



# 2020 ARRI

2020 ANNUAL REPORT ON RESULTS AND IMPACT OF IFAD OPERATIONS

Independent Office  
of Evaluation

 **IFAD**  
Investing in rural people



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Cover photo

**Madagascar**

Local population in Mahatsinjo village, Avaradrano, Madagascar.

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# Abbreviations and acronyms

2030 Agenda	2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AER	Annual Evaluation Review (ADB)
AfDB	African Development Bank
APR	Asia and the Pacific Division (IFAD)
ARRI	Annual Report on Results and Impact of IFAD Operations
CD	country director
CLE	corporate-level evaluation
CLISSA	Competitive Local Innovations for Small-scale Agriculture Project
COSOP	country strategic opportunities programme
CSPE	country strategy and programme evaluation
DER	Development Effectiveness Review (ADB)
ENRM	environment and natural resources management
ESA	East and Southern Africa Division (IFAD)
ESR	evaluation synthesis report
FADIP	Fisheries and Agriculture Diversification Programme
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GALS	Gender Action Learning System
GEWE	gender equality and women's empowerment
IDA	International Development Association
IDEV	Independent Evaluation Office (AfDB)
IE	impact evaluation
IED	Independent Evaluation Department (ADB)
IEG	Independent Evaluation Group (World Bank Group)
IFAD11	Eleventh Replenishment of IFAD's Resources
IFI	international financial institution
IOE	Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean Division (IFAD)
LIC	low-income country
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MAR	Management Action Record (World Bank)
MAREP	Market Access and Rural Enterprise Development Programme
MIC	middle-income country
MPOWER	Mitigating Poverty in Western Rajasthan
NADeP	National Agribusiness Development Project

NEN	Near East, North Africa and Europe Division (IFAD)
NICARIBE	Agricultural, Fishery and Forestry Productive Systems Development Programme in RAAN and RAAS Indigenous Territories
NRGP	Northern Rural Growth Project
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – Development Assistance Committee
PADEE	Project for Agricultural Development and Economic Empowerment
PADER-G	Rural Development Support Programme in Guera
PADFA	Commodity Value Chain Development Support Project
PAPAM	Fostering Agricultural Productivity Project
PCR	project completion report
PCRV	project completion report validation
PDAR	Agricultural and Rural Development Project
PMD	Programme Management Department (IFAD)
PNAAFA	National Programme to Support Agriculture Value Chain Actors
PPE	project performance evaluation
PPI-2	Small-scale Irrigation Development Project
PREVES	Project for Reviving Food Crops and Small Livestock Production in the Savannah
PRODEAR	Rural Areas Development Programme
PRONEA	National Programme for Agricultural Extension
PROPACOM	Support to Agricultural Development and Marketing Project
RAP	Rural Access Project
RBA	Rome-based agency
RCPRP	Rehabilitation and Community-Based Poverty Reduction Project
RMF	results measurement framework
SAPP	Smallholder Agribusiness Promotion Programme
SECAP	Social, Environmental and Climate Assessment Procedures
SSSJ	Soum Son Seun Jai – Community-based Food Security and Economic Opportunities Programme
STCRSP	Smallholder Tree Crop Revitalization Support Project
SUSTAIN	Supporting Traditional Rainfed Small-scale Producers in Sinnar State
WCA	West and Central Africa Division (IFAD)
WFP	World Food Programme
WUPAP	Western Uplands Poverty Alleviation Project





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# Foreword

The Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD (IOE) is pleased to present the 2020 Annual Report on Results and Impact of IFAD Operations (ARRI), the eighteenth edition of the report. A synthesis of IFAD's performance based on evaluative evidence, this year's report highlights results and recurring issues based on independent evaluations.

Since its inception in 2003, the focus and structure of the ARRI have been revised several times to improve its relevance to changing priorities and demands of the Fund. However, in terms of methodology and content, the ARRI shares some similarities with annual flagship reports prepared by the evaluation offices of major international financial institutions. The 2020 ARRI is a pilot of the transition to an ARRI that can bring more actionable knowledge while reporting on trends in the performance of the organization.

Similar to previous ARRIs, this report presents quantitative information on ratings, but the qualitative analysis is based on performance across a range of interventions and development contexts that can help improve the design and implementation of IFAD-supported projects. In addition, this ARRI introduces insights into recurring factors that contribute positively or negatively to the development effectiveness of IFAD's operations and strategies. These recurring factors can be considered systemic as they persist in project designs across geographical regions and over a number of years.

The 2020 ARRI draws its quantitative findings from a sample of 259 project-level evaluations completed between 2007 and 2018, for a total number of 3,009 ratings, as well as 54 country strategy and programme evaluations. Qualitative findings are drawn from 109 project-level evaluations completed between 2017 and 2019, and 14 country strategy and programme evaluations finalized in the same period.

The most recent results of projects (those completed in 2016-2018) show that the performance of IFAD operations has been overall positive. Currently, 75 per cent or more projects assessed against the criteria of relevance, IFAD's performance as a partner, environment and natural resources management, adaptation to climate change, and innovation are rated moderately satisfactory or better. However, overall project achievement has been slightly declining in the medium term (2013-2015). This is a result of several evaluation criteria such as relevance displaying flat or slightly declining trends, and some, such as government performance, with more pronounced declines. However, on the positive side, some criteria such as environment and natural resources management show clear, upward trends, and some like sustainability show a recent uptick after a persistent decline. The recurring factors identified in the report will guide the selection of topics for future evaluations.

At a more strategic level, independent evaluations of country programmes demonstrate that they are well aligned to the policies and priorities of IFAD and governments, and that they have been adapted to reflect the changing rural landscape and topical issues. However, the linkages between lending and non-lending activities still need strengthening in order to better achieve the desired development results.

In terms of the four mainstreaming corporate priorities – gender, climate, nutrition and youth – evaluations find good progress related to gender and climate in IFAD-supported operations, but point to an urgent need to collect data on outputs and outcomes related to nutrition and youth to enable measuring progress on them.

In closing, we hope that the repositioned ARRI will act as a springboard for engendering corporate-wide dialogue and decisive action on how to sharpen the quality of design and implementation of IFAD-supported operations and country programmes. This is critical as the organization intensifies efforts to improve its development effectiveness towards the eradication of poverty and the attainment of gender equality as envisioned in the Sustainable Development Goals.



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## Sri Lanka

Woman picking tea on a plantation in Elkaduwa Matle Area, Sri Lanka. Tea is one of the country's main export crops. The Smallholder Plantations Entrepreneurship Development Programme finances rural income-generating activities such as tea plantations.

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# Executive summary

## Introduction

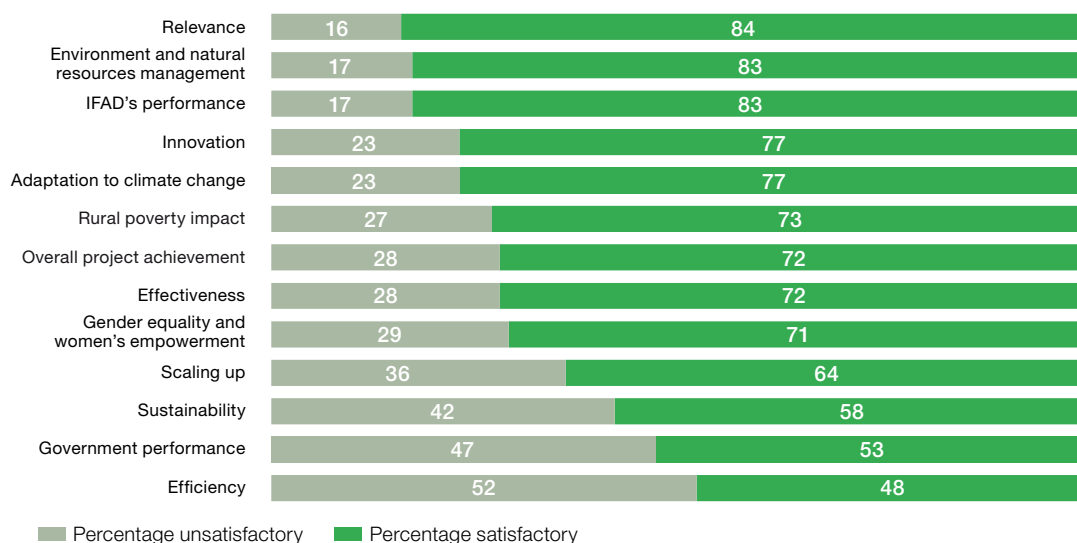
1. This is the eighteenth edition of the Annual Report on Results and Impact of IFAD Operations (ARRI), the flagship report of the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD (IOE). The ARRI presents a synthesis of the performance of IFAD-supported operations and highlights systemic and cross-cutting issues, lessons and challenges to enhance the development effectiveness of IFAD-funded operations. In terms of methodology and content, the ARRI shares some similarities with the annual flagship reports of the evaluation offices of major international financial institutions (IFIs) such as the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank.
2. **Evolving structure of the report.** Since its inception in 2003, the focus and structure of the ARRI have been revised several times to improve its relevance to the changing priorities and demands of the Fund. In keeping with this continued emphasis on improving relevance, this 2020 ARRI has undergone changes to address: (i) the changing learning and accountability needs of IOE's key IFAD stakeholders, as reflected in feedback from IFAD's Governing Bodies and Management; (ii) recommendations from the 2019 External Peer Review of IFAD's Evaluation Function; (iii) IOE's internal reflection that called for increased utility of the ARRI through a more streamlined document; and (iv) the evolution of the approaches followed by other IFIs.
3. The 2020 ARRI is a pilot of the transition to an ARRI that, along with assisting the accountability function as in the past, seeks to bring more actionable knowledge. It contains two notable changes. First, there is no "learning theme" chapter. Following feedback from the Executive Board, a more comprehensive approach is taken by presenting analysis across a range of interventions and development contexts that can help IFAD-supported projects improve their design and implementation. The focus is on offering insights into recurring factors that positively or negatively contribute to the development effectiveness of IFAD's operations and strategies. Second, this year's ARRI does not include recommendations, in line with practices at other IFIs. The findings of the 2020 ARRI are expected to help identify topics for future evaluations and, in turn, the recommendations provided by these will be more focused and specific.
4. **Evolving ARRI content.** Starting with the 2020 ARRI, while the presentation of performance results will continue to be the bedrock of every edition, the way of presenting learning topics will evolve in order to better contribute to enhancing the development effectiveness of IFAD's operations. This will be further elaborated upon in the context of the revision of the IFAD Evaluation Manual in 2021.

5. **Methodology.** The current and long-term rating performance reported in the ARRI is based on projects and programmes evaluated by IOE. Projects are assessed and rated across 10 evaluation criteria: rural poverty impact; relevance; effectiveness; efficiency; sustainability of benefits; gender equality and women's empowerment; innovation; scaling up; environment and natural resources management; and adaptation to climate change. In addition, the performance of IFAD and the government as partners is evaluated for each project. Finally, two composite criteria that assess project performance (an average of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability) and overall project achievement (all 10 criteria) are presented in all evaluations. Following the Good Practice Standard of the Evaluation Cooperation Group of the Multilateral Development Banks for Public Sector Evaluations, IFAD uses a six-point rating scale to assess performance under each evaluation criterion.
6. These performance measures help IFAD understand whether results were achieved and also offer critical diagnostics, such as the sustainability, relevance to target groups and efficiency of interventions, thereby highlighting areas where improvements are needed. The ratings are obtained from impact evaluations (IEs), project completion report validations (PCRVs) and project performance evaluations (PPEs). Ratings for non-lending activities are obtained from country strategy and programme evaluations (CSPEs).
7. In line with consolidated practices at other IFIs, the main trends in performance are explained through an analysis of the percentages of moderately satisfactory or better on a three-year moving basis, to highlight long-term trends and smooth short-term fluctuations (an analysis of year-to-year changes would be too sensitive to such fluctuations). The rating performance in this report was drawn from 259 projects that were completed between 2007 and 2018.
8. To improve its relevance to IFAD's current operations, the 2020 ARRI revised its methodology, and identified recurring issues emerging from evaluation findings related to design as well as to the implementation of interventions at the project and country levels. They were identified using quantitative and qualitative approaches (NVivo software), and were selected for the IEs, PCRVs and PPEs finalized in 2019; once identified, they were traced back to evaluations conducted in 2018 and 2017 (a total of 109 evaluations). The strategic-level analysis is based on the assessments in the CSPEs finalized in 2017, 2018 and 2019 (14 CSPEs). The recurring design issues persisted in designs approved in different years and spread across all geographical regions. Their persistence merits closer scrutiny and offers useful insights for verifying the soundness of the present design processes.
9. **Process.** The shaping of the 2020 ARRI was underpinned by the principles of responsiveness and collaboration. During the preparation of the report, presentations of the preliminary findings were made to representatives of the divisions in the Programme Management Department (PMD) and the Strategy and Knowledge Department, as well as of IFAD's Senior Management, and feedback was elicited. The report was finalized taking into account written comments received from Management.
10. **The most recent performance of projects (completed in 2016-2018) shows that the ratings for the majority of criteria lie in the moderately satisfactory or above zone.** Chart A shows that, except for efficiency, the majority of projects have a higher proportion of positive or moderately satisfactory and above ratings. In the most recent period (2016-2018), the criteria with the highest positive ratings were: relevance (84 per cent),

## Portfolio performance

Chart A Ranking of all criteria by share of overall satisfactory ratings

Percentage of projects with overall satisfactory/unsatisfactory ratings, 2016-2018



Source: IOE evaluation database (PCR/V/PPE), April 2020.

IFAD's performance as a partner (83 per cent), environment and natural resources management (83 per cent), adaptation to climate change (77 per cent), and innovation (77 per cent). At the other end of the spectrum were efficiency, sustainability and government performance with a lower proportion of moderately satisfactory or better ratings (48-58 per cent of moderately satisfactory or better ratings).

11. **The historical trend for overall project achievement has been slightly declining in the medium term and is consistent with the project completion report (PCR) trend.** The aggregate performance of IFAD-supported projects, evaluated through the overall project achievement criterion, has shown a slight decline since 2013-2015 (chart B); the proportion of moderately satisfactory or better ratings in the most recent period (2016-2018)

Chart B Combined overview of the performance criteria using IOE ratings

Percentage of projects rated moderately satisfactory or better, 2007-2018



Source: IOE evaluation database (PCR/V/PPE), April 2020.

is 72 per cent. The ratings in the PCRs for the same criterion follow a trend pattern similar to IOE ratings in the same period.

12. **The performance of IFAD's operations in the past five years exhibits four distinct patterns.** The analysis of ratings of projects completed shows four distinct patterns.
  1. A flat or slightly declining trend, the latter especially beginning in 2013-15. Three ratings – **relevance, effectiveness and IFAD's performance** – display this pattern.
  2. A more pronounced declining trend. In this case, the decline has been more than 10 per cent between 2013-15 and the most recent period, and includes five criteria – **rural poverty impact, innovation, scaling up, gender equality and women's empowerment, and government performance**. In particular, ratings given for government performance have declined more than for any other criterion, a drop of 20 per cent from 2013-15 until the most recent period.
  3. A declining trend followed by an uptick in the most recent period. Two criteria – **sustainability and efficiency** – have seen an increase in positive ratings for the most recent period. This is noteworthy given that it comes on the heels of a trend that had been declining since 2012-14. Findings from next year's ARRI will confirm whether the recent increase has continued.
  4. A long-term positive trend. Ratings for two criteria – **environment and natural resources management, and adaptation to climate change** – have been mostly on an upward trajectory since 2010-12.
13. The 2007-2018 overall average disconnect (or the absolute difference) between IOE and PMD ratings is -0.29, similar to past ARRI, but it has diminished for some criteria. In particular, effectiveness, adaptation to climate change, and environment and natural resources management show a lower disconnect than the average. The highest disconnect between the mean IOE and PMD

ratings is for relevance (-0.48), while the lowest is for rural poverty impact (-0.16). The difference between the mean ratings of IOE and PMD is also statistically significant for all criteria. A correlation analysis conducted on IOE and PMD ratings suggests that trends in IOE and PMD ratings are consistent overall. The correlation is particularly high for effectiveness, efficiency, rural poverty impact, government performance, project performance and overall project achievement.

14. **Performance of countries with fragile situations.** The report also provides an assessment of the performance of countries with fragile situations. The analysis shows that, on average, projects in such countries have a higher proportion of moderately satisfactory or above ratings in the most recent period (2016-2018) as compared to the previous period (2015-2017). However, in the most recent period, for the majority of evaluation criteria, ratings for projects in countries without fragile situations are higher than or equal to the ratings for projects in countries with fragile situations.

### Learning from successes and challenges related to project design

15. The ARRI presents a selected range of factors identified by evaluations as contributing to the performance of projects, and hence to the observed trends and/or recent performance. These recurring factors span all five of IFAD's geographical regions. They can be considered systemic in that they persisted in design and implementation.
16. Certain factors are key to a successful design, and findings of evaluations conducted between 2017 and 2019 highlighted the following factors as the ones affecting project design: (i) addressing specificity of the context; (ii) effective social targeting; (iii) coherence of project components and activities;



(iv) incorporating lessons learned from the past; (v) partnerships for results; (vi) identifying and mitigating risks; and (vii) enhancing ownership of interventions by stakeholders. These factors can act as both enablers and constrainers to successful project designs. The following are the main findings and lessons concerning a selected few.

17. **Addressing specificity of the context.**

**Adequate context analysis in design and implementation is important in all cases but even more so in situations of weak governance, fragile institutions, and inadequate legal and regulatory frameworks.** This ARRI presents three common typologies of inadequate context consideration that can result in less-than-desirable outcomes: (i) excessively complex design and overambitious geographical coverage and targets; (ii) a lack of assessment of the government's implementation and coordination capacity that results in implementation delays; and (iii) project designs with ambitious expectations of entering into private-sector partnerships, while not envisioning appropriate incentives and unrealistically estimating risk-averseness.

18. **Effective social targeting. Recent evaluations have shown that beneficiary inclusion is being built into designs in general. However, successful projects have been those that have included a more focused approach through activities adapted to specific beneficiary groups.**

Thus, with regard to gender, successful projects were the ones where: (i) pro-poor targeting determined which commodities and value chain interventions were selected; (ii) women were targeted through activities that provided them with diversified sources of income; and (iii) proper attention was paid to managing the time burden of women, through, for instance, reduced time for water collection. However, targeting for youth was a rare topic in the evaluated sample of projects, given that it is still at an early stage. Livelihoods of young

people face two main challenges: (i) access to assets, goods and services; and (ii) a lack of opportunities to acquire new skills. The analysis in the ARRI confirms the need for a more specific approach on youth with regard to these two challenges.

19. **Learning from past projects. Recent evaluations have shown that lessons learned from the past can be particularly instructive in two areas.**

Given the variety of development contexts in which IFAD-supported projects operate, these areas were identified as: (i) the duration required for strengthening the capacities of producers' organizations; and (ii) the institutional capacity of implementing agencies. Both of these are critical in driving the success of IFAD-supported projects. Strengthening capacities of producers' organizations is one of the principal activities in achieving development effectiveness and sustainability. Assessing institutional capacities in advance, particularly when they are weak, helps projects prepare better for implementation.

20. **Establishing appropriate partnerships for development effectiveness was an important recurring factor**

in the projects analysed, especially in the latest evaluations. Selecting partners without the right implementation capacities and experience, combined with insufficient contribution requirements, negatively affected the effectiveness of activities. In value chain projects in particular, an excessive focus on production hampered partnerships between actors in downstream activities, especially with and between private-sector stakeholders. Ultimately, this weakened market linkages. However, successful partnerships with technical institutions, such as agricultural research institutes or agricultural technology institutes, are key to ensuring support to project beneficiaries even after project completion, provided these are adequately funded by the government after closure.

## Findings and lessons from project implementation

21. While the role of the project design stage is to develop the framework and lay out the most effective pathway for a project to achieve its development objectives, the role of the implementation stage is to ensure that the expected quality standards are met and the timeline is respected, or that the implementation is adapted to changing contexts, and desired outcomes are achieved. In recent evaluations, several factors were highlighted that either supported or impeded project implementation, and were recurring. They are: (i) quality of implementation and supervision support; (ii) quality of project management; (iii) support provided to groups and institutions; (iv) training for strengthening capacities of beneficiaries; and (v) adapting to changes in the external context. Of these factors, the analysis looked at three regarding which the evaluation findings were instructive: (i) training for capacity-building of beneficiaries, a key activity common to most projects; (ii) support to producers' groups and institutions, two common actors in IFAD-supported projects; and (iii) adapting to a changing external context.
22. **Training for capacity-building of beneficiaries.** The evaluations pointed out the positive contribution of training with regard to the enhancement in beneficiaries' human capital. The quality of training itself was particularly effective when accompanied by the right needs assessment and targeting. Evaluations found that **appropriate duration and timing of training enables beneficiaries to reach a certain level of maturity.** In this regard, the delivery of the training has to take into account the needs of the beneficiaries (e.g. women's daily schedule to tend to their children, and a transport allowance) in order to avoid cases of absenteeism and dropouts. Optimal conditions for knowledge transfer cannot be created if training is delivered late in the programme or when there is a considerable time gap between delivery of training and its actual application.
23. **Support provided to groups and institutions. The focus of most projects with regard to farmer groups was on both commercialization and empowerment.** Support to farmers' groups mainly concerned increasing commercialization while empowering the groups. Successful projects were those that helped enhance not only crop productivity but also quality of produce, thus incentivizing the private sector to participate through buying of produce, and those that provided logistical support and pre-financing to farmers' cooperatives. While commercialization was pursued, group empowerment was also promoted through participatory identification of priorities and implementation of the agreed investments, control by the groups over resources, and linkages established with local institutions (e.g. farmers' groups providing input to local government institutions).
24. **Adapting to changes in the external context. IFAD's capability to be flexible and responsive to external events during implementation was challenged, but evaluations highlighted a number of successful cases.** External events led to a delay in implementation and non-achievement of targets, and in some cases, project extension. However, successful cases were those that: (i) developed initiatives on a piloting basis to respond to the launch of a new national or sector plan by the government; (ii) adjusted and sharpened project activities (reducing geographical focus, more strongly involving local agricultural development institutions in the implementation, and refining monitoring and evaluation [M&E] and coordination mechanisms among development partners); (iii) had a stronger focus on community development (especially women and youth) in the face of social unrest; and (iv) reinforced support to decentralized government structures.

25. **Overall, for implementation to be successful, one of the most fundamental drivers is the capacity and expertise of the project management units. IFAD support to project management units remains crucial.** While the factors examined above can act as both enablers and constrainers to project achievements, the quality of project management units is fundamental to successful implementation. The level of expertise and qualification of staff and the rate of staff turnover are crucial aspects underpinning the quality of these units. In this regard, IFAD's role in providing quality supervision and implementation support cannot be overstated.

### Findings and lessons from non-lending activities

26. **The long-term performance of non-lending activities has oscillated between periods of peaks and troughs.** After an increase until 2011, the more recent decline in overall non-lending activities, comprising knowledge management, partnerships and policy engagement, has been underpinned by the performance for knowledge management, with ratings of 50 per cent moderately satisfactory or above. Partnership-building has performed well recently, with ratings of 64 per cent moderately satisfactory or above, while country-level policy engagement has shown a slight increase to 50 per cent moderately satisfactory or above.

27. **A combination of communication tools has worked well for knowledge management, but knowledge remains confined largely to the project level, not contributing sufficiently to higher-level corporate or policy processes.** Projects used a variety of communication tools, including print and electronic media, for sharing and disseminating knowledge products and reaching out to larger audiences nationally. Exchange visits between projects took place

and learning events were held (however, the quality of M&E systems was variable). Nevertheless, knowledge products were not always customized for use in corporate knowledge repositories or higher-level policy forums. Inputs for higher-level policy forums and corporate knowledge repositories require an added layer of analytical refinement, highlighting policy dimensions and ramifications, which address the concerns of higher decision-making authorities.

28. **Partnerships with government have been fruitful, but collaboration or coordination has been in an initial phase with the Rome-based agencies (RBAs) and uneven with development agencies.** Most projects were anchored to the relevant ministry of agriculture, and this produced a strong relationship between the two parties, with IFAD being the partner of choice, especially in low-income countries (LICs). However, this also meant that the involvement of other line ministries was limited to the project level only. In several cases, collaboration with other development agencies was characterized by insufficient action to build systematic partnerships that would have resulted in the different agencies pooling their resources to achieve better and more efficient aid effectiveness. There was relatively more collaboration with the RBAs as compared to other development partners, albeit at a technical level.

29. **IFAD's strategic support and actions for policy engagement do not always match the scope of the objectives of engagement and the scale of activities required to achieve them.** In countries where IFAD was a relatively small player, collaborations with development partners were instrumental in its engagement with the government. An area where IFAD's contribution to policy engagement stands out is rural finance, and this success merits replication. In other cases, there was some mismatch between the objectives to be achieved via policy

engagement in the country strategic opportunities programmes (COSOPs) and the resources (time and staff) and the capacity allocated vis-à-vis the challenge of achieving pro-poor policy change. Most COSOP agendas for policy engagement were relevant to the context, but there was little planning on which policy reform processes IFAD should engage in, and which working groups and task forces IFAD would participate in, mostly due to country offices' limited resources.

30. **In terms of income groupings, LICs show an equal or better performance to middle-income countries (MICs) for policy engagement and partnerships.** Country-level policy engagement shows aligned ratings between the two groups of countries. Partnership-building has a significantly better performance in LICs than in MICs. These findings suggest that there have been more opportunities for partnership in LICs, given the greater number of bilateral and multilateral agencies operating there, organized in thematic coordination groups, and thanks to the government's support to donor coordination. The situation has been different in several MICs. Nonetheless, MICs continue to show demand for financing and knowledge partnerships, given the progress made by several of them in reducing poverty and in order to maintain their track record for promoting growth.

### Findings and lessons from country strategies and programmes

31. **The strategic orientation of country programmes was generally aligned with policies and priorities of IFAD and governments, and adapted to the changing context.** The COSOPs were well aligned with the key development and sectoral policies of the government and have offered an opportunity to implement some of these. One reason for the alignment is the consultative process carried out

in developing new COSOPs, including regular consultations with governments and development partners, and stakeholder validation workshops. This has ensured that COSOPs reflect national priorities in agriculture and rural development. While sustainable and profitable access to markets has been the most dominant theme in the more recent cohort of COSOPs evaluated, there has been a clear emphasis on topics such as efficient and climate-smart sustainable production systems, improving the management of natural resources, and building the resilience of smallholder farmers.

32. **The mitigation measures proposed to manage the risks identified in the country programmes were at times less specific and less commensurate with the means that IFAD can deploy.** Most COSOPs adequately covered risks related to sector-specific policies, fiduciary aspects and risks related to institutional practices. However, some mitigation measures were too broad, thus bringing into question their actual execution or efficacy. For example, some of the measures proposed were rather generic, such as support to producers' organizations to make a useful contribution to the development of agricultural policies, or the establishment of a climate of trust between them and the government through regular meetings and open consultations.
33. **From a strategic perspective, the linkages between lending and non-lending activities still require strengthening.** The COSOPs continue to be largely hinged upon the investment portfolio, with less attention to non-lending activities. More effective COSOPs are those that lay out a clear and actionable agenda for non-lending activities and provide an indication of the estimated administrative resources and technical support from headquarters and hubs. However, this was not the case for the majority of country strategies evaluated.

## Findings and lessons from areas of corporate priorities

34. The 2020 ARRI also presents findings and lessons learned in the four areas of gender, nutrition, youth and climate, which have also been prioritized under the Eleventh Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD11). The evaluated country strategies and projects that form part of the analysis were designed before the mainstreaming in these four areas had been institutionalized. Therefore, the purpose here is not so much to analyse their performance, but rather to present findings and offer possible lessons that can be relevant and useful to the ongoing efforts for mainstreaming these areas. The headline findings and lessons in each of the four areas are presented below.

### Gender

1. IFAD's gender focus has evolved from providing general guidelines on gender inclusion in projects to better-defined gender implementation strategies and action plans.
2. Activities for the empowerment of women have been strongest in training, microfinance and specific income-generating activities.
3. Efforts to reduce gender inequality have yet to fully expand from the project level to the strategic level through a greater use of policy engagement, for instance.

### Nutrition

1. Nutrition-related outcomes were not an explicit part of strategic objectives at the programme level.
2. Nutrition-related objectives were expected to be achieved through increased production and incomes.
3. The role of women was especially important in achieving positive nutritional outcomes.
4. The limited evaluability of nutritional outcomes hampered the assessment of nutrition in the evaluations considered in this report.

### Youth

1. IFAD's strategic evolution in terms of youth engagement has recently been more pronounced, in line with the Fund's greater emphasis on youth mainstreaming.
2. The buy-in from youth in regard to IFAD's interventions in agriculture is premised on involving youth early in the project design phase.
3. IFAD's work with rural young people requires strategic orientation, involving the use of non-lending activities.
4. Approaches for mainstreaming youth require strong consideration of the relevance of activities and products to their aspirations.

### Climate

1. The majority of the evaluated COSOPs developed after 2010 have elements of climate change as part of their strategic objectives.
2. While the climate-related objectives of COSOPs were aligned with related national policies and priorities, evaluations found limited evidence of knowledge and learning from projects being channelled to inform national policies and strategies.
3. There is increasing attention to the interdependent nature of climate change adaptation in projects.
4. Trying to balance the longer-term benefits deriving from climate change measures with the shorter-term economic considerations is challenging.

## Conclusions

35. **The 2020 ARRI time series related to performance criteria show that the majority of ratings remain in the zone of moderately satisfactory or above. There has been an overall declining trend in the ratings of completed since 2013-2015, albeit with some variations and exceptions.** There have been different performance patterns across the evaluation criteria in both the recent

performance and long-term trends. Three criteria – relevance, effectiveness and IFAD’s performance – show fluctuating trends, with some flattening or decline more recently.

36. There is a more pronounced declining trend in the case of five criteria: rural poverty impact, gender equality and women’s empowerment, innovation, scaling up and government performance. Government performance in particular has witnessed the sharpest drop. However, two criteria, namely environment and natural resources management and adaptation to climate change, experienced an upward trajectory. Moreover, both efficiency and sustainability have followed a declining path but have experienced an uptick in the recent period. A comparison of self-assessment and independent ratings shows that the trend in PCR ratings (self-assessment) is similar to the one observed in IOE ratings (independent evaluation) in the period 2013-2018.

37. **Overall, the strategic focus of IFAD’s country programmes has adapted well to the changing context, but synergies between lending and non-lending activities need to be better exploited.** IFAD’s country programmes are generally aligned with policies and priorities of both IFAD and governments. In this regard, they have tuned their focus with emerging priorities. However, linkages between the lending and non-lending activities are yet to be fully exploited. Evaluations have observed two constraints. First, knowledge generated from projects and partnerships formed with project actors remain relegated at the project level only, and often do not feed into the strategic-level non-lending activities. Second, COSOPs’ ambitions in terms of the scope of non-lending activities are not matched with the resources and the capacity available to attain them.

38. **The performance of IFAD-supported projects can be linked to four factors at the time of design: (i) addressing the specific context; (ii) differentiated targeting strategies; (iii) partnerships for results; and (iv) learning from past experience.**

The analysis in the ARRI puts the spotlight on a number of factors that are important at the project design stage and have a strong bearing on the performance of projects. For example, complex design and overambitious geographical coverage and targets have undermined the developmental effectiveness of projects. Similarly, the lack of precise identification of the likely risks to attaining project outcomes early at the design stage has affected performance. Finally, selecting partners without the right implementation capacities and experience to implement the project has negatively affected the effectiveness of IFAD-supported activities.

39. **Key implementation challenges relate to: (i) ensuring that targets in terms of time and quality of delivery are met; and (ii) adapting to changes in the social, political, natural and developmental landscape, especially in countries with fragile situations.**

The analysis has highlighted that the transition from design to implementation poses challenges. Internal challenges include ensuring that targets in terms of time and quality related to project activities that were conceptualized at design are met. External changes relate to ensuring that implementation is carried out as planned in the face of shifts in the social, political, natural and developmental landscape. Successful implementation relies largely on the capacity and expertise of the project management units. Performance of project management units is an area of challenge, as reflected in the long-term decline in ratings for government performance. At the same time, the quality of IFAD’s supervision and implementation support is key to bolstering and redressing performance.

40. **IFAD's efforts related to gender and climate have important lessons to offer for mainstreaming youth and nutrition.** Findings from evaluations show that IFAD-supported projects have made progress with regard to gender and climate. In the case of gender, there are cases where participation by women has moved from mere inclusion through quotas to specific activities better suited to their needs. In several cases, climate has been elevated from just a project-level activity to becoming part of the strategic objectives in the country programmes. Moreover, in both of these areas, there is clearer specification of targets, and results needed to achieve these targets, with a monitoring framework to track progress. However, evaluations struggled to find clear or explicit links between project activities and outputs, and outcomes related to nutrition. Findings related to youth are still scarce given that this an important but relatively recent area of emphasis. Moving forward, the aforementioned efforts related to gender and climate can be emulated in successfully mainstreaming nutrition and youth.
41. **The areas of declining performance identified in the 2020 ARRI warrant further examination.** The performance trends signify that the perceptible decline in areas of rural poverty impact, gender equality and women's empowerment, innovation, scaling up and government performance requires attention. In particular, government performance is an area that has witnessed a sharp drop in ratings. Given that government performance influences, and is in turn influenced by, other criteria such as efficiency, sustainability and IFAD's performance, to name but a few, these areas should also be further examined. The 2020 ARRI also provides an analysis of the recurring factors, which span a range of interventions and contexts, and their likely links to improving programming.
42. **Moving forward**, this calls for action on the part of Management and IOE. In the case of Management, this discussion could trigger both an examination of the factors underlying the recent trends, and an internal self-reflection and learning within different parts of IFAD to craft solutions that are contextualized to their own areas and situations, and which can help strengthen the development effectiveness of IFAD's programmes.
43. Similarly, the findings in the 2020 ARRI may assist IOE in identifying topics for other evaluation products, such as corporate-level evaluations, thematic evaluations and evaluation syntheses. In turn, these evaluations may contribute to better explaining trends in ratings and other ARRI findings. Moreover, in line with the evolving nature of the ARRI, future editions – in addition to analysing project-level rating trends – could devote further attention to consolidating findings from IOE's higher- and strategic-level evaluations, including CSPEs. This would add to the strategic and forward-looking content of the ARRI.
44. Finally, in the future, in consultation with Management, sections of the ARRI may be dedicated to reviewing ex post the follow-up to the recommendations of selected IOE evaluations and any remaining gaps. This is the current practice at other IFIs.

Madagascar

M. Ruffin Razafindrakoto,  
cobbler, in his workshop  
in Analamanga district,  
Madagascar.

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# 1 Overview

## Background

1. **Purpose of the ARRI.** This is the eighteenth edition of the Annual Report on Results and Impact of IFAD Operations (ARRI), the flagship report of the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD (IOE). The ARRI presents a synthesis of the performance of IFAD-supported operations, and highlights systemic and cross-cutting issues, lessons and challenges to enhance the development effectiveness of IFAD-funded operations. In presenting an overview of results and impact of IFAD operations as well as recent trends based on evaluations completed by IOE each year, the ARRI is key to ensuring accountability for results. Similarly, by presenting evidence-based performance and trends in performance, it seeks to promote self-reflection and learning within IFAD – particularly at all levels of management. To assist this process, it offers an analysis of select areas of work to present what works and why (or why not). This is the only vehicle that provides an independent assessment of the aggregate performance of IFAD operations through a review of independent evaluations, and as such is critical to the Fund and its evaluation function.
2. The ARRI is similar, in terms of methodology and content, to the annual evaluation reports of major international financial institutions (IFIs) such as the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Asian Development Bank

(ADB) and the World Bank. The evaluation functions, in addition to their own annual reviews and reports, also provide – to different extents – inputs to management results reporting in the form of independent evaluation ratings. In the case of the World Bank, independently validated ratings are the cornerstone of development effectiveness and results reporting by the management. In addition, annual evaluation (or other) reports often present an analysis of follow-up to evaluation recommendations (similar to the President’s Report on the Implementation Status of Evaluation Recommendations and Management Actions at IFAD). Such reports also highlight how the IFIs intend to improve collaboration with operational departments to strengthen the use and feedback loops of evaluative knowledge and evaluation findings (annex X provides more details on reporting by IFIs).

3. **Evolving structure of the report.** Since its inception in 2003, the focus and structure of the ARRI have been revised several times to improve its relevance to IFAD’s changing priorities and demands. In keeping with this continued emphasis on improving relevance, the 2020 ARRI has undergone changes to address the needs of IFAD’s Governing Bodies and Management. The changes are aligned to at least four dimensions: (i) the changing learning and accountability needs of IOE’s key IFAD stakeholders, as reflected in feedback from IFAD’s Governing Bodies

and Management regarding the scope of the ARRI; (ii) recommendations received from the External Peer Review of IFAD's Evaluation Function; (iii) IOE's internal reflection that called for increased utility of the ARRI through a more streamlined and condensed document; and (iv) the evolution of approaches of other IFIs.

