Sub-Regional Evaluation (SRE) of countries in fragile situations: Learning from the G5 countries + Nigeria (G5+1)
• First sub-regional evaluation (SRE), with objective: to enhance evidence based learning for an improved IFAD’s engagement.

• Fragility theme identified and G5 Sahel countries + Norther Nigeria selected.

• Period covered: 2010 – 2021, lending and non lending operations.

• Context: persistent rural poverty, environmental degradation, climate change burdens, social inequity, and insecurity due to medium intensity conflict.

• Mixed-methods approach and fragility analytical framework applied;
Fragility analytical framework

- Degradation of natural resources and climate change burdens
- High poverty and weak economic framework
- Social inequality and weak social cohesion
- Weak institutions, poor governance leading to trust erosion in public institutions
- Great insecurity and violent conflicts due to extremist groups

Main fragility drivers (G5+1) → Fragile situations → Building resilience

Fragility
High vulnerability to man-made and natural shocks and stressors

Interventions to reduce the exposure and to adapt to shocks

Resilience
Absorptive, adaptive and transformative capacities are in place

Interventions to reduce the vulnerability and/or intensity of fragility burdens

Source: SRE team
Increased prioritization of IFAD’s support to resilience building, but a lack of comprehensive fragility analysis.

- Focus on building resilience, explicitly after 2015.
- Three categories of fragility drivers addressed: economic poverty, climate change and social inequity.
- Weak state institutions and violent conflict: managed as risks to mitigate.
- Fragility analyses are not performed systematically or not holistically.
- Added value and usage of such analyses are not clear for country teams.
Coherence between consecutive projects and within the program, but insufficient reflection of specific features of working in fragile contexts.

- Coherence between consecutive loan operations and within programs.
- Learning not specifically intended to enhance how to address fragility drivers, except in Nigeria.
- Weak capacities of public institutions not explicitly factored into designs.
- Transhumance not well incorporated in IFAD’s country strategies.
- Partnership and policy engagement unused to better addressing fragility.
Results: socioeconomic fragility

Supporting: income generating activities, customary saving and credit groups and non financial services were instrumental in building resilience.

• Improved farming practices, increased yields and reduced yield variability.

• Supports to customary credit and saving groups (e.g. Chad and Mauritania).

• Promotion of cereal bank facilities, (e.g. in Chad and Mali).

• Trainings, inclusive value chain supports and inclusive financial access have been critical (all six countries).
Empowering grassroots’ organisations to deliver effectively and participate in policy discussion were critical for resilience building.

• Positive results in support organizations of producers, communities related and their apex. Example of ROPPA.

• They are critical to ensure the sustainability of projects’ results.

• Mixed results achieved for the functionality of water users’ associations of small-scale irrigation schemes (in Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, and Niger).

• Endogenous grassroots’ mechanisms: useful to strengthen social cohesion.
Soil and water conservation practices and diversification of livelihoods were critical for adaptation strategies.

- Soil and water conservation, small-scale irrigation are useful adaptive strategies: climate-smart agriculture.
- GEF and ASAP funding: instrumental to support positive strategies for smallholders’ adaptation to climate change.
- Insufficient support on environmental issues linked to pastoralism.
- Land tenure issues remain critical in the sub-region, yet not fully addressed.
Challenges in terms of financing conditions and field presence, which reduced IFAD’s effectiveness in fragile situations.

- Low flexibility of loan financing conditions, not allowing swift adjustments.
- Grant financing: more appropriate and adaptive but very limited amounts.
- Challenges of governments to meet their co-financing agreement.
- Positively, availability of international climate financing (e.g. GEF and GCF).
- Non residence country directors (5/6) constrained ability to respond swiftly.
Conclusion: main points

• A nexus approach of rural poverty and conflict was not applied by supported operations.

• Key strategic and operational lessons include:
  • Holistic fragility analyses;
  • Effective partnerships to address all main fragility drivers;
  • Strengthening grassroots institutions, and endogenous mechanisms;
  • Supports to women and youths;
  • Promoting climate-smart agriculture;
  • Flexible financing mechanism, and close supports for longer periods.
Recommendations

- **Recommendation 1.** Develop a comprehensive resilience framework for the sub-region or region to guide assessments, designs and implementation of operations (at field, national and regional levels).

- **Recommendation 2.** Use the opportunity of IFAD decentralization 2.0 to improve the capabilities of country teams, interactions, and agility for effective delivery in the G5+1 fragile contexts.

- **Recommendation 3.** Revisit approaches for VCD support within the sub-region to further improve the inclusiveness, and to build on community-driven approaches in highly fragile areas.
Recommendation 4. Further promote the resilience of rural communities through supports to POs/FOs and CBOs to effectively deliver services and strengthen their capacity to engage in policy dialogue on topics related to them.

Recommendation 5. Organize greater support to country teams for a greater effectiveness of non-lending operations in those contexts.
Thank you