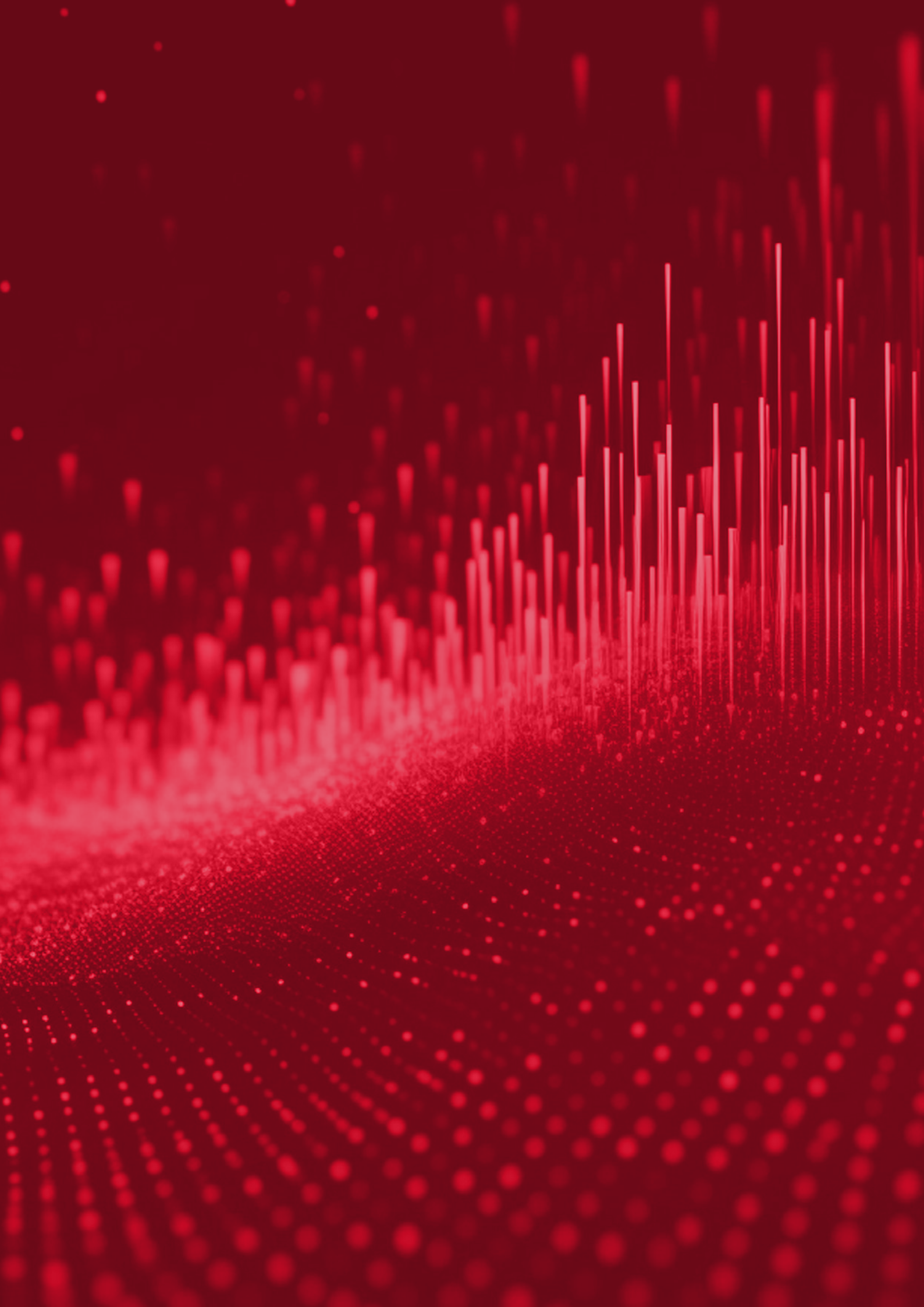# IOE | IFAD
Investing in rural people

Independent Office of Evaluation

Knowledge Management Practices in IFAD
CORPORATE-LEVEL EVALUATION

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Contents

APPENDIX

Country case study summaries available on request from **evaluation@ifad.org**.

Abbreviations and acronyms

4P	public-private-producer partnership
AAR	after action review
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AI	artificial intelligence
APR	Asia and Pacific Division, IFAD
ARIE	Annual Report on the Independent Evaluation of IFAD
ARRI	Annual Report on Results and Impact of IFAD Operations
AVP	Associate Vice-President
AWPB	annual work plan and budget
CD	country director
CDI	Change, Delivery and Innovation Unit, IFAD
CEPAL	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CLE	corporate-level evaluation
CLPE	country-level policy engagement
COM	Global Communications and Advocacy Division, IFAD
CoP	community of practice
COSOP	country strategic opportunities programme
CSPE	country strategy and programme evaluation
CSSG	Corporate Services Support Group
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EB	Executive Board
ECG	Environment, Climate, Gender and Social Inclusion Division, IFAD
EMC	Executive Management Committee
ERG	External Relations and Governance Department, IFAD
ESA	East and Southern Africa Division, IFAD
ESR	evaluation synthesis report
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FFS	farmer field school
FGD	focus group discussion
FMD	Financial Management Services Division, IFAD
GALS	Gender Action Learning System
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GFRID	Global Forum on Remittances, Investment and Development
GIS	geographic information system
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GPR	Global Engagement, Partnership and Resource Mobilization Division, IFAD
HR	human resources
ICO	IFAD Country Office
ICT/ICTs	Information and Communications Technology Division, IFAD/Information and communication technologies
ICT4D	Information and Communication Technology for Development
IFI	international financial institution
IICA	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
IOE	Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD
K-packs	knowledge packs

KAP	knowledge, attitudes and practices
KM	knowledge management
KM4D	Knowledge Management For Development
KMCG	knowledge management coordination group
KMCO	KM Committee
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean Division, IFAD
LR	learning route
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MCO	multi-country office
MDLP	Multi-Donor Partnership on Learning for Development Impact
MERCOSUR	Mercado Común del Sur (Southern Common Market)
MICs	middle-income countries
MOPAN	Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network
MTR	midterm review
NEN	Near East, North Africa and Europe Division, IFAD
NGO	non-governmental organization
OBI	Oracle Business Intelligence
ODC	Operations Document Centre
OPR	Operational Policy and Results Division, IFAD
ORMS	Operational Results Management System
PMD	Programme Management Department, IFAD
PMI	Sustainable Production, Markets and Institutions Division, IFAD
PMU	project management unit
PROCASUR	Corporation for Regional Rural Development Training
PTA	Policy and Technical Advisory Division
PVE	participatory video evaluations
QAG	Quality Assurance Group, IFAD
RBA	Rome-based agency
RDR	Rural Development Report
REAF	MERCOSUR Commission on Family Farming
RIA	Research and Impact Assessment Division, IFAD
RIDE	Report on IFAD's Development Effectiveness
RSP	Rural Solutions Portal
SAFIN	Smallholder and Agri-SME Finance and Investment Network
SICA	Central American Integration System
SKD	Strategy and Knowledge Department, IFAD
SKiM	Strengthening Knowledge Management For Greater Development Effectiveness In The Near East, North Africa Central Asia and Europe
SF	Strategic Framework
SME	small and medium-sized enterprise
SSTC	South-South and Triangular Cooperation
ToC	theory of change
UMIC	upper-middle-income country
UN	United Nations
USAID	US Agency for International Development
WCA	West and Central Africa Division, IFAD

Foreword

The Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD (IOE) conducted a corporate-level evaluation (CLE) of knowledge management (KM) practices in 2023. This evaluation came after the IOE CLE on decentralization, conducted in 2022. It focused on specific KM functions and practices, but highlighted similar structural constraints.

The CLE is unique in its approach to evaluating KM in that it specifically focused on practices at headquarter, regional and country levels, as well as on the linkages between them, which were supposed to change following the recently implemented reforms in IFAD. Decentralization had placed country programme staff closer to clients, supporting enhanced engagement and contextual knowledge. Nevertheless, IFAD's KM architecture and specialized functions remain centralized in headquarters. Regional structures are understaffed and without adequate budgetary allocations, often unable to provide the critical link between countries and headquarter-based KM processes.

The CLE flagged the importance of a knowledge agenda that can underpin IFAD's ambition to become a leader on rural transformation. The evaluation acknowledges the quality of the numerous technical knowledge products. At the same time, it highlights the need to connect multiple knowledges, including local and contextual knowledge, for transformative actions. Development efforts must leave no knowledge behind. The Fund's growing field presence, coupled with the tangible nature of its interventions, position it well as a broker of local and contextual knowledge. Transformative change requires a systemic approach to knowledge creation, expanding the boundaries of knowledge systems to ensure that development interventions can address the opportunities and challenges within the diversity of settings in which IFAD works.

The CLE found that IFAD has successfully mobilized multi-stakeholder processes for knowledge generation and sharing in several countries. The ability of the organization to leverage the knowledge of others allows it to increase the impact of its development interventions, thus enhancing its value for money proposition. The senior independent advisor for this CLE, Dr Zenda Ofir, emphasizes in her report that IFAD is very well positioned to play a strong leadership role in assisting country stakeholders to design, implement and evaluate strategies and programmes based on what is known today about how transformative development happens.

The CLE findings highlight the importance of looking at the entire architecture, complexity and various elements that bring about change. Interventions must be fully integrated into the policy culture and political will of the countries and communities in which they take place. The CLE thus recommends that IFAD should reclaim its role in elevating the operational knowledge to a global level, to inform the rural transformation debate. The CLE recommends a lighter and more flexible knowledge agenda, with a focus on rural transformation and integrating multiple knowledges. The agenda would guide the engagement with knowledge partnerships at global, regional and country levels. The shift in emphasis also requires transitioning from a centralized KM architecture towards a model that features devolved responsibilities and resources. The upcoming Strategic Framework would provide an opportunity for IFAD to position itself as a driver of rural transformation.

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Acknowledgements

Executive summary

A. Background

1. As approved by the Executive Board during the 134th session in December 2021, the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD (IOE) conducted a corporate-level evaluation (CLE) of knowledge management practices in 2022/2023. The evaluation is expected to inform the ongoing **deliberations on the IFAD13 replenishment**.

2. The IFAD Strategic Framework (2016-2025) has clearly positioned the contribution of KM to IFAD's strategic goals. Knowledge-building, dissemination and policy engagement together represent one of the four pillars for the achievement of IFAD's development results set out in its Strategic Framework. The **importance of knowledge in delivering transformational change** was further emphasized in the 2021 Report of the Consultation on the Twelfth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources.

3. The CLE reviewed the relevance, coherence, effectiveness and efficiency of knowledge management (KM) practices at corporate, regional and country levels for the period 2016 to mid-2023. The CLE assessed how the organization has leveraged its knowledge base to underpin rural transformation, in particular at country level, and reviewed to what extent its existing strategies, structures and functions have supported IFAD's ambition to contribute to transformative change in partner countries. The review period was set in a context of ongoing decentralization reforms. Factors that have been driving KM during this period included IFAD's growing country presence, turnover of staff, and limited resources for non-lending activities. The CLE had a particular focus on how **corporate-level KM practices were linked with KM practice at country level**.

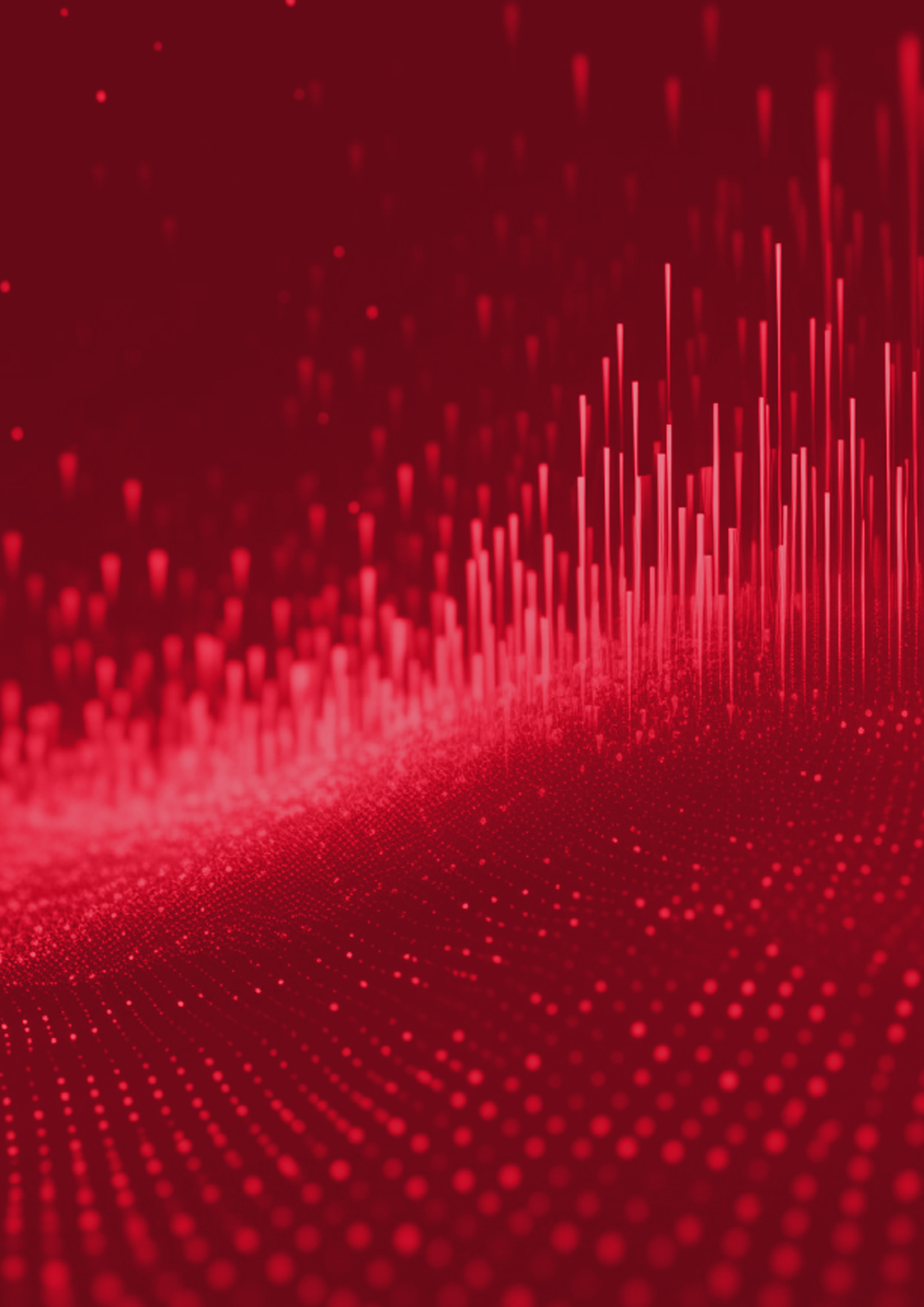4. The CLE used a theory of change to conceptualize the linkages between KM practices, the drivers and institutional arrangements explaining their existence, and KM results contributing to rural transformation. The conceptual framework for the evaluation was based around **six coexisting generational approaches to Knowledge Management for Development** (KM4D). Currently, the majority of KM practices in IFAD belong to the third and fourth-generation of KM. Third-generation KM includes knowledge-sharing tools and more emphasis on tacit knowledge. The fourth generation comprises practice-based, people-centric approaches to KM and involves the establishment of inter-organizational communities of practice; and the increased role of social media.

5. Informed by the conceptual framework, the evaluation design focused on the exploration of a set of **hypotheses** that cover causal linkages between KM strategies, tools, practices, and key enabling factors, and how they interact to deliver observed KM results at corporate, regional division and country programme levels. These hypotheses were tested in the evaluation process, and explanatory factors and alternative explanations identified. The evaluations drew data from **six evidence blocks, including a corporate documents review, surveys, interviews and focus group discussions**. The CLE obtained evidence on KM results from 20 country case studies and 5 regional division studies.

B. Findings

6. **KM practices were often effective in their contribution to country programmes**. Clear KM frameworks and strategies aligned with needs on the ground and country strategic opportunities programme priorities enabled success, while fragmented approaches compromised sustainability. Fewer cases were found where the systematic generation and sharing of knowledge enabled effective policy engagement. Transformative (fifth- and sixth-generation) practices were supported by strong IFAD Country Office leadership and multi-stakeholder partnerships for KM, which included beneficiaries, NGOs and governmental bodies. Multi-stakeholder processes beyond individual projects created better platforms for policy influence. Strategic regional grants also supported policy-oriented KM. Participatory processes validated local insights, blended knowledge systems, and exchanged grassroots innovations. Innovative and transformational KM practices were often funded through regular grants.

