

Evaluation Approach Paper

Thematic Evaluation

ADB Plan for Operational Priority 5: Promoting Rural Development and Food Security, 2019–2024

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A. Rural Development and Food Security are Crucial for Asia and the Pacific

1. This paper sets out the rationale, approach, and methodology for an independent evaluation of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) Plan for Operational Priority 5: Promoting rural development and food security, 2019–2024 (OP5).¹ Given the importance of rural development and food security objectives to achieving ADB’s Strategy 2030 goals, and as we approach the halfway point of its implementation, this evaluation will be a timely input to assess progress, identify lessons, and inform the future direction of ADB support.

2. Agriculture and food systems employ one-third of developing Asia’s workers, but the sector is beset by persistent challenges of low productivity and incomes, and food insecurity looms large.² Conflict, coronavirus disease (COVID-19), climate change, and growing inequalities are converging to undermine food security.³ Energy and fertilizer prices, subsidies, trade and supply chain issues, external shocks, and the broader political economy, all are playing a role in the region’s food security challenges. In 2022, nearly 1.1 billion people in the region lacked healthy diets due to poverty and soaring food prices. ADB support for improved rural development and food security intends to help achieve Sustainable Development Goal 2, which aims to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture by 2030. However, currently, the world is moving in the wrong direction, with Asia particularly impacted. The Rome-based agencies of the United Nations estimated that in 2021, more than half of the people affected by hunger were in Asia.⁴ The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP) included Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka in their latest early warnings on acute food insecurity.⁵

3. Rural development has underpinned much of ADB’s work in Asia and Pacific since its establishment in 1966. It is relevant now more than ever given the pressures of environmental degradation and climate change, and the drive for greater private sector engagement in the

¹ ADB. 2019. *Strategy 2030: Operational Plan Priority—Promoting Rural Development and Food Security, 2019–2024*. Manila.

² ADB. 2021. *Asian Development Outlook 2021 Update - Theme Chapter: Transforming Agriculture in Asia*. Manila. <http://dx.doi.org/10.22617/FLS210352-3>

³ The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) identify four dimensions of food security: (i) food availability, (ii) economic and physical access to food, (iii) food utilization, and (iv) stability over time. New dimensions of agency and sustainability have been proposed. High Level Panel of Experts. 2020. *Food security and nutrition: building a global narrative towards 2030*. A report by the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition of the Committee on World Food Security. Rome.

⁴ FAO, International Fund for Agricultural Development, UNICEF, WFP, and World Health Organization. 2022. *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2022*. Rome: FAO.

⁵ FAO and WFP. 2022. *Hunger Hotspots FAO–WFP early warnings on acute food insecurity. October 2022 to January 2023 Outlook*. Rome.

region's economies. The principle of supporting developing member countries (DMCs) in the structural transformation of their rural economies has been integral to achieving greater prosperity, including the development of both off-season and off-farm economic activities.⁶ Rural areas typically are underserved by access to basic infrastructure and services and youth and women are particularly impacted due to these rural development deficits in the region. Asia's rural communities are rapidly shrinking and aging, posing a serious challenge to agricultural development. Rural areas are also home to most of the region's natural resources, most critically its water resources, which have been poorly managed and degraded over many decades, and this represents a threat to the food systems and populations that depend upon them. Changes to climate and climate variability represent significant threats to the resilience of food systems and the rural economy. The private sector plays an integral role in agricultural food systems in the Asia and Pacific region. It comprises "a broad array of entities, ranging from farmers; fishers; foresters; livestock herders; and micro, small and medium-sized enterprises to large firms, both domestic and multinational companies, and philanthropic foundations."⁷ Production, transport, logistics, processing, and consumption, and other elements of agricultural value chains in food systems rely heavily on private sector engagement.

B. ADB's Operational Priority 5 Coincides with a New Urgency for Food Security

4. ADB has been supporting agriculture and rural development since it began its operations. ADB strategies were published in 2009 and 2015 to drive ADB's support on sustainable agriculture for food security. This effort culminated in the identification of rural development and food security as an operational priority under Strategy 2030, with the OP5 plan being endorsed by ADB Board of Directors in October 2019.

5. On 27 September 2022, ADB announced plans to provide \$14 billion over 2022–2025 to ease the food crisis and promote long-term food security in Asia and the Pacific.⁸ This was followed by an internal paper outlining ADB's approach to achieving this financial target.⁹ These actions coincide with broader concern across DMCs on growing food insecurity and rising food inflation.

6. OP5 is to be delivered through activities framed against three pillars: (i) rural development, (ii) agricultural value chains, and (iii) food security.¹⁰ It focuses on developing sustainable food systems, rural infrastructure, and agri-logistics centers to enable the integration of producers, agribusinesses, and consumers in the national, regional, and global food systems. OP5 has no specific outcome targets but is supported by indicators in the corporate results framework. While the corporate results framework has no specific targets for OP5, the plan does identify a number of objectives including, for example, two pilots to establish rural economic hubs and the expansion of nonsovereign agribusiness operations to at least one-third of OP5 operations.¹¹ These objectives in the OP5 plan will be assessed in this evaluation.

⁶ ADB. 2017. [*Banking on the Future of Asia and the Pacific: 50 Years of the Asian Development Bank*](#). Manila.

⁷ FAO. 2021. [*FAO Strategy for Private Sector Engagement, 2021–2025*](#). Rome.

⁸ ADB. 2022. [*ADB Plans \\$14 Billion to Ease Food Crisis, Promote Long-Term Food Security in Asia and the Pacific*](#). News Release. 27 September.

⁹ ADB. 2022. ADB's Ambition for Food Security. December (internal).