4. The 2020 ARRI is a pilot of the transition to an ARRI that, along with assisting the accountability function as in the past, seeks to bring more actionable knowledge and a better balance between: (i) rating analysis; (ii) substantive evidence from projects on what works and what does not; and (iii) consolidating findings from more country- and corporate-level evaluations (CLEs). In view of this, the 2020 ARRI introduces significant changes related to the structure of the report and the analysis. It retains some of the features of past ARRIs, importantly, the presentation of performance ratings of IFAD operations as mandated by IFAD's Executive Board. At the same time, in order to deepen learning from the report, the focus is on offering insights into recurring issues that positively or negatively affect the development effectiveness of IFAD's operations and strategies, and that also contribute to the recent results and long-term trends in performance. To this end, it summarizes the findings of independent evaluations of the past three years. By increasing the cohort of evaluations, the analysis now relies on a more robust (expanded) evaluation base to distil the lessons learned. It is envisioned that, while the presentation of performance results will continue to be the bedrock of every ARRI, the approach taken to presenting learning can change in future annual editions. This will ensure that ARRI progressively incorporates new and more effective forms of learning for enhancing development effectiveness of IFAD's operations.
5. In a departure from the past, there are two notable changes in terms of the content and structure of the 2020 ARRI report. First, there is no "learning theme" chapter, and second, there are no recommendations. The objective of the learning theme has been to delve deep into a theme and to identify and present good practices in different scenarios related to that theme. Following feedback from the Executive Board, the 2020 ARRI takes a more comprehensive approach by presenting analysis across a range of interventions and development contexts that can help IFAD-supported projects improve their design and implementation.
6. Furthermore, this year's ARRI does not include recommendations. This is more in line with practices at other IFIs. The ARRI presents recurring findings in recent evaluations related to the strengths and opportunities in the design and implementation of IFAD-supported operations. Thereby, it points to possible areas that merit reflection and learning. The findings of the 2020 ARRI are expected to help identify topics for future evaluations, and these evaluations will provide recommendations that are more focused and specific.
7. Another development associated with the ARRI is the creation of "ARRI Live", a dashboard system that will present IOE ratings and show trends in ratings in real time. It will allow rapid access to IOE ratings through a visual dashboard that internal and external users can use to interactively navigate through charts and tables. It will contribute to more effective and efficient knowledge management within IOE and IFAD.
8. The structure of the report has been modified to mirror the new features of the 2020 ARRI. Chapter 1 provides an overview of the context and the new features of the 2020 ARRI, as well as the new methodology and limitations. Chapter 2 provides graphics on recent performance and long-term trends of ratings for aggregate and individual IOE evaluation criteria related to IFAD's performance in lending activities. In addition, it shows the comparison between IOE evaluations and

the ratings of the Programme Management Department (PMD), and between IFAD's performance and the performance of other IFIs. There is no description of factors underpinning results for each criterion as in the past; instead, the ARRI adopts a more strategic approach by highlighting factors that collectively have ramifications across all criteria and need urgent attention. This is the focus of chapter 3, which identifies the successful and challenging aspects of IFAD's operations at both design and implementation stages. Chapter 4 analyses findings related to IFAD's performance in country strategies and non-lending activities, and also includes an analysis of some selected themes that are IFAD's corporate priorities. Chapter 5 presents the conclusions.

### Sources of data

9. The ARRI uses all evaluations produced by IOE since 2007.<sup>1</sup> These evaluation products assess IFAD's performance at the project, country and corporate levels. The report presents

the ratings, and summarizes the analysis, findings, conclusions and recommendations provided by these evaluations. The recent rating performance in the 2020 ARRI is drawn from projects completed between 2016 and 2018. Table 1 summarizes the number of evaluations considered for both types of analysis (recent performance and long-term trend performance).

### Methodology and approach

10. The performance reported in ARRI is based on projects and programmes evaluated by IOE as per the standard evaluation criteria. As measures of performance, the evaluation criteria (including the two aggregate measures) are spelled out in the IFAD Evaluation Manual. These are also consistent with international standards and practices, namely, the United Nations Evaluation Group, the Evaluation Cooperation Group, and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC). Moreover, these

<sup>1</sup> These evaluation products consist of: corporate-level evaluations (CLEs), country strategy and programme evaluations (CSPEs), evaluation synthesis reports (ESRs), impact evaluations (IEs), project completion report validations (PCRVs), and project performance evaluations (PPEs).

Table 1 Summary of data sources for the 2020 ARRI

	Number and type of evaluations	Evaluations in the sample
Recent performance (projects completed between 2016 and 2018)	63 project-level evaluations project performance evaluations, project completion report validations, impact evaluations	51 project completion report validations, 11 project performance evaluations, 1 impact evaluation
Long-term performance trends (projects completed between 2007 and 2018)	259 project-level evaluations project performance evaluations, project completion report validations, impact evaluations	71 project performance evaluations, 183 project completion report validations, 6 impact evaluations
Country strategy and programme evaluations completed between 2007 and 2019	54 country strategy and programme evaluations	

Note: The ARRI 2020 analysis also refers to findings from other high-level IOE evaluations products, such as the evaluation synthesis report (ESR) on rural youth (2014), the ESR on IFAD's country-level policy dialogue (2017), the ESR on what works for gender equality and women's empowerment (2017), the ESR on building partnerships for enhanced development effectiveness (2018), the ESR on IFAD's support to community-driven development (2019), and the corporate-level evaluation on IFAD's engagement in pro-poor value chain development (2019).

criteria have come to measure performance not only at the project level but also at the programme, country and global levels. These measures aid the organization in understanding not only whether results are achieved but also whether they are sustainable, relevant to target population, achieved efficiently, empower women, and involve innovations and scaling up, etc. Thus, they highlight areas where improvements are needed to strengthen performance. The ratings are obtained from IOE evaluations, particularly from project performance evaluations (PPEs), where available. Where they are not, the ratings are obtained from corresponding project completion report validations (PCRVs). Ratings for non-lending activities are obtained from country strategy and programme evaluations (CSPEs). Other ratings such as those from project completion reports (PCRs) and from IFIs are used for comparison purposes. To present the trends in ratings, the ARRI uses a three-year moving average of ratings, which serves to smooth inter-annual variations.

**2** For more details related to IOE products, including process and methodologies used, refer to the Evaluation Manual: <https://www.ifad.org/en/web/ioe/evaluation/asset/39984268>.

**3** In other words, the number of projects with this marker were identified in year 1 evaluations, year 2 evaluations, and year 3 evaluations, and aggregated to have the sum of projects with this marker. Recurrence is calculated as the percentage of these sums of projects in the total projects evaluated in the three-year period. Each marker can have subcategories, and each subcategory may be assessed in the same evaluation (e.g. for gender targeting and youth targeting, and the social targeting marker).

11. The 2020 ARRI incorporates a revised methodology to facilitate the analysis at the project and country levels (chapters 3 and 4, respectively). At the project level, the methodology identified a set of “markers”, which are features or factors that underlie IFAD-supported projects at the design and implementation stages. They were identified using quantitative and qualitative approaches, and were selected for the latest cohort of project evaluations, i.e. PCRVs, PPEs and impact evaluations (IEs)<sup>2</sup> finalized in 2019. Once identified, they were traced back to evaluations conducted in 2018 and 2017 (see annex IV). The final selection of these factors was based on their recurrence in these three years of evaluations, i.e. those factors that recurred in the past three years of evaluation were used. Recurrence is defined as an instance when the same factor was flagged in evaluations conducted in each year of the three-year period considered.<sup>3</sup> The support

of NVivo software facilitated the qualitative analysis. In the following stage, these factors were validated by IOE staff. It should be noted that the scope of the ARRI is to present the performance trends and recent performance. Presenting a comprehensive picture of the underlying causes of these trends and current performance is beyond its scope and better addressed by higher-level evaluations dedicated to that task. However, by identifying recurring factors, the ARRI presents a select range of persistent issues that could contribute to the observed trends and recent performance.

12. The country-level analysis in this ARRI is based on the assessments in the CSPEs. A similar approach was also applied to the CSPEs, i.e. the analysis was based on CSPEs finalized in 2017, 2018 and 2019. Findings were summarized from the performance related to the efficiency and the effectiveness of country strategies and the performance of non-lending activities.
13. As mentioned above, the cohort of projects that formed the basis of the analysis was larger than in the past. A total of 109 PCRVs and PPEs (all evaluations conducted in 2017, 2018 and 2019) formed the basis for the project-level analysis, while the country-level analysis was drawn from 14 CSPEs.
14. **Ratings scale:** In line with the Good Practice Standards of the Evaluation Cooperation Group of the Multilateral Development Banks for Public Sector Evaluations, IFAD uses a six-point rating scale to assess performance in each evaluation criterion. The ratings, an integral part of performance reporting in IOE evaluations, are used in the analysis of the ARRI for reporting on IFAD’s aggregate operational performance. Therefore, in each independent evaluation, IOE ensures that the ratings assigned are based on evidence and follow a standard methodology and process. Moreover, comprehensive internal and external peer reviews are organized to enhance

Table 2 IOE rating system

Score	Assessment	Category
6	Highly satisfactory	Satisfactory
5	Satisfactory	
4	Moderately satisfactory	
3	Moderately unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
2	Unsatisfactory	
1	Highly unsatisfactory	

Source: IFAD Evaluation Manual, 2015.

objectivity as well as finalize the assessments and ratings of each evaluation. Finally, the ratings are also shared with Management prior to finalization, providing an opportunity to submit evidence and/or arguments should it wish to dispute the ratings, and the ratings can be changed based on any further evidence and/or arguments presented by Management. Table 2 presents the rating system.

15. **Caveats and limitations.** There are a few caveats to consider when interpreting the results and analysis in the report. First, the 2020 ARRI long-term performance trends reflect the changes in the evaluation criteria and definitions included in the revised harmonization agreement between Management and IOE.<sup>4</sup> In particular: (i) rural poverty impact domains criteria, such as household income and assets, human and social and empowerment, food security and agricultural productivity, and institutions and policy are no longer rated separately, therefore, ratings for previous years have been removed from the quantitative analysis; (ii) scaling up and innovation have been rated separately in evaluations since 2017;<sup>5</sup> (iii) starting in evaluation year 2016, IOE has rated environment and natural resources management (ENRM) separately from adaptation to climate change; and (iv) sustainability has been included in the calculation of project performance starting from 2016 in evaluations of projects completed from 2013 onwards.

16. Second, other factors that can possibly affect the interpretation of criteria are related to the introduction of guidance and strategy notes by IFAD across different points in time. The adoption of new procedures can affect and help evolve IOE's evaluative approaches, and the additional and new knowledge can influence its ratings (for example, as in the case of the introduction of the Social, Environmental and Climate Assessment Procedures [SECAP] for the assessment of ENRM, or the modified definition of relevance). Third, some of the changes to designs stemming from recent IFAD policies or guidelines from IFAD may not have been captured in evaluations of projects that were formulated in the past. However, it is important to acknowledge that the ARRI identifies recurrent performance factors and issues that continue to be relevant.

4 IFAD. 2017. *Agreement on the Harmonization of IFAD's Independent Evaluation and Self-Evaluations Methods and Systems Part I: Evaluation Criteria*. Rome. <https://webapps.ifad.org/members/eb/120/docs/EB-2017-120-INF-2.pdf>

5 At the time of the harmonization agreement, both IOE and IFAD Management had agreed to change the scope of scaling up from "potential to scaling up" to "scaling up". However, it is likely that some projects had still been rated for potential to scaling up in the interim.

## Mexico

A group of Indigenous women from a Maya community in Campeche, Mexico. These artisans only work with wood leftovers such as tree bark, and other small pieces that cannot be sold. They contribute to the mitigation of climate change by taking advantage of their natural resources and avoiding forest exploitation.

©IFAD/Carla Francescutti



## 2 IFAD's lending performance

### Recent performance (2016-2018)

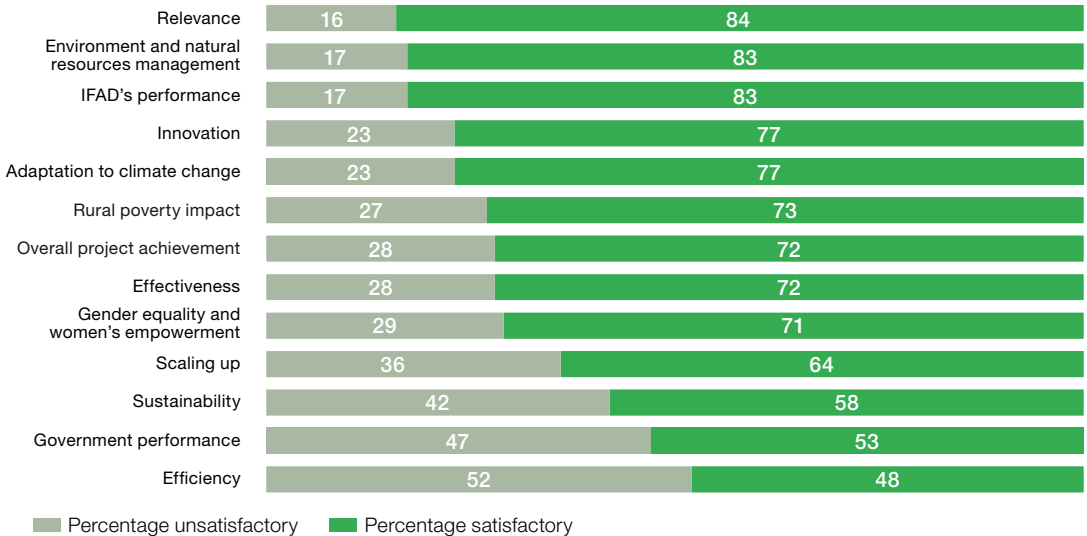
17. Chart 1 provides a snapshot of the most recent performance as estimated by a three-year moving average of ratings issued during 2016-2018, presented by individual evaluation criteria. When criteria are ranked based on the average share of moderately satisfactory ratings (ratings of 4 and above), relevance (84 per cent), IFAD's performance as a partner (83 per cent), ENRM (83 per cent), adaptation to climate change (77 per cent), and innovation (77 per cent) perform better than does overall project achievement.
18. At the other end of the spectrum are efficiency, sustainability and government performance with a lower proportion of

moderately satisfactory or better ratings (48-58 per cent of moderately satisfactory or better ratings). For most criteria, the majority of ratings are moderately satisfactory or above.

19. This report also provides an assessment of the performance of countries with fragile situations. The analysis shows that, on average, projects in countries with fragile situations have better moderately satisfactory and above ratings in the most recent period (2016-2018) as compared to the previous period (2015-2017). However, in the most recent period, for the majority of criteria, the ratings of projects in countries with non-fragile situations are higher than, or equal to, such countries. Annex IX provides the details.

Chart 1 Ranking of all criteria by share of overall satisfactory ratings

Percentage of projects with overall satisfactory/unsatisfactory ratings, 2016-2018



Source: IOE evaluation database (PCR/V/PPE), April 2020.

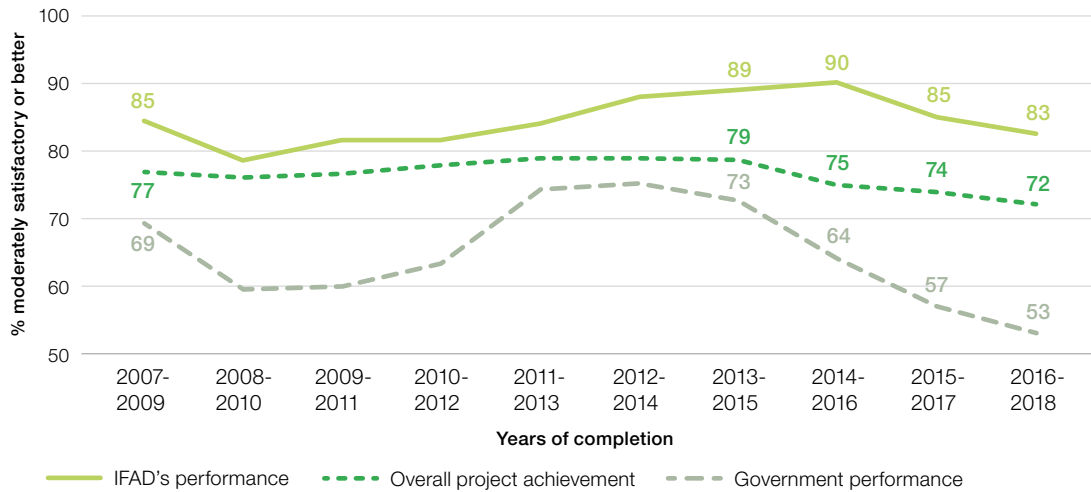
**Performance trends (2007-2018)**

20. Chart 2 provides a snapshot of the historical performance (2007-2018) for overall project achievement, IFAD's performance as a partner and government performance as a partner. Overall project achievement is an overarching assessment of a project, drawing upon the analysis and ratings for all criteria except IFAD's performance and government performance, and, thus, taken together, the

chart depicts all criteria used by IOE (see annex I for the list of criteria). The trend for overall project achievement has seen some slight decrease in the last three periods.

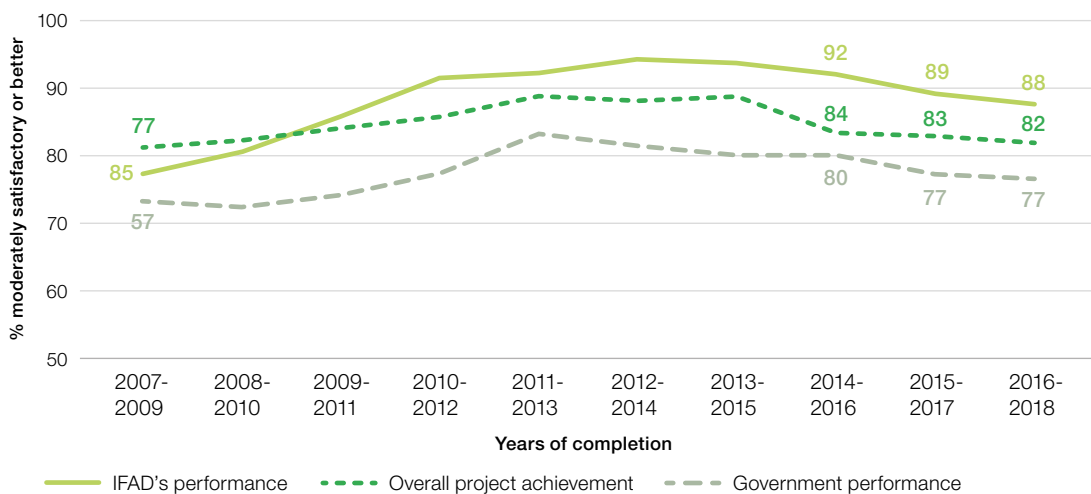
21. IFAD's performance has started to show a slight decline since 2015, although the proportion of moderately satisfactory or better ratings is a high 83 per cent. The decline has been more marked for government performance.

**Chart 2 Combined overview of the performance criteria using IOE ratings**  
Percentage of projects rated moderately satisfactory or better, 2007-2018



Source: IOE evaluation database (PCR/PPE), April 2020.

**Chart 3 Combined overview of the performance criteria using PCR ratings**  
Percentage of projects rated moderately satisfactory or better, 2007-2018





22. These trends are comparable to PCR rating trends for the criteria, especially for overall project achievement and IFAD's performance, as chart 3 shows.
23. In table 3, project performance is compared across IFAD's five geographical regions.<sup>6</sup> It is important to note that comparing performance across regions does not amount to assessing

**Table 3 Performance across regions**

Comparison across IFAD's geographical regions, 2007-2018 on the basis of projects rated moderately satisfactory and better (MS+) and projects rated satisfactory or better (S+)

	Asia and the Pacific	Latin America and the Caribbean	East and Southern Africa	Near East, North Africa and Europe	West and Central Africa
<b>Project performance</b>	N=62 projects	N=40 projects	N=47 projects	N=47 projects	N=64 projects
Percentage of projects rated moderately satisfactory or better	79	58	55	64	42
Percentage of projects rated satisfactory or better	19	8	11	4	3
<b>Rural poverty impact</b>	N=61 projects	N=38 projects	N=45 projects	N=47 projects	N=62 projects
Percentage of projects rated moderately satisfactory or better	92	71	87	89	68
Percentage of projects rated satisfactory or better	38	21	29	30	18
<b>Overall project achievement</b>	N=61 projects	N=38 projects	N=46 projects	N=47 projects	N=64 projects
Percentage of projects rated moderately satisfactory or better	87	71	78	85	63
Percentage of projects rated satisfactory or better	46	21	20	17	13
<b>IFAD's performance</b>	N=62 projects	N=40 projects	N=47 projects	N=47 projects	N=60 projects
Percentage of projects rated moderately satisfactory or better	89	85	87	91	77
Percentage of projects rated satisfactory or better	35	33	38	30	27
<b>Government performance</b>	N=62 projects	N=40 projects	N=47 projects	N=47 projects	N=64 projects
Percentage of projects rated moderately satisfactory or better	87	70	55	70	45
Percentage of projects rated satisfactory or better	44	18	19	15	14

<sup>6</sup> Project performance is an aggregate criterion that aggregates performance for four criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.

Source: IOE evaluation database (PCR/PPE), April 2020.

the performance of individual IFAD regional divisions per se; performance of projects is affected by a host of factors, including the context in which projects operate.

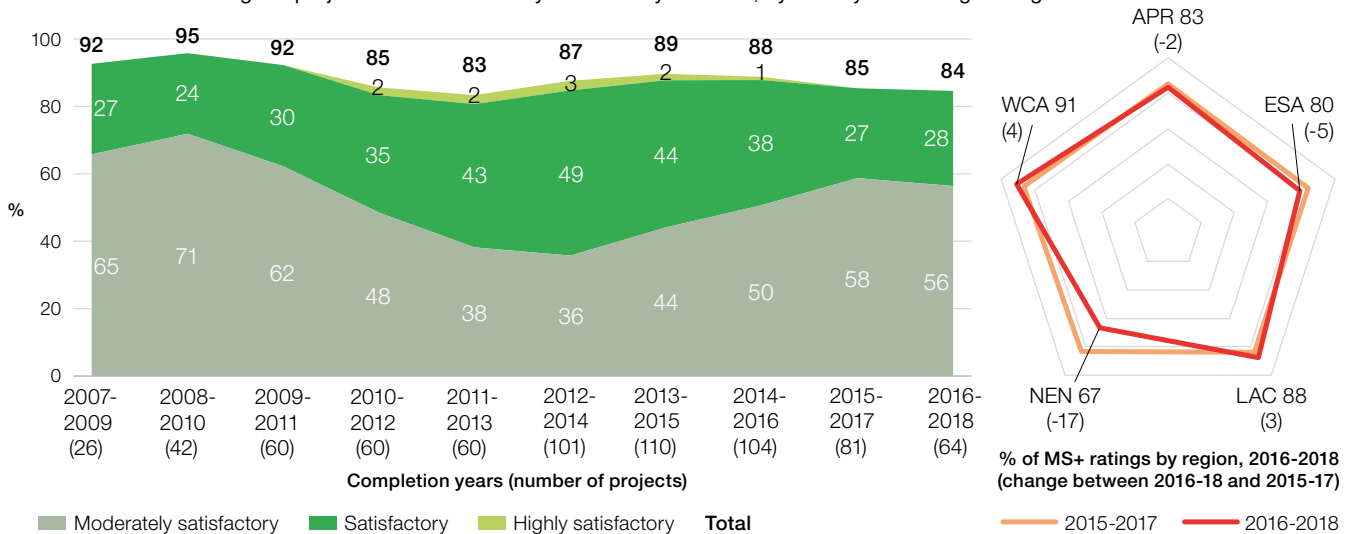
24. Between 2007 and 2018, the Asia and the Pacific Division (APR) had a higher proportion of projects than other regions rated both moderately satisfactory or better, and satisfactory or better for project performance, rural poverty impact, overall project achievement and government performance. Government performance varies across regions; projects in the APR are rated significantly higher than those in other regions. For IFAD's performance, the Near East, North Africa and Europe Division (NEN) continues to show a relatively higher proportion of projects rated moderately satisfactory or better, as was the case in the previous ARRI. The performance of IFAD operations in the West and Central Africa Division (WCA) is weaker than that in other regions for the five criteria, partly due to lower ratings for government performance (fewer than half of the projects were rated moderately satisfactory or better).
25. The following sections present a breakdown of the ratings by criterion for their long-term

performance (2007-2018). Similarly, for each criterion, the regional performance for that criterion is also presented by way of comparison between two time periods: the most recent period, and the period preceding it (the values in parentheses denote the percentage change between the two periods).

26. **Relevance.** IFAD operations remain highly relevant, with an average of **84 per cent** of all projects completed between 2016 and 2018 rated as moderately satisfactory or better, albeit with some decrease since 2013-2015 (chart 4). Among the regions, evaluated projects in the WCA and the Latin America and the Caribbean Division (LAC) performed better in comparison to the IFAD overall trend.
27. **Effectiveness.** The overall trend of moderately satisfactory or above ratings in effectiveness has remained nearly flat since 2012-2014 (chart 5). The share of projects rated moderately satisfactory or better for their effectiveness in the most recent period is **72 per cent**, with fully satisfactory ratings decreasing from 21 per cent in 2015-2017 to 17 per cent in 2016-2018. In terms of regional performance in 2016-2018, ratings for projects in the NEN ran counter to the overall IFAD trend.

Chart 4 **Project relevance, 2007-2018**

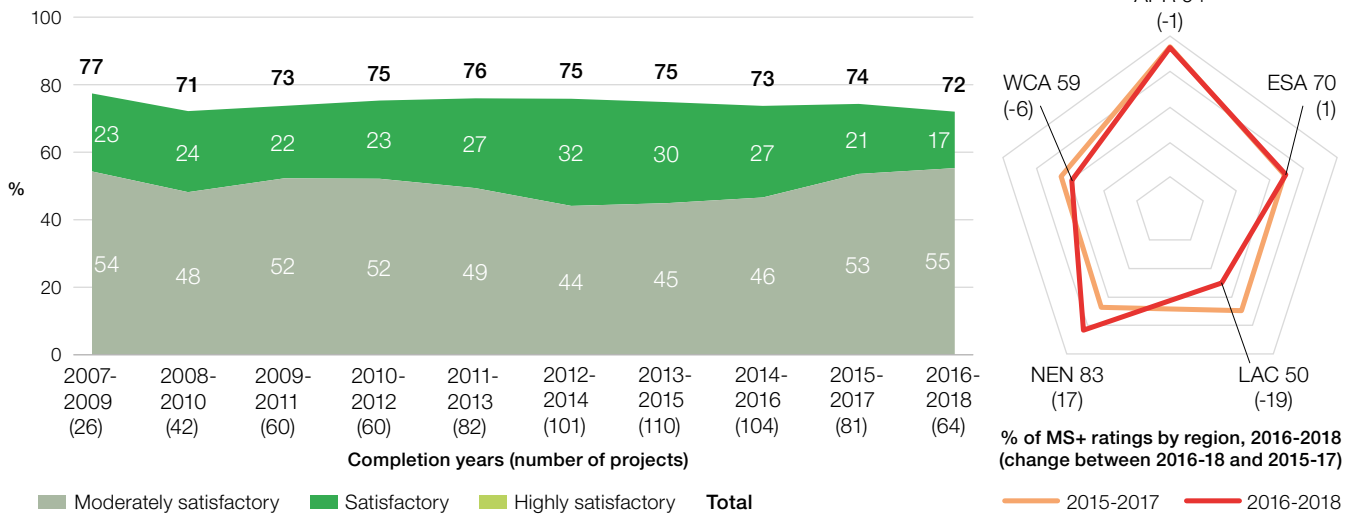
Percentage of projects rated moderately satisfactory or better, by three-year moving average



Source: IOE evaluation database (PCR/V/PPE), April 2020.

Chart 5 Project effectiveness, 2007-2018

Percentage of projects rated moderately satisfactory or better, by three-year moving average



Source: IOE evaluation database (PCR/V/PPE), April 2020.

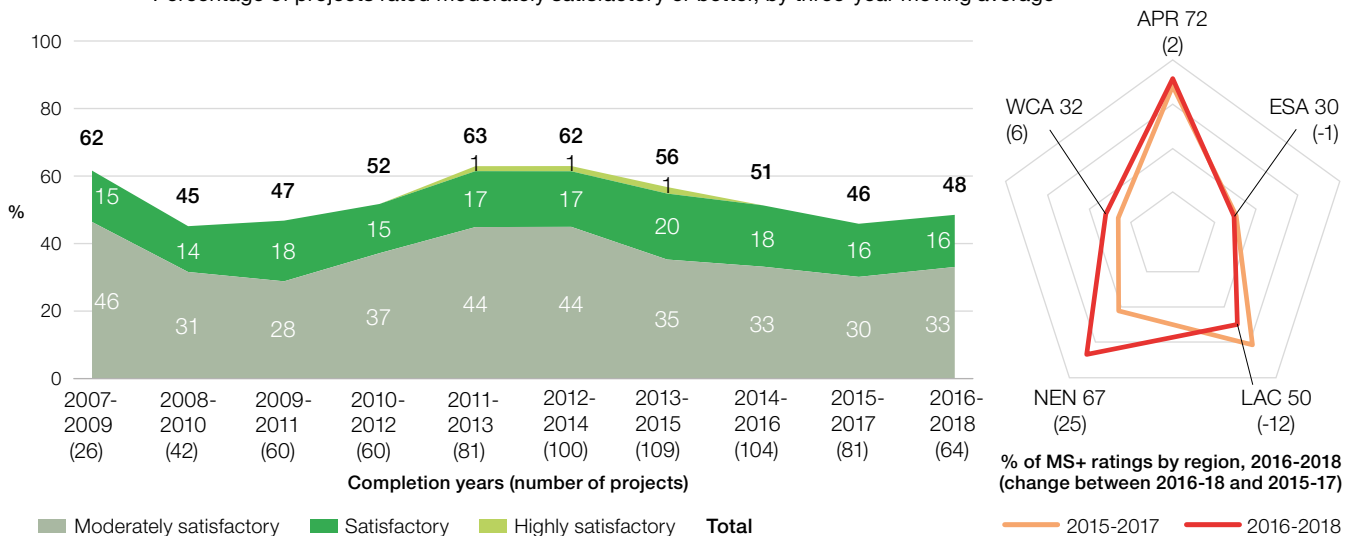
28. **Efficiency.** In the latest period, performance in operational efficiency has continued to be well below overall project achievement, and has shown a declining trend since 2013 (chart 6). The share of projects rated moderately satisfactory or better declined from a high of 63 per cent in 2013 to **48 per cent** in 2016-2018. This was also a slight uptick from 46 per cent in 2017. Among the regions, the ratings for the NEN ran counter to this trend,

followed by the WCA. The percentage of moderately satisfactory or better ratings in the NEN has increased, rising from 42 per cent in 2015-2017 to 67 per cent in 2016-2018, well above the global average of IFAD.

29. **Sustainability of benefits.** Like efficiency, sustainability of benefits has shown a decline for moderately satisfactory or better ratings since 2012-2014 (from 62 to 58 per cent),

Chart 6 Project efficiency, 2007-2018

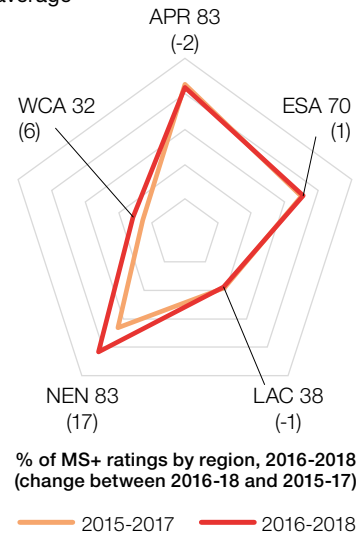
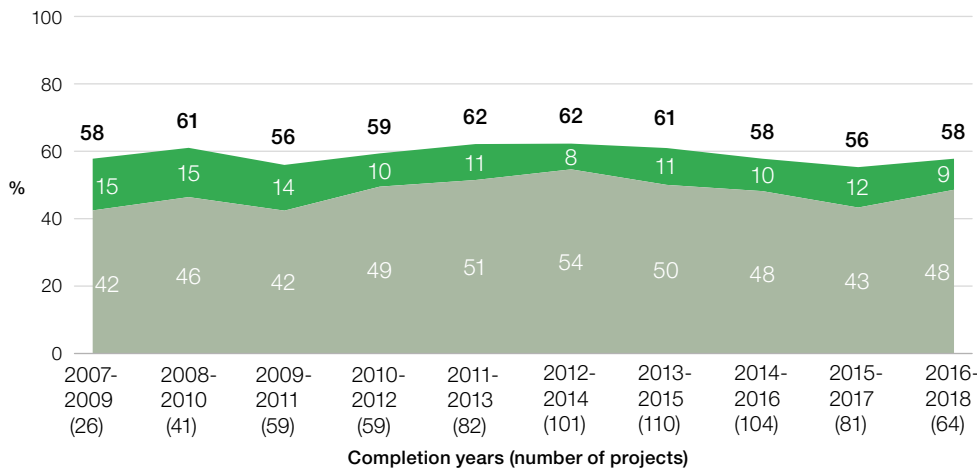
Percentage of projects rated moderately satisfactory or better, by three-year moving average



Source: IOE evaluation database (PCR/V/PPE), April 2020.

Chart 7 **Project sustainability, 2007-2018**

Percentage of projects rated moderately satisfactory or better, by three-year moving average



Source: IOE evaluation database (PCR/V/PPE), April 2020.

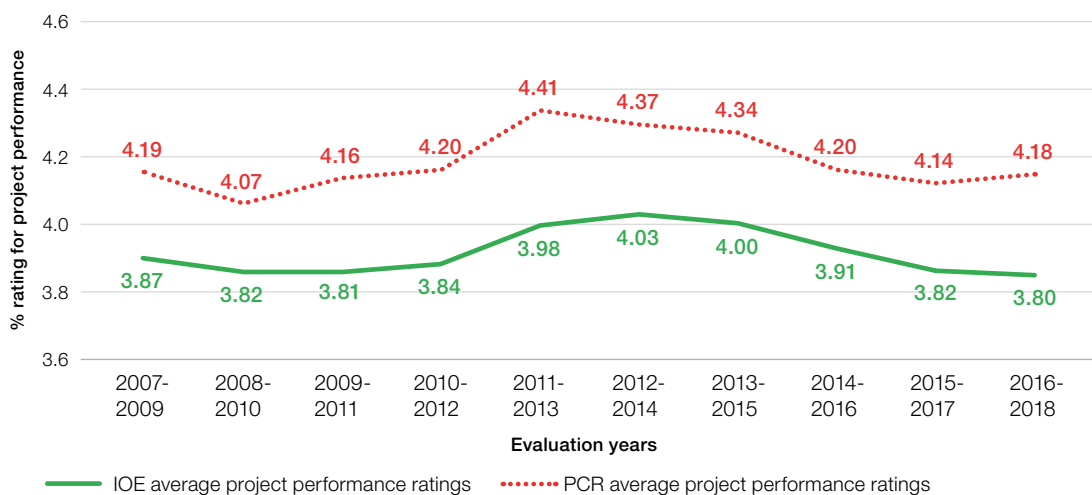
although a slight uptick was observed from the previous year (rising from 56 to the recent 58 per cent) (chart 7). After some decline since 2013-2015, there was a slight increase between 2015-2017 and 2016-2018. Among the regions, the performance of projects in the NEN, WCA and East and

Southern Africa Division (ESA) has shown an increase in moderately satisfactory or above ratings.

30. **Project performance.** This aggregate criterion is an arithmetic average of the ratings for relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and

Chart 8 **Project performance, 2007-2018 – average PCR ratings and average IOE ratings**

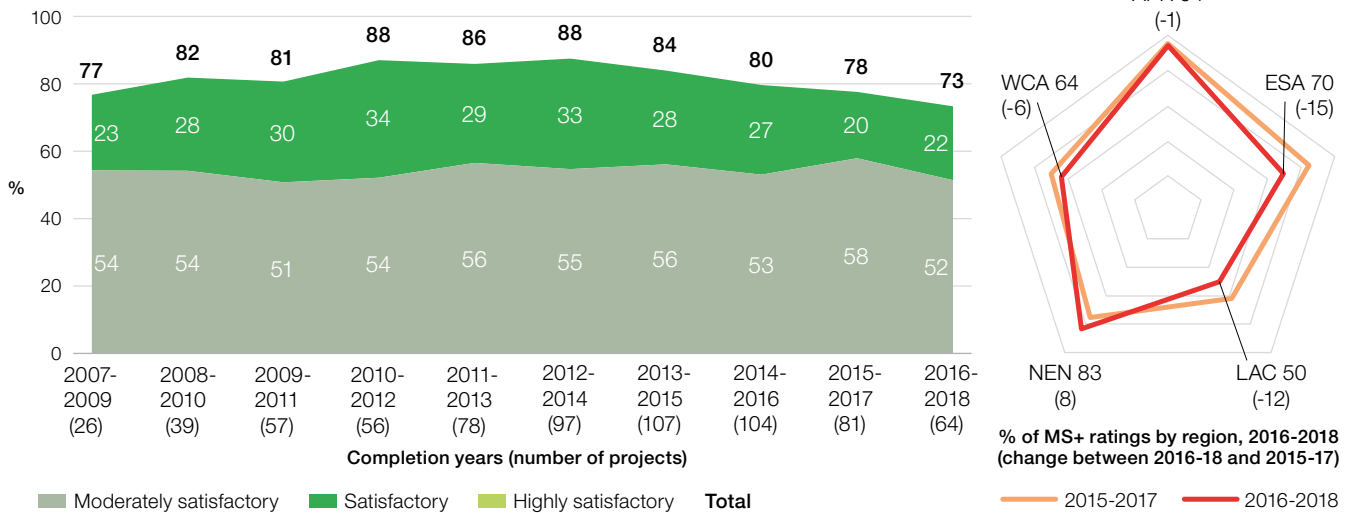
Average rating for project performance, by three-year moving average



Source: IOE/PCR ratings, April 2020.

Chart 9 Rural poverty impact, 2007-2018

Percentage of projects rated moderately satisfactory or better, by three-year moving average



Source: IOE evaluation database (PCR/V/PPE), April 2020.

sustainability. There has been a decline in performance ratings, especially since 2013-2015, from 4.03 to 3.80 (chart 8). Sustainability has been included under project performance from 2013 onwards and may have contributed to a drop in the average. Another aspect contributing to the decline is the pronounced drop in ratings for efficiency, especially since 2012-2014. Moreover, PCR ratings of completed projects show higher average ratings for project performance overall compared to IOE ratings. However, the two rating types show similar trends; both PCR and IOE ratings have been declining in the recent past. Only in the most recent period has there been a slight change in the direction of PCR ratings.

