ensure credibility of the evaluation's analysis, IOE must obtain input from in-country stakeholders, in particular to capture feedback from IFAD clients such as government officials, project staff, other development partners and representatives of beneficiaries. Four regional consultation workshops are planned: one each in Africa (Nairobi), Asia (Hanoi), Latin America and the Caribbean (Lima) and the Near East, North Africa and Europe (at headquarters). Apart from the latter, the regional consultations will allow IOE to also assess the functioning of the only IFAD regional office (Nairobi) and the country offices in Peru and Viet Nam.
63. IFAD staff (including those in ICOs) will cover their own costs of participation in the regional consultations. IOE will develop a concept note, which will outline in more detail the broad objectives, overall methodology and process for collection of information through the four regional consultations. Moreover, IOE will selectively cover the costs of government representatives and representatives of beneficiaries to facilitate their participation in the consultations.
64. Case studies. In addition to the above, IOE will prepare a few case studies in countries with different models of ICOs, with the specific aim of identifying good practices and lessons learned in IFAD's decentralization. For this purpose, additional country visits will be undertaken to selected countries, which will be done, however, within the framework of other evaluations (e.g. country strategy and programme evaluations or project performance evaluations) being carried out by IOE in 2016. The criteria for selecting countries to visit will be developed at the outset of the process, and will include fragile states, as well as countries with ICOs and those without. In addition to the new case studies, the evidence base will be augmented by reviewing findings from recent country programme evaluations.
65. Study of comparator organizations. The experience of and lessons from selected comparator institutions will be examined to identify key lessons of relevance to IFAD. In this regard, it is important to underline that the CLE will consider the experiences and lessons of other organizations carefully, ensuring their relevance to IFAD. The CLE plans to study the following comparator organizations: AfDB, ADB, the Inter-American Development Bank, Food and

Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Food Programme (WFP), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and the World Bank. The comparator study will be based both on a thorough literature review, on a survey of these organizations and interviews with key staff.

V. Evaluation process

66. The evaluation phases, deliverables, review process, team and timeline are shown in annex V.

Evolution of IFAD's decentralization

Timeline	Main events
2016	IOE undertakes a corporate-level evaluation on IFAD's decentralization
2013	The Executive Board approved the IFAD country presence strategy (2014-2015) with revisions proposed by Management captured therein
	The Executive Board approved the IFAD country presence policy and strategy
2008 - 2010	Annual progress report on the Activity plan for IFAD's country presence prepared by Management
2007	Corporate-level evaluation on IFAD's Field Presence Pilot Programme conducted by IOE IFAD Management presented the Activity plan for IFAD's country presence
2006	The Executive Board approved IFAD policy on supervision and implementation support
	The first country presence initiative, the three-year Field Presence Pilot Programme, was approved by the Executive Board
2002	A proposal to enhance IFAD's field presence by strengthening in-country capacity was presented to the Executive Board
2000 - 2002	The issue of IFAD's presence in countries was discussed during the Consultation of the Fifth Replenishment

IFAD Country Offices

Region	Approved (December 2015)	Actually established (November 2015)	Effective/operational (November 2015)
APR	13 Afghanistan Bangladesh Cambodia China India Indonesia Lao PDR Myanmar Nepal Pakistan Philippines Sri Lanka Viet Nam	11 Bangladesh Cambodia China India Indonesia Lao PDR Nepal Pakistan Philippines Sri Lanka Viet Nam	11 Bangladesh Cambodia China India Indonesia Lao PDR Nepal Pakistan Philippines Sri Lanka Viet Nam
ESA	10 Burundi Ethiopia Kenya Madagascar Malawi Mozambique Rwanda Uganda United Republic of Tanzania Zambia	9 Burundi Ethiopia Kenya Madagascar Mozambique Rwanda Uganda United Republic of Tanzania Zambia	9 Burundi Ethiopia Kenya Madagascar Mozambique Rwanda Uganda United Republic of Tanzania Zambia
LAC	7 Bolivia (Plurinational State of) Brazil Colombia Guatemala Haiti Panama Peru	6 Bolivia (Plurinational State of) Brazil Guatemala Haiti Panama (closed in 2013) Peru	5 Bolivia (Plurinational State of) Brazil Guatemala Haiti Peru
NEN	6 Egypt Kyrgyzstan/Tajikistan Morocco Sudan Turkey Yemen	4 Egypt Morocco Sudan Yemen	4 Egypt Morocco Sudan Yemen
WCA	14 Benin Burkina Faso Cameroon Chad Côte d'Ivoire Democratic Republic of the Congo Ghana Guinea Liberia Mali Niger Nigeria Senegal Sierra Leone	11 Burkina Faso Cameroon Côte d'Ivoire Democratic Republic of the Congo Ghana Guinea Mali Niger Nigeria Senegal Sierra Leone	11 Burkina Faso Cameroon Côte d'Ivoire Democratic Republic of the Congo Ghana Guinea Mali Niger Nigeria Senegal Sierra Leone
Total	50	41	40

