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“[…] a process to engage, directly and indirectly, with its partner governments and other country-level stakeholders, to influence policy priorities or the design, implementation and assessment of formal institutions (e.g. laws, administrative rules), policies and programmes that shape the economic opportunities for large numbers of rural people to move out of poverty.”

• Policy Dialogue part of Strategic Frameworks since 2002-06
• Growing commitments in IFAD-9 and IFAD-10
• Since 2016, new terminology: “Policy Engagement”
Key Features of the Evaluation Synthesis

- Focus on country-level
- Theory of change approach, articulating: inputs → processes → outputs → outcomes of policy dialogue
- Review of all CPEs (27), ARRIIs (6) and CLEs (10) published since 2010 (before and after 2013)
- Interviews with IFAD Management and staff
Country-Level Policy Dialogue - Theory of Change

**Inputs**
- Time
- Budget

**Processes (Windows of opportunity)**
- PD in COSOPs Design
- PD in Project Design
- PD during Implementation (supervision)
- PD through CPM/CPO participation in-sector working groups

**Outputs**
- Policy analysis and TA Notes for policy formulation
- Specific workshops, seminars, trainings (national or regional)
- Space or platforms for policy dialogue between national stakeholders

**Intermediate Outcomes**
- Enhanced capacity of national stakeholders to participate in national policy processes;
- Strengthen capacity of government agencies to formulate national policies and programmes

**Outcomes**
- Influence/change/adjustment on policies (national, subnational, regional, local) sectoral; legislation, procedures (drafted, proposed, approved)
- Scaling-up and adoption by government of successful models and initiatives
- Operationalization of a national policy or programme at the local level
1) **Grants.** Major funding source. Ex. MERCOSUR. Regional farmer federations, E-W Africa. But problems of alignment with loan portfolio

2) **Performance-based Allocation System.** *Rural Sector Performance* scoring process offers entry point opportunity but under-utilized

3) **Country presence.** Builds trust, understanding of local actors and priorities, participation in sector working groups. But shortage of human resources and variation in skills and interest among staff

4) **Policy elements in the lending activities.**
   - Policy dialogue objectives in COSOPs. However, sometimes over-ambitious, resource requirements not identified
   - Components in loan-funded projects
   - Inputs at project design, implementation support.
Policy dialogue Outputs

• Most common output (52% of cases): **supporting policy dialogue spaces** and platforms for stakeholders
  
  ➢ Development of the organizations of the rural poor to participate in policy discussions
  ➢ REAF Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay
  ➢ Mozambique, Focal Area Reference Groups

• Second in frequency (41%): CPM/CPO contribution to **sectoral working groups**

• Lower frequency (20%) undertaking **policy analysis**
Outcomes

A. In 55% of CPEs, some form of contribution to change or to adjust policies, legislation (national and sub-national)

- Nepal, new, pro-poor approach to forestry (leasehold forestry)
- Kenya, roll-out of the national irrigation policy
- India, input into Maharashtra Women’s Policy

B. 48% CPEs (overlapping) scaling up and adoption by the government of successful models, approaches.

- Vietnam, Brazil: participatory planning and resource allocation
- Ghana: SME sub-committees established in district assemblies

- Common characteristic in successful cases: IFAD was able to draw from project experiences to inform policy making (linkage with lending portfolio)
Conclusions

• IFAD has increased its focus and efforts to promote institutional and policy transformation at the country level and to scale up results

• Policy dialogue: main driver for creating the conditions for large numbers of rural people to move out of poverty

• Synergistic relationship among the three non-lending activities: knowledge management, partnership-building and policy dialogue are mutually reinforcing actions to complement IFAD’s investment projects

• Limitations in both the capacity and the mechanisms available to manage policy dialogue effectively
  
(i) under-documentation of informal and technical policy work;
(ii) absence of policy dialogue indicators;
(iii) limitation in experience, tools, incentives, staff time
Recommendations

1. Strengthen attention to policy dialogue in the COSOP
   Identify objectives and resources, partners, and indicators (outputs, intermediate outcomes and outcome levels)

2. Strengthen the capacity and incentives of staff.
   Information and training; feedback and accountability through performance assessment

3. Strengthen monitoring and reporting of policy dialogue activities
   Make policy dialogue activities more visible and preserve institutional memory

4. Strengthen the approach to self and independent evaluation of policy dialogue
   Assess policy advisory initiatives within projects and the links between ‘policy engagement’ and ‘impact on institutions and policies’