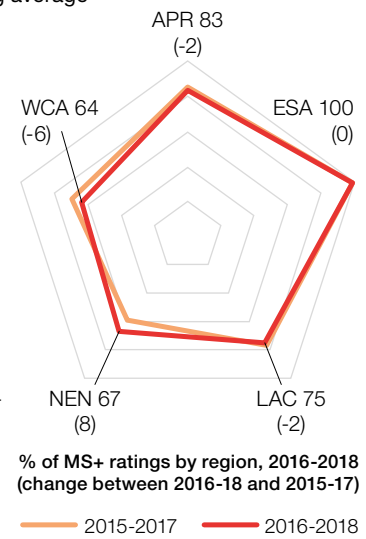
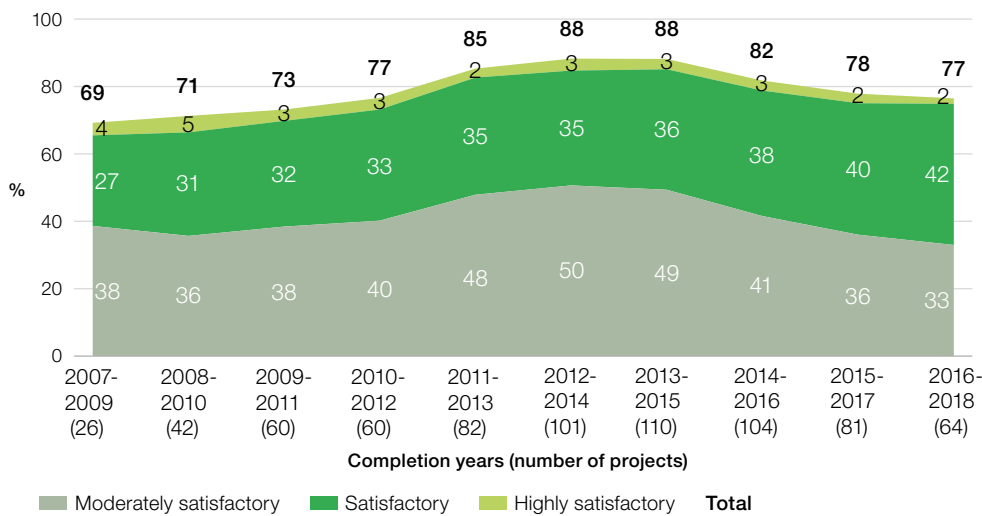
31. **Rural poverty impact.** The rural poverty impact criterion is a composite of the analysis in the following four subdomains: household income and assets; human and social capital and empowerment; food security and agricultural productivity; and institutions and

policies. Analysis shows that **73 per cent** of IFAD-supported projects were rated moderately satisfactory or above for rural poverty impact in 2016-2018, down from the 88 per cent observed in 2012-2014 (chart 9). The period between 2014 and 2018 shows a steady decline in the ratings for this criterion, but the decreasing trend emerged starting from 2012-2014. Among the regions, only in the NEN has this aggregate measure of performance shown a slight increase in the recent period.

32. **Innovation.** Evaluations conducted from 2017 onward have rated innovation and scaling up separately, following the harmonization agreement between IOE and Management. The separate ratings begin to appear in the trend line from 2011-2013, based on the completion year of the projects. The percentage of projects rated moderately satisfactory or better is **77 per cent** in 2016-2018, although the criterion has shown a considerable decline since 2013-2015

Chart 10 Innovation, 2007-2018

Percentage of projects rated moderately satisfactory or better, by three-year moving average



Source: IOE evaluation database (PCR/V/PPE), April 2020.

(chart 10). Among the regions, the NEN experienced a small increase in the most recent period, contrary to the slight downtick in the IFAD overall average.

of projects in the NEN and the WCA in the most recent period was better compared to the overall IFAD average.

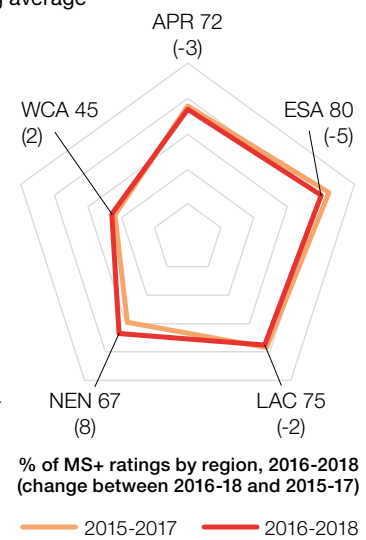
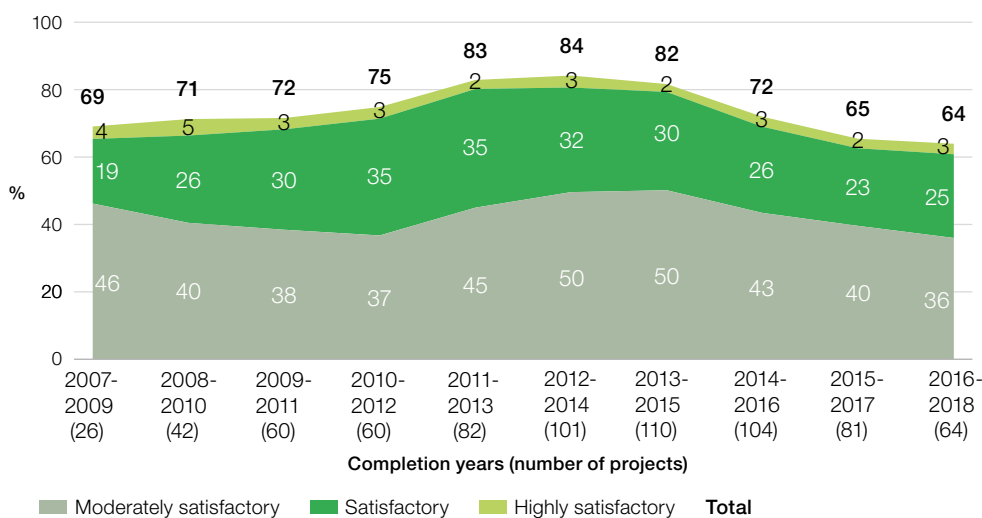
7 Innovation and scaling up were grouped and rated as one criterion prior to 2017. In order to generate individual time-series data for the two criteria prior to 2017, ratings given to the group were assumed to be the same for the individual criteria.

33. **Scaling up.** Performance in scaling up has steadily declined, from a peak of 84 per cent in 2012-2014 to 64 per cent in 2016-2018, based on ratings of moderately satisfactory or better (chart 11).<sup>7</sup> The change in performance

34. **Gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE).** The performance rating in this area is 71 per cent for 2016-2018, down from the peak value of 84 per cent in 2012-2014 (chart 12). Although this criterion has been historically among the

Chart 11 Scaling up, 2007-2018

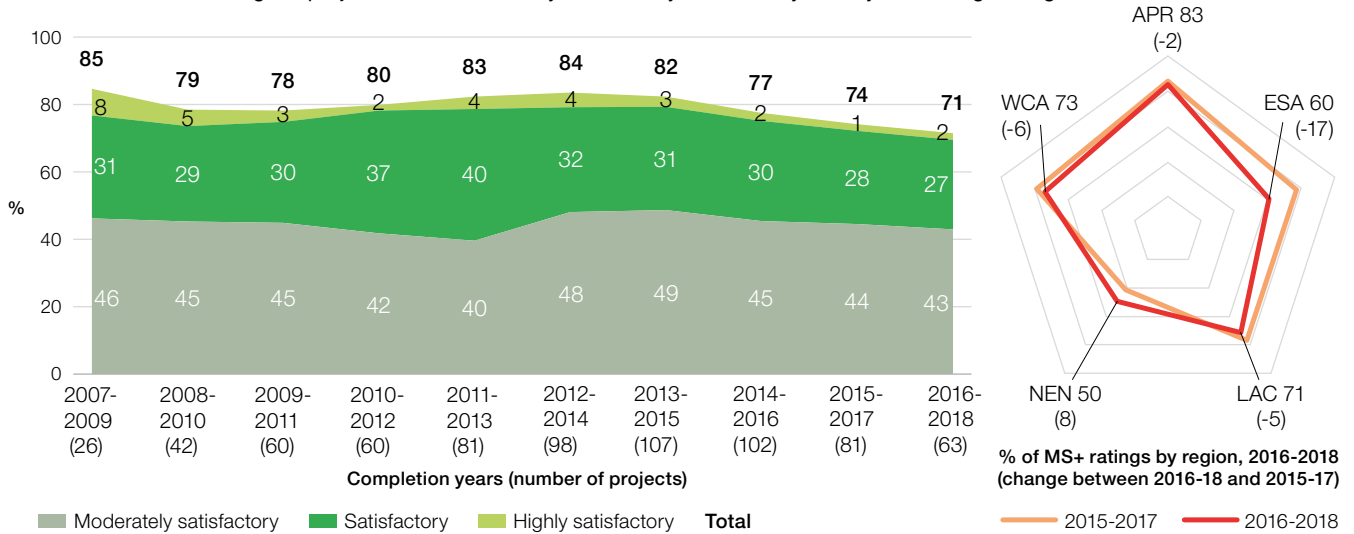
Percentage of projects rated moderately satisfactory or better, by three-year moving average



Source: IOE evaluation database (PCR/V/PPE), April 2020.

Chart 12 Gender equality and women's empowerment, 2007-2018

Percentage of projects rated moderately satisfactory or better, by three-year moving average



Source: IOE evaluation database (PCR/V/PPE), April 2020.

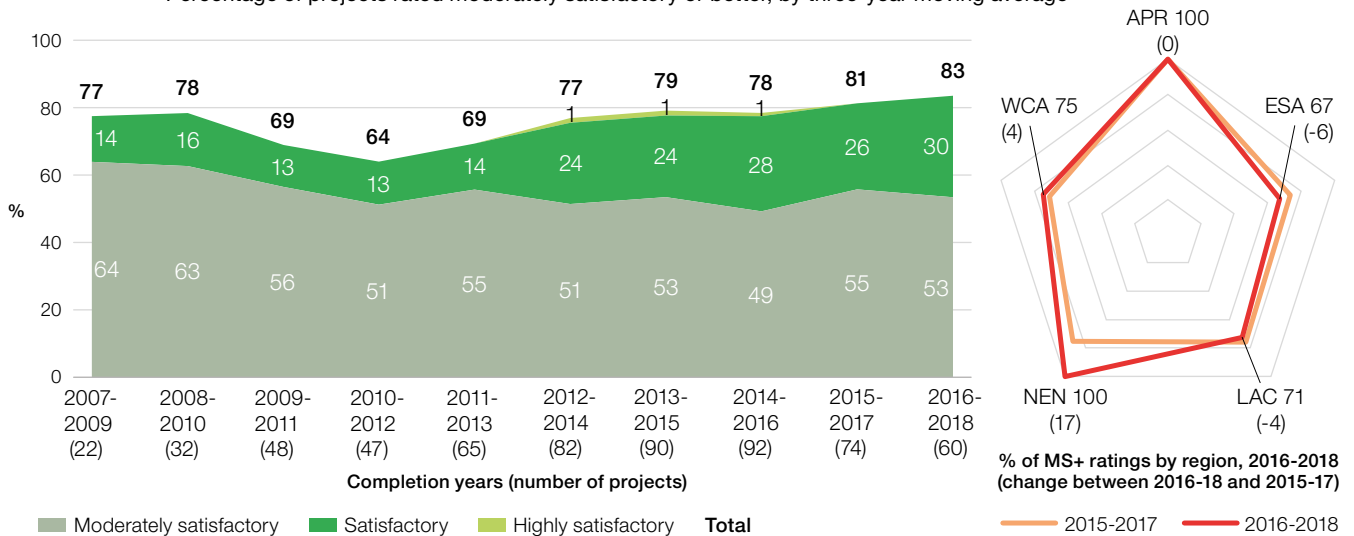
better-performing criteria, it has been trending downward, at least from the project cohorts that reached completion in 2012-2014. Projects in the NEN had a low percentage of moderately satisfactory or above ratings, but the change in performance in the most recent period was better than the IFAD average.

to climate change have been rated separately for the past three years. In 2016-2018, **83 per cent** of projects completed performed moderately satisfactory or better in terms of ENRM, confirming a positive trend in performance that started in 2011-2013, when only 64 per cent of the projects were able to achieve a moderately satisfactory or better rating in this area (chart 13). In the most recent period, two regions, the APR and NEN, show

35. **Environment and natural resources management (ENRM).** ENRM and adaptation

Chart 13 Environment and natural resources management, 2007-2018

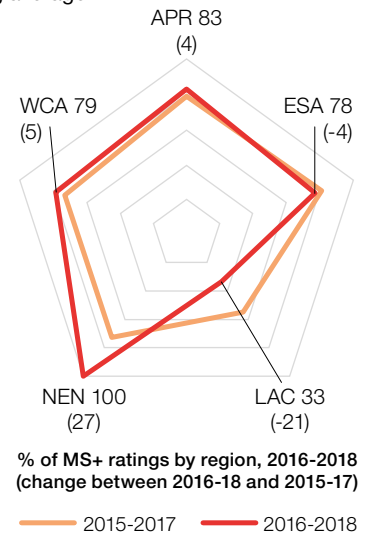
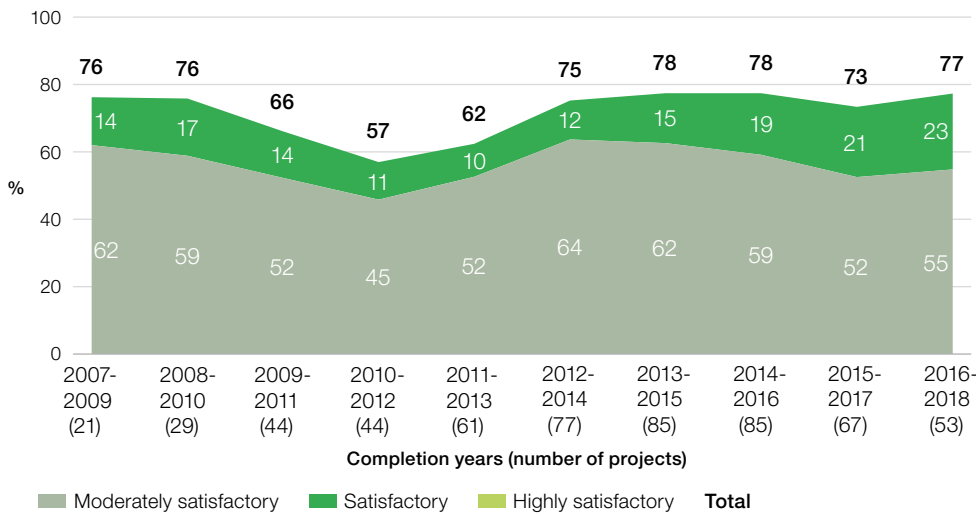
Percentage of projects rated moderately satisfactory or better, by three-year moving average



Source: IOE evaluation database (PCR/V/PPE), April 2020.

Chart 14 **Adaptation to climate change, 2007-2018**

Percentage of projects rated moderately satisfactory or better, by three-year moving average



Source: IOE evaluation database (PCR/V/PPE), April 2020.

100 per cent moderately satisfactory or above ratings, while the WCA shows an increase in moderately satisfactory or above ratings.

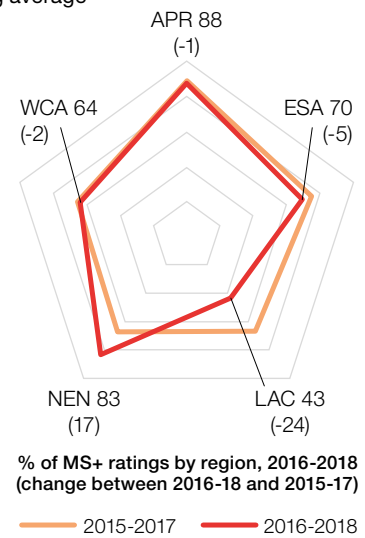
36. **Adaptation to climate change.** In the period 2016-2018, **77 per cent** of projects reported moderately satisfactory or better ratings, after performance had dropped in the previous period (2015-2017) (chart 14). Both moderately satisfactory and satisfactory

ratings contributed to this growth. In the NEN, 100 per cent of projects showed a rating of moderately satisfactory or better. The negative change in performance between the last two periods for the LAC and ESA runs counter to the positive change observed for the overall IFAD average.

37. **Overall project achievement.** The aggregate criterion shows **72 per cent** of moderately

Chart 15 **Overall project achievement, 2007-2018 – IOE ratings**

Percentage of projects rated moderately satisfactory or better, by three-year moving average

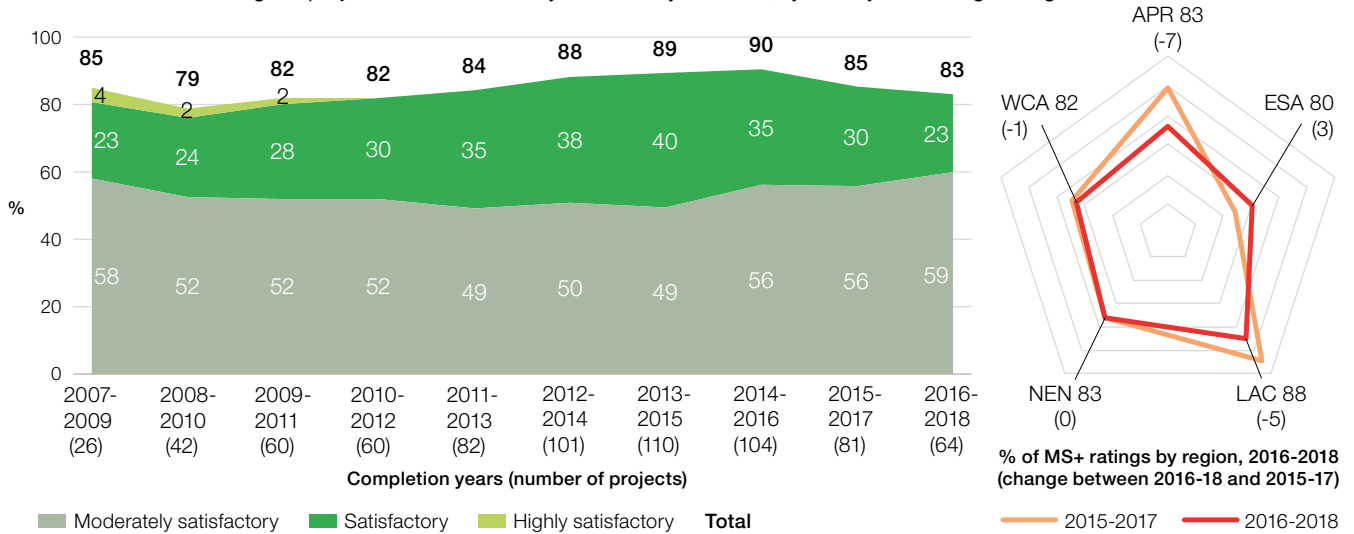


Source: IOE evaluation database (PCR/V/PPE), April 2020.



Chart 16 IFAD's performance as a partner, 2007-2018 – IOE ratings

Percentage of projects rated moderately satisfactory or better, by three-year moving average



Source: IOE evaluation database (PCR/PPE), April 2020.

satisfactory ratings or better in the most recent period, continuing a declining trend since 2013-2015 (chart 15).

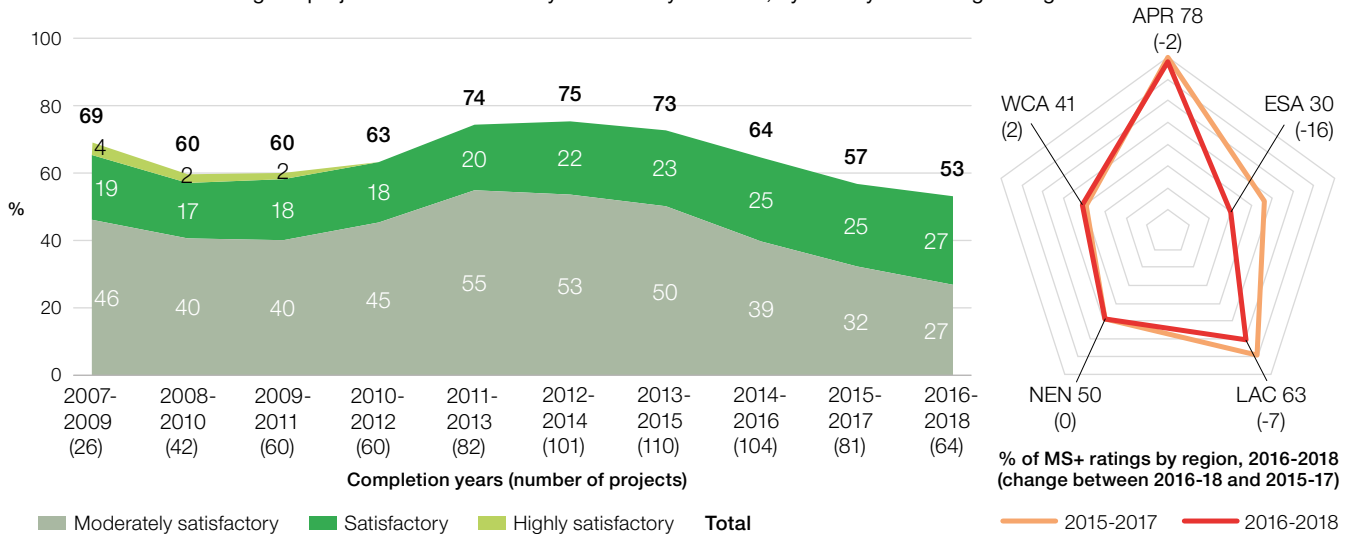
compared to the previous period, and better than the overall IFAD average.

38. **IFAD's performance as a partner.** IOE evaluated IFAD's performance as a partner as moderately satisfactory or better in **83 per cent** of projects in 2016-2018, slightly lower than in the previous period (chart 16). The ESA showed a better performance

39. **Government performance.** IOE ratings of the performance of government as a partner have seen a steady decline since 2012-2014. The proportion of projects rated moderately satisfactory or better decreased to **53 per cent** in 2016-2018, from a high of 75 per cent in 2012-2014 (chart 17).

Chart 17 Government performance as a partner, 2007-2018 – IOE ratings

Percentage of projects rated moderately satisfactory or better, by three-year moving average



Source: IOE evaluation database (PCR/PPE), April 2020.

After efficiency, this criterion is the one with the lowest proportion of positive ratings, and showing a declining trend in evaluations (with the exception of the WCA). The average ratings in the past two periods have been the lowest since the beginning of the trend analysis.

40. **Section conclusion.** Overall, ratings continue to be predominantly moderately satisfactory and above. However, there are signs of a multi-year downward trend, and for some criteria, such as government performance and rural poverty impact, this is marked. There are also exceptions to this: (i) the increasing trend for ENRM and adaptation to climate change; and (ii) some recent rebound for efficiency and sustainability.

### Performance of key international financial institutions

41. The ARRI situates the performance of IFAD operations in reference to the performance of the agriculture-sector operations of other IFIs and regional development banks, i.e. the ADB, the AfDB and the World Bank.<sup>8</sup> Although these organizations are different in terms of size of operations, scope of portfolio, project approaches and geographical focus, their operating models are similar to that of IFAD as, unlike the United Nations specialized agencies, programmes and funds, the ADB, the AfDB and the World Bank also provide loans for investment operations with sovereign guarantees. As members of the Evaluation Cooperation Group of the Multilateral Development Banks, their independent evaluation offices use similar methodologies and maintain independent evaluation databases.

42. Table 4 shows IFAD's project performance along with that of other IFIs on a similar criterion for two different periods, i.e. 2007-2012 and 2013-2018. Data on the overall project achievement criterion is a more comprehensive aggregate indicator for IFAD, although not strictly comparable with other IFIs, and is also presented in the table. The period from 2013 coincides with some changes that were introduced in measuring aggregate performance, such as inclusion of sustainability in IFAD's project performance. This could explain in part the change in IFAD's performance between the two periods. Another reason could be the decline in ratings for efficiency, especially since 2013. However, an important caveat is that the results of the IFIs may not be comparable. The method of aggregation of project performance is not uniform across the IFIs, neither in terms of the criteria used in aggregation (for example, the World Bank does not include sustainability in aggregate performance, but IFAD, the ADB and the AfDB do), nor in how the final value of the rating is calculated (see annex X for more details). Thus, the results need to be interpreted with caution.

<sup>8</sup> The Inter-American Development Bank and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development are not included in the benchmarking analysis because the former does not use a rating system, while the nature of focus and coverage of the latter is significantly different from those of IFAD. Therefore, the World Bank's performance is used to benchmark performance in the LAC and NEN regions as per Management's 2018 request.

Table 4 **Project performance**

Percentage of completed agriculture and rural development projects rated moderately satisfactory or better (MS+) by the independent evaluation offices, 2007-2012 and 2013-2018 (year of completion)<sup>1</sup>

	Overall project achievement <sup>2</sup>		Project performance <sup>3</sup>									
	World		World		Africa		Asia and the Pacific		Latin America and the Caribbean		Near East, North Africa and Europe	
	IFAD	IFAD	World Bank	IFAD <sup>4</sup>	AfDB	IFAD	ADB	IFAD	World Bank	IFAD	World Bank	
<b>Projects completed between 2007 and 2012</b>												
% of projects rated MS+	80%	71%	69%	62%	41%	87%	65%	68%	69%	73%	76%	
No. of agriculture projects evaluated	119	122	234	55	79	31	69	22	32	22	70	
<b>Projects completed between 2013 and 2018</b>												
% of projects rated MS+	77%	56%	80%	46%	68%	79%	59%	61%	85%	55%	81%	
No. of agriculture projects evaluated	174	177	205	92	85	42	32	23	33	31	42	

<sup>1</sup> Data from the World Bank have been adjusted since the 2018 ARRI, and the same methodology has been followed in the 2019 and 2020 ARRIs. In past years, the analysis was based on the "number of evaluations", including projects that were rated more than once in the time period considered. In the 2020 ARRI, the World Bank data have been aligned with ADB and AfDB data, and they only refer to the "number of projects" carried out in the time period considered for the analysis.

<sup>2</sup> Overall project achievement is the overarching assessment of the intervention, drawing upon the analysis and ratings for rural poverty impact, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability of benefits, gender equality and women's empowerment, innovation, scaling up, environment and natural resources management, and adaptation to climate change.

<sup>3</sup> Project performance is a simple arithmetic average of ratings given for relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of benefits.

<sup>4</sup> To make the comparison with the AfDB more consistent in term of countries included, the total IFAD for Africa includes the ESA and WCA, plus some African countries placed under the NEN in IFAD (Djibouti, Egypt, Morocco, Sudan and Tunisia).

*Notes:* AfDB: African Development Bank; ADB: Asian Development Bank. Data for AfDB are based on the year of evaluation, as the year of project completion is not available in the data provided by the IFI. Projects evaluated in 2019 are included as they refer to projects completed in 2018.

*Sources:* AfDB Independent Development Evaluation Unit, ADB Independent Evaluation Department, World Bank Independent Evaluation Group, and IOE evaluation database (all evaluations).

43. **Performance ratings of project completion reports (PCRs).**

This section assesses the “net disconnect” between the PMD and IOE ratings for each criterion included in PCRs and PCRVs/PPEs in order to obtain a better understanding of where differences lie in reporting on performance. The PMD ratings were higher on average for all criteria among the 254 projects assessed in the analysis presented in table 5. The difference between

the mean ratings of IOE and the PMD is also statistically significant for all criteria. The overall average disconnect between IOE and PMD ratings is -0.29, similar to past ARRIs, but for some criteria it has diminished. In particular, adaptation to climate change, ENRM and effectiveness show a lower disconnect than average, as an indication that the ratings are closer to following a common trend.

Table 5 **Comparison of IOE's PCR/PPE ratings and PMD's PCR ratings for all evaluation criteria in projects completed in 2007-2018 (N=254)**

Criteria (listed based on ranking by disconnect)	Mean ratings			T-test (comparison of means) p-value	Correlation (IOE and PCR)
	IOE	PMD	Disconnect		
Relevance	4.25	4.81	-0.48	0.00*	0.48
Scaling up	4.03	4.47	-0.43	0.00*	0.61
Project performance	3.90	4.24	-0.34	0.00*	0.73
Government performance	3.83	4.14	-0.31	0.00*	0.76
Efficiency	3.59	3.90	-0.30	0.00*	0.81
Sustainability	3.65	3.96	-0.31	0.00*	0.65
IFAD's performance	4.18	4.49	-0.31	0.00*	0.69
Gender equality and women's empowerment	4.13	4.43	-0.30	0.00*	0.65
Overall project achievement	3.97	4.27	-0.30	0.00*	0.74
Effectiveness	3.94	4.19	-0.25	0.00*	0.74
Innovation	4.18	4.39	-0.21	0.01*	0.67
Adaptation to climate change	3.83	4.03	-0.20	0.02*	0.49
Environment and natural resources management	3.98	4.13	-0.15	0.01*	0.58
Rural poverty impact	4.06	4.22	-0.16	0.02*	0.70

\* Indicates significance at the 5% level.

Note: In interpreting the correlation coefficients, one must consider that a strong correlation between IOE and PMD ratings only means that IOE and PMD ratings follow the same trend.

Source: IOE/PCR Ratings, April 2020.

44. The average disconnect with PCR ratings is highest in the NEN (-0.37) and the WCA (-0.30), followed by the APR (-0.29). The highest disconnect by criterion/region is registered in the NEN for relevance (-0.79), and the WCA for scaling up (-0.66). Annex VI presents a more detailed regional analysis.
45. Based on a correlation analysis conducted on IOE and PMD ratings, correlation is statistically significant for all ratings, and particularly high for the criteria of effectiveness, efficiency, government performance, project performance and overall project achievement. These are highly positively and statistically significantly correlated, which indicates that the trends in PMD and IOE ratings are very similar. In annex V, a more detailed comparison between IOE and PCR ratings for all criteria across time shows similar declining trends, albeit with larger or smaller disconnects for some criteria.

## Nepal

Shiva Shakti Women Farmer's Group discussing the Western Uplands Poverty Alleviation Project's Farmer Field School training in Integrated Pest Management in Salabang village, Rukum district, Nepal.

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### 3

## Improving IFAD's performance at the project level: learning from successes and challenges (2017-2019)

46. This chapter presents the diagnostics emerging from recent evaluations. IFAD has put in place strategies, policies and manuals that have successfully guided work related to country programmes and operations. However, despite these guidelines, and the success resulting therefrom, some challenges continue to confront IFAD's operations. That said, these successes and challenges, which are also key to achieving IFAD's development effectiveness, are within the Fund's influence and can be emulated and overcome, respectively.

47. The analysis in this chapter helps identify and understand the factors that may underpin the performance trends observed in chapter 2. Therefore, the objective of this chapter is to analyse what worked, what did not and why across a range of interventions and development contexts. It also sets out to answer the question: What common lessons can evaluations provide across a range of contexts and activities that can make the design and implementation of the projects supported by IFAD perform better? The ARRI recognizes that its scope of analysis pertains

to projects that were designed almost a decade ago, and that IFAD has introduced a number of measures to improve the quality of designs and the implementation of IFAD operations. To improve its relevance to IFAD's current operations, this ARRI has adopted the following two measures. First, this ARRI identifies recurring issues, which appear in a number of projects approved in different years and spanning all five regions. Hence, these issues can be considered systemic in that they have persisted despite the quality checks and standards at that time. As such, they signal a potential risk that some current projects may have similar issues despite the modifications and upgrades to the system. Second, this ARRI presents recurring issues with implementation that have been identified in recently evaluated projects (in 2017, 2018 and 2019).

## Findings and lessons from project designs

48. The design of a project is crucial in identifying underlying causes constraining development and in articulating solutions. It lays out the framework and the pathway for realistic, unambiguous and practical action for IFAD to improve its development effectiveness. Certain aspects are key to a successful design, and IOE evaluation findings have repeatedly pointed to these. The following are those factors found to be the most recurring in the past three years of IOE project-level evaluations: (i) addressing specificity of the context (found in 73 per cent of evaluated projects); (ii) effective social targeting (69 per cent); (iii) coherence of project components and activities (31 per cent); (iv) incorporating lessons learned from the past (23 per cent); (v) partnerships for results (21 per cent); (vi) enhancing ownership of interventions by stakeholders (13 per cent); and (vii) identifying and mitigating risks (12 per cent). In a recent paper, IFAD's Quality Assurance Group considers these same aspects as important and highlights that these require additional attention moving forward.<sup>9</sup>
49. **Addressing the context specificities. Adequate context analysis in design and implementation is important in all cases but even more so in situations of weak governance, fragile institutions, and inadequate legal and regulatory frameworks.** Analysis of the findings in the cohort of evaluations considered in this ARRI presents three common typologies of inadequate context consideration that have resulted in less-than-desirable outcomes: (i) excessively complex designs and overambitious geographical coverage and targets (Cameroon, Commodity Value Chain Development Support Project [PADFA]; Grenada, Market Access and Rural Enterprise Development Programme [MAREP]; and Lao People's Democratic Republic, Soum Son Seun Jai – Community-based Food Security and Economic Opportunities Programme [SSSJ]); (ii) a lack of assessment of the government's implementation and coordination capacity that results in implementation delays (Mali, Fostering Agricultural Productivity Project [PAPAM]; and Nepal, Western Uplands Poverty Alleviation Project [WUPAP]); and (iii) project designs with ambitious expectations of entering into private-sector partnerships while not envisioning appropriate incentives to attract the sector and unrealistically estimating its risk-averseness (Ghana, Northern Rural Growth Project [NRGP]; Liberia, Smallholder Tree Crop Revitalization Support Project [STCRSP]; and Maldives, Fisheries and Agriculture Diversification Programme [FADIP]).
50. On the other hand, analysis shows that successful projects in this regard used the following approaches: (i) decentralizing the implementation modalities to ensure that the needs of beneficiaries in a given territory/area, and the solutions proposed, are consistent and compatible with the socio-political reality of that territory (Argentina, Rural Areas Development Programme [PRODEAR], and Ghana, NGRP); (ii) in countries with fragile situations, building the capacity of farmer organizations in implementing projects by involving them as partners of public institutions (Guinea, National Programme to Support Agriculture Value Chain Actors [PNAAFA]); and (iii) appropriate context analysis is especially critical in value-chain-relevant projects given the inherent complexity of their design. For instance, the CLE on IFAD's engagement in pro-poor value chain development (CLE Value Chain) found that economic and financial sustainability was higher where value chains had been selected through sound market analysis specific to the context.

<sup>9</sup> Quality at Entry of the 2019 Project Portfolio: Learning from results for improving design quality, April 2020.



51. **Social targeting.** The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) calls for eradicating all forms of poverty, together with combating inequality, fostering inclusive and sustainable development, and cultivating social inclusion. IFAD's focus on poor rural people and their agriculture-based livelihoods places the Fund in a good position to contribute to poverty reduction, and targeting is central to this mandate. Evidence suggests that strengthening targeting strategies is important for raising the overall performance of IFAD's portfolio (see the 2018 ARRI). Effective targeting requires differentiated analyses of beneficiaries at the design stage, particularly for those with potential risk of exclusion (e.g. women, indigenous peoples, pastoralists, youth, landless people, migrants and other vulnerable groups). The recent evaluations show that beneficiary inclusion is happening in general, although the focus has been more on ensuring participation through quotas (on the principle that equal opportunities will reduce economic inequalities) and less on transformative approaches. The following analysis shows the findings with respect to the targeting of women and youth.<sup>10</sup>

52. **Addressing gender inequalities is central to addressing IFAD's mandate as women are among the most vulnerable and marginalized groups in rural areas.**

The evaluations show that without full understanding of local gender norms and cultural constraints, i.e. understanding why these exist, it is a challenge to arrive at gender-appropriate interventions and target women. Successful projects with better targeting of women included the following three types: (i) where pro-poor targeting and gender issues influenced which commodities and value chain interventions were selected (Zambia, Smallholder Agribusiness Promotion Programme [SAPP]; and Nicaragua,

Agricultural, Fishery and Forestry Productive Systems Development Programme in RAAN and RAAS Indigenous Territories [NICARIBE]); (ii) where women were targeted through activities that provided them with diversified sources of income (India, Mitigating Poverty in Western Rajasthan [MPOWER]; and Sudan, Supporting Traditional Rainfed Small-scale Producers in Sinnar State [SUSTAIN]); and (iii) where proper attention was paid to managing the time burden of women, through, for instance, reduced time for water collection (Chad, Rural Development Support Programme in Guera [PADER-G]).

53. On the other hand, there are common shortcomings found in targeting women that can lead to mixed outcomes: (i) when targets set for women are unrealistic about the lack of preconditions (e.g. targeting women farmers in cocoa activities where access to land for women is low [Liberia, STRP]); (ii) when training targeted at women treats them as a homogeneous group, without sensitivity to their characteristics (e.g. age, education and caste) and varying capacity or diversity of culture (Lao People's Democratic Republic, SSSJ); and (iii) when a self-selection approach to targeting is applied without specific incentives for the marginalized groups such as women to participate (Seychelles, Competitive local Innovations for Small-scale Agriculture Project [CLISSA]).

54. **IFAD has been increasing its focus on rural young people, especially since its Strategic Framework (2007-2011) introduced "... the creation of viable opportunities for rural youth and enhancing rural youth organizations" as a principle of engagement.** However, targeting for youth has been a rare topic in the evaluated sample of projects, given that it is still seen as being at an early stage. The livelihoods of young people face two main challenges: (i) access to

<sup>10</sup> These themes are analysed in more detail in chapter 4 of this report.

assets, goods and services; and (ii) a lack of opportunity to acquire new skills (see IFAD's Rural Youth Action Plan 2019-2021). The findings in the 2020 ARRI analysis confirm the need for a more focused approach on youth with regard to these two challenges. Where targeting overlooks the challenges facing young people (e.g. access to assets such as land), it can lead to a disconnect between the targets set and actual inclusion (Liberia, STCRSP). Similarly, where a holistic approach to targeting youth is lacking, for instance where technical skills training is provided without accompanying training in business development or entrepreneurship, or mentoring, it can lead to limited and unsustainable outcomes (Sierra Leone, Rehabilitation and Community-Based Poverty Reduction Project [RCPRP]; and Sri Lanka, National Agribusiness Development Project [NADeP]). On the other hand, involving young people in specific activities more suited to their aspirations, such as tasking them with providing logistical support in marketing or involving them in administrative tasks, has resulted in more active engagement from youth (Argentina, PRODEAR).

