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## **2025 Report on IFAD's Mainstreaming Effectiveness (RIME) related to Environment, Climate, Gender, Nutrition, Youth and Social Inclusion**

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**Useful references:** IFAD12: Deepening Impact and Building Resilience through Mainstreaming [IFAD12/2/R.3/Rev.2](#); Report of the Consultation on the Twelfth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources [GC 44/L.6/Rev.1](#); IFAD12 monitorable action 12.

**Action:** The Executive Board is invited to review the 2025 Report on IFAD's Mainstreaming Effectiveness (RIME) related to Environment, Climate, Gender, Nutrition, Youth and Social Inclusion

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## **Executive summary**

1. The 2025 Report on IFAD's Mainstreaming Effectiveness (RIME) reviews progress made under the Twelfth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD12) in integrating the mainstreaming themes of climate, environment, gender, youth, nutrition, Indigenous Peoples, biodiversity and disability inclusion across IFAD's strategies and operations. It also includes reporting on the three phases of the Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme.
2. The RIME shows strong performance in project design – with nearly all mainstreaming targets having been met or exceeded – and full integration of mainstreaming themes into all country strategies. Performance on related core indicators assessed during project implementation remains on track. Development outcome ratings assessed at project completion continue to be strong for environment and natural resources management and climate change adaptation, with ratings nearing the IFAD12 target of 90 per cent, while ratings for gender show a decline under IFAD12 compared with IFAD11.
3. To improve performance, IFAD has strengthened technical support, capacity-building and monitoring systems. A new fragility unit and expanded partnerships are addressing programming in complex settings, while pilot tools for nature-based solutions and digital technologies are enhancing climate tracking.
4. With a view to consolidating reporting on the results of IFAD's operations and realizing cost-efficiencies, Management proposes to integrate the RIME into the Report on IFAD's Development Effectiveness (RIDE) from IFAD13 onwards.

# **2025 Report on IFAD's Mainstreaming Effectiveness (RIME) related to Environment, Climate, Gender, Nutrition, Youth and Social Inclusion**

## **I. Introduction**

1. IFAD recognizes that building sustainable and inclusive agrifood systems that reduce poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition, and that build resilience in rural areas, requires strong attention to the environment, biodiversity, climate change, gender, nutrition, youth, Indigenous Peoples, and disability inclusion. In line with replenishment commitments and targets agreed since the Eleventh Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD11), IFAD has adopted a systematic approach to integrating these priorities across its portfolio. Since IFAD12, it has undertaken to report annually on related commitments and targets in the Report on IFAD's Mainstreaming Effectiveness (RIME).
2. The integration of mainstreaming themes in country strategic opportunities programmes (COSOPs), country strategy notes (CSNs) and investment projects is guided by IFAD's policies, strategies and action plans, such as: the [gender equality and women's empowerment policy](#) and the related [action plan](#), the [targeting policy](#), the [policy on engagement with Indigenous Peoples](#), the [strategy on biodiversity](#), the [disability inclusion strategy](#), the [IFAD nutrition action plan](#), the [rural youth action plan](#), and operational tools such as the [Social, Environmental and Climate Assessment Procedures](#) (SECAP), the [climate finance handbook](#), the [adaptation framework tool](#), and how-to-do-notes on [nutrition](#); [Free, Prior and Informed Consent](#); the [Gender Action Learning System \(GALS\)](#); and [youth](#).
3. The 2025 RIME reviews progress towards the IFAD12 mainstreaming targets set by Member States during replenishment consultations (see appendix I for definitions). It also includes the annual update on the Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme (ASAP). Appendix II provides an in-depth analysis of each thematic area.
4. With a view to enhancing the accessibility of reporting on the results of IFAD's operations and realizing cost-efficiencies, from IFAD13 onwards, Management proposes to streamline operational results reporting to governing bodies into one comprehensive document by integrating the main elements covered in the RIME into the Report on IFAD's Development Effectiveness (RIDE), which is presented annually to the September sessions of the Evaluation Committee and the Executive Board.

## **II. Overall mainstreaming performance**

5. IFAD met all project design-related mainstreaming targets under IFAD12, except for adaptive capacity. The failure to meet the target relating to adaptive capacity was due to the fact that the cohort of projects assessed included additional financing to ongoing projects from earlier IFAD cycles, for which the flexibility to adjust project designs to meet the criteria for building adaptive capacity was limited. However, 91 per cent of new projects approved under IFAD12 fulfilled the criteria for building adaptive capacity, exceeding the 90 per cent target.
6. Core indicators related to mainstreaming themes assessed during implementation remain on track. Development outcome ratings assessed at project completion continue to be strong for environment and natural resources management and climate change adaptation, with ratings nearing the IFAD12 target of 90 per cent, while ratings for gender show a decline under IFAD12 compared with IFAD11.

7. While performance on project design is strong, project completion trends underscore the importance of further deepening the understanding of implementation challenges to help identify tailored solutions to enhance delivery.

## A. Performance against mainstreaming targets for COSOPs and CSNs








8. IFAD successfully fulfilled the commitment to ensure that 100 per cent of COSOPs and CSNs incorporate analyses of gender, youth, environment and climate, as well as nutrition to the extent relevant to the national context. Under IFAD12, additional emphasis has been given to Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities (in 40 per cent of new COSOPs approved in 2024) and biodiversity.
9. Furthermore, all new COSOPs and CSNs included analyses of recipient countries' agriculture-related climate change commitments and priorities, including their Nationally Determined Contributions and National Adaptation Plans. Following a pilot in selected COSOPs in 2024, a more systematic approach to screening of national biodiversity strategies and action plans during COSOP preparation will be adopted.

## B. Performance against mainstreaming targets for project design

10. Project design-related mainstreaming targets for IFAD12 were mostly achieved or surpassed, except for the target related to building adaptive capacity (figure 1).

Figure 1

Performance against mainstreaming targets for project design (2022–2024)\*

IFAD12 targets at project design	Status end of 2022	Status end of 2023	Status end of 2024	Status end of IFAD12
 <b>40% of PoLG is climate-finance</b> [increased from 25% target in IFAD11]	30%	37%	54%	49%
 <b>90% build adaptive capacities</b> [new in IFAD12]	69%	78%	90%	84%
 <b>35% new designs validated as gender-transformative</b> [increased from 25% in IFAD11]	53%	53%	50%	51%
 <b>60% new designs validated as nutrition-sensitive</b> [same as IFAD11]	60%	63%	58%	60%
 <b>60% new designs validated as youth-sensitive</b> [same as IFAD11]	67%	63%	75%	70%
 <b>10 new designs prioritize Indigenous Peoples</b> [new in IFAD12]	3	5	9	14
 <b>5 new designs prioritize persons with disabilities</b> [new in IFAD12]	5	5	2	7

\* Data set includes 70 approved projects that incorporate social inclusion themes.

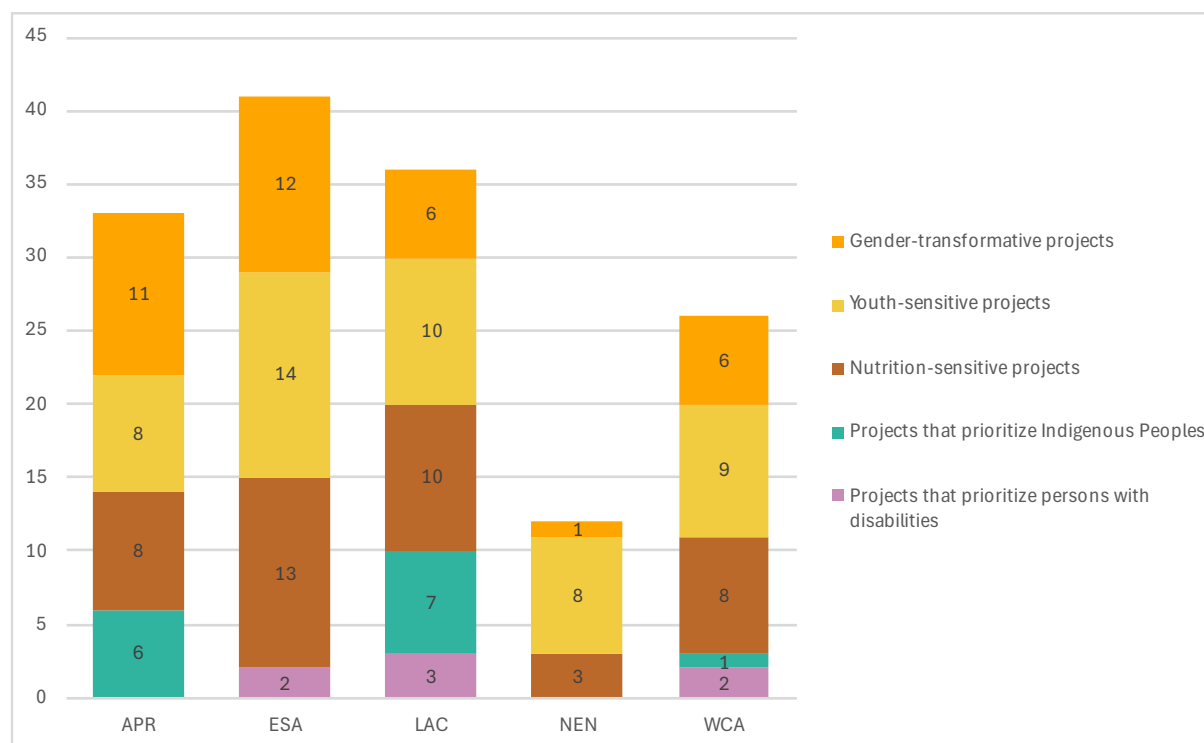
Source: Office of Development Effectiveness mainstreaming dashboard.

PoLG: programme of loans and grants.

11. Management introduced several measures to strengthen the integration of mainstreaming themes in project design. These include structured capacity-building for IFAD country teams and consultants, a more systematic approach to staffing and supporting project delivery teams, and targeted technical assistance to project management units (PMUs). These efforts are especially important in contexts where borrower interest in and institutional capacity for mainstreaming indicate a need for additional support.
12. While social inclusion mainstreaming commitments were met overall, regional variations are evident (figure 2). These differences reflect a combination of factors, including differing regional priorities, specific country demands, institutional capacities and local contextual challenges.

Figure 2

**Regional breakdown of social inclusion mainstreaming themes in new project designs approved in 2022–2024**



Source: Office of Development Effectiveness mainstreaming dashboard.

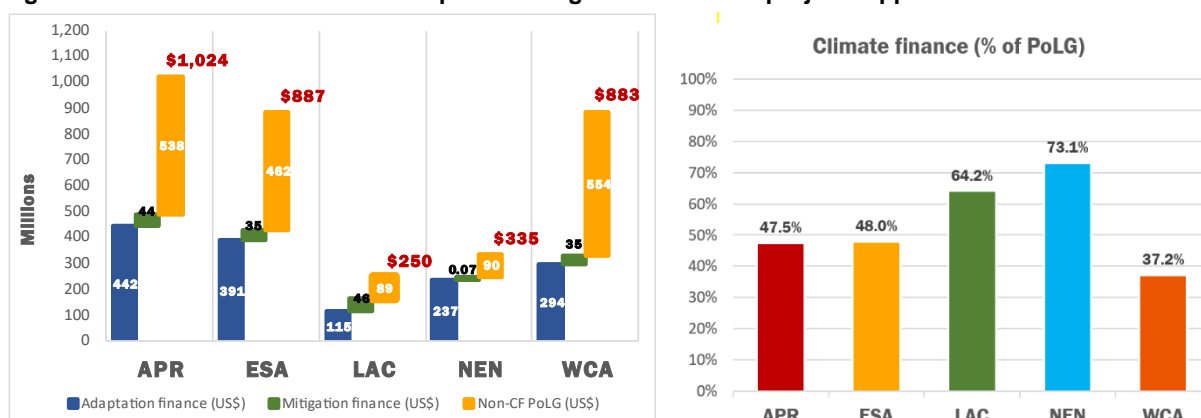
APR: Asia and the Pacific Division; ESA: East and Southern Africa Division; LAC: Latin America and the Caribbean Division; NEN: Near East, North Africa and Europe Division; WCA: West and Central Africa Division.

13. Regional and corporate portfolio stocktaking exercises are regularly conducted to analyse performance in mainstreaming areas and identify actions to enhance the quality of project design and implementation. Numerous capacity-building initiatives for IFAD and PMU personnel were undertaken, for example: development of a regional social inclusion action plan and related training in NEN and regional experience-sharing and capacity-building workshops on nutrition-sensitive agriculture approaches in APR, ESA and NEN. APR's regional gender action plan, which aligns with IFAD's corporate gender action plan, was also developed. Thematic specialists from the Environment, Climate, Gender, and Social Inclusion Division also conducted preliminary consultations with country and project design mission teams to identify strategic entry points for incorporating mainstreaming themes in the pipeline.
14. The IFAD12 climate finance target of 40 per cent was surpassed. Climate finance approvals peaked in the final year of IFAD12, rising by 13 per cent to reach a total

of 49 per cent. In total, US\$1,645.6 million was allocated to climate finance, comprising US\$1,478.8 million for adaptation and US\$168.7 million for mitigation.

15. Achievement of the climate finance target was supported by the development of an IFAD handbook and the organization of orientation sessions for staff and consultants to deepen their understanding of the climate finance tracking methodology and ensure accurate programming of climate finance. On-call technical advice was also made available to project design teams for effective integration of climate considerations.
16. With a view to meeting IFAD's 2030 target of allocating 30 per cent of climate finance to nature-based solutions, an approach for tracking such investments was piloted and updated. Preliminary findings indicate that IFAD is already close to meeting this target, taking into account both climate adaptation and mitigation finance.
17. There are evident regional variations in climate finance. Figure 3 shows the share of adaptation and mitigation climate finance within the total PoLG by region. Regional variations in IFAD's climate finance allocations reflect a combination of policy priorities, capacity and readiness, and investment opportunities. The priority accorded by national and regional governments to climate action significantly influences the level of climate finance requested and received. Capacity and institutional readiness further affect these variations: regions with more robust systems and technical capabilities are better equipped to absorb and utilize funding than regions with weaker capacities. The availability and maturity of climate-focused investment projects also shape allocations: regions with more developed project pipelines and clear investment opportunities typically secure larger shares of climate financing.

Figure 3  
Regional and overall breakdown of adaptation/mitigation finance in projects approved in 2022–2024



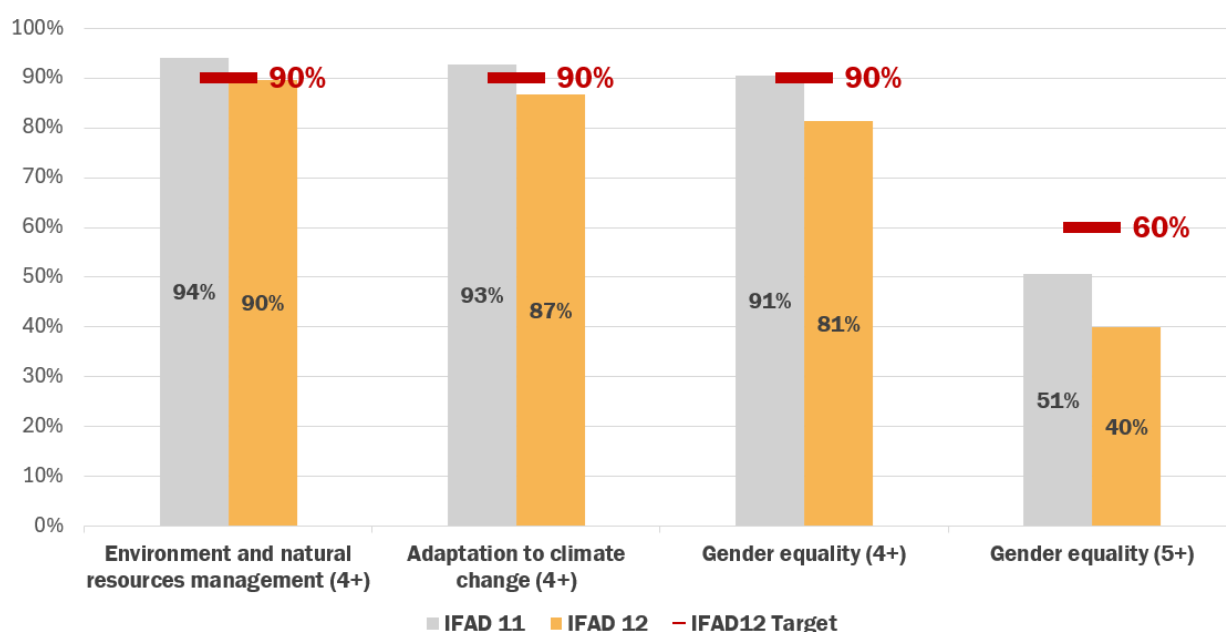
### C. Performance against mainstreaming targets at project completion

18. As shown in figure 4, IFAD demonstrated strong performance in environment and natural resources management (ENRM) and climate change adaptation (CCA), with ratings nearing the IFAD12 target of 90 per cent rated moderately satisfactory or better (4+), albeit with a slight decline compared to the previous year. In most cases, the slightly lower ratings in CCA were linked to broader implementation challenges – such as delayed start-up, unmet cofinancing commitments or slow disbursement – rather than to specific weaknesses in ENRM or CCA design. In a few cases, factors such as difficulty in measuring outcomes and impacts negatively affected ratings. However, some performance issues were directly linked to complex interventions (e.g. weather-index insurance or livestock adaptation), lack of robust

exit strategies or low cost-effectiveness, which contributed to moderately unsatisfactory outcomes.