7. **KM partnerships were key for IFAD to access external knowledge and to introduce innovative practices**. While IFAD collaborates in some networks, it does not fully leverage platforms discussing contemporary KM concepts such as local knowledge and decolonization. In most countries, partners value IFAD's grassroots expertise, thematic knowledge, convening ability, country presence and focus on learning and innovation. The CLE also found examples where IFAD has helped facilitate subregional knowledge exchange. Nevertheless, its limited country presence has put a tangible constraint on its engagement in coordination mechanisms. IFAD has not sufficiently addressed demands for technical know-how and South-South cooperation in middle-income countries.

8. **The corporate KM strategy was not sufficient to guide KM practices in partner countries**. The 2019 KM strategy was well aligned to IFAD's Strategic Framework and decentralization, reflecting contemporary good practices that received awards. Nevertheless, the strategy had major gaps, which undermined its effectiveness as a corporate document. These gaps included unclear KM roles across organizational levels, lack of attention to indigenous knowledge, and assumptions on resourcing and incentives at decentralized levels that did not hold. A major deficit in the KM strategy was the lack of an effective monitoring and reporting system for its results. In the following period, regional divisions have taken their own approaches to integrate KM within their specific contexts. Some of them prepared regional KM frameworks, established knowledge repositories in regional languages and defined their divisional goals on KM. At country levels, the CLE often found fragmented, ad hoc KM approaches responding to immediate needs. The more successful approaches usually relied on the experience and commitment of individual country directors (CDs).

9. **The KM architecture did not follow the ongoing decentralization process, as envisaged by the 2019 KM Strategy**. The 2019 KM Action Plan was overly focused on the Strategy and Knowledge Department (SKD), resulting in limited attention to IFAD's internal and external knowledge systems. The simultaneous creation in 2019 of multiple KM-related units, such as the Change, Delivery and Innovation Unit (CDI) under the Presidency, and the South-South and Triangular Cooperation's (SSTC) function within the Global Partnership, Engagement and Resource Mobilization Department, have contributed to the fragmentation of KM roles in IFAD. Moving the technical arm, the Policy and Technical Advisory Division (PTA) of the Programme Management Department (PMD) to SKD and concentrating the responsibilities for the implementation of the KM Action Plan in the SKD front office has made KM coordination and guidance across the organization more challenging. The roles of the three SSTC/KM centres were insufficiently defined and, with the exception of the Latin America and the Caribbean Division (LAC), less effective in supporting regional knowledge exchanges. Progress towards decentralizing SKD staff has been slow, limiting KM support to countries. Loaded with project-related tasks, SKD and PMD experts had minimal time for supporting knowledge-sharing at country and regional levels.

10. **Financial resources for KM were limited and unevenly distributed**. An examination of the regional divisions indicated an uneven distribution of financial and human resources. At country level, KM is grossly underresourced and relies on ad hoc measures to plug funding gaps. Loan-based KM financing is limited; tracking across systems is complicated by inconsistent data. In the past, grants were a key instrument to position IFAD as a knowledge player at global, regional and country levels. However, the sharp decrease of grants during IFAD12 had a major impact on regional-level KM. IFAD's administrative KM budget increased slightly in 2018-2021, going mainly to SKD, the External Relations and Governance Department (ERG) and PMD. Supplementary funds significantly enabled KM. However, staff resources were concentrated at IFAD headquarters (HQ). At country level, KM is underresourced, relying on ad hoc project funds.

11. **IFAD knowledge products are biased towards research and available in few languages, limiting their utility for country stakeholders**. While IFAD's publications addressed key themes, most were only published in English. Technical knowledge made up the largest share of IFAD's knowledge products, while experiential and policy knowledge from country programmes remains minimal. Although IFAD's research division expanded its scope, corporate knowledge did not adequately capture the on-the-ground expertise and Southern knowledge critical for rural transformation. Initiatives to leverage operational experiences, such as experience capitalization, were not continued. The review showed that knowledge products would have been more relevant if they had integrated scientific knowledge with technical, local, indigenous and community knowledges, and also involved participatory, multi-stakeholder processes.

12. **There is scope to enhance the cost-effectiveness of KM given the existing budgetary constraints**. The CLE estimated the average costs versus outreach for key IFAD knowledge products. Products developed in collaboration with country offices, such as the advantage series and policy briefs, showed a good balance of costs and outreach. Research products –, such as the impact assessments and the Rural Development Report –, were more costly and aimed at global outreach. The harmonization exercise initiated a few years ago would have been an opportunity to enhance the cost-effectiveness of the publication series. IFAD is currently short of lower-cost products with strong utility for country programmes. Cost-effective KM practices at programme level include field-level exchanges, with potential for improving project performance. Preparation of KM strategies or action plans is time-consuming, and their relevance is time-bound, reducing their cost-effectiveness. SKD's knowledge clinics are a cost-effective way to provide targeted, demand-driven guidance to country programmes. Despite perceptions, low-cost communication and social media tools were often cost-effective, especially in fragile situations.

13. **More adequate and easily accessible knowledge repositories would enable staff to share operational experiences more effectively**. Digital platforms and communities of practice (CoPs) enabled an increase in knowledge-sharing events within IFAD since 2016. The more active platforms usually required dedicated facilitators and funding, which were not always available. Beyond corporate platforms, there is a demand for platforms providing contextualized knowledge in local languages. The CoPs have helped by bundling knowledge, expertise and data. CoPs played an important role in introducing and sharing knowledge on new topics, such as geographic information systems (GIS) and supporting knowledge acquisition for newly arrived staff. Their effectiveness depended on staff engagement and thoughtful facilitation. Platforms and CoPs are low-cost options, but their proliferation has made maintenance and sustained funding more challenging.

14. **High workloads, understaffed country offices, vacant positions and the knowledge drain resulting from reassignment and turnover of staff were recurrent themes hindering sustained KM initiatives**. Staff are the key asset for IFAD, and in all cases reviewed, success depended on their individual motivation and commitment. Full-time KM positions were scarce and mostly funded from supplementary funds. In 2022, there were eight full-time KM officers, including seven in SKG and one in the Global Communications and Advocacy Division (COM). Country programme staff have KM among their numerous responsibilities, but often lack sufficient time to focus on specific KM tasks. The use of consultants to initiate and sustain KM practices in regional and HQ divisions was a common practice, but it limited ownership and integration within the organization. Knowledge retention was a persistent challenge exacerbated by staff reassignments. The evaluation noted the absence of systematic plans for capturing and transferring tacit knowledge before staff departure in many countries.

C. Conclusions

15. The CLE reviewed a period of major strategic developments and organizational reforms. The extent of these changes, and their disjointed nature, made it challenging for IFAD to discharge a forceful organization-wide KM initiative in line with the ambitions of its knowledge management strategy.

16. **The KM architecture is lagging behind the unfolding decentralization process**. IFAD has made substantive progress in enhancing its field presence since 2019. Country directors, who have a responsibility for KM in partner countries, are now outposted. In order to fulfil its decentralization targets, IFAD has dismantled some of the HQ-based Sustainable Production, Markets and Institutions Division (PMI) teams that had been leading knowledge exchange at global levels, for example on rural finance, by deploying them to different regions. The SKD staff outposted to decentralized offices retain a reporting line to HQ, limiting their integration into the decentralized structure. Nevertheless, the majority of SKD staff, especially those at senior levels, remain in HQ. Providing effective support to regions, while maintaining visibility and excellence globally in areas that are of strategic importance for IFAD, has been a balancing act.

17. **IFAD's institutional set-up for KM is not adequate to position itself as a knowledge player on rural transformation within the global landscape. The formal KM architecture, focused on SKD, does not support the organization-wide nature of KM and the diversity of KM roles in IFAD**. The KMCG has been useful as an organization-wide platform for knowledge-sharing. As a convener of the knowledge management coordination group (KMCG), the SKD front office does not have the capacity to support a more coherent and effective KM approach across the various departments. IFAD's ambition to contribute to rural transformation, including scaling up solutions, requires recognizing the different roles in KM that would adequately consolidate and share different types of knowledge with its stakeholders at global, regional and country levels. IFAD's knowledge is produced in a piecemeal, fragmented, "projectized" way, without thinking strategically about contributions to the necessary systemic changes needed for rural transformation. There is no overarching knowledge agenda that would enable such a systems approach to knowledge generation and sharing.

18. **Gaps in KM capacity and senior guidance were the underlying reasons for the absence of evidence on KM effectiveness**. IFAD's conceptualization of the role of KM within the organization demonstrates its commitment to use KM to enhance its development effectiveness, recognizing its importance in serving clients through improved programmes and policy support. Yet, IFAD does not have the frameworks in place to demonstrate its effectiveness as knowledge provider at corporate, regional and country levels. KM budgets and results are not being tracked, and reporting of corporate-level results is focused on HQ-based activities only. As front-line implementers of KM in IFAD, regional divisions struggle to adequately support KM activities. This dovetails with more structural challenges: the absence of dedicated KM frameworks in some areas points to gaps in strategic planning and KM prioritization. The challenge deepens with lack of capacities and sustainable human resources. Relying on sporadic grants, supplementary funds or project savings introduces uncertainties, hinting at gaps in long-term KM planning. Such an approach, while rendering some short-term benefits, poses risks for enduring results.

19. **CLE case studies exposed positive examples where KM practices in countries have shown results. However, overall, more support is required**. Evidence from the country case studies demonstrates that IFAD has the potential and knowledge to deliver highly transformative KM practices at country level that can support rural transformation. In some cases, such practices have been delivered. Projects depend considerably on IFAD's support for institutionalizing KM. There is no set body of experiences being leveraged in any country to build the foundational capacity for KM during design or implementation. Approaches were typically one-off or ad hoc. The lack of an institutional approach to capturing these experiences has led to an inconsistent and fractured approach to KM. Later-generation practices based on multi-stakeholder engagement bring the most tangible routes towards development results for rural transformation. However, delivery of those practices is hindered by the absence of a supportive structure and more foundational understanding of the role of KM within projects. Knowledge partnerships can enhance IFAD's effectiveness and impact for rural transformation, as shown by the country case studies. They also strengthen the efficiency of IFAD's KM practices and increase the likelihood of the sustainability of practices and their results.

20. **The CLE highlights the challenges that IFAD will have to address in order to become more effective and efficient in the generation and use of knowledge**. IFAD's internal structures and mechanisms have not been conducive to effective and efficient KM practices. Knowledge retention mechanisms have not been sufficient to mitigate knowledge attrition under IFAD's decentralization and reassignment policies. This was in part due to a lack of well-functioning digital platforms to enable sufficient storage and sharing of knowledge. The absence of senior KM specialists and the scarcity of full-time knowledge managers within the organization are obstacles to professionalizing KM. Currently, KM expertise and performance is neither well recognized nor incentivized. The reduced availability of regular funding for KM is a limitation on introducing innovative (fifth- and sixth-generation) KM practices that IFAD will have to overcome.

21. **Knowledge will be key for IFAD to increase its relevance as a development player**. Knowledge is vital to ensure that the organization is at the forefront of rural transformation. IFAD can play a key role in translating knowledge from operations and contribute to the global understanding of how rural transformation can be effected. In order to do so, IFAD needs to align its knowledge products and the knowledge embedded in its projects. Currently, knowledge from operations is not effectively synthesized and integrated with rigorous assessments for scaling up. Successful mobilization of resources will require IFAD to keep abreast of the latest development and good practices. Artificial intelligence offers huge potential for IFAD in terms of searching its complex of internal databases and navigating external knowledge. However, this potential and the related challenges are moving targets, as the field develops very rapidly. This makes it crucial for IFAD KM staff to continue in knowledge partnerships.

D. Recommendations

22. The proposed recommendations address these challenges within the current resource constraints. IFAD could mitigate resource constraints through more effective and efficient utilization of existing capacities and resources to some extent. In addition, the CLE recommends that resources for KM should be mobilized through reallocations of internal funding and additional resources from knowledge partnerships.

23. **Recommendation 1: IFAD should reclaim its role in elevating the operational knowledge it generates to a global level in order to inform the rural transformation debate**.

    a. The current KM strategy should be complemented by a lighter, more flexible "**Knowledge agenda**" outlining the goals and priorities of KM throughout IFAD. This agenda should place greater emphasis on rural transformation and fifth- and sixth-generation practices, such as multi-stakeholder processes. It should also recognize the importance of local knowledge in country programmes. The latter factor will also involve more pluralistic definitions of knowledge. The agenda would also cover the relevant non-lending areas, including SSTC, country-level policy engagement (CLPE) and innovation.

    b. **Knowledge partnerships** should be at the core of IFAD's approach to KM and will lead to greater effectiveness and impact. These partnerships will also strengthen the efficiency of IFAD's KM practices and increase the likelihood that practices and their results will be sustainable. The knowledge agenda mentioned in point 1a would guide stronger engagement with knowledge partnerships at global, regional and country levels.

    c. To address the fragmented institutional framework, IFAD should establish a **small strategic office at executive level**, similar to or combined with CDI, with adequate capacity to guide the implementation of the knowledge agenda. The office would be responsible for initiating, developing and managing the knowledge agenda for IFAD.

    d. **Communities of practice** (CoPs) should be more systematically used to support innovation and learning, and their performance should be monitored.

24. **Recommendation 2: IFAD Management should initiate a decisive shift away from its overly centralized KM architecture and allocate sufficient human and financial resources across decentralized levels**.

  a. The ongoing decentralization in IFAD will also require more **devolved responsibilities and resources for KM**, with a lighter touch in terms of central planning and reporting. The decentralized KM roles currently in PMI – the Environment, Climate, Gender and Social Inclusion Division (ECG) and SSTC – should be firmly integrated into regional structures, and the reporting lines adjusted accordingly. Reporting on SSTC and KM should be integrated into regional divisions (PMD) to provide effective support for country offices.

  b. Regional divisions should consolidate the available **KM capacities** dispersed throughout the organization and appoint full-time knowledge managers, who would be responsible for synthesizing knowledge from operations and facilitating knowledge exchanges with stakeholders at country and regional levels. Gaps in KM expertise could be compensated by leveraging knowledge partnerships.

  c. Regional divisions should develop a framework for monitoring the effectiveness of KM practices at regional and country levels, with appropriate indicators to measure **KM outcomes** in terms of changing KM behaviours, skills and capacities as well as driving the uptake and use of knowledge products. Performance on KM should be recognized and adequately rewarded.

  d. The **KMCG** should play an important role as an inclusive platform to support good practices on KM across regions. The **KM resource centre** should continue providing uniform formats and resources across KM.

25. **Recommendation 3: IFAD Management should monitor KM effectiveness and focus on KM practices and products that provide the best value for money at global and operational levels**.

  a. **Monitoring knowledge products and platforms** needs to focus on results, so that choices can be made between the most effective products and platforms.

  b. Divisions should adopt a **consistent and comparable budgeting system** for KM. Regional divisions should oversee the cost-effectiveness of KM practices at regional and country levels.

  c. Prioritizing KM practices that involve local partners in the **co-creation of knowledge**, linking different knowledge systems, is key. Knowledge practices that involve multiple stakeholders are likely to be more effective and sustainable.

  d. **Annual reports on budget use** and KM results should be reported to the President.

26. **Recommendation 4: IFAD's next Strategic Framework should define how knowledge would enable IFAD to position itself as a driver of rural transformation within a global context of uncertainty and crisis**.

  a. **Knowledge production** should be guided by a systems approach, connecting the multiple dimensions of transformative change and the stakeholders and partners who would contribute to this knowledge. Demand, quality and cost-effectiveness should be among the key criteria driving knowledge generation and sharing.

  b. Knowledge management should aim at contributing to the "bigger, better and smarter" ambition in IFAD's framework through its role in **scaling up, replication and policy engagement** for transformational change.

  c. Enhancing the effectiveness of corporate knowledge management should be an integral part of IFAD's **reform agenda**. IFAD would need to define its comparative advantage against other strong KM players among the international financial institutions and the private sector, which both support transformative change.

  d. **Application of international standards** would raise the bar for knowledge management in IFAD. The ISO 30401 provides common definitions and standards for organizational processes that IFAD should consider embedding in its future KM strategy.

IFAD Management's response

I. Considerations on the main findings

1. Management welcomes the corporate-level evaluation (CLE) on IFAD's Knowledge Management (KM) practices and thanks IOE for the comprehensive assessment. The CLE recognizes that knowledge is essential to IFAD's mandate in assisting member states as a development partner.

2. **Management concurs with the CLE finding that several organizational reforms during the review period challenged the implementation of effective organisation-wide KM initiatives** that matched the ambition of IFAD's KM strategy 2019 to 2025. In addition to decentralization, IFAD conducted reassignment exercises in 2020 and 2022, which moved staff to different geographical, operational, and technical areas which greatly affected the retention of institutional knowledge.

3. **IFAD has already incorporated many CLE recommendations into its ongoing knowledge work**. The CLE was timely as it coincided with SKD Knowledge Unit's efforts to enhance the value of the knowledge function at IFAD, following the KM Strategy Midterm Review (MTR) in 2022. Both the MTR and CLE have informed the Knowledge Action Plan (KAP) for 2023-2025. IFAD is leveraging the KAP to inform IFAD's country strategies and investment operations and contribute to global policy efforts towards rural transformation. IFAD's next KM Strategy, to be approved in 2026, will be informed by an assessment of progress and results and build on the CLE.