Source: IFAD Country Presence Strategy (2014-2015) and data provided by Field Support Unit.

Review of decentralization experience in other development organizations

A. Decentralization in multilateral development banks

1. The main aim of decentralization in major multilateral development banks (MDBs) is driven by the premise that: (i) development requires building local capacity and this necessitates in-country presence; (ii) local presence improves country knowledge, facilitates better alignment and coordination and improves project quality and development effectiveness; and (iii) closer proximity to governments and clients leads to better understanding their needs, thus helping to improve client service and operational effectiveness.
2. However, there are also management and organizational issues associated with the increasing numbers, roles and responsibilities of MDB country offices. These include: (i) moving international staff to field offices and recruiting more local staff can increase costs; (ii) dispersing sector specialists risks undermining cross-institution knowledge-sharing; and (iii) cultural silos can emerge when MDB staff are in many different locations.
3. The African Development Bank (AfDB) has a decentralization roadmap covering the period from 2011 to 2015¹⁴ under which AfDB aims to: (i) strengthen its existing field offices through increased staffing and greater responsibilities in portfolio management and implementation, including analysis to support policy dialogue with governments; (ii) expand its presence in fragile countries to better respond to specific country needs, including donor coordination and harmonization; and (iii) consolidate regional capacity by reorganizing existing regional offices and opening new ones to increase sharing of technical and specialist skills. AfDB's Independent Development Evaluation Department conducted an evaluation¹⁵ of the bank's decentralization strategy and process in 2009. One of the four main recommendations was that the bank establish a clear structure for management of the decentralization process. Another relevant evaluation to be analysed is the bank's decentralization roadmap.¹⁶
4. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has implemented three major resident mission policies (1982, 1986, 2000). Initially, ADB's resident missions were focused on portfolio management and were located in countries experiencing portfolio performance problems. The 2000 Resident Mission Policy allowed ADB to expand operations and increase its client-oriented role and activities in the field. The 2000 policy defined resident mission strategic objectives, partnership objectives, standard functions, and specific functions. It significantly expanded the role of the resident missions to include: (i) government relations and increasing partnerships; (ii) macroeconomic monitoring; (iii) country strategy development and programming; (iv) supporting project processing; (v) policy dialogue, thematic work and knowledge management; (vi) project supervision; and (vii) external relations. As a result, the size of the missions increased, given the added responsibilities.
5. The 2013 corporate evaluation study on "ADB's decentralization: progress and operational performance" focused on the performance of decentralization for quality service delivery and development effectiveness and provided policy recommendations.

¹⁴ AfDB, *Decentralization Roadmap* (Tunis, 2011). www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Policy-Documents/-Rev-3-Decentralization-Roadmap-pdf.

¹⁵ See evaluation report at www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Generic-Documents/BP-Decentralization-Summary-Report.FINAL.EN.pdf.

¹⁶ See evaluation report at www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Policy-Documents/-Rev-3-Decentralization-Roadmap-pdf.

It recommended, among other issues, that ADB should strengthen the technical capacity of resident missions and delegate more operational responsibility to them.¹⁷