19. Completion ratings for gender equality and women’s empowerment (GEWE) show that 81 per cent of projects were rated moderately satisfactory (4+), against a target of 90 per cent, while 40 per cent were rated satisfactory (5+), against the aspirational target of 60 per cent (figure 4). Ratings dropped under IFAD12 compared with IFAD11, largely due to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated travel restrictions. Analysis of projects for which project completion reports were completed in the 2022–2024 period shows that in several instances, implementation of GEWE activities was significantly disrupted and/or deprioritized. Furthermore, lockdowns and remote supervision constrained the provision of timely and quality training and technical support on GEWE to PMUs and severely compromised the ability to monitor and report effectively on GEWE outcomes. With assessments in this area being heavily reliant on field visits and consultations with target groups, the quality of data and evidence was negatively affected, leading in some cases to a lowering of GEWE ratings. Additionally, the 60 per cent target for GEWE ratings of 5 and above – set as an aspirational benchmark – has repeatedly proven challenging to meet and will be reviewed in the light of operational experience. Table 1 summarizes the main challenges affecting performance on GEWE along with solutions being employed to address them.

Figure 4  
**Status of mainstreaming performance at completion, IFAD11 compared with IFAD12 (2019–2021 compared with 2022–2024)**



Source: Project completion report ratings in the Operational Results Management System (ORMS).

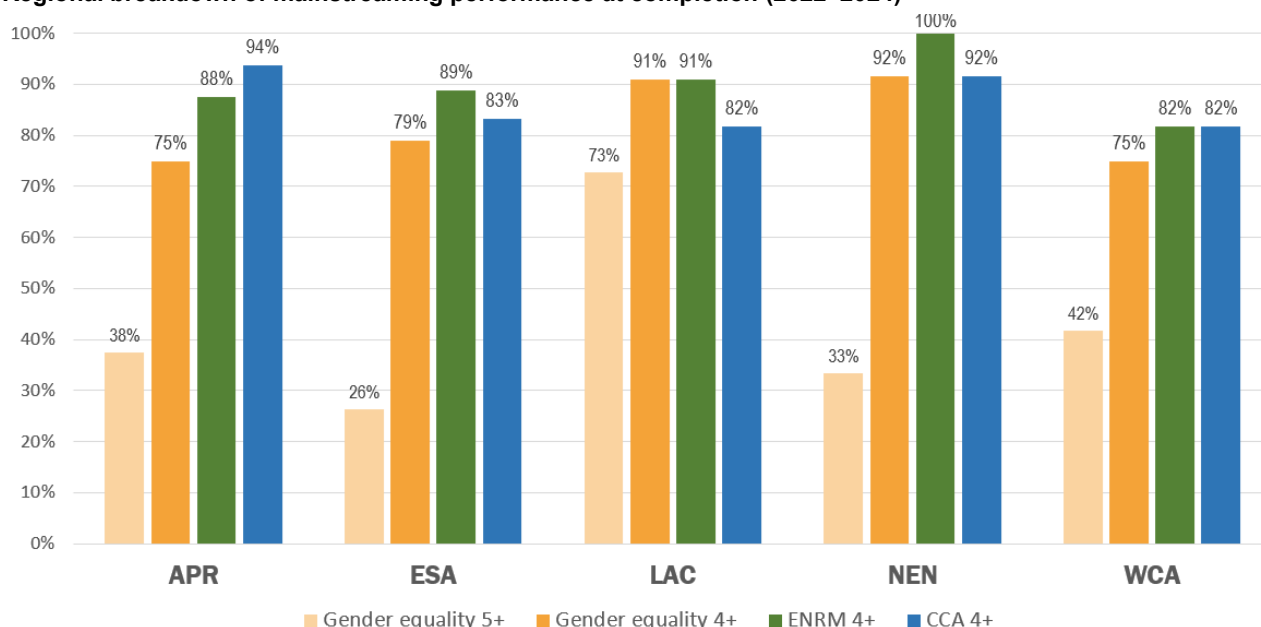
Table 1  
**Solutions being employed to address GEWE challenges during project implementation**

<i>Challenges</i>	<i>Solutions</i>
Overall implementation delays and/or weak performance affecting GEWE-related outcomes.	Strengthen early risk diagnostics and adaptive management during design, supervision and midterm reviews; ensure adequate resourcing for GEWE strategies and shared accountability for GEWE outcomes across IFAD and project partners.
Reduced presence of GEWE expertise during supervision due to resource constraints.	Prioritize deployment of GEWE specialists in supervision and implementation missions, especially for high-need projects, leveraging partnerships and supplementary funding when required.
Limited GEWE capacity and understanding within PMUs.	Deliver targeted capacity-development training for PMUs, embed gender/social inclusion expertise within implementation teams and provide sustained technical backstopping throughout the project cycle.
Weak monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems limiting ability to track GEWE outcomes.	Conduct robust gender analysis at inception, integrate outcome-level gender indicators (e.g. women's empowerment as measured by the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index [WEAI]), and strengthen M&E systems through targeted training and operational guidance.
Fragile country contexts leading to greater vulnerability and implementation challenges.*	Apply IFAD's fragility-sensitive programming and prioritize women-focused resilience investments.
External shocks, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, disrupt and/or lead to deprioritization of implementation of GEWE activities.	Integrate contingency planning and enhanced remote delivery of technical support for GEWE activities (e.g. through local expert communities of practice and networks).
Legacy project designs (e.g. from IFAD9 and IFAD10) with relatively limited focus on GEWE.	Where feasible, retrofit older projects with targeted GEWE support and integration of updated gender practices.

\* Based on a cohort of 14 projects closed during the period 2022–2024 in countries with fragile situations, only 21 per cent of projects rate 5+ for gender equality in fragile contexts compared to 45 per cent in nonfragile situations for a cohort of 56 projects.

20. Project-level development outcome ratings at completion differ across regions, particularly for GEWE (figure 5). For example, LAC exceeded the 60 per cent target for projects rated gender 5+, while NEN achieved 100 per cent for projects rated 4+ for environment and natural resources management. Both APR and NEN surpassed the 90 per cent target for adaptation to climate change. These variations reflect differences in national policy priorities and institutional capacity. Government commitment to GEWE shapes the ambition, integration and resourcing of gender objectives and interventions. Institutional readiness – such as trained gender focal points and access to technical support – further drives performance. Regions such as LAC with stronger supervision systems and more consistent involvement of GEWE specialists tend to perform better. In contrast, weak M&E systems, limited government ownership and under-resourced gender strategies have contributed to lower ratings in APR and ESA.
21. Fragile contexts, as seen in parts of ESA and WCA, continue to constrain performance and widen regional variability. Better alignment with regional specificities and the operational realities of working in fragile contexts is needed to ensure that mainstreaming commitments remain realistic and adapted to context. Tailoring targets and implementation strategies to country conditions – rather than applying uniform benchmarks – can improve both performance and accountability.

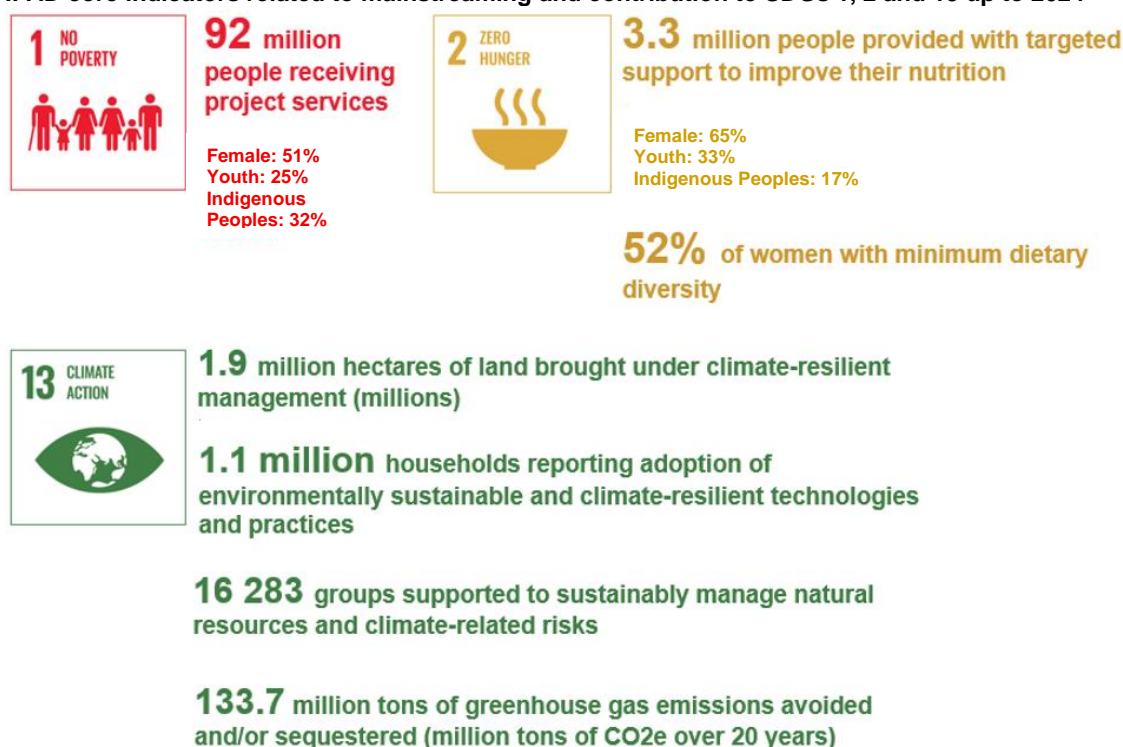
Figure 5  
**Regional breakdown of mainstreaming performance at completion (2022–2024)**



22. Although IFAD does not currently track performance on nutrition through a specific rating at completion, recent supervision data show that 82 per cent of ongoing projects rated on nutrition achieved a performance score of 4 or above and are increasingly delivering tangible results. Additionally, results from core indicator monitoring show that 3.3 million people received support to improve their nutrition, and the share of women reporting minimum dietary diversity (MDD-W) reached 52 per cent, surpassing the IFAD12 target of 25 per cent. These encouraging data points reflect concerted efforts to strengthen technical assistance to PMUs from project start-up throughout implementation. Challenges remain, however, particularly in embedding nutrition into project M&E systems and ensuring dedicated resources for implementation of nutrition-sensitive activities. In IFAD13, institutional mechanisms to track nutrition performance and indicators, including improved data systems to capture dietary outcomes and food consumption will be further strengthened.
23. Analysis of projects under implementation demonstrates significant contributions to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) related to social inclusion, climate change and nutrition, as indicated by data from the 209 projects currently reporting against IFAD's [core indicators](#) (figure 6).

Figure 6

**IFAD core indicators related to mainstreaming and contribution to SDGs 1, 2 and 13 up to 2024\***



\* Consistent with the approach taken for IFAD13, the RIDE reports on outreach, outcome and output results but does not compare them with targets. Even if IFAD works on project design to ensure projects have the greatest outreach possible, the country-driven nature of IFAD-financed projects is not compatible with top-down target-setting at this level.  
Source: Project logical framework data in ORMS.

## **D. Portfolio management and performance improvement**

24. IFAD's portfolio management system places strong emphasis on learning to enhance the quality of future project designs and the implementation of ongoing ones. Lessons are consistently documented in project supervision and completion reports; project impact assessments; project, country and thematic evaluations undertaken by the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD; and ad hoc assessments such as the review by IFAD and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) of IFAD's work on agroforestry, from which lessons learned and best practices were extracted to scale investments in nature-based solutions (for further detail on the latter see appendix II). Such lessons are integrated into the project design process through quality enhancement and assurance reviews, which are in turn supported by the application of other tools, namely: the IFAD12 Mainstreaming Guidelines for Social Inclusion Themes, and the IFAD Climate Finance Tracking Guidelines and the Climate Finance Information Package, which can be used by country teams to support the design of climate-focused projects.
25. Furthermore, IFAD has updated its approach for operating in fragile situations, with a focus on promoting long-term resilience of target groups and partner institutions. This involves the use of advanced diagnostic tools, improved fragility programming and adaptive management of country programmes, strengthening of internal capabilities and building of strategic partnerships. In preparation for IFAD13, a dedicated unit to address fragility was created within the Department for Country Operations.
26. All regions have devised measures to address challenges and improve performance, including through capacity-building aimed at IFAD and PMU personnel, developing operational toolkits, organizing learning events and strengthening M&E through, for

example, new courses on M&E as part of IFAD's Operations Academy (OPAC) M&E curriculum and new [IFAD guidance to strengthen project-level M&E](#). These measures are expected to improve performance across all indicators, not only those related specifically to mainstreaming areas.

### **III. Way forward**

#### **Strategic focus and integration of mainstreaming themes**

27. In line with IFAD13 commitments, new strategies and action plans on climate, environment, biodiversity, gender, nutrition and youth are being developed to drive enhanced performance. These will prioritize alignment and synergies with work in core areas such as agricultural production, inclusive finance, infrastructure, value chain development and private sector engagement. Innovative models will be piloted and scaled, supported by stronger results monitoring and learning.

#### **Monitoring and performance enhancement**

28. IFAD is closely monitoring its pipeline to meet IFAD13 mainstreaming targets. Quarterly reviews ensure that the integration of mainstreaming themes in new project designs remains on track. These reviews help identify projects with strong mainstreaming potential and flag those needing additional technical support, allowing timely deployment of resources to IFAD teams and government partners. Project design guidelines have been updated to reflect lessons from IFAD12, with a focus on adaptive capacity, nature-based solutions and improved climate finance tracking.
29. To improve implementation performance, regional teams will enhance planning and coordination across technical and country teams and strengthen technical support in underperforming areas. Communities of practice will be expanded and partnerships with technical agencies such as FAO and the World Food Programme will be deepened. Further improvements are expected through greater use of spatial data, updated consultant rosters and the piloting of new technologies supported by grants.
30. Enhancing implementation support will also benefit from more strategic use of resources and technical expertise in mainstreaming areas. For example, country-level portfolio reviews by technical specialists will be encouraged to promote more holistic assessments and recommendations for performance improvement, cross-fertilization of lessons and best practices, and cohesive country programme implementation.

#### **Strategic partnerships and engagement**

31. IFAD will expand strategic partnerships to foster innovation and address cross-cutting challenges. Key collaborations include those with the Joint Programme on Gender Transformative Approaches for Food Security and Nutrition, the Joint Programme on Rural Women's Economic Empowerment, the Gender Transformative Mechanism, the School Meals Coalition, the Zero Hunger Coalition, and the Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems Coalition. With FAO, IFAD also co-leads the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) Food Systems Integrated Program and works jointly on climate finance tracking and biodiversity monitoring, thus strengthening its capacity to deliver strong results.
32. IFAD will leverage growing investments from the private sector, notably in climate resilience and nature-positive finance. These efforts will build on the success of projects utilizing innovative finance, such as [water funds projects](#) or the [GEF Food Systems Integrated Program](#). The creation of the Private Sector Operations Division will further boost IFAD's ability to engage with the private sector, with mainstreaming themes as priority areas.

### **Leveraging advanced technologies**

33. IFAD is beginning to make greater use of technologies such as geographic information system (GIS) mapping, remote sensing and distributed ledger technology to support implementation, monitoring and safeguards tracking. Some projects have started recording IFAD-financed investments using GIS to enhance planning and oversight. Under IFAD13, the Capitalizing on Earth Observation (CAPEO) grant is expected to help generate improved environmental and climate datasets, in collaboration with technical partners.
34. IFAD will continue to explore fit-for-purpose artificial intelligence tools to strengthen project design, supervision and data analytics, building on current momentum in digital innovation.

