



Sierra Leone Country Strategy and Programme Evaluation

Presentation to the Evaluation Committee
108th Session
1 April 2020

Independent Office
of Evaluation

 **LIFAD**
Investing in rural people

Portfolio (2003-2019)

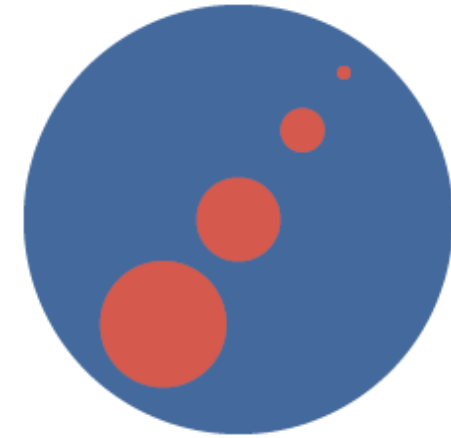
Evaluated portfolio	Total: USD 201 million
IFAD	USD 98 million
Government	USD 21 million
International co-financing	USD 63 million
Loan projects	2 closed, 2 ongoing/not closed, 1 recently started
Grants	18 regional/global grants
COSOPs	2003, 2010, Country Strategy Note 2017-18

Strategic Focus

Strategic objectives and focus over evaluation period	COSOP 2003	COSOP 2010
	<p>Crop diversification, income generating activities and promotion of small-scale rural enterprises.</p> <p>Revitalization of the rural financial market to promote rural growth</p> <p>Community development</p>	<p>Support to agriculture</p> <p>Support to rural finance</p> <p>Support to local development</p>

Major outputs achieved

- Over 800,000 people reached
- 20,000 hectares of rice and tree crop rehabilitated
- 76 functional CBs/FSAs
- 1300 kms of rural roads rehabilitated
- 52 Agri-Business Centres transformed



Overall strategy and programme

Overall, strategic objectives achieved moderately.

Relevant strategic focus areas, solid alignment with governments' policies and credible targeting strategy, but insufficient attention to enhancing synergy between different IFAD instruments

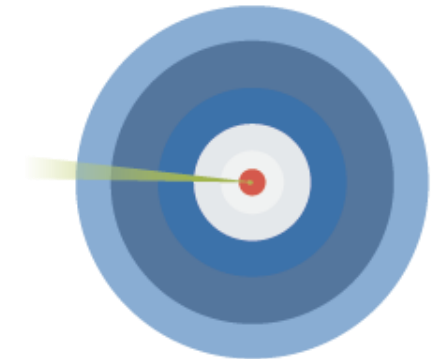
Modest contribution from the non-lending side in addressing key constraints in the lending portfolio and only modest investment in feeding lessons learned into government policy development.

Focus more on development and over-sight of the individual projects rather than on management of the country programme as a coherent whole.

The context of chronic fragility and Ebola to be borne in mind

Efficiency, Effectiveness and Rural Poverty Impact

- Disbursement performance satisfactory (IFAD-99%)
- Economic efficiency: positive rate of return on investment
- Improved crop productivity contributed to household assets improvement
- No hard evidence on food security improvement
- Rehabilitation of roads improved connectivity
- Agro-processing and market linkages less successful
- RFIs successful in reaching people, but agricultural loans low



Gender equality & women's empowerment/Youth

- Quotas helped women's engagement, but size not representative of population
- Income increases for women; no specific activities for women headed HHs
- GALS brought acceptance of women as partners but not all take it sufficiently seriously yet.
- Youth engagement sought through quotas; youth-specific activities in agriculture lacking



Sustainability of benefits

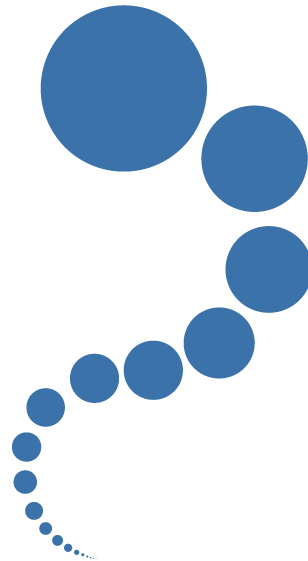
Most FSAs and CBs viable and operate in a sustainable manner; the APEX Bank operates below agreed sustainability targets

Farmers may face issues with availability of seed, fertiliser and extension services

Some grassroot institutions are able to act independently

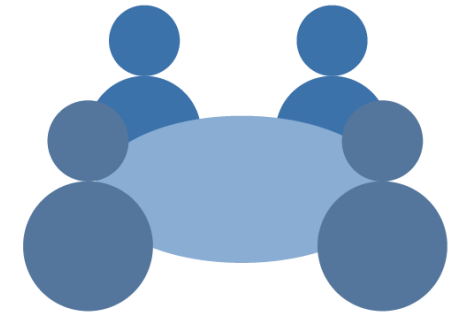
Marketability is less than optimal since many farmers sell individually and trained farmers are not linked to ABCs (yet)

Sustainability in government institutions is threatened by lack of capacity and funding



Non-lending activities

- Focus of Knowledge Management more on enhancing project implementation and less on programme development or policy dialogue.
- Partnerships limited; principal partner - Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
- Policy engagement weak; ICO capacity not sufficient
- Grants not used to support knowledge management or policy engagement in the lending portfolio



Conclusions

- IFAD's portfolio managed to keep its relevance strong
- Portfolio successful in taking financial services to large parts of rural areas; true financial inclusion was missed
- Notable efforts to include youth, but a more strategic approach required
- Lack of strong market linkages impaired realization of full potential.
- Primary focus on production at the cost of diversification and nutrition.
- The effectiveness of the lending portfolio constrained by capacity to undertake non-lending activities



Recommendations

- 1** Deepen the developmental impact through strengthening value chain linkages.
- 2** Pursue diversification more vigorously to improve nutrition and build economic resilience.
- 3** Elevate the engagement in rural finance by building on the existing structures.
- 4** Re-balance the focus to management of the country programme.
- 5** Strengthen the targeting focus through a country-specific youth strategy.