¹⁰ Food security is not defined in the OP5 plan. However, in the context of OP5's third pillar, food security primarily concerns achieving sustainable, resilient, and productive food systems.

¹¹ Footnote 1, paras. 51 and 54–56. The OP5 plan expects to achieve by 2024 the following outcomes: (i) two pilot rural economic hubs initiated; (ii) scale up food safety and phytosanitary measures in one selected area; (iii) implement disaster risk mitigation and environmental protection measures in two DMCs; and (iv) expand nonsovereign agribusiness operations project count to at least one-third of ADB operations in rural development and food security.

7. The ADB's Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department is conducting a self-evaluation midterm review of OP5, focusing on performance (lending and portfolio), suitability of OP5 structure, and continued relevance to emerging trends and to global and/or regional context. This is expected to be completed by 2023. Both the midterm review and the note on ADB's ambition for food security will serve as inputs to this evaluation.

C. Multilateral Development Banks have Ramped up Support for Rural Development and Food Security

8. Most multilateral development banks (MDBs) and other international financial institutions have adopted a food systems approach to food security anchored in the four dimensions proposed by FAO (footnote 3), while recognizing the competing nature of the sector. For example, the Inter-American Development Bank adopted a Food Security Sector Framework, which highlights the multidimensional nature of food security, and the need for effective coordination among the various sectors and institutions involved in food security.¹² Thus, to improve food security, agricultural interventions must be aligned with health, nutrition, social protection, and water and sanitation projects.

9. The World Bank's approach to rural development is holistic, multi-sectoral, and focused on the well-being of rural people by building their productive, social, and environmental assets. The World Bank has led several food security initiatives.¹³ The World Bank also provides regular food security updates and in May 2022, it announced it was making up to \$30 billion available over a period of 15 months to boost food and nutrition security, reduce risks, and strengthen food systems.¹⁴ The International Finance Corporation recently launched a \$6 billion financing facility to strengthen the private sector's ability to respond to the crisis and help support food production.

10. International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) is a specialized global development organization exclusively focused on and dedicated to transforming agriculture, rural economies, and food systems. Its latest strategic framework aims focus on (i) increasing poor rural people's productive capacities, (ii) increasing poor rural people's benefits from market participation, and (iii) strengthening the environmental sustainability and climate resilience of rural people's economic activities.¹⁵ In May 2022, IFAD launched the Crisis Response Initiative which aims to help to prevent hunger and food insecurity and mitigate the worst impacts of the food crisis on poor rural communities.

11. In May 2022, international financial institutions, including ADB, formulated a joint action plan in response to sharp increases in chronic and acute food insecurity caused by conflict, climate change, and economic disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.¹⁶ The international financial institutions agreed to ramp up their work across six priority goals, in line with their comparative advantages. The six priority goals are: (i) supporting vulnerable people, (ii) promoting open trade, (iii) mitigating fertilizer shortages, (iv) supporting food production now, (v) investing in climate-resilient agriculture for the future, and (vi) coordinating for maximum

¹² Inter-American Development Bank. 2018. *Food Security Sector Framework Document*. Washington, DC.

¹³ For example, the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program and Food Systems 2030.

¹⁴ World Bank. 2023. Food Security Update: World Bank Response to Rising Food Insecurity (Latest Update – March 27, 2023). <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/agriculture/brief/food-security-update>

¹⁵ IFAD. 2016. *IFAD Strategic Framework 2016-2025 – Enabling inclusive and sustainable rural transformation*. Rome.

¹⁶ African Development Bank, ADB, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Inter-American Development Bank, IFAD, International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank Group. 2022. *International Financial Institution (IFI) Action Plan to Address Food Insecurity*. https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/IFI_Action_Plan.pdf

impact. ADB's efforts in this plan include (i) support for fragile and conflict affected states, such as Afghanistan and Myanmar through partnerships with United Nations agencies; (ii) social protection programs in Sri Lanka; (iii) cash transfer programs for smallholder farmers in Central Asia; and (iv) a food voucher program as part of an agricultural policy-based loan in the Philippines.

D. ADB Portfolio

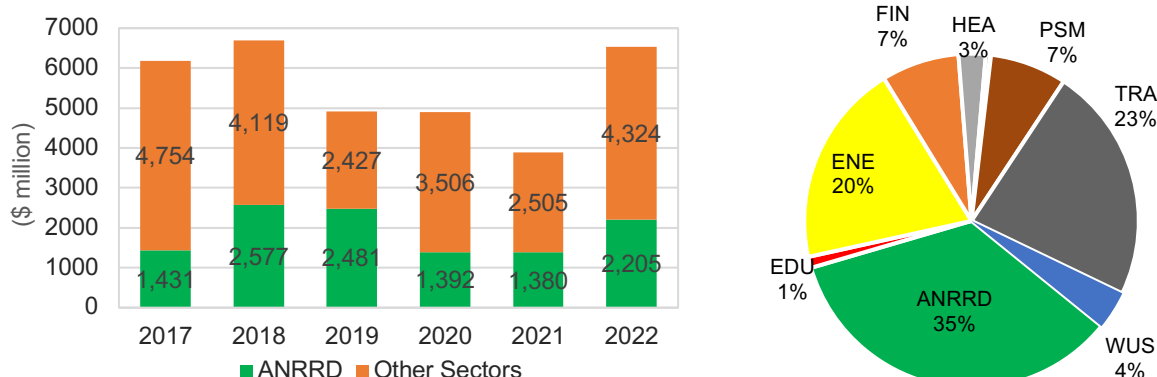
12. Conceptually, this evaluation considers a portfolio of projects where ADB supports delivery of OP5 objectives through a series of overlapping and complementary spheres. At its core is ADB's agriculture, natural resources, and rural development (ANRRD) sector, whose activities are strongly aligned with OP5 objectives. Outside of the ANRRD sector, ADB has a range of other sectoral contributions that can support goals for both food security and wider rural development to varying degrees. It will be an objective of this evaluation to identify, in the country case studies, the extent to which non-ANRRD sectors contribute to OP5 goals. Currently, an individual investment can be tagged for multiple operational priorities and there is no requirement to identify a primary operational priority. A 6-year portfolio (2017–2022) is proposed for this evaluation, 3 years before and after OP5 was endorsed to allow for comparative analysis.