6. The World Bank has a long history of organizational reforms to strengthen its performance towards client responsiveness, effectiveness, quality service delivery and technical excellence. Following several earlier reorganizations, the 1997 reform resulted in the introduction of the 'matrix organization' and increased decentralization.¹⁸ The 1997 reorganization was designed to deepen the country focus and responsiveness to client needs, with greater decentralization of country directors to the field and devolution of authority over strategy and budgets to them. Initially, decentralization led to devolved project implementation and transactions, followed by devolved policy and institutional development skills related to fiduciary issues.
7. The World Bank continues to see decentralization as an important measure to pursue cost effectiveness in general, and in particular to increase client responsiveness, improve country ownership, strengthen partnership and ensure wider integration of global with country knowledge. Part of the success of these reforms is the bank's ability to ensure a critical mass of high-quality technical expertise to ensure development effectiveness in a setting that is even more decentralized.
8. In 2012, the Independent Evaluation Group of the World Bank conducted an evaluation of the bank's organizational effectiveness. The broad aim of this evaluation was to assess the extent to which the dual objectives of the matrix system have been achieved and if the system has enhanced the bank's development effectiveness. The evaluation made three main recommendations, which were to: (i) enhance incentives and resources; (ii) invest more in strategic, economic, and sector work and business development; and (iii) develop and implement a plan to enhance the effectiveness of its matrix structure and management.¹⁹

B. Decentralization in United Nations agencies

9. Some of the common policy objectives behind the establishment of country offices in other United Nations agencies include: (i) facilitating strong partnerships with host countries and improving the alignment of development programmes with the host country's development objectives and priorities; (ii) reducing transaction costs by better understanding prevailing enabling environments and development challenges and by improving responsiveness, timeliness and quality of service delivery; and (iii) optimizing development effectiveness.
10. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has a long history in organizational decentralization. It intensified its decentralization process in the 1990s to: (i) bring technical and operational expertise closer to client countries and regions; (ii) reduce costs; and (iii) make the best use of national capacities.²⁰ Decentralizing required FAO to balance moving technical expertise closer to its clients and maintaining a critical mass of expertise at headquarters. While some authority was delegated to the decentralized locations, efforts were made to maintain adequate control and stewardship of resources and transparent reporting lines to senior management.
11. Since 2006, FAO has embarked on a major strengthening of the decentralization process. Decentralization is viewed as being a critical element in improving the effectiveness of FAO's work, thereby improving the organization's overall performance and results. This involved creating a more decentralized structure and adopting a new management approach, with increased delegation of authority and encouraging of

¹⁷ See evaluation report at www.adb.org/documents/corporate-evaluation-study-adbs-decentralization-progress-and-operational-performance.

¹⁸ World Bank, *The Matrix System at Work: An Evaluation of the World Bank's Organizational Effectiveness* (Washington, D.C., 2012). www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/008/j2937e/j2937e00.htm.

¹⁹ See evaluation report at <http://ieg.worldbankgroup.org/matrix-system-work>.

²⁰ [FAO. Reforming FAO Decentralization](http://www.fao.org/docrep/x4104e/x4104e09.htm). www.fao.org/docrep/x4104e/x4104e09.htm.

staff creativity and initiative. In 2015, the Office of Evaluation of FAO did a synthesis of the evaluations of FAO's regional and subregional offices. Overall, the synthesis found that there has been progress made over time towards a more inclusive and harmonized management model across the whole organization.²¹

12. World Food Programme (WFP). The main purpose of decentralization in WFP was to bring authority, responsibility for decision-making, senior staff and specialists closer to field operations and activities. Country offices were strengthened in terms of personnel and resources, and an intermediate level in the form of a regional bureau was set up between headquarters and country levels, thus creating a three-tier administrative structure. The roles and responsibilities of WFP's Rome headquarters staff were modified in such way that the prime function was to provide normative guidance and advice and support services to the field entities. Country offices became major front-line actors in the preparation and implementation of operations, linked with accountability for the resources used for these operations.

C. Lessons learned from the decentralization experience of comparator organizations

13. Each institution is unique and has a different organizational culture and corporate objectives. While there may be commonalities in the objectives of decentralization, there is no one decentralization model that may be considered applicable to all development organizations. However, four general lessons can be drawn about the design and implementation of organizational decentralization:²²
 - (i) Decentralization usually requires multiple iterations to optimize structures and is a long-term process.²³
 - (ii) "One size does not fit all." Different development organizations have made different choices, and some have made different choices in different regions, to suit their mandate, size, operating model and resource availability.
 - (iii) Key decentralization parameters in MDBs include: (a) ensuring clarity in reporting lines of staff; (b) articulating the roles of country managers and sector chiefs in project approvals; and (c) control of project design and supervision budgets.
 - (iv) "People issues" (e.g. incentives for people to move) must be carefully managed. Moreover, decentralization should not impede the flow of knowledge and expertise between the centre of the organization and country offices.

²¹ See evaluation report at <http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/008/j2937e/j2937e00.htm>. Available in English, Arabic and French.