55. **Learning from other projects.** Another recurring feature arising from the analysis relates to the importance of learning from other/previous projects at the design phase. IFAD's Knowledge Management Strategy (2019) has referred to the consideration of "challenges of setting processes, tools and behaviours that connect and motivate people to generate and share good practices, learning and expertise to improve IFAD's efficiency, credibility and development effectiveness". Building projects on the basis of lessons learned from previous IFAD-supported projects is an appropriate foundation for sound project planning, and for an increased understanding of the risks involved.

56. **Recent evaluations show that lessons learned from the past can be used across a variety of contexts but are particularly instructive in two areas.** For instance, capitalizing on the experience of previous projects facilitates cross-learning, especially related to grass-roots institutional building, women's empowerment and technology (Haiti, Small-scale Irrigation Development Project [PPI-2]; and India, MPOWER). Use of learning helps introduce innovations, and identify and make use of emerging opportunities (Ghana, NGRP). Building on past knowledge of the area, specific commodities and target groups to design a value chain approach has improved the success of projects (CLE Value Chain). However, two areas where lessons from the past can be particularly instructive, especially given the variety of development contexts in which IFAD-supported projects operate, are the duration required for strengthening the capacities of producers' organizations (Cameroon, PADFA) and the institutional capacity of implementing agencies (Lao People's Democratic Republic, SSSJ). In the case of the latter, where experience showed capacities to be weak, one solution was to involve provincial or local agriculture offices in the implementation.
57. **The right partnerships for development effectiveness results is a recurring factor in the projects analysed, especially in the latest evaluations.** The evaluation synthesis report (ESR) Building Partnerships for Enhanced Development Effectiveness (2017) mentions that: "IFAD's current partnership strategy is not sufficient to guide country-level partnerships; it lacks specificity as to how to develop partnerships in a strategic manner and within a country context." In addition to the strategic level, the importance of partnerships is equally important at the operational level. The ARRI analysis also

found that selecting partners without the right implementation capacities and experience to implement the project, often combined with insufficient contribution requirements, has negatively affected the effectiveness of activities (Central African Republic, Project for Reviving Food Crops and Small Livestock Production in the Savannah [PREVES]). In value chain projects in particular, an excessive focus on production increases the possibility of inadequate partnerships being formed between actors in downstream activities, which ultimately weakens market linkages (Zambia, SAPP).

58. However, successful partnerships with technical institutions are particularly key to ensuring support to project beneficiaries even after project closure (Argentina, PRODEAR). Similarly, when aiming for social inclusion in projects, selection of appropriate partners, such as authorities or institutions directly involved with specific marginalized groups (e.g. ex-combatants), can ensure their proper inclusion (Côte d'Ivoire, Support to Agricultural Development and Marketing Project [PROPACOM]). At the design stage, when projects work with different partners and at different levels (national and/or local), sufficient attention to facilitating coordination among them at the implementation stage can lead to building ownership and achieving integration of project activities.

### Findings and lessons from project implementation

59. While the role of the project design stage is to develop the framework and lay out the most effective pathway for the project to achieve its development objectives, the role of the implementation stage is to ensure that the design is executed as planned, or that it is adapted in a timely manner, and desired outcomes are achieved. As the realities on the ground during implementation can be vastly different from those envisaged at the design stage, the challenge in effectively converting design into implementation is twofold: (i) ensuring that proposed activities are completed with the desired quality within the designated time and available budget; and (ii) allowing for adequate flexibility in the face of a changing external context (changes in the development, political and administrative contexts). The capacity of the project management unit is crucial to successfully managing both these challenges, and IFAD's role of overseeing and supporting implementation is pertinent.
60. The above factors were also identified as the most frequently recurring topics across the IOE project-level evaluations considered (109 projects). Specifically, the factors and their recurrence are as follows: (i) quality of implementation and supervision support (94 per cent of projects); (ii) quality of project management (88 per cent); (iii) support provided to groups and institutions (88 per cent); (iv) training for strengthening capacities of beneficiaries (73 per cent); and (v) adapting to changes in the external context (25 per cent).

61. Of the factors presented above, the analysis looks in detail at three regarding which the evaluation findings are instructive: (i) training for capacity-building of beneficiaries, a key activity common to most projects; (ii) producers' groups and institutions supported, two common actors in IFAD-supported projects; and (iii) adapting to a changing external context. In the following pages, these are explored in greater detail.
62. **Training for capacity-building of beneficiaries.** Capacity-building of beneficiaries and government officials is a key activity in IFAD-supported projects given its catalytic role in human empowerment – both economic and social – and its contribution to achieving project development results. The 2020 ARRI analysis shows the topic of training for strengthening capacities is recurrent (76 per cent of evaluations). In particular, the evaluations have pointed out the positive contribution of training (49 per cent of assessments of training are favourable) with regard to significant changes in the human capital of beneficiaries. To be more effective in the area of capacity development, projects begin with careful preparatory work, including the identification of capacity gaps and at least a modest capacity assessment. When successful, efforts for community development through training in business, adult literacy, gender awareness, and animal and agricultural production have contributed to building local knowledge in different fields, and increased opportunities for income-generating activities and improving nutrition.
63. The quality of training has been found to be particularly effective in the cohort of evaluations (71 per cent of observations related to quality of training showed a favourable assessment), often linked to its intensity and proper targeting, allowing significant improvements in the strengthening of the human capital of beneficiaries, including women, young people, producers' organizations, and institutions. In general, training related to the following topics was assessed to be useful: (i) training in conflict management, which enable beneficiaries to act cohesively; (ii) training on best agricultural practices, which contributed to increased agricultural productivity; (iii) training on road infrastructures, which helped communities manage road tolls and maintenance contracts; and (iv) training on natural resources management.
64. A frequent topic mentioned in recent evaluations is related to the importance of training modules on business records and financial services for smallholder farmers, women and young entrepreneurs, in particular. **Successful cases of financial literacy training are those that went beyond just support to basic services** (e.g. for opening savings accounts) to also introducing household savings as a risk management tool (e.g. to cope with natural disasters and illness) and as a way to accumulate capital for future investments. Moreover, where training was combined with linkages to microfinance institutions, the interaction boosted the confidence of the beneficiaries (Cambodia, Project for Agricultural Development and Economic Empowerment [PADEE]).
65. Other features affecting the uptake of training, although less recurrent, are related to its duration and timing. **Appropriate duration and timing of the training enables beneficiaries to reach a certain level of maturity** that allows them to develop management capacities and negotiation skills, and to mobilize both human and financial resources for their activities. The delivery of the training has to take into account the needs of the beneficiaries (e.g. women's

daily schedule to tend to their children, and transport allowance) in order to avoid cases of absenteeism and dropouts (Grenada, MAREP). Another issue is related to the timing of the training; optimal conditions for knowledge transfer cannot be created if training is delivered late in the programme or when there is a considerable time gap between delivery of training and its actual application (Gabon, Agricultural and Rural Development Project [PDAR]).

66. **Producers' groups and institutions**

**supported.** Working with producers' groups and institutions is an important activity in IFAD-supported projects, and the implementation of this is often an area of challenge due to realities on the ground being different from what was assumed or expected at the design stage, or because the implementation has not been carried out as per the plan. Importantly, in both these areas, projects deal with people who have different capacities but also different aspirations and perspectives, and this increases the challenge for projects that deal with a large number of people.

67. In regard to producers' groups, where assessed, 56 per cent of project assessments were positive. **The focus of most projects with regard to producers' groups was on the twin objectives of commercialization and empowerment.** Where there was greater direct participation by producers' groups in commercial processes, it led to stronger group coordination in terms of collective selling and the use of post-harvest infrastructure and, consequently, increased sales (Argentina, PRODEAR). In terms of better price incentives for producers' groups, two approaches worked well: (i) by giving equal importance to enhancing the quality of produce as to increasing productivity, the private sector was incentivized to

participate in buying the produce; and (ii) when projects provided logistical support and pre-financing to farmers' cooperatives, these were able to attract producers' groups by offering better prices and services (and, in the process, eliminating intermediaries) (Liberia, STCRSP). In terms of empowerment, where there was participatory identification of priorities and implementation of the agreed investments, control of groups over resources, and linkages established with local institutions (e.g. groups providing input to local government institutions), these led to improved social cohesion, resilience and self-help capacity, and thereby greater group empowerment (Indonesia, Coastal Community Development Project [CCDP]; and Lao People's Democratic Republic, SSSJ).

68. One of the main strengths of functioning as a group is the increased negotiating power acquired by the group. However, this has often not occurred where groups have lacked cohesion. Among the reasons for this have been a lack of training aligned to organizations' needs, inadequate assessment of their performance, and weak capacities of local development partners and service providers working with the groups (Seychelles, CLISSA; and Zambia, SAPP). However, it is pertinent to note that where groups were newly formed under the project, especially on the marketing side, the limited project duration of IFAD's projects has often been the reason for cohesion being underdeveloped. An important objective of IFAD-supported projects is ensuring the sustainability of groups after the end of the project. In this regard, two challenges were observed in the evaluations: (i) where linkages between local, regional and national levels among farmers and their national representative body were weak (Chad, PADER-G); and (ii) where autonomous farmers' organizations were created but without a clear strategy to

mobilize their own financial resources (Central African Republic, PREVES; and Guinea, PNAAFA).

69. Strengthening of institutions encompasses both the organizational set-up of the institutions involved and the capacity-building of those institutions by means of training. Some 79 per cent of the evaluations highlighted this topic, with the majority displaying a favourable assessment of institutions when they were supported by IFAD-supported projects. Institutions providing extension services are usually the most common partners of IFAD. Successful provision of high-quality extension services was found in instances where extension agents were well equipped thanks to the projects, or where projects helped formation of a grass-roots-level extension network through engagement with a variety of external service providers (Cambodia, PADEE). The involvement of key national actors (i.e. research institutes and universities, and district and provincial offices) in project activities promoted good institutional collaboration and coordination of implementation and also allowed flexibility in introducing new development approaches (Mozambique, National Programme for Agricultural Extension [PRONEA]).
70. The value of institutional analysis was pointed out by the Quality Assurance Group in its 2019 projects review: it is a necessary requirement to ascertain whether the indispensable capacities are in place within government institutions and in-country partners in order to ensure that project outcomes are obtained. Forging effective partnerships between key players in the sector at various levels has led to lasting policy and institutional impacts, and the opposite is equally true (Sudan, Rural

Access Project [RAP]). Moreover, a lack of a holistic approach to capacity-building can affect the sustainability of benefits accruing from the project, for instance, where capacity-building was only undertaken for grass-roots organizations and not for local institutions involved in implementing and/or supervising project activities and some key national institutions (Côte d'Ivoire, PROPACOM; and Liberia, STCRSP).

71. **Adapting to changes in the external context. IFAD's capability to be flexible and responsive was challenged at times in the presence of external events that occurred during implementation**, such as unanticipated change in governments' policy direction, conflict, and social and political unrest that would have compromised the projects' effectiveness (26 per cent of evaluations assessed this topic). In some cases, this led to a delay in implementation and non-achievement of targets, and in some cases, to project extension. However, some of the projects successfully addressed the external context by adopting one of the following measures: (i) launching initiatives on a piloting basis to respond to the launch of a new national or sector plan by the government (Lao People's Democratic Republic, SSSJ); (ii) adjusting and sharpening project activities in the face of armed conflicts (reducing geographical focus, more strongly involving local agricultural development institutions in the implementation, and refining monitoring and evaluation [M&E] and coordination mechanisms among development partners) (Mali, PAPAM); (iii) a stronger focus on community development (especially on women and youth) in the face of social unrest (Nepal, WUPAP); and (iv) reinforcing support to decentralized government structures (Sierra Leone, RCPRP).

72. The analysis of three years of evaluations showed that regions with a high number of countries with fragile situations (the WCA) have displayed a good response to external context challenges (Liberia and Sierra Leone). It is also noted that the positive performance over time has continued to improve in the most recent evaluations, suggesting that IFAD's responsiveness and flexibility have improved.

Haiti

Nan Carré, north-west region, Haiti. Oltin Saint Filet, preparing and planting his irrigated plot.

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## 4

## Improving IFAD's performance at the strategic level: learning from country strategies, non-lending activities and priority corporate areas

73. This chapter presents the main findings and lessons learned with regard to the relevance of IFAD's country strategies, its non-lending activities and some important corporate priorities. The focus is on aspects that are more strategic in nature (as opposed to operation-level aspects discussed in chapter 3). The analysis presented here is based on findings and lessons distilled from the CSPEs conducted between 2017 and 2019 (14 CSPEs). Therefore, although some of the country programmes that were evaluated date back to the recent past, the recurring nature of the findings (as in the case of chapter 3) reflects their relevance and value.

74. Findings and lessons related to some corporate priorities are also summarized, namely: gender, climate change, nutrition and youth. In addition to being priorities, they reflect operational implications that have been repeatedly emphasized in strategy documents. While areas such as nutrition and youth have relatively more recently found prominence as IFAD's priorities, they have been part of IFAD-supported activities and, therefore, there are sufficient and relevant lessons to consider.

### Main findings and lessons from country strategies and programmes

75. Country strategic opportunities programmes (COSOPs) are fundamental instruments to determine IFAD's strategic positioning in a country and to articulate the mix of interventions that will contribute to the goal of rural poverty reduction. This section analyses and reports on performance related to COSOPs. It analyses the design and coherence of IFAD's country strategies, including the relevance and effectiveness of the strategic objectives designed to achieve those strategies through lending and non-lending interventions.

76. **The evaluations show that the strategic orientation of country programmes was generally aligned with policies and priorities of IFAD and governments.** All 14 evaluations considered the COSOPs to be well aligned with the key development and sectoral policies of the government and have offered an opportunity to implement some of these. One reason for the alignment is the consultative process carried out in developing

new COSOPs, including regular consultations with governments and development partners, and stakeholder validation workshops that have ensured that COSOPs reflect national priorities in agriculture and rural development (Burkina Faso, Cameroon and Nepal). The COSOPs evaluated took due cognizance of IFAD's strategic priorities as mentioned in the Strategic Frameworks at the time of their creation (Strategic Frameworks of 2007-2010 and 2011-2015).

77. **The strategic focus of COSOPs adapted to a changing context and was evidence-based.** While sustainable and profitable access to markets has been the most dominant theme in the more recent cohort of COSOPs evaluated (in seven out of the eight COSOPs that were developed in 2010 and thereafter), there has been a clear emphasis on topics that have dominated the global discourse: efficient and climate-smart sustainable production systems, and improving the management of natural resources and building resilience of smallholder farmers (in six of the eight COSOPs referred to above). Another notable aspect is the shift in the orientation of strategic objectives between successive COSOPs; strategic objectives have become more specific and strategic as opposed to in the past, when they were broader (e.g. increase access to economic opportunities), and articulated as goals instead of objectives (e.g. increase the income and food security of the poor).
78. In general, IFAD's country strategies that were evaluated were informed by recommendations of CSPEs (8 out of 14). These include areas such as specific sectors, climate change, and developing commercial agriculture and profitable small and medium-sized enterprises. However, past recommendations, particularly those related to synergies between lending and non-lending portfolio (Kenya) and strengthening the capacity of IFAD in the country (Mexico), were not followed in some

cases. **The targeting focus in COSOPs was mixed in terms of coverage, and reflective of context and priority interventions.** With regard to geographical focus, where this was mentioned in broad terms in the COSOP, without guidance on areas and suitability of types of interventions therein, the geographical coverage in the portfolio was too broad and dispersed. Another drawback of the absence of strategic guidance on geographical focus is that there is less reflection on the issue of geographical disparities, which can be crucial for designing more relevant interventions. In some instances, the target group was described in general with less consideration of the differences between geographical areas. For example, landholding size varies greatly between different areas; and in sparsely populated areas, a poor household may have more than two hectares of land (Cambodia).

79. However, in Burkina Faso, there was a clearer identification of the target group and evolution of the targeting strategy, in part reflecting better diagnostic analysis and more strategic thinking, and in part reflecting the changing country context. There was recognition of the need to support those who may be above the poverty line but are vulnerable to shocks, in addition to those below the poverty line, and devise distinct interventions for different groups. It is important that groups be well characterized (level and causes of poverty, strategies adopted, and priority needs), and the responses provided be adequate to the needs and in accordance with the objectives and means proposed in the strategy and with geographical targeting.
80. **The logical articulation of the results management framework in the COSOP is an important prerequisite for realizing the theory of change for the country programme.** One of the main features of a COSOP is the results management framework, which is to be monitored closely in order to ensure the attainment of strategic objectives. A number of weaknesses

were observed in the results management frameworks of some COSOPs. Two such examples are: (i) unclear linkages between the strategic objectives and indicators that would not provide, or would be misleading about, progress on achievements; and (ii) indicators too closely tied to investment projects, with the result that progress at the country programme level is difficult to measure. The lack of logical articulation between objectives, means and goals prevents the realization of the theory of change of the programme. This, along with the lack of allocation of specific resources for implementation and monitoring, can seriously limit the coherence of the programmes (Peru).

81. Another shortcoming was where the target group also included specific groups of beneficiaries. Their inclusion in the strategic objectives or in the results management framework was not always clear (a general focus on “smallholder farmers”). Instead, some of the better-articulated logical frameworks were those that linked the global, strategic and politico-institutional objectives of the country's strategy with the development objectives of the country (Madagascar). They showed links between the strategic objectives and the intermediate results, making it possible to judge the progress made in achieving them, and defined quantitative indicators for each of the global and strategic objectives, indicating benchmark and target values.

82. **The mitigation measures proposed to manage the risks identified in the country programmes were, at times, less specific and relevant, and less commensurate with the means that IFAD can deploy.** Most COSOPs adequately covered risks related to sector-specific policies, fiduciary aspects and risks related to institutional practices. Selected areas of risk that could have been more adequately identified were the government's difficulties in providing the necessary counterpart funds (Sierra Leone), and the withdrawal of the cofinancing partners

(Madagascar). The risk of poor financial management of projects was well managed through a results-based management approach applied by all projects as well as by the internal control systems for projects (Cameroon).

83. However, some mitigation measures were broad or not comprehensive enough, thus bringing into question their actual execution or its efficacy. For example, support to producers' organizations to make a useful contribution to the development of agricultural policies, or the establishment of a climate of trust between them and the government through regular meetings and open consultations, was broad (Burkina Faso). Similarly, risks linked to the profitability and sustainability of (micro) projects managed by the rural poor could not be mitigated solely by drawing up sustainable activity plans.

84. **From a strategic perspective, the pertinent linkages between lending and non-lending activities still require strengthening.**

The COSOPs continue to be largely hinged upon the investment portfolio with less attention to non-lending activities. The items under policy engagement, partnerships and knowledge management mainly relate to activities envisaged in the investment projects (Kenya and Sierra Leone). As outlined in the 2015 ARRI, and something that is still relevant, the more effective COSOPs are those that lay out a clear and actionable agenda for non-lending activities and provide an indication of the estimated administrative resources required. The linkages between the two are important for creating an environment that can help attainment of the strategic objective by, for instance, engendering a shift in policies towards consideration and inclusion of the poor.

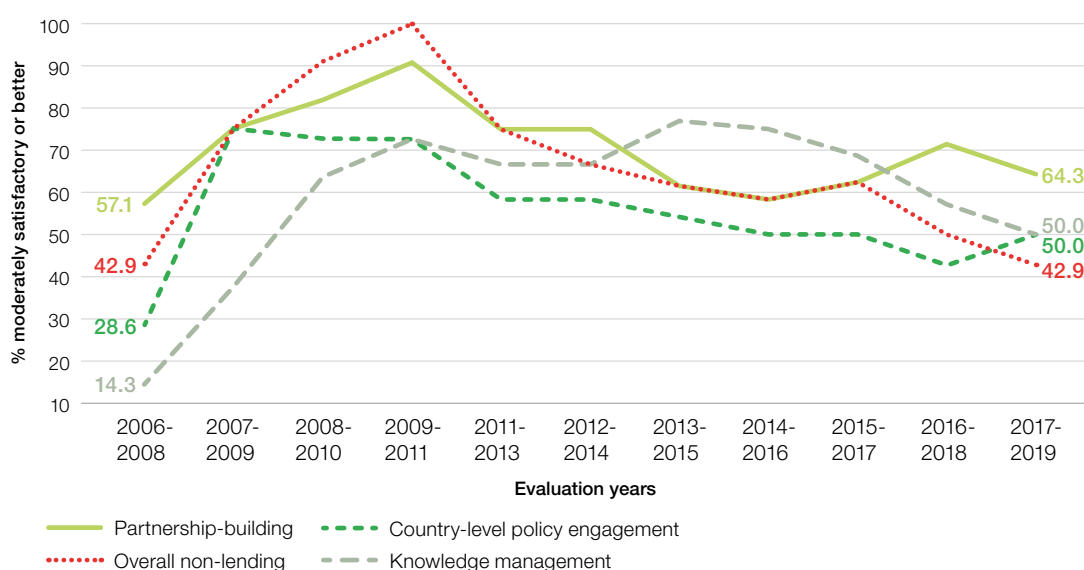
## Findings and lessons from non-lending activities

85. Chart 18 shows the trends for positive ratings for the three non-lending activities (knowledge management, policy engagement and partnerships) and overall non-lending during every three-year period since 2006-2008 (based on the year of the evaluation). The maximum percentage of positive ratings for overall non-lending (100 per cent) was achieved in 2009-2011, when the percentage of positive ratings was above 70 per cent for every non-lending activity, and, in particular, for partnership-building peaked at 91 per cent. Since then, the overall performance of all non-lending activities has followed a decreasing trend, reaching 42.9 per cent in 2017-2019.

86. The more recent decline in overall non-lending activities has been driven by the performance for knowledge management, reaching its lowest in 2017-2019 (50 per cent). Partnership-building remains the best performing criterion at 64.3 per cent, while country-level policy engagement shows a slight increase from 43 per cent in 2016-2018 to 50 per cent in 2017-2019. A further breakdown of IFAD's non-lending performance by income classification of countries shows that while the performance of low-income countries (LICs) and middle-income countries (MICs) is comparable for policy engagement and knowledge management, when it comes to partnership-building, LICs have a far higher proportion of moderately satisfactory or above ratings (annex VIII provides more detail).

Chart 18 Performance of non-lending activities

Percentage of evaluations rated moderately satisfactory or better, 2006-2019 (year of evaluation)



Note: Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Source: IOE CSPE database (50 evaluations), March 2019.

## Knowledge management

87. IFAD's Strategic Framework 2016-2025 clearly recognizes the importance of knowledge management as a key activity for strengthening the organization's development effectiveness. Knowledge generated by IFAD programmes is a key resource to further the organization's mandate of sustainable and inclusive rural transformation. Knowledge management performance remained quite stable from 2010-2011 to 2012-2014. Starting in 2013-2015, the ratings considerably improved, although ratings of satisfactory and above continued to elude knowledge management. Since 2015-2017, the trend has started to decline, reaching 50 per cent in 2017-2019 (as shown in chart 18). The following are some key findings from the evaluations.
88. **When knowledge management remains confined to the project level alone, it diminishes its strategic relevance to the country programme.** At a strategic level, COSOP knowledge management initiatives at the country level are expected to contribute and add value to IFAD's corporate knowledge repository. However, knowledge products were not always customized for use in corporate knowledge repositories or higher-level policy forums (Nepal). They principally catered to front-line beneficiaries and working-level counterparts, and even here the evaluations found a variation among projects within the same portfolio on the scope and use of knowledge management. Inputs for higher policy forums and corporate knowledge repositories require an added layer of analytical refinement and sophistication, highlighting policy dimensions and ramifications, which are attractive to higher-level policymakers and decision makers.
89. **Country-specific grants can prove useful for pursuing objectives related to knowledge management.** Among the factors favourable to knowledge management are effective partnerships that have been forged with research institutes and have generated a great mass of knowledge and several technical and technological innovations. However, when it came to global and regional grants, the links with individual country programmes were weak, and the results and learning from such grants were not adequately benefiting IFAD country programmes. Given that most of the country programmes evaluated had a larger proportion of global and regional grants meant that the avenue of grants could not be leveraged to drive knowledge management.
90. **A combination of communication tools has worked well in the portfolios evaluated, but M&E systems have led to mixed results on knowledge management.** Print media and publications were the main vehicles for knowledge- and information-sharing used by projects. Projects used electronic media (websites, videos, article uploads and how-to-do notes) for sharing and disseminating knowledge products, and for reaching out to larger audiences nationally. Exchange visits between projects took place and learning events were held in addition to workshops, seminars and meetings (Kenya). However, one reason for the underperformance of knowledge management has been the quality of M&E systems at the project level. In some instances, the systems have helped create, capture and distil knowledge, but in others, they have focused only on gathering data for project use (Angola). Another reason has been a lack of funding to undertake activities – activities were planned but not budgeted (Burkina Faso).

## Partnership-building

91. While effective partnership-building for results depends on a number of factors, IFAD country presence and government capacity are among the most important. Where IFAD established country presence, the frequency and quality of interactions with national government counterparts improved and enabled IFAD's participation in sectoral donor and other partner coordination groups. That said, partnership-building performance has been uneven across the different time periods, with better performance between 2009-2011 and 2012-2014. Starting in 2013-2015, the trend began to decline, reaching a low of 58 per cent in 2014-2016 (as shown in chart 18). However, it is notable that the share of satisfactory ratings has been increasing in the last three time periods, a sign of improved strategies in implementing partnerships. The key findings from evaluations are summarized below.
92. **In terms of the mix of partnerships, those with government were the most fruitful of all, but these were limited to a few ministries.** Most projects were anchored to the ministry of agriculture in the country concerned, and this produced a strong relationship between the two parties, with IFAD being the partner of choice, especially in LICs. However, this also meant that the involvement of other line ministries was limited to the project level only, and, within that, mainly in implementation, with limited participation in the design of projects, thus limiting a sense of ownership on their part (Sierra Leone). There have been limited instances of partnerships with the ministry of gender, ministry of youth, and ministry of environment, and this is especially significant given that the focus of IFAD's country strategies has been on these particular areas. Instead, where IFAD was actively involved with different government line agencies (e.g. Sri Lanka), the partnerships were restricted to the project level alone. However, there have also been challenges on the government side, for instance, implementation slowdowns due to a lack of clear delineation of authorities among the tiers of government leading to higher transaction costs for IFAD (Nepal).
93. **Collaboration or coordination has been in an initial phase with the Rome-based agencies (RBAs) and uneven with development agencies.** Most of the COSOPs evaluated make little mention of IFAD in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (2013-2017) or the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2018-2022). In some instances, collaboration has been limited to the mapping of projects to avoid overlaps and ensure coverage of the entire territory, with little or no action to build systematic collaboration to pool resources for improved aid effectiveness (Burkina Faso). There has been relatively more collaboration with the RBAs, although at a technical level, for instance, participation of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in design, appraisal, formulation and supervision missions for specific interventions such as farmer field schools (Sierra Leone) and for specific subsectors (e.g. aquaculture) (Kenya). There are clear opportunities for IFAD to work with the RBAs to provide advisory support on issues such as food production and food security, and GEWE in agriculture and rural development.
94. **Partnerships with other actors, such as the private sector and NGOs leave room for deepening.** Most projects tend to see NGOs as service providers to help in implementing the project. Thus, partnerships have been limited to contractual obligations, and their full potential has not been harnessed (Sri Lanka). Depending on the country context, NGOs can positively contribute to project design

through their local experience, and assist in better targeting and more effectively mobilizing communities. Partnerships with the private sector have evolved in value chain projects and in contract-farming and the outgrower model. The private sector could be involved much more as an active partner rather than just as a service provider or target for leveraging. For example, private-sector actors can play a greater role in project design and on supervision missions, take part in the country programme management team, and bring in their experiences in major IFAD reviews, workshops and training forums. As per the ESR on partnerships, some of the challenges have been with regard to risk- and cost-sharing mechanisms with private enterprises, the absence of which has limited their involvement in IFAD-supported projects. In this regard, and as pointed out in the 2018 ARRI, government commitment to and support for private-sector development is key, and IFAD should use its partnership with government to promote private-sector involvement.

### Country-level policy engagement

95. IFAD uses a broad concept of country-level policy engagement, including a notion of collaboration and consideration of a range of approaches that IFAD adopts to engage in the policy process. The criterion has shown a steady performance aligned at 50 per cent of positive ratings since 2010-2012, with a slight increase in the most recent period driven by moderately satisfactory ratings (as shown in chart 18).
96. **An area where IFAD's contribution to policy engagement stands out is rural finance, and this success merits replication.** A number of evaluations have provided notable examples in this area. For instance, in Sri Lanka, the programme upgraded the

support for policy and institutional issues around inclusive rural finance, including the operationalization of the 2016 Microfinance Act. In Sierra Leone, the development of the new Agricultural Finance Policy and Strategy for the Rural Finance Network was a good example of engagement. IFAD's rural finance initiative in Kenya has influenced policy thinking in the sector with other partners and government. While there has as yet been no contribution to the formulation of a broad rural finance policy, Kenya has drafted a credit guarantee policy and bill.

97. **Collaborations with development partners were instrumental in policy engagement when there was low government commitment and where IFAD was a relatively small player.** In several countries, other relatively large development partners, such as the World Bank, or those with a specific mandate closer to policymaking, such as FAO with technical assistance, have had a more influential role in policy engagement. However, collaboration has been a successful route to policy engagement. For instance, in Burkina Faso, IFAD, FAO, the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation presented the government with a policy brief on improving the management of post-harvest losses in cereals and pulses, which was echoed in the new National Rural Sector Programme. The partnership between FAO, IFAD and the World Bank led to the adoption of the farmer field school approach as the national extension methodology in Angola. In Madagascar, IFAD contributed to the development of the Agriculture Livestock Fisheries Policy Letter and the Agriculture Livestock Fisheries Sector Programme with other partners. In Nepal, IFAD and the ADB provided financing to the development of the Agricultural Development Strategy, and were joined by another 11 development partners at a later stage.

98. **IFAD's strategic and structured support and actions for policy engagement may not always match the scope of the objectives and the scale of their activities.**

Largely, there was a mismatch between the objectives to be achieved via policy engagement in the COSOPs and the resources (time and staff) and capacity allocated vis-à-vis the challenge of achieving pro-poor policy change. Most COSOPs' agendas for policy engagement were relevant to the context. However, there was some lack of planning and partnerships on which policy reform processes IFAD should engage in, and which working groups and task forces IFAD would participate in. As the ESR on policy dialogue had noted in 2017 – and this is still relevant – most of the work on country-level policy dialogue and engagement has been informal, reacting to opportunities, unrecorded, unresourced, with neither indicators nor incentives, with non-lending as an add-on, and without specified deliverables. Where policy engagement has occurred, it has been mainly in indirect form, for instance, support to the participation of farmers' organizations in technical working groups on agriculture, and through the involvement of decision makers in supervision and implementation support activities (Egypt). At the level of farmers' organizations, IFAD has provided constant support to enable them to defend their interests in the public-private dialogue spaces that are being set up at all levels, and this has enabled it to consolidate its internal governance and its capacity for policy dialogue with government (Burkina Faso).

99. **The role of grants in policy engagement can be enhanced through better M&E systems and a more systematic use of evidence.**

A lack of adequate analytical work has hampered progress in the policy engagement. However, even where grants have supported engagement with

different studies, and that has allowed the systematization and dissemination of experiences, this has not culminated in systematic dialogue with government (Peru). Another issue with grants has been the difficulty in directly linking grant interventions at regional or global levels to policy engagement, as to a large extent such changes result from a multitude of stakeholders and different country contexts. However, it can be argued that grants have been able to indirectly influence the policy environment by building the capacity of their members through seminars, workshops, exchange tours and focused studies, thus enhancing the capacity of the members to lobby from an informed point of view (Kenya).

100. To conclude this section on non-lending, there are some perceptible constraints on IFAD's engagement in policy processes and dialogues in the country and in forging or sustaining partnerships. These two non-lending activities are relatively longer-term processes, which need regular dialogue and interactions at various levels of the government and with the donor partners. IFAD country directors (CDs) have a pivotal role to play in bringing proven project successes to the government's attention, and in advocating to government policymakers for their scaling up. However, frequent CD rotations, the CD location being out of the country, and single-person country offices have created a void in engagement with national authorities and development partners. The decentralization of IFAD offers new opportunities for IFAD to be more involved in country-level policy processes. However, unless issues related to limited resources, complex projects, wide geographical distribution of activities and specific skillsets of IFAD country offices are tackled in a holistic way, IFAD's non-lending performance will continue to face some challenges.



## Findings and lessons learned in selected areas of corporate priorities

101. This section presents findings and lessons learned in the four areas of gender, nutrition, youth and climate, which have also been prioritized under the Eleventh Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD11). The common characteristic of these themes is that they are cross-cutting; they cannot be addressed in isolation from the overall context, and they apply across the board to all or most country conditions and programmes, irrespective of the thematic focus of any specific project. Some of them have more recent priorities than others and, hence, are still evolving. The evaluated projects that form part of the analysis in this edition of the ARRI were designed well before mainstreaming in these four areas had been institutionalized. Therefore, the purpose of this section is not so much to analyse their performance, but rather to present findings and offer possible lessons that can be relevant and useful to the ongoing efforts for mainstreaming these areas.

### Gender

102. **IFAD's gender focus has evolved from providing general guidelines on gender inclusion in projects to better-defined gender implementation strategies and action plans.** The country programmes contain a number of common elements including: (i) setting out gender-specific targets, quotas and indicators; (ii) gender sensitization, awareness-raising and training (for beneficiaries and their groups and project staff); (iii) gender-sensitive implementation modalities and considerations (e.g. suitable timing of meetings and training for women participants); (iv) composition of boards, committees and project teams; (v) women's engagement in entrepreneurial activities

and access to savings and credits; and (vi) training and/or capacity-building for women in leadership positions. Projects that used gender-based diagnoses, for example, by quantitatively and qualitatively assessing the gender gap (Peru), were more successful, while those that did not recognize that gender relations can be very different in different religious-ethnic groups across the project areas (Sri Lanka) were less successful in this regard. The presence of gender and social inclusion specialists within projects helped take forward inclusion initiatives (Nepal), although several country programmes did not have such specialists (Angola and Georgia). All this has also helped cross-fertilization of successful ideas and practices among projects in a country portfolio. Similarly, the Gender Action Learning System (GALS)<sup>11</sup> has been a positive approach that has raised intrahousehold gender awareness and challenged families on the traditional roles of men and women (Madagascar and Sierra Leone).

103. **Activities for the empowerment of women have been strongest in training, microfinance and specific income-generating activities.** Across the projects, support in this area has been common and effective to increase women's participation and benefits. Participatory approaches and capacity-building, including group formation and functional skills training, had a clear impact on women's self-esteem, status and recognition, and in a number of cases challenged gender roles and power relations, as also reported in the ESR on GEWE. In projects that included a financial services component, women normally made up the majority of beneficiaries. Women have also been prominent among matching grant recipients (Sri Lanka). However, while rural finance has generally been beneficial for women, some activities have faced

<sup>11</sup> The Gender Action Learning System (GALS) is a community-led empowerment methodology that uses principles of inclusion to improve income and the food and nutrition security of vulnerable people in a gender-equitable way. It positions poor women and men as drivers of their own development, identifying and dismantling obstacles in their environment, and challenging service providers and private actors. It uses inclusive and participatory processes, and simple mapping and diagram tools.

problems in taking advantage of this. For instance, where loans have been for livestock-related activities, these have worked well where the income flow is regular (such as selling milk and eggs) (Egypt), but for other activities such as raising animals for sale – which requires a longer gestation period – the terms of loans (e.g. the repayment period) have not worked (Sierra Leone).

104. **Efforts to reduce gender inequality have yet to fully expand from the project level to the strategic level.** The projects' implementation was largely limited to meeting the practical needs of women, without delving into transformational changes at the community or household levels (Cameroon). Country programmes should also aim for a strategic orientation, using non-lending activities to explore opportunities to influence land ownership laws, policies and customs that discriminate against women. In this regard, collaboration with other institutions, such as NGOs, which may be in a position to advise on gender issues (for example, to share knowledge and lessons learned) or seek complementarities, needs to be fostered.

### Nutrition

105. **Nutrition outcomes were not an explicit part of strategic objectives at the programme level.** The country strategies that were evaluated did not make explicit reference to nutrition, although food security was part of the goal in some of them. They did not define a pathway through which they were to maximize their contribution to improving nutrition, and nutrition outcomes were not part of their results management framework.
106. **Therefore, the lack of evaluability of nutritional outcomes has hampered the assessment of nutrition in the evaluations considered in this report.** Most evaluations

could not analyse the attribution of the projects to improved nutrition as there is a general lack of strict rigour in the available studies and impact surveys. The most frequent indicators used for assessing food security are dietary diversity, length and frequency of the “hungry season”, number of meals per days and, in some cases, child malnutrition. While these indicators are internationally recognized, there are certain conditions to be met. They require regular monitoring (or at least at the time of conducting baseline and endline studies), and M&E is an area where some of the programmes have not performed well. Moreover, measurement of child malnutrition (height, weight and body mass index) requires special instruments and trained staff.

107. **Nutrition-related objectives were expected to be achieved through increased production and incomes.** Most evaluations assessed the implicit pathways to achieving nutrition in the absence of explicit objectives and activities related to nutrition. However, the caveat here is that increased income can lead to better food security, and better nutrition from increased access to healthy food if part of the additional income is used for purchasing more or higher-quality food. In terms of diversification, backyard gardening was found to be one of the more effective ways of promoting nutrition (Kenya). Food security improved thanks to the increased availability of food from the backyard gardens and the additional food purchased (Sierra Leone). Some projects reported improvement in household nutrition through eating more protein-rich food as well as more diverse fruit and vegetables grown in the backyard gardens and tree nurseries (Madagascar). Irrigation water from water tanks also supported the year-round production of vegetables, so improving the stability of the improved food and nutrition security.

108. IFAD's Nutrition Action Plan 2019-2025 suggests integrating nutrition considerations into stages of the food value chain beyond production (storage, processing, distribution and marketing). In this regard, the CLE on value chains reports that projects that developed value chains for staple crops and for fisheries products for local and national markets led to nutritional improvements, either through increases in income, or through production and productivity improvements, and/or by reducing harvest-related and post-harvest losses.

