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**Republic of Türkiye**  
**Country strategic opportunities programme**  
**2025–2030**  
**Management’s response to Member States’ comments**

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Document: EB 2025/OR/2/Rev.1/Add.2

Date: 30 June 2025

Distribution: Public

Original: English

**FOR: INFORMATION**

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Comments by the United States	Management's response
<p>1. The United States thanks IFAD for the opportunity to review Türkiye's new COSOP. Overall, we appreciate the clear overview of the context setting out many of the challenges hindering Türkiye's development over the medium-term. Strategic Objective 2 is particularly well-targeted, linking IFAD's activities closely to IFAD's core mandate and ability to address many of the challenges identified.</p>	<p>1. Noted, with thanks.</p>
<p>2. The United States cannot accept an overbearing focus in the document on climate change or climate finance. Instead of general representations of climate change as an overarching policy priority or root cause of threats, we maintain that IFAD can be more effective in achieving its mandate by being explicit that its work is focused on helping farmers adapt to specific environmental threats, such as land degradation, drought, floods, and extreme heat. Unfortunately, this COSOP often fails to adequately link IFAD's proposed strategy to the real challenges facing rural communities. For example, the theory of change laid out in paragraph 29 for Strategic Objective 1 makes vague references to "supporting adaptation and mitigation goals," including the reduction of GHGs, rather than addressing specific threats faced by rural farmers in the country. Strategic Objective 1 also targets outcomes promoting the adoption of green technology, green infrastructure, and reduced GHG emissions, where a technology neutral approach may enhance IFAD's effectiveness in building the resilience of rural communities. We urge IFAD to</p>	<p>2. Thank you for your thoughtful feedback and clear articulation of your concerns. We fully appreciate your point regarding the importance of clearly linking IFAD's strategic objectives to the specific and tangible challenges faced by rural communities. Indeed, IFAD's core mandate of poverty alleviation, food security and resilience-building remains our central priority. The COSOP identifies some of the specific challenges faced by rural communities that affect their resilience, food security and incomes. These include droughts, water resources under pressure compounded by inefficient water management practices, reduction in crop genetic resources, and land degradation, leading to a decrease in productivity of agricultural lands.</p> <p>The specific technologies outlined in strategic objective 1 reflect Türkiye's choice, particularly in a context where off-grid and relatively low-cost operating technologies may be more appropriate to address the specific challenges rural communities face.</p> <p>As the COSOP is a living document, we will use the annual and midterm reviews to further adjust and refine approaches and priorities as necessary in consultation with our partner government.</p>

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<p>avoid framing its work as a response to an all-encompassing "climate threat" and instead to remain steadfastly grounded in delivering its core mandate of poverty alleviation, food security, and resilience building.</p>	
<p>3. The United States believes that IFAD should focus on removing the barriers to socioeconomic opportunity for every individual in rural communities, without preferencing of individual groups. Diversity, equity, and inclusion policies diminish the importance of individual merit, aptitude, hard work, and determination. The United States believes people should not be stigmatized, demeaned, or shut out of opportunities because of their race, sex, age, or any other such characteristic. Strategic Objective 3 expressly preferences and limits participation to women and youth in a way that may exclude others from the benefits of IFAD's work under this Strategy. The United States urges IFAD revise its country strategies going forward to focus on promoting equality of opportunity and improving economic outcomes for all groups, which will also benefit women and youth.</p>	<p>3. Thank you for your feedback and concerns. We fully share your commitment to promoting equality of opportunity and ensuring that no individual is excluded from development benefits based on race, sex, age or other characteristics. These are principles central to the IFAD Targeting Policy approved in 2023.</p> <p>IFAD's country strategies, including the one for Türkiye, are anchored in the institution's mandate and commitments to invest in rural people, with a particular focus on addressing poverty and food insecurity among those who are most underserved. The identification of target groups within these strategies is grounded in context-specific socioeconomic analysis to ensure that IFAD's investments are responsive to the realities on the ground and effective in achieving their intended development outcomes.</p> <p>The focus on women and youth under strategic objective 3 is based on evidence that these groups often face the greatest barriers in rural areas. Addressing these gaps is not about exclusion but about expanding opportunity and unlocking potential that could benefit all members of the communities where IFAD projects are implemented.</p> <p>Going forward, we will aim to explain more clearly how these activities are indeed aimed at removing barriers to socioeconomic opportunities for all.</p>
<p>4. The United States appreciates IFAD's efforts to strengthen partnerships for enhancing policy engagement and informing decision makers about IFAD-promoted approaches. However, while the COSOP details key policy areas on which IFAD intends to focus, we do not believe it adequately outlines how IFAD will enhance its approach to policy engagement in a manner that addresses the</p>	<p>4. As outlined in the COSOP document, the country programme intends to strengthen partnerships to enhance policy engagement in the country. This will be done primarily at grassroots, village, district and municipal levels with the aim of ensuring that the needs and expectations of rural communities targeted through IFAD-financed investments are duly reflected in national decision-making forums to facilitate the reform of existing, or adoption of new, policies that support sustainable agriculture and provide a conducive environment for poor farmers to thrive. Indeed, we appreciate the importance of public stakeholders,</p>