4. **Management is committed to further examine and address the agreed CLE recommendations once IFAD's recalibrated organizational structure is introduced**. The CLE came at a pivotal juncture as the institution embarks on its recalibration exercise that will realign the institution's structure to enhance its operational efficiency and efficacy in service delivery. Within this context, the corporate KM function will be moving to the newly established Office of Development Effectiveness (ODE) that will be responsible for managing, measuring, and facilitating the effectiveness of IFAD operations. ODE will consolidate and enhance several functions currently spread across the house, including KM, innovation, results, and impact assessment. In the context of finalizing the structure of ODE, Management will draw on the lessons from the evaluation to ensure that IFAD has a robust knowledge management function, bearing in mind human and financial resources.

II. Management's perspective on recommendations

5. Overall, Management is aligned with the general direction of the CLE's findings and recommendations. However, some key considerations are highlighted regarding specific recommendations detailed below.

6. **Recommendation 1: IFAD should reclaim its role in elevating the operational knowledge it generates to a global level.**

   Management overall **agrees** with this recommendation, with the caveats below.

7. **Recommendation 1a: The current KM Strategy should be complemented by a lighter, more flexible 'Knowledge agenda' outlining the goals and priorities of KM throughout IFAD.**

   Management **partially agrees**. Rather than complementing the current KM Strategy with a 'Knowledge agenda', the current KAP effectively fulfills this role. The KAP provides a comprehensive coverage of the elements proposed for the 'agenda', such as: articulating the KM goals and priorities across IFAD, placing greater emphasis on rural transformation, acknowledging the significance of local knowledge, and encompassing relevant non-lending areas such as SSTC, country level policy engagement, and innovation. A KAP annex outlines the actions foreseen to address many of the CLE recommendations, for example: 1b on knowledge partnerships, 1d on communities of practice, and 3a on monitoring, among others.

8. **Recommendation 1b: Knowledge partnerships should be at the core of the IFAD approach to KM and will lead to greater effectiveness and impact.**

   Management **agrees** that knowledge partnerships should be at the core of IFAD's approach to KM. The pursuit of partnerships is increasingly imperative for fostering learning and facilitating the coordination of knowledge, both internally and externally. Internally, the KMCG serves as the key mechanism for fostering knowledge exchange, coordination, and supports KM effectiveness. IFAD also has been collaborating with numerous external partners with the aim of bringing state of the art knowledge to IFAD and its member states. It engages with the UN, IFIs, think tanks, universities, and research institutes for knowledge events and leverages knowledge generated by partners within its grant and supplementary funded programs (e.g., 50x2030, SAFIN, GEF). The new ODE will enhance this partnership-building function, by allowing for cross fertilization of knowledge and enhanced partnerships internally and with external stakeholders.

9. **Recommendation 1c: IFAD should establish a small strategic office at executive level.**

   Management **agrees** with the need for strengthening IFAD's KM Architecture. Under the ongoing recalibration, the KM unit will be moved from SKD to ODE under IFAD's Executive Vice President. Management will define the specific functions of the KM unit within this new office, by leveraging the guidance offered in this recommendation while also balancing it with ODE's mandate and role as established by the recalibration.

   In the interim, the 2023-2025 KAP already focuses on enhancing IFAD's KM architecture, function and value added. It defines the key role of the corporate KM unit in providing strategic direction, establishing knowledge priorities and results, and coordinating KM efforts across the institution, in collaboration with the IFAD-wide KMCG group.

10. **Recommendation 1d: Communities of Practice (CoPs) should be more systematically used to support innovation and learning.**

    Management **agrees** with the recommendation. Presently, IFAD has 11 formalized CoP groups. Beyond those, however, there are numerous other types of KM networks that have proven successful at project, country, and global levels, as well for specific thematic areas. These operate effectively, actively sharing knowledge and innovations. Collaborating with the KMCG, the KM Unit will continue promoting CoPs alongside other knowledge-sharing practices and platforms such as Dgroups, restricted social media networks, etc. The platform selection should be entrusted to network owners, who are best positioned to align the group's needs with the most suitable format.

11. **Recommendation 2: Initiate a decisive shift away from its overly centralized KM architecture and allocate sufficient human and financial resources across decentralised levels.**

    Management **partially agrees** with this recommendation and supports greater decentralization of key work streams. Within this context, regional staff with KM functions are decentralized to the regional offices. Further to that, given the existing resource-constrained environment, IFAD will need to adjust its KM ambitions and structures in line with existing human and financial resources. This will be considered within the ongoing recalibration.

12. **Recommendation 2a: The ongoing decentralization would also require more devolved responsibilities and resources for KM.**

Management **partially agrees** given the need to assess its feasibility. In the context of numerous global, country, and organizational priorities, Management will assess the feasibility of this recommendation and balance it with the availability of human and financial resources within an overall constrained budget environment where any real increases to the budget will be kept to a minimum. The purpose of the current organizational recalibration is to identify the most effective ways of working with existing resources to allow IFAD to deliver on its mandate. At present, Management is not in a position to confirm whether or how to address this recommendation, especially regarding regional structures and reporting lines.

13. **Recommendation 2b: Regional divisions consolidate KM capacities dispersed throughout the organization and appoint full-time knowledge managers**.

Management **disagrees** with the recommendation. Overall, Management supports the idea of consolidating organizational capacities and will bring together several functions currently spread across the house, including KM. However, this consolidation will take place within the new ODE rather than in regional divisions. Moreover, appointing new KM positions needs to be considered within the wider scope of IFAD's decentralized structure and the strategic prioritization of the budget. It is also important to recognize that knowledge management is inherent in the role of all operational and technical staff.

14. **Recommendation 2c: Regional divisions should develop a framework for monitoring the effectiveness of KM practices**.

Management **agrees** with the recommendation, and further suggests that the frameworks are coordinated by the KM Unit so they are aligned across regions and at the corporate level for compatibility and cross-learning. The recommendation has been taken into consideration already within the enhanced KAP Results Measurement Framework, building on results data from all divisions, including regional offices.

15. **Recommendation 2d: KMCG and KM Resource center should continue to play important roles.**

Management **agrees** with the recommendation. The KMCG under the leadership of the KM unit will continue to support and coordinate organization-wide KM work and will maintain knowledge platforms such as the Knowledge Resource Center, Knowledge sites on Intranet, X-Desk and others.

16. **Recommendation 3: IFAD Management should monitor KM effectiveness and focus on KM practices and products that provide the best value for money at global and operational levels.**

Management partially agrees with this recommendation. Some of the actions proposed will depend on the feasibility to adopt the proposed budgeting system.

17. **Recommendation 3a: Results-focused Monitoring of knowledge products and platforms.**

Management **agrees** that monitoring needs to be results-focused to inform the focus on most effective products and platforms. This recommendation has been addressed in the enhanced KAP Results Measurement Framework.

18. **Recommendation 3b: Consistent and comparable budgeting system for KM.**

Management **partially agrees** with the recommendation. While management agrees that KM budgeting should be consistent and comparable, it needs to assess the feasibility, system requirements, resource implication and timelines for introducing such a system and decide on its implementation. The system needs to be developed first at the corporate level and then rolled out and implemented by divisions, and needs to separate KM budget from Communications, ICT and others, which are often combined.

19. **Recommendation 3c: Involve local partners in the co-creation of knowledge**.

Management **agrees** to prioritise KM practices that involve local partners in the co-creation of knowledge. IFAD and WFP have just hosted the annual Multi Donor Learning Partnership network meeting in May 2024 that focused on local knowledge generation and sharing, using KM best practices and lessons from other UN agencies and IFIs. Under IFAD's grants policy, IFAD is prioritizing supporting grantees in developing partner countries which is another mechanism to support local knowledge co-creation.

20. **Recommendation 3d: Annual reports on budget use and KM results**.

    Management **partially agrees** with the recommendation. KM results at corporate level are already reported on annually in the RIDE and IFAD Annual Report. However, reconciling KM results with budget expenditures will depend on the feasibility of changing the budgeting system, as noted in recommendation 3b.

21. **Recommendation 4: IFAD's next strategic framework should define how knowledge would enable IFAD to position itself as driver of rural transformation**.

    Management **agrees** with the recommendation and will consider it in the preparation of the 2025-2031 Strategic Framework.

22. **Recommendation 4a: Knowledge production should be guided by a systems approach**.

    Management **agrees** with the recommendation. The KM Unit has produced a guidance note for IFAD knowledge production which includes the standards of knowledge with demand, quality, cost effectiveness and intended use of knowledge among the key criteria. KMCG will continue to serve as a platform to ensure their implementation.

23. **Recommendation 4b: Contribution to "bigger, better and smarter" IFAD**.

    Management **agrees** that KM should contribute to positioning IFAD as a reliable thought partner and to enhancing IFAD operations for scaling up, replication and policy engagement for transformational change. The current KAP includes many activities that address this aim, for example by serving IFAD's Member States' policy development and extracting evidence of successful practices and innovations and their dissemination for replication and scaling up.

24. **Recommendation 4c: KM should be an integral part of IFAD's reform agenda**.

    Management **agrees** and has already integrated the knowledge function into the ongoing recalibration which aims at improving the effectiveness of IFAD's operational delivery.

25. **Recommendation 4d: Application of international standards**.

    Management **agrees** to consider applying international standards during the development of the next KM Strategy. The KM Unit will engage with relevant external KM networks (e.g. UN, IFI and MDLP) to benchmark institutional experiences in integrating international standards, resource implications, and potential benefits. Regarding ISO certification specifically, notably, no UN or IFI institution has been accredited (ref. MDLP and publication co-authored by ADB auditor).

Chapter

I
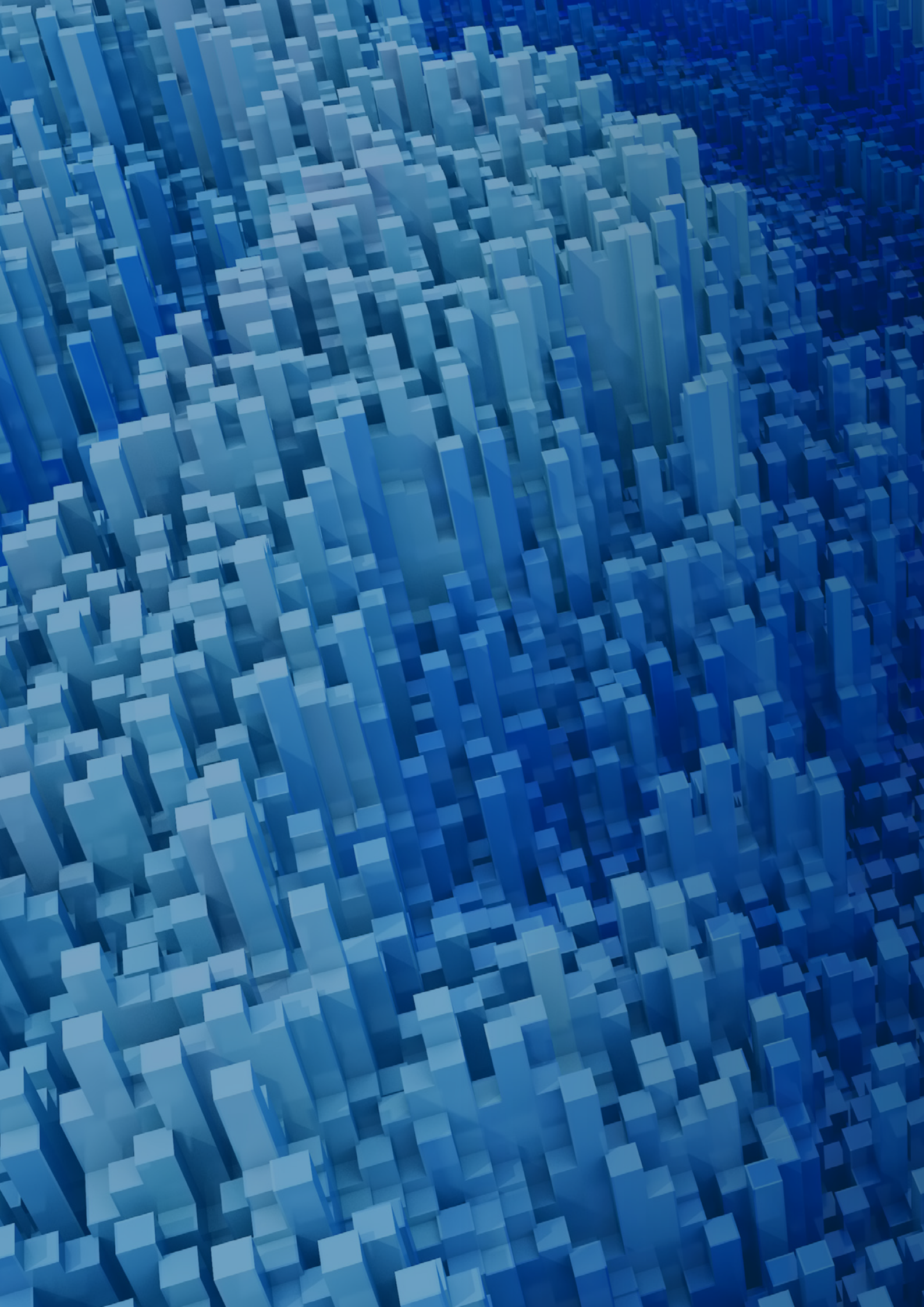
Evaluation objectives
and methodology

I. Evaluation objectives and methodology

A. Background

1. As approved by the Executive Board during the 134th session in December 2021, the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD (IOE) conducted a corporate-level evaluation (CLE) of knowledge management practices in 2022/2023.[1] The CLE reviewed the relevance, coherence, effectiveness and efficiency of knowledge management (KM) practices at corporate, regional and country levels for the period 2016 to mid-2023.

2. Knowledge is a critical element of IFAD's medium-term strategy for delivering transformative rural development. The IFAD Strategic Framework (2016 – 2025) aims to maximize its comparative advantage by working "bigger, better and smarter". It will mobilize and leverage substantially greater investment in rural areas; strengthen the quality of countries' rural development programmes through evidence-based innovation, knowledge-sharing, partnerships and policy engagement; and deliver development results more cost-effectively. Knowledge and its effective management play an important role in all three areas.

3. Knowledge-building, dissemination and policy engagement together represent one of the four pillars for the achievement of IFAD's development results set out in the Strategic Framework. **The importance of knowledge in delivering transformational change** was further emphasized in the 2021 Report of the Consultation on the Twelfth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources. IFAD conducted a midterm review (MTR) of the IFAD 2019-2025 KM Strategy in 2022. The MTR focused on the adequacy and effectiveness of the strategy and the action plan (2019-2021) and will inform the preparation of a new KM Action Plan 2023-2025.

4. The scope for this CLE goes beyond the KM strategy and its implementation. The evaluation uses IFAD's Strategic Framework (2016-2025) to position the contribution of KM within IFAD strategic goals. The framework has guided the development of the 2019 KM Strategy but goes beyond it, by also defining the broader strategic ambitions for IFAD in support of rural transformation. The CLE aims to assess how the organization has leveraged its knowledge base for rural transformation, in particular at country level, and to what extent the existing strategies, structures and functions have supported IFAD's ambition to contribute to transformative change in partner countries. The evaluation has a particular focus on the **linkage between corporate-level KM practice and actual KM practice at country level**.

5. With this approach, the evaluation is expected to inform the ongoing **deliberations on the IFAD13 replenishment**. The business model for IFAD13, proposed by Management, already notes that knowledge is intrinsic to IFAD's business model: "Generating cutting-edge knowledge helps to increase IFAD's visibility, credibility and influence as a trusted partner." The evaluation aims to assist IFAD further define its positioning itself as a knowledge partner on rural transformation within the larger development landscape.

6. The ongoing decentralization process has fundamentally changed the way knowledge is generated and shared with partners in countries and within IFAD itself.[2] The CLE reviews **how KM has performed and delivered in the decentralized structure** during the period 2016–2022. It also explores important aspects that are driving KM in IFAD in the context of decentralization, such as IFAD's growing country presence, staff turnover and limited resources for non-lending activities.

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7. The evaluation was conducted in a rapidly changing international environment. At the midpoint of the journey to deliver Agenda 2030, multiple global crises are undermining progress on the Sustainable Development Goals.[3] Levels of official development assistance have increased. However, funding is increasingly absorbed by the changing priorities of donor country spending, such as hosting refugees and providing aid to Ukraine.

8. **Knowledge management, at the heart of IFAD's strategic approach and an intrinsic part of the response to crises, is also evolving quickly**. Rapid digitalization, including artificial intelligence and machine learning, and evolving social media, are changing the way international financial institutions (IFIs) and development organizations share and broker knowledge. At the same time, there is greater societal emphasis on diversity and inclusion as it relates to knowledge. Within international development, this has led to efforts to decolonize knowledge by dismantling the fundamental inequities of the knowledge system. One aspect of this attempt is an awareness of the need for greater inclusion of knowledge and knowledge holders from multiple peripheries.

