

**Chairs' Aide Mémoire - Joint Meeting of CoC-IEE Working Groups I & II**  
**28 April 2008, 09.30 – 12.30**

Vic Heard, Chair WG I & Natalie Feistritz & Lamya Al-Saqqaf, Co-Chairs Working Group II

**The Evaluation Function**

- 1) The joint Working Groups agreed with the IEE that strong evaluation was indispensable for both the Governing Bodies and for senior management and that the conduct of evaluation must be responsive to, but operationally independent of, both. Evaluation in FAO was already of a relatively high standard and provided a strong foundation to build on further. The learning and accountability functions of evaluation were essential for both the Governing Bodies and management and for confidence in the evaluation function. Transparency was important as well as clarity on institutional arrangements. There was thus overall consensus in the Working Groups that, as suggested by FAO Management, the Organization's evaluation policy, strategy and institutional arrangements should be incorporated in a "Charter" which should be subject to Governing Body approval. The Working Groups also considered, with a large measure of agreement with Management, that:
  - a) the evaluation office should be inside the FAO secretariat structure, as a separate office, reporting to the Director-General or his Deputy and to the Governing Bodies through the Programme Committee (or its successor arrangements). The Deputy Director-General should continue to chair the internal evaluation committee to provide advice to the Director-General and this Committee should also interact with the Programme Committee from time-to-time;
  - b) the rolling evaluation plan should be approved by the Governing Bodies, as at present, following consultation with the internal evaluation committee;
  - c) the evaluation Regular Programme budget should be firmly established as a fixed percentage of the Regular Programme Budget and should be fully protected and allocated to the evaluation office. The Working Groups considered that a greater proportion of the budget should be allocated to evaluation than the current level of just over 0.5% and many considered that it should rise progressively to the 1.0% level proposed by the IEE. The Working Groups also emphasised that all donors should respect the Council decision that at least 1% of all extra-budgetary funds should be allocated for evaluation;
  - d) the post of Director of evaluation should be recruited at D2 level, in line with the other evaluation offices in the Rome based agencies and the post of Inspector-General in FAO. The process of selection and appointment should be professional and transparent and the Governing Bodies should be fully consulted in the process. The Director of evaluation should serve for a fixed term with the possibility of renewal for a maximum of one further term, with no immediate possibility for reappointment within FAO to another post;
  - e) all appointments for evaluation of staff and consultants, should follow transparent and professional procedures with the first criteria being technical competence but also with attention to considerations of regional and gender balance. The Director of evaluation should have the main responsibility for the appointment of evaluation staff and the sole responsibility for appointment of consultants (the Working Group was informed that the system of delegations was already moving towards having responsibility for the appointment of staff and increased responsibility for appointment of consultants

shift to ADGs and heads of independent offices. Management thus opined that no special procedures would be required for evaluation);

- f) quality assurance was very important and a peer and evaluation mechanism for periodic review of the evaluation function should be put in place;
- g) the follow-up processes for evaluation should be further strengthened;
- h) all evaluation reports, management responses and follow-up reports should continue to be public documents fully available to all FAO Members. Efforts to discuss and bring the reports to the attention of all concerned Governing Body members should also be further strengthened;
- i) as recommended by the IEE, the evaluation office should have an institutionalised advisory role to management on results based management and programming and budgeting, reinforcing the feed-back and learning loop;
- j) evaluation should be well coordinated within the UN system, taking account of the work of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) and FAO Evaluation Office should continue to work closely with the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG);
- k) the evaluation office should continue to work closely with the Office of the Inspector-General and where appropriate the External Auditor but for the reasons elaborated in the IEE report the Working Group did not consider that a merger of the two offices would be appropriate.