²² These lessons are drawn from Dalberg 2012 and World Bank 2012.

²³ For example, the World Bank's decentralization efforts were done in two iterations (1997-1999 and 2010-2012), and AfDB's and ADB's efforts required three iterations.

Evaluation framework²⁴

<i>Evaluation criteria</i>	<i>Evaluation questions</i>	<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Data sources</i>
Relevance	<p>KEY QUESTIONS:</p> <p>What is the international context for decentralization and its relevance to IFAD?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paris/Accra/Busan and the policy perspective of donors and developing countries. • Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)/Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). • Trends towards decentralization in international agencies, including United Nations agencies and Rome-based agencies. <p>Is the decentralization, as it has developed, coherent with IFAD's stated objectives?</p> <p>What was the level of institutional commitment to decentralization?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity of decisions and commitment by the Executive Board and by Senior Management. • Commitment of staff to decentralization. <p>Relevance of the strategy design as it was initiated and as it evolved formally and informally.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality and clarity of the design as originally specified. • Coherence of the decentralization strategy with IFAD's other major institutional reforms (e.g. adoption of direct supervision). • Plausibility of underlying assumptions including those for costs and benefits. • Conformity of implementation to the evolving design/plan. • Relevance of the decentralization as implemented, including any divergence from plan. • Relevance for the future including flexibility of the corporate structure. <p>What is the relevance of decentralization to national ownership and direction?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced national ownership and direction of development assistance. • Decreased burden on government for formal reporting to IFAD • Coherent action at country level with international partners <p>How appropriate was institutional governance for the decentralization, including by the Executive Board and Management?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversight and management. • Monitoring, reporting and accountability. 	<p>Declarations of intent</p> <p>Extent of decentralization in other agencies</p> <p>Functions decentralized in other agencies</p> <p>Coherence of decentralization with Strategic Framework (2007-2010; 2011-2015; 2016-2025)</p> <p>Executive Board decisions; Management decisions</p> <p>Gaps in the logical or conceptual framework, specification of functions to be decentralized – both operational and administrative, time frames</p> <p>Evidence of how rapidly IFAD has changed structures, staffing and functions in the past</p> <p>Perception of governments</p> <p>Evidence of joint projects, joint policy or knowledge work, IFAD programme integration with other donor/United Nations programmes</p> <p>Information to and guidance from the Executive Board on policy and strategy</p> <p>Comprehensiveness of Management guidance</p> <p>Monitoring, reporting and accountability frameworks, coverage by evaluation and audit</p>	<p>Public documents including Strategic Framework and Executive Board</p> <p>Comparator studies</p> <p>Executive Board and Management Documents</p> <p>Questionnaires and interviews</p> <p>Executive Board, replenishment and Management documents, including budget- and human resource-related, and internal audit documents and evaluations.</p> <p>Views expressed in questionnaires, interviews and workshops</p>

²⁴ The evaluation framework will be subject to further development during the inception phase of the evaluation.