### **Building evidence and strengthening return-on-investment propositions**

35. Evidence from impact assessments, evaluations and cost-benefit analyses will be used more systematically to support the development of return-on-investment and value-for-money propositions for borrowers to invest in mainstreaming theme areas. For example, a forthcoming adaptation finance handbook will outline key metrics and success factors to help operational teams design climate-resilient investments that can attract both public and private financing.

### **Identifying lessons in fragile contexts to enhance design and impact**

36. To enhance results in fragile contexts, IFAD will undertake a comprehensive portfolio assessment to identify effective responses to drivers of fragility. The resulting framework will pinpoint key success factors across adaptation and mainstreaming activities, providing clear, actionable guidance to improve the design and impact of future operations.

## Progress report on the Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme

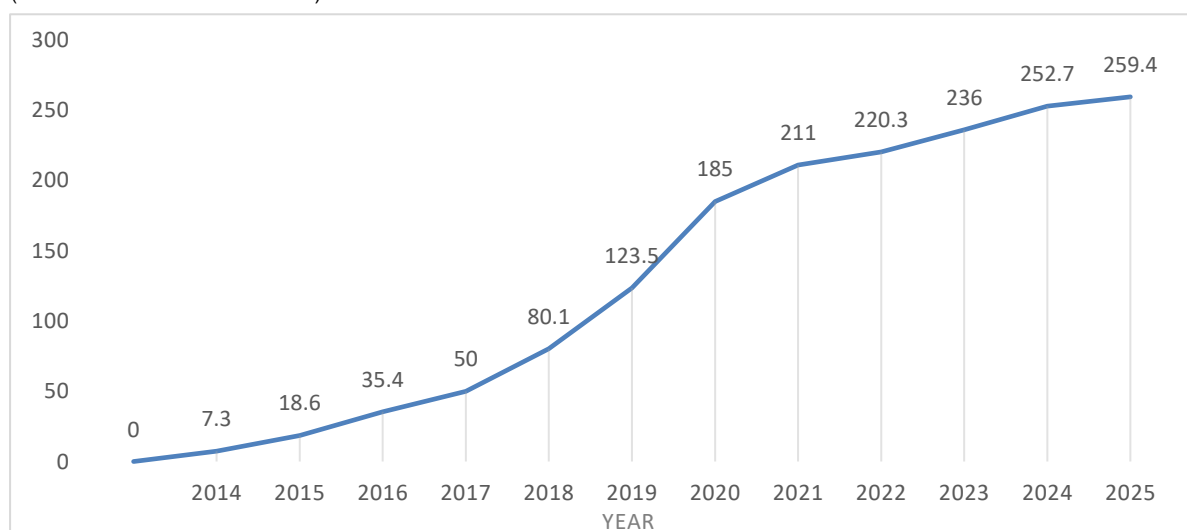
1. In line with the reporting assurances of the trust fund agreement, this progress report provides an update on the multiple phases of IFAD's Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme (ASAP).
2. The [first phase of the Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme](#) (ASAP1) was launched by IFAD in 2012. It mobilized US\$316 million in total, with the aim of improving the climate resilience of approximately 6.7 million small-scale farmers.
3. ASAP2 was launched in 2017 as a technical assistance mechanism to advance IFAD's work on climate adaptation, mitigation and safeguards, including mobilizing cofinancing from climate and environment funds, piloting innovations and developing tools, studies and knowledge products. ASAP2 mobilized approximately US\$ 16 million.
4. Launched in 2020, the [enhanced Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme \(ASAP+\)](#) builds on ASAP1 and ASAP2 with the goal of mobilizing US\$500 million. It aims to build the climate resilience of small-scale agricultural producers and to help partners achieve their national climate change adaptation and mitigation goals. ASAP+ currently supports a portfolio of 10 investment projects spanning multiple regions.

### I. Overall programme status and results

#### A. ASAP1 status and results

5. ASAP1 has funded interventions in 44 IFAD-supported projects across 41 countries (with two projects each in Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria and Sudan). The portfolio is set for completion in 2025. So far, 30 projects have been closed and completed, while 14 are ongoing, all having reached the midterm review phase. In 2024, six projects reached completion.
6. Disbursement of ASAP1 (figure 1) has been strong despite a difficult operational context in many countries due to fragile contexts, political instabilities and impacts from the war in Ukraine. The portfolio currently stands at 86 per cent disbursed.

Figure 1  
**ASAP cumulative disbursements (as at 31 December 2024)**  
(Millions of United States dollars)



7. Despite global challenges, ASAP1 has overachieved in six out of its eight target areas. Notably, ASAP1 has reached over 7.2 million poor smallholder household members, surpassing its original target of 6.7 million a full year ahead of schedule. Further, it has supported climate-resilient practices on 1.7 million hectares of land (90 per cent of target) and engaged 1.9 million individuals in climate risk management and environmental stewardship (103 per cent of target). These results are extremely positive and are predicted to rise over 2025, meeting targets across all indicators.
8. Learning and knowledge management on climate change adaptation are central to ASAP's objectives, with numerous studies and knowledge management products already published. At COP29, IFAD unveiled its latest ASAP publication **A Decade of Innovation: Achievements and Opportunities in Climate Adaptation Finance**, which highlights the pivotal role of ASAP in bridging the adaptation finance gap. The report showcases how ASAP has effectively integrated climate adaptation into agriculture and rural development, promoted nature-based solutions and mobilized both public and private climate finance. It also includes case studies and lessons learned that underline the programme's impact, particularly in empowering marginalized groups such as women and Indigenous Peoples.
9. Table 1 presents performance against ASAP1 output and outcome targets at portfolio level. All targets have been at least 90 per cent achieved, with many indicators showing achievement levels above 120 per cent.

Table 1

**Aggregate programme targets and results against ASAP1 logical framework**

<i>ASAP results hierarchy</i>	<i>ASAP results at global portfolio level</i>	<i>Portfolio results indicators</i>	<i>Programmed at design*</i>	<i>Results from RIME 2024</i>	<i>Current results</i>	<i>Percentage achieved</i>
Goal	Poor smallholder farmers are more resilient to climate change	1 Number of poor smallholder household members whose climate resilience has been increased	6 727 159	6 985 574	7 183 689	106 per cent
Purpose	Multiple-benefit adaptation approaches for poor smallholder farmers are scaled up	2 Leverage ratio of ASAP grants versus non-ASAP financing	01:07.5	01:07.9	01:07.9	105 per cent
		3 Number of tons of greenhouse gas emissions (CO2e) avoided and/or sequestered	80 million tons over 20 years (2012 target)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Outcome 1	Improved land management and gender-sensitive climate-resilient agricultural practices and technologies	4 Number of hectares of land managed under climate-resilient practices	1 884 273 hectares	1 606 007	1 697 597	90 per cent
Outcome 2	Increased availability of water and efficiency of water use for smallholder agriculture production and processing	5 Number of households, and production and processing facilities with increased water availability	4 443 facilities	4 854	4 854	109 per cent
			289 503 households	396 497	404 930	140 per cent
Outcome 3	Increased human capacity to manage short- and long-term climate risks and reduce losses from weather-related disasters	6 Number of individuals (including women) and community groups engaged in climate risk management, environment and natural resources management or disaster risk reduction activities	1 926 889 people	1 898 394	1 993 900	103 per cent
			25 407 groups	25 773	26 680	105 per cent
Outcome 4	Rural infrastructure made climate-resilient	7 United States dollar value of new or existing rural infrastructure made climate resilient	US\$131 575 730	124 817 000	128 196 000	97 per cent
			543 km	528	528	97 per cent
Outcome 5	Knowledge on climate-smart smallholder agriculture documented and disseminated	8 Number of international and country dialogues on climate issues where ASAP-supported projects or project partners make an active contribution	36	38	52	144 per cent

\* Currently expected to be achieved by December 2025, but subject to change depending on the evolving status of ASAP projects.

## B. ASAP2 status

10. Like ASAP1, ASAP2-financed initiatives need to be completed by the end of 2025. As of the end of 2024, 98 per cent of the funds had been allocated and spent. The overall balance of unallocated ASAP2 funds is US\$111,442.
11. In November 2024, ASAP2 allocated US\$250,000 to partner with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in applying the Global Livestock Environmental Assessment Model – interactive (GLEAM-i) and the Tool for Agroecology Performance Evaluation (TAPE) to assess productivity, feed use and greenhouse gas emissions in livestock systems. This effort is supported by an additional US\$150,000 from the Reducing Agricultural Methane Programme (RAMP). The collaboration includes greenhouse gas assessments in several ASAP and RAMP countries, as well as training sessions in Brazil, Georgia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Tajikistan, Uganda and other countries to be confirmed. TAPE-related data collection and reporting will also continue, with Argentina leading the implementation of the methodology.

## C. ASAP+ status and pipeline

12. ASAP+ has received US\$86.3 million, with an additional US\$6.1 million as receivable contributions, totalling US\$92.4 million. Table 2 shows the ASAP+ portfolio as at 31 December 2024, which includes 10 projects. All available ASAP+ project resources have been allocated. The focus of ASAP+ for 2025 is on inception and implementation at project level and resource mobilization at the programme level.

Table 2  
**ASAP+ current portfolio**

<i>Project location and name</i>	<i>Project overview</i>	<i>Status</i>
<b>Brazil</b> Amazon Sustainable Management Project (PAGES)	The project will target 20,000 family farms associated with rural organizations and aims to reduce rural poverty while decreasing deforestation and environmental degradation in the Amazon region of Maranhão, increasing the resilience of 64,000 people and reducing approximately 6 million tons of CO <sub>2</sub> equivalent. <b>ASAP+ financing:</b> US\$17.1 million	In implementation
<b>Brazil</b> Promotion of Payment for Environmental Services (PES) for Deforestation-free Supply Chains	Brazil will use CompensACTION funds to pilot projects that recognize the potential of PES in incentivizing forest conservation. IFAD proposes a PES pilot fund to promote forest conservation by marginalized communities through deforestation-free value chains. The aim is to assess PES's potential to enable livelihood diversification, increase deforestation-free income sources through non-timber forest product (NTFP) production and improve NTFP market access. <b>ASAP+ financing:</b> US\$4.4 million	In implementation
<b>Burkina Faso</b> Programme to Strengthen Smallholder Resilience to Climate Change (PSSRC)	This programme aims to boost smallholder resilience to climate change with investments in proven adaptation practices, Indigenous technologies, and nature-based solutions. It emphasizes enhancing water access for agriculture, promoting crop and income diversification, and implementing sustainable agricultural models led by the Government. <b>ASAP+ financing:</b> US\$7 million	In implementation
<b>Chad</b> Strengthening Productivity and Resilience of Agropastoral Family Farms Project (RePER)	RePER's development objective is to improve the performance and increase the resilience of the targeted agropastoral family farms. ASAP+ financing will strengthen the resilience of family agro-pastoral farms by (i) improving access to water and disseminating environmentally friendly techniques that are resilient to climate change in production and post-harvest activities; (ii) improving access to climate information, setting up ecological monitoring systems and environmental and climate education; and (iii) reducing emissions, preventing deforestation and improving household living conditions by promoting energy-efficient stoves. <b>ASAP+ financing:</b> US\$7 million	In Implementation
<b>Ethiopia</b> Participatory Agriculture and Climate Transformation Programme (PACT)	PACT aims to achieve resilient agricultural income growth and improved diets for rural households. ASAP+ funds will support infrastructure, ecosystem enhancements, and community livelihood diversification. CompensACTION funds complement PACT's activities in three target regions. <b>ASAP+ financing:</b> US\$11.4 million	In Implementation
<b>Lesotho</b>	The CompensACTION pilot will be embedded in the ongoing ROLL project. It features a regeneration coalition facility, aiming to support the setting up of local multi-stakeholder	In implementation

<i>Project location and name</i>	<i>Project overview</i>	<i>Status</i>
Regeneration of Landscapes and Livelihoods (ROLL)	initiatives, as well as a regeneration opportunities fund, which can invest in activities proposed by the coalitions and that have returns on water-related ecosystem services. The CompensACTION pilot enhances the regeneration opportunities fund's ecosystem services payment system to include water efficiency, carbon sequestration and innovative carbon financing. <b>ASAP+ financing:</b> US\$4.4 million	
<b>Malawi</b> Programme for Rural Irrigation Development (PRIDE)	PRIDE focuses on developing resilient land and water management systems, transferring knowledge to smallholders and ensuring linkages to viable markets. The ASAP+ resources will fund the construction of irrigation systems, increasing productivity in rainfed areas and reversing land degradation. The programme will add at least 20,000 beneficiaries to those targeted by PRIDE, with supplementary funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF). <b>ASAP+ financing:</b> US\$7 million	In Implementation
<b>Niger</b> Family Farming Development Programme in the Diffa Region (ProDAF)	The programme will build on and upscale the ongoing ProDAF investments to strengthen the resilience of vulnerable households through climate adaptation practices and technologies, better agronomic practices and improved water resources management. The programme will collaborate with other interventions funded by GEF, the Green Climate Fund and ASAP in Niger. <b>ASAP+ financing:</b> US\$7 million	In implementation
<b>Somalia</b> Adaptive Agriculture and Rangeland Rehabilitation Project (A2R2)	A2R2 aims to improve water resources and rangelands management, and promote eco-agriculture and climate-proof livelihoods, as well as forest and habitat rehabilitation and improved governance and information systems for land degradation and biodiversity. A pilot microfinance facility will target vulnerable groups, particularly women and youth, for climate-resilient income-generating activities. Funding for ASAP+ will cofinance funding from GEF's Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) and the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program. <b>ASAP+ financing:</b> US\$7 million	Implementation of ASAP+ component to start in the second quarter (Q2) 2025
<b>Yemen</b> Rural Livelihood Development Project (RLDP)	RLDP targets vulnerable women and youth, aiming to benefit 175,000 people. It aims to enhance food and nutrition security, boost sustainable agriculture production, and build resilience through community-based planning, climate-resilient infrastructure, and climate-smart agriculture. The project, approved by the Executive Board, is cofinanced by the Rural Poor Stimulus Facility, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and GEF's LDCF. <b>ASAP+ financing:</b> US\$7 million	Approved internally Implementation to start in Q2 2025

13. As of Q4 2024, ASAP+ had a disbursement rate of 11 per cent, indicating that the majority of projects are still in the early stages of programming and implementation. Despite this, ASAP+ has demonstrated strong leveraging potential. For every dollar of ASAP+ funding, over US\$9 in additional cofinancing has been mobilized, underscoring the programme's value in attracting complementary investment. The relatively low disbursement rate reflects both the early maturity of several projects and the operational complexities of working in fragile and conflict-affected contexts, which represent 60 per cent of the current portfolio.
14. By project type, investment was led by irrigation (44.4 per cent), followed by agricultural development (22.2 per cent), with equal allocations (11.1 per cent) for credit and financial services, rural development, and storage and processing. Two ASAP+ supervision missions were conducted during this period, and initial field results are promising.
15. A refreshed programming approach for ASAP+ was also drafted, following guidance from the advisory committee received in October and shared for feedback, signalling a strategic shift to improve implementation and responsiveness in fragile and conflict-affected environments, focusing on biodiversity-positive investments, the gender-nutrition-climate nexus, and increased economic and financial innovations to increase crowding-in of the private sector.
16. Table 3 shows aggregate results targets for the approved ASAP+ projects. Aggregate project results/targets will continue to rise as projects transition from start-up to programmatic phases over 2025.

