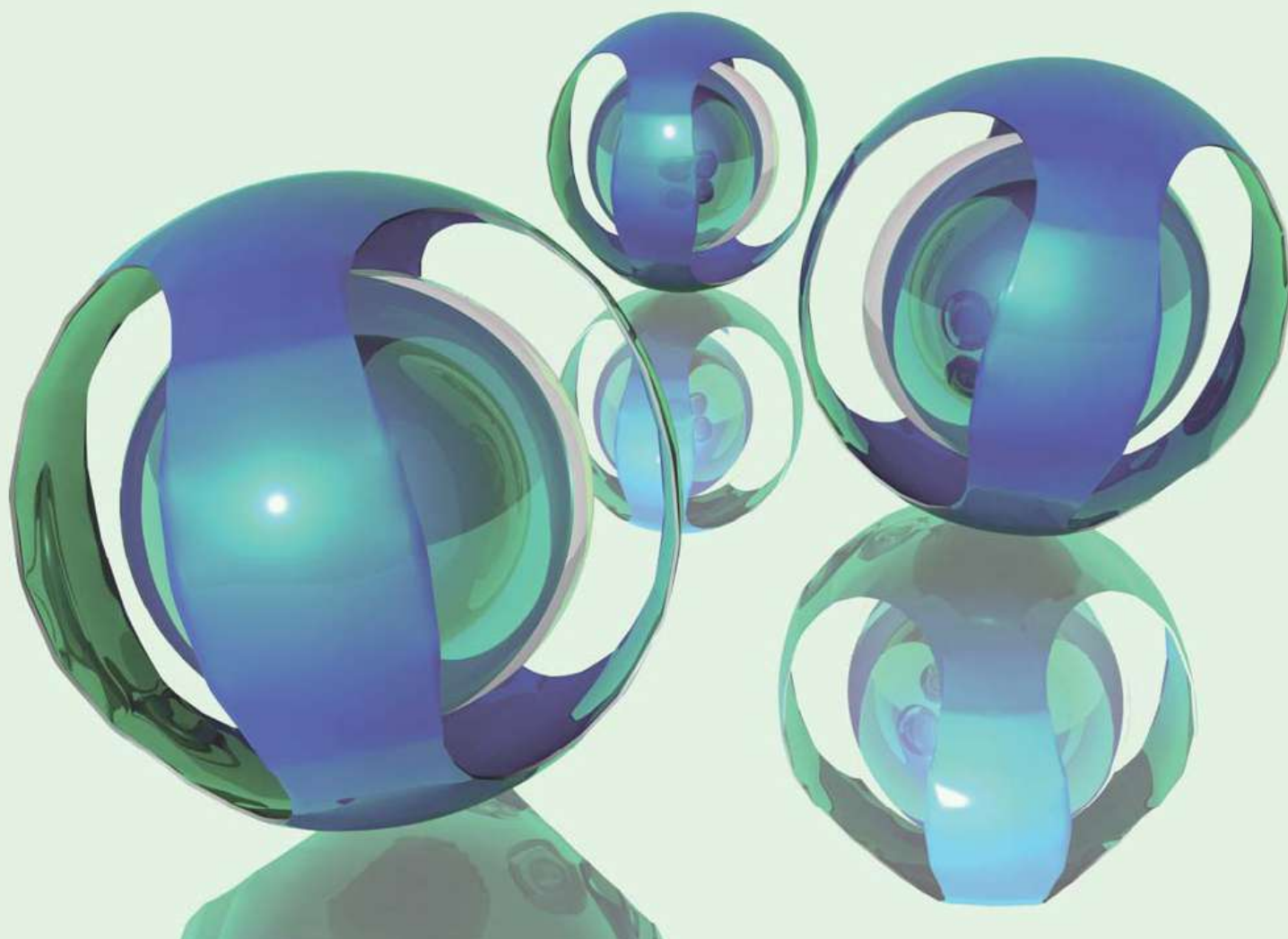




Enabling poor rural people  
to overcome poverty

# **IFAD's independent evaluation: Ten years of accountability, learning and transformation**

April 2013



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April 2013



**1** years **IOE**  
**Independent Office of Evaluation**  
2003-2013 **Accountability and learning for better rural livelihoods**

A special acknowledgement is extended to the IOE 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary team for its dedication and for the preparation of this commemorative booklet. The team includes Vera P. Weill-Halle, consultant, and IOE staff: Melba E. Alvarez, Evaluation Communication and Knowledge Management Officer; Cristina Benvenuti, Communication Intern; Prashanth Kotturi, Evaluation Research Analyst; Francesca Palombo, Evaluation Intern; and Maria Cristina Spagnolo, Evaluation Assistant. In addition, an appreciation is extended to IFAD's Communications Division for the constructive comments and suggestions provided during this process.

