Contributing to rural poverty reduction through accountability and learning: independent function at IFAD

Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD

Perth, 21 September 2016, aes16 International Evaluation Conference

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Presentation outline

➢Introduction of IFAD and IOE

➢Why "independence" and "independence" in what way?

➢Collaboration with stakeholders and learning loop to improve policies and operations: how do we do?

➢Types and examples of evaluations and introduction of the IOE Evaluation Manual

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

➢ A specialized agency of the United Nations established in 1978

➢ Focuses on rural poverty reduction in developing member countries

➢ Provides loans and grants (mainly to/through governments) to finance agricultural and rural development projects

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Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD (IOE)

➢ A unit of IFAD that reports to the Executive Board of IFAD, rather than to the President

➢ Initially a M&E unit/division embedded in the operations department - gained an independent status in 2003

➢ Conducts evaluations of IFAD-financed policies, strategies and operations (i.e. projects, country programmes) to promote **accountability** and **learning**

Why "independence"?

➢ Increases **credibility** of evaluations

➢ Is seen by governing bodies as an assurance that the institution works to **improve** itself

➢ Avoids **conflict of interest and undue pressure** from management

➢ Provides an **objective perspective** on what works and what does not work

➢ **Strengthens** self-evaluation

"Independence" in what way?

The IOE Director:

➢ is appointed by and reports directly to the IFAD Executive Board. The Board is supported by a sub-committee (Evaluation Committee).

➢ has authority to issue final evaluation reports without prior clearance from anyone outside IOE

➢ makes decisions concerning IOE staff and consultants, in accordance with IFAD rules and procedures

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But "Independence" ≠ isolation

➢ For each evaluation, key partners identified in IFAD, government and other stakeholders: "core learning partnership"

➢ At entry point: draft approach paper and key questions discussed with stakeholders

➢ Comments and feedback of partners gathered throughout the evaluation process
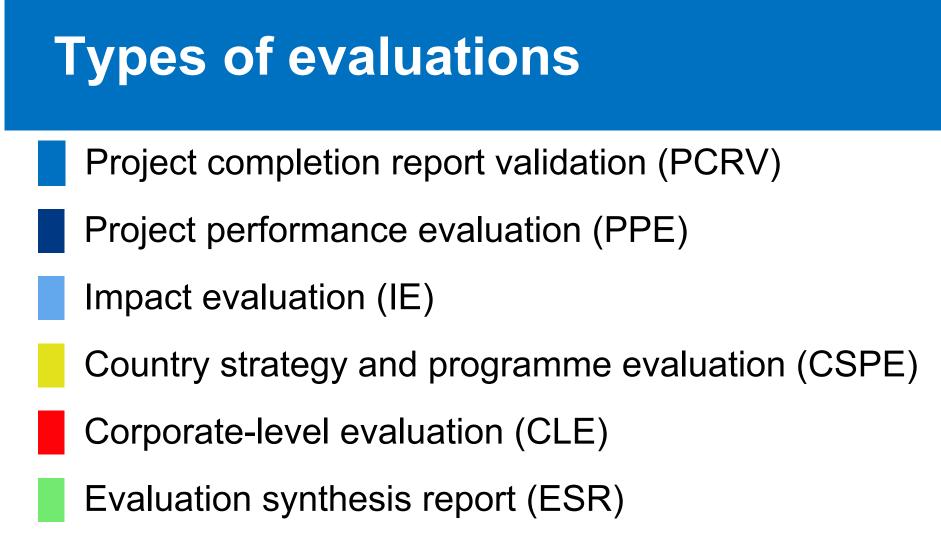
➢ Draft evaluation report - comments sought, "audit trail"

➢ Final workshop to discuss the findings and recommendations → "agreement at completion point"

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Feedback and learning loop

IOE	IFAD
Presents key recommendations in final evaluation reports	← Prepares response to evaluation recommendations and follow-up actions
Submit comments on PRISMA to the Board	→ Annually prepare and submit to the Board "President's Report on the Implementation Status of Evaluation Recommendations and Management Actions" (PRISMA)
Participates in key in-house quality assurance fora (e.g. for new projects)	
Submit comments on new policy/ strategies to the Board, if covered in past evaluations	→ Submit new policy/strategies to the Board for approval
Validates all PCRs	→ Prepares project completion reports (PCRs) for all projects

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Types of evaluations

Project completion report validation (PCRV)

Project performance evaluation (PPE)

Impact evaluation (IE)

Country strategy and programme evaluation (CSPE)

Corporate-level evaluation (CLE)

Evaluation synthesis report (ESR)

Annual Report on Results and Impact of IFAD Operations (ARRI)

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Examples of CLEs and ESRs

Corporate level evaluations (CLEs)

- IFAD's engagement in fragile and conflict-affected states and situations
- IFAD's performance-based allocation system
- IFAD policy on grant financing

Evaluation synthesis reports (ESRs)

- IFAD's engagement with indigenous peoples
- Engagement in pastoral development (IFAD-FAO joint)
- Environment and natural resource management

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Evaluation Manual – second edition

- Contains the **core methodology** used by IOE in conducting evaluations

- Guides staff and consultants involved in evaluation work

- Describes processes for each type of evaluation

- Incorporates **new international evaluative trends**

- Available in English, French, Spanish and Arabic

Evaluation methodology fundamentals

Understanding the pathway to change and measuring of achievements along the results chain

➢ Theory-based approaches

➢ Mixed-methods approach

➢ Techniques and instruments for data collection

➢ Analysis and interpretation of data

➢ Benchmarking

➢ Evaluation questions

Evaluation criteria (mainly for project evaluation)

Reflects IFAD's specificity

- **Rural poverty impact**
  - **Household income and net assets**
  - **Human and social capital and empowerment**
  - **Food security and agricultural productivity**
  - **Institutions and policies**

- **Other evaluation criteria**
  - **Gender equality and women's empowerment**
  - **Innovation and scaling up**
  - **Environment and natural resources management**
  - **Adaptation to climate change**

- **Project performance**
  - **Relevance**
  - **Effectiveness**
  - **Efficiency**
  - **Sustainability of benefits**

- **Overall project achievement**

- **Performance of partners**
  - **IFAD**
  - **Government**

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Please visit our webpage

www.ifad.org/evaluation/overview

Thank you!

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