13. The OP5 portfolio for this evaluation will follow the classification adopted by ADB's Strategy, Policy, and Partnerships Department for tracking ADB's corporate results framework. For 2019–2021, an interim methodology was adopted, where all projects classified under the ANRRD sector and all projects classified as high in rural location impact (65% or more), were tagged under OP5. For this evaluation, the same methodology is applied for 2019–2021 and retroactively for 2017–2018. For 2022, ADB introduced a new methodology to enhance the system of mapping ADB operations to the operational priorities. In short, the 2022 approach automatically includes all ANRRD projects and all non-urban transport sector projects. Project teams can also manually select a project if it has a significant rural outcome (55% or more). For consistency, this evaluation includes this approach for 2022 projects. It will be an objective of this evaluation to test these classification approaches in the country case studies.

14. Applying these methodologies for 2017–2022, a total of 244 committed operations (on average 41 operations per year) amounting to a total of \$33.1 billion (on average \$5.5 billion per year) were classified under OP5 (Figure 1). Against total ADB commitments during the same period, OP5 represents about 20% of total ADB commitments by number of operations and 32% by lending volume of operations. At the sector level within OP5, ANRRD remains the largest sector accounting for 109 out of the 244 operations (45%) and \$11.5 billion out of the \$33.1 billion (35%). Collectively, however, the combination of other sectors outnumber (135 out of 244) and almost double the volume (\$21.7 billion) of that of ANRRD. Notable among these sectors are transport, which accounts for 23% of the committed volume, and energy at 20%.

15. Most of the OP5 portfolio was derived from sovereign operations, i.e., 75% by number (182 out of 244) and 92% in terms of volume (\$30.5 billion out of \$33.1 billion). The balance of 62 operations (25%) amounting to \$2.7 billion (8%) were from nonsovereign operations.

Figure 1: Volume of ADB Committed Support to Rural Development and Food Security, 2017–2022

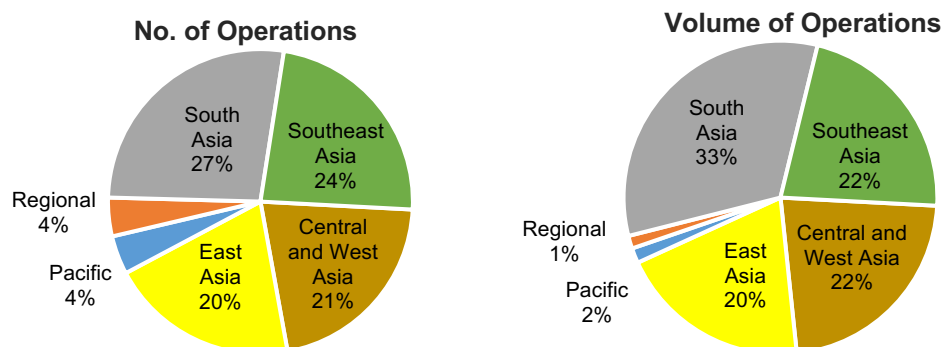


ADB = Asian Development Bank; ANRRD = agriculture, natural resources, and rural development; EDU = education; ENE = energy; FIN = finance; HEA = health; PSM = public sector management; TRA = transport; WUS = water and other urban infrastructure and services.

Source: ADB (Strategy, Policy, and Partnerships Department).

16. At the regional level, South Asia dominates the distribution both in terms of number (66 out of 244) and volume (\$10.8 billion out of \$33.1 billion), while the allocation is evenly distributed among Southeast Asia, Central and West Asia, and East Asia regions, ranging from 20% to 24% (Figure 2). The Pacific region has the smallest portfolio, accounting for only 4% of the portfolio by number and 2% by volume. The top 10 country portfolio is presented as Attachment 1. India has the largest portfolio by volume and the People's Republic of China (PRC) by number.

Figure 2: ADB Support to Rural Development and Food Security by Region, 2017–2022



ADB = Asian Development Bank.

Source: ADB (Strategy, Policy, and Partnerships Department).

17. This evaluation will look at technical assistance (TA) projects that fall under the ANRRD sector and their contribution to the OP5 objectives, in terms of capacity development, policy advice, and knowledge support. For the period 2017–2022, a total of 265 TA projects amounting to \$233 million were approved under the ANRRD sector or an average of 44 TA projects annually. This represents 15% of the total TA projects approved during the same period in terms of number, or 11% in terms of volume. More than half (55%) were transaction TA projects (i.e., preparatory,

linked to loans, or policy advice), while the remaining (45%) are standalone knowledge support TA projects that provide capacity development, policy advice, or research and development.

18. **Available evaluation evidence.** This will be the first full evaluation of a Strategy 2030 operational priority for the Independent Evaluation Department (IED). IED's 2018 sector-wide evaluation of ADB support for ANRRD covering a portfolio from 2005 to 2017 will be an important input to this evaluation.¹⁷ Given the cross-sectoral nature of OP5, evaluations from other sectors and themes will also be relevant, including Asian Development Fund evaluation, and other evaluations. We will assess progress in implementing the actions plans for the recommendations in these evaluations, where they are relevant to the key questions of this evaluation.

