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Investing in rural people

## **Republic of the Sudan**

### **Country Strategy and Programme Evaluation**

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**For: Review**

## Agreement at Completion Point

### A. Introduction

1. The Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD (IOE) undertook a country strategy and programme evaluation (CSPE) in Sudan in 2019. This CSPE followed the country programme evaluation in 2008 by IOE and was the third country-level evaluation for Sudan. The main objectives of the CSPE were to: (i) assess the results and performance of the IFAD country programme; and (ii) generate findings and recommendations to steer the future partnership between IFAD and the Government for enhanced development effectiveness and rural poverty eradication.
2. The CSPE covers the period 2009-2018. Three key dimensions of the country strategy and programme were assessed in the CSPE: (i) project portfolio performance; (ii) non-lending activities, namely, knowledge management, partnership building and country-level policy engagement; and (iii) performance of IFAD and the Government. Building on the analysis on these three dimensions, the CSPE assesses the relevance and effectiveness at the country strategy and programme level.
3. This agreement at completion point (ACP) contains recommendations based on the evaluation findings and conclusions presented in the CSPE report, as well as proposed follow-up actions as agreed by IFAD and the Government. The signed ACP is an integral part of the CSPE report in which the evaluation findings are presented in detail, and will be submitted to the IFAD Executive Board as an annex to the new country strategic opportunities programme for Sudan. The implementation of the recommendations agreed upon will be tracked through the President's Report on the Implementation Status of Evaluation Recommendations and Management Actions, which is presented to the IFAD Executive Board on an annual basis by the Fund's Management.

### B. Recommendations and proposed follow-up actions

4. **Recommendation 1: Identify opportunities for partnerships and cofinancing to scale up achievements in key areas and generate greater impact**, including the following:
  - i. Explore options to mobilize resources for integrated programmes, including basic infrastructure interventions. The rural infrastructures funded by IFAD's portfolio, such as rural roads and water provision (for humans and animals), have proven effective and often necessary interventions to address rural poverty, complementing productive activities (crop and livestock production, forestry) and natural resource management. IFAD should explore options for mobilizing cofinancing resources for this purpose so as to facilitate enabling conditions for rural communities to be engaged in productive activities and to reduce the risk of a more commercialized approach favouring the better-resourced and more accessible communities. At the same time, there should also be policy engagement with the Government to develop and operationalize a strategy and mobilize resources for adequate operation and maintenance. Support for water provision (for humans and animals) is key in rainfed areas and needs to be integrated into IFAD investment or complementary interventions.
  - ii. Identify and strengthen partnerships with non-state actors and development agencies fundamental to the achievements of the projects and the COSOP. IFAD needs to be more inclusive and gain from the comparative advantage of other organizations and institutions with complementary expertise (e.g. academic and research institutions, civil society organizations, NGOs, bilateral and multilateral development agencies and international agricultural research centres). This is

important to strengthen: poverty, food and nutrition analysis and assessments; conflict analysis; agricultural research; community development; natural resource governance; agriculture policy dialogue; technology transfer; and innovation.

- iii. Refocus attention on institutional and policy influence to promote inclusive finance. IFAD should, in collaboration with CBOS and other partners, identify opportunities to address policy-level and systemic issues to develop an enabling environment for inclusive finance. This should build on the experience on the ground in Sudan, as well as IFAD corporate experience and knowledge elsewhere. Support may be within the project framework as well as by mobilizing technical assistance or a grant. Furthermore, the relationship with ABSUMI and ABS should be revisited to clarify a long-term vision and the scope for reinforcing the strategic partnership.

**Proposed follow-up:** Agreed. IFAD and the Government of Sudan to take the full advantage of the new opportunities and synergies to collaborate with a range of local and international development partners to strengthening Sudan's investment in key sectors such as basic services, agriculture and agribusiness including climate resilience.