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<p>clear weaknesses identified by IOE in the CSPE. We believe some other areas for improvement, such as institution-building and knowledge management, were more strongly addressed in this regard. The United States requests IFAD to provide additional insight and consider revising the COSOP to more clearly reflect its plan for strengthening its policy engagement activities, which will be critical to promote the long-term sustainability of its work as Türkiye transitions away from IFAD financing.</p>	<p>including local and national governments, as they create the conditions for the private sector and other institutional players such as farmers' organizations or cooperatives to work together for the promotion of long-term sustainable rural transformation.</p> <p>The key policy areas to be pursued during the COSOP implementation period are covered in the COSOP document itself. These were negotiated with the relevant authorities in Ankara, including the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, the Ministry of Treasury and Finance and the Presidency of Strategy and Budget.</p> <p>Lessons learned from policy engagement will systematically be captured to enable adjustment and reorient activities as appropriate. We will strengthen the country programme's evidence-based knowledge management framework to increase the effectiveness of the Fund's activities in the agriculture and rural development sectors. Through monitoring and evaluation, evidence will be captured to ensure that good practices and lessons learned from ongoing and future investments are institutionalized in technical guidelines that will inform future project designs to facilitate continuity and scaling of relevant methodologies and approaches.</p> <p>The country team will also continue to be an active player in relevant policy forums jointly with other development partners as has been the case with the formulation of the National Pathway Towards Sustainable Food Systems or individually, for instance, through its participation in working groups of the National Agriculture and Forestry Council and the elaboration of the country's twelfth Development Plan.</p> <p>As the COSOP has now been formally agreed <i>with our counterparts in Türkiye, no further changes will be made to the current document; however, the above will be borne in mind in the formulation of any new project designs developed and during the annual COSOP reviews for this COSOP period.</i></p>
<p>5. Weaknesses in the COSOP assessment framework continue to inject uncertainty and undermine our confidence in the graduation process. For example, neither indicator selected for monitoring progress toward eliminating hunger are</p>	<p>5. Türkiye has made significant progress over the past two decades, positioning itself on track to achieve high-income country status by the end of the COSOP period. However, while the income threshold for entering the graduation process according to IFAD's Graduation Policy has been exceeded, sustaining this trajectory will require addressing emerging challenges in several key sectors.</p>

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<p>direct measurements, instead monitoring obesity rates and fluctuations in food prices. While these may be valuable measurements in some contexts, they do little in terms of indicating Türkiye's progress towards reducing hunger, rural poverty, or the country's readiness to transition away from IFAD financing. We also find the completion targets for the RSPA indicators unrealistic considering the previously noted policy engagement weaknesses. Finally, we have previously commented positively on the inclusion of sub-regional indicators when relevant/practical, which we view as potentially better barometers of IFAD's impact in the most rural areas of each country. Given the use of sub-regional data for some indicators provided in Annex III, we request more insight into why IFAD chose not to integrate such data or targets into the overall graduation assessment criteria.</p>	<p>Macroeconomic stability and structural reforms are crucial for maintaining progress, particularly in sectors such as smallholder agriculture, where climate shocks and competitiveness challenges persist. Ensuring that these reforms lead to tangible results will be essential for sustaining the development momentum.</p> <p>Despite substantial economic growth, Türkiye faces considerable obstacles in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For SDG 1 (no poverty), while poverty reduction has been notable, the subnational distribution of poverty remains entrenched, particularly in rural and economically disadvantaged regions. Addressing this challenge will require targeted actions to reduce vulnerabilities among smallholder farmers and marginalized communities, whose economic resilience remains fragile despite national progress.</p> <p>Concerning SDG 2 (zero hunger), while progress has been made in reducing malnutrition, obesity has emerged as a significant public health challenge. This concern is compounded by unsustainable dietary patterns, such as increasing consumption of energy-intensive animal products, which reflects broader shifts in food consumption trends. Additionally, Türkiye's Sustainable Nitrogen Management Index, which measures efficiency in crop production, shows no clear improvement, signalling a need for more effective strategies in sustainable agriculture and resource management.</p> <p>For SDG 10 (reduced inequalities), Türkiye faces persistent income inequality, despite progress in poverty reduction. The regional disparities are stark, with eastern regions and rural areas experiencing significantly higher levels of vulnerability. The Gini coefficient and other indicators of inequality suggest that the progress made in poverty alleviation has not been equally shared across all segments of the population. In this context, while the country has made strides towards meeting certain SDG targets, the broader effort to reduce inequality has proved to be more difficult.</p> <p>Given that the end of the COSOP period will align with the end of 2030, it would be prudent to assess Türkiye's progress. This would provide a clearer understanding of how the country is tracking progress towards meeting its SDGs, taking into account the complexities involved in achieving poverty reduction, gender equality, and economic inclusion. The COSOP should ideally not solely</p>