19. Evaluative evidence will be drawn from internal and external sources. Relevant impact evaluations done by other ADB departments will be used to support hypothesis development and findings. At the project level, a total of 72 ANRRD sector projects were independently evaluated and/or validated since 2017, including project completion report validations, extended annual review report validations and TA completion report validations. These will be supplemented with 231 validations from other sectors for the selected country case studies. It will be an objective of this evaluation to assess the extent to which these validated projects contributed results towards OP5 outcomes. Country assistance program evaluations and validations will also be examined. Evidence will be supplemented from broader sources including evaluations from other MDBs¹⁸ and other forms of evaluation synthesis.¹⁹ An ongoing IED evaluation to prepare an evidence gap of global and regional value chains will also be an important input.

E. Evaluation Scope, Theory of Change, and Key Questions

20. **Scope.** The purpose of the evaluation is to assess how well positioned and responsive ADB is to deliver effective support for rural development and food security in Asia and the Pacific. The scope will focus on rural development and food security as envisioned under the OP5 plan and reflected in ADB's country partnership strategies (CPSs) and portfolio. The evaluation will review indicators ex-ante in the design and monitoring framework (DMF) indicators of reports and recommendations of the President, and results ex-post in project completion reports. Validations of project completion reports and extended annual review reports will be used to support the performance assessment. It will draw relevant lessons from past and present performance, enhance understanding of ADB's comparative strengths and weaknesses, and inform future strategic approaches and investment design to improve development effectiveness. The evaluation will attempt to discern the thematic contributions from ADB's sectoral operations.

21. The evaluation scope will include relevant approvals and project evaluations (both sovereign and nonsovereign) in the 6-year period, from 2017 to 2022, 3 years before and after OP5 was published to track and analyze changes in design and assess the likelihood of achieving OP5 objectives. The evaluation will include detailed portfolio reviews at the project and sector levels, and review of the design of CPSs over time, country missions, and stakeholder interviews at the country level. For mission countries, ADB investment pipelines will also be examined, where concept papers are available, to assess portfolio trajectories. ADB nonsovereign agribusiness

¹⁷ IED. 2018. [Sector-wide Evaluation: ADB Support for Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Rural Development](#). Manila: ADB.

¹⁸ For example, Independent Evaluation Group. 2019. *World Bank Support for Irrigation Service Delivery: Responding to New Challenges and Opportunities*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

¹⁹ For example, N. Moore, et al. 2021. *The effects of food systems interventions on food security and nutrition outcomes in low- and middle-income countries, 3ie Evidence Gap Map Report 16*. New Delhi: International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie).

investments will also be reviewed along with related programs, such as the Microfinance Risk Participation and Guarantee Program and the Trade and Supply Chain Finance Program, where contributions to OP5 objectives can be identified. The country-focused approach will examine country and regional contexts, assessing portfolio-wide cross-sectoral contributions, and considering how other operational priorities are contributing to OP5 objectives and their overlaps. The evaluation will also consider other development partners active in this space and how ADB is collaborating with them in supporting DMC priorities, e.g., Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research institutes, WFP, other United Nations agencies, as well as MDBs.

22. **Theory of change.** While OP5 does not include an explicit theory of change (TOC), IED developed a TOC building on the narrative presented in the OP5 plan, ADB's corporate results framework indicators, and on IED's understanding from previous evaluations of how ADB sectoral and thematic activities support OP5 objectives (Attachment 2). Ultimately, it is expected that support for OP5 will help deliver the overall impacts of prosperous rural economies, reducing malnutrition, and food security for all. The evaluation will attempt to unpack these objectives on an illustrative basis. For example, the extent to which ADB support contributes to the four dimensions of food security will be examined. Expected outcomes are centered on the three explicit pillars of OP5 (para. 9), with a fourth implicit outcome included to capture crosscutting co-benefits that OP5 supports, helps leverage—this is expected to focus on climate, environment, and gender co-benefits. Outputs and inputs are driven by ADB support for ANRRD sector and other sectors that steer the portfolio, through both sovereign and nonsovereign investments, towards the four stated outcomes. At the institutional level, the evaluation will examine how ADB's corporate and country strategies and organizational set-up are aligned with DMC priorities and help deliver OP5 objectives.

23. External drivers, which play a key role on food security, will provide important context and information on binding constraints, such as trade policy, external shocks, climate change, and environmental degradation. Assumptions needed to deliver this TOC include complementarity with development partners, global macroeconomic stability, regional cooperation and integration, open trade policies, and progress on halting environmental degradation and shifting economies to low carbon pathways.

24. **Key evaluation questions.** The evaluation will address the overarching question: how well positioned is ADB to deliver effective support for rural development and food security in Asia and the Pacific under its Strategy 2030 OP5 plan? To assess progress on these objectives, the overarching question will be underpinned by three supporting questions. Greater emphasis will be given to issues of relevance and coherence, as it is too early for a comprehensive assessment of effectiveness. An evaluation matrix with sub-questions and data sources is presented in Attachment 3.

- (i) **How relevant is ADB's approach to responding to the evolving challenges on rural development and food security?** This will include an assessment of the continued relevance of the OP5 plan, the inferred TOC and related guidance, with persistent challenges and evolving needs of ADB and DMCs. It will include a comparative analysis of CPSs and operations' designs before and after OP5 was endorsed. Responsiveness will include assessing how ADB tailored its actions to different country contexts, how it reacted to shocks that impact on the state of DMCs food security, and how it has strengthened its staffing and organizational arrangements.
- (ii) **How coherent are ADB's OP5 operations, internally and externally, with DMCs priorities?** Internal coherence will consider cross-sectoral contributions

from ADB's ANRRD and other sectors, and across lending and nonlending modalities. External coherence will focus on collaborations with other development partners to augment its approaches and address knowledge gaps.