109. **The role of women was especially important in achieving positive nutritional outcomes.** The income-generating activities (including through backyard gardening) and training provided to women (including on household nutrition) contributed to their empowerment. Moreover, as reported in the ESR on GEWE, empowered women contribute more and better to the health, nutrition and productivity of whole families and communities. Training on GALS was also deemed to have contributed to improved nutrition in beneficiaries of IFAD-supported projects (Sierra Leone).

### Youth

110. **IFAD's strategic evolution in terms of youth engagement has recently been more pronounced** in line with the Fund's greater emphasis on youth mainstreaming. Projects are moving to increased quotas and including specific activities for young people. Projects have used a variety of means to include young people, aimed at their economic empowerment, with varying degree of success. These have primarily included: enabling access to financial services; supporting entrepreneurship development; employment and training (business, technical and vocational); and promotion of value chains that young people were engaged in, or interested in.

111. **The buy-in from young people in regard to IFAD's interventions in agriculture is premised on involving young people early in the project design phase,** choosing the appropriate sequencing of activities, and establishing well-functioning project support before project commencement. These efforts should be supported by context and/or needs analysis, including fairly detailed and documented diagnoses of the regions of intervention. This analysis should explain in detail the major constraints preventing the empowerment of young men and women, capture their talent and aspirations, and propose strategies to promote benefits that are rooted in the analysis of these contexts. Therefore, a related finding is to treat youth as a unique group, different from other vulnerable strata of society. For instance, the ESR on youth pointed out that the practice of grouping youth with other vulnerable groups, such as indigenous peoples or women, and solely implementing self-targeting approaches is not effective.

112. **IFAD's work with rural young people requires a strategic orientation.** There is a potential for governments and IFAD to strengthen their strategic partnerships to promote policy engagement for young people (e.g. in the area of access to land and assets, and improving literacy). Interventions have been more successful where youth features prominently among the strategic priorities of the government, and where government ministries and departments related to youth are capacitated with adequate skills and resources. Grants can also be successful as a strategic vehicle and for fostering innovation (Cameroon). However, the grants have to be scaled up and increase linkages with the IFAD country portfolio. In addition, country programmes should increase budget allocations for activities targeting young people, and improve their M&E systems to collect age-disaggregated data.

113. **Approaches for mainstreaming youth require strong consideration of relevance of activities and products.** Opportunities for rural youth employment are likely to occur in processing and/or service industries closely affiliated with agriculture. Hence, the choice of sectors in value chains for involving young people becomes important (Kenya). There is a need to balance the tension between reaching the poorest groups and having a feasible and sustainable value chain development intervention. An effective strategy in this regard, according to the CLE on value chains, is to select value chains in which young people are already engaged and mainstream youth inclusion across all project activities. There may also be a need to adopt innovative approaches for involving young people in programmes. For instance, the CLE on value chains makes a case for providing specific training to youth – for example, vocational training focused on agrifood industry needs.
- Climate**
114. **A majority of the evaluated COSOPs developed after 2010 have elements of climate change as part of their strategic objectives.** The evaluated country strategies have moved from “do no harm” to a proactive orientation of activities related to building resilience to climate change and sustainable use of natural resources (Kenya and Madagascar). The most common activities have been: training (including farmer field schools); provision of resilient and organic inputs; climate-resilient infrastructure; awareness-raising; and including climate risk and resilience assessment in the protocols for screening and evaluation of business proposals. However, at the project level, most have not had an explicit climate change strategy on how to mainstream climate change adaptation in all project components and detailing the budget for climate adaptation activities (Cameroon and Egypt).
115. **While the climate-related objectives of COSOPs were aligned with related national policies and priorities, evidence of influence on policies and strategies of governments at the project level was limited.** Similarly, capacities of government staff were found to be weak in several countries, highlighting the need to incorporate training as an integral part of projects if the goal of sustainability of benefits is to be achieved (Sierra Leone).
116. **There is increasing attention to the interdependent nature of climate change adaptation in projects.** A comprehensive approach to climate change adaptation is needed because environment, natural resources and climate are overly complex, with intersecting economic, political, social and cultural issues, and vested interests of many actors. In designing climate adaptation initiatives, care is being taken to restore or improve natural ecosystems. For example, in order to avoid overexploitation of water due to irrigation (seen as an important means to improve productivity), some projects have made provision for water-saving equipment. Similarly, some projects have combined diversification activities for income generation with climate-resilient practices; for example, by promoting late-season crops and early fruit-growing (peaches), activities whose peak water requirements fall outside the driest summer period (Tunisia).
117. **The balance between climate focus and economic considerations has been delicate.** Enhancing climate resilience and restoring or improving the ecosystem would be economically beneficial to everyone, including smallholder farmers in the long term. However, in the short term, the benefits may not be always clear-cut, and, hence, economic considerations can take precedence over the longer-term benefits.

Thus, although diversified farming systems are generally more resilient to adverse climate developments (and adverse market conditions), the focus has generally been on one or two products with the highest market potential. For instance, in the case of Sierra Leone, while the focus put on a few primary commodities was justified from a development perspective, it limited the degree of production diversification as an avenue for economic and climate-related resilience. However, it has been possible to balance local economic needs with positive environmental impacts. For instance, in the case of Mexico, the creation and strengthening of microenterprises helped reduce pressure on natural forests by generating income alternatives for communities involved in gathering forest products or deforestation to expand land for agriculture.

## Sudan

Batun Mohammed, farmer, feeds her animals in Al Mujaadeen village. Married with five children, she is a returnee from South Sudan. Before IFAD's intervention, she has no income. Through the project, she received adult education and training in technologies for farming and animal nutrition as well as food processing for family nutrition.

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# 5

## Conclusions

118. After a careful analysis of independent evaluations, the 2020 ARRI provides the following conclusions, considering the findings and lessons from the previous sections.
119. **The 2020 ARRI time series related to performance criteria show that the majority of ratings remain in the “moderately satisfactory or above” zone. There has been an overall declining trend in the ratings of projects completed since 2013-2015, albeit with some variations and exceptions.** There has been uneven performance across the different criteria in terms of both recent performance and long-term trends. Three criteria – relevance, effectiveness and IFAD’s performance – show fluctuating trends, with some flattening or decline more recently. There is a perceptible decline in the cases of five criteria: rural poverty impact, GEWE, innovation, scaling up, and government performance. These five criteria declined by over 10 per cent between 2013-2015 and 2016-2018. In particular, government performance witnessed the sharpest drop. Overall, the performance of the portfolio is also of concern in the light of the relative weakening of IFAD’s performance compared to major IFIs.
120. However, there are positive aspects that deserve attention. First, ENRM has continued its upward trajectory, and adaptation to climate change has recovered from a blip in the previous period. Second, both efficiency and sustainability have shown positive shifts in the most recent period, different from their long-term declining trend. Third, the proportion of moderately satisfactory and above ratings remains high for all criteria (except for efficiency). A comparison of self-assessed and independent ratings shows that the trend in PCR ratings (self-assessment) is similar to the one observed in IOE ratings (independent evaluation) in the period 2013-2018.
121. **The performance of IFAD-supported projects can be linked to four factors at the time of design: (i) addressing the specific context; (ii) differentiated targeting strategies; (iii) partnerships for results; and (iv) learning from past experience.** The analysis in the ARRI has put the spotlight on a number of factors important at the project design stage that have a strong bearing on project performance. For example, complex designs and overambitious geographical coverage and targets have undermined the

developmental effectiveness of projects. Similarly, the lack of careful identification early on at the design stage of the likely risks to attaining project outcomes has also affected performance. Finally, selecting partners without the right implementation capacities and experience to implement the project has negatively affected the effectiveness of IFAD-supported activities. These factors are obvious and generally within IFAD's influence. However, the fact that they are repeatedly referred to in the evaluations implies that insufficient attention has been paid to them. The ARRI has also presented learning from cases where these have been addressed effectively. Moving forward, these can be relevant to country programme teams engaged in designing projects and to IFAD's quality assurance processes.

122. **Key implementation challenges relate to: (i) ensuring that targets of time and quality are met; and (ii) adapting to changes in the social, political, natural and developmental landscape, especially in countries with fragile situations.**

The analysis has highlighted that moving from design to implementation poses certain challenges related to adapting the implementation to internal and external contextual changes. Internal challenges relate to ensuring that targets of time and quality related to project activities that were conceptualized at design are successfully met, and external changes are related to ensuring that implementation is carried out as planned in the face of shifts in the social, political, natural and developmental landscape. While, to an extent, the likely risks can be identified and mitigation measures put in place at the design stage, successful implementation relies largely on the capacity and expertise of the project management units. This continues to be an area of challenge, as demonstrated by the

evidence presented in this report on the long-term decline in ratings for government performance, under which performance of project management units is evaluated.

123. **Overall, the strategic focus of IFAD's country programmes has adapted well to the changing context, but synergies between lending and non-lending activities need to be better exploited to enhance the Fund's development effectiveness.** IFAD's country programmes are generally aligned with policies and priorities of both IFAD and governments. In this regard, they have tuned their focus with emerging priorities. Thus, relevant themes, such as efficient and climate-smart sustainable production systems, management of natural resources and resilience of smallholder farmers, are increasingly being mainstreamed in country strategies through their inclusion in strategic objectives. However, linkages between the lending and non-lending activities are yet to be fully exploited. These in tandem are important for creating an environment that can help attainment of a country programme's strategic objectives. Evaluations have observed that knowledge generated from projects and partnerships formed with project actors remain relegated to the project level only, and often do not feed into the strategic-level non-lending activities. The COSOPs continue to be largely hinged upon the investment portfolio, with less attention to non-lending activities. While there is ambition in terms of the scope of non-lending activities, this is not matched by the resources and the capacity available, as compared to the lending activities. As outlined in the 2015 ARRI – and something that is still relevant – more-effective COSOPs are those that lay out a clear and actionable agenda for non-lending activities and provide an indication of the estimated administrative resources that are sufficient for attaining the agenda.



124. **IFAD's efforts related to gender and climate have important lessons to offer for mainstreaming youth and nutrition.** Findings from evaluations show that IFAD-supported projects have made progress with regard to gender and climate. In the case of gender, there are cases where participation of women has moved from mere inclusion through quotas to specific activities better suited to their needs. In several cases, climate has been elevated from just a project-level activity to becoming part of the strategic objectives in the country programmes. Moreover, in both these areas, there is clearer specification of targets and of results needed to achieve these targets, with a monitoring framework to track progress. However, evaluations struggled to find clear or explicit links between project activities and outputs, and outcomes related to nutrition. Findings related to youth are still scarce given that this an important but relatively recent area of emphasis. Moving forward, the aforementioned efforts related to gender and climate can be emulated in successfully mainstreaming nutrition and youth.
125. **The areas of declining performance identified in the 2020 ARRI warrant further examination.** The performance trends signify that the perceptible decline in the areas of rural poverty impact, efficiency, sustainability, GEWE, innovation, scaling up and government performance requires urgent attention, and appropriate strengthening in these areas. One clear topic is government performance, an area that has been witnessing a sharp drop in ratings. Given that government performance influences, and is in turn influenced by, other criteria such as efficiency, sustainability and IFAD's performance, to name but a few, these areas should also be further examined. The report has also provided an analysis of the recurring factors, which span a range of interventions and contexts, and their likely links to improving programming. This calls for action by Management and IOE. In the case of Management, this discussion could trigger an examination of the factors underlying the recent trends, and internal self-reflection and learning within different parts of IFAD to craft solutions that are contextualized to their own areas and situations. This will help strengthen the development effectiveness of IFAD's programmes.
126. **Moving forward,** ARRI findings may assist IOE in identifying topics for other evaluation products, such as CLEs, thematic evaluations and evaluation syntheses. In turn, these evaluations may contribute to better explaining trends in ratings and other ARRI findings.
127. In keeping with the evolving nature of the ARRI, future editions, in addition to analysing project-level rating trends, could give further attention to consolidating findings from CLEs, thematic evaluations and CSPEs. This would add to the strategic and forward-looking content of the ARRI.
128. Finally, in the future, in consultation with Management, sections of the ARRI may be dedicated to reviewing ex post the follow-up to the recommendations of selected IOE evaluations and any remaining gaps. This is current practice at other IFIs.

Sierra Leone

Some representatives of Kasiyatama Cocoa Cooperative in front of their shop in Koidu town, Kono District.

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# Annexes

## Annex I Definition of the evaluation criteria used by IOE

Criteria	Definition <sup>1</sup>
<b>Rural poverty impact</b>	<p>The changes that have occurred or are expected to occur in the lives of the rural poor (whether positive or negative, direct or indirect, intended or unintended) as a result of development interventions.</p> <p><b>Four impact domains</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Household income and net assets: Household income provides a means of assessing the flow of economic benefits accruing to an individual or group, whereas assets relate to a stock of accumulated items of economic value. The analysis must include an assessment of trends in equality over time.</li> <li>• Human and social capital and empowerment: Human and social capital and empowerment include an assessment of the changes that have occurred in the empowerment of individuals, the quality of grass-roots organizations and institutions, the poor's individual and collective capacity, and, in particular, the extent to which specific groups such as youth are included or excluded from the development process.</li> <li>• Food security and agricultural productivity: Changes in food security relate to availability, stability, affordability and access to food, and the stability of that access, whereas changes in agricultural productivity are measured in terms of yields; nutrition relates to the nutritional value of food and child malnutrition.</li> <li>• Institutions and policies: The criterion relating to institutions and policies is designed to assess changes in the quality and performance of institutions, policies and the regulatory framework that influence the lives of the poor.</li> </ul>
<b>Project performance</b>	Average of the ratings for relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of benefits.
<b>Relevance</b>	<p>The extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, institutional priorities, and partner and donor policies.</p> <p>It also entails an assessment of project design, coherence in achieving its objectives, and relevance of targeting strategies adopted.</p>

Criteria	Definition <sup>1</sup>
<b>Effectiveness</b>	The extent to which the development intervention's objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.
<b>Efficiency</b>	A measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted into results.
<b>Sustainability of benefits</b>	The likely continuation of net benefits from a development intervention beyond the phase of external funding support. It also includes an assessment of the likelihood that actual and anticipated results will be resilient to risks beyond the project's life.
<b>Other performance criteria</b>	
Gender equality and women's empowerment	The extent to which IFAD interventions have contributed to better gender equality and women's empowerment, for example, in terms of: women's access to and ownership of assets, resources and services; participation in decision-making; workload balance; and impact on women's incomes, nutrition and livelihoods.
Innovation	The extent to which IFAD development interventions have introduced innovative approaches to rural poverty reduction.
Scaling up	The extent to which IFAD development interventions have been (or are likely to be) scaled up by government authorities, donor organizations, the private sector and other agencies.
Environment and natural resources management	The extent to which IFAD development interventions contribute to resilient livelihoods and ecosystems. The focus is on the use and management of the natural environment, including natural resources defined as raw materials used for socio-economic and cultural purposes, and ecosystems and biodiversity – with the goods and services they provide.
Adaptation to climate change	The contribution of the project to reducing the negative impacts of climate change through dedicated adaptation or risk reduction measures.
<b>Overall project achievement</b>	Overarching assessment of the intervention, drawing upon the analysis and ratings for rural poverty impact, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability of benefits, gender equality and women's empowerment, innovation, scaling up, environment and natural resources management, and adaptation to climate change.
<b>Performance of partners</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>IFAD</b></li> <li>• <b>Government</b></li> </ul>	This criterion assesses the contribution of partners to project design, execution, monitoring and reporting, supervision and implementation support, and evaluation. The performance of each partner will be assessed on an individual basis with a view to the partner's expected role and responsibility in the project life cycle.

<sup>1</sup> These definitions build on: the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results-Based Management; the Methodological Framework for Project Evaluation agreed with the Evaluation Committee in September 2003; the first edition of the Evaluation Manual discussed with the Evaluation Committee in December 2008; and further discussions with the Evaluation Committee in November 2010 on IOE's evaluation criteria and key questions.

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**Annex II List of country strategy and programme evaluations completed and published by IOE (1992-2020)**

Country programme evaluation	Division	Publication year(s)
Angola	ESA	2018
Argentina	LAC	2010
Bangladesh	APR	1994, 2006, 2016
Benin	WCA	2005
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	LAC	2005, 2014
Brazil	LAC	2008, 2016
Burkina Faso	WCA	2019
Cambodia	APR	2018
Cameroon	WCA	2018
China	APR	2014
Congo	WCA	2017
Ecuador	LAC	2014
Egypt	NEN	2005, 2017
Ethiopia	ESA	2009, 2016
Gambia (The)	WCA	2016
Georgia	NEN	2018
Ghana	WCA	1996, 2012
Honduras	LAC	1996
India	APR	2010, 2016
Indonesia	APR	2004, 2014
Jordan	NEN	2014
Kenya	ESA	2011, 2019
Madagascar	ESA	2013, 2020*
Mali	WCA	2007, 2013
Mauritania	WCA	1998
Mexico	LAC	2006, 2020
Morocco	NEN	2008
Mozambique	ESA	2010, 2017
Nepal	APR	1999, 2013, 2020
Nicaragua	LAC	2017
Niger	WCA	2011
Nigeria	WCA	2009, 2016
Pakistan	APR	1995, 2008
Papua New Guinea	APR	2002

Country programme evaluation	Division	Publication year(s)
Peru	LAC	2018
Philippines	APR	2017
Republic of Moldova	NEN	2014
Rwanda	ESA	2006, 2012
Senegal	WCA	2004, 2014
Sierra Leone	WCA	2020*
Sri Lanka	APR	2002, 2019
Sudan	NEN	1994, 2009
Syrian Arab Republic	NEN	2001
Tunisia	NEN	2003, 2019
Turkey	NEN	2016
Uganda	ESA	2013
United Republic of Tanzania	ESA	2003, 2015
Viet Nam	APR	2001, 2012
Yemen	NEN	1992, 2012
Zambia	ESA	2014

Note: APR = Asia and the Pacific; ESA = East and Southern Africa; LAC = Latin America and the Caribbean; NEN = Near East, North Africa and Europe; WCA= West and Central Africa.

## Annex III Evaluations completed by IOE in 2019

Country/ region	Title	Project ID	Executive Board approval date	Effectiveness date	Project completion date	Project duration (years)	Total project financing (US\$)
Corporate-level evaluation							
All	IFAD's Engagement in Pro-poor Value Chain Development						
Evaluation synthesis report							
All	Community-driven Development in IFAD-supported Projects						
Country strategy and programme evaluations							
Madagascar	Project to Support Development in the Menabe and Melaky Regions (AD2M)	1318	20/04/2006	13/11/2006	31/12/2015	9	23,484,313
	Project to Support Development in the Menabe and Melaky Regions – Phase II (AD2M-II)	850	15/09/2015	30/12/2015	31/12/2022	7	56,700,000
	Support to Farmers' Professional Organizations and Agricultural Services Project (AROPA)	1429	11/09/2008	13/01/2009	31/03/2019	10	71,343,696
	Support Programme for Rural Microenterprise Poles and Regional Economies (PROSPERER)	1401	13/12/2007	28/04/2008	31/12/2021	13	67,829,490
	Vocational Training and Agricultural Productivity Improvement Programme (FORMAPROD)	1516	03/07/2012	08/05/2013	30/06/2023	10	89,453,232
	Inclusive Agricultural Value Chains Development Programme (DEFIS)	1492	11/12/2017	05/03/2018	31/03/2024	6	235,000,001
Mexico	Rural Development Project for Rubber-Producing Regions of Mexico (PDRRH)	1141	03/05/2000	21/12/2001	31/12/2009	8	55,000,000
	Strengthening Project for the National Micro-watershed Programme (PNM)	1268	18/12/2003	18/06/2005	21/12/2010	5	28,000,000
	Sustainable Development Project for Rural and Indigenous Communities of the Semi-Arid North-West (PRODESNOS)	1349	08/09/2005	01/09/2006	31/12/2013	7	32,958,000
	Community-based Forestry Development Project in Southern States (Campeche, Chiapas and Oaxaca) (DECOFOS)	1412	15/09/2009	23/03/2011	31/03/2016	5	18,528,823

Country/ region	Title	Project ID	Executive Board approval date	Effectiveness date	Project completion date	Project duration (years)	Total project financing (US\$)
	Sustainable Development Project for Communities in Semiarid Areas (PRODEZSA)	1597	03/04/2012	29/11/2012	31/12/2020	8	42,017,074
	Rural Productive Inclusion Project (PROINPRO)	973	28/11/2015	21/06/2016	11/07/2018	2	19,526,000
Nepal	Western Uplands Poverty Alleviation Project (WUPAP)	1119	06/12/2001	01/01/2003	30/09/2016	13	32,564,628
	Leasehold Forestry and Livestock Programme (LFLP)	1285	02/12/2004	07/09/2005	31/12/2014	9	15,973,904
	Poverty Alleviation Fund Project II (PAFP II)	1450	13/12/2007	31/07/2008	31/12/2018	10	213,508,839
	High Value Agricultural Project in Hill and Mountain Areas (HVAP)	1471	17/12/2009	05/07/2010	30/09/2018	8	18,872,483
	Improved Seeds for Farmers Programme (Kisankalagi Unnat Biu-Bijan Karyakram) (ISFP/ KUBK)	1602	21/09/2012	02/12/2012	31/12/2019	7	55,402,190
	Adaptation of Smallholders in Hilly Areas Project (ASHA)	1723	13/09/2014	26/02/2015	31/03/2021	6	37,617,300
	Samriddhi-Rural Enterprises and Remittances Programme (SRERP)	1724	22/04/2015	10/12/2015	31/12/2022	7	49,323,472
	Agriculture Sector Development Programme (ASDP)	1418	11/12/2017	04/06/2018	30/06/2024	6	68,089,000
Sierra Leone	Rehabilitation and Community-Based Poverty Reduction Project (RCPRP)	1054	18/12/2003	02/03/2006	31/03/2017	11	52,834,236
	Rural Finance and Community Improvement Programme (RFCIP)	1310	18/04/2007	30/05/2008	30/06/2014	6	13,056,617
	Smallholder Commercialization Programme (SCP)	1599	11/05/2011	29/07/2011	30/09/2019	8	56,400,000
	Rural Finance and Community Improvement Programme II (RFCIP II)	1710	03/04/2013	26/06/2013	30/06/2022	9	47,147,499
	Agricultural Value chain Development Project (AVDP)	1544	08/12/2018	16/07/2019	30/06/2024	5	92,018,715
<b>Impact evaluation</b>							
Niger	Food Security and Development Support Project in the Maradi Region (PASADEM)	1625	13/12/2011	12/03/2012	31/03/2018	6	31,706,599
<b>Project performance evaluations</b>							
Haiti	Small-scale Irrigation Development Project (PPI-2)	1275	14/12/2006	05/11/2008	30/06/2016	8	34,070,720



Country/ region	Title	Project ID	Executive Board approval date	Effectiveness date	Project completion date	Project duration (years)	Total project financing (US\$)
Liberia	Smallholder Tree Crop Revitalization Support Project (STCRSP)	1616	13/12/2011	13/07/2012	30/09/2017	5	24,963,058
Nepal	Western Uplands Poverty Alleviation Project (WUPAP)	1119	06/12/2001	01/01/2003	30/09/2016	13	32,564,628
Sierra Leone	Rehabilitation and Community-Based Poverty Reduction Project (RCPRP)	1054	18/12/2003	02/03/2006	31/03/2017	11	52,834,236
<b>Project completion report validations</b>							
Argentina	Rural Areas Development Programme (PRODEAR)	1364	14/12/2006	16/12/2009	31/12/2015	6	44,820,816
Bangladesh	Participatory Small-scale Water Resources Sector Project (PSSWRSP)	1466	15/09/2009	06/11/2009	30/06/2018	9	119,797,515
Cambodia	Project for Agricultural Development and Economic Empowerment (PADEE)	1559	03/04/2012	08/06/2012	30/06/2018	6	47,285,972
Cameroon	Commodity Value Chain Development Support Project (PADFA)	1439	22/04/2010	18/10/2010	31/12/2017	7	24,290,175
Central African Republic	Project for Reviving Food Crops and Small Livestock Production in the Savannah (PREVES)	1579	30/04/2011	12/05/2011	31/12/2017	6	13,166,531
Chad	Rural Development Support Programme in Guera (PADER-G)	1582	15/12/2010	18/10/2011	31/12/2016	5	20,118,089
China	Guangxi Integrated Agricultural Development Project (GIADP)	1555	13/12/2011	20/01/2012	31/03/2017	5	96,862,014
Côte d'Ivoire	Support to Agricultural Development and Marketing Project (PROPACOM)	1589	13/12/2011	16/03/2012	30/06/2018	6	28,965,642
Gabon	Agricultural and Rural Development Project (PDAR)	1313	12/09/2007	20/03/2008	31/03/2017	9	14,029,254
Ghana	Rural and Agriculture Finance Programme (RAFIP)	1428	17/12/2008	30/04/2010	30/06/2016	6	29,781,020
	Northern Rural Growth Project (NRGP)	1390	13/12/2007	24/10/2008	31/12/2016	8	103,553,046
Grenada	Market Access and Rural Enterprise Development Programme (MAREP)	1569	05/12/2010	30/03/2011	31/03/2018	7	7,499,157
Guinea	National Programme to Support Agriculture Value Chain Actors (PNAAFA)	1206	05/09/2002	05/08/2004	30/03/2017	13	37,230,912
India	Mitigating Poverty in Western Rajasthan (MPOWER)	1418	24/04/2008	11/12/2008	31/12/2017	9	62,335,803
Indonesia	Coastal Community Development Project (CCDP)	1621	21/09/2012	23/10/2012	31/12/2017	5	43,241,914

Country/ region	Title	Project ID	Executive Board approval date	Effectiveness date	Project completion date	Project duration (years)	Total project financing (US\$)
Lao People's Democratic Republic	Soum Son Seun Jai – Community-based Food Security and Economic Opportunities Programme (SSSJ)	1608	13/12/2011	22/12/2011	30/09/2017	6	19,333,798
Maldives	Fisheries and Agriculture Diversification Programme (FADIP)	1377	12/09/2007	15/09/2009	31/03/2018	9	6,871,017
Mali	Fostering Agricultural Productivity Project (PAPAM)	1444	16/09/2010	13/10/2011	31/07/2018	7	174,550,111
Mozambique	National Programme for Agricultural Extension (PRONEA) Support Project	1326	20/04/2006	25/11/2007	31/12/2017	10	25,242,000
Nicaragua	Agricultural, Fishery and Forestry Productive Systems Development Programme in RAAN and RAAS Indigenous Territories (NICARIBE)	1505	15/12/2010	11/01/2012	30/09/2017	5	14,954,158
Niger	Ruwanmu Small-Scale Irrigation Project (PPI Ruwanmu)	1646	21/09/2012	19/02/2013	30/06/2018	5	25,652,306
Seychelles	Competitive local Innovations for Small-scale Agriculture Project (CLISSA)	1560	07/04/2013	14/11/2013	31/12/2018	5	3,741,141
Sri Lanka	National Agribusiness Development Project (NADeP)	1457	17/12/2009	23/02/2010	31/12/2017	7	32,963,333
Sudan	Rural Access Project (RAP)	1503	17/12/2009	04/04/2010	31/12/2015	5	14,963,546
	Supporting Traditional Rainfed Small-scale Producers in Sinnar State (SUSTAIN)	1524	15/12/2010	26/04/2011	30/06/2018	7	21,192,956
Togo	Support to Agricultural Development Project (PADAT)	1558	15/12/2010	22/12/2010	31/12/2016	6	81,996,240
Zambia	Smallholder Agribusiness Promotion Programme (SAPP)	1474	15/09/2009	20/01/2010	31/03/2017	7	24,638,533

## Annex IV 2020 ARRI methodology and analysis

### Methodology

1. The 2020 ARRI introduces a new methodology for the preparation of the report to facilitate the analysis at project and country levels.

### Project-level analysis

2. The project-level analysis (chart IV.1) focuses on the individual project evaluations that IOE has conducted through the years. In this year's ARRI, the **common features** with the previous editions are the following:
  - a) The qualitative analysis is based on the evaluations completed by IOE in 2017, 2018 and 2019.
  - b) All numerical and statistical data are based on projects' completion date.
  - c) Only completed (but not ongoing) projects are subject to qualitative analysis.
3. The **new features** introduced with the 2020 ARRI for the project-level analysis are related to two main aspects: (i) **the analytical process**; and (ii) **the sample of projects used for the analysis**.

4. **Analytical process:** The 2020 ARRI focuses on recurring evaluation findings related to the design and implementation of IFAD operations and country strategies. Addressing and learning from recurring performance issues (positive or negative) is an important pathway towards improving IFAD's development effectiveness. As a first step, this analysis distilled recurring design and implementation issues from all evaluations completed by IOE in 2017, 2018 and 2019. In this report, these issues or determinants of performance of IFAD's operations are referred to as markers. The "**analysis by markers**" is an innovative aspect introduced in this report.
5. The process to identify the markers was:
  - a) **All evaluations completed during the period 2017-2019 were the main drivers for the qualitative analysis.** The evaluations have been scanned and analysed with the support of NVivo software in order to assess the key features within each project with regard to project design and implementation. The goals of this exercise have been to avoid any "gaps" in the analysis and to make the analysis comprehensive of all aspects related to design and implementation.

Chart IV.1 Project-level analysis process for the 2020 ARRI



- b) The **discussion and findings related to performance assessment** in IOE evaluations completed during 2017-2019 were the main sources of information.
  - c) Several internal **IOE consultations and review of management assessments and other documents highlighted the main aspects/topics** that are considered decisive to assess the performance of evaluated projects, both in positive and negative terms.
  - d) All topics identified in steps a), b) and c) were compiled to determine **a final list of markers**.
  - e) A final list of markers was categorized into two main groups: **markers for design**, and **markers for implementation**. Each marker is shown in a **ranking** sequence based on the recurring frequency in the evaluations completed during 2017-2019.
6. **Sample of projects used for the analysis:**  
The 2020 ARRI extended the qualitative analysis to the evaluations conducted in 2017 and 2018. The purpose of such an expansion is threefold: (i) **to provide more realistic values of ratings and be consistent with the practice of other IFIs** – the three-year average of ratings ironed out spurious variations in annual ratings stemming from small sample size; (ii) **to increase the number of sampled projects** to make it more robust compared to the limited sample size when considering only evaluations completed in 2019; and (iii) **to help identify recurring issues/markers** and thus provide a quantitative basis for the analysis.
7. The results of the project-level analysis are presented in chapter 3 of the ARRI.

## Country-level analysis

8. The country-level analysis is based on the assessment and ratings in the country strategy and programme evaluations (CSPEs), which are: (i) overall project portfolio achievement (based on 10 criteria); (ii) performance of partners (IFAD and government); (iii) non-lending activities; and (iv) country strategy and programme performance (its relevance and effectiveness).
9. As outlined above, the analysis is based on the **14 CSPEs completed during the period 2017-2019**. The main emphasis is placed on strategic-level issues in order to better understand IFAD's performance at the country level. To this end, chapter 4 of the ARRI focuses on the relevance of IFAD's country strategies in terms of their suitability to the context and whether, and how, they have evolved over the past few years.

## Project-level analysis

### Age of portfolio for the 2020 ARRI project analysis

10. The **average project duration** of all projects (109) (all evaluations completed during 2017-2019) is presented in chart IV.2.
11. The projects included in the analysis are distributed **by approval and completion** year, as shown in the chart IV.3. Sixty-nine per cent of the approved projects are concentrated between 2006 and 2010, while 68 per cent of the projects were completed between 2014 and 2017.
12. When comparing the distribution by entry-into-force and completion years, the distance between the years narrows, with 92 per cent of the projects becoming effective between 2007 and 2013 (chart IV.4).

Chart IV.2 Average project duration in years (2017, 2018 and 2019 evaluations)

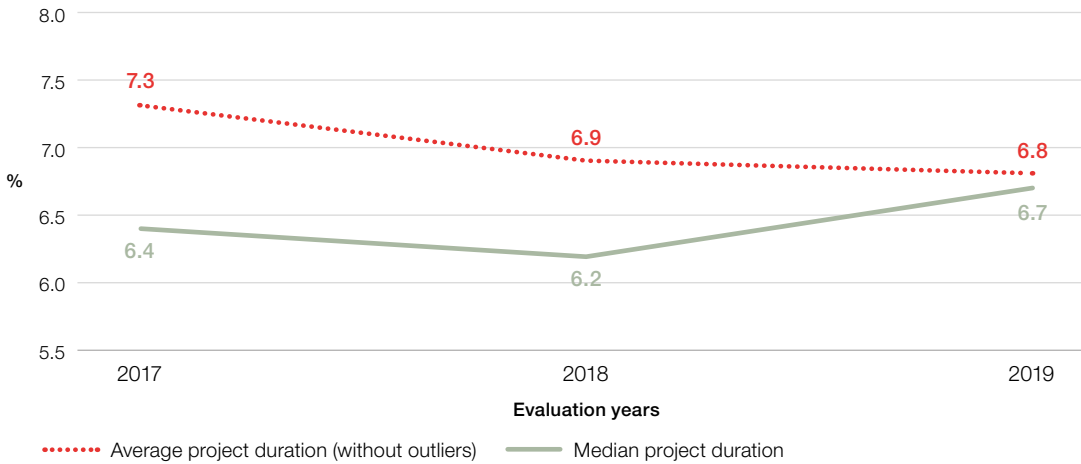


Chart IV.3 Number of projects by year of approval and completion in 2017, 2018 and 2019 evaluations

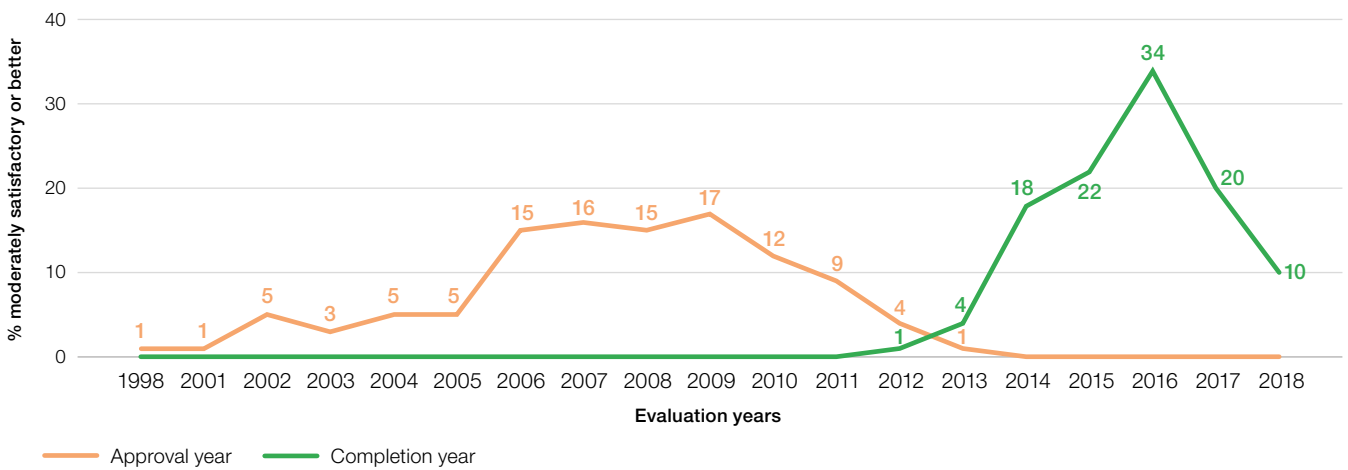
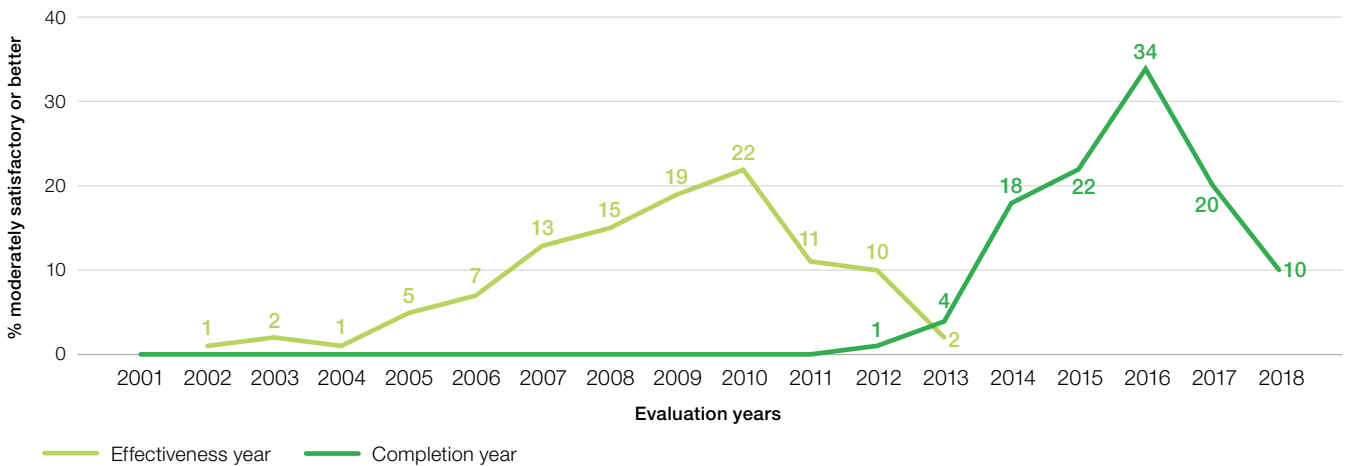
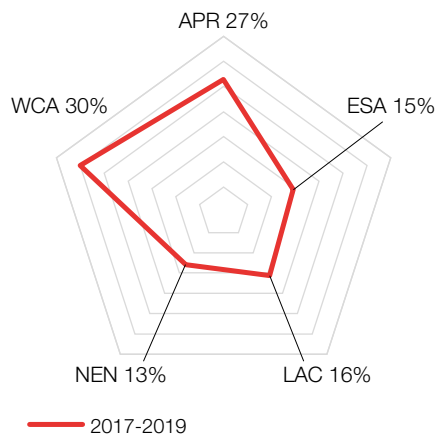


Chart IV.4 Number of projects by year of effectiveness and completion in 2017, 2018 and 2019 evaluations



**Chart IV.5 Regional distribution of projects in 2017, 2018 and 2019 evaluations**



Note: APR = Asia and the Pacific; ESA = East and Southern Africa; LAC = Latin America and the Caribbean; NEN = Near East, North Africa and Europe; WCA = West and Central Africa.