Table 3

**Project results targets against ASAP+ Results Management Framework indicators\***

<i>ASAP+ results hierarchy</i>	<i>ASAP+ results at global portfolio level</i>		<i>Portfolio results indicators</i>	<i>Programmed at design</i>	<i>Achieved so far</i>
<b>Goal</b>	Poor smallholder household (HH) members supported in coping with the effects of climate change (outreach)	1	Number of poor smallholder household members whose climate resilience has been increased	Persons 964 757	Persons 21 644
<b>Outcome 1</b>	Outcome area 1. Increased resilience of vulnerable households to the impacts of climate change on their food security and nutrition, focusing particularly on rural women, youth, Indigenous Peoples and persons with disabilities	2	Number of persons/households reporting adoption of environmentally sustainable and climate-resilient technologies and practices [CI 3.2.2.]	HH 22 112 Persons 123 681	
		3	Number of persons/households reporting a significant reduction in the time spent for collecting water or fuel [CI 3.2.3.]	HH 8 313 Persons 37 945	
<b>Sub-outcome 1.1</b>	Improved access to nutritious food and products from agrobiodiverse farming systems	4	Number of persons/households supported to increase the diversity of farmed species and varieties	HH 508 Persons 3 000	
<b>Sub-outcome 1.2</b>	Enhanced human capacity to manage climate risk	5	Number of persons/groups supported to sustainably manage natural resources and climate-related risks [CI 3.1.1.]	Groups 20 864	43 Groups
		6	Number of persons/households provided with climate information services	Persons 3 000	4 183 Persons
<b>Sub-outcome 1.3</b>	Scaled up climate-resilient land and natural resources management	7	Number of hectares of land brought under climate-resilient management [CI 3.1.4 / ASAP 4]	Ha 513 244	
<b>Sub-outcome 1.4</b>	Climate-proofed services and infrastructure	8	Number of persons/households with increased water availability and/or efficiency for production purposes [ASAP 5b, modified]	HH 3 213 Persons 13 2622	
		9	US\$ value of new or existing rural infrastructure made climate resilient [ASAP 7a]	USD ('000) 26 000	
		10	Km of new or existing rural roads that have been made climate resilient [ASAP 7b]	Km 10	
<b>Sub-outcome 1.5</b>	Strengthened policy frameworks on climate-resilient smallholder agriculture	11	Number of existing/new laws, strategies, regulations or policies on climate change and the agricultural sectors proposed to policymakers for approval, ratification or amendment	5	
<b>Outcome 2</b>	Reduced emissions from win-win interventions with significant development benefits, particularly for food insecure and marginalized groups	12	Number of tons of greenhouse gas emissions (CO <sub>2</sub> e) avoided and/or sequestered [CI 3.2.1]	1 842 433	
<b>Sub-outcome 2.1</b>	Increased availability of low-emissions development opportunities	13	Number of persons accessing technologies that sequester carbon or reduce greenhouse gas emissions [CI 3.1.3]	Persons 3 540	
		14	Number of persons in new or existing green jobs	-	

\* The information presented includes data for projects whose designs were completed and therefore can be considered final, save for adjustments made to targets during implementation, and other projects whose design phase is ongoing and therefore should be considered preliminary.

**D. Status of the ASAP Trust Fund**

17. Table 4 presents the financial status of the ASAP Trust Fund as at 31 December 2024.

Table 4

**Financial status of the ASAP Trust Fund**

	<i>Member State</i>	<i>Local currency (000)</i>	<i>Year received</i>	<i>Contributions received (US\$' 000)</i>	<i>Estimated receivable received (US\$' 000)</i>	<i>Grand total received+ estimated receivable (US\$' 000)</i>
Complementary contributions	Belgium	EUR 6 000	2012	7 855	0	7 855
ASAP1	Canada	CAD 19 849	2012	19 879	0	19 879
	Finland	EUR 5 000	2014	6 833	0	6 833
	Netherlands (Kingdom of the)	EUR 40 000	2012	48 581	0	48 581
	Norway	NOK 63 000	2013/2014/2015	9 240	0	9 240
	Sweden	SEK 30 000	2013	4 471	0	4 471
	Switzerland	CHF 10 000	2013	10 949	0	10 949
	United Kingdom	GBP 147 523	2012/2013/2014	202 837	0	202 837
	<b>Subtotal</b>			<b>310 645</b>		<b>310 645</b>
Supplementary funds						
ASAP1	Flemish Department for Foreign Affairs	EUR 2 000	2014	2 380	0	2 380
	Republic of Korea	US\$ 3 000	2015	3 000	0	3 000
	<b>Subtotal</b>			<b>5 380</b>		<b>5 380</b>
	<b>Total ASAP1</b>			<b>316 025</b>		<b>316 025</b>
ASAP2	Norway	NOK 80 000	2016	9 550	0	9 550
	Sweden	SEK 50 000	2016	5 904	0	5 904
	France	EUR 300	2019	335	0	335
	<b>Total ASAP2</b>			<b>15 789</b>		<b>15 789</b>
ASAP+	Qatar Development Fund	US\$ 500	2020	500	0	500
	Austria	EUR 2 000	2020	2 437	0	2 437
	Ireland	EUR 4 000	2021	4 702	0	4 702
	Sweden	SEK 100 000	2021	11 018	0	11 018
	Germany	EUR 32 000	2021/2022	29 561	6 157	35 718
	Denmark	DKK 190 000	2021/2023	28 170	0	28 170
	Norway	NOK 100 000	2022	9 881	0	9 881
	<b>Total ASAP+</b>			<b>86 269</b>	<b>6 157</b>	<b>92 426</b>
	<b>Total</b>			<b>418 083</b>		<b>424 240</b>

## Summary of IFAD12 commitments relative to mainstreaming themes\*

<i>Monitorable action</i>	<i>Committed end date</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Description as at 31 December 2024</i>
1. Increase target for climate finance to 40 per cent of the IFAD12 PoLG	Q4 2024	<b>Complete</b>	49 per cent
2. Present a strategy on biodiversity to the Executive Board	Q4 2021	<b>Complete</b>	Biodiversity Strategy approved.
3. Develop specific agro-biodiversity initiatives to improve management and restoration of water or land ecosystems	Q4 2022	<b>Complete</b>	<p>The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the World Agroforestry (ICRAF) institute hosted events focusing on agrobiodiversity and supported a stocktaking of IFAD works in agroforestry to boost investments. Agroforestry was integrated into over 20 per cent of surveyed IFAD projects between 2011 and 2021 and is the most common form of nature-based solutions finance identified (covering 28 of climate finance). Recent projects like Value Chain Innovation for Sustainable Transformation in Agrarian Reform Communities Project (VISTA) in the Philippines, Enhancing Food Security through Sustainable Agriculture, Local Economy Development and Healthy Diets (EFOSE) in Haiti, the Hunan Green Development Project (HGDP) in China, the Tree Crops Extension Project II (TCEPII) in Liberia and Inclusive Smallholder Agriculture Development in the North-West Mountains of Tunisia (DINAMO) in Tunisia highlight agrobiodiversity.</p> <p>Supplementary funds include EUR 52.5 million from the European Union for the Investing in Livelihood Resilience and Soil Health in African, Caribbean and Pacific ACP Countries programme, and EUR 20.2 million (including EUR 5 million from Belgium) for the Global Programme for Small-scale Agroecology Producers and Sustainable Food Systems Transformation. Both include agrobiodiversity prominently.</p> <p>Programmes with the Green Climate Fund, Adaptation Fund and Global Environment Facility support ecosystem restoration and biodiversity investments. The Vision for Adapted Crops and Soils (VACS) initiative boosts crop diversity and soil health.</p>
4. Ensure that 35 per cent of new investment projects are gender-transformative at design	Q4 2024	<b>Complete</b>	51 per cent
5. Climate capacity: 90 per cent of projects designed to build adaptive capacity	Q4 2024	<b>Not fully achieved</b>	84 per cent
6. Ensure that 60 per cent of new investment projects explicitly prioritize youth and youth employment	Q4 2024	<b>Complete</b>	70 per cent
7. Ensure that 60 per cent of new investment projects are nutrition sensitive at design	Q4 2024	<b>Complete</b>	60 per cent
* Data relative to design based on the Office of Development Effectiveness mainstreaming dashboard.			
8. Present an updated policy for IFAD's work with Indigenous Peoples for approval to the Executive Board	Q2 2022	<b>Complete</b>	Approved: EB 2022/137/R.6

<i>Monitorable action</i>	<i>Committed end date</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Description as at 31 December 2024</i>
9. Ensure that at least 10 new projects include Indigenous Peoples as a priority target group	Q4 2024	<b>Complete</b>	14 projects
10. Replenish the Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility including through mobilization of additional resources from other partners	Q4 2022	<b>Complete</b>	In 2023 IFAD approved US\$2.5 million in regular grant resources to complement the contribution from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and mobilized an additional US\$2.9 million from the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD). Also US\$400 000 has been mobilized from the enhanced Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme (ASAP+).
11. Present a strategy for persons with disabilities to the Executive Board	Q2 2022	<b>Complete</b>	Approved: EB 2022/137/R.7
12. Ensure that at least five new projects include persons with disabilities as a priority target group	Q4 2024	<b>Complete</b>	IFAD exceeded this target by designing seven projects prioritizing persons with disabilities in 2024 in Brazil, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Madagascar and Mali.
13. Revise IFAD's targeting policy to better reflect mainstreaming and social inclusion priorities (Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities)	Q4 2022	<b>Complete</b>	Approved: EB 2023/138/R.3
14. Strengthen reporting on mainstreaming themes and commitments through a standalone annual report to complement the Report on IFAD's Development Effectiveness	Q3 2023	<b>Complete</b>	Two RIME reports already published in 2023 and 2024.

## Summary of key terms related to IFAD mainstreaming priorities

<b>Targeting</b>	<p>IFAD's definition of targeting has both strategic and operational meanings.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategically, targeting relates to resource allocation to ensure that funds are programmed in a way that is consistent with IFAD's mandate. The focus of this Policy is on targeting within country programmes and informing new and existing corporate initiatives. Allocation of resources across countries through the performance-based allocation system and the Borrowed Resources Access Mechanism is not addressed here.</li> <li>Operationally, poverty targeting is traditionally defined as the process by which resources are directed to people defined as poor based on eligibility criteria (such as geographic targeting, self-targeting and direct targeting). IFAD expands this to encompass the broad set of actions – including all aspects of design and implementation – that include or exclude individuals from project interventions and ensure that IFAD's investment projects are relevant and effective in reaching, benefiting and empowering the target group.</li> </ol> <p>IFAD's target group are people living in poverty in rural areas as well as vulnerable populations at risk of falling into poverty in rural geographies, with a continuing priority on the poorest and most excluded, including those who are food insecure.</p>
<b>Climate finance</b>	<p>A project with <b>climate finance</b> aims at increasing climatic resilience by actively tackling identified climatic vulnerabilities through adaptation and mitigation measures in response to country needs and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). IFAD has adopted the internationally recognized MDB Methodologies for Tracking Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Finance (hereafter: the MDB Methodologies).</p> <p>The metric for this target is <b>Climate-focused PoLG (percentage)</b> and is measured as United States dollar value reported as a percentage share of total IFAD approvals, calculated based on the internationally recognized MDB Methodologies for Climate Change Adaption and Mitigation Tracking. Climate finance is calculated at design, based on the final cost tables and project design reports of approved IFAD operations.</p>
<b>Adaptation finance</b>	<p>There are separate methodologies for calculating adaptation and mitigation finance. <b>Climate change adaptation</b> aims to reduce the risks or vulnerabilities posed by climate change and to increase resilience to the adverse impacts of climate change. Identification of adaptation finance is a result of a three-step process and thus, for a project's finance to be counted either fully or partially as adaptation finance, the project must meet each of the following three steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set out the project's context of vulnerability to climate change;</li> <li>Make an explicit statement of intent to address this vulnerability as part of the project; and</li> <li>Articulate a clear and direct link between the vulnerability and the specific project activities.</li> </ol> <p>The metric for this target is <b>Projects designed to build adaptive capacity (percentage)</b> and is measured as a percentage of IFAD projects that include activities aiming to build climate-related</p>

	<p>adaptive capacity across multiple dimensions (e.g. increasing incomes; improved access to productive resources; empowerment of vulnerable groups). This indicator is measured at design, based on the project design reports of approved IFAD operations.</p>
<b>Mitigation finance</b>	<p><b>Climate change mitigation</b> reduces or limits greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions or sequesters carbon to mitigate climate change. However, not all activities that reduce GHG emissions are eligible to be counted towards MDB mitigation finance, which is based on a list of activities that are compatible with low-emission pathways. Mitigation finance tracking is built on the Common Principles for Climate Change Mitigation Finance Tracking developed jointly by the MDBs and the International Development Finance Club (IDFC). This methodology is refined over time, to iteratively increase ambition and enhance alignment with the goals of the Paris Agreement, especially on keeping anthropogenic climate change to “well below” 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.</p> <p>As a precondition for attributing mitigation finance to an IFAD project, IFAD requires an ex-ante GHG assessment to prove that the project overall has the potential to be a net sink of GHG emissions, compared to the without-project scenario.</p> <p>Though some interventions can achieve adaptation and mitigation objectives jointly, the activities and outcomes of adaptation are context-specific, while mitigation has a global component.</p>
<b>Nature –based solutions finance</b>	<p>Nature-based solutions are defined by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as “actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural and modified ecosystems that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously benefiting people and nature”. UNEA-5 recognises in its proceedings that “nature-based solutions [...] can improve action for adaptation and resilience to and mitigation of climate change and its impact”. At the 2021 IUCN World Congress, IFAD committed that by 2030, at least 30% of IFAD’s climate finance will also support nature-based solutions (NbS). Starting in IFAD 13, NbS finance is measured for all projects validated as building climate resilience in the project specific context and location and thus include climate finance. Climate adaptation and mitigation activities are screened against the NbS taxonomy of eligible activities.</p>
<b>Building adaptive capacity</b>	<p>This new indicator shows that while IFAD climate finance regards only activities specifically aimed at addressing climate change, the majority of IFAD projects address climate objectives. <b>A project will automatically be flagged as building adaptive capacities provided that at least 15 per cent of the IFAD investment is validated as climate finance.</b></p>
<b>Gender mainstreaming</b>	<p>Gender mainstreaming is the process by which reducing the gaps in development opportunities between women and men and working towards equality between them become an integral part of the organization’s strategy, policies and operations.</p>
<b>Gender transformative</b>	<p>A <b>gender transformative</b><sup>1</sup> project actively seeks to address the root causes of existing gender inequalities including persistent discriminatory social norms, practices, attitudes, beliefs and value systems that represent structural barriers to women’s and girls’ inclusion and empowerment.</p> <p>Criteria that also apply to a “gender mainstreamed” project (a subset of “gender transformative” projects) are not marked with an asterisk. Criteria that go beyond “gender mainstreaming” and help to identify a “gender transformative” project are marked with an</p>

<sup>1</sup> <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/821502e3-f7ae-449b-b432-11abd1a5bb87/content>.

	<p>asterisk. Note that the IFAD12 RMF only formally tracks “gender transformative” projects approved. It is obligatory for gender-transformative projects to report on the IFAD empowerment index, which is based on IFPRI’s project level Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index (pro-WEAI). This indicator is measured at design, based on a range of design criteria verified in the project design reports of approved IFAD operations.</p>
<b>Nutrition-sensitive</b>	<p>A <b>nutrition-sensitive</b> project addresses the underlying causes of malnutrition related to inadequate household nutrition and food security, to ensure that acceptable, diverse, nutritious and safe foods – adequate to meet the dietary needs of people of all ages – are available and affordable at all times. It includes a nutrition-sensitive agricultural pathway embedded in the project’s theory of change, with explicit nutrition objectives, integrated activities (such as for example production diversification; production of nutrient-dense crops; improvements in processing, storage and preservation of diversified, nutritious foods; nutrition education; and women and youth empowerment) and indicators to monitor and measure results achievement.</p>
<b>Youth-sensitive</b>	<p>A <b>youth-sensitive</b> project generates long term youth employment opportunities and/or entrepreneurship by addressing context-specific challenges and potentials of rural youth. This can be reached by various means, especially by providing a balanced mix of activities that support youth access to assets, skills, and services.</p>
<b>Disability inclusion</b>	<p>A project that includes Persons with Disabilities as a priority target group aims to advance the social, economic, and/or political inclusion of persons with disabilities in rural areas. This is done using a “twin-track approach”, meaning that these projects (a) introduce broader disability inclusion mainstreaming measures alongside (b) providing targeted support to empower persons with disabilities<sup>2</sup>.</p>
<b>Prioritizing Indigenous Peoples</b>	<p>A project that includes Indigenous Peoples as a priority target group is located in areas home to Indigenous Peoples and showcases pathways to Indigenous Peoples’ socio/economic empowerment. It enhances their livelihoods building on their cultural heritage and identity as assets, such as by promoting self-determination (Free, Prior and Informed Consent), traditional knowledge and food systems, tenure security, resilience of Indigenous Peoples’ ecosystems, recognition of their role as stewards of natural resources and biodiversity, inclusive income generation and market access alongside women’s empowerment<sup>3</sup>.</p>

<sup>2</sup> UN Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS).

<sup>3</sup> This is done in line with the IFAD Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples and Standard 4 of SECAP 2021.