- (iii) **To what extent are ADB operations likely to be effective in delivering support to DMCs towards OP5 objectives?** This will include assessing progress towards operational objectives set out in the OP5 plan. At project level, the likelihood of effective support will be based on available evaluative evidence from past investments that align with OP5 indicators under the corporate results framework. This assessment will be supplemented by a review of published evidence in the literature to check alignments with the evidenced transmission pathways to achieve outcomes.

F. Evaluation Methods, Resource Requirements, and Tentative Timetable

25. **Evaluation methods.** The evaluation will use a mixed methods approach to gather evidence from various sources to address the evaluation questions. The evaluation activities will include (i) review of the OP5 plan, its midterm review, and processes; (ii) contextual background papers on food security, agricultural value chains, and rural development in the region; (iii) a comparison of approaches by other multilateral financial institutions; (iv) desk review assessment including portfolio review of ADB projects and country case studies; (v) online survey targeted to members of the ADB Rural Development and Food Security Thematic Group; (vi) geospatial methods where possible to assess spatially-based outcomes; (vii) field visits, beneficiary focus groups, and interviews with government officials, private sector clients, ADB staff, development partners, and other key stakeholders; (viii) institutional assessment of ADB's staffing and organizational set-up, including assessing changes in the staffing mix and progress implementing relevant institutionally related recommendations in previous IED evaluations.

26. The assessments will be supplemented with interviews with key stakeholders to answer the evaluation questions. Reviews of evaluative reports and operational documents will also be supplemented by systematic feedback through beneficiaries' focus group discussions and semi-structured client interviews. A project template will be developed to assess cross-sectoral contributions to OP5 objectives by reviewing the design of approved projects' DMF indicators for alignment with outputs and outcomes set out in the TOC. Effectiveness assessments will be limited to evaluative evidence (e.g., project and TA completion reports validations) published during the evaluation period and will focus on the achievement of targets set for DMF indicators that align and contribute to the outputs and outcomes set out in the TOC. These assessments will be supported by country case studies, field missions, and effectiveness evidence from published sources (footnotes 18 and 19).

27. **Country missions.** Missions will be undertaken to selected DMCs to obtain primary data on DMC government and development partner perspectives, beneficiary experiences, and to assess how ADB tailors its OP5 response to different contexts. Case studies will serve as an opportunity for more in-depth analysis and will be designed to answer the evaluation questions and to test the validity of the TOC. Emphasis will be given to case studies where one or more interventions are being implemented across multiple contexts. A combination of desk studies, virtual and in-person country missions are proposed, covering two countries per ADB region to capture a range of approaches and country contexts across OP5's three pillars.

28. **Country selection.** Selection of DMCs for case studies was determined using a range of criteria including portfolio size, available evaluative evidence, food security risk, a broad cross-section of lending modalities, sectors and subsectors, and sovereign and nonsovereign coverage. Attachment 4 provides a summary of the issues and context of the selected countries. The PRC and India have the largest portfolio and number of validations allowing for multiple case studies and to generate lessons across all TOC outcomes, which will be conducted as desk studies. Pakistan is also selected as it has suffered food security challenges due to recent floods and financial shocks and has a portfolio focused on productivity and rural development issues, but mission meetings will be undertaken virtually. Philippines is chosen as a pilot country case study as it has a well-represented portfolio including food security investments channeled through policy-based lending and social protection. A mix of virtual and in-person meetings in the Philippines will be used to develop the framework for the subsequent in-person country missions.

29. In-country missions will be undertaken in at least one country for each of the five ADB regions. Cambodia has the second largest number of OP5 investments in Southeast Asia, with a focus on agricultural value chains, and is eligible for Asian Development Fund support. Bangladesh has a portfolio strong on production and connectivity, a focus on smallholders, and regularly subject to climate-related shocks. Uzbekistan has the largest portfolio in the Central and West Asia region and focuses on agricultural value chains. Mongolia is included for its relatively high number of operations in the agriculture sector including support to rangeland and smallholder farmers amid the unique geographic conditions. Tuvalu and Vanuatu have the largest number of OP5 investments and will be the focus of the Pacific case study to capture the DMC's unique rural development features, including food security support through contingent disaster financing and transport infrastructure. The evaluation will attempt to assess causality of outcomes attributable to ADB interventions. In attempting to do so, the evaluation will carefully consider countries and context that are similar prior to ADB engagement to isolate contribution effects. In addition, consultation missions are also planned for Singapore (to consult on ADB's regional agribusiness investments) and Washington, DC (to consult with development partners and think-tanks).

30. **Limitations.** The tagging systems available for OP5 investments are not precise and may, on the one hand, include interventions with variable degrees of contribution to OP5 objectives, and other had may not capture all relevant interventions. The country case studies will allow for a deeper dive and attempt to attribute the relative contribution of ANRRD and other sector investments. Given OP5's recent approval in 2019, almost no investments have been completed or validated.²⁰ Validated completion reports published during the evaluation period will be used, but only where their results clearly align with the output and outcome indicators in the TOC. Published evaluative evidence will be used to supplement the effectiveness assessment. It is also noted that during the evaluation period, COVID-19 will likely have impacted on normal operations in many DMCs and in ADB. Given the ADB's new operational model is in its nascent stage of implementation, it will be too early to assess its effectiveness.²¹

31. **Dissemination plan.** The evaluation findings will be disseminated within ADB and externally within the region. The final report will be posted on the IED website. After the Development Effectiveness Committee discussion of the final report, knowledge sharing and

²⁰ No ANRRD investments approved since 2020 have been completed and validated.

