

IOE



Investing in rural people

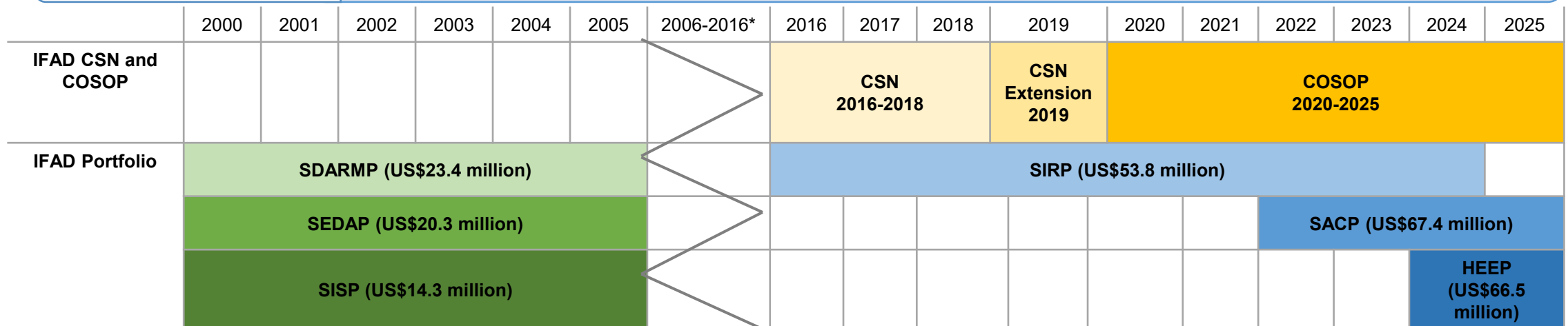
Independent Office of Evaluation



Evaluation
Committee
135th Session
Rome, 21 October
2026

Republic of Zimbabwe
Country Strategy and Programme Evaluation
Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

First	Country-level evaluation in Zimbabwe
Scope	Period 2016-2025; CSN 2016 and COSOP 2020, portfolio of projects and non-lending activities
Portfolio	Three projects (1 completed, 1 at mid-point, and 1 new)
Methodology	Mixed-methods approach



Findings: Relevance and Coherence

- Relevant strategic objectives and supported themes
- Relevant approaches and implementation arrangements
- Coherent internal structure of the programme, and complementarity of themes
- Positive programmatic approaches with a joint PMU



- Design quality moderate to insufficient on certain themes
- Technical design challenges, and institutional capacity not considered adequately at design stage
- Insufficient synergy developed with other partners
- Weak coordination of donor support at central level

Findings: Effectiveness and Impacts

- Better productivity and production
- Contract farming enabled access to markets and partnerships
- Effective nutrition-sensitive interventions
- Better governance and accountability in irrigation schemes
- Community-based financial mechanisms
- Increased household incomes, food and nutrition security, and improved human and social capital



- Market linkages have been informal and insufficient
- Private sector engagement has generated mixed results
- Limited progress on inclusive financial services
- Unsuccessful income diversification support in dryland areas

- Women's participation targets were achieved
- GALS contributed to meaningful changes: households, decision-making, and productivity, and women's resilience overall
- Improvements in women's access to economic opportunities
- Household influence and community leadership



- Youth participation was low; Uneven implementation of youth-specific interventions
- Limited evidence of income generation and employment for youth
- PWDs targeted through SACP, but participation still low
- No interventions implemented to address specific needs of PWD and people without access to land

- Economic returns of investments
- Effective engagement of government structures for routine support
- Strengthened community-based organisations: better ownership
- GALS: contribution to economic sustainability of households
- Effective community-based financial institutions
- Linkages with private actors contributed to sustaining market access



- Effectiveness lags increased over time
- Persistent fiduciary capacity gaps
- High inflation affected quality of results
- Financial vulnerability of farmers
- Lack of business development strategies
- Technical gaps reported by farmers and observed by the mission
- Insufficient financial and technical capacities of government structures

- Improved water efficiency and soil conservation
- Reduced soil erosion, and improved moisture and vegetation
- Multiple climate smart practices promoted and adopted by farmers,
- Land rehabilitation, catchment restoration, and biodiversity conservation
- Increased production and income diversification for resilience



- Ongoing water losses
- Gullies formed near pump sites
- Limited evidence of reforestation practices
- Insufficient staffing and budget to enforce standards
- No recent water resource and soil health studies

- Strong strategic partnership between GoZ and IFAD to enable resilience of smallholders
- Support bolstered KM and policy engagement
- Positive gains in promoting sustainable and resilient smallholder agriculture through revitalisation of existing irrigation schemes
- Positive outcomes in nutrition and gender-transformative change
- However, coordination gaps limited achieving greater results; and sustainability of results was critically constrained
- Limited outreach to youth, people with disabilities and landless people
- Mixed results for access to markets and in enabling efficiency gains



Recommendation 1. IFAD and the GoZ should pursue prioritising, in the next strategy, strengthening the resilience of smallholders but in a more holistic manner.

Recommendation 2. IFAD and the GoZ should systematically leverage non-lending activities and address institutional capacity gaps.

Recommendation 3. IFAD to strengthen its presence in Zimbabwe and support improving strategic and operational coordination within the agricultural sector.

Recommendation 4. IFAD and the GoZ to roll out sound thematic approaches aligned with the Zimbabwean context, that further strengthen rural resilience .

Recommendation 5. IFAD and the GoZ, building on positive experiences of gender transformative interventions, should strengthen social inclusion

Recommendation 6. IFAD and the GoZ to identify and implement appropriate solutions to remove bottlenecks that prevent achieving efficiency gains



Thank you for your attention