B. Purpose, objectives and scope

9. The **purpose** of the CLE is to help the organization appreciate the diversity of practices and types of knowledge that are relevant to its work, and to achieve a shared, more coherent understanding of the role KM plays in the context of IFAD's rural transformation agenda. The findings, conclusions and recommendations of the CLE will support IFAD Management and staff in the adoption of good KM practices. It will also support the Executive Board in its accountability function by informing the deliberations during the Thirteenth Replenishment of IFAD's resources.

10. The CLE has three **objectives**.

   i. To assess the relevance, coherence, effectiveness and efficiency of current KM practices at corporate, regional and country levels.

   ii. To review and identify lessons from other development organizations that IFAD can use to improve its KM performance in the future.

   iii. To articulate what is needed in KM to help IFAD pursue the objectives of its rural transformation agenda.

11. The **scope** of the CLE is the period from 2016 to mid-2023, which coincides with IFAD's current Strategic Framework (2016–2025). IFAD's current KM Strategy was prepared in 2019. The CLE will cover KM practices at corporate, regional and country levels.

12. The CLE will address three overarching evaluation questions.

   i. How relevant and coherent are the current KM practices given the mandate and needs of the organization within the global, regional and local contexts in which IFAD works (relevance and internal coherence)?

   ii. To what extent has IFAD, through its KM practices, effectively contributed to rural transformation, and which factors can explain its performance (effectiveness)?

   iii. How efficient has been the use of the available financial and human resources to deliver the KM strategy, KM practices and KM results (operational and institutional efficiency)?

13. For each overarching question, sub-questions are presented in the evaluation framework (annex II).

3   A preliminary assessment of the approximately 140 targets for which data is available undertaken by the United Nations shows that only about 12 per cent are on track, and some 30 per cent have either seen no movement or regressed below the 2015 baseline. As the United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres has stated, "It is time to sound the alarm". United Nations. 2023. Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals: towards a rescue plan for people and planet. Social and Economic Council 2023 Session. **https://hlpf.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-07/SDG%20Progress%20Report%20Special%20Edition.pdf?_gl=1*gs6a4y*_ga*MTk5MjA2NDU4MS4xNjc1MzQ0OTMy*_ga_TK9BQL5X7Z*MTcyNDkyMjE2Mi4xLjAuMTcyNDkyMjE2My4wLjAuMA**

C. Terminology for this CLE

14. This section provides clarification of some key terms adopted for the purpose of this CLE. A longer list of terms is included in the glossary (annex V). All terms in the glossary are identified with an asterisk*.

> Knowledge* is the awareness, understanding or information that has been obtained by experience or study, and that is either in a person's mind or possessed by people generally (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.). There are different types of knowledge in IFAD. Internal knowledge* comprises explicit, implicit and tacit knowledge. This knowledge is invested in individual members of staff as practices but also carried by KM tools and products. There is also external knowledge*, such as policy knowledge*, scientific knowledge*, technical knowledge*, local knowledge* and indigenous knowledge*.

15. The fundamental question for this evaluation concerns how KM functions, mechanisms and processes were institutionalized and systematically followed to improve IFAD's operational performance and development effectiveness. Therefore, the CLE uses a pragmatic definition of KM, which captures the evaluation's explicit focus on KM practices and the impact of KM at country level. For the purpose of this CLE, **knowledge management** is defined in the following way.

> The systematic management of the generation, sharing, use and brokering* of substantive* knowledge through tools and practices at organizational and individual levels, with a view to enhance IFAD's role and contribution to rural transformation globally and in partner countries.

16. **Knowledge management practices** relate to the choices and behaviours made by individual staff, organizational units and the organization as a whole, both formally and informally, to generate, use and share knowledge. These choices are based on their understanding, on their skills and expertise, their attitudes, the tools and resources they have at their disposal, and the wider environment in which they are embedded. For IFAD, these practices include: using platforms, systems and processes for sharing knowledge and learning; building internal capacity; applying evidence and experience to policy engagement and programmes; and engaging and learning with development partners. Practices are dependent on strategy and the enabling environment. Knowledge management practices are defined in the following way.

> A shared repertoire of resources developed by practitioners, including experiences, stories, tools, and ways of addressing recurring problems and integrating the lessons learned. KM practices relate to 'how' knowledge is generated, shared, used and brokered by IFAD. These practices involve personal and organization choices, the behaviours and insights of individual staff, organizational units and the organization as a whole, both formally and informally.

D. Conceptual framework

17. The CLE uses a theory of change (ToC) to conceptualize the linkages between KM practices, the drivers and institutional arrangements explaining their existence, and the KM results contributing to rural transformation. Figure 1 provides a schematic overview of the ToC. The elaborated ToC is included in annex I. The CLE also sets out the underlying assumptions underpinning the ToC, and assessed their validity, with details presented in annex VIII. The definitions used in the ToC were pragmatically aligned with IFAD's Strategic Framework to focus on the implementation of KM practices across the organization, rather than limiting its scope to only the 2019 KM Strategy and Action Plan. The CLE aimed to examine KM practices and activities at corporate, regional and country level, achieving a broader reach and ambition than the earlier documents could capture.

FIGURE 1

Conceptual framework and theory of change
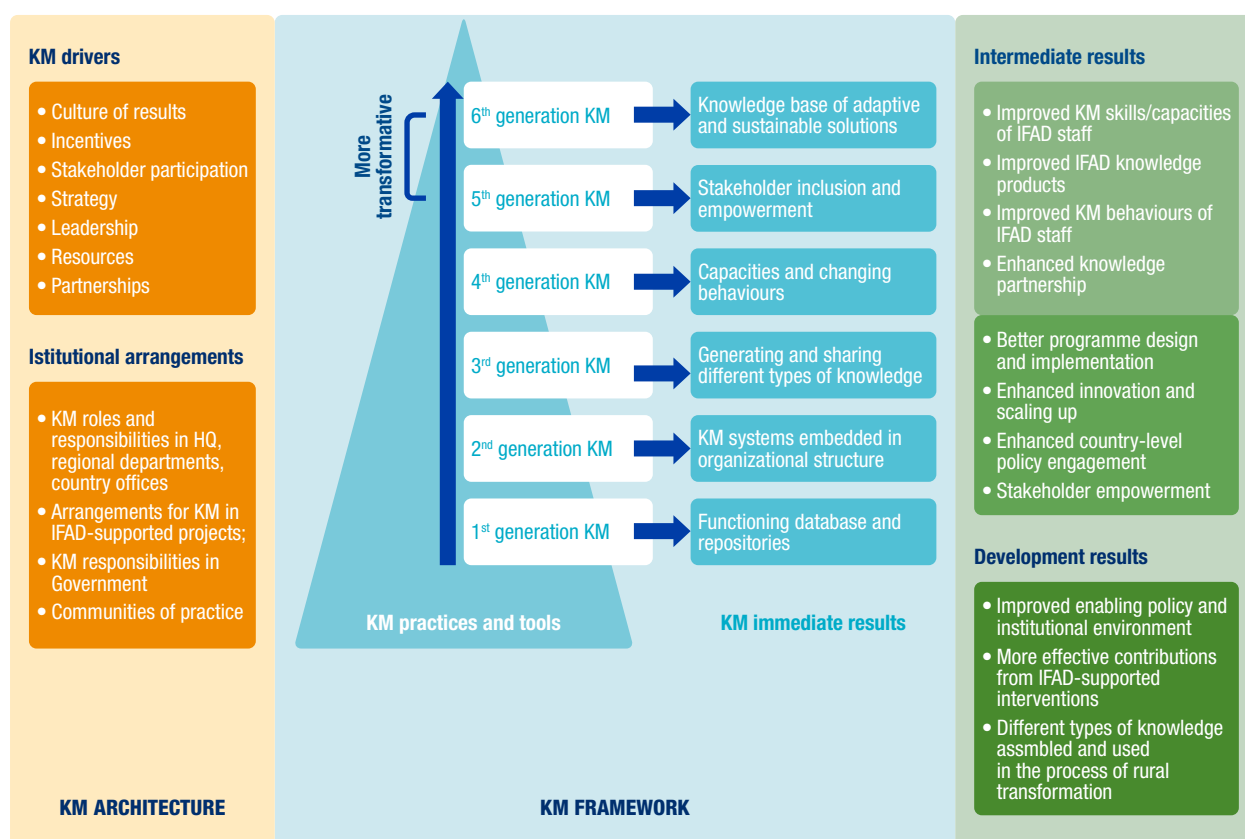
Source: CLE team

18. The ToC illustrates **how KM is expected to help IFAD position itself globally by working "bigger, better and smarter"**, as defined in the Strategic Framework (2016–2025). In order to become "better", IFAD would need to enhance the quality of its country programme. IFAD would also generate knowledge on issues related to inclusive and sustainable rural transformation for policy engagement. The two development results are captured in the ToC. As a third development result, the ToC envisages assembling different types of knowledge, including scientific, operational, indigenous and local knowledge. This recognizes that different types of knowledge are needed to solve complex or "wicked" problems; the knowledge of all stakeholders, and particularly marginalized ones, is an important component of epistemic (knowledge-related) justice.

19. As a priority for IFAD working "smarter", the Strategic Framework (2016-2025) includes fostering a culture of excellence and results across the organization. The ToC highlights the need for a results culture to drive KM. A results focus, innovation, critical self-reflection, and discussions to effect sustained improvements to operations are the key elements of a results culture and a driver for effective KM. It also provides incentives for staff to engage in KM. Other drivers are leadership, strategy and resources for KM. Finally, stakeholder participation is seen as a driver for KM as it enables knowledge-sharing and broader ownership.

20. The ToC scopes immediate and intermediate KM results as well as the development results to which KM is expected to contribute. The more immediate results include generating and sharing different types of knowledge, enhanced capacities and skills, and stakeholder inclusion and empowerment. Intermediate results include improvements and changes, for example with regard to staff capacities, knowledge products and partnerships all contributing to improved programme results and implementation, more successful innovation and scaling up, and enhanced policy engagement.

21. The framework assumes that KM results would contribute to transformative development through three broader development results: (i) an **improved enabling policy and institutional environment**; (ii) **more effective operations**; and (iii) **better use of different types of knowledge**. Together, these three development results contribute to rural transformation and greater progress towards Agenda 2030. In particular, the practices from the fifth and sixth generations of KM are expected to contribute to transformative processes by developing a knowledge base of adaptive and sustainable solutions.

22. The conceptual framework for the evaluation is based around **six co-existing generational approaches to knowledge management for development (KM4D)**.[4] Each of these generations has introduced KM concepts and tools for greater understanding of KM4D. Currently, the majority of KM practices in IFAD belong to the third and fourth generations of KM. Third-generation KM includes knowledge-sharing tools – such as after-action review, the peer assist, case studies and best practices – and more emphasis on tacit knowledge. The fourth generation comprises practice-based, people-centric approaches to KM and involves the establishment of inter-organizational communities of practice. It also considers the increased role of social media.

23. The fifth generation, with its more holistic focus on the development of a knowledge ecology or system, has been developed with the growing understanding that many different types of knowledge, such as local knowledge and technical knowledge, are needed to solve "wicked" or complex problems (Brown et al. 2010), and that knowledge is itself a global public good. More recently, a sixth generation of KM4D has emerged, labelled "decolonization of knowledge". This generation recognizes the value of indigenous knowledge as well as organizational efforts to increase diversity, equality and inclusion (Boyes et al. 2023).[5] The higher generations, particularly the fifth and sixth, are characterized by an implicit recognition of the relevance of the wider knowledge ecosystem and of many different types of knowledges, linking organizational and societal knowledge.

4   Cummings, S., Kiwanuka, S., Gillman, H., & Regeer, B. 2019. "The future of knowledge brokering: perspectives from a generational framework of knowledge management for international development". Information Development, 35(5), 781–794. https://doi.org/10.1177/0266666918800174.

5   Boyes, B., S.J.R. Cummings, F. Tesfaye Habtemariam and G. Kemboi. 2023."'We have a dream': proposing decolonization of knowledge as a sixth generation of knowledge management for sustainable development. Special Issue on 'Uncomfortable truths in international development: approaches to the decolonization of knowledge from development practice, policy and research." *Knowledge Management for Development Journal* 17(1/2): 11-41.

E. Methodology

24. Informed by the conceptual framework, the evaluation design explored a set of **hypotheses** that cover causal linkages between KM strategies, tools, practices and key enabling factors, and how they interact to deliver KM results at corporate, regional division and country programme levels. These hypotheses were tested in the evaluation process and explanatory factors and alternative explanations identified (see annex VIII). The linkages and concepts captured in the ToC, as well as the hypotheses, have led to the development of the **evaluation framework** (see annex II).

25. The framework forms the core of the evaluation approach. The framework linked evaluation questions, sub-questions, indicators and the sources of evidence in the form of a series of **six evidence** blocks. Each evidence block utilized multiple data collection methods and sources. In turn, each sub-question used evidence from one or multiple blocks. The evidence blocks are illustrated in figure 2 below.

FIGURE 2
CLE evidence blocks

1 **Corporate-level KM documents and data review** (KM Strategy, knowledge products etc.)

2 **Analysis of KM performance data and evaluations** (Report on IFAD's development effectiveness [RIDE], Annual Report on the Independent Evaluation [ARIE], IOE evaluations, Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network [MOPAN])

3 **Deep dives** Including grants review, partnership analysis, review of IFI & UN lessons on KM

4 **Surveys and interviews** (including 10 FGDs, stakeholder interviews and KAP survey)

5 **Five regional division studies** (Asia and Pacific Division [APR], East and Southern Africa Division [ESA], Latin America and the Caribbean Division [LAC], Near East, North Africa and Europe Division [NEN] and West and Central Africa Division [WCA])

6 **Twenty country case studies** (Four countries per region)

26. During the synthesis phase, the evaluation team assessed the extent to which the evidence was adequate and could be triangulated through the various sources and methods. Constraints in the availability and quality of data were, in particular, noted for evidence blocks 1 and 2 (see limitations).

27. Due to the paucity of corporate data on KM effectiveness, the evaluation mainly used evidence on KM results from **country case studies**, drawn from the documents review and stakeholder interviews. The evaluation selected 20 country case studies,[6] 4 of them involving country visits (China, Egypt, Kenya and Viet Nam), and in-depth studies of KM in the 5 regional divisions. The selection of case study countries aimed to capture a diversity of KM practices influenced by factors such as country income status, portfolio size and IFAD's presence. Due to the recent reassignment of staff, the team also had to consider the availability of staff in the countries. Following the piloting of the case study methodology in 2022, the CLE had developed guidance on process and documentation, including standardized reporting formats, which helped to ensure the consistency of case study findings. Following a documents review and landscape analysis, the case study team planned to interview between 10 and 20 stakeholders per country. The research, conducted in French, English, Portuguese, Spanish and Chinese, benefited from a multilingual team, which mitigated language barriers in country selection. In some countries, namely Egypt, Kyrgyzstan and Viet Nam, interpreters were also used. The case studies were enriched by participatory evaluation videos in Brazil and Peru, in order to incorporate perspectives from local and indigenous groups involved in IFAD-funded interventions.

28. Beyond the case studies, the CLE incorporated a diverse set of perspectives across the organization through **surveys, regional studies, outlier analysis and focus group discussions (FGDs)**. More than 10 FGDs, involving 75 participants (outside IOE), covered thematic and institutional issues beyond the case studies. Overall, the evaluation incorporated inputs from approximately 550 stakeholders, including 190 current and former IFAD staff. Due to the voluntary nature of participation, there was a tendency for those with a keen interest in KM to participate more. Recent staff turnover and reassignments complicated the inclusion of former stakeholders, who may otherwise have been interviewed for this CLE. Incomplete contact lists maintained by country offices sometimes posed a challenge for contacting external stakeholders.

29. The knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) survey brought in responses from a larger IFAD in all regions: 83 responses were received, and reflected a broader range of perspectives.[7] The second survey on platforms and communities of practice was sent to internal and external audiences through the knowledge management coordination group (KMCG); it did not provide an adequate number of responses (fewer than 50) and the results were not included in the analysis. In addition, the evaluation used existing data from corporate surveys such as the Client Survey (>2000 respondents between 2020 and 2022) and the Global Staff Survey (>500 respondents for 2022).

30. **Thematic deep dives** (evidence block 3) contributed to the corporate perspective of this evaluation through cross-cutting reviews, such as a review of grants and partnerships. The review of "signature solutions" focused on specific knowledge solutions that were widely shared in IFAD (see chapter IV.D.).

31. The CLE team **synthesized** and structured findings from the six blocks of evidence around the conceptual framework to develop a "system-level" picture of KM at IFAD, looking at how these factors contributed to the delivery of the development impacts identified in the conceptual framework. It also determined the status of current KM practices against the six-generation framework and the potential of these practices to contribute to rural transformation (see annex IV for detailed descriptions of methods for data collection and analysis).

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6   The list of case study countries is included in annex IV, which also explains the case study methodology.