The designations 'developed' and 'developing' countries are intended for statistical convenience and do not necessarily express a judgement about the stage reached by a particular country or area in the development process.

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## The role and experience of IFAD's Evaluation Committee



**Shobhan Pattanayak (India)**  
Chairman of the Evaluation Committee  
from April 2011 to December 2012



**Agus Saptono (Indonesia)**  
Chairman of the Evaluation Committee  
from April 2013 to March 2015

The Evaluation Committee (EC) of IFAD's Executive Board was established in 1988; it is one of the two standing committees of the Board, the other being the Audit Committee. The EC consists of nine Board members, four representatives from List A (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development), two from List B (Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries) and three from List C (developing countries). The chair of the EC rests with List B or List C.

The primary responsibility of the EC is to advise the Board on evaluation issues. It does this by assisting the Board in its oversight role; enhancing the Board's ability to assess the quality and impact of IFAD-supported programmes and projects; and increasing the Board's knowledge of lessons learned in IFAD-supported programmes with a view

to ensuring that IFAD has an effective and efficient evaluation function.

IFAD's Evaluation Policy led to the creation of a new governance structure for its independent evaluation function, and provided a framework in which evaluations contributed to institutional learning and accountability. During the 2000s, the Policy enabled the EC to engage with IOE and IFAD Management on evaluation issues and propose institutional changes.

The EC commends IOE on the quality of its evaluation reports and products. The Annual Report on Results and Impact of IFAD Operations (ARRI) has become IOE's annual flagship publication and IOE reports consistently provide sound analysis supported by evidence from a variety of sources to validate the conclusions. This

robust data, coupled with open and critical evaluations, has enabled the EC to make useful decisions for improving IFAD's performance. IOE's recommendations are reviewed by the EC and presented to the IFAD Executive Board. Several evaluations and their analyses have contributed to organizational and operational changes in IFAD.

***“The success of the independent evaluations and the implementation of evaluation recommendations was the outcome of the willingness of IOE and IFAD Management to work together and respond to each other’s concerns: learning and accountability are two sides of the same coin.”***

Since 2001, the EC has conducted regular country visits in connection with IOE country programme evaluations (CPEs). These visits have strengthened the EC members' knowledge and understanding

of the opportunities and challenges IFAD faces in delivering its mandate. This in turn enabled EC members to carry out their oversight role effectively and to offer informed feedback and guidance to IFAD Management, IOE and the Board on issues that merit attention in terms of reducing rural poverty.

The EC visited the Syrian Arab Republic in 2001, Indonesia in 2004, Mexico in 2006, Mali in 2007, the Philippines in 2008, India in 2009, Mozambique in 2010, Brazil in 2011 and Ghana in 2012; it is planning a country visit to Viet Nam in 2013. The EC benefited from opportunities for direct interaction with country partners, national authorities and project beneficiaries.

The CPE in Indonesia in 2003/04 was an early example of innovation in IOE in that IFAD staff and EC members were able to participate in the national round-table workshops and interact with country partners and project beneficiaries. This became a model for other CPE workshops and field visits by EC members. Such direct exposure to project activities furthered EC members' awareness and made them more effective in formulating policy recommendations.

The CPE for India in 2009 was important in that it confirmed the effectiveness of IFAD's operating model in the country and focused on the target groups – poor women and tribal communities. This CPE helped IFAD develop a new country strategic opportunities programme and learn from

experience, expand operations in India and, in collaboration with the Government, tackle some of the most serious problems of rural poverty.

IOE invariably responds to the concerns of the EC and is willing to address initiatives such as the *Peer Review of IFAD's Office of Evaluation and Evaluation Function* by the Evaluation Cooperation Group of the multilateral development banks in 2009/10. This review reaffirmed that IOE's evaluation products are being well used at IFAD, and stated that "corporate evaluations were influential and contributed to changes that had a strategic impact on IFAD." The review also led to several enhancements in IFAD's evaluation system, which has further strengthened IOE's credibility and usefulness.

As Chairs of the EC, we have seen that collaboration can bring results and lead to institutional improvements. The success of the independent evaluations and the implementation of evaluation recommendations was the outcome of the willingness of IOE and IFAD Management to work together and respond to each other's concerns: learning and accountability are two sides of the same coin. As EC members, we shall continue to work to ensure that IOE and IFAD Management are effective contributors to institutional change and improvement.