

Concept note of the management self-assessment, design and discussion workshop

IOE Thematic Evaluation on IFAD's support to Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

20-21 March, Rome (Italy) + virtual

INTRODUCTION

1. The thematic evaluation on IFAD's support on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) was included in the Independent Office of Evaluation (IOE) work programme and budget for 2022, as approved by IFAD's Executive Board in its 134th session (December 2021). The inception phase of the evaluation started in September 2022 and the approach paper was shared with management for comments in December.
2. **The purpose of the TE on GEWE** is to: (i) provide evidence of the development effectiveness, results and performance of IFAD-funded operations in relation to their contribution to GEWE; and (ii) generate lessons and recommendations to enhance IFAD's future policies, strategies, and interventions. Therefore, the TE will cover various GEWE work areas: (i) IFAD as a catalyst for policy advocacy, partnerships and knowledge management; (ii) the GEWE performance of IFAD-supported country programmes and projects, grants and supplementary funds; (iii) IFAD's efforts to build GEWE capacity amongst implementing partners including government officials; (iv) whether human and financial resources and systems are adequate to ensure the corporate GEWE agenda is adapted to implementation contexts; and (v) the gender and diversity balance in IFAD.
3. **The scope of the evaluation:** The evaluation will cover the period 2012 to 2022: (a) to capture recent organizational changes, the period 2016 to 2022 will be considered, and (b) to identify the results related to GEWE of project investments and other non-lending interventions, the evaluation will prioritize those designed after the approval of IFAD's gender policy (2012). The evaluation will cover the entire portfolio during the selected period, and will offer lessons on recent efforts on gender transformative approaches (GTAs). The focus will be on identifying common GEWE problems in multiple contexts.
4. **The evaluation approach** is outlined in the Approach Paper that will be discussed in the 120th session of the Evaluation Committee (an organ of IFAD Governing Body) in April 2023. A mixed method approach will be used. A portfolio analysis of all relevant projects and grants, case studies, e-surveys, document review, semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders and selected country case studies and deep dives will be used to collect primary evidence. To the extent feasible, IFAD's approach will be compared with the experience of other IFIs and similar UN agencies.

INTRODUCTION ABOUT THE WORKSHOP

5. As set in the IFAD Evaluation manual (2022), a workshop took place to finalize the inception phase of the evaluation, stimulate discussion and gather views from IFAD staff. It comprised various sessions over two days:
 - (i) An **introduction to the TE** on GEWE by IOE;
 - (ii) A **self-assessment seminar** based on a presentation prepared by IFAD management in response to a set of guiding questions provided by IOE
 - (iii) A discussion on how the IFAD GEWE approach and results are **adapted to various development contexts**;
 - (iv) A session that allowed for an in-depth discussion on how **IFAD mainstreaming themes and other ECG work streams** are addressed in IFAD's operations;
 - (v) A **design session** to collect suggestions to finalize the evaluation approach and work plan.
6. The workshop ended with a **summary of key points** discussed. The objectives, content and expected participants to each session are outlined below, followed by a **brief summary of topics discussed** and the **link to the presentations**.

Session 1: Introduction about the TE on GEWE by IOE

Monday 20 March - 9h00-10h00

7. The objective of this session was to introduce the evaluation goals, approach, methods, timeline. The session gathered IFAD management expectations of the evaluation. The expected outcome of this session was clarity amongst all attendees on the TE focus, which should permeate to other IFAD staff. Potential sources and key informants to consider in subsequent stages of the TE were identified. Key participants were appointed members of the evaluation core learning partnership group (CLPG), composed by specialists from all regional divisions, OPR, RIA, PMI, QAG, OSB and GPR. Other IFAD staff with key information on GEWE will also be invited to this session, as necessary.

Session 2: Self-assessment seminar

Monday 20 March - 10h00-13h00

8. The objective of the self-assessment session was to gather views from IFAD management (led by the ECG gender team, with inputs from selected regional and country-level staff) on key topics related to the overarching evaluation questions in the box below. This session facilitated and deepened the evaluation team's understanding of the roles and responsibilities of key IFAD units involved in GEWE work and provide additional information for data analysis.

Box 1: Overarching questions of the Thematic Evaluation

1. How **relevant** are IFAD gender corporate documents to the 2030 Agenda, how **adaptive** are they to changing environments, and how do they **align** with IFAD's transformational agenda and other contextual changes?
2. What **added value** does IFAD bring to its various stakeholders, including poor rural women and men, when it comes to promoting GEWE?