7   The survey consisted of a set of KM-related questions, of which nine were multiple-choice and two open-ended. The survey was sent to IFAD staff through the general mailing lists (annex VII).

F. Process

32. **The evaluation phases**. The evaluation involved a preparatory phase (document review, preparation of the approach paper, and meeting with the IOE Advisory Panel) and a design phase (piloting the case study methodology, stakeholder consultations, participatory videos, finalization of approach paper and stakeholder consultations). This was followed by the main data collection phase, a synthesis phase and a reporting phase.

33. **Learning process**. As the purpose of this CLE includes to "achieve a shared, more coherent understanding of the role KM plays in the context of IFAD's rural transformation agenda", the team worked closely with members of the KMCG and other concerned stakeholders, including those involved in country case studies. More than 10 FGDs and group interviews involving IFAD staff and managers from all divisions provided opportunities for sharing and reflection. The CLE also conducted FGDs with retirees and the IFAD Youth Net to discuss issues of knowledge retention.

34. **Quality assurance and enhancement**. An senior independent advisor, Zenda Ofir, provided quality enhancement and assurance services for the evaluation. She reviewed the evaluation approach, design and methodology for data collection and analysis. The senior advisor's review of the final report is included in annex XI. The CLE also benefited from internal IOE peer review as well as from the comments of the external peer reviewer, Eric Bloom, Principal Evaluation Specialist at the Asian Development Bank.

35. **Deliverables**. The final report, including the Management response, will be presented to the Executive Board in June 2024.

G. Limitations

36. Data gaps in IFAD's financial reporting systems. To quantify the financial resources used for KM, the CLE analysed grants review and project cost data from the Oracle Business Intelligence (OBI) database. Data analysis showed that there are significant data gaps in understanding how KM is budgeted and funded. Therefore, it was not possible to obtain reliable data on budgets for KM in loans, grants or supplementary funds. There are also gaps in the available data on human resources for KM. During an FGD with regional economists, the CLE team discussed the issue, but it proved impossible to obtain accurate KM budget data.[8] In addition to dedicated KM specialists in SKD and KM focal points at corporate and regional level, staff time used for knowledge creation and its use and dissemination is not budgeted, but is routinely a part of many job descriptions within IFAD. To complement existing data gaps, the CLE team used qualitative and quantitative information from surveys, FGDs and interviews.

37. Thematic categorizations in OBI, SKD and COM. There is no agreed categorization of thematic areas in IFAD (investment categories, mainstreaming issues), which would make it possible to track resources and activities consistently across the organization. Different classifications for thematic areas are used by COM and SKD, and data therefore cannot be cross-referenced, e.g. investment areas, supplementary funds and knowledge products. Some divisions, such as PMI, have their own ways of tracking knowledge products and events, but these are not adopted widely.

38. Insufficient monitoring of KM activities. For example, COM does not collect the basic data to track knowledge-sharing events. The classification of publications was incomplete; only a small portion of publications was allocated to thematic areas. There is also a lack of systematic monitoring of KM practices, products and platforms, which meant that the CLE had to develop procedures for this.

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[8] ESA made an attempt to obtain accurate budget data from ongoing projects but concluded that such data were inconsistent.

39. Grant documentation. IFAD does not have a central storage for grant documents (design, progress, completion report and other reports produced through grants). The CLE therefore had to retrieve grant documents, where available, from the Quality Assurance Group (QAG), divisional x-desks and OBI. No documents were available on the results achieved after grant closure. Finally, most of the IFAD staff involved with grants who were interviewed had been handed their grant-related tasks from previous colleagues and therefore could not have comprehensive information.

40. CLE timeframe. The timeframe for this CLE (2016-2023) has set limitations to the data presented in this report. Financial and HR data from 2016 until the end of 2022 were used for the analysis. Country case studies and regional division studies were conducted from December 2022 until June 2023, and they covered the KM activities and products available during this period. Data related to downloads of IFAD knowledge products refer to the period from January 2016 to December 2022. KM activities and publications have continued after the conclusion of the data analysis (July 2023), and not all of them may be reflected in this report.

Chapter II

Background to KM in IFAD
and KM lessons learned

II. Background to KM in IFAD and KM lessons learned

41. This chapter provides the background to KM in IFAD by examining the evolution of KM strategies and the institutional arrangements for KM. It also reviews lessons on KM from IFAD's independent evaluations as well as learnings from other IFIs and UN organizations.

A. KM strategies and architecture

42. The evolution of KM strategies over the past 15 years is an indication of IFAD's ambition to position itself as a knowledge organization in a global context. IFAD's first KM strategy was approved in 2007 to cover the years 2008-2010 (IFAD 2007). At this time, IFAD adopted the ambition to be a "**learning organization**", arguing that "IFAD will learn systematically and collectively from its own projects and programmes, and from the experience of its partners, particularly poor rural people, in order to deliver high-quality services and to enable its partners to find innovative ways to overcome poverty, and to use the knowledge acquired to foster pro-poor policy reforms" (IFAD 2007). Against the background of the adoption of KM strategies by other international organizations, the motivation for the new strategy was twofold: a rapidly changing global context which required new learning and approaches; and a recognition that **development effectiveness depended on new knowledge capabilities**.

TABLE 1

Timeline of key KM milestones at IFAD

Year	Strategy/document
2007	IFAD Strategy for Knowledge Management 2008-2010
2011	Progress report on the implementation of the IFAD Strategy for Knowledge Management and the innovation agenda
2011	IFAD Medium-term Plan 2011-2013: Knowledge management and policy dialogue outcomes 2011-2013
2014	IFAD Knowledge Management Framework 2014-2018
2015	Annual Report on Results and Impact of IFAD Operations (ARRI) 2015: Learning theme on knowledge management: How can operations learn to improve performance?
2016	IFAD Strategic Framework 2016-2025; Knowledge Management Action Plan 2016-2018
2019	Knowledge Management Strategy 2019-2025; Knowledge Management Action Plan 2019-2021
2019	Introduction of the Annual Report on Knowledge Management in the RIDE
2022	Midterm Review of Knowledge Management Strategy 2019-2025
2022	South-South and Triangular Cooperation Strategy for IFAD
2023	Knowledge Action Plan 2023-2025

Source: Evaluation team.

43. Since 2007, IFAD has introduced additional KM strategies, with associated action plans together with reviews and other reporting arrangements. These are indicated in table 1. IFAD's current **Knowledge Management Strategy (2019-2025)** was approved by the Executive Board in May 2019 (IFAD 2019). The strategy aims to guide IFAD towards better integrated and more effective KM that is tailored to the new decentralized organizational structure, enhanced business model and the development of effectiveness framework, and supports IFAD in achieving greater development impact. It presents knowledge as an integral part of IFAD's Strategic Framework 2016-2025 and argues that successful implementation of the strategy will support IFAD to achieve development impact.

44. The strategy is being implemented through the two-phased knowledge management action plans, the first of which (2019-2021) was developed concurrently with the strategy and subsequently executed. IFAD commissioned an internal **midterm review (MTR)** of IFAD's Knowledge Management Strategy (2019-2025), which was completed in September 2022. The main findings of the MTR were that: (i) knowledge is a key driver of development impact and it found increased knowledge creation, access and use, and a growing learning culture within IFAD; and (ii) parts of the strategy proved challenging to execute and monitor. In particular, the strategy was over-ambitious since it was not supported by dedicated resources and staff time. Recommendations included: a refresh of the KM strategy; additional resources for KM activities; adoption of the concepts of "thought leadership" and "knowledge for impact"; and a condensed KM monitoring system. The recommendations from the MTR have led to a second Knowledge Action Plan to cover the second half of implementation of the strategy (2023-25), which has been submitted to IFAD Management for review.[9]

45. **Knowledge management architecture**. The 2019 KM Strategy lays out the basic structures for KM in the context of the ongoing decentralization process. It envisages that the mandates of knowledge creation, use and dissemination are undertaken throughout IFAD's corporate, regional and country-level architecture. The Programme Management Department (PMD) and its regional divisions (APR, ESA, NEN, LAC, WCA) act as the front-line implementers of IFAD's KM strategy by operationalizing KM at the project and programme levels, for example, through regional KM strategies. As elaborated in the 2019 KM strategy, the Executive Management Committee (EMC) is responsible for modelling and prioritizing KM overall at IFAD, while the KM team within the Strategy and Knowledge Department (SKD) explicitly leads the development of guidelines, tools and outreach support for implementing KM strategies and action plans. (See table 1 in annex III for further details).

B. Lessons from evaluations of knowledge management

46. **IOE's country strategy and programme evaluations** (CSPEs) rate KM performance by evaluating KM outcomes against the country strategic opportunities programme (COSOP) objectives.[10] The trend in the performance of KM in country programmes shows little change since 2010. After rising in the early 2010s, there was a decline in KM performance until 2017, after which performance improved again. However, in 2021, KM performance was still lower than was observed a decade ago. The 2016 ARRI[11] took stock of IFAD's experience with KM, recognizing progress in using knowledge resources more strategically, in incorporating lessons of past operations into present work, and in expanding knowledge-sharing both within the organization and with external partners at all levels. It also showed that KM activities at the country strategy and project levels were hampered by budget constraints and a lack of both incentives and human resources.

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9   The latest version of the action plan discussed by the EMC (July 2023) does not specify the budget implications.

10   IOE assesses KM in each CSPE providing a rating on a scale of 1 to 6, specifically "the extent to which the IFAD-funded country programme is capturing, creating, distilling, sharing and using knowledge." No further guidance or rubric is provided.

11   Annual Report on Results and Impact of IFAD Operations, 2016. https://www.ifad.org/documents/38714182/39709860/ARRI_2016_full.pdf/569bcea7-a84a-4d38-867f-89b3bb98e0e4

47. The 2022 **Annual Report on the Independent Evaluation of IFAD** (ARIE) noted that among the non-lending activities, which also include partnership-building and policy engagement, KM has received the lowest share of ratings within the satisfactory range.[12] The 2022 ARIE provided lessons learned from recent CSPEs on KM. Positive cases shared common factors, such as country strategies (COSOPs) that were explicit in how to operationalize KM processes; operational partnerships for KM with other development partners; earmarked financial resources, such as grants; and government leadership in capturing and using knowledge. The review also noted weak project monitoring and evaluating (M&E) systems, a tendency to confuse KM with communication, and insufficient human and financial resources as hindering factors.

48. The CLE reviewed 11 recent KM evaluations undertaken by IFIs and United Nations entities.[13] A number of international organizations with business models similar to that of IFAD have completed evaluations of KM in the past three years. The focus of these evaluations is on corporate KM systems, and they do not generally reach down to the country level. In addition, they do not focus on KM practices. Despite these differences in focus, the evaluative evidence available allowed the CLE to identify lessons that could inform IFAD's approach to KM.

49. The evaluations reveal a set of the 10 most common lessons learned about KM. These are listed in box 1.[14]

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13 Corporate-level evaluations of KM from the Asian Development Bank (2020), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (2021), the Global Environment Facility (2020), the Inter-American Development Bank (2019), the World Bank (2019), the Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations (2016, 2018), the International Labour Organization (2020), International Organization for Migration (2018), UNESCO (2023) and UN Women (2019). See annex IV for further details.

14 The recent Multi-Donor Partnership on Learning for Development Impact (MDLP) publication, *Return on Knowledge* (2022) offers further lessons on KM obtained through case studies from international organizations, including IFAD.

12 See annex VI.

BOX 1

Top ten lessons from recent IFI and UN evaluations on KM

Leadership and organizational culture

Leadership commitment and culture are critical to embed knowledge management. Without top management support and an open, collaborative culture, knowledge management will struggle.

- Having clear governance mechanisms, frameworks and strategies helps provide coherence and direction to knowledge management.

- Breaking down organizational silos and boundaries is key to improve knowledge flows. Rigid structures prevent effective collaboration and sharing.

- Knowledge management must be integrated into core business processes, not an add-on. This requires it to be mainstreamed into operations.

Staff responsibilities and incentives

- Knowledge management requires dedicated roles, resources and units for consistency and effectiveness. Relying on ad hoc efforts risks fragmentation.

- Incentives and staff performance systems should align with and reinforce desired knowledge behaviours. Rewards and recognition matter.

- Systematically capturing tacit knowledge from staff and consultants is vital so that expertise does not get lost.

Capacities and knowledge use

- Investing in user needs assessments, dissemination and M&E is key to maximize the impact of knowledge products and services.

- Leveraging external partnerships and networks with stakeholders such as the academic community enhances knowledge management capabilities.

- Awareness-raising and capacity-building enables staff to fully utilize knowledge management systems and integrate knowledge into their work.

Source: CLE analysis.

Chapter
III

The relevance and coherence of IFAD's strategies and institutional framework for KM

III. The relevance and coherence of IFAD's strategies and institutional framework for KM

Evaluation question 1: How relevant and coherent is IFAD's institutional framework for knowledge management, given the mandate and needs of the organization and the global, regional and local context in which IFAD works?

50. This chapter looks at the relevance of IFAD's KM strategies and architecture at corporate, regional and country levels. It tests the hypothesis that the knowledge produced by IFAD is relevant to its mandate[15] and the needs of the organization, both in terms of the Strategic Framework 2016-2025 and at regional and country levels. It also verifies the internal and external coherence of IFAD's KM strategy, assessing the institutional arrangements for KM, including the integration of SSTC. Finally, it reviews the hypothesis that IFAD is engaging in KM partnerships and is well positioned as a knowledge provider (see annex VIII).

A. Relevance of the 2019 KM Strategy and Action Plan

51. **The 2019 KM Strategy was well aligned with IFAD's Strategic Framework and ongoing decentralization process**. In broad terms, the 2019 KM Strategy responded to the aspirations of the Strategic Framework (SF) 2016-2025, which emphasized KM as a key part of its agenda to contribute to rural transformation. The SF states that "IFAD's development impact will depend on the quality of its programme of work and its success in leveraging financial resources and knowledge in, through and beyond the programmes it supports. This will constitute IFAD's scaling up agenda." The KM strategy aimed to guide IFAD towards better integrated and more effective KM that is tailored to the new decentralized organizational structure, enhanced business model and IFAD effectiveness framework. IFAD's 2019 KM Strategy represented contemporary good practices. For example, the 2016 UN Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) inspection of knowledge management in the UN[16] saw IFAD as one of the "pioneers" of knowledge management. IFAD has also received awards for its consistent strategic orientation in KM and the people-centred, highly consultative process of developing the strategy.[17]

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15 IFAD's mandate as set out in the SF is investing in rural people and enabling inclusive and sustainable transformation of rural areas, notably through smallholder agriculture-led growth.

16 UN JIU. 2016. *Knowledge Management in the United Nations system*. p.3. **https://www.unjiu.org/sites/www.unjiu.org/files/jiu_document_files/products/en/reports-notes/JIU%20Products/JIU_REP_2016_10_English.pdf**

17 IFAD received an award for advancing knowledge and organizational learning practice from the Henley Forum for Organizational Learning and Knowledge Strategies during its 20th annual conference on 5-6 February 2020. In September 2018, IFAD received the International Award from Knowledge Management Austria at the Knowledge for Development Partnership conference at the World Trade Organization.

52. **The CLE found that the main assumptions underpinning the 2019 KM Strategy did not hold**. The theory of change (ToC) in the 2019 KM Strategy includes assumptions for the intended KM outputs, outcomes and impact. The ambition of the ToC was high, claiming that IFAD would assemble and transform knowledge into better development results and progress towards the 2030 Agenda. Notwithstanding the absence of corporate data to monitor the output and outcome-level indicators in the ToC (see chapter IV), the CLE findings did not confirm these underlying assumptions. Resources for KM were not adequate and there were insufficient incentives for staff at a decentralized level (see chapter VI on efficiency). Synergies within the IFAD knowledge system were not sufficient to create a learning culture with a positive impact on IFAD's development outcomes (see chapter III.C. on coherence).

53. **Neglect of indigenous and local knowledge was a gap in the 2019 KM strategy**. The KM strategy says little about indigenous and local knowledge, even though the SF and relevant policies have emphasized the importance of engagement with Indigenous Peoples. The 2009 Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples highlights that Indigenous Peoples' knowledge provides possible judicious and equitable pathways for development in many developing countries. The Strategic Framework 2016-2025 notes that IFAD will also continue to focus on vulnerable and marginalized rural groups, including Indigenous Peoples. Moreover, the 2022 update to the Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples reaffirms IFAD's commitment to support Indigenous Peoples' self-driven development, while respecting and enhancing their traditional livelihoods, occupations and knowledge. The accessible knowledge products had not yet gained prominence at the time of the design of the KM strategy, as IFAD adopted its disability inclusion strategy in 2022. However, accessibility would need to be considered in any future KM policies or strategies.