13. The regional distribution of the 109 projects evaluated and included in the sample is indicated in chart IV.5: 57 per cent are in the APR and the WCA, while the remaining 43 per cent are distributed among the other regions.

#### Project sample

14. The full sample of completed and evaluated projects for the 2020 ARRI analysis consists of:
- 36 evaluations completed in 2017 (1 impact evaluation [IE], 26 project completion report validations [PCRVs], 9 project performance evaluations [PPEs]);
  - 41 evaluations completed in 2018 (1 IE, 27 PCRVs, 13 PPEs);
  - 32 evaluations completed in 2019 (1 IE, 27 PCRVs, 4 PPEs);
- for a total of **109 evaluations**.
15. The markers used for the analysis are divided in two main groups: **design** (7 markers), and **implementation** (5 markers), for a total of **12 markers**.
16. The **total number of frequencies** (number of times a marker is observed in an evaluation and mapped under a marker taking into account the full analytical context of the document) is equal to

**310** frequencies in design and **565** frequencies in implementation in the past three ARRI. Based on the number of frequencies, the markers have been ranked to determine the most frequently recurring markers.

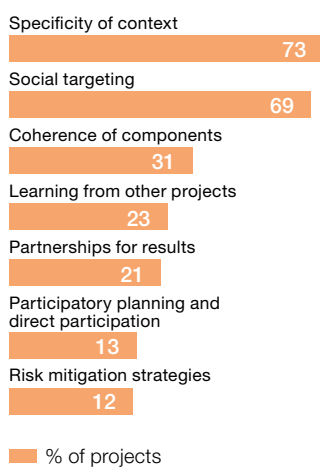
17. **Each marker is “mapped” in a project only once**, even if it occurs more than once. Hence, the number of instances/frequencies in/by which each marker is mapped shows the percentage of projects displaying the identified marker (for example: “selection of partners at design” is a marker captured 10 times in the 2019 evaluations, which means that 10 projects out of 41 evaluations in the 2019 ARRI – 24 per cent of projects – show the marker). However, some markers have more than one level of observation, and a project can be mapped more than once (e.g. in “social targeting”).
18. Each marker has been assigned an **“attribute”** in terms of more or less successful practices as well as those with mixed results. When a marker is defined **“more successful”**, it means that the evaluation has emphasized that it is favourable and decisive for the project’s results. In the case of a **“less successful”** attribute, the evaluation has pointed out that, because of a specific shortcoming, the project has not fully or partially been able to achieve its objectives. **“Mixed results”** are usually referred to descriptions that highlight both positive and negative aspects under a specific marker.
19. The analysis has identified two main sets of shares: (i) share of projects within each marker (how many projects out of the 109 show the marker); and (ii) share of frequencies for each marker – to determine the recurrence of each one of them.
- Markers in design**
20. The definitions of markers in design are indicated in table IV.1. The description is based on the 2019 evaluations and how these topics are mirrored in the analysis that IOE has conducted for each project.

Table IV.1 Metadata for design markers in the 2020 ARRI analysis

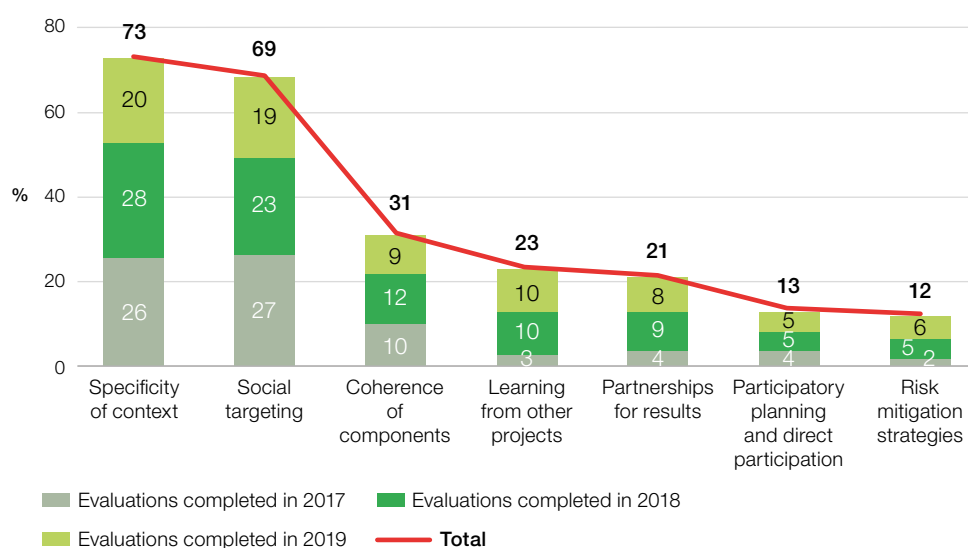
Design markers		
Level 1	Level 2	Metadata description based on the 2020 ARRI project sample
Quality of design	Addressing specificity of context	Relevance and coherence of project design to guarantee consistency and compatibility with the political, economic and social context of the country. Beneficiaries' demands and needs identified in a timely manner. In-depth analysis of country's political context.
	Scope of design	Scope of project too broad/ambitious in terms of number of activities, geographical spread, complexity of activities and products, taking into account the budget.
	Coherence of components and activities	Coherence and synergy among components (and activities) of the project design. Complementarity between project goals and activities. Relevance of components in meeting project objectives.
	Partnerships for results	Identification at design of partners with the necessary capacities to implement the project and reach all target groups. Strengthening of existing partnerships to provide technical and financial support to beneficiaries.
	Risk mitigation strategies	Strategy included in the design based on the process of identifying, evaluating and prioritizing risks, and steps to minimize the impact of these anticipated risks. In particular, with regard to emerging environmental climatic risks, market risks (accessibility to financial resource, lack of knowledge of client demand), infrastructure design, and appropriateness to country context.
Social targeting	Women	Focus on women coherent with the country's local context. Inclusion of gender strategy at design (including necessary gender capacities in implementation units), in line with country's policy documents referring to women's empowerment. Promotion of women's participation in decision-making roles in the different productive and investment processes conducted by the project.
	Rural poor, farmers, vulnerable	Balanced approach to support the rural poorest and most vulnerable through project's activities. Targeting poor people in remote locations. Assessment in design of the heterogeneity of targeted producers' and farmers' organizations in terms of institutional arrangements as well as internal capabilities. Monitoring mechanisms to track the status of this group throughout implementation to be included in the design. Social mobilization and participatory decision-making approaches in design to reach out to marginalized groups. It includes all references to elite capture.
	Youth	Design to include a strategy to involve young people in production, organization, management and marketing. Inclusion of mechanisms to include young people in decision-making processes. Ensuring design relevance to young people and include elements to address the needs and demands of young people. Assessment of youth capabilities (i.e. land ownership) in the country. Training on business skills and access to financial services.
	Indigenous	Targeting strategy relevant for indigenous communities' needs, participation and organization.
Learning from other projects		Capitalizing on experience and lessons from other IFAD-supported projects through knowledge-sharing and peer-to-peer learning.
Participatory planning and direct participation (i.e. ownership of stakeholders)		Strengthening of decision-making process in producers' organizations by promoting direct participation and inclusion. Supporting sharing of knowledge and experience to fortify rural participatory development.

21. The markers for design have been mapped in all project evaluations completed in 2017, 2018 and 2019 (total sample: 109 project evaluations). Chart IV.6 indicates the percentage of projects mapped under each main marker.
22. Charts IV.6 and IV.7 show that **73 per cent** of the projects have been classified under addressing specificity of context within quality of design and, within this percentage, the projects have been equally distributed across the three years of evaluations. Social targeting is the second-most represented marker and shows a lower presence in the 2019 evaluations. Coherence of components and activities is the third-most mapped marker and equally distributed across the three years, followed by learning from other projects, which seemed more recurrent in the 2018 and 2019 evaluations. The latest two markers, participatory planning and direct participation and risk mitigation strategies, appeared in 13 per cent and 12 per cent of projects, respectively.
23. In terms of **frequencies** of markers, the percentages might change because some markers include “level 2” mapping (see table IV.1). In this case, a project may be mapped more than once. For example, a project evaluation that has shown features and issues related to social targeting may be mapped both under women and youth if these are topics analysed and mentioned in the document. Charts IV.8 and IV.9 represent the percentages of the frequencies within each marker in the 2017, 2018 and 2019 sample of evaluated projects. Social targeting is the marker with the highest frequency (40 per cent), followed by addressing specificity of context (26 per cent), coherence of components and activities (11 per cent), earning from other projects (8 per cent), partnerships for results (7 per cent), and, finally, participatory planning and direct participation (5 per cent) and risk mitigation strategies (4 per cent). The markers with more evident asymmetrical distribution across the three years of evaluations are learning from other projects, partnerships for results and risk mitigation strategies.

**Chart IV.6 Percentage of projects mapped under design markers (N=109)**



**Chart IV.7 Distribution of projects across 2017, 2018 and 2019 evaluations**



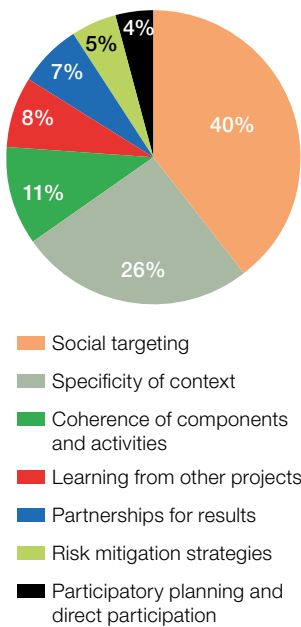
Note: All percentages in charts IV.6 and IV.7 do not add up to 100 per cent because they indicate the percentage of projects mapped under each marker.



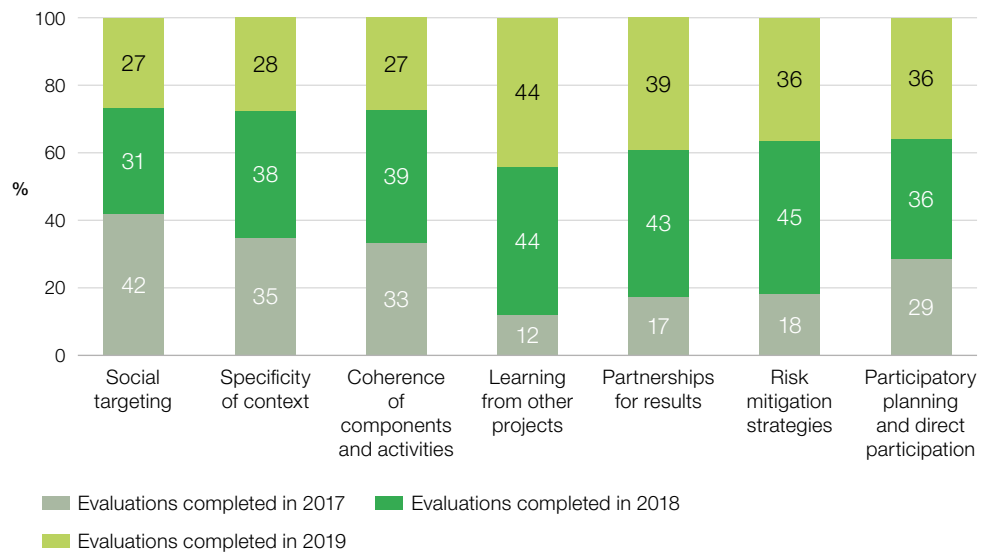
24. Finally, each design marker identified has been given an attribute (see paragraph 18). Chart IV.10 below indicates the distribution by attribute within each marker.
25. The analysis showed that social targeting, learning from other projects and participatory planning and direct participation have the

highest frequency of positive attributes. The most problematic findings relate to addressing specificity of context, coherence of components and activities in project design and the lack of risk mitigation strategies. Partnerships for results at design has shown a balanced distribution of attributes.

**Chart IV.8 Percentage of frequencies mapped under design markers (N=310)**

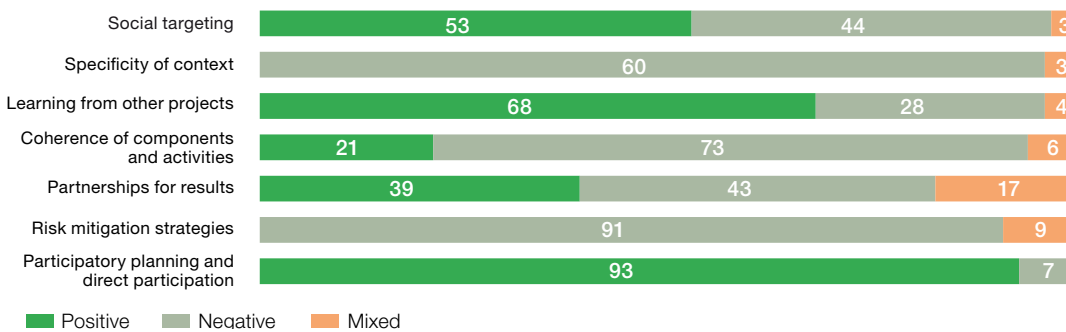


**Chart IV.9 Distribution of projects across 2017, 2018 and 2019 evaluations**



Note: All percentages in charts IV.6 and IV.7 do not add up to 100 per cent because they indicate the percentage of projects mapped under each marker.

**Chart IV.10 Percentage of projects mapped under design markers (N=310)**



**Markers in implementation**

26. The definitions of markers in implementation are shown in the table IV.2. The description is

based on the 2019 evaluations and how these topics are mirrored in the analysis that IOE has conducted for each project.

Table IV.2 **Metadata for implementation markers in the 2020 ARRI analysis**

Implementation markers		
Level 1	Level 2	Metadata description based on the 2020 ARRI project sample
Project management	Staffing	Assessment of staff capacities, turnover, timely replacement, and delays in recruitment in order to establish impact on project effectiveness and capacity-building.
	Expertise	Presence/absence of expertise (technical, gender-/climate-/environment-related) and effects on project implementation.
	M&E and data availability	Assessment of M&E systems (transparent, qualified, cost-effective, innovative) to monitor outputs and share knowledge.
	Financial management	Performance of financial control mechanisms with regard to audit reports, procurement, disbursements, outsourcing processes, recordkeeping.
Training for strengthening capacities of beneficiaries	Quality	Types of training conducted and their capabilities to result in human capital improvement.
	Timing	Timing of training execution to assess outcomes and sustainable results.
	Duration	Duration of training in relation to its capability to reach the right target and number of people and to guarantee long-term results.
	Women	Success level of training for women as a vehicle to mainstream women's empowerment.
Implementation and supervision support		Assessment of: (i) how IFAD's supervision missions have been successful or not in improving project implementation, adjusting design, providing technical support, reallocating funds, and reviewing targeting strategies; and (ii) whether and how IFAD's recommendation have been implemented and have contributed to effectiveness development.
Groups and institutions supported	Producers' organizations	Involvement of producers' organizations in decision-making processes. Strengthening of grass-roots organizations to achieve beneficial results for the target communities, and effectiveness in building community cohesion and empowerment.
	Institutions	Ownership of institutional capacity (key institutional partners, organizational arrangements, and capacity-building efforts needed during implementation) within government institutions and in-country partners.
Adapting to changes in external context		Adjustments during project implementation to the project design to respond to context changes linked to social and political unrest or climate-related events.

Chart IV.11 Percentage of projects mapped under implementation markers (N=109)

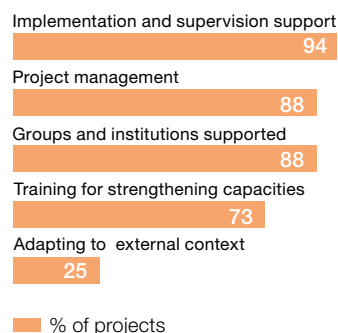
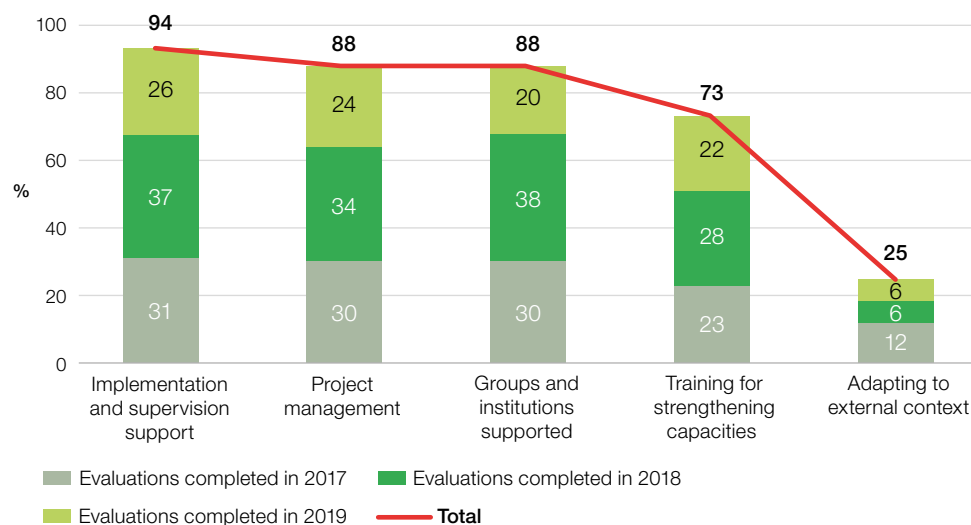


Chart IV.12 Distribution of projects across 2017, 2018 and 2019 evaluations



Note: All percentages in charts IV.6 and IV.7 do not add up to 100 per cent because they indicate the percentage of projects mapped under each marker.

27. The markers for implementation have been mapped in all project evaluations conducted by IOE in 2017, 2018 and 2019 (109 project evaluations). Charts IV.11 and IV.12 indicate the percentage of projects mapped under each main marker.
28. Charts IV.11 and IV.12 show that **94 per cent** of the projects have been classified under the marker implementation and supervision support and, within this percentage, the projects have been distributed in large percentages across the three years of evaluations, with a smaller share in documents completed in 2018. The markers groups and institutions supported and project management (both at **88 per cent**) are the second-most represented in the cohort of projects. The marker groups and institutions supported includes two levels of analysis: (i) producers' organizations; and (ii) institutions (see table IV.2). Project management includes three different level-2 items: (i) monitoring and evaluation (M&E) data; (ii) staffing and expertise; and (iii) financial management.

With regard to adapting to changes in external context (mapped in **25 per cent** of the large cohort of projects in the sample), the marker reflects context changes linked to social and political unrest or climate-related events. The percentage of projects mapped under this marker is higher in 2017 evaluations, because 50 per cent of the projects evaluated that year were all in **countries with fragile situations**, where the external context inevitably interfered with IFAD's operations.

29. In terms of frequencies of markers, the share within each marker may change as some markers are including level-2 mapping (see table IV.2). In this case, a project may be mapped more than once. For example, within project management, a project evaluation may be classified under both M&E and staffing and expertise. That is also why the sample is equal to 565 observations (chart IV.13), which is higher than the 109 evaluations considered.

Chart IV.13 Percentage of frequencies mapped under implementation markers (N=565)

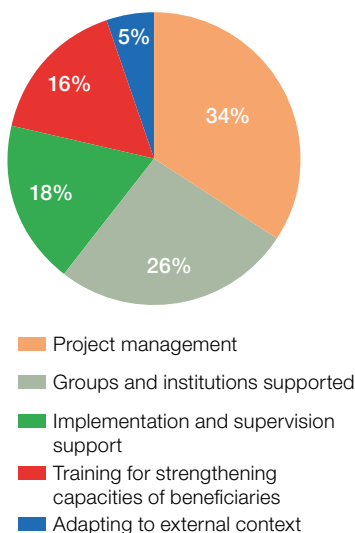
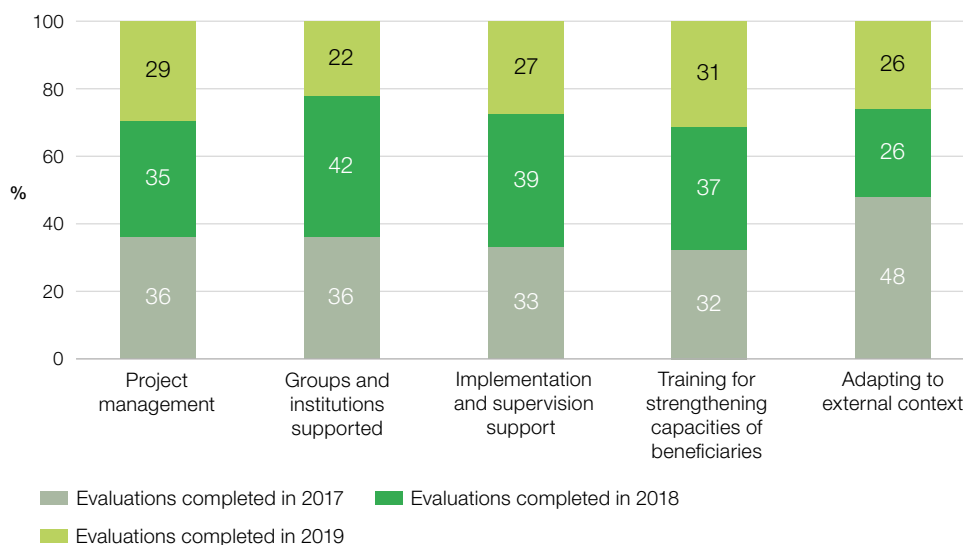


Chart IV.14 Distribution of projects across 2017, 2018 and 2019 evaluations



Note: All percentages in charts IV.6 and IV.7 do not add up to 100 per cent because they indicate the percentage of projects mapped under each marker.

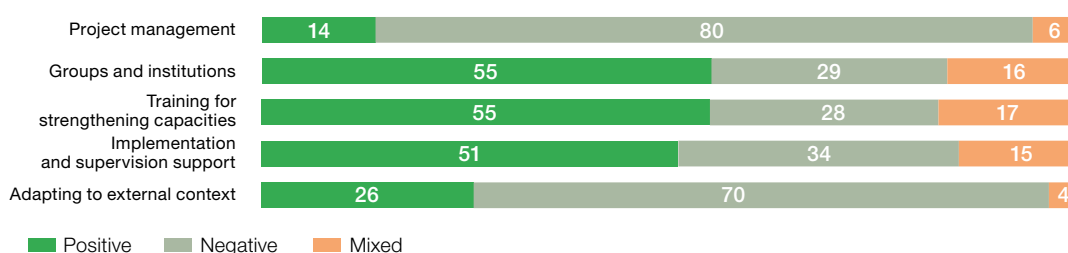
30. Charts IV.13 and IV.14 represent the percentages of the frequencies within each implementation marker in the 2018, 2019 and 2020 ARRI sample of projects. Project management is the marker with the highest frequency at **34 per cent**, followed by groups and institutions with **26 per cent**, training for strengthening capacities with **16 per cent**, implementation and supervision support with **18 per cent**, and external context with **5 per cent**.

### Project-level analysis: list of projects under each marker and examples of successful/ unsuccessful practices

32. This section includes: (i) tables summarizing the main findings in the markers analysis (tables IV.3 and IV.4); and (ii) a list of projects under each marker and based on attributes assigned, for both quality of design and project implementation (tables IV.5-IV.8).

31. The most frequent marker, project management, also shows the highest percentage of negative attributes (chart IV.15).

Chart IV.15 Percentage of projects mapped under implementation markers (N=565)



## Design

Table IV.3 List of markers for analysis on project design

Level 1 markers	% frequency of marker in the analysis (N=310)	% of projects (2018, 2019, 2020 samples) mapped under each marker (N=109 evaluations)
Addressing specificity of context (N=80)	26%	73%
Social targeting (N=124)	40%	69%
Coherence of components and activities (N=33)	11%	31%
Learning from other projects (N=25)	8%	23%
Partnerships for results (N=23)	7%	21%
Participatory planning and direct participation (N=14)	5%	13%
Risk mitigation strategies (N=11)	4%	12%

Table IV.4 Marker levels and results by attributes

Level 1 markers	Level 2 markers	Positive	Negative	Mixed
Addressing specificity of context	No level 2	38%	60%	3%
Social targeting	100%	53%	44%	3%
<i>Women</i>	42%	64%	36%	–
<i>Farmers/vulnerable</i>	31%	49%	48%	3%
<i>Youth/indigenous</i>	27%	45%	45%	9%
Coherence of components and activities	No level 2	21%	73%	6%
Learning from other projects	No level 2	68%	28%	4%
Partnerships for results	No level 2	39%	43%	17%
Participatory planning and direct participation	No level 2	93%	7%	–
Risk mitigation strategies	No level 2	–	91%	9%

Table IV.5 List of projects under design markers

Marker description	Projects mapped	Selected successful examples	
		Approaches associated with favourable ratings	Approaches associated with unfavourable ratings
<b>Addressing specificity of context</b>			
Relevance and coherence of project design to guarantee consistency and compatibility with political, economic and social context of the country. Beneficiaries' demands and needs identified in a timely manner. In-depth analysis of country political context.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Argentina PRODEAR</li> <li>• Cambodia PADEE</li> <li>• Chad PADER-G</li> <li>• China GADP</li> <li>• Côte d'Ivoire PROPRACOM</li> <li>• Gabon PDAR</li> <li>• Ghana NRGF</li> <li>• Haiti PPI-2</li> <li>• Guinea PNAFAA</li> <li>• India MPOWER</li> <li>• Indonesia CCDP</li> <li>• Lao People's Democratic Republic SSSJ</li> <li>• Liberia STRP</li> <li>• Maldives FADIP</li> <li>• Mali PAPAM</li> <li>• Mozambique. PRONEA</li> <li>• Nepal WUPAP</li> <li>• Nicaragua NICARIBE</li> <li>• Niger PPI</li> <li>• Seychelles CLISSA</li> <li>• Sierra Leone RCPRP</li> <li>• Sri Lanka NADeP</li> <li>• Sudan RAP</li> <li>• Sudan SUSTAIN</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevance of design to IFAD's strategic priorities in the country</li> <li>• Changes in approach in post-conflict context</li> <li>• Modular design to introduce pilot and innovative measures for poverty reduction</li> <li>• Realistic targets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of regulatory framework to provide incentives to attract private sector</li> <li>• Insufficient analysis of financial capabilities of beneficiaries</li> <li>• Underestimation of producers' low capabilities and institutional weaknesses</li> <li>• Inadequate assumptions on national implementation capacity for a market-oriented approach</li> </ul>
<b>Scope of design</b>			
Scope of project too broad/ ambitious in terms of number of activities, geographical spread, complexity of activities and products, taking into account the budget.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cameroon PADFA</li> <li>• Central African Republic PREVES</li> <li>• Grenada MAREP</li> <li>• Guinea PNAFAA</li> <li>• Lao People's Democratic Republic SSSJ</li> <li>• Maldives FADIP</li> <li>• Sri Lanka NADeP</li> <li>• Sudan SUSTAIN</li> <li>• Togo PADAT</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ambitious expectations for the capabilities of beneficiaries</li> <li>• Overestimation of targets</li> <li>• Range of activities ambitious and complex to undertake</li> <li>• High expectations in terms of scope of private-sector involvement</li> <li>• Optimistic assumptions on likelihood of scaling up</li> </ul>

Marker description	Projects mapped	Selected successful examples	
		Approaches associated with favourable ratings	Approaches associated with unfavourable ratings
<b>Coherence of components and activities</b>			
Coherence and synergy among components (and activities) of the project. Design. Complementarity between project goals and activities. Relevance of components in meeting project objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cambodia PADEE</li> <li>• Chad PADER-G</li> <li>• Haiti PPI-2</li> <li>• Liberia STCRSP</li> <li>• Maldives FADIP</li> <li>• Mali PAPAM</li> <li>• Mozambique PRONEA</li> <li>• Niger PPI</li> <li>• Seychelles CLISSA</li> <li>• Zambia SAPP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complementarity between project goals and activities of other national and international organizations</li> <li>• Coherence of components to address challenges in terms of access to market</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Add-on” activities with weak internal coherence and coordination challenges</li> <li>• Lack of clarity in design about categories of expenditure causing overspending and reallocation of funds</li> <li>• Unclear linkages between project management unit and other departments creating confusion on roles and responsibilities</li> </ul>
<b>Partnerships for results</b>			
Identification at design of partners with the needed capacities to implement the project and reach all target groups. Strengthening of existing partnerships to provide technical and financial support to beneficiaries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Argentina PRODEAR</li> <li>• Central African Republic PREVES</li> <li>• Côte d’Ivoire PROPRACOM</li> <li>• Gabon PDAR</li> <li>• Ghana NGRP</li> <li>• Liberia STCRSP</li> <li>• Sri Lanka NADeP</li> <li>• Zambia SAPP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selection of relevant partners to ensure proper social inclusiveness of specific marginalized groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exclusion of partners with relevant expertise</li> <li>• Support to pre-existing partnerships leaving little space for project to alter market power and use pro-poor approaches</li> </ul>
<b>Risk mitigation strategies</b>			
Strategy included in the design based on the process of identifying, evaluating and prioritizing risks, and steps to minimize the impact of these anticipated risks. In particular, with regard to emerging environmental climatic risks, market risks (accessibility to financial resource, lack of knowledge of client demand), infrastructure design, and appropriateness to country context.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gabon PDAR</li> <li>• India MPOWER</li> <li>• Liberia STCRSP</li> <li>• Sri Lanka NADeP</li> <li>• Sudan RAP</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for risk mitigation strategies with regard to climatic risks (resistant crops, diversification of incomes, soil fertility management)</li> <li>• Need for risk mitigation strategies in public-private-producers partnership (4Ps) model, in particular with regard to risk-sharing mechanisms as a way of engaging the private sector</li> </ul>

Marker description	Projects mapped	Selected successful examples	
		Approaches associated with favourable ratings	Approaches associated with unfavourable ratings
<b>Social targeting (women)</b>			
<p>Focus on women coherent with the country's local context. Inclusion of gender strategy at design (including necessary gender capacities in implementation units), in line with the country's policy documents referring to women's empowerment. Promotion of women's participation in decision-making roles in the different productive and investment processes conducted by the project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central African Republic PREVES</li> <li>• Chad PADER-G</li> <li>• Côte d'Ivoire. PROPRACOM</li> <li>• Ghana NGRP</li> <li>• India MPOWER</li> <li>• Indonesia CCDP Lao</li> <li>• People's Democratic Republic SSSJ</li> <li>• Liberia STCRSP</li> <li>• Nepal WUPAP</li> <li>• Nicaragua NICARIBE</li> <li>• Sudan SUSTAIN</li> <li>• Zambia SAPP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women's empowerment through direct participation in income-generating activities</li> <li>• Consideration of women's comparative advantage in the design of commodity selection and value chain analysis</li> <li>• Women's empowerment through leadership positions</li> <li>• Access to credit and control over assets</li> <li>• Bridging gender gaps in food intake</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inappropriate effective communication to women beneficiaries (language barriers)</li> <li>• Lack of acknowledgement of women's limited access to land</li> </ul>
<b>Social targeting (farmers/vulnerable/poor)</b>			
<p>Balanced approach to support the rural poorest and most vulnerable through the project's activities. Targeting poor people in remote locations. Assessment in the design of the heterogeneity of targeted producers' and farmers' organizations in terms of institutional arrangements as well as internal capabilities. Monitoring mechanisms to track the status of this group throughout implementation to be included in the design. Social mobilization and participatory decision-making approaches in design to reach out to marginalized groups. It includes all references to elite capture.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cambodia PADEE</li> <li>• Cameroon PADFA</li> <li>• Chad PADER</li> <li>• Gabon PDAR</li> <li>• Liberia STCRSP</li> <li>• Maldives FADIP</li> <li>• Nepal WUPAP</li> <li>• Sierra Leone RCPRP</li> <li>• Sri Lanka NADeP</li> <li>• Seychelles CLISSA</li> <li>• Zambia SAPP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjusting targeting poor with non-farm interventions and non-land-based activities</li> <li>• Community investment plan approach effective to target the very poor in remote geographical locations</li> <li>• Targeting farmers with experience and knowledge of local resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequate analysis of farmers' organizations capabilities and organizational structures</li> <li>• Self-selection mechanisms for beneficiaries' participation</li> <li>• Selection of cooperatives with no managerial, strategic and financial capabilities</li> </ul>



		Selected successful examples	
Marker description	Projects mapped	Approaches associated with favourable ratings	Approaches associated with unfavourable ratings
<b>Social targeting (youth/indigenous)</b>			
Design to include a strategy to involve youth in production, organization, management and marketing. Inclusion of mechanisms to include youth in decision-making processes. Ensuring design relevance to youth and including elements to address the needs and demands of young people. Assessment of youth capabilities (i.e. land ownership) in the country. Training on business skills and access to financial services. Targeting strategy relevant for indigenous communities' needs, participation and organization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Argentina PRODEAR</li> <li>• Liberia STCRSP</li> <li>• Nepal WUPAP</li> <li>• Nicaragua NICARIBE</li> <li>• Sierra Leone RCPRP</li> <li>• Sri Lanka NADeP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate training, didactic and technical materials</li> <li>• Specific indicators for including youth and indigenous</li> <li>• Involvement of youth in production, organization, and management</li> <li>• Youth involved in administrative tasks</li> <li>• Youth providing logistical support in marketing</li> <li>• Negotiation of long-term leases for land to favour youth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of training for youth on business skills</li> <li>• Targeting on income-generating activities and self-employment not attractive for youth</li> <li>• Youth not included in value chain</li> </ul>
<b>Learning from other projects</b>			
Capitalizing on experience and lessons from other IFAD-supported projects through knowledge-sharing and peer-to-peer learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bangladesh PSSWRS</li> <li>• Cambodia PADEE</li> <li>• Cameroon PADFA</li> <li>• China GIADP</li> <li>• Côte d'Ivoire PROPRACOM</li> <li>• Ghana NGRP</li> <li>• Haiti PPI-2</li> <li>• India MPOWER</li> <li>• Lao People's Democratic Republic SSSJ</li> <li>• Liberia STCRSP</li> <li>• Niger PPI</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building on innovations and emerging opportunities from earlier project phases</li> <li>• Wider application and adoption of management techniques already pilot-tested</li> <li>• Learning route for stakeholders to facilitate cross-learning with other IFAD-supported projects in the region on value chain</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequate training on synergies between two projects with regard to a joint project unit and shared M&amp;E system</li> <li>• Lack of clarity among project partners</li> </ul>
<b>Participatory planning and direct participation, i.e. ownership by stakeholders</b>			
Strengthening of decision-making processes of producers' organizations by promoting direct participation and inclusion. Supporting sharing of knowledge and experience to fortify rural participatory development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Argentina PRODEAR</li> <li>• Bangladesh PSSWRS</li> <li>• Chad PADER-G</li> <li>• China GIADP</li> <li>• Sudan SUSTAIN</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct participation through rural development roundtables for development strategy</li> <li>• Beneficiaries' involvement in subprojects planning phase, operation and maintenance, training</li> <li>• Village implementation groups taking decisions on project activities</li> <li>• Social cohesion improved through training, villages development communities and common interest groups</li> </ul>	

## Implementation

Table IV.6 List of markers for analysis on project implementation

Level 1 markers	% frequency of markers in the analysis (N=565)	% of projects (2018, 2019, 2020 samples) mapped under each marker (N=109 evaluations)
Project management (N=194)	34%	88%
Groups and institutions supported (N=149)	26%	88%
Implementation and supervision support (N=102)	18%	94%
Training for strengthening capacities of beneficiaries (N=93)	16%	73%
Adapting to changes in external context (N=27)	5%	25%

Table IV.7 Marker levels and results by attributes

Level 1 markers	Level 2 markers	Positive	Negative	Mixed
Project management	100%	14%	80%	6%
<i>Staffing and expertise</i>	35%	9%	87%	4%
<i>M&amp;E data</i>	32%	25%	71%	3%
<i>Financial management</i>	32%	8%	83%	10%
Groups and institutions supported	100%	55%	29%	16%
<i>Producers' organizations</i>	42%	57%	27%	16%
<i>Institutions</i>	58%	53%	30%	16%
Implementation and supervision support (N=102)	No level 2	51%	34%	15%
Training for strengthening capacities of beneficiaries	100%	55%	28%	17%
<i>Quality of training</i>	70%	66%	15%	18%
<i>Timing and duration of training</i>	15%	–	86%	14%
<i>Training for women</i>	15%	57%	29%	14%
Adapting to changes in external context	No level 2	26%	70%	4%

Table IV.8 List of projects under implementation markers

Marker description	Projects mapped	Approaches associated with favourable ratings	Approaches associated with unfavourable ratings
<b>Project management (staffing and expertise)</b>			
Assessment of staff capacities, turnover, timely replacement, and delays in recruitment in order to establish impact on project effectiveness and capacity-building. Presence/absence of expertise (technical, gender-/climate-/environment-related) and effects on project implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bangladesh PSSWRS</li> <li>• Cambodia PADEE</li> <li>• Cameroon PADFA</li> <li>• Central African Republic PREVES</li> <li>• China GIADP</li> <li>• Gabon PDAR</li> <li>• Grenada MAREP</li> <li>• India MPOWER</li> <li>• Indonesia CCDP</li> <li>• Liberia STCRSP</li> <li>• Maldives FADIP</li> <li>• Mali PAPAM</li> <li>• Nepal WUPAP</li> <li>• Sierra Leone RCPRP</li> <li>• Sudan SUSTAIN</li> <li>• Zambia SAPP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experienced staff establishing effective financial management systems</li> <li>• Staff performance assessments leading to successful output delivery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slow recruitment process leading to delays in loan utilization and overall achievements</li> <li>• High staff turnover leading to low physical execution rate (increased time for orientation by new staff)</li> <li>• Lack of replacement of staff in time (due to lack of availability of staff) and long procurement procedures</li> <li>• Insufficient attribution of roles and responsibilities</li> <li>• High turnover of country project managers, causing inconsistencies in management styles and limited policy engagement</li> </ul>
<b>Project management (M&amp;E/data availability)</b>			
Assessment of M&E systems (transparent, qualified, cost-effective, innovative) to monitor outputs and share knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Argentina PRODEAR</li> <li>• Cambodia PADEE</li> <li>• Cameroon PADFA</li> <li>• Central African Republic PREVES</li> <li>• Côte d'Ivoire PROPRACOM</li> <li>• Gabon PDAR</li> <li>• Grenada MAREP</li> <li>• Guinea PNAFA</li> <li>• Indonesia CCDP</li> <li>• Liberia STCRSP</li> <li>• Mali PAPAM</li> <li>• Mozambique PRONEA</li> <li>• Nepal WUPAP</li> <li>• Nicaragua NICARIBE</li> <li>• Seychelles CLISSA</li> <li>• Sierra Leone RCPRP</li> <li>• Zambia SAPP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• M&amp;E plan developed from the start</li> <li>• Data collected cascading upward from districts to national levels with adequate verification mechanisms</li> <li>• Web-based management information system to allow real-time information</li> <li>• Innovative, simple, cost-effective system strengthening project management capacity</li> <li>• Allowing expeditious corrective actions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weak and inadequate M&amp;E system</li> <li>• Monitoring tools not articulated despite IFAD's recommendation</li> <li>• Lack of incentives to collect data properly</li> <li>• Inadequate staff and resource and skills to collect data at the decentralized levels (districts)</li> <li>• No automation</li> <li>• Inadequate effort by IFAD to support staff more with training and technical assistance</li> </ul>