- i. What are **key outcomes (and trends)** from the promotion of GEWE in IFAD interventions?
- ii. What are the **characteristics of IFAD gender transformative interventions** and the key **drivers** of sustainable GEWE results in different contexts?
3. To what extent is IFAD adequately **equipped and living up to its ambition** in terms of GTA promotion and complementarity of GEWE with other themes?

9. Guiding questions for IFAD management's presentation in Session 2:

- What are the strengths of relevant **corporate-level strategies and policies to IFAD's focus on GEWE** (since the 2012 gender policy, with an emphasis from 2016 onwards)? What limitations can be identified?
- Whether the **evolution of organizational** structures supporting GEWE have had impacts on supporting work in the field? (starting with an overview of gender architecture/business model, key IFAD units involved in GEWE work)
- Overview of key **operational aspects of how GEWE is addressed** in COSOPs and investments, including operational procedures (e.g. through project delivery teams), training and guidelines, available human resources, staff motivation to focus on GEWE.
- Current **measurement tools for GEWE** and changes since 2012.
- Outline of **milestones, achievements and views on GEWE results trends**, with an emphasis on **innovations and scaling-up of initiatives** with good GEWE results¹.
- What are the main **challenges experienced by IFAD** (internally and externally) in the delivery of GEWE support and **how they are being addressed**?
- **Value proposition and IFAD's niche** in supporting GEWE in rural areas in comparison to other technical and financial partners and large NGOs;
- **Summary and moving forward** with regard to GEWE support at IFAD (towards 2030 and beyond, IFAD13).

10. The presentation by IFAD management will be followed by a general discussion to clarify any points. CLPG members and other key IFAD staff will be asked to complement the presentation with their own views.

Session 3 – Reflection on IFAD GEWE performance in different contexts

Monday 20 March, 15h00-16h30h for HQ/WCA/NEN/ESA + LAC region

Tuesday 21 March, 9h00-10h00 for HQ/WCA/NEN/ESA + APR region

11. The objective of this session was to better understand how the IFAD corporate approach to GEWE is suited to various implementation contexts, and understand adjustments that are made for different development contexts. Whether there is a shared understanding of GEWE concepts across the regions was explored, including in terms of how GEWE concepts are translated into different languages and how GEWE results/ratings vary according to the context discussed. Therefore, participants to this session were operational staff from the Programme Management Department of IFAD.

¹ investment loans, grants, joint programmes, specialized funds, capacity building for implementing partners; advocacy and policy dialogue; partnerships; and knowledge management.

Two time slots were proposed to take into consideration the time difference between APR/LAC and Rome.

12. The session started with presentations led by the IFAD regional divisions, including aspects related to countries with fragility situations and in middle-income countries, where they were asked to reflect and present on the topics below. In addition, there was a discussion on key factors affecting gender performance of IFAD operations and participants were asked to prioritize the final list of factors.

- How do **IFAD staff and partners approach GEWE in line with your unique regional/national context** (fragile/conflict, religion, country classification -low or middle-income-, the level of support/progress in the national GEWE legislative environment versus local customary practice)?
- What actions you have taken to **contextualize programme/project gender results** (and ratings) considering this different setting?
- What are the key **challenges in adapting** IFAD corporate GEWE concepts and approaches (GE, WE, GTA, intersectionality) to these various contexts, including how they are translated into other languages, if necessary?
- What is your understanding of the **contribution of IFAD support to GEWE**? What do you think it is underreported in relation to IFAD GEWE performance in this context?
- What are the **recent success stories/good practices in terms of GEWE** in your region and what were the **key factors** which contributed to their success?

Session 4- IFAD mainstreaming themes and ECG work streams

Tuesday 21 March, 10h00-12h30

13. The objective of this session was to gather first-hand information on how GEWE is integrated/articulated with other IFAD mainstreaming themes (and work streams such as indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities) at corporate and operational levels and reflect on strengths and challenges. This session started with short presentations (5 minutes each) from the teams leading the work on gender, youth, nutrition, climate change/environment, poverty-targeting, disability and indigenous people's teams, covering the topics below, followed by a discussion.