54. **The intentions of the 2019 KM Strategy were not fully operationalized; the accompanying action plan resulted in a focus on actions by SKD rather than an organization-wide approach**. Attached to the KM strategy was the Knowledge Management Action Plan 2019-2021, which further defined the activities for that period over three broad areas: (i) knowledge generation, aligned with investment priorities and demand for knowledge services; (ii) knowledge use, which included building capacities in the decentralized context; and (iii) providing an enabling environment, including stronger incentives for staff to generate, share and use knowledge. These areas formed the basis of the action plan and together built the structure of the plan's results framework, with a series of outputs and outcomes delineated. A limitation of the 2019 KM Action Plan was its strong focus on SKD, with less emphasis on the KM-related roles of other departments and units (see chapter III.C. on internal coherence). Of the 35 activities listed in the plan, SKD was expected to take the lead role in two-thirds.

55. The 2022 MTR of the 2019 KM Action Plan, commissioned and managed by SKD, also focused on the corporate role of SKD.[18] An after-action review of the MTR, conducted by this CLE, found that the review had helped to identify key bottlenecks for KM in the organization, for example discerning that knowledge was still fragmented across various systems and platforms, making products and knowledge resources challenging for staff to find; that many KM activities were developed in silos; that project knowledge had not been leveraged to its fullest potential; and that monitoring of KM was focused more on knowledge product generation than on knowledge use.

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18 Because of resource constraints, the MTR did not assess implementation at country level or review the strategic role of KM in IFAD and in rural transformation. Besides, the MTR was not meant to assess: (a) outcomes in countries; (b) demand and uptake from clients; or (c) partnerships.

56. **The 2019 KM Strategy does not provide clear roles and responsibilities at the regional level**. The intention of the strategy was to align with the ongoing process of decentralization, enhancing the role of the regional hubs.[19] The strategy does not provide a clear and centralized definition of roles in corporate KM. In the absence of clear actionable guidance from the corporate KM Strategy, regional divisions have developed their own approaches to KM, responding with what seemed suited to their specific contexts and in line with their decentralization status. For example, APR tried to align its KM action plans with the corporate KM strategy and contextualize corporate KM within the region. NEN is reportedly drafting a regional KM strategy that will align with the corporate strategy. The LAC KM and SSTC Strategy for 2020-2021 took a different approach compared to the IFAD corporate KM strategy, focusing more on engagement at different levels and integrating KM into country programmes. The LAC strategy also reflected on the relevance of KM and SSTC to respond to the diverse demands of middle-income countries (MICs). ESA recently developed some frameworks, including a KM Action Plan for 2022-2025 and country-specific plans. In WCA, the Dakar Hub championed a project-centric approach with KM action plans from 2018-2020. However, this was discontinued due to the turnover of staff in the hub. The multitude of approaches developed on the ground contributed to the overall fragmentation of KM in IFAD.

57. Prior to the 2019 strategy, there were initiatives within regional divisions to link the various tiers into a comprehensive approach. The NEN KM Strategy and Workplan (2016-2018) took a cohesive, three-tiered approach to KM with clear objectives at country, regional and corporate levels. It identified specific roles and entry points into the KM architecture for different divisions and staff. Moreover, it linked KM to other key business processes, like SSTC and scaling up, and recognized the need to fill gaps through technical support from other divisions. It included a results measurement framework to track progress and outcomes, and considered resourcing KM through various means such as administrative budgets, grants and loans. The NEN strategy showed a thorough, integrated approach to strategic planning for KM across levels of the organization. As such, it provided a good case study of comprehensive regional and country-level KM frameworks.

58. **Insufficient leadership and guidance led to weak KM approaches that were often driven by the immediate needs in countries**. The country case studies consistently reported on the weak linkages between subregional, regional, country and project levels. While some countries (e.g. Argentina, Viet Nam) demonstrated practices for subregional knowledge-sharing, these were linked into broader regional and corporate KM frameworks. In some cases, it was the insufficient integration of regional and global grants into the country programme that contributed to incoherent KM approaches, as seen in Argentina, Côte d'Ivoire and Egypt. However, more often, the reason was the absence of support from IFAD HQ and regional offices, in the form of training, guidance and frameworks. Support was notably missing in some countries, such as Angola and China, but also identified for regional hubs (e.g. Istanbul). Insufficient clarity about KM meant that the line between KM and communication practices was blurred, with a focus on dissemination rather than holistic knowledge processes.[20] The absence of full-time KM professionals and clear strategies at the country level was another gap, noted for example in Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt and Madagascar. This lack also prevented the effective monitoring of KM activities. In some cases, there was a good understanding of KM in country offices (e.g. Kenya). However, the capacities to guide KM in projects were insufficient.

59. **Recent KM initiatives indicate a relevant shift towards a focus on improving data quality and availability for knowledge-based country-level policy support**. IFAD's Data Governance Policy, approved in 2022, aims to improve IFAD's generation and use of data across all its areas of work. The policy is led by SKD with the involvement of several other divisions, including the Information and Communication Technology Division (ICT) and the Human Resources Division (HRD). A separate, but related, initiative is IFAD's Omnidata project. This project is led by ICT and establishes analytical tools for IFAD staff to access all of IFAD's databases from a single interface.

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19   The regional hubs later became the multi-country offices (MCOs).

20   The ARRI 2022 review of CSPE findings on KM also noted the confusion between KM and communication.

B. Relevance of IFAD's knowledge

60. This section reviews the relevance of knowledge produced by IFAD for stakeholders and partners supporting rural transformation. There is a growing recognition, also within IFAD, that rural transformation – as a wicked problem in contexts of complexity – requires many different types of knowledges. These so-called "multiple knowledges" underline the need for new ways of assessing the quality of knowledge, potentially by placing a greater emphasis on relevance and on the knowledge of key stakeholders, such as rural people. Such an approach does not undermine the value – and quality – of scientific knowledge, but rather stresses the need for its combination with other types of knowledge, such as technical, local, indigenous and community knowledge. The CLE therefore reviewed the prevalence of these knowledges in IFAD's knowledge products and the extent to which they address the needs of different stakeholder groups.

Relevance at country level

61. **Stakeholders at country level have different needs for knowledge**. Responses from the most recent IFAD Stakeholder Survey[21] indicated that IFAD's knowledge products have been broadly relevant to respondents' work and useful in informing policy or programme decisions. There was a strong consensus among respondents across regions that knowledge-intensive services provided by IFAD, encompassing technical assistance, capacity-building, advice and support to policy and programme development, and SSTC, were of significant relevance, as reflected by a high average score of 3.50 out of 4 for the related questions. The relevance of IFAD's knowledge products, such as data, analysis, studies and workshops, received a slightly lower average score. Case studies indicate that IFAD's corporate knowledge products could be improved through greater policy focus, analytical rigour, translation, dissemination and contextualization. Knowledge products grounded in country-specific experiences from projects, such as project completion reports and project supervision mission reports, were often valued more than IFAD's corporate knowledge products. Also, the organizational network analysis conducted for the MTR found that while HQ-based staff want more knowledge events and repositories, country-based staff prefer interactions

and helpdesks, such as ECG's project-focused help desk on gender and nutrition or the grant-funded disability helpdesk.

62. **IFAD's corporate knowledge products are not generally used at the country level because they are not sufficiently tailored or specific enough to cater to local needs**. Stakeholder feedback obtained during the country case studies process indicated that corporate knowledge products tend to be lengthy, academic, technical and less operational. Moreover, while the CLE found few instances of external actors using IFAD's knowledge products,[22] there seems to be a systemic constraint preventing their wider dissemination and application outside IFAD. Furthermore, PMI's review of knowledge products (2022) found that the identification of topics for knowledge products tends to be generally supply-driven. PMI knowledge products are not explicit about target audiences and the review found that out of 57 knowledge products reviewed, 44 did not explicitly indicate their target audience. For instance, in countries like Nigeria, a challenge was found in making these resources accessible to a varied audience. Insufficient capture of on-the-ground expertise from projects was also highlighted as a barrier to sharing knowledge externally in some contexts.[23]

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21   IFAD stakeholder survey, 31 May 2023. See more information in annex VI.

22   For example, in Mexico, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) reportedly learned from IFAD of a new project, and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) held weekly meetings with an IFAD consultant to follow its territorial management model. IFAD knowledge was seen as valuable by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (CEPAL) across themes like small farming. In Argentina, the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) expressed interest in deploying IFAD's Relative Rurality Index, and Plata Basin Financial Development Fund (FONPLATA) learned from IFAD interventions via Twitter.

23   An SKD analysis of the research series shows that while the majority of studies are concerned with Africa, downloads are concentrated in a few Anglophone African countries, namely Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi and Nigeria (analysis by F. Benedetti and G. Chiaventi).

63. **Country programmes rely on corporate knowledge products covering relevant themes**, in particular mainstreaming themes. Knowledge products produced at country level did not consistently address cross-cutting issues like gender, environment and youth. This is due to both a lack of clear incentives and an overreliance on individual interests in handling cross-cutting knowledge in the country teams. In many countries, cross-cutting issues do not feature prominently in the COSOPs or project design, so there is less incentive to generate related knowledge products. Only a handful of countries have produced knowledge resources that touch on these cross-cutting themes (for instance, gender in Kyrgyzstan, environment in Peru and rural youth in Nigeria and Brazil). While countries like Kenya and Argentina have granted slightly more attention to themes like gender or nutrition, their overall presence remains limited.

Relevance at corporate level

64. **Publication of research and technical knowledge is the responsibility of SKD**. The IFAD knowledge webpage lists the following series of knowledge products: *Advantage Series, Impact Assessment, Research Series, Results from the Field, and Toolkits*.[24] Other knowledge products include the IFAD Annual Report and the IFAD Rural Development Report. The largest series is the research series with 87 publications since 2016. The most viewed IFAD products from the series are the Rural Development Report, followed by the Annual Report, Advantage series, Impact assessment, Toolkit, Results from the Field (discontinued) and Research Series (also see chapter VI for the cost-effectiveness of knowledge products).

65. The IFAD Rural Development Report (RDR) is a flagship publication that analyses rural development issues and provides policy recommendations to promote sustainable and equitable development in rural areas. The RDR is based on research and uses data from a variety of sources, including IFAD's own operations, national and international surveys and academic research. The most recent RDR – "Transforming food systems for rural prosperity" – was released in 2021 to coincide with the United Nations Food Systems Summit. Previous RDRs were released in 2016 and 2019. The 2021 RDR was widely distributed and led to a series of debates with external partners on its contents. While the

report could not influence the design of the IFAD Strategic Framework 2016-2025, it was a source of data and analysis for the IFAD13 replenishment process.

66. Technical knowledge constitutes the largest share of knowledge products. The share of technical knowledge products that target operations, such as tools and guidelines, how to do notes and lessons learned, has been decreasing since 2016. The majority of publications is now formed of research and reports. Experiential knowledge and policy knowledge produced by country programmes continues to represent a small share of knowledge products (9 per cent) (see figures 3-8 in annex VI).

67. Within the SKD, the Research and Impact Assessment Division (RIA) produces research, data, knowledge and evidence. As part of IFAD's self-evaluation, RIA conducts impact assessments on a sample of at least 15 per cent of projects closing during each replenishment period.[25] Over time, RIA has expanded its scope of work to other knowledge products, contributing to knowledge production as a global public good. The IFAD 11 microsite is the main tool used to host the expanded data and knowledge. It hosts all the datasets used for the RIA impact assessments, which are available publicly.

68. Knowledge products published on IFAD's website cover relevant themes, in particular mainstreaming themes. Analysis on knowledge products by theme indicates that climate and environment stands out as the most widely represented topic, with 116 publications referring to it, followed by rural finance (73) and nutrition (62). Also, all the other IFAD mainstreaming themes feature prominently in the dataset, specifically: gender (49), Indigenous Peoples (39) and youth (35). Institutions and organizations (12), and fisheries (8) appear to be the least populous themes in IFAD publications. This is particularly true for the "access to markets" theme, where the analysis highlights a critical undersupply of knowledge products compared to the high share of IFAD financing supporting that theme.

69. **IFAD knowledge products are available in few languages only, limiting their utility**. The majority of IFAD's full-text publications are published in English, with a smaller selection in Spanish and French, and a minimal amount in Arabic. For instance, by the end of 2022, of the 682 knowledge products available on the IFAD website with download links, 99 per cent are in English. Only a small number of them also have versions in other languages: 13 per cent in Spanish, 16 per cent in French, and 5 per cent in Arabic. Knowledge products published in multiple languages are mainly research, reports and how-to-do notes.

70. **Corporate knowledge products do not adequately capture experiential and local knowledge**. Following the guidance from SKD, several divisions have prepared knowledge gap maps, notably WCA, LAC and NEN. The maps have primarily served IFAD's internal purpose, to inform IFAD's research agenda. The mapping exercise collected relevant technical insights in order to resolve knowledge gaps in IFAD's investment areas. With their focus on single investment areas, the maps do not provide the systems-level knowledge required for rural transformation. Furthermore, their current focus on only IFAD knowledge products and the narrower view of "credible evidence" excludes non-traditional sources, such as local and indigenous knowledge, areas particularly critical for transformative rural development.

71. Experience capitalization was a relevant initiative to document knowledge from operations. Experience capitalization is a facilitated, participatory process to analyse lessons from experience and use them to improve development interventions. The collaboration on this between SKD and the Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation resulted in five case study reports produced in ESA, WCA and APR. Facilitators based in the South assisted the programmes to analyse and document experiences from implementation. Although it last took place in 2018, the initiative has not been repeated since.

72. **The potential of knowledge from the Global South to drive rural transformation is not being fully leveraged by IFAD**. Such knowledge can play a crucial role in supporting rural transformation. Yet, the knowledge gained via IFAD's SSTC channels has fallen short in both capturing the rich insights from the Global South and aligning them with IFAD's role in supporting rural transformation. The Rural Solutions Portal (RSP), monitored by a partnership analysis in the GPR, is the main institutional platform to share knowledge under the China-IFAD SSTC Facility.[26] Partners should provide a short written description of their solutions. However, in some cases, they presented their details without revealing details of the solution.

73. This platform showcases replicable solutions to common challenges in rural development, offering an easily navigable repository of innovations capable of replication or adaption. However, its limited scope, together with the current emphasis on standalone innovations and technology means that it does not fully represent the transformative knowledge of the South. As of November 2023, the RSP has mostly shared solutions related to crops (53), farmers' organizations (43), market access (35), and climate and environmental strategies (33). Cross-cutting themes such as gender, youth, nutrition and Indigenous Peoples form only a small fraction of the solutions available, and solutions related to the inclusion of people with disabilities are entirely absent.

74. IFAD's SSTC Approach (2016)[27] recognized the limited availability of resources in IFAD and proposed the use of global partnerships, in particular with FAO and the World Food Programme (WFP), to leverage knowledge and technical collaborations. More specifically, the paper suggested collaboration with FAO's South-South Cooperation Gateway[28] and WFP's Centres of Excellence. These proposals were not followed up and the RSP did not achieve the visibility of the SSTC initiatives experienced by FAO and WFP. This seems like a missed opportunity to scale up knowledge-sharing through SSTC. For example, WFP's Centre of Excellence in China was greatly appreciated by the national governments and stakeholders met during the China case study.

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26 The rural solutions portal shows over 100 solutions last year developed in partnership with institutions such as Alliance for a Green Revolution (AGRA), the Brazil Africa Institute, and the US Agency for International Development (USAID). The five countries with most traffic to the site were China, Kenya, India, Rwanda and the United States of America. Google analytics show over 20 daily visits and more than 25,000 visits over the last year (May 2023). https://ruralsolutionsportal.org/en/-/39585602-46.

27 Executive Board document (EB 2016/119/R.6).

28 https://www.fao.org/south-south-gateway/database/en/.

C. Coherence of KM strategies, architecture and practices

75. This section reviews how KM roles are institutionalized and linked within IFAD. KM requires diverse roles in order to contribute to rural transformation. The section assesses whether the divisions with a knowledge function are sufficiently linked within a coherent system for decision-making and innovation in IFAD. It also reviews IFAD's engagement in partnerships to advance KM within the wider development community. Recognizing the connections between IFAD's internal knowledge and external knowledge is important because IFAD and its stakeholders are also part of the wider knowledge ecosystem.

Coherence of institutional arrangements for KM

76. **Simultaneous creation of several units with a mandate for KM in 2019 laid the foundation for incoherence within the KM system**. In 2019, IFAD adopted its KM strategy and created a new KM team within SKD to coordinate the implementation of the KM Action Plan. In the same year, IFAD established a Change, Delivery and Innovation (CDI) unit, with a broad mandate to promote innovative solutions in IFAD's processes and operations. Also in 2019, IFAD established SSTC and Knowledge Centres in Addis Ababa, Beijing and Brasilia, and placed the responsibility for SSTC in the newly created Global Engagement, Partnership and Resource Mobilization Division.[29] Divisions such as COM and ICT, while having a role in KM, were only marginally involved in the strategy development and implementation. These decisions have caused some inconsistencies and duplication within the KM architecture.