²¹ If the likely effects of the new operating model are clear during the evaluation, these will be considered in the recommendations.

learning activities will be held, including dissemination seminars and presentations in evaluation conferences as opportunities arise. A video capturing experiences and results in the field with key stakeholders and beneficiaries will be prepared. An event in one of the case study countries will be undertaken to disseminate findings and lessons with country stakeholders.

32. **Resource requirements.** The evaluation will be conducted by a team of IED staff comprising: (i) Garrett Kilroy, principal evaluation specialist (team leader) with overall responsibility for the evaluation implementation and report delivery; (ii) Alexander Wellsteed, principal evaluation specialist; (iii) Arjun Guha, evaluation specialist; (iv) Hans Woldring, senior evaluation specialist; (v) Shimako Takahashi, evaluation specialist; (vi) Sherine Ibrahim, principal evaluation specialist; (vii) Lawrence Nelson Guevara, senior evaluation officer; (viii) Alvin Morales, senior evaluation officer; (ix) Aldous Moses Tirona, evaluation officer, and (x) Elizabeth Li, evaluation analyst. The team will be under the supervision of Nathan Subramaniam, Director, Sector and Project Division.

33. A team of international and national consultants will be engaged in accordance with the ADB Procurement Policy: (i) evaluation advisor, (ii) rural development expert, (iii) food security experts, (iv) private sector and agricultural value chain expert, (v) headquarter-based research and evaluation associate, (vi) headquarter-based portfolio and database management consultant, and (vii) in-country national consultants in each country of field visit. The proposed approach paper and draft report will also be reviewed by internal and external reviewers who are experts in the field of rural development and food security.

34. **Tentative schedule.** The evaluation of ADB's OP5 plan is expected to be completed and submitted to the Development Effectiveness Committee in the second quarter of 2024.

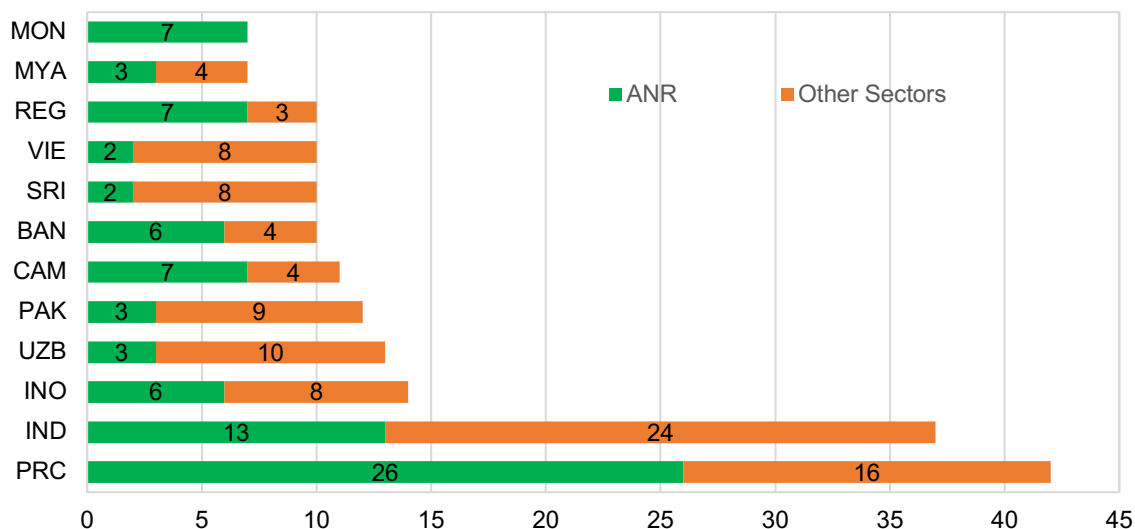
Activity/Milestone	Target Date
Approval of the evaluation approach paper	IV May 2023
Desk review, pilot virtual missions	I June–I July 2023
In-person country missions	I–IV August 2023
Storyline meeting	II October 2023
Peer-review of draft report	I–II December 2023
Interdepartmental review of draft report	III–IV January 2024
Editing	II February–I March 2024
Heads of departments meeting	III March 2024
Board circulation	I April 2024
Development Effectiveness Committee Meeting	IV April 2024

Attachments:

1. ADB Support to Rural Development and Food Security by Top 10 Countries, 2017–2022
2. Proposed Theory of Change for the Evaluation of Operational Priority 5 Plan
3. Evaluation Matrix
4. Issues and Context for the Selection of Country Cases for the Evaluation of Operational Priority 5 Plan