## In focus: Detailed review of IFAD's mainstreaming effectiveness

### A. ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE (INCLUDING BIODIVERSITY)

#### International context

1. In 2024, climate threats to rural development intensified. Developing countries require an estimated US\$212 billion annually through 2030 for adaptation—nearly four times current flows<sup>4</sup>. Yet little global climate finance reaches small-scale farmers and bridging this gap would require US\$75 billion<sup>5</sup> annually to protect livelihoods and build resilience. Stalling adaptation efforts and compounding risks leave vulnerable communities exposed, while the economic cost of climate inaction could reach 10% of global GDP—and up to 17% in low-latitude, low-income countries<sup>6</sup>.
2. Biodiversity loss remains a systemic threat. In October 2024, leading scientists warned of nearing irreversible ecological thresholds<sup>7</sup>. Ecosystem degradation, costing up to US\$10 trillion annually, is undermining agriculture, fisheries, and health<sup>8</sup>. Yet biodiversity finance is growing: MDB loans for biodiversity doubled (2022–2023); The Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD) was adopted by institutions managing US\$15.9 trillion in assets; and private nature finance grew from US\$9.4 billion to over US\$102 billion in four years<sup>9</sup>. Instruments like green bonds and payments for ecosystem services are expanding.

#### Strategic orientation

3. IFAD is scaling up concessional finance and in-country support for climate-vulnerable and fragile contexts, with adaptation fully mainstreamed across investments through a blend of ODA and climate finance. Building on strong performance in climate-resilient agriculture and growing biodiversity investments guided by the 2022–2025 Biodiversity Strategy and updated SECAP, IFAD will develop an integrated Climate, Environment and Biodiversity Strategy in 2025. This strategy, shaped through consultations with Member States, will enhance synergies across technical areas to boost impact, efficiency, and co-benefits for food systems, nature, and climate action.

#### Examples of partnerships and cooperation

##### *Mobilizing Global Climate Finance*

4. IFAD continued to mobilize resources from the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and Global Environment Facility (GEF) to amplify its projects' impact<sup>10</sup>. For instance, in 2024 IFAD helped launch the Africa Integrated Climate Risk Management Programme (AICRM) in seven Sahel countries (Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Gambia) in partnership with GCF, the African Development Bank, Africa Risk Capacity, and WFP. This six-year program (2023–

<sup>4</sup> <https://gca.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/State-and-Trends-in-Climate-Adaptation-Finance-2024.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.ifad.org/en/w/news/cop29-new-climate-finance-goal-must-empower-small-scale-farmers-to-help-feed-the-world>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-024-45781-w>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2024/oct/21/humanity-earth-natural-limits-biodiversity-warning-cop16-conference-scientists-academics>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/biodiversity>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.unepfi.org/themes/ecosystems/private-finance-for-nature-surges-to-over-102-billion/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.ifad.org/en/climate#:~:text=,building%20rural%20people%E2%80%99s%20adaptive%20capacity>

2029) pools US\$143.4 million (including an \$82.85 million GCF grant) to strengthen millions of farmers' resilience in the Great Green Wall region<sup>11</sup>.

5. In September 2024, IFAD and Rwanda launched RDDP II, a US\$100.4 million climate-smart dairy project promoting sustainable practices across 27 districts. Co-financed by partners including the OPEC Fund, GCF, and Heifer International, it showcases IFAD's role in leveraging blended finance for inclusive, climate-resilient rural development.

### ***Advocating for Breakthroughs in Global Policy***

6. **In 2024, IFAD actively engaged in key global policy forums on climate, biodiversity, and land restoration.** At COP29 countries agreed to a New Collective Quantified Goal, tripling climate finance for developing countries to US\$300 billion per year by 2035. This echoed IFAD President Alvaro Lario's advocacy<sup>12</sup> for urgent increases in smallholder-focused adaptation finance. At COP16 (UNCCD), IFAD reaffirmed commitments to land restoration through nature-based approaches and Rio Convention alignment. IFAD also supported participation in CBD COP16, the IFAD Farmers' Forum, and EU-funded biodiversity action with farmers' organizations.

### ***Advancing Regional Programs and Ecosystem-Based Solutions***

7. **A regional program in support of the Great Green Wall was launched in 2024.** Supported by the GCF IGREENFIN programme and the GEF LDCF fund, the initiative facilitates knowledge exchange and best practice adoption across 11 countries, with over US\$600 million in IFAD investments.
8. **IFAD secured its first Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF) project.** The US\$5 million grant will be blended with Pro-Camelidos II in Bolivia, supporting biodiversity-positive grassland restoration with a focus on Indigenous Peoples.

### ***Catalyzing Private Sector Engagement and Innovative Finance***

9. During IFAD12, the Fund forged alliances to unlock new sources of climate finance. In 2024, IFAD partnered with the Climate Bonds Initiative to co-develop green bond-aligned frameworks and guarantees, linking smallholders to impact investors and climate risk insurance tools<sup>13</sup> to drive sustainable investment for rural transformation<sup>14</sup>. The collaboration introduces innovative instruments – for example, developing partial credit guarantees and a Rural Transformation Financial Framework aligned with CBI's green bond standards<sup>15</sup>. The goal is to mobilize private capital for climate resilience by developing green taxonomies and investable agricultural projects.

### ***Strengthening Civil Society and South–South Collaboration***

10. In June 2024, IFAD and the OPEC Fund for International Development signed a new cooperation agreement to expand joint financing of climate-resilient rural projects<sup>16</sup>. The OPEC Fund – a longstanding partner that has co-financed over US\$1 billion across 120+ IFAD projects– committed to boost co-financing for food security and climate adaptation, bringing additional resources to smallholders.

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.ifad.org/en/w/news/ifad-and-partners-to-build-resilience-of-smallholder-farmers-to-climate-change-impacts-in-seven-sahelian-countries#:~:text=Through%20this%20new%20programme%2C%20IFAD,Niger%2C%20Senegal%20and%20The%20Gambia>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.devex.com/news/cop29-countries-agree-to-triple-climate-finance-for-developing-nations-107345>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.ifad.org/en/web/latest/-/ifad-and-climate-bonds-initiative-partner-to-drive-sustainable-investment-for-rural-transformation>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.climatebonds.net/resources/press-releases/2024/06/climate-bonds-initiative-and-ifad-united-nations-join-forces#:~:text=Rome%2FLondon%2C%20,climate%20resilience%20and%20sustainable%20agriculture>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.climatebonds.net/resources/press-releases/2024/06/climate-bonds-initiative-and-ifad-united-nations-join-forces#:~:text=The%20two%20organisations%2C%20A0signed%2C%20A0a%20letter%20of,food%20sector>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.ifad.org/en/w/news/opec-fund-deepens-partnership-with-ifad-to-strengthen-food-security-and-climate-action#:~:text=Rome%2FVienna%2C%20June%2025%2C%202024%3A%20The,third%20of%20food%20worldwide>

11. **IFAD also continued working closely with fellow Rome-based agencies (FAO and WFP) and regional institutions.** For example, IFAD's partnership with African Risk Capacity (ARC) in the Sahel program provides climate risk insurance solutions<sup>17</sup>.
18. **IFAD strengthened engagement with producer organizations, youth, and Indigenous Peoples.** The latest IPAF cycle focused on climate and biodiversity, while a new ASAP financing window supported Indigenous and farmer groups. IFAD also integrated the Global Biodiversity Youth Network into its youth platform to support strategic initiatives.

### ***Informing Climate Investment with Evidence***

12. IFAD, in partnership with IISD, published cost-benefit studies on green infrastructure in Kenya and Eswatini, launched at COP16. In 2024, IFAD also approved the CAPEO grant to enhance environmental and climate data through collaboration with global partners.

### **Achievements against IFAD12 commitments and action plan KPIs**

13. IFAD has invested US\$1.6 billion in climate finance and secured over US\$1 billion in additional funds from the GCF, AF, GEF, and ASAP. As of 2025, 84 per cent of projects build adaptation capacity<sup>18</sup> (6 per cent short of target), and 90 per cent are rated moderately satisfactory or better on environment and climate (meeting 100 per cent of the target). Nearly 953,000 households have adopted sustainable and climate-resilient practices—272 per cent of target—and IFAD operations are carbon negative, with 27.3 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e avoided or sequestered.
14. Under IFAD12, biodiversity has been firmly integrated into IFAD's operations. As of December 2024, 90% of the Biodiversity Strategy's results framework is implemented. A 2024 portfolio review found that 25% of climate finance supports nature-based solutions (NbS), with 87% of mitigation finance NbS-driven. IFAD developed key tools, including a biodiversity standard under SECAP, a core indicator, and a system for tracking NbS finance. Supplementary funding was mobilized for agroecology, notably €52.5 million from the EU for ACP countries and €20.2 million for a global agroecology programme. IFAD has also elevated its profile in global biodiversity forums and technical groups, while internal learning is accelerating, with 140+ staff engaged, 25+ events held, and key knowledge products shared via the Operations Academy. IFAD adopted its first biodiversity strategy and as of December 2024, 90% of its result framework is implemented.

### **Highlights**

15. IFAD exceeded its climate finance goals during IFAD12. Over US\$1.28 billion was invested in projects helping small-scale farmers adapt to climate change in 2022–2024 – 47% of IFAD's portfolio, above the 40% target<sup>19</sup>. Climate-focused spending accelerated, with US\$502.7 million disbursed for adaptation/mitigation in 2022–2023 and over US\$750 million in 2024 alone, reflecting a major scale-up<sup>20</sup>. This financing helped integrate climate resilience into IFAD-supported agricultural and rural development projects worldwide.

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.ifad.org/en/w/news/ifad-and-partners-to-build-resilience-of-smallholder-farmers-to-climate-change-impacts-in-seven-sahelian-countries#:~:text=Through%20this%20new%20programme%2C%20IFAD,Niger%2C%20Senegal%20and%20The%20Gambia>

<sup>18</sup> To qualify as climate adaptive, projects must have at least 15 per cent of financing dedicated to climate change adaptation activities.

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.ifad.org/en/w/news/2024-climate-action-report-ifad-expands-it-climate-finance-for-more-resilient-rural-populations#:~:text=both%20increased%20and%20exceeded%20its,set%20at%2040%20per%20cent>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.ifad.org/en/w/news/2024-climate-action-report-ifad-expands-it-climate-finance-for-more-resilient-rural-populations#:~:text=both%20increased%20and%20exceeded%20its,set%20at%2040%20per%20cent>

16. IFAD elevated climate adaptation across its programs as part of food systems transformation. At COP29, IFAD released its Climate Action Report 2024 “Green Horizons”, showcasing enhanced support for rural resilience<sup>21</sup>.

### Challenges

17. The global adaptation gap remains vast—US\$75 billion annually<sup>22</sup>—with smallholders receiving only a fraction of available finance. The 2024 MOPAN report urges IFAD to sharpen its strategic focus and scale up partnerships and country presence to match its growing climate ambition. Fragile contexts pose additional challenges: project designs often predate conflict, lack contingency plans, and struggle to adapt—leading to persistent implementation issues. When overall project performance falters, mainstreaming themes—especially those representing a small share of the focus—are frequently deprioritized.

### Key lessons

18. Leveraging climate finance through existing investments delivers greater impact than standalone projects. In Ethiopia, adding US\$11 million to an irrigation programme unlocked over US\$100 million in co-financing and exceeded climate resilience targets—highlighting the value of scaling through established platforms.<sup>23</sup> Common definitions for NbS, agroecology, regenerative and climate-smart agriculture would improve design consistency. Dedicated windows (e.g., GEF-8, GBFF) enhance biodiversity visibility in project design.
19. Further lessons from 2024 were synthesised in a publication assessing impact of the ASAP<sup>24</sup> programme.

### Way Forward

20. Leverage To enhance impact, IFAD should leverage CAPEO and emerging technologies—including GIS, AI, and blockchain—for improved project design and monitoring. Expanding private sector engagement through blended finance and clear taxonomies is also key, building on successful models such as [water funds projects](#) and the [GEF Food System Integrated Programme](#).

### IFAD13 outlook

19. Under IFAD13, a resource mobilization target of US\$2 billion is set to support a US\$10 billion programme of work, reaching 100 million people. At least 45 per cent of investments will target climate finance, while Additional Climate Contributions (ACCs) will boost predictable adaptation funding for vulnerable communities.

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.ifad.org/en/w/news/2024-climate-action-report-ifad-expands-it-climate-finance-for-more-resilient-rural-populations#:~:text=IFAD%E2%80%99s%20Climate%20Action%20Report%202024%2C%20ecosystems%2C%20and%20promote%20sustainable%20agriculture>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.ifad.org/en/w/news/cop29-2024-united-nations-climate-change-conference#:~:text=Yet%2C%20they%20receive%20less%20than,the%20world%27s%20most%20vulnerable%20populations>

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.ifad.org/en/w/explainers/6-lessons-learned-from-a-decade-of-climate-adaptation#:~:text=Luckily%2C%20driving%20climate%20adaptation%20in,at%20scale%20and%20maximize%20impact>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.ifad.org/en/w/explainers/6-lessons-learned-from-a-decade-of-climate-adaptation#:~:text=Luckily%2C%20driving%20climate%20adaptation%20in,at%20scale%20and%20maximize%20impact>

## B. NUTRITION

### International context

1. The triple burden of malnutrition—underweight, micronutrient deficiencies, and overweight—now affects both high- and low-income countries. Globally, over 3 billion people suffer from poor-quality diets, and more than 2 billion lack essential vitamins and minerals, undermining health, development, and economic potential. Ironically, rural areas—where much food is produced—are among the most food-insecure, with many small-scale producers themselves facing malnutrition.
2. In response, IFAD draws on its dual role as a UN agency and international financial institution to help governments build sustainable, resilient food systems. Through nutrition-sensitive investments tailored to national contexts, IFAD supports improved rural diets—especially for small-scale producers, family farmers, women, youth, Indigenous Peoples, and crisis-affected communities. Partnerships with nutrition stakeholders, civil society, and the private sector are key to this effort.

### Strategic orientation

3. The updated Targeting Policy underscores the multidimensional nature of poverty, including food insecurity and malnutrition, and reinforces IFAD's people-centred, life-cycle approach. It prioritizes nutritionally vulnerable groups—especially children, adolescent girls, and women of reproductive age, including pregnant and lactating women. The policy also calls for the use of food security and nutrition indicators to better profile rural populations in IFAD's diagnostic and operational frameworks.
4. Guided by its Action Plan on Mainstreaming Nutrition-Sensitive Agriculture (2019-2025), IFAD adopted a multisectoral approach to optimize the complementary contributions that food and agriculture can make to improve nutrition, including by engaging with partners with expertise in other sectors, particularly health, education water and sanitation.

### Achievements against IFAD12 commitments and action plan KPIs

20. IFAD met the corporate commitment of 100 per cent Country Strategic Opportunities Programmes (COSOPs) designed as nutrition sensitive. With 60 per cent of new designs validated as nutrition-sensitive, IFAD met its IFAD12 corporate commitment. Key achievements include targeted nutrition support to 3.3 million people or households; 66 per cent of projects reviewed at mid-term and 82 per cent of supervised projects scored 4 or above on nutrition. The percentage of women reporting minimum dietary diversity reached 52 per cent, exceeding the 25 per cent target. IFAD organized webinars and regional deep dives to share lessons from nutrition-sensitive projects, which are now informing new COSOPs and IFAD13 project designs. A roster of 60 validated nutrition consultants was also finalized and launched

### Highlights

21. IFAD hosted a regional workshop on nutrition-sensitive agriculture in Asia-Pacific, bringing together diverse development professionals to share best practices and strengthen capacity in designing agri-projects that integrate nutrition alongside climate and income objectives.
22. On 22 May in Dhaka, IFAD launched the Smallholder Agricultural Competitiveness Project – Diversified Resilient Agriculture for Improved Food and Nutrition Security (SACP-RAINS). The workshop focused on integrating nutrition across the agricultural value chain to strengthen resilience and improve nutrition outcomes for 670,000 smallholder farmers in climate-vulnerable regions.

**Challenges**

5. At the operational level, key barriers include weak integration of nutrition in project theories of change and a lack of baseline nutrition data to inform evaluations. Institutionally, nutrition is often perceived as an added burden by project delivery teams and client governments, hindering its systematic uptake.

**Key lessons**

6. Success was driven by early involvement of a nutrition specialist in project design, targeted capacity building through nutrition labs, and strong advocacy by ECG project delivery team members. Effective onboarding of dedicated nutrition experts within PMUs, timely start-up packages, and tailored technical support further accelerated implementation. Strategic partnerships with UN agencies and NGOs brought in critical expertise, while providing Country Directors with early-stage nutrition analyses and ready-to-use talking points helped strengthen policy dialogue during COSOP preparation.