77. **CDI's position under the Office of the President is an advantage as it enhances its ability to engage across the organization, and its nimble and focused structure makes it more agile**. The CDI team consists of two full-time staff members, supported by a few short-term personnel. While CDI performs a KM function – identifying, promoting and disseminating good practices on the topic of innovation – it sits outside IFAD's KM architecture. CDI is part of the KMCG and collaborates with SKD on specific initiatives such as its learning events. However, it is separate in terms of work planning and budget. CDI is also active in building external

partnerships in the innovation sector. For instance, it participates in the Innovation Working Group of the IFIs and in the UN-wide Behavioural Science Coordination Group.

78. **SSTC is not well integrated into the regional KM architecture**. IFAD's 2016 SSTC Approach[30] involved KM practices such as knowledge exchanges, learning routes and regional learning centres, under the pillar of "Improved knowledge and/or skills". The PMD was primarily responsible for conceiving, designing, supervising and supporting SSTC activities at regional, country and project levels. An interdepartmental working group on SSTC was established in 2017, to improve entity-wide knowledge-sharing and coordination of SSTC activities but meetings were infrequent and governance mechanisms were unclear.[31] Regional SSTC and Knowledge Centres were established in 2019, but their role was not well defined. In 2022, IFAD adopted the South-South and Triangular Cooperation Strategy (2022-2027). The strategy aimed to: (i) systematically identify and disseminate knowledge and innovation at the country programme and project level; and (ii) support policy engagement to increase the productive capacity, market access and resilience of rural people. In 2022, IFAD reported progress on SSTC which recognized the need for greater synergy between KM and SSTC.[32]Clarification of the roles of the SSTC and Knowledge Centres and improved coordination with the knowledge teams, as demanded by the report, are still pending.[33]

79. **The role of the SSTC and knowledge centres vis-à-vis the establishment of new regional offices still requires clarification**. According to the 2021 IFAD SSTC Strategy, the three SSTC and Knowledge Centres were expected to be harmonized within IFAD's new Decentralization 2.0 structure. It was envisioned that IFAD's new regional offices would assume a coordination and leadership responsibility for the implementation of SSTC activities on the ground, building on the existing knowledge and expertise of the SSTC and knowledge centres. In line with efforts to increase the share of decentralized staff, the regional offices were expected to include staff from various departments.

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29   GPR was a division created by the merger of the Global Engagement, Knowledge and Strategy Division (GKS) and the Partnership and Resources Mobilization Division (PRM). SSTC used to be under the management of GKS.

30   Executive Board document EB 2016/119/R.6.
31   According to the 2019 of self-assessment of IFAD's SSTC, conducted by the GPR. The self-assessment also recommended a shift towards operational SSTC trade and investment partnerships.
32   Executive Board document EB-2022-137-R-29.
33   See IOE CSPE on China, 2023.

80. **While the centres are formally headed by the country directors where they are located, the staff still report to GPR**. There are therefore multiple divisions to respond to, and resources are scant.[34] In LAC, the centre is based in Brasilia and run by one dedicated staff member from GPR. The head of the SSTC and Knowledge Centre is the Brazil country director (CD). The GPR staff member is housed in a PMD office in Brasilia and maintains the KM function, which is overseen by SKD. The Beijing SSTC and Knowledge Centre is fully absorbed by the SSTC facility and has not played a role in either regional- or country-level KM. In ESA, the Ethiopia SSTC and Knowledge Centre in Addis Ababa never functioned. Corporate direction for how this centre ought to function or be funded has effectively been subsumed by the GPR division, since the Addis Ababa centre does not have senior staff that could effectively perform the function employed there. This gap is even more significant given that the Addis Ababa centre is also supposed to cover WCA and the North Africa part of NEN.

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34 According to the Brazil country director (CD), GPR can provide a budget of US$10,000. Otherwise, activities must be funded through savings made in the Brazil country office.

BOX 2

Challenges for SSTC and KM in upper-middle-income countries

Focus group discussions with IFAD staff working in LAC countries reveal significant challenges in IFAD's capacity to implement SSTC and KM in upper-middle-income countries (UMICs). The leadership of SSTC across various departments, combined with a lack of dedicated resources for KM, suggests a disjointed approach. Although progress has been made through the creation of the SSTC and Knowledge Centre in Brazil, high staff turnover, a disconnect between field teams and headquarters, and the deferral of KM and SSTC to the latter stages of projects further demonstrate the challenges. The in-country presence is already overstretched and the ongoing engagement with regional networks, such as the Central American Integration System (SICA) and the Southern Common Market, MERCOSUR, is demanding. While there is recognition of the value of SSTC in graduating countries, the discussions highlight the need for clearer guidelines, strategic prioritization and resource allocation. The emphasis on differentiating communication from KM, the call for private sector engagement, and the desire for better integration between field teams and HQ all point to areas for improvement. There is a pressing need for a more coherent, resource-backed and integrated approach to effectively implement SSTC. and KM in UMICs.

Source: FGD on SSTC in LAC UMICs.

81. **Divisions have various roles in IFAD's knowledge system, catering for diverse audiences**. They have complementary roles in IFAD's knowledge system that were not adequately covered by the 2019 KM Strategy and Action Plan, which focused on the role of SKD. PMD, SKD and QAG are the main producers of knowledge, but the types of knowledge differ. All divisions are engaged in knowledge-sharing, but for diverse audiences. PMD, PMI, ECG and QAG are the main users of knowledge for strategy, planning and decision-making.

FIGURE 3

Schematic overview of IFAD's KM system

TYPE OF KNOWLEDGE GENERATED

PMD
- Contextual knowledge
- Policy knowledge
- Local knowledge
- Experiential knowledge

- Research
- Technical knowledge

SKD

KNOWLEDGE SHARING CHANNELS

PMD
- Portfolio stocktakes

SSTC UNIT
- SSTC

- Events
- Workshops
- Publications
- Forums
- Platforms

- Success stories
- Evidence gap maps

SKD

- Knowledge packaging
- Partnership

ERG

KNOWLEDGE USE FOR DECISION-MAKING

PMD

QAG

- COSOP/project designs
- CLPE
- Strategic advice at executive level
- Strategies

SKD

CDI

▲ KM role insufficiently defined   ▲ Insufficient integration into KM system

Source: CLE mapping (see detailed information in table 1 in annex III)

82. The knowledge generated by SKD and PMD shows important differences but is also complementary. SKD has a specific advantage producing scientific and technical knowledge. PMD, due to its proximity to country stakeholders, is better positioned to produce contextualized and operational knowledge. Knowledge production also requires support from other divisions, in particular COM and ICT.

83. COM is responsible for publishing knowledge products and increasing the visibility of operations. In order to streamline IFAD's knowledge production and help to ensure consistent quality and appearance, COM, in collaboration with the KMCG, has developed templates for the main types of knowledge products. During CLE interviews, COM reported that one of its main hurdles is in obtaining primary knowledge on IFAD operations, resulting in heavy demands on country staff to provide information. The country studies noted a lack of clarity regarding the type and availability of support from COM outside basic edits and formatting.

84. ICT joined the KMCG only in 2023. The division reports an increasing involvement in KM-related discussions in recent months, reflecting the realization within IFAD that it has a key role to play in KM. ICT provides the infrastructure to store and share the information and data on which KM builds and which has been highlighted as a significant challenge by IFAD staff, given that the current proliferation of databases and platforms does not facilitate access to information. Some platforms, such as ORMS and xdesk, have a corporate database function, while others, such as microsites and Power BI dashboards, are divisional initiatives. The multiplication of platforms poses a challenge for the maintenance of the KM infrastructure.

KM partnerships

85. **Bilateral partnerships are key for IFAD to access and share knowledge at global, regional and country levels**. The 2023 MOPAN assessment of IFAD[35] recognized IFAD's steps to increase external partnerships on KM, collaborating with institutions like the World Bank. The assessment also saw opportunities to further develop systems and capacities to leverage external knowledge and best practices, to complement its current internal focus. In a similar vein, the IFAD stakeholder survey (formerly called the IFAD client survey) highlighted the need for improvement in IFAD's coordination with other aid agencies and in continually assessing and adjusting its programmes. This suggests that, while the knowledge products are valued, there is a need for improved coherence in practice, especially in coordination efforts.[36]

86. **GPR has a role in supporting knowledge partnerships globally**. Currently, IFAD has 179 active partnership agreements.[37] Of these, 64 agreements (36 per cent) mention activities related to KM, such as knowledge production, sharing, strengthening and technical cooperation. Research and regional organizations were the types of organizations with the highest presence of KM in the agreements, as respectively 64 per cent and 60 per cent of agreements with such organizations included KM activities. The most frequently mentioned activities were knowledge-sharing (in 35 agreements) and knowledge production (in 15 agreements). Due to the lack of monitoring and follow-up on these partnership agreements, there is no compiled data as to what actual activities or results have stemmed from them. Given the substantial presence of knowledge-related activities, this absence of monitoring and drawing of lessons negatively impacts IFAD's ability to strategically reflect on its knowledge partnerships and inform its partnership efforts. This is particularly the case for its major knowledge partners, such as research bodies and the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) organizations.

35 This is the fourth assessment of IFAD conducted by MOPAN, with earlier assessments completed in 2010, 2013 and 2017-2018. This assessment covers the period from 2018 through 2022.
36 IFAD client survey.
37 IFAD's partnership database on IFAD's Operations Manual, accessed in July 2023.

87. **Despite producing relevant materials, knowledge management around grants remains weak, as responsibilities for grant management are spread throughout the organization**. IFAD does not have a corporate system for storing grants, unlike IFAD projects (loans). Evidence of results beyond the immediate outputs of the grants is limited, as reporting on grants ends with the termination of grant financing and there is no follow-up by IFAD on any subsequent results. As per the 2021 grant policy, IFAD's QAG has established a corporate centralized process of monitoring grants. Grant-financed partnerships have enabled knowledge production and management initiatives, which would not have been possible solely within IFAD's loan portfolio. For instance, grants to research organizations focused on supporting agricultural research, which in some cases were directly used in IFAD projects but more often supported the broader knowledge ecosystem. In LAC, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and IFAD have built a strong knowledge partnership through the New Ruralities grant.[38] QAG ratings of KM in IFAD's regular grants portfolio indicate that the best performing organizations were from the private sector, the United Nations, CGIAR and research organizations (see figure 3).

[38] The New Ruralities grant funded a study that aimed to identify different transformations in rural areas to formulate new development policies, evaluate the impact of a heterogeneous and dynamic definition of rurality on public development policies and the assigning of public funds to territories, and encourage a regional and national debate on public strategies on rural development. The study was conducted in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Mexico and Panama, and resulted in the development of a Relative Rurality Index.

FIGURE 4

Correlation between QAG KM ratings, type of organization and number of grants
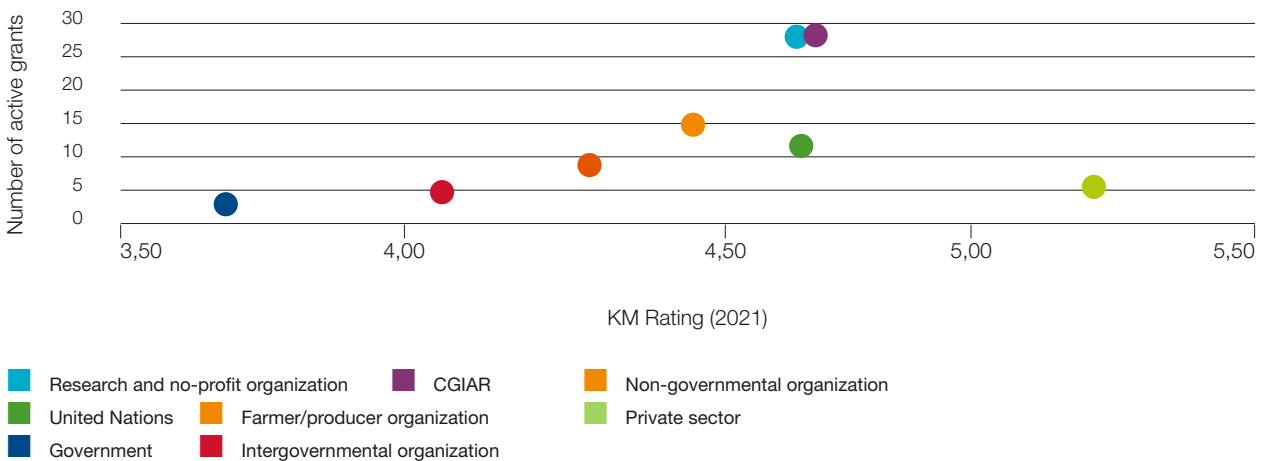
Source: CLE analysis QAG Grants Status Reports and OBI.

88. **IFAD is not taking full advantage of networks where contemporary KM concepts are discussed**. In 2020, IFAD joined the Multi-Donor Partnership on Learning for Development Impact (MDLP),[39] which was set up by multilateral and bilateral development agencies[40] to raise the priority of their knowledge and organizational learning agendas; to intensify efforts to share learning with each other and to deliberately learn together; and to champion knowledge and learning investments across the international development sector. Members of the MDLP, such as the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (the German Development Cooperation, GIZ) and the US Agency for International Development (USAID), have taken advantage of these new insights in the development of policies on local knowledge[41] and discussions on decolonization, while IFAD has not. For instance, current discussions within the KM and KM4D disciplines are focusing on the potential of artificial intelligence (AI) for knowledge work and knowledge management. While IFAD is looking into the potential uses of AI in its work, this has remained disjointed from its broader knowledge management efforts. The Athena Project looked at opportunities to strengthen KM through the use of AI for knowledge generation,[42] but ended in 2021. Currently, the work on AI is followed through ICT4D and Omnidata.

89. A relevant area is the **50x2030 initiative**, established in 2019 in partnership with FAO and the World Bank, to promote the use of data and evidence in policymaking processes at country level. This is funded with supplementary funds and focuses on producing demand-driven knowledge products for national policymakers. For instance, knowledge products were produced in Georgia and Uganda as inputs to policy formulation by the ministries of agriculture. Lessons from implementation indicates the existence of strong capacities and willingness in countries to make use of data and evidence. Still, a challenge remains in terms of the identification of data sources and knowledge products tailored to specific policy needs.

90. The CLE found that these initiatives are consistent with external developments in the UN system. Primary among such developments is the UN 2.0 agenda, championed by the UN Secretary-General as part of the efforts to reaffirm the UN's contribution to the final stretch of Agenda 2030. The UN 2.0 library has identified IFAD initiatives in four out of five of these components, indicating that IFAD's work on KM is well aligned to UN 2.0. Data analytics can uncover new insights and knowledge, for instance IFAD's use of GIS and remote sensing (e.g. Kyrgyzstan).[43]

D. IFAD's positioning as knowledge partner

91. IFAD's ambition is "strengthening [IFAD's] ability to learn, generate knowledge and provide evidence about what works, including by leveraging the knowledge of others to deepen and complement its own knowledge base"[44] and is a critical dimension for IFAD's agenda for working better. The SF foresees that IFAD's global role would become stronger, but more focused, while building on knowledge from operations and partnerships: "Drawing on both its operational experience and outside expertise, it will generate knowledge on issues related to inclusive and sustainable rural transformation, and it will draw on this knowledge in engaging in relevant global policy processes, where it will contribute its specific perspective."

92. The 2019 KM strategy notes that IFAD's comparative advantage lies in its strong targeting of the poorest and most food-insecure people in rural areas, and in its focus on empowering them to increase their productive capacities. The strategy also notes that "from a knowledge perspective, the specificity of its focus combined with IFAD's work in diverse country contexts, enables it to: draw on a wide range of experiences; share lessons learned; bring successes from one country or region to another; and play an important role in shaping global policy discussions on agriculture and rural development. Effective partnerships to innovate, learn and scale up impact form a critical component of this comparative advantage" (IFAD 2018).

39 https://www.mdlp4dev.org/.
40 Other members comprise the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, GIZ, the Inter-American Development Bank, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, UNICEF, the Wellcome Trust, USAID and the World Bank.
41 https://usaidlearninglab.org/resources/report-integrating-local-knowledge-development-practice.
42 Garbero, A., et al. 'The Athena Project: Leveraging artificial intelligence and big data for IFAD 2.0'. Report from Phase 2. International Fund for Agricultural Development, Rome, Italy, 2021.
43 https://un-two-zero.network/all-projects/?_sft_entity=ifad.
44 Strategic Framework 2016-2025.

93. **In most country case studies, the partners appreciated IFAD as a knowledge provider and knowledge broker**. IFAD's country-level partners value its grassroots expertise, flexibility, thematic knowledge, convening ability, country presence and focus on learning and innovation.[45] IFAD was also seen as playing an important "knowledge broker" role in countries such as Kenya, Kyrgyzstan and Nigeria, while its regular field-level supervision of projects provides hands-on monitoring and opportunities for knowledge exchange (e.g. Pakistan). Long-term presence and engagement at country level builds impact and relationships (Côte d'Ivoire and Tunisia). The decentralized structure and close connections to the field level where knowledge is generated was highlighted as being important in Côte d'Ivoire. In some countries like Argentina, Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire, Peru and Tunisia, the COSOPs and project-level KM strategies reflected and leveraged IFAD's strengths including partnerships, decentralized presence, thematic expertise and innovation. However, in other countries like Angola, Egypt, Kyrgyzstan and Sierra Leone, IFAD's comparative advantages were not explicitly articulated or strategically utilized in the COSOPs or country-level KM frameworks.