Marker description	Projects mapped	Approaches associated with favourable ratings	Approaches associated with unfavourable ratings
<b>Project management (financial management)</b>			
Performance of financial control mechanisms with regard to audit reports, procurement, disbursements, outsourcing processes, recordkeeping.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cambodia PADEE</li> <li>• Central African Republic PREVES</li> <li>• China GIADP</li> <li>• Gabon PDAR</li> <li>• Grenada MAREP</li> <li>• Liberia STCRSP</li> <li>• Maldives FADIP</li> <li>• Mozambique PRONEA</li> <li>• Nepal WUPAP</li> <li>• Seychelles CLISSA</li> <li>• Sri Lanka NADeP</li> <li>• Sudan SUSTAIN</li> <li>• Togo PADAT</li> <li>• Zambia SAPP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledgeable and experienced staff</li> <li>• Timely audit reports</li> <li>• Financial control discipline (vehicle log-movement sheets, operational cost controls, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Missing accounts reconciliation</li> <li>• Limited financial reports prepared</li> <li>• High turnover of financial managers</li> <li>• Delay in submitting documents</li> <li>• Inefficiencies in outsourcing processes</li> <li>• Insufficient quality of recordkeeping</li> <li>• Lack of manual for accounting and financial reporting</li> <li>• Disproportionate disbursements (overhead costs at the expense of project activities)</li> </ul>
<b>Training for strengthening capacities of beneficiaries (quality)</b>			
Types of training conducted and their capabilities to result in human capital improvement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Argentina PRODEAR</li> <li>• Central African Republic PREVES</li> <li>• Chad PADER-G</li> <li>• China GIADP Côte d'Ivoire PROPRACOM</li> <li>• Gabon PDAR</li> <li>• Ghana NRGF</li> <li>• Haiti PPI-2</li> <li>• India MPOWER</li> <li>• Lao People's Democratic Republic SSSJ</li> <li>• Liberia STCRSP</li> <li>• Nepal WUPAP</li> <li>• Niger PPI</li> <li>• Sierra Leone RCPRP</li> <li>• Sudan RAP</li> <li>• Sudan SUSTAIN</li> <li>• Togo PADAT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training contributing to significant changes in human capital of beneficiaries</li> <li>• Improved literacy contributing to land management and increased productivity</li> <li>• Agricultural technical training contributing to good agricultural practices</li> <li>• Training of cooperatives improving business management</li> <li>• Off-farm training leading to new production technology and diversification of income</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training not effective because of lack of uptake by participant producers</li> <li>• Inadequate training on climate change</li> <li>• Strengthening of apex structures through training, but not enough to represent interests of beneficiaries and coordinate actions at grass-roots level</li> <li>• Variable quality of training depending on commitment of trainers and lead farmers</li> <li>• Training for producers' organizations at grass-roots level, but not adequate to create unions to facilitate marketing</li> </ul>
<b>Training for strengthening capacities of beneficiaries (women)</b>			
Success level of training for women as a vehicle to mainstream women's empowerment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bangladesh PSSWRS</li> <li>• Côte d'Ivoire PROPRACOM</li> <li>• Guinea PNAFA</li> <li>• Mozambique PRONEA</li> <li>• Niger PPI</li> <li>• Sierra Leone RCPRP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training women in income-generating activities</li> <li>• Functional literacy training targeting women</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training designed for women in leadership roles, but lack of strategy</li> </ul>

Marker description	Projects mapped	Approaches associated with favourable ratings	Approaches associated with unfavourable ratings
<b>Training for strengthening capacities of beneficiaries (timing and duration)</b>			
Timing of training execution to assess outcomes and sustainable results. Duration of training in relation to its capability to reach the right target/number of people and to guarantee long-term results.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cambodia PADEE</li> <li>• Cameroon PADFA</li> <li>• Gabon PDAR</li> <li>• Grenada MAREP</li> <li>• Mali PAPAM</li> <li>• Liberia STCRSP</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High dropout rate because of inadequate consideration of local conditions (lengthy curricula and timing of training, i.e. overlapping with cropping season)</li> <li>• Training provided, but lack of financing at completion to implement plans of action</li> </ul>
<b>Implementation and supervision support</b>			
Assessment of: (i) how IFAD's supervision missions have been successful or not in improving project implementation, adjusting design, providing technical support, reallocating funds, reviewing targeting strategies; and (ii) whether and how IFAD's recommendation have been implemented and have contributed to effectiveness development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Argentina PRODEAR</li> <li>• Bangladesh PSSWRS</li> <li>• Cambodia PADEE</li> <li>• Central African Republic PREVES</li> <li>• Chad PADER-G</li> <li>• China GIADP</li> <li>• Côte d'Ivoire PROPRACOM</li> <li>• Gabon PDAR</li> <li>• Ghana NGRP</li> <li>• Grenada MAREP</li> <li>• Guinea PNAFA</li> <li>• India MPOWER</li> <li>• Indonesia CCDP</li> <li>• Lao People's Democratic Republic SSSJ</li> <li>• Liberia STCRSP</li> <li>• Maldives FADIP</li> <li>• Mali PAPAM</li> <li>• Mozambique PRONEA</li> <li>• Nepal WUPAP</li> <li>• Nicaragua NICARIBE</li> <li>• Niger PPI</li> <li>• Seychelles CLISSA</li> <li>• Sierra Leone RCPRP</li> <li>• Sri Lanka NADeP</li> <li>• Sudan RAP</li> <li>• Sudan SUSTAIN</li> <li>• Togo PADAT</li> <li>• Zambia SAPP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant recommendations at fiduciary and technical level</li> <li>• Consistency of implementation support</li> <li>• Follow-up on issues to ensure solutions are adopted</li> <li>• Flexibility and responsiveness to evolving contexts</li> <li>• Implementation support with regular supervision missions</li> <li>• Proactivity in dealing with implementations issues during supervision</li> <li>• Design adjustment/ resources shifting</li> <li>• Decentralization of programme coordination unit proposed during mid-term review (MTR) helped reach target population better</li> <li>• Narrowing of scale and variety of activities helped achieve better focus</li> <li>• Adjustment of targets during implementation to take into account the context</li> <li>• An accelerated plan of action prepared at MTR to help improve progress (introduction of competitive salaries for the project coordination unit staff; increased mobility to reach remote communities, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjustments recommended to procurement procedures but not implemented</li> <li>• Separate mission from cofinancier creating more work for project management unit</li> <li>• Conflicting suggestions from different missions</li> <li>• Changes in team composition in supervision missions</li> <li>• Inconsistencies in leadership and technical substance</li> <li>• Insufficient support to increase funding</li> <li>• Lack of an early decision (after several missions) to carry out a major strategic re-alignment and restructuring of the project</li> </ul>

Marker description	Projects mapped	Approaches associated with favourable ratings	Approaches associated with unfavourable ratings
<b>Producers' organizations</b>			
<p>Involvement of producers' organizations in decision-making processes. Strengthening of grass-roots organizations to achieve beneficial results for the target communities and effectiveness in building community cohesion and empowerment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Argentina PRODEAR</li> <li>• Central African Republic PREVES</li> <li>• Chad PADER-G</li> <li>• Côte d'Ivoire PROPACOM</li> <li>• Guinea PNAFA</li> <li>• Haiti PPI-2</li> <li>• India MPOWER</li> <li>• Indonesia CCDP</li> <li>• Lao People's Democratic Republic SSSJ</li> <li>• Liberia STCRSP</li> <li>• Maldives FADIP</li> <li>• Nepal WUPAP</li> <li>• Nicaragua NICARIBE</li> <li>• Seychelles CLISSA</li> <li>• Sierra Leone RCPRP</li> <li>• Sudan RAP</li> <li>• Sudan SUSTAIN</li> <li>• Zambia SAPP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct participation of producers' organizations in commercial process</li> <li>• Better coordination of sales</li> <li>• Better use of post-harvest infrastructure</li> <li>• Acquisition of legal status by organizations</li> <li>• Control over resources generating a new model for rural development, increasing community cohesion and empowerment</li> <li>• "Push" approach building farmers' capacity to improve productivity and quality</li> <li>• "Pull" approach to incentivize the private-sector company</li> <li>• Logistical support and pre-financing to cooperatives encouraging farmers to sell directly to them and not intermediaries</li> <li>• Adjusting amount of local development plans to achieve better focus and avoid territorial dispersion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weak linkages between local, regional and national levels among producers' organizations and their national representative body</li> <li>• Lack of training aligned to organizations' needs. And lack of adequate assessment of their performance led to weak negotiating power</li> <li>• Revision of design during implementation for IFAD to fully meet the setting up and operational costs of producers' cooperative organizations threatened the taking up of ownership by these organizations</li> <li>• Autonomous professional agricultural organizations created, but no strategy provided to mobilize their own financial resources</li> </ul>

Marker description	Projects mapped	Approaches associated with favourable ratings	Approaches associated with unfavourable ratings
<b>Institutions</b>			
<p>Ownership of institutional capacity (key institutional partners, organizational arrangements, capacity-building efforts needed during implementation) within government institutions and in-country partners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Argentina PRODEAR</li> <li>• Bangladesh PSSWRS</li> <li>• Cambodia PADEE</li> <li>• Central African Republic PREVES</li> <li>• Côte d'Ivoire PROPRACOM</li> <li>• Guinea PNAFA</li> <li>• India MPOWER</li> <li>• Indonesia CCDP</li> <li>• Liberia STCRSP</li> <li>• Lao People's Democratic Republic SSSJ</li> <li>• Maldives FADIP</li> <li>• Mali PAPAM</li> <li>• Mozambique PRONEA</li> <li>• Nepal WUPAP</li> <li>• Nicaragua NICARIBE</li> <li>• Niger PPI</li> <li>• Seychelles CLISSA</li> <li>• Sierra Leone RCPRP</li> <li>• Sudan RAP</li> <li>• Sudan SUSTAIN</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The project also contributed to formation of a grassroots-level extension network through engagement with various external service providers</li> <li>• Development of territorial plans to implement activities, investments and an M&amp;E system coupled with active support from central government helped achieve targets by territorial bodies</li> <li>• Building of infrastructure for decentralized institutions helped them in overcoming lack of central government funding and strengthened their decision-making ability</li> <li>• Well-equipped extension agents providing higher-quality extension services</li> <li>• Inclusion of relevant and key national actors helped promote good institutional collaboration and coordination in the implementation of project activities</li> <li>• Project developed capacities of local government agencies through capacity-building, better equipment and institutional support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of involvement of key actors in strategic activities</li> <li>• Lack of expertise of institutions and service providers</li> <li>• Limited institutional capacity not including all levels (only undertaken for grass-roots not for local institutions involved in implementing/supervising project activities and some key national institutions, thus affecting sustainability)</li> <li>• The lack of ownership and institutional capacity prevented the forging of effective partnerships between key players in the sector at various levels, and lasting policy and institutional impacts</li> <li>• Weak project coordination</li> <li>• Inadequate financial management</li> <li>• Insufficient internal control</li> <li>• Institutional arrangements resulting in numerous cost centres that could not be serviced by the limited project staff but later streamlined</li> </ul>

Marker description	Projects mapped	Approaches associated with favourable ratings	Approaches associated with unfavourable ratings
Adapting to changes in external context			
<p>Adjustments during project implementation to the project design to respond to context changes linked to social and political unrest or climate-related events.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central African Republic PREVES</li> <li>• Chad PADER-G</li> <li>• China GIADP</li> <li>• Guinea PNAFA</li> <li>• Indonesia CCDP</li> <li>• Lao People's Democratic Republic SSSJ</li> <li>• Mali PAPAM</li> <li>• Nepal WUPAP</li> <li>• Sierra Leone RCPRP</li> <li>• Zambia SAPP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design adjusted because of government sharpening focus on ecotourism during implementation</li> <li>• IFAD was flexible and responsive to the required design changes resulting from the implementation context on the ground (design adjusted because of government's new strategy on food security and nutrition) and to reallocate grant budget to support a successful outcome of the project (financing village investment plans)</li> <li>• Design adjusted because of conflict</li> <li>• How: financing the right infrastructures, reducing geographical focus, involving local agricultural institutions, refining M&amp;E and coordination mechanisms among partners</li> <li>• Social and political unrest</li> <li>• Design adjusted based on previous experience in the region, focusing on the poorest, women and youth to mitigate the risk (targeting the same people as the rebels)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ebola crisis and social unrest causing slow implementation</li> </ul>



### Country-level analysis: examples of CSPEs by topic identified in the analysis

33. This section defines some of the CSPE narrative that guided the analysis in chapter 4 of the 2020 ARRI (table IV.9). The evaluation sample included 14 CSPEs conducted between 2018 and 2020.

Table IV.9 Findings from chapter 4 and corresponding evaluation documents

Findings	Examples
<p>1) The strategic orientation of country programmes was generally aligned with policies and priorities of IFAD and governments</p>	<p><b>Burkina Faso:</b> As highlighted in the country strategy and programme evaluation (CSPE) conducted in the country, the 2007-2012 country strategic opportunities programme (COSOP) was developed in a participatory manner with all the stakeholders between January 2005 and June 2007. During this period, a series of consultations was organized both at the level of the capital and in the field. A participatory survey on perceptions of poverty and an inventory of best practices in small-scale irrigation were carried out during the consultative process with farmers and pastoralists. A national final validation consultation completed the process. The country strategy note was formulated by the country office in November 2016, then discussed with the Government and approved by IFAD in January 2017.</p> <p><b>Cameroon:</b> As reported in the CSPE conducted in the country, “the preparation of the COSOP [country strategic opportunities programme] 2007-2012 followed a long consultation process, which spanned almost three years, including a consultation mission in late 2004, written exchanges with the Government on the project COSOP during 2005, a validation workshop at the end of May 2006, and, finally, the approval of the strategy by the IFAD Executive Board in August 2007. The preparation of the 2015-2019 Portfolio Strategy, with the support of experts from the FAO Investment Centre, included consultations at the level of the Government, technical and financial partners and representatives of POs. The document was validated during a participatory stakeholder workshop in early 2015.”</p> <p>However, the strategic objectives of IFAD’s overall strategic frameworks evolved over the period. The objectives of improving the management of natural resources, agricultural techniques and services, financial services, market access, off-farm employment opportunities and the participation of the rural poor in policymaking were added to the promotion of agropastoral entrepreneurship and the improvement of the institutional and political context in favour of agriculture. The 2011-2015 Strategic Framework also added rural youth as a priority target, and highlighted the importance of promoting producer-public-private partnerships enabling the rural poor to integrate the agricultural value chains. The design of the Youth Agropastoral Entrepreneurship Promotion Programme and the 2015-2019 Portfolio Strategy clearly integrate all of these new aspects.</p> <p><b>Nepal:</b> The 2013 COSOP was formulated following a consultative process with the Government, led by the Ministry of Agriculture and with participation of a wide cross-section of stakeholders, which ensured that the COSOP was aligned with national development policies.</p>

Findings	Examples
<p>2) The strategic focus of COSOPs adapted to the changing context and was evidence-based</p>	<p><b>Madagascar:</b> The country is an example of how previous recommendations have been taken into account in the development of IFAD country's strategy. The 2012 CSPE gave rise to recommendations that were taken into account by the 2015-2019 COSOP, either in the formulation of strategic objectives, such as resilience to climate change (SO1) and the sector approach (SO2), or in defined implementation approaches and actions, such as support for deconcentration and decentralization in the context of anchoring interventions at regional and local levels, or the dissemination of agricultural techniques well stated in the activities to be developed for reaching SO1.</p> <p><b>Mexico:</b> As observed in this country, not all previous recommendations have been followed. For instance, 2007-2012 COSOP benefited from IOE's 2006 country programme assessment and followed most of the recommendations of that evaluation, except that of establishing a stronger project M&amp;E system. And that one of IFAD being physically present in the country.</p> <p><b>Sierra Leone:</b> COSOPs in this country show a good adaptation to the changing context. The 2003 COSOP clearly indicates a strategic focus on development-oriented recovery assistance. In the short term, the strategic thrust for IFAD was to provide rapid assistance to the communities as part of the reintegration and regeneration process, and the aim was to restore basic services and revive economic activities. The 2010 COSOP aligned with the shift in government's focus from reconstruction and rehabilitation of the agriculture sector debilitated by the civil war towards to economic development.</p>
<p>3) The targeting focus in COSOPs was mixed in terms of coverage, and reflective of context and priority interventions</p>	<p><b>Cambodia:</b> Here, the COSOPs have not exhibited a clear direction in terms of geographical focus. The 1998 and 2008 COSOPs both referred to the selection of geographical areas (with provinces being the first level of entry) with high poverty rates. The poverty rates would have been one of the considerations, but in reality, other considerations (as also noted in the 2008 COSOP) were understandably the prime driver for geographical area selection, such as the presence of partners and their already existing or planned initiatives, and apparently the Royal Government of Cambodia's preference to distribute donor-funded agriculture-sector projects in different areas. The targeting strategy in the 1998 and 2008 COSOPs was basically centred around the multiple-stage identification of geographical areas with high poverty rates (provinces, districts, communes and then villages), and then the identification of the poor households within the selected villages (using wealth-ranking exercise, later also combined with the IDPoor list). The target groups were categorized as very poor and poor, with the very poor comprising "most vulnerable households", the landless or those with little land, women and women-headed households, and indigenous and ethnic minority households. However, they were described in general with little consideration of the differences between geographical areas. For example, landholding size varies greatly between different areas, for example, in sparsely populated areas, a "poor household" may have, say, more than two hectares of land. The target group and the targeting strategy described remained largely static between the 1998 and 2008 COSOPs.</p> <p><b>Egypt:</b> This country represents a case in which targeting is fairly well studied, based on a survey of the determinants of poverty and the different types of IFAD targets. These targets are well characterized (level and causes of poverty, strategies adopted, priority needs), and the responses provided are adequate to the needs, and in accordance with the objectives and means proposed in the strategy and with geographical targeting.</p> <p><b>Sri Lanka:</b> Both COSOPs in this country indicate the intention of going to geographical areas where the poverty level is high. The 2003 COSOP was more specific in noting dry zones, estate communities and coastal areas, but they were seen as independent operations in different locations in different sectors with different sets of target groups. The 2015 COSOP left it broad, only stating "districts and areas with higher incidences of poverty, and localities that are conflict-affected and face specific development challenges because of their geographical locations." In reality, the geographical coverage in the portfolio has been broad and dispersed. In addition to limited guidance in this aspect in the COSOPs, other factors have also contributed. First, the post-tsunami operations covered long-stretched coastlines, part of which would not have been included by IFAD interventions. Second, the end of the conflict in 2009 brought IFAD to a new area in the north, where the poverty rate is indeed high. Third, geographical areas for NADeP support were basically driven by the interests of the private sector, which led to quite dispersed areas with more concentration in some areas rather than less.</p>

Findings	Examples
<p>4) The logical articulation of the results management framework in the COSOP is an important prerequisite for realizing the theory of change for the country programme</p>	<p><b>Burkina Faso:</b> The 2007-2012 COSOP logical framework includes quantitative results indicators and quantitative and qualitative stage indicators. No analysis has been made showing the articulation of the stage indicators with the outcome indicators, and the latter, sometimes irrelevant, do not present a baseline situation. The links between the stage indicators and the outcome indicators are not clear and are not explained. Monitoring and evaluation is approached in a very general way in four lines, without mentioning an existing baseline situation or one to be implemented in 2007, and without reflecting on the approach to be followed so that the M&amp;E indicators of projects can be consolidated so as to provide details for the COSOP result indicators.</p> <p><b>Cambodia:</b> Among a number of weaknesses that were observed in the results management frameworks in the 2008 and 2013 COSOPs, there is an example of how linkages between the strategic objectives and indicators are not clear in many cases (e.g. indicator on child malnutrition for the strategic objective on resilience to climate and other shocks in the 2013 COSOP); and how most of the indicators in the 2013 COSOP results management framework are closely tied to each investment project and do not serve to reflect on the progress at the country programme level. These weaknesses have been gradually self-identified in the course of COSOP and country programme reviews.</p> <p><b>Madagascar:</b> The COSOP logical framework links the global, strategic and politico-institutional objectives of the country's strategy with the development objectives of Madagascar. It also makes the link between the strategic objectives and the intermediate results, making it possible to judge the progress made in achieving them. It defines quantitative indicators for each of the global and strategic objectives with, for the most part (56 per cent), benchmarks and target values.</p> <p><b>Peru:</b> As reported in the CSPE conducted in the country, by not incorporating instruments (credit and non-credit) into the results management matrix, it is not possible to identify a coherent logic for the implementation of the strategy in achieving the objectives. Together, the lack of logical articulation between objectives, means and goals prevented the generation of an explicit theory of change for the programme. This, together with the lack of allocation of specific resources for implementation and monitoring, limited the coherence of the programme.</p>

Findings	Examples
<p>5) The mitigation measures proposed to manage the risks identified in the country programmes were at times less specific and relevant, and less commensurate with the means that IFAD can deploy to do so</p>	<p><b>Burkina Faso:</b> The risks identified in the COSOP and the country strategy note are relevant to the realities of the rural sector in Burkina Faso. The COSOP has identified many risks. However, the proposed mitigation measures appear weak. Indeed, the risks linked to the profitability and sustainability of micro projects managed by the rural poor cannot be mitigated solely by sustainable activity plans. To remedy this, the COSOP also provides for “targeting the poorest who, thanks to the projects, will be able to manage a microenterprise for their own account”, which is not true in reality. The mitigation of other risks is mainly planned through negotiation, selection of activities, information and consultation on policies; so, many actions that are necessary but insufficient.</p> <p><b>Cameroon:</b> For the majority, the mitigation measures proposed seem appropriate, such as support to producers’ organizations to make a useful contribution to the development of agricultural policies and the establishment of a climate of trust between the Government and producers’ organizations through regular meetings and open consultations with other influential technical and financial partners or the improvement storage infrastructure for agricultural products and facilitation of warrantage. Certain mitigation measures have not yet been put into practice within the country programme, in particular the geographical concentration of projects to avoid dusting (7 of the 10 regions of Cameroon are covered by current projects) or integration of adaptation measures to climate change. The measures proposed to improve governance and project management seem insufficient and poorly implemented and monitored, in particular the application of results-based management, and the strengthening of project management units in matters of internal control, targeting, prioritization of activities, and procurement. Moreover, the risk identified in the 2007-2012 COSOP concerning the Government’s difficulties in providing the necessary counterpart funds no longer appears in the 2015-2019 Portfolio Strategy, probably because the payments were beyond forecasts (always delayed) in the few years preceding this strategy.</p> <p><b>Madagascar:</b> The COSOP does not foresee the risks of withdrawal of the cofinancing partners, risks which arose during the previous COSOP, and does not specify the procedure to follow in this case to avoid an unbalanced start of projects and the anachronistic realization of activities (actions of training and capacity-building, for example, before productive structuring actions or opening up).</p>
<p>6) Country programmes can only better achieve their universal goal of improving incomes and food security if they exploit the synergies between lending and non-lending activities</p>	<p><b>Madagascar:</b> For non-lending activities, the COSOP has explicitly defined: (i) the themes and means of the policy dialogues in relation to the projects in the portfolio in progress, and of the sector programme being identified; (ii) the types of partnership to strengthen or initiate based on clearly identified areas likely to support its country programme; (iii) knowledge management objectives and themes, as well as mechanisms for the dissemination of information and knowledge useful to target populations; and (iv) the priorities of the donation window in relation to the objectives of resilience to climate change, knowledge management and networking in Madagascar at regional and international platforms, and the promotion of South-South cooperation.</p> <p><b>Kenya and Sierra Leone:</b> The two countries are both examples of how the mix of instruments deployed during the COSOPs’ implementation period has not been optimal. The synergies between lending and non-lending could have been stronger. In both countries, this has largely been due to the weaker performance of policy engagement and knowledge management, and the often distinct and separate role of grants.</p>

Annex V **Comparison of IOE's project performance evaluation/impact evaluation ratings and the Programme Management Department's project completion report ratings ranked by disconnect**

Table V.1 **All evaluation criteria, only project performance evaluations/impact evaluations completed, 2007-2018 (N=77)**

Criteria	Mean ratings			Mode		Observations	
	IOE	PMD	Disconnect	IOE	PMD	IOE	PMD
Relevance	4.12	4.91	-0.79	4	5	77	76
Scaling up	4.10	4.67	-0.56	4	5	77	75
Project performance	4.00	4.46	-0.46	4	5	77	76
Adaptation to climate change	3.85	4.29	-0.43	4	4	61	21
IFAD's performance	4.18	4.59	-0.40	4	5	77	75
Efficiency	3.79	4.18	-0.39	4	4	77	77
Effectiveness	4.09	4.45	-0.36	4	5	77	77
Sustainability	3.82	4.16	-0.34	4	4	77	77
Gender equality and women's empowerment	4.22	4.56	-0.34	4	5	77	77
Overall project achievement	4.12	4.45	-0.33	4	5	77	77
Government performance	4.04	4.34	-0.30	4	5	77	77
Environment and natural resources management	3.96	4.24	-0.28	4	4	68	67
Innovation	4.19	4.47	-0.28	4	5	77	76
Rural poverty impact	4.20	4.34	-0.14	4	5	76	77

Source: IOE evaluation rating database and PMD project completion report rating database.

Table V.2 All evaluation criteria, only project performance evaluations/impact evaluations completed, 2016-2018 (N=12)

Criteria	Mean ratings			Mode		Observations	
	IOE	PMD	Disconnect	IOE	PMD	IOE	PMD
Relevance	3.92	4.91	-0.99	4	5	12	11
Scaling up	3.92	4.83	-0.92	4	5	12	12
IFAD's performance	4.08	4.83	-0.75	4	5	12	12
Gender equality and women's empowerment	3.92	4.58	-0.67	4	5	12	12
Project performance	3.90	4.50	-0.60	4	4	12	11
Efficiency	3.75	4.33	-0.58	4	4	12	12
Effectiveness	4.00	4.58	-0.58	4	5	12	12
Government performance	4.08	4.58	-0.50	4	5	12	12
Innovation	4.17	4.67	-0.50	5	5	12	12
Overall project achievement	3.91	4.27	-0.36	4	4	11	11
Sustainability	3.83	4.08	-0.25	4	4	11	11
Environment and natural resources management	4.45	4.64	-0.18	4	4	11	11
Rural poverty impact	4.00	4.17	-0.17	4	4	12	12
Adaptation to climate change	4.33	4.40	-0.07	5	4	9	10

Source: IOE evaluation rating database and PMD project completion report rating database.

## Annex VI Analysis of disconnect between project completion report and IOE ratings

### Project completion report validation/project performance evaluation data series

#### Analysis of disconnect by evaluation criteria

1. Within the 2007-2018 project completion report validations (PCRVs)/project performance evaluations (PPEs) analysed in the 2020 ARRI
2. Charts VI.2 and VI.3 show the trend for each criterion based on the average rating per completion year for IOE and the Programme

(chart VI.1), the largest disconnect is registered for relevance (-0.55), followed by scaling up (-0.43). Rural poverty impact and environment and natural resources management (ENRM) show the lowest disconnect (-0.16 and -0.15).

Chart VI.1 Ranking of disconnect between IOE and project completion report ratings, 2007-2018

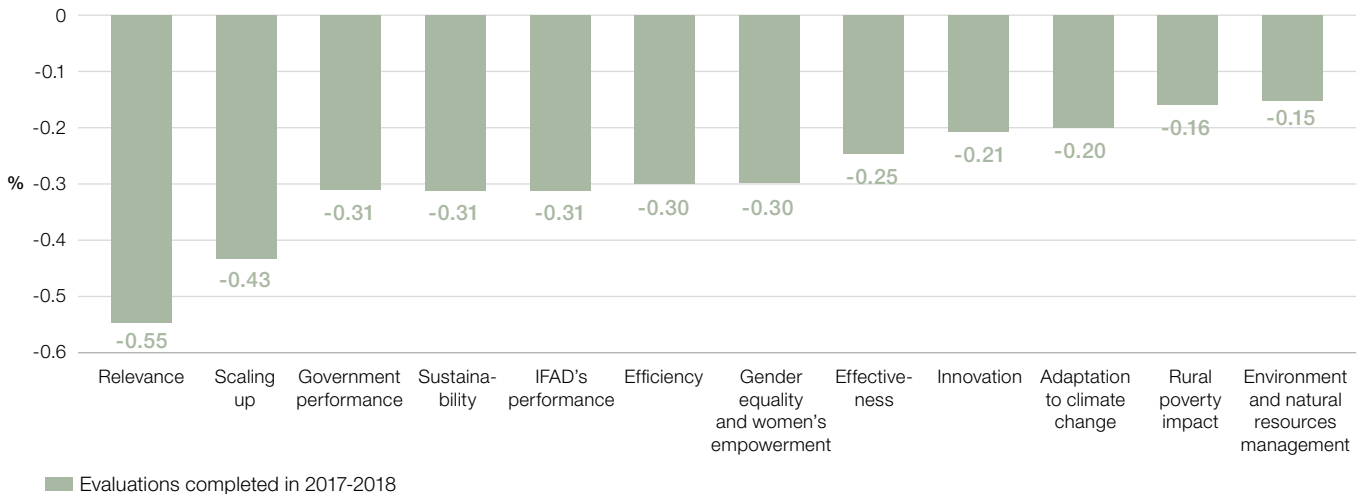


Chart VI.2 Relevance

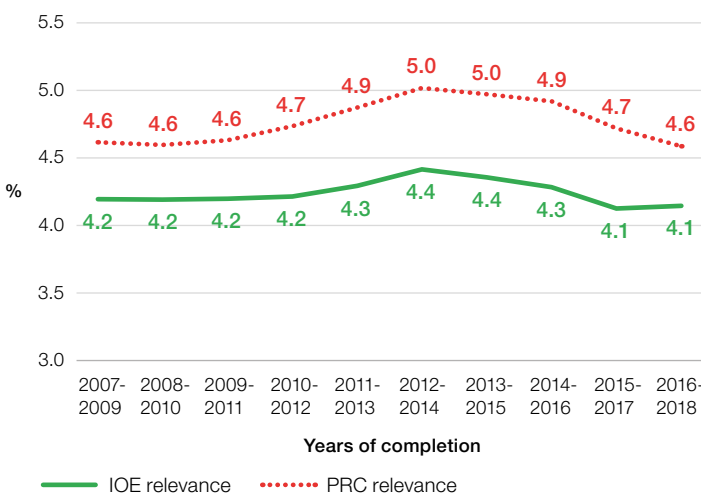


Chart VI.3 Effectiveness

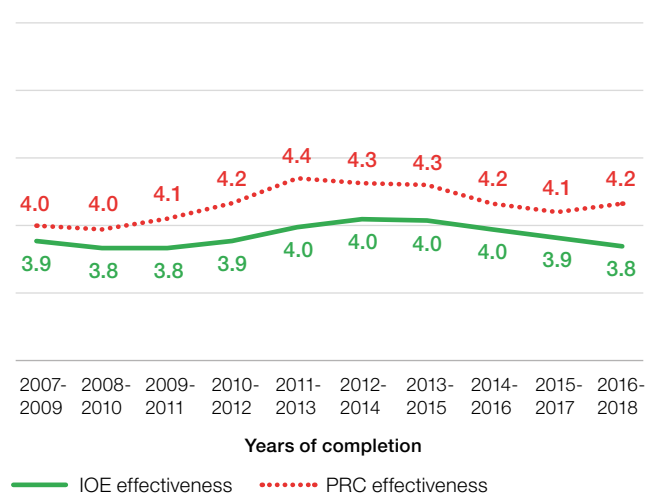


Chart VI.4 Efficiency

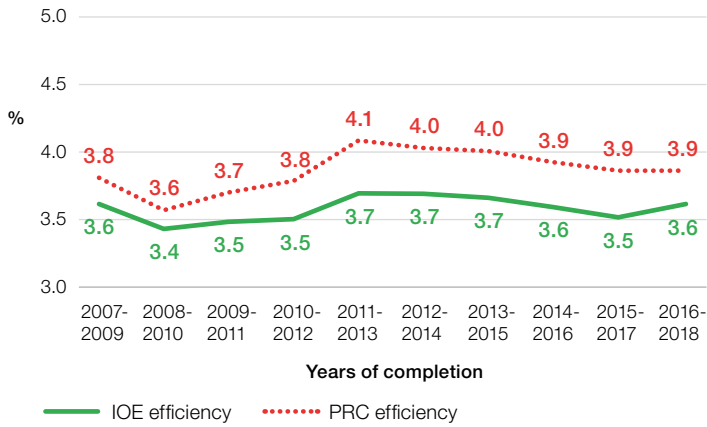


Chart VI.5 Sustainability



Management Department (PMD) using the three-year moving average technique (PCR/V/ PPE/ impact evaluation [IE] database 2007-2018). When looking at average ratings, an overall aligned trend can be noticed between IOE and PCR ratings.

3. **Relevance** shows a declining trend for both IOE and PMD since 2012-2014, and the difference between IOE and PCR average ratings is the highest in comparison with the other criteria. **Effectiveness** shows a consistent aligned trend between IOE and PCR average ratings, with the exception of a slightly larger gap in the most recent time period.
4. **Efficiency** ratings by IOE and PMD show aligned and stable trends from 2011-2013, after a consistent increase started in 2008-2010 (chart VI.4). **Sustainability**, which shows a flat trend in average rating for IOE, is more variable for PMD ratings (chart VI.5). Between 2009-2011 PMD ratings increase until 2011-2013, causing a higher disconnect with IOE ratings. From 2013-2015, PMD ratings start declining as well, reducing the gap with IOE.
5. Noticeably, the gap between IOE and PMD ratings for **gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE)** has increased over time (chart VI.6). As for **rural poverty impact**, more consistency and alignment is noticed overall (chart VI.7).

Chart VI.6 Gender equality and women's empowerment



Chart VI.7 Rural poverty impact

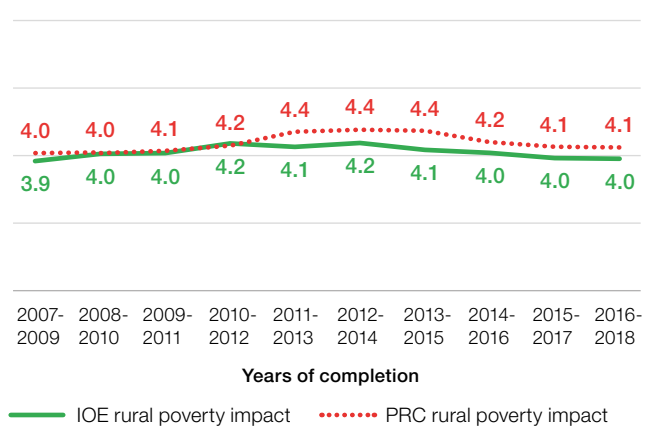




Chart VI.8 Innovation

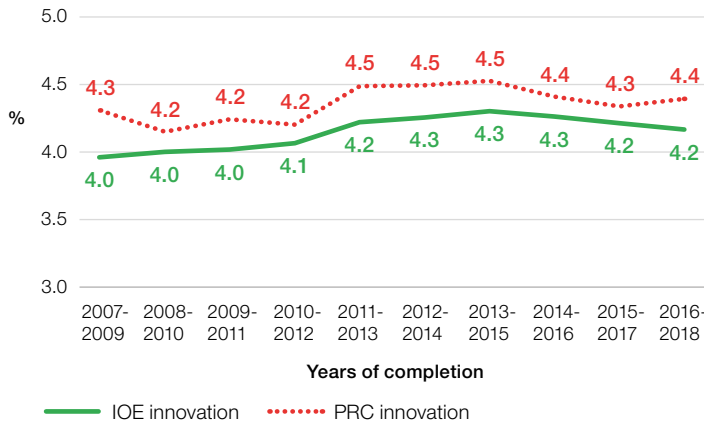
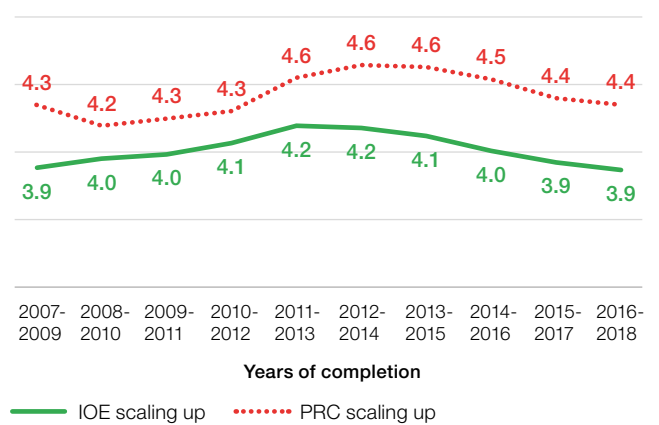


Chart VI.9 Scaling up



6. **Innovation** shows aligned and stable trends in average ratings between PMD and IOE, with a higher disconnect in 2016-2018 (chart VI.8). Also for **scaling up**, it is possible to observe an alignment in the trends, yet with an increasing gap between the PCR and IOE average ratings starting from 2010-2012 (chart VI.9). IOE 2017 evaluations are the first ones to rate the criteria separately.