**Actions required to enhance/improve performance**

7. **At an operational level,** nutrition should be fully integrated into the theory of change in project designs, with mandatory budget allocations detailed in every AWP/B and nutrition interventions starting in the first year of implementation. Start-up packages must include clear guidance on nutrition interventions and measurement. A centralized database of firms, surveys, and tools should be developed to support PMUs in tracking nutrition impact. To improve the accuracy of results reporting, nutrition ratings should be removed from non-nutrition-sensitive projects at midterm review, while mandatory ratings should be applied at project completion for nutrition-sensitive interventions.
8. **At the institutional level,** IFAD should strengthen internal leadership and advocacy for nutrition and social inclusion across divisions, ensuring these priorities are championed consistently. In parallel, building a strong evidence base and value-for-money proposition is essential to increase borrower demand and commitment to nutrition interventions.

**IFAD13 outlook**

9. IFAD has met its IFAD12 nutrition commitments. Under IFAD13, 60 per cent of sovereign projects will be nutrition sensitive, aiming to reach 5 million people with improved nutrition. During this period, IFAD will also update its Nutrition Action Plan, setting ambitious targets for 2030 and beyond. The revised plan will align with IFAD13 priorities, including fragility, biodiversity, climate, and local private sector engagement, and will reinforce IFAD's vision for transforming food systems to improve nutrition and promote healthy diets.

## C. GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

### International context

1. The world is off track to achieve gender equality by 2030, highlighting the urgency of addressing persistent gaps. While women play a key role in agrifood systems—often more so than men—their participation and benefits remain unequal. Access to land, services, finance, and technology continues to lag, further constrained by discriminatory norms that limit women's agency and economic opportunities.

### Strategic orientation

2. As part of IFAD13 commitments a new Gender Action Plan will be developed in 2025 in order to reinforce IFAD's work on gender equality and women's empowerment. Among others, this will take into account recommendations of the Independent Office of Evaluation's 2024 thematic evaluation on gender equality and empowerment to strengthen monitoring, and more clearly link gender to IFAD13 priorities such as fragility, climate, and private sector engagement. The evaluation's recommendation to update IFAD's Gender Policy will be assessed while developing the new Gender Action Plan.

### Examples of strategic GEWE partnerships and cooperation

3. **The Global Initiative for Gender Transformative Approaches (GTAs) for Securing Women's Land and Resource Rights (WLRR)** is working to enhance women's land rights through the integration GTAs in rural development interventions. IFAD collaborated with a consortium comprised of Centre for International Forestry Research and World Agroforestry (CIFOR-ICRAF), International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), and Alliance of Biodiversity International and International Centre for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) to implement the WLRR initiative. This consortium piloted a process for designing and implementing GTAs across selected IFAD projects in six countries.
4. **The Gender Transformative Mechanism in Climate Adaptation (GTM)** is an innovative financing model designed to unlock funding and provide targeted support to empower rural communities - particularly women - and equip them with the resources, knowledge, and technologies needed to achieve gender equality and build resilience to climate change. Operated by IFAD since its establishment in 2021 and with funding support from the Gates Foundation, the GTM strengthens national systems, policies, and programmes to ensure long-term impact and harnesses results-oriented approaches to drive performance and enhance cost-effectiveness.
  - **In India**, GTM supports MAVIM, the State Women's Development Corporation of the Government of Maharashtra, in establishing a Centre of Excellence to promote a grassroots-led model of development and advocate for women's empowerment as a strategy for climate resilience.
  - **In Ethiopia**, the GTM applies a women-inclusive landscape approach to irrigation and natural resource management, behavioural change, and climate-smart inputs, technologies, and practices.
  - **In Burkina Faso**, GTM strengthens women's inclusion in climate resilient value chains with significant unmet market demand. Through tailored bundles of interventions, including access to land, large scale and long-term financial credit, and improved entrepreneurial and business skills.
    - Another key development is GTM's partnership-building with IFAD's climate finance team to engage climate funds and position IFAD as a leader at the gender-climate nexus. Through targeted support to selected "GTM-tagged" climate projects, GTM aims to boost GEWE programming within climate fund activities and achieve transformative results.
8. **The Joint Programme on Gender Transformative Approaches for Food Security and Nutrition (JP GTA)** implemented from 2019 to 2024 by the United Nations Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) – the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Food Programme (WFP) with financial support from the European Union. The Programme was launched in response to a call at the 2016

High-level Event “Step It Up Together with Rural Women to End Hunger and Poverty” to promote approaches to tackle the underlying social and behavioral causes of gender inequalities. The JP GTA has successfully supported RBAs and their partners in embedding GTAs into policy dialogues, programmes, working modalities and institutional culture, while also strengthening inter-agency collaboration to advance gender equality and achieve zero hunger.

- The program conducted several diagnostic studies in 2024, including the **Diagnostic of Gender and Age Norms in Financial Inclusion** (a pilot study in five districts of Malawi), which explored the impact of social norms on women’s and youth’s financial inclusion, providing concrete recommendations for interventions to address existing inequalities.
- In 2024, the program published several knowledge products, including:
  - Technical Guidance Note: Rural Women and Financial Inclusion.
  - Step-by-Step Guide to Integrating a Gender-Transformative Approach Throughout the Project Cycle.
  - Theory of Change for Gender-Transformative Programming for Food Security, Nutrition, and Sustainable Agriculture (Technical Note).

9. **Joint Programme 'Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women' (JP RWEE):** The JP RWEE is a global initiative aimed at improving the livelihoods, rights, and resilience of rural women to advance sustainable development, the 2030 Agenda, and the SDGs. Led by FAO, IFAD, UN Women, and WFP the Programme is being implemented across Nepal, Niger, the Pacific Islands (Fiji, Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Tonga), Tanzania, Tunisia, and Rwanda for the period 2022 – 2027. In 2024, the programme reached 24,738 rural women and men across its four strategic outcomes, achieving 83% of the consolidated outreach target. This represents significant progress compared to 2023, when only 52% of the annual target (15,063 out of 28,900) was reached. This enhanced performance reflects strengthened coordination, accelerated implementation efforts, and deeper engagement with partners on the ground.

10. IFAD also actively participated in key global policy forums including the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW 68), the Commission on Food Security and Nutrition CFS that promoted the adoption of the voluntary guidelines on gender equality and the empowerment of women’s and girls, and COP28.<sup>44</sup>

### **Achievements against IFAD12 commitments and action plan KPIs**

11. **Performance on gender at design has been strong and increasing.** In IFAD11, the Fund exceeded its target of gender transformative ambitions at design (41 per cent against a target of 25 per cent). For IFAD 12, the Fund reports 51 per cent as of December 2024 against a target of 35 per cent.
12. **Implementation performance has remained steady,** with 87.5 per cent of projects rated moderately satisfactory or better (4+), just below the 90 per cent target, and only 12.5 per cent rated satisfactory or better (5+), well below the 60 per cent target, which was set as an aspirational benchmark and has repeatedly proven challenging to meet.

### **2024 Highlights**

13. **IFAD performed relatively well on its programmatic GEWE performance targets, particularly at design.** IFAD12 (2022-2024) committed to ensuring that 35% of its projects qualified as gender transformative at design and 60% of projects assessed as fully gender mainstreamed or transformative (rating 5 +) at completion. By the end of the IFAD12 replenishment cycle, the percentage of gender transformative projects at design reached 51%, surpassing the expected target.

14. **In its annual UNSWAP reporting for 2024, IFAD met or exceeded each of the 16 indicators against which it reports.** In addition, IFAD scored higher (59%) than the overall UN System score (35%) and other reporting Funds and Programs (43%) for Indicators Exceeding Requirements (figure 3). IFAD exceeded performance on 10 out of 17 reporting indicators and met the targets on 6, with one indicator marked as not applicable (figure 4). This performance highlights IFAD's strong commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment.

Figure 3: Comparative Analysis of UNSWAP indicators between IFAD, the Overall UN System and Funds and Programmes. (2024)

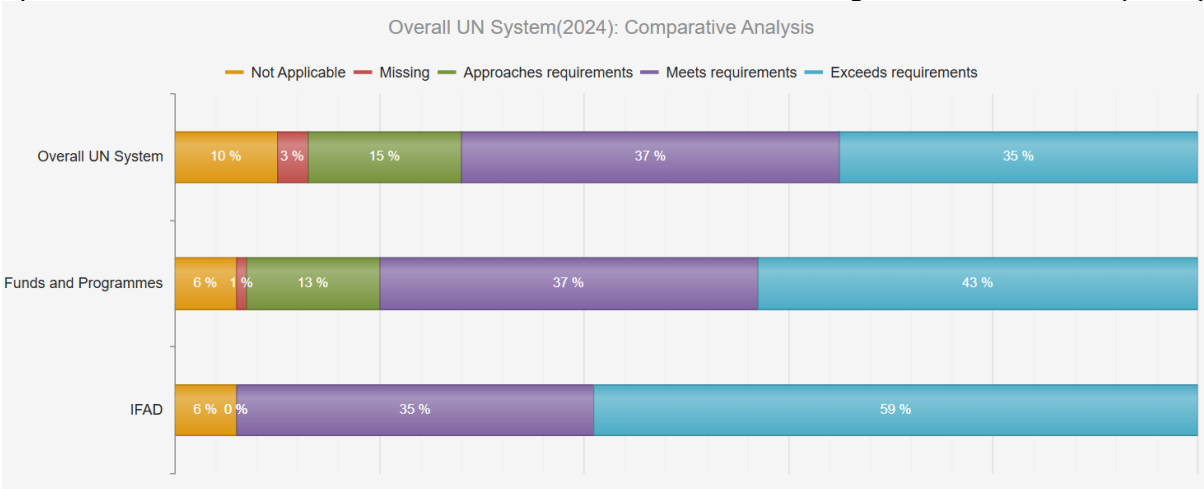
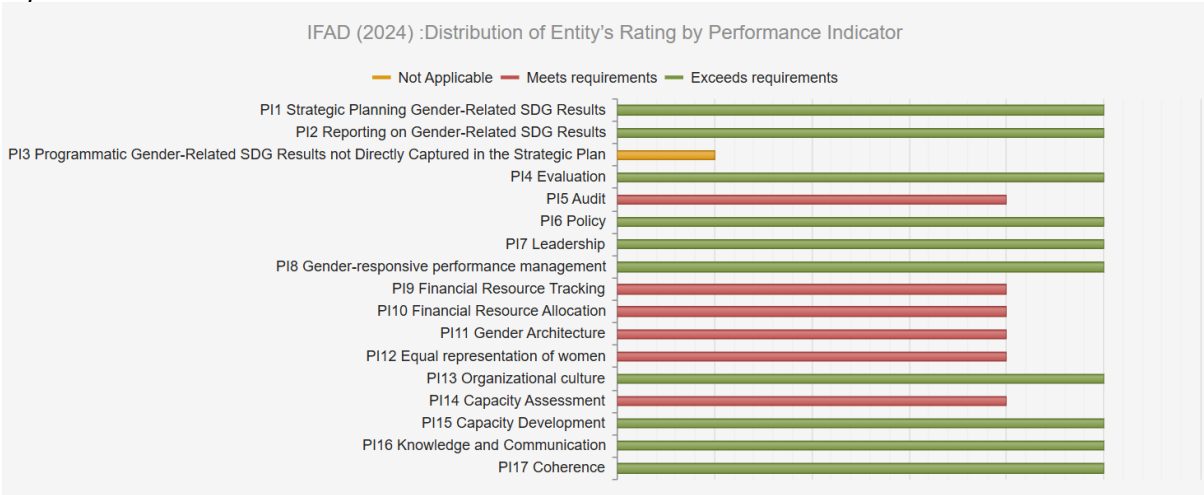


Figure 4: Distribution of IFAD's Rating by Performance Indicator for the 2024 UNSWAP report.



15. **In 2024, IFAD played a strategic and active role in global policy processes, particularly at CFS 52.** The Fund contributed to CFS's strategic direction, policy development, and key workstreams on inequalities, collaborative governance, and uptake of policy products. IFAD provided technical input, co-organized high-level side events—including on the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality—and ensured strong representation in plenary. Support included financial contributions, a seconded staff member, and logistical assistance. IFAD also promoted rural transformation, inclusive investment, and gender equality by actively disseminating and applying CFS products across its programmes.

Challenges

16. Despite significant improvements in gender integration at design, sustaining these ambitions during implementation remains difficult. Most agriculture ministries,

IFAD's main implementing partners, lack the capacity to operationalize gender strategies, and this gap extends to project management units (PMUs). Staff shortages, weak institutional support, and insufficient resources often constrain implementation.

17. The COVID-19 pandemic intensified these constraints. Between 2020 and 2022, technical support and supervision were mostly remote. For GEWE, which relies on field visits and consultation, this severely disrupted both implementation and monitoring. Women faced heightened care burdens, economic hardship, GBV, and reduced access to services—further limiting their participation. Projects closing between 2022 and 2024 were hardest hit, helping explain the drop in ratings from IFAD11 to IFAD12.
18. Measuring gender outcomes remains a major challenge. Most M&E systems collect sex-disaggregated data only on outreach, making it difficult to assess results on empowerment, decision-making, or workload reduction. Tools like pro-WEAI are underused. Remote supervision and lack of feedback loops compromised the quality of operational guidance and performance reporting.
19. Structural inconsistencies also persist. GEWE ratings are applied uniformly across projects, regardless of whether they were designed to be gender-transformative. This skews assessments and limits learning. Ratings of 6 are rare and poorly differentiated from 5, and corporate guidance remains insufficiently adapted to project stages. Limited government ownership further undermines progress, with IFAD teams often needing to advocate for gender outcomes amid weak enabling environments.

### **Key lessons**

20. Strong GEWE results are tied to government ownership, long-term support, and resourced action plans. Economic arguments for GEWE can help secure buy-in. The IOE evaluation confirms that scalable GEWE interventions are underpinned by local commitment.
21. Projects with early integration of gender expertise and targeted plans perform better.
22. Projects rated 3 often lacked strategy or suffered early closure (e.g. Liberia, Congo, Benin); projects rated 4 performed well on economic empowerment but fell short on voice, norms, and decision-making.
23. Documentation was inconsistent in cases like OPELIP (India) and KIIWP (Rwanda). However, innovative models emerged: PRODEFI in Burundi supported GBV survivors with integrated services, and LMRP in Sudan delivered effective GEWE outcomes despite fragility.
24. Regionally, WCA saw a drop in 4+ ratings (92 to 70 per cent) but an increase in 5+ ratings (38 to 50 per cent). APR declined from 91 to 75 per cent due to weak M&E and under-documented results. ESA dropped from 89 to 79 per cent, reflecting unfamiliarity with GEWE tools and poor norm tracking. LAC remained stable with strong technical support, while NEN improved in 4+ ratings but saw reduced 5+ scores, linked to weak GEWE integration at design.

### **Actions required to enhance/improve future performance**

25. Develop clear guidance and training tools to strengthen gender capacity across IFAD staff, government counterparts, and PMUs. Establish a vetted roster of gender consultants and embed gender expertise in supervision missions. Provide tailored support to PMUs to design, resource, and monitor gender action plans.
26. Strengthen metrics to track GEWE outcomes beyond participation, including empowerment, norm change, and voice. In fragile contexts, apply adapted GEWE guidance and integrate safeguards for vulnerable populations.
27. Invest in supervision quality: ensure gender specialists are systematically involved in missions and that M&E systems can track change across IFAD's Strategic Objectives. Align technical assistance and implementation support with project-specific GEWE pathways.

### **IFAD13 outlook**

28. IFAD will continue to strengthen GEWE programming in line with the corporate evaluation recommendations, update its Gender Action Plan, and deepen partnerships. Capacity building support for PMUs will be prioritized, supported by a roster of validated gender consultants. Gender investment cases will be developed to mobilize long-term financing, leveraging global platforms such as Beijing+30, CSW69, and COP30.

## D. YOUTH

### International context

1. **Eighty-five per cent of the world's 1.2 billion young people aged 15– 24 live in developing countries, mostly in rural areas.** By 2030, a seven per cent rise is projected in the youth population. In rural areas, the challenges for young people are particularly complex. Constraints on access to land, natural resources, finance and markets, services, technology, knowledge, information and education are the main challenges faced by rural youth. Too often, they resort to migration, either to urban areas or overseas. At the same time, young people, on average, are more agile, educated, innovative, and generally tend to have stronger aspirations for work that benefits society and environmental sustainability. These skills will be critical for reforming food systems and adapting to the global challenge of climate change. With the right support, young people can take the lead in modernizing rural areas, and in the transformation of agriculture and food systems. The potential returns of investing in young people are boundless for food security, poverty reduction and employment, as well as peace and political stability.