<i>Evaluation criteria</i>	<i>Evaluation questions</i>	<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Data sources</i>
Effectiveness	<p>KEY QUESTIONS:</p> <p>To what extent has decentralization contributed to the achievement of IFAD's institutional objectives?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did decentralization contribute to preparation of country strategies, loan/grant identification and preparation; and preparation of project pipeline? And institutional policies and strategies? • How did decentralization contribute to better supervision and more efficient project implementation and self-assessment? • How did decentralization contribute to strengthening IFAD's partnership role and relations with in-country stakeholders? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Governments (including counterpart funding) ➢ United Nations agencies and the local donor community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Enhanced harmonization of IFAD's programme with other donors and United Nations agencies, including the Rome-based agencies. ✓ Resource mobilization and cofinancing ➢ Non-government stakeholders (including civil society and private sector) • How did decentralization contribute to IFAD's policy dialogue? • How did decentralization contribute to knowledge management, innovation and capacity-building? • How did decentralization contribute to sustainability and scaling up? <p>To what extent has decentralization contributed to achieving development results including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectiveness • Impact on rural poverty • Gender equity • Effects on environment and natural resource management and climate change adaptation 	<p>Quality-at-entry ratings of the COSOPs.</p> <p>Survey ratings, feedback from ICO case studies and regional consultation workshops on issues related to project design, implementation, partnerships, policy dialogue, knowledge management and capacity-building.</p> <p>Number of projects and value of IFAD financing in countries with ICOs.</p> <p>Quantitative analysis of portfolio data (e.g. time from loan approval to entry into force and first disbursement; disbursement profile; average time for processing withdrawal applications; projects at risk; delays in implementation; project status report ratings for selected fiduciary aspects).</p> <p>Analysis of indicators in the monitoring framework for outreach and scaling up, country programme development, partnership-building, policy dialogue and knowledge management and innovation.</p> <p>Analysis of indicators in the annual portfolio reviews (i.e. development achievement, food security, gender focus, poverty focus, climate and environment focus).</p> <p>IOE project and country programme evaluation ratings.</p>	<p>Desk review, databases, project status reports, internal audit reports, evaluation reports, online survey, interviews, regional consultation workshops, ICO case studies. Grant-related documentation.</p> <p>The quantitative analysis of the country office monitoring frameworks, portfolio data and online survey will be undertaken both for cases with and without ICOs, and for cases before and after ICOs (when possible) for comparison purposes.</p>
Efficiency	<p>KEY QUESTIONS:</p> <p>Are the institutional structure and organizational arrangements in place for decentralization efficient and functional?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribution of functional responsibilities by typology of ICOs – progress to date • Reporting lines and delegation of authority by typology of ICOs • Independent and service-level agreement for hosting agency (advantages and disadvantages) • Host country agreement <p>What contribution did the decentralization of administrative and financial business processes make to efficiency?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decentralization of disbursement functions • ICT systems and connectivity • Transaction and service handling for ICOs by host and/or co-located agencies • IFAD's policies and processes for managing decentralization costs – (both 	<p>Clarity, duplications, capacities</p> <p>Costs and estimated savings (including in managerial time)</p> <p>Security</p> <p>Qualitative interaction and synergies</p> <p>Visibility and image</p> <p>Adequacy of ICO/headquarters connectivity for different functions and transactions</p> <p>Adequacy for remote transaction handling, including delegated authority and controls (separation of entry and authorization).</p>	<p>Data on costs, savings and staffing</p> <p>Questionnaires, interviews, regional workshops</p> <p>Comparator studies</p> <p>Audit reports</p> <p>Electronic survey</p> <p>Desk review, databases, ICO annual progress reports, internal audit reports, online survey, interviews, regional consultation workshops</p> <p>Desk review, databases, ICO annual progress reports, internal audit</p>

<i>Evaluation criteria</i>	<i>Evaluation questions</i>	<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Data sources</i>
	<p>recurrent and non-recurrent) and their effectiveness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributions of decentralization/ICOs to improving the efficiency of IFAD's business processes • Opportunities for further efficiency gains, including potential for decentralizing administrative functions to lower-cost countries. • Risks and oversight. <p>How did decentralization support programmatic and managerial efficiency?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programmatic efficiency indicators by typology of ICOs (with and without ICO and before and after ICOs). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Adequacy of current systems, indicators and definition of targets ➢ Adequacy for managerial decision-making and Executive Board oversight. <p>What contribution did human resource management make to efficiency?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trend and current human resource placement – office staffing including consultants and use of host agency staff. • Staffing profile of ICOs including terms of reference (clarity) and match of staff with terms of reference in terms of seniority and capacities. • Policies for international staff (selection, rotation, career and capacity development, maintaining both country knowledge and headquarters connectedness, incentives). • Policies for national staff, including potential for career development, knowledge of IFAD and staff improvement. <p>What were the overall costs and savings of decentralization?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs and savings by headquarters divisions and typology of ICOs (with and without ICO and before and after ICOs); functional breakdown below is desirable but will depend upon data availability. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ By development support function ➢ By administrative and financial support function • Cost of oversight of ICOs • Any duplication of functions and efficiency implications • Trends in objects of expenditure including travel, salaries, consultants and communications (ICOs and headquarters divisions) • Impact of cost drivers such as salary scales, mix of headquarters-based and local staff, and country requirements for security 	<p>Adequacy of staff in ICOs to handle decentralized transactions.</p> <p>Period between approval and entry into force</p> <p>Country office costs, administrative and programmatic</p> <p>Number of host country agreements signed</p> <p>Number of supervision/implementation support missions in which country office staff participate</p> <p>Number of ICOs with access to the IFAD intranet</p> <p>Staff views. (Willingness to move from Rome. Views on functions to decentralize. Selection criteria for ICOs, the different ICO models, budget and staffing criteria; terms of reference of ICOs and headquarters units and staff).</p>	<p>reports, online survey, interviews, regional consultation workshops</p>