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	<p>focus on income thresholds for graduation but also consider the broader, multidimensional progress towards the SDGs.</p> <p>In terms of the rural sector performance assessment (RSPA), Türkiye has established key policies and frameworks to support rural development and poverty alleviation. However, the real challenge lies in the continuous implementation of these policies. While national development strategies and financial inclusion programmes are promising, their effectiveness will depend on the Government's ability to enforce and adapt these policies over time. Midterm assessments or the new RSPAs that will be made available at the beginning of the Fourteenth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources (IFAD14) will provide important insights into how well Türkiye is performing in rural development and poverty reduction. These will be crucial for understanding whether Türkiye's rural transformation efforts are benefiting smallholder farmers and contributing to sustainable, equitable growth in the long term.</p> <p>In terms of subnational indicators, these are specifically presented for SDG 10 in table 8 of appendix III, focusing on the Gini coefficient and the income share of the bottom 40 per cent of the population. These indicators will be assessed as part of the annual, midterm and completion reviews of the COSOP. For SDG 1, we have only included national indicators in the table, but maps have been provided to illustrate poverty and vulnerability levels at the subnational level.</p> <p>While these subnational indicators have not been included in the summary table for the sake of brevity, it is important to recognize that subnational inequalities will play a significant role in evaluating Türkiye's progress towards meeting broader SDG targets and graduation criteria. This is especially important because poverty and inequalities in Türkiye are geographically localized, with significant variations across different regions. Regional disparities remain pronounced, with the eastern and rural areas facing higher levels of vulnerability compared to urban centres. Therefore, these subnational indicators will be vital in both shaping future assessments and ensuring that development efforts are targeted effectively.</p>

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<p>6. Finally, we regret that IFAD did not outline in this COSOP a clear pathway or trajectory toward graduation from IFAD financing. The projections for IFAD13 and IFAD14 indicate the same lending envelop of US\$50 million across each cycle. As U.S Treasury Secretary Bessent stated in his remarks during the World Bank-IMF Spring Meetings, there is no justification for continued lending to countries that have met graduation criteria, as it siphons off resources from higher priorities and disincentivizes efforts to move away from dependency toward private sector-led growth. We strongly urge IFAD to set out concrete timelines and pathways for countries ready to transition away from IFAD financing, as called for in the graduation policy.</p>	<p>6. Türkiye's progress towards becoming a high-income country is commendable, but achieving its SDG targets, particularly in addressing poverty, inequality and gender disparities, requires more focused, sustained efforts. The COSOP midterm review and the final completion assessment in 2030 will provide a better sense of the progress towards these goals, offering a clearer picture of how Türkiye is balancing economic growth with socioeconomic inclusion and environmental sustainability. As the country continues its journey towards graduation, ensuring the effective implementation of policies in key sectors such as agriculture, financial inclusion and climate resilience will be critical for maintaining a balanced, sustainable growth trajectory.</p> <p>The COSOP includes US\$50 million as the indicative lending amount to Türkiye during each of the IFAD13 and IFAD14 cycles. We are currently in the process of assessing the full demand to finalize the IFAD13 allocation. IFAD14 figures will be determined in due course bearing in mind the findings of the COSOP midterm review and other criteria, as appropriate.</p>