### Strategic orientation

2. Guided by its first Rural Youth Action Plan (2019) and the updated Targeting policy (2023), IFAD supports governments to make tailored investments that empower rural youth to pursue remunerative livelihoods and employment opportunities in on/off and non-farm enterprises in rural areas. IFAD adopts a “3E” approach which includes:
  - a. **Employment:** Giving rural youth access to decent employment opportunities.
  - b. **Entrepreneurship:** Fostering youth-led start-ups and accelerating the growth of existing youth-led businesses.
  - c. **Empowerment:** Enabling young women and men to participate in decision-making at the local, national and global level.
3. In 2024, in preparing IFAD’s new Rural Youth Action Plan (an IFAD13 commitment) a stocktaking of IFAD’s youth-sensitive portfolio was conducted to identify strengths, gaps, and scalable practices, alongside a benchmarking exercise that assessed IFAD’s positioning relative to other development actors. In parallel, extensive consultations with internal and external stakeholders—including youth organizations, implementing partners, and country teams—helped draw key lessons and refine strategic priorities. These efforts have laid a strong foundation for a revitalized Rural Youth Action Plan that is evidence-based, inclusive, and well-positioned to deliver transformative results for rural youth starting in 2025.
4. Two strategic initiatives for IFAD’s future work on youth include the Rural Youth Alliances and the Agribusiness Hubs Programme.
  - **Rural Youth Alliances:** The Rural Youth Alliances (RYAs) were piloted in four countries (Colombia, Morocco, Rwanda, and Senegal) by IFAD as platforms to strengthen rural youth organizations’ capacities and their engagement in IFAD’s operations and local to global policy dialogues. In line with IFAD13 commitments, the RYAs initiative is now set to expand to an additional three to five countries, building on lessons from the pilot phase to strengthen youth engagement across the portfolio.
  - **Agribusiness Hub Programme:** Launched in 2019, the Programme is IFAD’s flagship youth initiative focused on improving rural youth employment and entrepreneurship in the agribusiness sector. Operating in nine African countries, the Programme combines market-relevant training, job placement, and business development support, facilitated through public-private partnerships. Programme targets have been exceeded, with the creation of

over 42,000 jobs and 8,000 businesses. As the Programme's first phase ends in 2025, resource mobilization efforts are underway for a Scale-up phase to continue expanding its outreach and impact.

### Partnerships and policy engagement

5. In the context of developing the new Rural Youth Action Plan IFAD participated in and supported the participation of rural youth in several regional and global youth events, including: Global Conference on Decent Jobs for Youth (Kigali, May 2024); Africa Food System Forum (Rwanda, September 2024); G7 Agri Hackathon (Italy, September 2024); World Food Forum (Italy, October 2024); Asia-Pacific Youth Development Forum (Bangkok, October 2024); Regional Conference on Youth in the Middle East (Jordan, October 2024); CBD COP16 (Colombia, Nov 2024); GDPRD Thematic Working Group on Youth (Italy, November 2024).
6. Other key initiatives in 2024 include:
  - **Expanding engagement with partners in the Decent Work for Equitable Food Systems Coalition.** IFAD strengthened its partnerships with the ILO and CARE to raise awareness on decent work issues in agri-food systems. At the 2024 meeting of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), IFAD co-organized a plenary session focused on "Promoting Decent Work in Food Systems and Agriculture". Through the Coalition, IFAD supports various initiatives, sharing relevant tools and good practices, providing technical support in integrating decent work issues in sector-specific policies.
  - **CSO consultation in preparation of IFAD's new Strategic Framework.** In November 2024, IFAD organised a CSO consultation on the new IFAD Strategic Framework 2025-2031 bringing together youth representatives from global youth organizations (e.g. YPARD, YOUNGO, Global Youth Biodiversity Network) and RYAs, alongside farmers organisations and Indigenous Peoples to share priorities, experiences and recommendations for IFA to further strengthen the strategic framework in line with their priorities.
  - **Capacity building for Rural Youth Alliances.** In 2024, two microgrants were implemented through the RYAs. In Colombia, the grant supported activities that elevate youth voices in rural development processes and policies. In Senegal, it supported efforts to institutionalize youth consultations with public authorities on rural development laws.
  - As part of its policy engagement efforts, ECG developed a youth-sensitive **business case for investing in rural youth**. This tool is designed to be adaptable across diverse country contexts and serves to strengthen evidence-based advocacy for integrating youth-focused components in IFAD-supported projects. The business case aims to clearly articulate the "returns on investment" of youth inclusion, equipping IFAD to more effectively engage with governments and stakeholders—particularly in L/U/MIC countries—on the benefit of borrowing for socially inclusive initiatives.

### Achievements against IFAD12 commitments and action plan KPIs

7. **COSOPs and project design:** 100 per cent of new COSOPs and CSNs included rural youth as a priority target group. A target of 60 per cent was set for the share of youth sensitive projects across the IFAD12 portfolio. In 2024, 29 out of 38 projects or 75% of projects designed were youth sensitive. This brings the overall IFAD 12 Y-S project designs to 65 out of 95 projects (70 per cent) well above target. Geographical breakdown of projects includes LAC 16 (76 per cent), NEN 8 (88 per cent), WCA 11 (68 per cent), APR 10 (45 per cent), ESA 20 (76 per cent). This lifts IFAD active youth-sensitive portfolio to an overall outreach target to more than 11 million young people.

8. **Guidance and reporting.** In 2024, two guidance notes were prepared to support programme teams in delivering youth-sensitive projects. One of the guidance notes centres on “designing Youth-sensitive” projects while the other is a how-to-do note on “integrating the agribusiness hubs ecosystem model for rural youth wage and self-employment” in IFAD operations.
23. **Two key knowledge products and a video series were produced in 2024.** The first was an in-focus stocktake on the Rural Youth Alliances pilot in four countries. The second was a policy brief, *“Elevating the Potential of Rural Youth: Paths to Decent Jobs and Sustainable Futures,”* developed in collaboration with the ILO. In addition, three videos showcasing results from the Agribusiness Hubs programme in Cameroon, Nigeria, Malawi, and Madagascar were produced.
24. **Tracking youth employment in IFAD’s portfolio:** In 2024, IFAD’s portfolio reached a total of 69 projects that are monitoring youth employment outcomes through Core Outcome Indicator 2.2.1 “Number of beneficiaries with new jobs/employment opportunities”. This brings the total number of jobs targeted for youth to more than 550,000.
9. **Learning and knowledge events.** A ‘learning and reflection forum’ was held in Kigali to assess performance the of the Agribusiness Hub Programme and facilitate cross-learning between various implementing partners.

### Challenges

10. Clarifying and simplifying how job creation is measured could encourage greater government ownership of Core Outcome Indicator 2.2.1 (“Number of beneficiaries with new jobs/employment opportunities”). Some countries are hesitant to commit to this indicator, as it does not fully capture the reality of rural labour markets, where underemployment is more common than unemployment.
11. Limited technical capacity in design and implementation remains a challenge. Project teams need better access to data, good practices, and guidance on integrating youth employment and empowerment into project design and implementation. Stronger feedback mechanisms would also improve youth engagement throughout the project cycle.

### Key lessons

12. **Align with country-specific priorities:** Appropriate employment strategies must be tailored to the specific local contexts and government priorities. Intervention strategies should be developed in close coordination with governments, with a focus on identifying agri-food employment prospects that offer meaningful opportunities for rural youth.
13. **Strong country and PMU ownership is critical for the success of RYAs.** The RYA pilots showed that embedding alliances within IFAD-financed projects strengthens their sustainability and influence, especially when supported with strategic communication activities. Alliances like those in Colombia and Senegal benefited from increased visibility and in turn were more successful in resource mobilization.

### Actions being taken to enhance performance

25. **Measuring youth-sensitive performance.** In 2024, work commenced on the development of a protocol to assess youth-sensitivity across IFAD-supported projects. The protocol incorporates key elements such as outreach performance, proxy indicators for social inclusion, and relevant logframe indicators to provide a structured and measurable approach. Looking ahead to 2025, the protocol is expected to integrate artificial intelligence to enhance the precision and depth of analysis, enabling more targeted insights and data-driven decision-making for youth-focused interventions.

14. **Measuring employment outcomes.** Options for improving the measurement of employment outcomes generated by IFAD-supported projects are being assessed to ensure that progress on youth-related outcomes is more accurately captured and communicated.
15. **Improving youth sensitivity in 'project implementation':** In 2025, a guidance note on implementation of youth-sensitive projects will be developed. It will target specific phases of implementation (start-up, ISM, MTR and SVMs) and provide practical, field-oriented tools and recommendations to help country teams, project implementers, and partners design and deliver interventions that respond to the specific needs, challenges, and aspirations of rural youth. It will draw on lessons learned from IFAD's existing youth-focused portfolio, stakeholder consultations, and best practices across regions.

### **IFAD13 outlook**

16. In line with IFAD13 commitments, IFAD's new Rural Youth Action Plan will be adopted, ensuring IFAD is well-positioned to deliver transformative results for rural youth. The RYAs will also be expanded to an additional three to five countries. Additionally, a Scale-up phase of the Agribusiness Hubs Programme will be launched (subject to mobilization of adequate resources), building on successes of the first phase and key improvements to substantially expand the Programme's outreach and impact.

## E. INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

### International context

1. **Globally, Indigenous Peoples face significant challenges that stem from a history of discrimination, dispossession of their lands, and marginalization.** Representing about 6 per cent of the global population, they account for nearly 19 per cent of the extreme poor<sup>25</sup>, with life expectancies that are up to 20 years lower than those of non-Indigenous populations<sup>26</sup>. Their unique cultures, languages, and knowledge systems, particularly in relation to environmental stewardship and sustainable practices, are under threat due to inadequate recognition and protection of their lands and resources.
2. **In response, IFAD considers Indigenous Peoples as a priority target group and is committed to empower them by supporting their right to self-determination.** IFAD's approach includes fostering systematic dialogue and partnership through the Indigenous Peoples' Forum at IFAD (IPFI), financing grassroots projects through the Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility (IPAF), engaging in policy dialogue, and ensuring the Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) in project design and implementation, including through the participation of Indigenous experts. By fostering collaboration, valuing cultural diversity, and tailoring interventions, IFAD aims to improve development effectiveness in engaging with Indigenous Peoples.
3. **Recent international efforts have seen growing momentum in channelling climate and development finance directly to Indigenous Peoples.** Notably, the Forest Tenure Funders Group has pledged USD 1.7 billion (2021–2025) to support forest guardianship by Indigenous Peoples and local communities, with progress highlighted in its latest annual report. The report underscores improvements in disbursing funds more equitably and in supporting the development of Indigenous Peoples-led financial mechanisms that enhance autonomy and long-term impact.

### Strategic orientation

4. **In 2024, IFAD further strengthened its engagement with Indigenous Peoples through its country programmes, continued support to the IPFI and the IPAF, and strategic partnerships. The Synthesis of Deliberations and the regional action plans agreed upon during the sixth IPFI global meeting in 2023 served as key strategic orientation elements.** In alignment with the updated Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples and with SECAP, FPIC is mandated before initiating any activities in territories home to Indigenous Peoples and used as an instrument to co-design solutions. IFAD continued to incorporate Indigenous Peoples' perspectives and to involve their representatives in the design and implementation of new relevant projects and COSOPs. IFAD also continued to hire Indigenous experts in project design and implementation (in Cameroon, Kenya and Bolivia in 2024) through a pilot approach funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) supplementary funds.

### Example of partnerships and cooperation

5. A key milestone was the enhanced participation of IPFI Steering Committee members in IFAD governance processes, including their role as observers in the Executive Board for which in 2024 a specific procedure has been put in place, and

<sup>25</sup> International Labour Organization (ILO), *Implementing the ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention No. 169: Towards an inclusive, sustainable and just future*, 2020.

<sup>26</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), *State of the World's Indigenous Peoples*, Volume V, 2021.

their engagement in consultations related to the design of IFAD's new Strategic Framework (2025–2030).

6. In preparation for the IPFI Seventh global meeting in February 2025, 12 regional and subregional consultation meetings were held in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Pacific between August and November 2024. The meetings were organized by regional Indigenous Peoples' Organisations in collaboration with IFAD country offices, IFAD staff and the IPFI Steering Committee and brought together over 450 participants from more than 70 countries.
7. IFAD also continued to mobilize climate finance through Indigenous Peoples-led mechanisms, including the implementation of the sixth cycle of the IPAF, and increased efforts to facilitate direct access to funding. Initiatives were supported by partners such as Norad, through a USD 2.9 million agreement to strengthen Indigenous Peoples' organizations in Africa, while complementing IFAD's engagement in international dialogues on the transparency and accountability of funding flows to Indigenous Peoples. IFAD also maintained its long-standing collaboration with Slow Food, providing additional support to Indigenous youth and women in protecting and promoting their communities' food heritage, through the allocation of a small grant of USD 250,000.
8. In September 2024, an IPAF Workshop took place in Turin in conjunction with the Terra Madre event of Slow Food and resulted into: (i) shared lessons and experiences in the implementation of the IPAF among IPAF partners; (ii) identification of strategic directions for the future of the IPAF; and (iii) strengthened IPAF network and partnership with Slow Food.

### **Achievements against IFAD12 commitments and action plan KPIs**

9. **Ensure that at least 10 new projects include Indigenous Peoples as a priority target group:** the targets for IFAD12 have been met and surpassed, with 14 projects that include Indigenous Peoples as a priority target group approved<sup>27</sup>, compared to the 10 initially planned.
10. **Replenish the IPAF including through mobilization of additional resources from other partners:** in 2023, IFAD allocated USD 2.5 million from regular grants to complement Sida's contribution. USD 2.9 million were mobilised from Norad to contribute to capacity strengthening of IPs organisations in Africa and to the seventh IPAF cycle. Additionally, USD 400,000 was mobilized from ASAP+ to pilot a climate adaptation-focused approach. The sixth IPAF cycle (2023–2026) funds 53 projects aimed at advancing Indigenous Peoples' conservation and sustainable biodiversity management for climate adaptation and resilience. These projects began implementation in 2024 with the support of regional implementing partners – Foro Internacional de Mujeres Indígenas (FIMI); Indigenous Peoples' International Centre for Policy Research and Education (Tebtebba); and Samburu Women Trust (SWT) – that organized regional start up workshops as key platforms to engage with IPAF implementing partners at all levels, refine implementation strategies, and ensure alignment with the priorities of Indigenous Peoples in their respective regions.

### **Highlights**

11. **The IPFI continues to serve as the cornerstone of IFAD's engagement with Indigenous Peoples.** The preparation for the seventh global meeting in 2025 included regional consultations that offered a platform for dialogue on self-

<sup>27</sup> The 14 projects including Indigenous Peoples as a priority target group approved in IFAD12 are: Bolivia – AGROSUSTENTAR; Brazil – PROCASE II, Paulo Freire Project II, PDHC III, PAGES; Colombia – Rurality for Life; El Salvador – Rural Adelante 2.0; India – OPELIP II; Lao PDR – AFN II; Philippines – VISTA; Solomon Islands – AIMN\_SLB; The Democratic Republic of the Congo – AVENIR; Vanuatu – AIMN\_VUT; Viet Nam – RECAF.

determined development, food sovereignty, and climate resilience as well as for strengthened collaboration with the IFAD country teams.

12. **Through IPAF small grants, IFAD has continued to promote Indigenous Peoples-led solutions by supporting projects designed and implemented by Indigenous Peoples and their organizations.** These efforts have positioned IFAD in the global discussion on enhancing direct access to finance to Indigenous Peoples and their organisations, and the Fund has been invited to contribute to high-level dialogues on the quality and transparency of climate finance, including events linked to the Paris Roadmap and initiatives led by Charapa and the Global Alliance of Territorial Communities with the engagement of the Forest Tenure Funders Group.
13. **IFAD remains an active member of the Coalition on Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems.** This partnership is closely aligned with IFAD's priorities and enables collaboration at the global and national levels to promote the central role of Indigenous Peoples in biodiversity, nutrition, and sustainable food systems. In 2024, IFAD hosted the Gathering on Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems, a high-level event where, among other, the results of a study highlighting the contributions of Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems to biodiversity, nutrition, and climate resilience were presented.
14. IFAD, through its participation in the Inter-Agency Support Group's Working Group on SWAP indicators, contributed actively to the development of indicators to monitor the rights and well-being of Indigenous Peoples.
15. IFAD played an active role in the 23rd session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, intervening in plenary sessions and in the closed dialogue with the United Nations agencies, and co-organizing side events with relevant partners focusing mainly on the topics of: food systems, land tenure, youth engagement and socioeconomic development through entrepreneurship and creative industries.