Evaluation process

1. Phases. The CLE of IFAD's Decentralization Experience will be undertaken in eight phases: (i) evaluation design; (ii) desk review of documents and analysis of data; (iii) data and information collection; (iv) analytical phase; (v) sharing of emerging findings with Management through PowerPoint presentations; (vi) preparation of draft final report and comments by IFAD Management; (vii) finalization of CLE report and preparation of IFAD Management response; and (viii) dissemination of results. The phases are not strictly sequential. They will be iterative, conducted in parallel and partially overlapping.
2. Deliverables, review process and feedback. The main deliverables of the CLE will include an approach paper, the final evaluation report and a Profile and Insight.²⁵ IFAD Management will be invited to provide written comments on the draft approach paper and draft final report. The Evaluation Committee will also review the draft approach paper, and their comments will be duly considered in the design and implementation of the evaluation. IOE will prepare an "audit trail", which will transparently illustrate how IFAD Management comments were treated in the final report. Several working papers will be produced in the course of the evaluation on different topics and will be made available on request.
3. Two further key deliverables are the written IFAD Management response and report of the senior independent adviser on the quality of the final evaluation report. Both deliverables will be included in the published final CLE report.
4. In line with the IFAD Evaluation Policy, IOE will seek the cooperation of a senior independent adviser – Richard Manning, former Chair of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – whose main role will be to review and provide comments on the draft approach paper and draft final report. In addition, representatives from the Independent Evaluation Department of the Asian Development Bank²⁶ will review and comment on the same two deliverables.
5. Given the formative nature of the evaluation, added attention will be devoted to organizing consultations with IFAD Management and staff at key stages of the evaluation. The aim of such interactions will be to exchange thoughts and discuss selected emerging evaluation issues, which will ensure wider learning and timely feedback from independent evaluation to IFAD's work in decentralization.
6. Evaluation team. Under the overall strategic direction of Oscar A. Garcia, Director, IOE, the CLE will be led by Fabrizio Felloni, Lead Evaluation Officer, IOE. Three senior consultants – Bruce Murray, John Markie and Barun Chatterjee – will be mobilized to provide specific inputs on topics such as organizational decentralization, human resource management, and budget and cost matters. The evaluation team will also be supported by Xiaozhe Zhang, Adolfo Patron and Abdoulaye Sy, Research Analysts, IOE; and Giulia Santarelli, Evaluation Assistant, IOE.
7. Timeline. The evaluation will be carried out and completed in 2016, as indicated in the timeline on the next page.

²⁵ *Profiles and Insights* are two key IOE communication products, produced at the end of the evaluation once the report has been finalized. Both are two-page brochures of about 500-700 words. The *Profile* will contain a summary of the main evaluation findings and recommendations. The *Insight* will focus on one topic of key interest (e.g. delegation of authority to ICOs, role of subregional offices/hubs) emerging from the evaluation, with the aim of stimulating further debate and reflection among partners concerned.

²⁶ ADB has been selected as they have recently completed a similar evaluation of the bank's decentralization.

Timeline (March-December 2016)	Activities
29 March	Revised draft approach paper discussed by IFAD Evaluation Committee
April-May	Consultant recruitment, desk review of documents and data collection
May-July	Interviews and focus group discussions, electronic survey and information extraction from IOE reports
July-August	Statistical and data analysis for effectiveness and efficiency assessments
17-18 May	Regional workshops (I. Rome)
13-14 June	Regional workshops (II. Nairobi)
31 May -1 June	Regional workshops (III. Lima)
6-7 July	Regional workshops (IV. Hanoi)
Late July (date to be determined)	Presentation of emerging findings to Management
March-July	Study of comparator organizations
August	Preparation of financial management, organizational arrangements, administration and human resource management working papers
1-7 September	Internal peer review in IOE
9 September	Draft evaluation report sent to IFAD Management for comments and in-house workshop organized on main findings and recommendations
30 September	Management provides written comments on draft final report
October	IOE to finalize evaluation report
27 October	Final report transmitted to the Office of the Secretary for editing and translation. IFAD Management to prepare written response
28 November	Presentation of the final report to the Evaluation Committee
14-15 December	Presentation of the final report to the 119 th session of the Executive Board

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