ADB SUPPORT TO RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND FOOD SECURITY BY TOP 10 COUNTRIES, 2017–2022

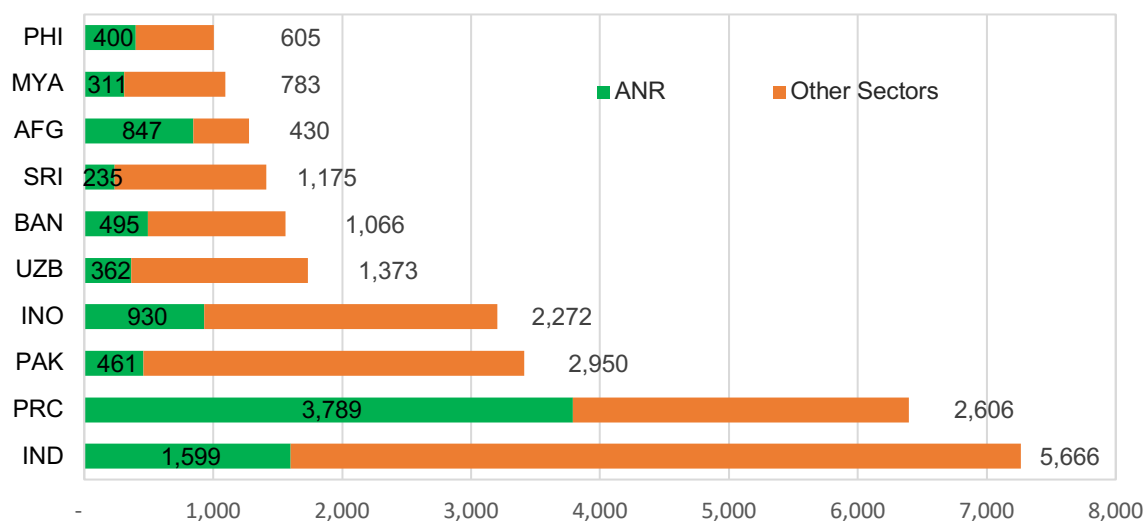
Figure A1.1: Number of Operations



ANR = agriculture and natural resources, BAN = Bangladesh, CAM = Cambodia, IND = India, INO = Indonesia, MON = Mongolia, MYA = Myanmar, PAK = Pakistan, PRC = People's Republic of China, REG = regional, SRI = Sri Lanka, UZB = Uzbekistan, VIE = Viet Nam.

Source: Asian Development Bank (Strategy, Policy, and Partnerships Department).

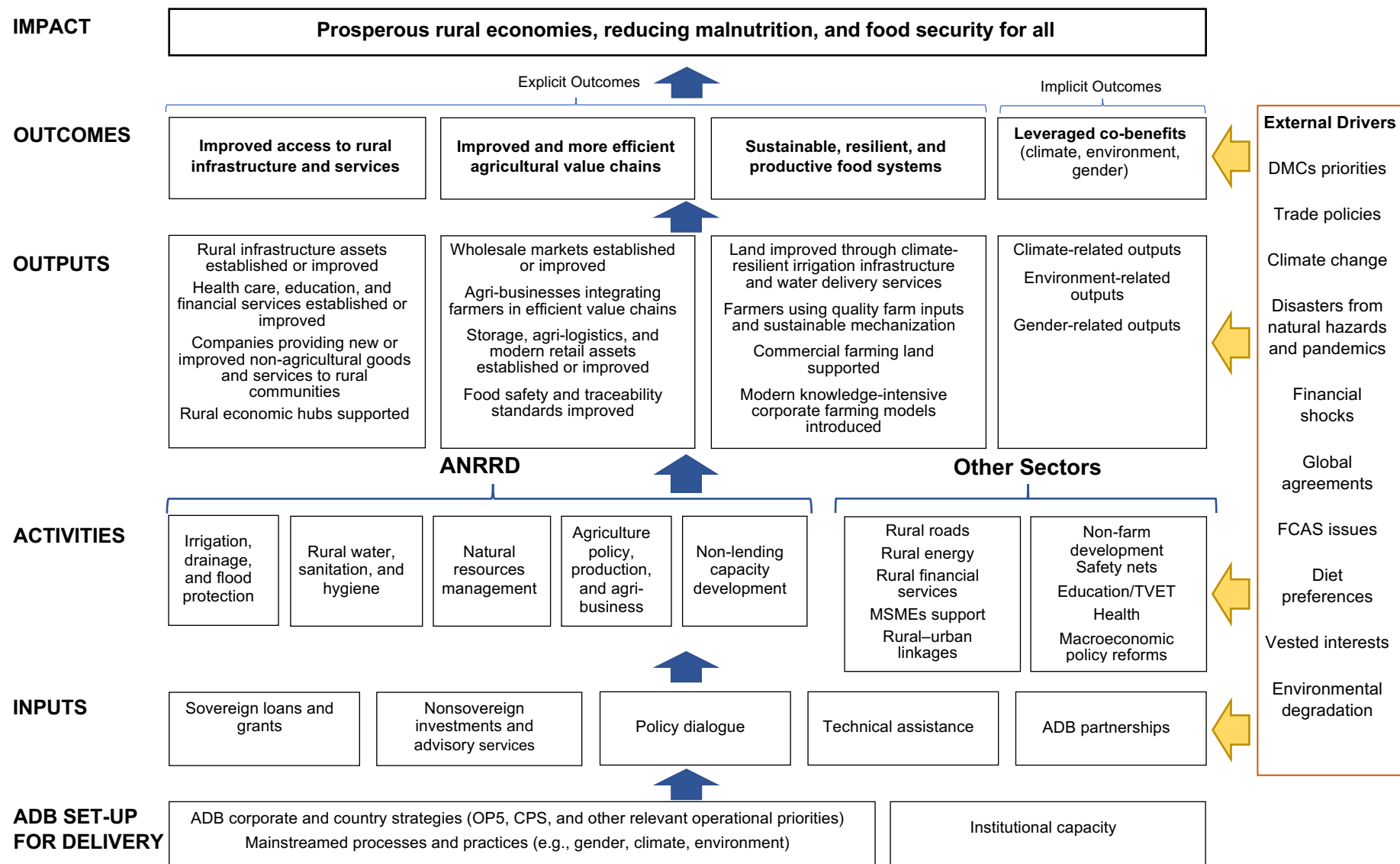
**Figure A1.2: Volume of Operations
(\$ million)**



ANR = agriculture and natural resources, AFG = Afghanistan, BAN = Bangladesh, IND = India, INO = Indonesia, MYA = Myanmar, PAK = Pakistan, PHI = Philippines, PRC = People's Republic of China, SRI = Sri Lanka, UZB = Uzbekistan.

Source: Asian Development Bank (Strategy, Policy, and Partnerships Department).