- There should be a commitment by IFAD and the Government to enhancing efforts to develop new partnerships and to strengthen coordination in resource mobilization in particular to activities supporting the scaling-up and sustaining impacts generated by development interventions in areas of infrastructure and basic services provision. The added value and the synergies leveraged by government, communities, UN agencies, private sector and development partners in availing additional resources is an opportunity to complementing each other on the programmatic activities through strengthened resource mobilization efforts.
- Stakeholders and partners, such as academia (universities & research institutions), NGOs, CSOs and development partners have to work closely with the government on common agenda related to poverty alleviation, food security, nutrition, agricultural policies, technology transfer, natural resources governance and conflict management through defined long-term vision in prioritizing thematic areas for reform.
- Using experiences emanating from the practical implementation to anchor the policy dialogue on an evidence-based to influence policies and institutions reform. This has added credibility to IFAD's policy engagements and is testimony to the value of having a bottom up policy dialogue approach. The IFAD's experience with ABSUMI remains valid for fostering collaboration among development funding institutions including CBOS to identify opportunities to address policy-level and systemic arrangements to develop an enabling environment for reframing strategic partnership for inclusive finance to rural investment activities.

Responsible partners: all projects/programmes, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, Directorate of Foreign Finance, Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, International Relations Department, other relevant line ministries departments, UN agencies, Donors and IFAD.

Timeline: 2020 onward. Government strategies and agreements will give special attention to the promotion of co-financing through government partnership with international financing institutions and allocation of counterpart funding from government resources. MoFEP and MoANR to provide sufficient support to strengthening of partnership with technology promotion and MFIs.

5. **Recommendation 2: Ensure an inclusive and differentiated targeting strategy.** In particular, greater attention is needed to more effectively engage mobile pastoral communities as well as vulnerable households based on sound diagnostic analyses, and to monitor their participation and outcomes, while building on the solid achievements made in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment and reinforcing support for the rural youth.

**Proposed follow-up:** Agreed. Mobile pastoral communities have truly been targeted by completed and ongoing IFAD projects in Sudan. Effective outreach and targeting approaches should be considered for better engagement of such categories through comprehensive analysis of their needs and demand for services. The approaches should take into account the geographical areas, type and timing of interventions, gender and specific needs, building on proper situational analysis and in-depth understanding of the context.

- Projects outreach and targeting approaches to consider engagement of mobile pastoralists through targeting and selection criteria based on understanding the pattern of their livelihoods.
- Studies and assessments conducted by government, projects and partners must serve to highlight gaps in services directed to different components of the communities.

Responsible partners: all projects/programmes, government related ministries and departments at federal and state levels and IFAD.

Timeline: 2020 onward. Federal and state levels government will provide clear guidance on poverty targeting approaches and strategies that will be imbedded in the new COSOP (2021-2026) for the Sudan.

6. **Recommendation 3: Support the institutional capacity development of key government counterpart agencies at local and state levels, while building stronger links with IFAD-financed projects, to enhance sustainability.** IFAD needs to adopt a strategy of closer integration with relevant line ministries and agencies at a decentralized level (especially those responsible for agriculture, animal resources and range, and water). Key entry points for support could be in the areas of essential functions of these institutions – for example, data collection and collation (e.g. agricultural statistics), the development of M&E systems for government and non-government interventions in the sector(s), shared extension services, and the formulation of strategies and policies.

**Proposed follow-up:** Agreed. This requires government and IFAD to consider existence of sustainability elements in terms of institutions, implementation arrangements, technical capacities and financial resources to be secured with sufficient functionality and adequate governance and transparency measures.

- Starting from the design of the projects, sustainability factors should be taken into account based on a solid analysis of existing government and community institutions to ensure their capability in taking over the responsibility of upscaling and sustaining the development impacts and results.
- Government is a key community supporter in better planning by forming the structures and organizations to provide the legal, administrative and financial requirements for sustainable development.
- IFAD will ensure a critical institutional assessments would be carried out to inform the exit strategy planned at the design of projects to satisfy the sustainability requirements. Hence, design of interventions should pay full attention to the sustainability factors throughout the implementation and evaluation of the interventions.

Responsible partners: all projects/programmes, government related ministries and departments at federal and state levels, targeted communities and IFAD.

Timeline: 2020 onward. All designs of the new projects/programmes have to ensure integration of sustainability elements including resources in every development intervention.

7. **Recommendation 4: Better articulate the theory of change in country and project strategies that underlines the expected poverty impact.** Greater attention is required at the project conceptualization stage to identify the pathways through which the project goals (e.g. reduced poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition) could be achieved. Consistent indicators for measuring the effectiveness and impact of project interventions should be set along the same pathways. This will contribute to a more effective monitoring and analysis of the activities which lead to scaling-up of good practices that bring fundamental changes in the livelihood contexts of the engaged rural communities.