7. **Environment and natural resources management (ENRM) and adaptation to climate change** show a very low disconnect starting in 2014-2016 (charts VI.10-VI.11). The two criteria started to be rated separately from 2016.

Chart VI.10 Environment and natural resources management

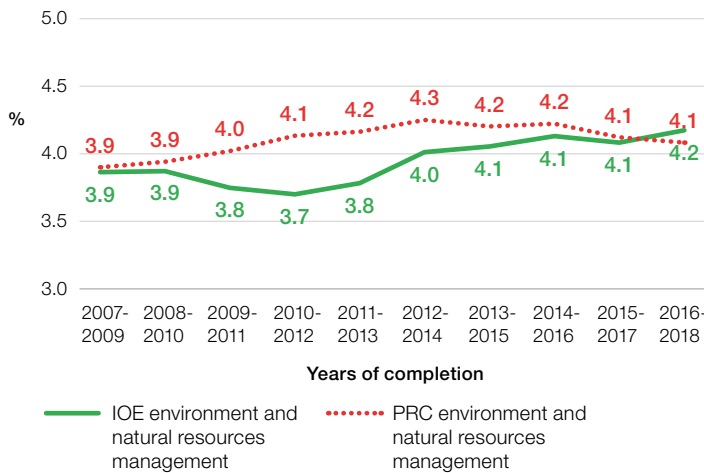


Chart VI.11 Adaptation to climate change

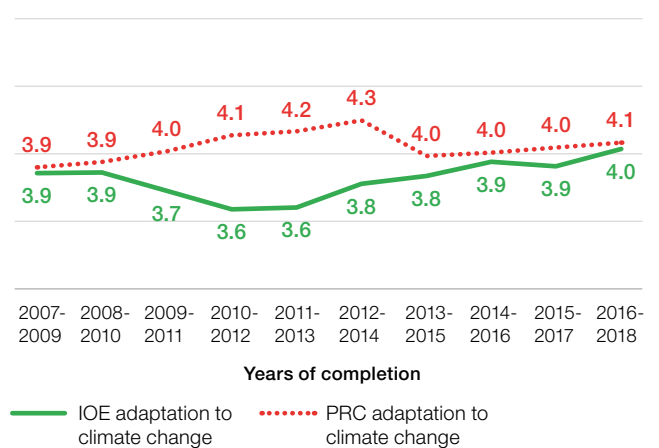


Chart VI.12 IFAD's performance

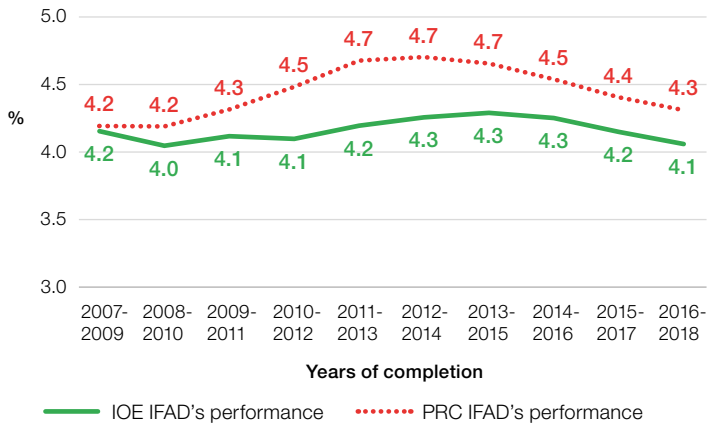
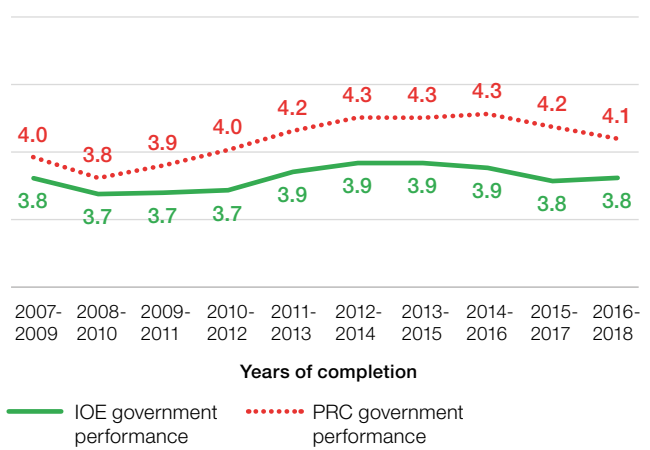


Chart VI.13 Government performance



8. As for **IFAD's performance as a partner**, IOE and PMD ratings follow a parallel trend and, starting from 2013-2015, they both show a decline (chart VI.12). **Government performance as a partner** shows aligned trend in ratings and a relatively stable distance between the two averages since 2011-2013 (chart VI.13). This criterion is on the border of the satisfactory zone: since 2010-2012 it has been in the satisfactory zone for PMD (4 and above), and in the unsatisfactory zone for IOE (3 and below).

9. **Project performance** shows a slight disconnect and aligned trends across time (chart VI.14). Starting in 2013-2015, the IOE average rating has always been in the unsatisfactory zone. **Overall project achievement** has a particularly flat trend for IOE ratings (chart VI.15), and the difference with PCR ratings was slightly higher between 2011-2013 and 2014-2016.

10. The majority of IOE ratings from project evaluations in the period 2007-2018 (47.7 per cent) are moderately satisfactory (4), as shown in the distribution analysis of

Chart VI.14 Project performance

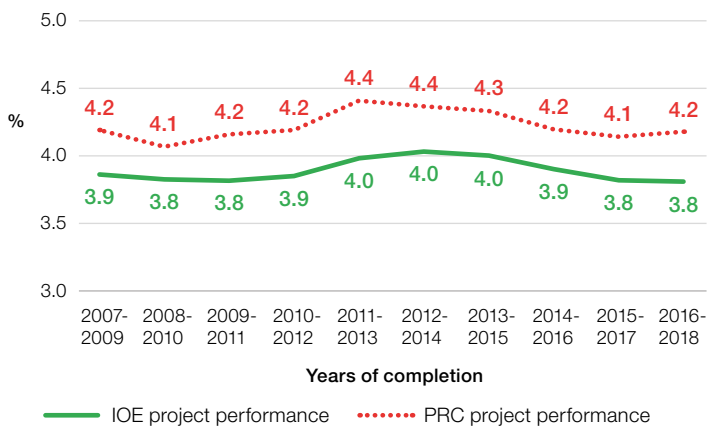


Chart VI.15 Overall project achievement

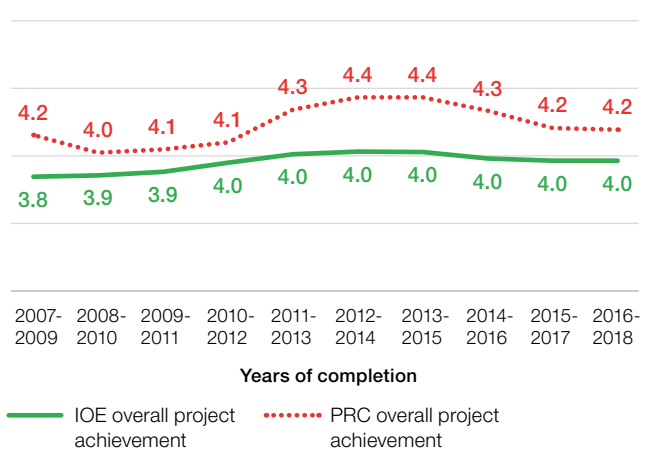
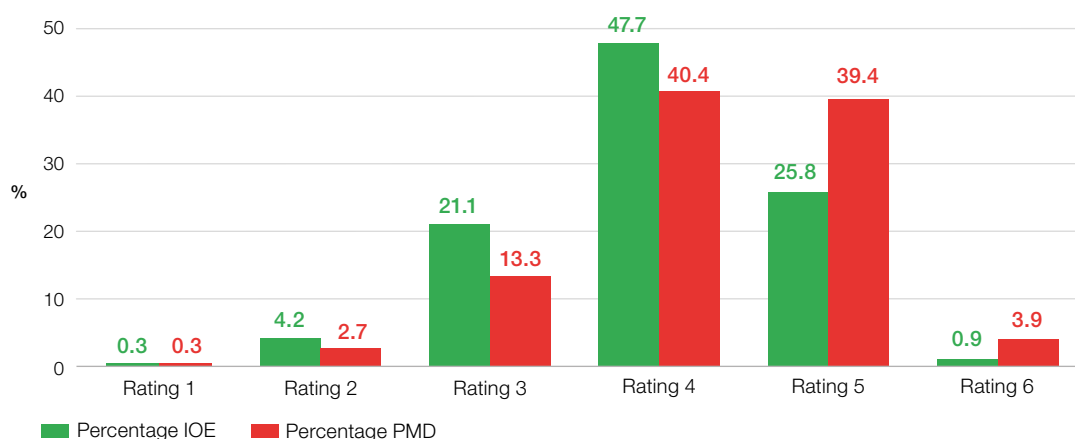


Chart VI.16 Distribution of IOE ratings (N=3,009) and PCR ratings (N=2,887), 2007-2018



Source: IOE evaluation database (PCR/PPE) and PCR database, April 2020.

independent ratings in chart VI.16. In terms of the tails of the distribution, out of the total of 2,887 ratings across 12 evaluation criteria, only 0.3 per cent are ratings of 1, and 0.9 per cent are ratings of 6. The bulk of the ratings in the evaluations, i.e. 94 per cent, are 3, 4 and 5. The distribution is mostly aligned with the previous one in the 2019 ARRI, except for a slight shift in the rating of 3 (an increase of 1 per cent from the 2019 ARRI) and the rating of 6 (a minor decrease of 0.2 per cent from the 2019 ARRI).

11. A comparison between the distribution of IOE ratings and **PMD ratings** shows that ratings 3, 4 and 5 are those where most disconnect occurs. The PCRs ratings indicate a high concentration in favour of ratings 4 and 5, with 3.9 per cent having a rating of 6.
12. **In summary**, the disconnect between IOE and PCR (PMD) ratings is confirmed in the ARRI 2020, and it shows that IOE and Management are in agreement on the trends, even when actual ratings differ.

Overall project achievement ratings are flatter and more stable for IOE, while PMD ratings show more fluctuations. Relevance has the highest disconnect in the long term (-0.55) and a smaller gap in the most recent period (-0.44). Effectiveness and efficiency indicate a consistent disconnect across time, both in the long term and in the most recent period. Sustainability, like relevance, has seen a decrease in its disconnect in the most recent period (-0.31 in the long term and -0.24 in the most recent period). As for the other criteria, rural poverty impact, adaptation to climate change and ENRM show the lowest disconnect both in the long term and in the most recent period. IFAD's and government performance as partners indicate the same disconnect (-0.31) in the long-term comparison. However, while the disconnect for IFAD's performance has improved in the most recent period (-0.29), that for government performance has increased to -0.40.

Table VI.1 Regional average disconnects

PCR/PPE data series, 2007-2018

	Regions (PCR/PPE 2007-2018)					All regions
	APR	ESA	LAC	NEN	WCA	
Average disconnect	-0.27	-0.28	-0.28	-0.34	-0.30	-0.29

Note: APR = Asia and the Pacific; ESA = East and Southern Africa; LAC = Latin America and the Caribbean; NEN = Near East, North Africa and Europe; WCA= West and Central Africa.

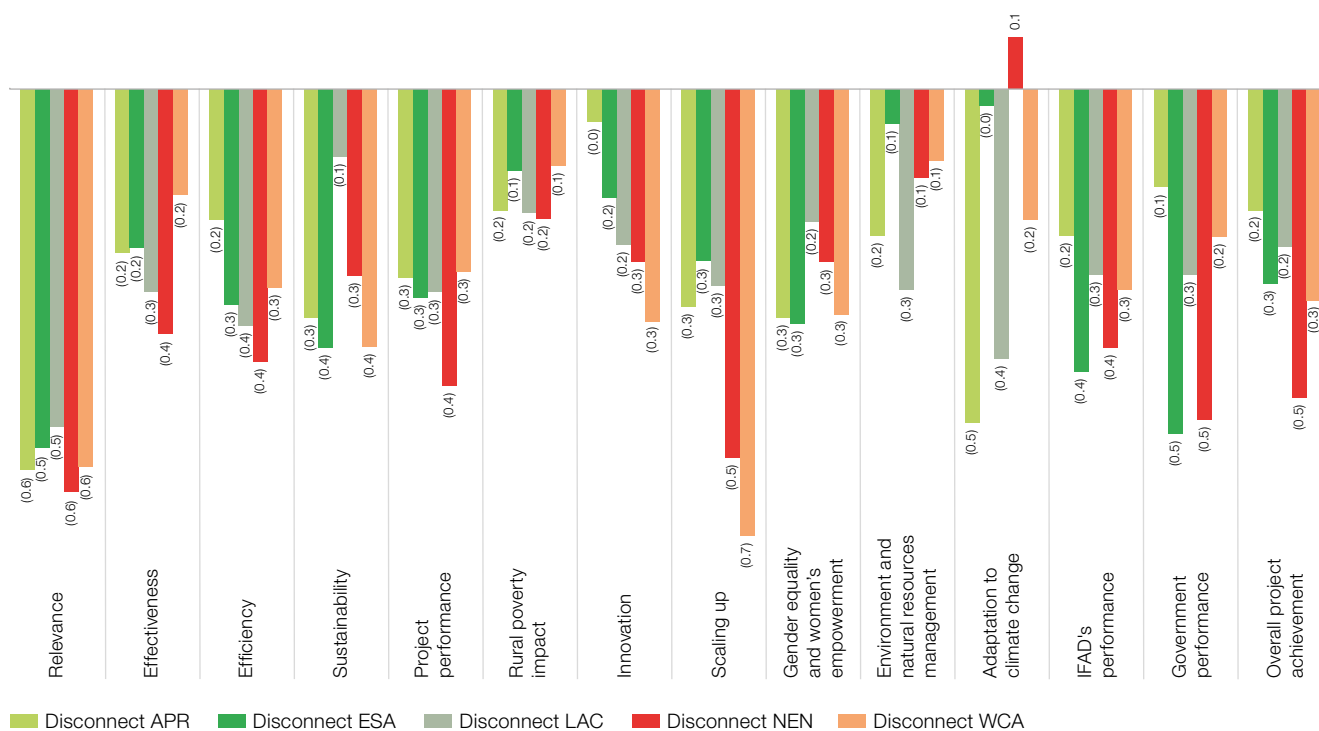
### Analysis of performance by region

13. The regional average disconnect between IOE and PMD ratings is shown in table VI.1.
14. The average disconnect shown in table VI.1 was calculated through two steps. First, average disconnects between IOE and PMD ratings were obtained for each evaluation criterion within each region. Second, the average disconnect of each criterion was averaged within each region. For instance, the average disconnect shown for APR is the

average of the mean disconnect between IOE and PMD ratings regarding relevance, effectiveness, etc. in all APR evaluations. This method was also applied to determine the overall average disconnect, which includes all regions.

15. Chart VI.17 (PCR/PPE data 2007-2018) shows some differences in disconnect among regions for the different criteria as shown below:
  - Relevance: aligned disconnect among regions.

Chart VI.17 IOE and project completion report ratings disconnect by regions



- Effectiveness: lowest disconnect in the WCA/highest in the NEN.
  - Efficiency: lowest disconnect in the APR/highest in the NEN and LAC.
  - Sustainability: lowest disconnect in the LAC/highest in the WCA and ESA.
  - Project performance: highest disconnect in the NEN and aligned disconnect among the other regions.
  - Rural poverty impact: aligned disconnect among regions, between 0.1 and 0.2.
  - GEWE: lowest disconnect in the LAC with no significant difference in the other regions.
  - Innovation: no disconnect in the APR/highest in the WCA.
  - Scaling up: lowest disconnect in the ESA/highest in the WCA.
  - ENRM: lowest disconnect in the ESA/highest in the LAC.
  - Adaptation to climate change: positive disconnect in the NEN/highest in the APR and WCA.
  - IFAD's performance as a partner: lowest disconnect in the APR/highest in the NEN and ESA.
  - Government performance as a partner: lowest disconnect in the APR/highest in the ESA and NEN.
  - Overall project achievement: lowest disconnect in the APR/highest in the NEN.
16. Tables VI.2 and VI.3 indicate the performance of every region within each criterion analysed in the most recent periods presented in the 2020 ARRI. Table VI.2 presents the percentage of moderately satisfactory and better ratings (PCR/PPE data series) by region in 2016-2018. Dark cells indicate a negative trend compared to the previous

Table VI.2 **Percentage of moderately satisfactory and above ratings by region, 2016-2018**

Criteria	APR (18 projects)	ESA (10 projects)	LAC (8 projects)	NEN (6 projects)	WCA (22 projects)
Relevance	83	80	88	67	91
Effectiveness	94	70	50	83	59
Efficiency	72	30	50	67	32
Sustainability	83	70	38	83	32
Project performance	72	20	38	67	32
Rural poverty impact	94	70	50	83	64
Innovation	83	100	75	67	64
Scaling up	72	80	75	67	45
Gender equality and women's empowerment	83	60	71	50	73
Environment and natural resources management	100	67	71	100	75
Adaptation to climate change	83	78	33	100	79
IFAD's performance	83	80	88	83	82
Government performance	78	30	63	50	41
Overall project achievement	88	70	43	83	64

■ Negative trend ■ Positive trend

Table VI.3 Percentage point increase/decrease between 2016-2018 and 2015-2017 period

Criteria	APR	ESA	LAC	NEN	WCA
Relevance	-2	-5	3	-17	4
Effectiveness	-1	1	-19	17	-6
Efficiency	2	-1	-12	25	6
Sustainability	-2	1	-1	17	6
Project performance	-3	-18	-16	25	-7
Rural poverty impact	-1	-15	-12	8	-6
Innovation	-2	0	-2	8	-6
Scaling up	-3	-5	-2	8	2
Gender equality and women's empowerment	-2	-17	-5	8	-6
Environment and natural resources management	0	-6	-4	17	4
Adaptation to climate change	4	-4	-21	27	5
IFAD's performance	-7	3	-5	0	-1
Government performance	-2	-16	-7	0	2
Overall project achievement	-1	-5	-24	17	-2

■ Negative trend ■ Positive trend

three-year period of 2015-2017. Table VI.3 indicates the magnitude of the decline or increase between 2016-2018 and 2015-2017.

17. The tables can be summarized with the following findings:

- The LAC shows declining ratings across all criteria except relevance, and shows double-digit decreases in six out of the 14 criteria considered.
- The NEN's performance, as opposed to that of the LAC, improves across all criteria except relevance. The most substantial improvements can be noticed in adaptation to climate change, efficiency, and project performance.
- The APR presents declining trends for all criteria except efficiency and adaptation to climate change, remaining constant for ENRM. However, all the declines are very small in terms of magnitude. IFAD's

performance represents the highest decline, with -7.

- The ESA's performance decreased for 10 out of the 14 criteria, with GEWE and government performance presenting the most severe drops. At the same time, innovation retains the highest percentage of positive ratings.
- The WCA presents mixed results with performance improving for half of the criteria and declining for the other half. However, none of the criteria that has changed in a positive way shows a significant increase, as nor do any of the negative trends. This is particularly alarming.

## Annex VII IOE ratings for project completion reports

1. **Project completion reports (PCRs).** In project completion report validations (PCRVs), IOE assesses and rates PCRs using four evaluation criteria. These are: (i) scope (e.g. whether the PCR has adhered to IFAD guidelines for PCRs); (ii) quality (e.g. report preparation process and robustness of the evidence base); (iii) lessons (e.g. whether the PCR includes lessons on the proximate causes of satisfactory or less than satisfactory performance); and (iv) candour (e.g. in terms of objectivity in the narrative, and whether ratings in the PCR are supported by evidence included in the document). Ratings for each of these criteria are aggregated in the PCRVs to provide an overall rating of the PCR document.
2. As shown in table VII.1, the overall assessment of PCRs of projects completed between 2016 and 2018 has been stable compared to the projects completed in the previous time period. Eighty-nine per cent of the PCRs validated by IOE rated moderately satisfactory or better. The 2020 ARRI finds an improvement in satisfactory or better ratings for candour and overall evaluation of the PCR. A slight decrease in quality of the PCR is noticed in 2016-2018 versus 2015-2017.

Table VII.1 **Quality of project completion report documents**

Percentage of satisfactory ratings by evaluation criteria, project completion report validation/ project performance evaluation data series, 2014-2018

Evaluation criteria	Percentage of moderately satisfactory or better			Percentage of satisfactory or better		
	2014-2016	2015-2017	2016-2018	2014-2016	2015-2017	2016-2018
Scope	91	91	87	42	52	51
Quality	76	74	67	24	20	17
Lessons	94	93	92	59	64	62
Candour	89	89	89	43	53	60
Overall rating	91	92	89	31	35	38

Source: IOE evaluation database (PCRv/PPE), April 2020.

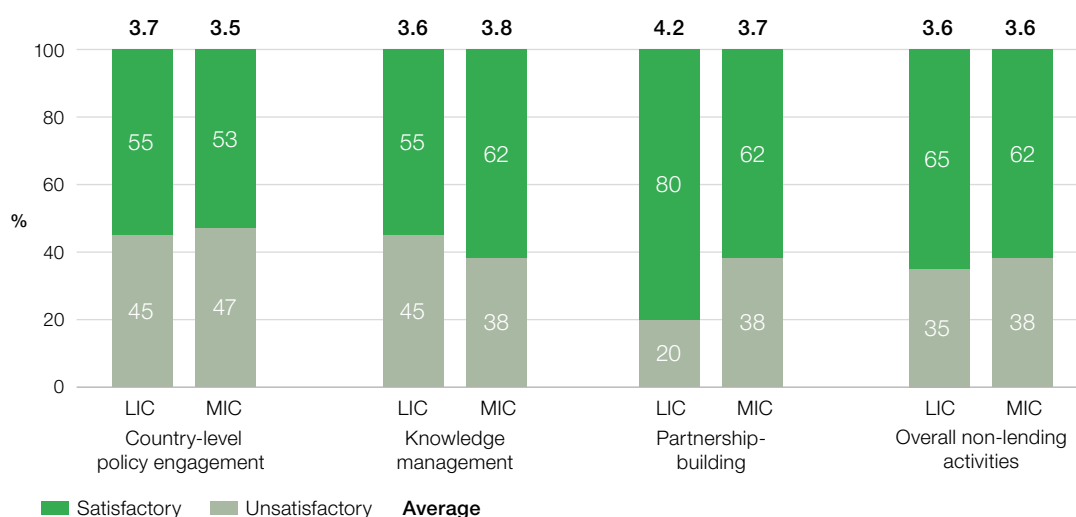
## Annex VIII Performance in non-lending activities by income groups (low-income countries and middle-income countries)

1. Of the total of 54 country strategy and programme evaluation (CSPEs), 34 were conducted in middle-income countries (MICs) and 20 of them in low-income countries (LICs). Of the new CSPEs included in the 2020 ARRI, three were conducted in LICs (Madagascar, Nepal and Sierra Leone) and one in a MIC (Mexico). In addition, two out of four of the CSPEs included in the 2020 ARRI were carried out in the country for the first time (Mexico and Sierra Leone). Analysis was conducted comparing the proportion of satisfactory and unsatisfactory ratings for LICs and MICs across the four non-lending evaluation criteria and for all the CSPEs completed by IOE since 2006. It is notable that LICs show a better performance for every non-lending activity except for knowledge management (chart VIII.1), although ratings

are still mostly positive. Country-level policy engagement shows aligned ratings between the two groups of countries. Partnership-building has a significantly better performance in LICs than MICs. All average ratings are below the satisfactory line (below 4), except for partnership-building in LICs (4.2). These results prove the presence of greater opportunity for partnerships in LICs, where a larger number of bilateral and multilateral agencies operate, and given that some MICs do not promote international cofinancing. Nonetheless, MICs continue to show high demand for financing and knowledge partnerships in order to avoid risking their poverty-reduction gains, and to maintain their track record for promoting growth and addressing IFAD's four mainstreaming areas.

Chart VIII.1 Performance of non-lending activities in low-income countries and middle-income countries

Percentage of satisfactory/unsatisfactory evaluations, 2006-2019 (year of evaluation)



Source: IOE CSPE database (54 evaluations), April 2020.



## Annex IX Current performance of projects in countries with fragile situations

1. Table IX.1 shows the most recent performance of projects in countries with fragile situations compared to projects in countries with non-fragile situations.<sup>12</sup>

Table IX.1 Percentage of projects with moderately satisfactory ratings or above (MS+) in countries with non-fragile and fragile situations, 2016-2018 (non-fragile: N=50; fragile: N=13) versus 2015-2017 (non-fragile: N=62; fragile: N=18)

Criteria	% MS+ ratings in countries with non-fragile situations (2016-2018)	% MS+ ratings in countries with fragile situations (2016-2018)	Change in countries with non-fragile situations 2016-2018/ 2015-2017	Change in countries with fragile situations 2016-2018/ 2015-2017	Difference in countries with non-fragile and fragile situations (2016-2018 %MS+ ratings only)
Relevance	82	92	▼ -2	▲ 3	▼ -10
Effectiveness	76	62	▼ -5	▲ 6	▲ 14
Efficiency	50	46	▲ 2	▲ 7	▲ 4
Sustainability	62	46	▲ 1	▲ 7	▲ 16
Project performance	46	46	▼ -7	▲ 2	— 0
Rural poverty impact	78	62	▼ -4	▼ -5	▲ 16
Innovation	78	77	▼ -3	▲ 5	▲ 1
Scaling up	66	62	▼ -3	▲ 6	▲ 4
Gender equality and women's empowerment	85	85	▲ 12	▲ 8	— 0
Environment and natural resources management	78	75	▼ -6	▲ 8	▲ 3
Adaptation to climate change	82	85	▲ 7	▲ 1	▼ -3
IFAD's performance	54	54	▼ -31	▲ 4	— 0
Government performance	73	69	▲ 13	▲ 8	▲ 4
Overall project achievement	86	92	▲ 8	▼ -2	▼ -6

Source: IOE evaluation database (PCR/V/PPE), April 2020.

<sup>12</sup> Definition of countries with fragile situations is aligned with the World Bank "Harmonized List of Fragile Situations FY 19" and consistent with the ARRIIs from previous years.

## Annex X Reporting of results for development effectiveness in comparator organizations

### Summary

1. This note briefly examines two issues:
  - How evaluation offices of IFAD's peers **calculate and present** aggregate organizational results and performance on an annual basis.
  - How independent evaluation ratings are **used** in results reporting.
2. The note examines three comparator organizations: the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank. These organizations produce different types of corporate-level reports focusing on results and development impact or effectiveness, prepared by their management and their evaluation offices.
3. Most have at least two reports:
  - an annual report from the evaluation function, which contains analysis of aggregated independent evaluation ratings and analysis of corporate performance, as well as presentation of the activities and findings from the year's evaluations;
  - a results or development effectiveness report produced by management reporting on the results measurement framework (RMF), in which some data, validated by the evaluation function, are included.
4. The evaluation functions, in addition to their own annual reviews and reports, also provide – to different extents – inputs to management results reporting in the form of independent evaluation ratings. The World Bank has the closest collaboration between evaluation offices and management, with a very significant use of independently validated ratings used in the development effectiveness/results reporting. Annual (or

other) reports of the evaluation functions also often present an analysis of follow-up to evaluation recommendations (similar to the President's Report on the Implementation Status of Evaluation Recommendations and Management Actions at IFAD). Moreover, all highlight how they intend to improve collaboration with operational departments to strengthen the use and feedback loops of evaluative knowledge and evaluation findings. Improving how IFIs deal with and track evaluation recommendations is an issue for all IFAD's peers.

### World Bank

5. The **Results and Performance of the World Bank Group report**<sup>13</sup> is the annual review of the development effectiveness of the World Bank Group conducted by the Independent Evaluation Group's (IEG). The report, which has changed format over the years and is due for yet another change, provides a retrospective assessment. It synthesizes trends in independent IEG ratings and identifies explanatory factors behind portfolio performance. Its focus is on project outcome ratings and World Bank performance ratings. It covers the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the International Development Association (IDA), and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency, and is 26 pages long with more than 100 pages of detailed appendices, including some that are only available online and contain inter alia additional background data and methodological explanations.
6. The report includes sections with explanatory factors for World Bank performance, both

<sup>13</sup> World Bank. 2019. *Results and Performance of the World Bank Group 2018. Independent Evaluation Group*. Washington, DC. <https://ieg.worldbankgroup.org/sites/default/files/Data/Evaluation/files/rap2018.pdf>

external and internal to the World Bank. It makes no recommendations, but the report includes a section on “Follow-up on Major Evaluations by World Bank Group Management”, containing an analysis of the Management Action Records (MARs). It also presents a management response.

7. **Reform of the Results and Performance of the World Bank Group report.** One commitment of the management is to reform the MARs in close collaboration with the IEG to “enhance the strategic relevance and impact of IEG recommendations and of management actions to improve the Bank Group’s development effectiveness.” The current approach is considered overly focused on individual actions and targets, not conducive to learning and adaptation during implementation, and not able to allow a comprehensive view across IEG reports, which are often interrelated.
8. **Use of IEG ratings in results reporting.** In addition to informing the Results and Performance of the World Bank Group report, IEG ratings and validations are a cornerstone of the World Bank’s results measurement system for the IDA as well as its corporate balanced scorecard – the apex of the corporate results reports of the institution. The annual scorecard is a snapshot of results, organized in a three-tier framework: (i) development context; (ii) client results; and (iii) performance.<sup>14</sup> While operational outcome and output indicators in tier 2 are management data, some in tier 3 – performance – are IEG-validated ratings. The IDA Results Measurement System uses the same framework.<sup>15</sup> It has 84 indicators to track results of IDA countries at an aggregate level. Of these, several indicators in tier 3 are IEG-validated ratings, relating to development outcomes and portfolio performance.

## Asian Development Bank

9. The ADB’s Annual Evaluation Review (AER) presents a synthesis of the performance of the ADB, and highlights results and systemic issues from independent evaluations conducted each year.<sup>16</sup> The board-required report of the Independent Evaluation Department (IED) is produced to promote accountability and learning. It focuses on the operational performance and results of the ADB, and provides a synthesis of the evaluations prepared by the IED in the preceding year and an in-depth analysis of performance trends of completed operations. It includes a special topic to strengthen results, and reports on management’s acceptance and implementation of IED recommendations.
10. The AER includes a special thematic chapter, which changes from year to year. In the most recent edition, 2019, it focused on a review of ADB’s corporate results framework and the Development Effectiveness Review (DER). The AER also provides an annual update on the implementation status of recommendations from IED high-level evaluations. The report is 70 pages long, with 30 pages of annexes and an executive summary of more than 10 pages. Performance is discussed in terms of lending modality, sector, country and regional perspectives. The AER includes recommendations. The report, like the Results and Performance of the World Bank Group report, includes a chapter analysing how recommendations to IED evaluations have been followed up.
11. **Issues of interest.** The ADB has, like the World Bank, a focus on evaluation recommendations and how to improve uptake and tracking. The introduction in 2017 of a technical meeting between the IED and management, before the finalization of an evaluation report, has improved acceptance

<sup>14</sup> World Bank. 2019. *Corporate Scorecards, November 2019*. <http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/388081580918341342/World-Bank-Group-Scorecard-2019-data.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> International Development Association. 2020. *IDA18 Results Measurement System*. <https://ida.worldbank.org/results/rms>

<sup>16</sup> Independent Evaluation, Asian Development Bank. 2019. *2019 Annual Evaluation Review; Performance and scorecards*. <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/evaluation-document/467896/files/aer-2019.pdf>

ratings. The AER states that: “Continued efforts to improve the management action record system (MARS) and to change it from a basic tracking and reporting system to a more dynamic learning tool that provides information on the outcomes of evaluation recommendations are also discussed.” The report also advocates more systematic learning from the thematic and sector evaluations produced by the IED, particularly from the implementation of the recommendations of these reports. It is suggested that this learning process be done jointly by the ADB’s management and the IED through various learning sessions.

**17** Asian Development Bank. 2020. *2019 Development Effectiveness Review, April 2019*. <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/institutional-document/602911/defr-2019-secm420.pdf>

**18** Independent Development Evaluation, African Development Bank. 2019. *Annual Report 2019: From experience to knowledge and learning*. [http://idev.afdb.org/sites/default/files/documents/files/IDEV-Annual\\_Report\\_2019\\_%28En%29\\_WEB.pdf](http://idev.afdb.org/sites/default/files/documents/files/IDEV-Annual_Report_2019_%28En%29_WEB.pdf)

**19** Independent Development Evaluation, African Development Bank. 2019. *Synthesis Report on the Validation of the 2017 Project Completion Reports*. <https://idev.afdb.org/sites/default/files/documents/files/PCR%202017-Synthesis%20report%20ENG.pdf>; and Independent Development Evaluation, African Development Bank. 2019. *Synthesis Report on the Validation of the 2016 Project Completion Reports*. <https://idev.afdb.org/sites/default/files/documents/files/PCR-2016-Synthesis%20report%20ENG.pdf>

## 12. Use of IED ratings and data in

**management results reporting.** The ADB’s DER is an annual report by the ADB’s management that assesses the ADB’s progress in implementing its long-term strategic framework, Strategy 2020. It builds on the corporate results framework.<sup>17</sup> The review is management’s flagship report on the ADB’s performance in achieving the priorities of its corporate strategy, using indicators in the corporate results framework as the yardstick. Focusing on operations financed by the ADB, it assesses the ADB’s development effectiveness, highlights actions the ADB has taken to improve, and identifies areas where the ADB’s performance needs to be strengthened. The review covers all operations financed by the ADB’s ordinary capital resources and the Asian Development Fund. It presents emerging trends and identifies actions for improving corporate performance. In the four-tier RMF scorecard, IED-validated ratings are used for country assistance programmes, both sovereign and non-sovereign success ratings, and success ratings for policy-based lending.

## African Development Bank

13. The Independent Evaluation Office (IDEV) of the AfDB produces an annual evaluation report that presents inter alia the work of the office and major insights derived from the year’s evaluations.<sup>18</sup> In 2019, the IDEV also produced two validation synthesis reports of the project completion reports (PCRs) for 2016 and 2017, respectively, to provide the AfDB’s board, management, and operational staff with credible evidence on the quality of the PCRs, and the performance of AfDB projects that exited its portfolio in 2016 and 2017. The annual report includes a short reference to these two reports.<sup>19</sup>
14. **Issues of interest.** The 2019 annual evaluation report includes a review of the status of implementation of recommendations from the management action records system. While management reports regularly to the board on the status of **actions**, as a new initiative the IDEV is due to assess and report to the Committee on Operations and Development Effectiveness on the level of adoption of evaluation **recommendations** once a year. The objective of this report is to examine the extent to which management has adopted the agreed recommendations by assessing: (i) the alignment of the actions to their respective recommendations; and (ii) the degree of implementation of the actions. Pursuant to this provision, IDEV is currently working on its first management action records system report, which should be available in early 2020 and be presented in the 2020 annual report. It will cover the recommendations for which all actions were due by December 2018.
15. The IDEV works quite closely with the AfDB’s operations departments, aiming to raise the impact of evaluations on the AfDB’s work and raise awareness within the AfDB of

the formative value of the IDEV's work, and highlighting the evaluation process as a joint learning exercise. In 2018, the IDEV enhanced its engagement with the AfDB's operations departments through closer cooperation in the design and conduct of evaluations, including through reference groups. It also launched a series of capitalization workshops, a platform for the IDEV and the AfDB's operations staff to discuss findings, lessons and recommendations from evaluations, and to foster improved project designs and strategies.

16. **Use of IDEV ratings and data in management results reporting.**

The AfDB's flagship results report, the Annual Development Effectiveness Review, is structured around its four-tier RMF and includes only one dataset from the IDEV relating to "operations independently rated as satisfactory or above at completion." The RMF explains it as follows: "At project completion, the Bank's task managers assess how well the project delivered its intended development outcomes. The task manager's assessment is complemented with an assessment by the Bank's Independent Development Evaluation."<sup>20</sup>

### Aggregation of project performance

17. This subsection presents the methods used by the evaluation offices of the three international financial institutions to aggregate the performance of their operations.
18. **World Bank.** The performance of the World Bank's operations is based on the overall performance of the World Bank. The World Bank's performance is based on two criteria: (i) quality at entry (the extent to which the World Bank identified, facilitated preparation

of, and appraised the operation such that it was most likely to achieve planned development outcomes and was consistent with the World Bank's fiduciary role); and (ii) the quality of bank supervision (this refers to the extent to which the World Bank proactively identified and resolved threats to the achievement of relevant development outcomes and the World Bank's fiduciary role). The overall performance of the World Bank is highly satisfactory if both these criteria are highly satisfactory. However, if these are different, then it uses the lower of the two values. For example, if quality at entry is highly satisfactory but quality of supervision is satisfactory, the performance of the World Bank is termed as satisfactory.

19. **Asian Development Bank.** The core project evaluation criteria are relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. Each of these leads to specific assessments, and the ratings are aggregated to arrive at a rating for the overall performance of a project – either highly successful (weighted average is greater or equal to 2.7), successful (overall weighted average is greater than or equal to 1.6 and less than 2.7), less than successful (overall weighted average is greater than or equal to 0.8 and less than 1.6), or unsuccessful (overall weighted average is less than 0.8).

20. **African Development Bank.** Overall project rating is an arithmetic mean of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. The performance on the rating is then determined based on the value of the mean, and using the following rule: a mean value of 1.00-1.49 is highly unsatisfactory, 1.50-2.49 is unsatisfactory, 2.50-3.49 is satisfactory, and 3.50-4.00 is highly satisfactory.

<sup>20</sup> African Development Bank Group. 2019. *Annual Development Effectiveness Review 2019: Integrating Africa, connecting people*. [https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Development\\_Effectiveness\\_Review\\_2019/ADER\\_2019\\_\\_EN.pdf](https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Development_Effectiveness_Review_2019/ADER_2019__EN.pdf)





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