## Challenges

16. Ensuring sustained support for the IPAF and the IPFI process will require continued resource mobilization, including from external partners. IFAD will explore options to diversify and secure funding for these initiatives to maintain momentum and long-term engagement.
17. As engagement with Indigenous Peoples continues to expand across the portfolio, there is scope to strengthen technical support at regional and country levels. IFAD will consider ways to improve coordination, ensuring consistent and responsive delivery aligned with the updated Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples.
18. Establishing structured consultation mechanisms with Indigenous Peoples at the country level remained challenging due to limited staff time, fragmented processes, and the absence of dedicated coordination mechanisms in many contexts, despite being a clear priority identified by the IPFI.

## Key lessons

19. The Fund is increasingly applying FPIC as a tool for co-creating investments and country strategies, including through the recruitment of Indigenous experts. This approach is improving ownership and integration of Indigenous Peoples' knowledge and needs to be sustained.
20. Engagement with Indigenous Peoples from the very early stages of project and country strategy design results in more relevant inputs and better designed interventions. This piloted process of engagement needs to be further strengthened and streamlined through enhanced collaboration at the country level.

21. The active involvement of members of the IPFI Steering Committee, including their participation in IFAD governance (e.g., Executive Board, new Strategic Framework consultations), has been crucial in institutionalizing Indigenous Peoples' voices within IFAD structures. Continued support is needed to further improve this process.

### **Actions required to enhance/improve performance**

22. Enhance monitoring systems to effectively track Indigenous Peoples-related commitments and results, improving strategic planning and operational support.

### **IFAD13 outlook**

23. The 14 Indigenous Peoples-prioritizing projects approved under IFAD12 will continue to be monitored and supported throughout implementation. Strengthening the capacity of IFAD staff and implementing partners remains critical to ensuring effective design and delivery.
24. The corporate targets related to the Fund's engagement with Indigenous Peoples under IFAD13 are as follows:
- Continue support to the corporate processes for the three civil society partnerships: the Indigenous Peoples' Forum at IFAD, Farmers' Forum and Grassroots Youth Alliance.
  - Ensure that farmers' organizations, Indigenous Peoples and youth are consulted in the development of relevant strategies and operational policies, and explore further options to ensure due participation of all relevant rights holders and stakeholders in relevant processes, with a specific focus on persons or groups that may face additional barriers for participation. This should build on IFAD's Social, Environmental and Climate Assessment Procedures, and existing coordination mechanisms and consultative processes, and respect IFAD's official governance structures and processes.
  - Ensure that at least 10 new projects include Indigenous Peoples as a priority target group.
  - Replenish the Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility, including through mobilization of additional resources from other partners.

## F. DISABILITY INCLUSION

### International context

1. **An estimated 1.3 billion people globally (16 per cent of the world's population) live with a significant disability, with nearly 80 per cent residing in low- and middle-income countries.** Despite their numbers, persons with disabilities continue to face systemic exclusion and discrimination, limiting their access to fundamental rights and opportunities. In rural areas, these barriers are compounded by inadequate infrastructure, limited access to skills development, a lack of assistive tools and technologies, and persistent stigma. Such challenges restrict their participation in agrifood systems and access to economic opportunities, deepening their vulnerability to poverty and food insecurity.
2. **In response to this persistent inequality, IFAD identifies persons with disabilities as a key target group for its projects and programmes.** IFAD recognizes that when structural barriers are removed and equal opportunities are ensured, persons with disabilities can thrive as economic actors and contribute meaningfully to the well-being of rural households and communities. Guided by the principle of "nothing about us, without us," IFAD's disability-inclusive approach emphasizes consultation with farmers with diverse impairments and promotes socio-economic empowerment through enhanced access to opportunities, services, and participation in rural organizations.

### Strategic orientation

3. **IFAD's work on disability inclusion is guided by its dedicated Strategy, approved in December 2022** and covering a 5-year implementation period. Globally, the Strategy is aligned with the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, the UNDIS and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Internally, the Strategy is aligned and supported by the IFAD Targeting Policy and the Strategy on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. The Strategy provides a solid foundation for promoting disability inclusion throughout all pillars of IFAD's work. It is articulated around four main action areas: (i) Leadership, strategic planning and management; (ii) Inclusiveness; (iii) Programming and (iv) Organizational Culture. The implementation of the Strategy is based on 3 overarching pillars: (i) the adoption of twin-track approach (combining a mainstreaming approach with targeted interventions; (ii) an intersectional approach; and (iii) a strong focus on partnerships.

### Partnerships and cooperation

4. **IFAD's work on disability inclusion benefits from the collaboration with several partners with solid expertise in this area of work.** A fundamental collaboration has been established and maintained with the consortium responsible for the implementation of the IFAD-funded grant "Sparkling Disability-inclusive Rural Transformation" (SPARK), which includes Light for the World, the International Labour Organisation and PROCASUR Cooperation. This collaboration goes beyond the implementation of the grant and facilitates other important functions, including advocacy, capacity development and policy engagement. To support the implementation of the Strategy, IFAD cooperates with other UN agencies, such as the World Food Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization and actively participates in the Global Action on Disability (GLAD) Network. In the context of projects, IFAD has established collaboration with local and national Organisations of Persons with Disabilities, which have been instrumental partners in promoting the visibility and engagement of rural persons with disabilities.

## Highlights

5. IFAD12 targets for disability inclusion have been met, with 7 new projects explicitly prioritizing persons with disabilities now under implementation in Ethiopia, Madagascar, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali, Ecuador, Brazil, and Colombia. These projects mainstream disability inclusion in line with IFAD's requirements. An additional 35 ongoing IFAD-supported projects identify persons with disabilities as a specific target group, bringing the total to 42 projects working on disability inclusion (21.8 per cent of the 192 active projects in IFAD's portfolio).
6. The SPARK grant exceeded expectations, reaching 63,050 farmers with disabilities (35,707 women and 27,343 men) through eight IFAD-supported projects in Burkina Faso, India, Malawi, and Mozambique. Concluded in September 2024, SPARK served as a platform to test and validate disability-inclusive approaches, while enhancing awareness and capacity at multiple levels (IFAD and project staff, government counterparts and implementing partners). SPARK also supported the establishment of an internal HelpDesk on disability inclusion and facilitated immersive learning opportunities, including Learning Routes, extending its impact beyond the target countries.
7. IFAD improved its performance under the UNDIS reporting framework, meeting or exceeding 11 out of 16 indicators in 2024. While further efforts are needed in specific areas, the overall trend reflects growing institutional commitment and provides a solid foundation for scaling up disability inclusion across IFAD's work.

## Challenges and Key lessons

8. As disability inclusion is still a relatively new focus for IFAD, additional efforts are needed to build awareness and capacity among staff and project teams, ensuring meaningful integration of disability inclusion concerns not only at design, but throughout the project cycle.
9. Project reviews indicate that identifying persons with disabilities as a target group does not always translate into clear targeting and disability inclusion strategies, adoption of disability-inclusive approaches, or engagement with disability-specific expertise—potentially limiting both outreach and impact. The collection and use of disability-disaggregated data also remains limited, making it difficult to systematically monitor progress at the corporate level.
10. A lack of dedicated staff and financial resources continues to constrain disability mainstreaming. Currently, oversight of this technical areas is managed by a Senior Technical Specialist on Gender and Social Inclusion, who also serves as IFAD's focal point on disability inclusion.
11. The experience with SPARK demonstrated the value of having a dedicated grant to implement targeted interventions and pilot innovative disability-inclusive tools while building awareness and capacities of local communities and implementing partners. Building on SPARK's positive results, IFAD has started to explore options for mobilizing additional resources to consolidate and scale up inclusive approaches in new projects and regions.

## Actions required to enhance/improve performance

12. Expand capacity development opportunities on disability-inclusive programming for IFAD staff, project teams, government counterparts, and implementing partners.
13. Develop targeted guidance materials and practical tools to support the design and implementation of inclusive projects.
14. Allocate adequate staff and financial resources to provide technical support, aligned with IFAD13's commitment to design at least five new inclusive projects.

15. Strengthen monitoring systems to enable more systematic collection of disability-disaggregated data and improve results tracking.

**IFAD13 outlook**

16. The seven disability-inclusive projects approved under IFAD12 will be closely monitored and supported during implementation, while technical assistance will be provided to design at least five new projects under IFAD13.
17. The mid-term review of the Disability Inclusion Strategy, scheduled for presentation to the Executive Board in 2025, will offer an opportunity to assess progress, identify gaps, and refine strategic direction for IFAD13.
26. Given the ongoing need to enhance capacities and solidify best practices and lessons learned, exploring the potential for mobilizing resources for dedicated interventions on disability inclusion will be prioritized.

## Evidence-based products developed in 2024 related to mainstreaming themes

Knowledge products from prior years of IFAD12 are found in the corresponding years RIME.

Category	Title	Theme
Briefs	<a href="#">Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems: Lessons Learned from the SAMRIDDHI Rural Enterprises and Remittances Project in Nepal</a>	Lessons from Indigenous Peoples' food systems in Nepal.
	<a href="#">IFAD13 Core Additional Climate Contributions: Enhancing IFAD's climate work</a>	Rationale and structure of IFAD13 climate contributions.
	<a href="#">Highlights from the Crisis Response Initiative in Malawi</a>	Outcomes from Malawi's Crisis Response Initiative.
	<a href="#">Developing Gender Transformative Approaches through Gender Analysis for Enhanced Women's Land and Resource Rights</a>	Gender analysis for enhancing land/resource rights.
	<a href="#">Technical Brief: IFAD's response to tropical cyclone Freddy in Malawi</a>	Impact analysis of Cyclone Freddy on Malawi's rural systems.
	<a href="#">Theory of change for gender transformative programming for food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture</a>	Outlines gender transformative programming for food systems.
	<a href="#">Securing Women's Resource Rights through Gender Transformative Approaches: Learning Exchange</a>	Peer learning on securing women's resource rights.
	<a href="#">Securing Women's Resource Rights through Gender Transformative Approaches: A socio-legal review</a>	Review of legal frameworks on women's land tenure.
	<a href="#">Note pratique: Mise en repos et régénération naturelle assistée (RNA)</a>	Note on restoring degraded rangelands in Djibouti through assisted regeneration and sustainable management.
Guidelines	<a href="#">Step-by-step guide to integrating a gender transformative approach throughout the project cycle</a>	Step-by-step guide for applying GTA in projects.
	<a href="#">Guidelines for measuring gender transformative change in the context of food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture</a>	Guidelines for designing and evaluating GTA interventions.

	<a href="#">A Practical Guide for Including Agricultural Methane Emission Reduction Targets in Nationally Determined Contributions</a>	Guide to integrating methane targets in national plans.
Reports	<a href="#">Djibouti: Programme to Reduce Vulnerability in Coastal Fishing Areas</a>	Multisector adaptation programme in coastal Djibouti.
	<a href="#">Mali: Fostering Agricultural Productivity Project</a>	Renewable energy and biogas systems for rural Mali.
	<a href="#">Mozambique: Pro-Poor Value Chain Development in the Maputo and Limpopo Corridors</a>	Climate-smart innovations in Mozambique value chains.
	<a href="#">Sudan: Butana Integrated Rural Development Project</a>	Governance framework for resource conflict reduction.
	<a href="#">The Gambia: National Agricultural Land and Water Management Development Project</a>	Innovation in irrigation, markets, and agroforestry in Gambia.
	<a href="#">Case Study: Project to Strengthen Resilience of Rural Communities to Food and Nutrition Insecurity in Niger</a>	Results of a resilience project in rural Niger.
	<a href="#">Climate Action Report 2024</a>	Showcases climate and development case studies from IFAD.
	<a href="#">Lessons Learned from the Resilient Food Systems Programme</a>	Insights from the Resilient Food Systems initiative.
	<a href="#">Lessons learned from IFAD's response to Cyclone Freddy in Malawi</a>	Summary of lessons from IFAD's Cyclone Freddy response.
	<a href="#">Migrant remittances and diaspora finance for climate resilience</a>	Overview of diaspora and remittance strategies for climate resilience.
	<a href="#">Remittances for climate change adaptation in Mali</a>	Use of remittances to support climate adaptation in Mali.
	<a href="#">Community-based seed-revolving mechanisms in Kyrgyzstan</a>	Overview of Kyrgyzstan's community seed fund model for disaster-affected mountain farmers.
	<a href="#">Investing in Livestock for Improved and Resilient Livelihoods, Nutrition and Climate Action</a>	Position paper with five recommendations for climate-smart livestock investments that support livelihoods and reduce emissions.
	<a href="#">IFAD, 2024, Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems: Lessons Learned from the SAMRIDDHI Rural Enterprises and Remittances Project in Nepal</a>	Brief on lessons from Nepal's SAMRIDDHI Project and Indigenous Peoples food systems.

	<a href="#">Walking the Walk: Reducing Methane Emissions from Agrifood Systems</a>	Scalable solutions for reducing methane from food systems.
	<a href="#">A Decade of Innovation: Achievements and Opportunities in Climate Adaptation Finance</a>	ASAP's achievements and lessons in climate adaptation.
	<a href="#">Mapping affordable and transferrable climate-smart technologies for smallholder farmers</a>	Mapping climate-smart tech for smallholder challenges.
	<a href="#">Strengthening agroforestry in rural investments: Lessons learned and best practices from IFAD operations</a>	Insights into agroforestry's role in climate resilience.
	<a href="#">Securing Women's Resource Rights through Gender Transformative Approaches: A socio-legal review</a>	Review of legal frameworks on women's land tenure.
	<a href="#">Integrating nutrition into IFAD's investments in the Pacific</a>	Review of nutrition-sensitive investments in the Pacific.
	<a href="#">Diagnóstico de normas de género en la agricultura familiar y campesina - Un estudio piloto en dos provincias del Ecuador</a>	Technical paper providing a summary of a pilot diagnostic study conducted by FAO, IFAD and WFP in two provinces of Ecuador.
	<a href="#">Diagnostic of gender and age norms in financial inclusion - A pilot study in five districts of Malawi</a>	This report presents an investigation into how social norms impact rural women's and youth's ability to access and use formal financial products and services in Malawi.
Other Communications	<a href="#">Pathways to inclusion: Lessons and strategies for Disability-Inclusive Rural Transformation</a>	Insights from the 2024 SPARK Learning Route in Malawi
	<a href="#">Storybook: The Year the Cold Didn't Come</a>	Climate change-themed storybook.
	<a href="#">Photobook: South Sudan Empowering women, building a resilient future</a>	Highlights IFAD's impact on South Sudanese women and communities.
	<a href="#">Operations Academy: ICT4D in Agriculture - Natural Resource Management, Biodiversity and Climate Adaptation</a>	This advanced course builds on the ' <a href="#">Fundamentals of ICT4D in Agriculture</a> ' course to further IFAD staff's understandings of key principles and approaches to integrate digital solutions into IFAD's work.
	<a href="#">Empowering Persons with Disabilities in Agriculture</a>	Video highlighting the key moments from this 2024 SPARK Learning Route in Malawi.

	<a href="#">Malawi 202312 Gender Learning Route</a>	Video highlighting the key moments from this 2023 SPARK Learning Route in Malawi.
	<a href="#">How rural Maharashtra is challenging gender norms &amp; building climate resilience</a>	Overview video from IFAD's Gender Transformative Mechanism (GTM)
	<a href="#">Feeding the future: Empowering women through the JP RWEE</a>	Overview video from the Joint Programme on Rural Women's Economic Empowerment (JP RWEE)
<b>External Collaborations</b>	<a href="#">Sustainable Asset Valuation of Nature-Based Infrastructure in Eswatini</a>	Report assesses the value of agroforestry, aiming to guide future project design and financing.
	<a href="#">NBI to Combat Water Scarcity in Kenya</a>	Assesses how nature-based infrastructure (NBI) components contribute to protecting local communities against natural hazards and boost crop productivity.
	<a href="#">Nature-Based Solutions for Health</a>	Overview of the IUCN–WHO report on how nature-based solutions can improve health outcomes and support climate, biodiversity, and resilience goals.
	<a href="#">Elevating the potential of rural youth: Paths to Decent Jobs and Sustainable Futures</a>	Addresses the urgent need to create decent jobs for rural youth by examining both the demand and supply sides of the rural labour market