PROPOSED THEORY OF CHANGE FOR THE EVALUATION OF OPERATIONAL PRIORITY 5 PLAN



ADB = Asian Development Bank; ANRRD = agriculture, natural resources, and rural development; CPS = country partnership strategy; DMC = developing member country; FCAS = fragile and conflict-affected situations; MSMEs = micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises; OP5 = Operational Priority 5: Promoting rural development and food security, 2019–2024; TVET = technical and vocational education and training.

Source: ADB (Independent Evaluation Department).

EVALUATION MATRIX

How well positioned is ADB to deliver effective support for rural development and food security in Asia and the Pacific under its OP5 plan?		
Supporting Questions	Sub-questions	Data Sources
How relevant is ADB's approach to responding to the evolving challenges on rural development and food security?	<p>What are the global and regional trends and challenges that affect rural development and food security in Asia and the Pacific?</p> <p>Is the design of the OP5 plan, inferred TOC, and related guidance still relevant to DMCs needs and consistent with ADB's evolving priorities, such as its shift towards being a climate bank?</p> <p>Have ADB's CPSs and the design of operations responded to OP5 objectives and priorities?</p> <p>How has ADB's analytical work through CPS preparation, policy dialogue and technical assistance evolved to address OP5 objectives?</p> <p>How responsive has ADB been in supporting DMCs to cope with various shocks including financial shocks, COVID-19 pandemic, and disasters?</p> <p>How has ADB staffing and institutional arrangements evolved to address OP5 objectives?</p> <p>Are co-benefits on climate, gender, and environment being mainstreamed into OP5 investments?</p>	<p>Literature review</p> <p>Project design assessments and CPS comparative analysis</p> <p>Key informant interviews</p> <p>Country case studies</p> <p>Institutional review</p> <p>Online staff survey</p>
How coherent are ADB's OP5 operations, internally and externally, with DMCs priorities?	<p>Is ADB's support for OP5 objectives designed in a coherent and integrated manner across sectors to meet DMC needs?</p> <p>At the country level, what is the relative contribution across sectors to OP5 objectives?</p> <p>How coherent has been ADB support across the range of lending and non-lending operations?</p> <p>Externally, to what extent is ADB's approach coherent with other development partners from a strategic, operational, and knowledge perspective?</p> <p>To what extent does ADB engage with CGIAR and national agricultural research agencies in formulating its country work and pipeline?</p>	<p>Comparative case studies</p> <p>Portfolio review</p> <p>Contribution analysis</p> <p>Key informant interviews</p> <p>MDB comparative analysis</p>
To what extent are ADB operations likely to be effective in delivering support to DMCs towards OP5 objectives?	<p>What progress has been made towards expected OP5 activities, outcomes, and results?</p> <p>At the project level, how likely effective are ADB OP5 operations at contributing to OP5 objectives?</p> <p>What is the published evidence on achieving OP5 related objectives in Asia and the Pacific?</p>	<p>Key informant interviews</p> <p>Beneficiary focus groups</p> <p>Field verification of project results</p> <p>Literature review</p>

ADB = Asian Development Bank; CGIAR = Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, COVID-19 = coronavirus disease; CPS = country partnership strategy; DMC = developing member country; MDB = multilateral development bank; OP5 = Operational Priority 5: Promoting Rural Development and Food Security, 2019–2024; TOC = theory of change.

Source: ADB (Independent Evaluation Department).

**ISSUES AND CONTEXT FOR THE SELECTION OF COUNTRY CASES FOR THE
EVALUATION OF OPERATIONAL PRIORITY 5 PLAN**
(Operational Priority 5: Promoting Rural Development and Food Security, 2019–2024)

		Operational Priority 5 Pillars			Issues and Context
		Food Security	Agricultural Value Chains	Rural Development	
Country Case Methodology	DMC	Climate-smart agriculture Knowledge-intensive agriculture Youth and women empowerment Water-food-health nexus	Modern agriculture value chains Food safety and traceability Affordable rural finance	Rural-urban connectivity Rural health and education Off-grid energy solutions Rural economic hubs	
Desk review	IND	☑☑	☑☑	☑☑	Largest portfolio, validations, and issues
	PRC	☑☑	☑☑	☑☑	Largest portfolio, validations, and issues
Pilot mission	PHI	☑☑	☑	☑	Social safety nets, PBL
Virtual mission	PAK	☑☑	☒	☑☑	Environmental shocks Emergency assistance loans Social safety nets, PBL FAO/WFP Hunger Risk Hotspots list
In-person country mission	CAM	☑☑	☑☑	☑	ADF country Private sector/NSO Smallholder farmers Fisheries
	MON	☑☑	☑☑	☑	Rangeland agriculture Private sector/NSO sustainable tourism Smallholder farmers
	BAN	☑☑	☑	☑☑	Smallholder farmers Climate-related shocks Rural connectivity
	TUV/ VAN	☒	☑	☑☑	ADF and SIDS country Logistics and shipping Contingent disaster financing, social safety nets
	UZB	☑	☑☑	☑	Double landlocked Land degradation Water stress Private sector/NSO

☑ = up to two projects; ☑☑ = more than two projects; ☒ = no projects.

ADB = Asian Development Bank; ADF = Asian Development Fund; BAN = Bangladesh; CAM = Cambodia; DMC = developing member country; FAO = Food and Agriculture Office; IND = India; MON = Mongolia; NSO = nonsovereign operations; PAK = Pakistan; PBL = policy-based lending; PRC = People's Republic of China; SIDS = small island developing states TUV = Tuvalu; UZB = Uzbekistan; VAN = Vanuatu; WFP = World Food Programme.

Source: ADB (Independent Evaluation Department).