- slide 1: key corporate goals of the mainstreaming theme
- slides 2 and 3: internal structures, analytical skills of staff/consultants and headcount, financial resources to deliver the goals
- slide 4: main efforts to coordinate and work with other colleagues from other mainstreaming themes (what works well and what does not)
- slide 5: key results of successful integration of GEWE with youth/nutrition/disability / environment and climate change/ indigenous peoples /poverty and targeting

14. Following the discussion, participants discussed the questions below :

- What is your own definition of what IFAD understands by "mainstreaming"
- Any examples of good integration of GEWE into other mainstreaming themes?

- What challenges are encountered in driving the mainstreaming processes?

Session 5: TE Design session with key staff from IFAD management

Tuesday 21 March - 14h00-16h00

15. The session had the following objectives: to ensure a shared understanding of the approach underlying the TE of IFAD's support to GEWE; and to encourage participation and a sense of ownership of the evaluation process among members of the CLPG and other participants at this session. The session helped to gather suggestions from participants about how to reinforce the theory of change and how to use it to collect and analyse data. The evaluation team also shared the criteria used to choose the country case studies and participants provided feedback on interesting practices to analyse.

Summary and concluding remarks

Tuesday 21 March - 16h00-16h30

16. The TE evaluation manager and the ECG gender lead summarized key points, key messages understood and learned from the various sessions, with feedback from participants.

Time and Session	Content / sub-sessions	Main presenter	Expected participants
Monday 20 March 2023			
9-10am	9-9h10 Introductions of participants	All participants	Members of the evaluation core learning partnership (CLP) group – representing all regional divisions, OPR, RIA, PMI, QAG, OSB and GPR and other key IFAD staff.
Introduction to the IOE Thematic Evaluation on GEWE (Session 1)	9h10-9h25 Presentation by IOE	Ms Monica Lomena-Gelis, IOE Evaluation manager	
	9h25-10h00 Plenary discussion on IFAD’s management evaluation expectations	All participants, moderated by IOE Evaluation manager	
10h00-13h00	10h00-10h45 Presentation by IFAD’s management based on IOE questions	Ms Ndaya Beltchika, ECG lead technical specialist, gender and social inclusion (with inputs from regions)	IOE Director and IFAD senior managers + members of the CLPG and other selected experts
Self-assessment seminar (Session 2)	10h45-13h00 General discussion	All participants, moderated by IOE Evaluation manager	
Lunch break			
15h00-16h30	15h00-15h30 Prioritization of factors affecting gender performance in IFAD operations	Moderated by IOE external senior evaluator	Members of the CLPG + selected CD (LAC, NEN, WCA, ESA) + ECG social inclusion and gender experts
GEWE performance in different contexts (Session 3)	15h30-15h35 Presentation by LAC participants	Each subgroup will choose a presenter	
	15h35-15h40 Presentation by NEN participants		
	15h40-15h45 Presentation by WCA participants		
	16h00-16h30 Plenary discussion	Moderated by IOE evaluation manager	

Time - Session	Content / sub-sessions	Main presenter	Expected participants
Tuesday 21 March 2023			
9h00-10h00 GEWE performance in context (Session 3)	9h30-9h40 Presentation by APR 9h40-9h50 Presentation by ESA	Each subgroup will choose a rapporteur	Members of the CLPG + selected CD (APR and countries with fragile situations) + ECG SI and gender experts
	9h50-10h00 Plenary discussion	Moderated by IOE	
10h00-12h30 IFAD mainstreaming themes and ECG work streams (Session 4)	10h00-10h05 Presentation by the youth team 10h05-10h10 Presentation by the nutrition team 10h10-10h15 Ppt by the cc/environment team 10h15-10h20 Presentation by the gender team 10h20-10h25 Presentation by the disability team 10h25-10h30 Ppt by the indigenous people's team 10h30-10h35 Ppt by targeting/poverty team	Presenter from each of the mainstreaming themes and ECG work streams	Members of the CLPG + key representatives of ECG at HQ and from all regions covering all mainstreaming themes
	10h35-12h30 Plenary discussion	Moderated by IOE	
Lunch break			
14h00-16h00 TE design workshop (Session 5)	14h00-15h15 Plenary discussion and inputs to the evaluation theory of change and other key areas of the evaluation	Moderated by IOE	
	15h15-16h00 Presentation of selection criteria and the potential field-based case studies by regions	IOE Evaluation manager	
16h00-16h30 Summary and concluding remarks	16h00-16h10 Summary of key points from previous sessions and concluding remarks	ECG gender lead and IOE Evaluation manager	CLPG members and other selected IFAD technical experts