**Proposed follow-up**: Agreed. Usually development strategies require government to put in place specific planning, participation and evaluation methodologies with the involvement of the communities to promote socioeconomic changes. These strategies show how expected outcomes occur over the short, medium and longer terms as a result of a joint work.

- Goals assist in selecting right implementation arrangements and practices in achieving the specified objectives within specific timeframes. The government has a fundamental role in setting the strategies and objectives for creating the intended changes.
- All stakeholders including government and communities should adopt effective/efficient monitoring tools to track the changes encountered from applied practices and interventions.
- Outcome evidences will be used to convincing decision and policy makers on results for improvement. Stakeholders are encouraged to adopt qualified monitoring and evaluation systems and equipment.

Responsible partners: all projects/programmes, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, Directorate of Foreign Finance, Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, International Relations Department, other relevant line ministries departments, state-level ministries and departments, communities and IFAD.

Timeline: 2020 onward. Government ministries will lead the technical implementation of the development projects to provide guidance on government priorities and objectives for defining changes under questions. As well, strengthening its monitoring mechanisms to qualifying and quantifying results of interventions and value of resources.

8. **Recommendation 5: Strengthen the KM platform for IFAD-financed projects to foster information-sharing across the projects and partnership, as well as to bolster effective monitoring of the IFAD portfolio.** The strategy for KM is ambitious and well intentioned, but without sufficient resources, technical support and leadership it will not be realized. It is important that IFAD, the Government of Sudan and other development partners benefit from the rich experience of the IFAD portfolio in the country, including good practices and lessons learned.

**Proposed follow-up**: Agreed. The Country KM Strategy contributes to meeting the Sudan portfolio targets, enhances the implementation of the RB-COSOP, generates evidence-based knowledge that improves the effectiveness, efficiency and quality of IFAD's operations for greater outreach and impact as well as improve visibility, credibility and influence on sustainable rural development.

- Key stakeholders including the Central Coordination Unit (CCU), the projects, key Ministries at State and Federal level, communities and the ICO to avail financial and human resources as well as, creation of suitable structures and facilities for the implementation of the KM strategy.
- Ministries at state and federal level, beneficiaries organizations and partners to foster better planning, coordination and dissemination (better audience targeting) of knowledge and good practices with the purpose of supporting the sustainability and scaling up of successes.
- Technical capacities from government staff, projects staff, CCU, communities and partners to be strengthened and equipped with appropriate tools and facilities to maximize use of KM in improving outcomes and impact of development interventions, as well as policy engagement.

Responsible partners: all projects/programmes, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Ministry of Animal Resources and Fisheries, CCU, state-level ministries and departments, communities, relevant partners and IFAD.

Timeline: 2020 onward. The government line ministries will link the existing KM platforms, activities and structures with IFAD-funded projects strategies through better coordination and leadership.

9. **Recommendation 6: Strengthen IFAD's capacity to be better engaged in project supervision and reviews, KM, coordination across strategic partnerships (especially on NRM), and policy dialogue.** This could involve human resource and technical capacities (e.g. staffing at the country office, technical support from headquarters or the subregional hub), as well as resource allocation to upgrade non-lending activities (e.g. grant funding to pilot innovative approaches and/or to engage strategic partners; analytical studies). It is important that the country office be more actively engaged in project oversight, supervision and conceptualization to ensure consistency in approach. This in turn needs to draw upon an effective and informative knowledge platform. Furthermore, the country office, in collaboration with relevant partners, should be more active in policy engagement in the new political environment emerging in Sudan.

**Proposed follow-up:** Agreed. The ICO has control over field missions besides handling other variety of obligations, not limited to, the day-to-day follow up with government and projects on portfolio management and operations and contributing to the UNCT responsibility framework:

- IFAD Country Office (ICO) should maximize the use of its financial resources and technical capacities (human resources) to improve its engagement in the non-lending activities.
- Government to facilitate identifying areas for policy engagement and to provide effective follow-up procedures and regulatory frameworks for investment on KM products for the sake of creation conducive environment for development initiatives to widen the scope of benefits generated by collaborative development interventions.

Responsible partners: IFAD Headquarters, IFAD Country Office and government related line ministries and departments.

Timeline: 2020 onward. ICO will communicate and work closely with the Headquarters, sub-regional hub, government and projects to promote engagement in all country related activities.

**Signed by:**



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**Date:** 08/09/2020



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