

IOE



Investing in rural people

Independent Office of Evaluation



127 Evaluation
Committee

31 Oct. 2024

Republic of India
Country Strategy and Programme Evaluation
Key Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

- Scope: COSOP 2018, 13 projects (7 completed, 6 on going), covering 12 States.
- Evaluated portfolio: US\$2.46 billion, with co-financing from World Bank, Gates Foundation, BMZ.
- States visited: 7 Jharkhand (JTELP), Maharashtra (CAIM, Tejaswini, Nav Tejaswini), Meghalaya (LAMP), Mizoram (FOCUS), Odisha (OPELIP) and Uttarakhand (ILSP, REAP).
- Evaluation design reconstructed theory of change;
- Application of mixed-methods approach.



Results: relevance & coherence

- 2018 COSOP overall well-aligned with government strategies and priorities;
- Good geographic selection of states, with a focus on disadvantaged areas;
- Recognition of IFAD as a key actor for smallholder agriculture, STs and gender;
- Good convergence of most projects with various government departments;
- Strong partnership with DEA with periodical portfolio review meetings, as well as with State governments - worked well;
- Increased partnership with international partners (e.g. WB, BMZ);
- Investments enabled policy results in states with a long history of collaboration.

- Effective outreach of poor and disadvantaged groups.
- Community mobilization was instrumental and contributed to remunerative and resilient production systems and livelihoods, as well as social empowerment.
- Contribution to improved sustainable agricultural production systems and livelihoods, through improved agriculture practices and soil conservation efforts.
- Supports enabled access to financial services, and off-farm employment enabled.
- Contribution to improving dietary diversity among women, children and PVTGs;
- Numerous innovations promoted: e.g. Shaurya Dal (bravery squads), digital financial services, insurance, chain link fences; spiral grain separators.

- Women's participation: increased opportunities and access to resources for them; raising of women's status; Improved women's confidence and voice, (two States);
- Continuous government's support for grassroots institutions;
- Absorption into government structures of community cadres;
- Line agencies enabled provision of funding for scaling up;
- SHG model scaled up to state and national rural missions.
- Promoted sustainable farming practices and soil and water conservation activities;
- Community institutions formed to manage natural resources;
- Adaptation strategies: sustainable farming, diversification, insurance.



- Unrealistic having projects to be “simpler, larger and shorter in duration”;
- Lack of explicit strategy for dissemination of practices and adoption through knowledge exchange;
- Insufficient cross-learning and quality of outcome level data generated;
- Partnerships with the private sector pursued in some projects, but not generally;
- Efficiency challenges identified in previous evaluation remain valid:
implementation delays, turnover in key staff positions, delayed / insufficient funds flow at state level;
- Partial cancellation of some loans and lack of progress in new designs, leading to wasted efforts of all.

- Insufficient partnerships with the private sector through contractual arrangements and multi-stakeholder platforms;
- Lack of evidence on contribution to food security: poor measurement and food deficits were not significant in most project areas prior to the interventions);
- Weakness in dissemination of improved farm and husbandry practices: peer-to-peer learning and gender-differentiated approach;
- Financial viability and business cases for investments not clearly established;
- Support to grassroots organizations oriented to production and marketing activities was largely output- and incentive-driven, thus insufficient to enable self-reliant institutions.

- Mainstreaming of gender for most projects, but not effectively monitored; Insufficient attention to GTA;
- Less progress on women's entrepreneurship and access to markets and mixed results for easing women workloads;
- Mixed sustainability results of operational and maintenance arrangements for infrastructure or machinery;
- No evidence of scaling up at central level;
- Insufficient attention given to water efficiency and in monitoring of environmental safeguards;
- Uncertain sustainability of promoted settled agriculture in traditionally *jhum* areas;
- Unclear evidence of socio-economic and environmental assessment prior to expanding certain production systems (monoculture, goat rearing).

- High relevance and alignment with government policies and priorities;
- Positive incidence of rural finance supports and supports for smallholder livelihoods resilience;
- Evidence of scaling up at state level;
- Positive results in enhancing social capital and for raising women's status in the intervention areas;
- But less opportunity for cross learning, and for dissemination of improved practices;
- Insufficient development of partnerships with private actors, and efforts for market access;
- Persistent portfolio inefficiency issues.



Recommendation 1

- The next COSOP should establish IFAD's added value, to be supported by multi-pronged strategies based on the profiles of target groups, partners' capacities, and types of development challenges.

Recommendation 2

- Emphasise the promotion of effective monitoring, feeding into knowledge management and innovation for scaling up in all aspects of the country strategy and programme.

Recommendation 3

- Ensure adequate attention, investment and capacities in social capital enhancement for strengthening grassroots organizations.

Recommendation 4

- Strengthen market and business orientation in interventions aimed at improving small-scale producers' access to markets; this entails to identify clustering opportunities, and partner with private sector actors.

Recommendation 5

- Strengthen the care and considerations for the environment, natural resource management and climate resilience in a more integrated manner.

Recommendation 6

- Attention and measures to improve efficiency are needed. This requires a critical review by IFAD & GoI of issues, measures and actions.

Thank you for your attention



National Stakeholders' Workshop: New Delhi 07-10-2024
News Item: [here](#)