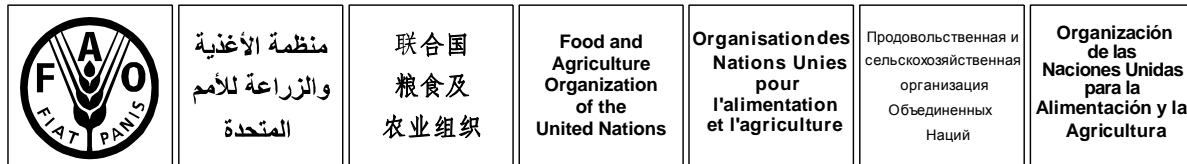


March 2013



PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

Hundred and Thirteenth Session

Rome, 18 - 22 March 2013

Evaluation of FAO's Role in Investment for Food and Nutrition Security, Agriculture and Rural Development

1. This cover page provides a summary of the background and key issues for the attention and guidance of the Programme Committee on the Evaluation of FAO's role in investment for food and nutrition security, agriculture and rural development.

Background

2. At its 108th session in October 2011, the Programme Committee requested a thorough review and evaluation of the Organization's past performance, as well as its current and potential role in supporting investment for food and nutrition security, agriculture and rural development.

Key issues in the Evaluation report

3. The Evaluation confirmed that to achieve any and all of FAO's strategic objectives, investment is a critical component of action. Globally, investment in the areas of FAO's mandate is rapidly expanding. FAO must play an influential role in investment decisions, both public and private, that affect food and nutrition security, agriculture and rural development (FNSARD). The Evaluation found that within FAO, only the Investment Centre (TCI) explicitly plays such role at the present time. However TCI's role is mainly focused on supporting public investment with IFI funds. TCI carries out this role quite well, and is a unique global resource for this type of work.

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4. Since the Independent External Evaluation (IEE), TCI has also developed greater skills in support to investment policy and strategies, and in capacity development. Investment support work in the rest of FAO, with few exceptions, is generally not explicit, and not well founded on appropriate skills. TCI, which has suffered from inadequate integration into the rest of FAO in the past, is increasing its support to the strengthening of these skills and work across the Organization. An important part of FAO's investment support will also be with the private sector (the largest investors by far): FAO needs to strengthen its understanding of the private sector, and its ability to work with it and advise and influence its investment decisions to better support development goals.

5. The five recommendations are to help FAO achieve the six results identified by the evaluation. The first and overarching recommendation is that FAO needs an agency-wide strategy for investment support, to clarify its objectives, means and activities in this regard. The remaining recommendations deal with achievement of these results under the strategy, including the need to: review and reinforce interaction and partnering with the private sector, other organizations, and especially the IFIs; develop a robust mechanisms for FAO's internal cross-support and collaboration on investment issues; enhance capacity development (institutional and individual) both in member countries and internally in FAO; and focus on the importance and strategic benefit of expanding and strengthening the role of TCI.

Management Response

6. FAO Management welcomes and overall supports the findings and recommendations of the Evaluation and notes its acknowledgement of FAO's critical role in providing investment support services to its member countries. Management appreciates the forward-looking focus of the Evaluation, taking into account the changing development environment, new and evolving actors and partnerships, particularly at the international level, and FAO's reviewed Strategic Framework.

7. Management notes the Evaluation's emphasis on strengthening FAO's engagement at strategic and operational levels with the private sector, in particular the corporate private sector, and in this regard would have welcomed more targeted guidance on FAO's specific role in such engagement, as well as on the key international and regional fora and processes for the Organization's focus.

8. Management agrees that the reviewed Strategic Framework presents an opportunity to embed systematic cross-divisional collaboration into FAO's support to investment. Management also recognizes the important link of this Evaluation to the policy evaluation¹ and recognises the need for a coordinated implementation of their follow-up actions and recommendations which, it is noted, may imply resource implications.

¹ PC 110/5; PC 110/5 Sup.1