94. IFAD has helped to set up structures that allow for the exchange of knowledge within and across subregions. Partners like FAO Nigeria and the Centre for the Implementation of Public Policies Promoting Equity and Growth highlighted IFAD's effectiveness in engaging high-level stakeholders and policymakers. Nonetheless, partners noted that IFAD's presence of late has been waning, and all note the need for further support, particularly financial, to continue their engagements with IFAD. Interviews with FAO suggest that although IFAD still has a strong reputation for expert knowledge on poverty reduction and rural development, it has been increasingly absent and protocol-heavy when engaging with governments, perhaps due to staff rotations.

95. While there are good examples where KM strengths are acknowledged, there is **scope for IFAD to highlight and demonstrate its strengths to partners more consistently**. IFAD's comparative strengths in KM were recognized by country-level partners to some extent, but were not adequately communicated or demonstrated. In countries such as Egypt and Madagascar, the evaluation found that certain key partners view IFAD only as a donor, rather than a knowledge provider. The findings are in line with the results of the 2022 IFAD stakeholder survey from 2020 to 2022, where an average of 3 per cent of respondents stated that expert and knowledge products were the most important thing that IFAD should do in future to strengthen its efforts to reduce rural poverty and food insecurity in their country. Similarly, low levels of response were found for KM-related areas, such as "active engagement with policy dialogues" and "exchanges and SSTC" (approximately 5 per cent and 3 per cent of respondents, respectively).

96. IFAD's limited number of staff at country level hinders its ability to engage in formal coordination mechanisms, such as joint working groups, UN Country Teams and development partner groups, facilitating greater alignment. While the CLE found evidence of IFAD contributing inputs to joint studies and assessments (e.g. in Kyrgyzstan), this did not necessarily translate into sustained, coherent KM partnerships. IFAD's KM work with cofinancing institutions, such as the World Bank and regional development banks, consisted of technical cooperation around cofinanced projects and sharing lessons from agricultural investments in forums such as donor coordination groups.[46] The evaluation found that that IFAD is perceived by its cofinancing partners at country level as a relevant technical player in the agriculture and rural development community. Exchanges with the UN and Rome-based agencies (RBAs) focused more on operations and design rather than KM practices and building communities of practice (CoPs).

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45 In Tunisia, Pakistan and Côte d'Ivoire, government partners highlighted IFAD's advantages in areas like grassroots insights, innovation, flexibility and thematic expertise. PMUs in Malawi, Peru, and Brazil valued IFAD's expertise in participatory tools, training, and scaling solutions. Expertise in specific thematic areas was also noted as a comparative strength of IFAD as a provider of knowledge on pastoralism and livestock (Kyrgyzstan), family agriculture (Argentina), value chain development (Côte d'Ivoire), and climate resilience (Côte d'Ivoire). IFAD's ability to pilot test innovative approaches which can be replicated and scaled up was noted for example in Brazil.

46 Examples of this can be found in most of the CLE's country case studies including Angola, Brazil, Nigeria, the Philippines and Viet Nam.

97. **In countries with limited IFAD presence, its role as knowledge provider was less evident**. Low staffing levels and the inability to prioritize KM prevented country offices from leveraging IFAD's grassroots knowledge and experience in countries with smaller portfolios. For example, in Sierra Leone, insufficient emphasis on capturing lessons learned and addressing challenges from the field in policy dialogues hampered IFAD's effectiveness as a knowledge provider. Lack of operational KM toolkits and products to fully capitalize on IFAD's presence and expertise was highlighted in Angola and Côte d'Ivoire. The need to reinforce partnerships and the suboptimal use or availability of grants for KM activities was noted in Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

98. **IFAD has not sufficiently addressed the knowledge demands of MICs. MICs** are not only interested in IFAD loans, but also have a higher demand for technical know-how and SSTC.[47] IFAD would need stronger capacities and partnership capabilities to address these demands.[48] China expects IFAD to provide high-quality expertise and engage as a knowledge partner at eye level. Yet, absence of rigorous data collection and effective KM platforms has limited its policy influence. Organizations like FAO, WFP, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) have successfully established knowledge centres in China, maintained high data quality, and encouraged robust partnerships, providing IFAD with potential models for improving its own KM and policy-influencing strategies. In Egypt, there are opportunities for IFAD to support the sharing of user-friendly knowledge from national research institutes to address local and regional demand, but this would require additional capacities in the MCO. The need for IFAD to clarify its role as knowledge partner will become even more pressing as UMICs are approaching graduation discussions.

E. Overall relevance and coherence

99. The CLE assessed the relevance of IFAD's 2019 KM strategy against the Strategic Framework (2016-2026). The KM strategy was a relevant document, but its scope has been reduced in the 2019 Action Plan, which was overly focused on SKD, neglecting the roles of other divisions within IFAD's knowledge system. The KM strategy was overtaken by the ongoing decentralization process, which placed greater responsibility on regional and country offices, and whose roles were not clearly defined in the KM strategy.

100. The CLE's assessment of IFAD's KM architecture shows a fragmented picture, which evolved over time. Shortly after the adoption of the KM strategy, IFAD created several new organizational units with a mandate for KM, which appear delinked, while other relevant units with a KM role outside SKD were not involved in the strategy's implementation. The KM architecture therefore remained excessively centred around SKD, without sufficient recognition of the major role of KM at the country level, especially in the context of IFAD's increasing decentralization. Partnerships at country level remain the most relevant avenues for knowledge exchange, while globally, IFAD has been less engaged in KM networks. Also, IFAD has not been able to sufficiently clarify the role of its SSTC and knowledge centres. The relevance of IFAD's knowledge needs to be assessed against what is required in support of rural transformation. IFAD maintains ample potential to better capitalize on its extensive knowledge of rural development issues and contribute to identifying solutions to development challenges. What is lacking is a more demand-driven knowledge offer, a more diffused and decentralized KM architecture, and a greater focus on leveraging effective KM partnerships.

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47 Also see the FGD on SSTC in LAC (box 2).
48 IOE's evaluation synthesis on partnerships (2018) noted that MICs have a higher demand for knowledge and that IFAD often does not have the right partnerships to address this demand.

Key findings on the relevance and coherence of IFAD's KM strategies and institutional framework

- IFAD's 2019 KM Strategy was aligned to the objectives of the IFAD Strategic Framework 2016-2025. It aimed to guide IFAD towards better integrated and more effective KM that is tailored to the new decentralized organizational structure, enhanced business model and its effectiveness framework. Indigenous and local knowledge was a gap in the KM strategy.

- The 2019 KM Action Plan was overly focused on one department, resulting in limited attention to country-level knowledge in IFAD's internal and external knowledge systems.

- CDI's position under the Office of the President is an advantage as it enhances its ability to engage across the organization, and its nimble and focused structure makes it more agile.

- The role of the SSTC and knowledge centres vis-à-vis the new regional offices still requires clarification.

- IFAD knowledge products are available in few languages only, limiting their utility for country stakeholders. IFAD's corporate knowledge products are not tailored or specific enough to cater to local needs.

- Recently, IFAD has been less engaged in networks where contemporary KM concepts are discussed.

- Grants were a key instrument to position IFAD as a knowledge player at global, regional and country levels.

- IFAD's partnerships at country level are significant avenues for knowledge exchanges, the most important ones being with government counterparts, UN Country Teams, donor coordination groups and bilateral partnerships with recipients of IFAD grants.

- In countries with limited presence IFAD's role as a knowledge provider was less evident.

- In middle-income countries, IFAD has not sufficiently capitalized on its experience to meet the knowledge demands of policymakers.

- Recent KM initiatives indicate a relevant focus on improving data quality and availability and a focus on knowledge-based country-level policy support. These initiatives are consistent with external developments in the UN system, primarily with the UN 2.0 agenda.

Chapter IV

The effectiveness of IFAD's KM architecture

IV. The effectiveness of IFAD's KM architecture

Evaluation question 1: How relevant and coherent is IFAD's institutional framework for knowledge management, given the mandate and needs of the organization and the global, regional and local context in which IFAD works?

A. Effectiveness of the corporate KM architecture

Corporate KM leadership

101. The SF (2016-2025) includes a priority for smarter working, optimizing the complementarity of functions and knowledge flows between IFAD Country Offices and headquarters. This chapter reviews the effectiveness of IFAD's KM architecture in delivering the KM strategy within the decentralized framework. The effectiveness of the KM strategy depends on both the broader architecture and the enabling environment in which it operated. The chapter probes these hypotheses with regard to the visible and effective leadership to guide and adapt the KM agenda in the context of unfolding organizational changes and reforms. It also reviews the role of the KMCG as an effective link to convey country and regional concerns and demands to corporate levels and the availability of relevant KM tools at corporate and regional levels (see annex VIII).

102. **Currently, there is no framework adequately measuring KM effectiveness at a corporate level**. The 2023 MOPAN assessment did not find evidence that IFAD is measuring how knowledge contributes to its development outcomes. The assessment also noted that linking knowledge application to results could help maximize the relevance of IFAD knowledge products. The 2019 KM Action Plan has a strong focus on knowledge products. The majority of the indicators in the related results framework were not monitored, as also noted by the internal MTR of the KM strategy. The MTR noted that the results of the action plan were not fully measurable and that monitoring the numerous indicators, some of which would require surveys, faced capacity and resource constraints. Several benchmarks were not established at the start of the plan and indicators for successful KM were found to be underdeveloped.

103. The IFAD Knowledge Management Framework 2014-2018 designated the Associate Vice-President (AVP) of SKD as the overall champion and leader of KM. Under the framework, the Operational Management Committee was to provide ongoing strategic guidance and leadership on KM implementation, but the AVP SKD would be responsible for ensuring KM is prioritized by senior management and integrated into strategic planning.

104. The Executive Management Committee has been guiding the 2019 KM Strategy. The KM Strategy 2019-2025 designates the entire Executive Management Committee (EMC) as IFAD's KM champions. A review of EMC minutes revealed that KM has been discussed at 16 meetings between 2016 and mid-2022. Considering the importance of KM and the more than 40 meetings held each year, this is not very often. Of these 16 meetings, KM was discussed as a day's agenda item at 7 meetings and was discussed within or in relation to other topics at the other 9 meetings. The main topics discussed in this context were related to the KM Action Plans (2016-2018 and 2022-2025), the KM strategy from draft to implementation and MTR. EMC members also asked for more information on the composition and role of the KMCG and the time commitment required for this activity.[49]

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49 EMC Minutes, 29th Meeting held on 21 July 2022. Available **here**.

105. Discussions highlighted the importance of internal collaboration, coordination on global engagements, and the role of corporate working groups in shaping content. Much attention was also given to using engagements to mobilize resources and partnering with other institutions.[50] Aligning KM efforts with global best practices and cross-divisional initiatives focusing on the learning culture and KM[51] was also mentioned.

106. **The CLE did not find evidence that the EMC has been infusing ideas on how to adjust the KM framework under the ongoing decentralization process**. The EMC has taken major decisions to integrate KM into the corporate strategy and structures between 2017 and 2019. During its deliberations on the KM Strategy, the EMC recommended stronger linkages with other divisions, such as CDI, COM, ICT and records management, to advance the KM agenda. Since 2019, no decision was taken on KM-related issues (see figure 5 below). The KM Action Plan 2023-2025 has been discussed by the EMC twice (in February and in July 2023).

50 EMC Minutes, 18th Meeting held on 12 May 2021. Available here.
51 EMC Minutes, 31st Meeting held on 26 August 2021. Available here.

FIGURE 5

EMC decisions related to KM

20 DECEMBER 2017	30 MAY 2018	24 OCTOBER 2018	20 AND 21 FEBRUARY 2019	27 FEBRUARY 2019
GKS tasked with making a presentation an the knowledge management framework as an instrument to capture, and more broadly disseminate, field and global knowledge.	**SKD** pursued a knowledge management strategy that: i. incorporates global knowledge into IFAD's programmes and projects; ii. maximizes the use of IFAD's field experience and SSTC knowledge across the organization to enhance IFAD's reputation as a global leader in sustainable rural development. iii. utilizes evidence-based knowledge across the organization to enhance IFAD's reputation as a global leader in sustainable rural development.	**SKD** were tasked to, in consultation with **PMD**, develop an exploration ahead of the EB session in December on how the Regional Hubs will be knowledge centres in the decentralization process.	**KM Startegy** to include the role of the **CDI** in the strategy. The EMC endorsed the strategy, action plan and RMF for submission to Executive Board for approval.	IFAD's **Rural Solutions Portal** to include the integration and partecipation of **PMD** and **SKD**.

Source: EMC minutes.

The Strategy and Knowledge Department

107. In addition to the role of the EMC, the AVP-SKD takes de facto leadership of the KM architecture with the delegated responsibility for the KMCG[52] (KM Annual Report 2022). The KM strategy does not specify the leading roles for KM across the organization, as did the earlier KM Framework (2014-2018), which stated: "IFAD managers lead the development of an organizational culture that values learning and sharing."

108. **Changes in SKD leadership have influenced the strategic priorities for KM**. The MTR of the KM strategy noted that frequent leadership changes, including three AVPs of SKD in three years, led to shifts in knowledge priorities and approaches. In 2021, the SKD's goal of "promoting partnership building to facilitate knowledge exchange, ensure visibility and mobilize resources" was replaced by "integrate supplementary funds and grants into IFAD's programme of work and leverage them to maximise impact on the ground". The following year, 2022, saw another shift in focus, with emphasis being placed on setting IFAD's strategic direction, thereby overshadowing previous goals centred on knowledge partnerships and supplementary funds and grants.[53]

109. **SKD currently does not have sufficient staff capacity to guide organization-wide KM**. With the adoption of the strategy, SKD established a KM team located in the SKD front office which was expected to provide technical support and guidance on KM across all levels of the organization. Whether this small team, consisting of two professional staff,[54] was able to guide KM in IFAD is difficult to confirm. The MTR concludes that this team needs to be strengthened in order to fulfil its function. The CLE's KAP survey confirmed the MTR observation, with around half of the respondents rating SKD's leadership in steering KM activities at IFAD as either "very weak" or "somewhat weak." Additionally, 53 per cent felt they did not receive adequate feedback from SKD on their knowledge outputs (see annex VII).

110. SKD launched an **online KM resource centre** in May 2020 to offer access to KM guidelines, tools, templates and training opportunities.[55] These are valuable resources, although it is not clear how often they have been used in practice. The resource centre is accessible both internally and externally and is intended to be "a resource for IFAD staff and consultants, project staff and partners who want to learn more about KM and how it can help in their daily work". Although it contains useful information to support KM efforts, the IFAD KM resource centre is available only in English. Since it is intended to be a resource for IFAD staff and consultants, project staff and partners, it is likely that some potential users need resources in other languages as well.

The KM coordination group

111. The KMCG was established as a platform for interregional and interdivisional knowledge-sharing. The 2014 KM framework established the interdivisional KM coordination group (KMCG), which is comprised of staff with KM responsibilities and focal points nominated by CDs from across IFAD.[56] The KMCG facilitates experience-sharing among its members on predefined thematic areas, acts as a knowledge aggregator, links to IFAD's strategic objectives, and provides a platform for collaboration among different regions.

112. **The KMCG has not always been effective as a link into the regional divisions**. For example, in ESA, due to the lack of a comprehensive KM platform, the KMCG provides the de facto structure for implementing KM at a regional level. Nonetheless, activities undertaken by the KMCG, such as the knowledge gap map, which was shared in the ESA business planning meeting of 2021, were not implemented in ESA. In other regions, the KMCG is not currently acting as an effective link between country, regional and corporate concerns; its relevance to regional initiatives is limited. In WCA, the failure to appoint a KM focal point may have been a contributing factor.

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52   According to the 2019 IFAD delegation of authority, the AVP-SKD is the Chair of the KMCG.
53   The divisions under SKD, including RIA, PMI and ECG, closely align their divisional goals with those of the department, with their knowledge-related divisional goals emphasizing knowledge-generating and disseminating activities.
54   In 2022, one of the two staff members was not fully available to work on KM due to other corporate commitments.
55   RIDE 2021.
56   The KM coordination group will comprise: the KM Coordinator (SKD), knowledge management officers and other staff with specific KM responsibilities; and representatives of PMD (including PTA), COM, HRD (Learning and Development), PRM, IOE, ICT, SKD and other divisions as appropriate, including CPMs and country office staff. Responsibilities associated with participation in the group will be reflected in staff annual performance evaluation and annual work plans.

113. The COVID-19 pandemic period was a turning point in the role of the KMCG. In 2020, the KMCG launched a series of bi-weekly discussions to promote learning and adaptation during IFAD's COVID-19 response.[57] An IFAD-wide KM Community of Practice (CoP) was established in May 2020 and initially focused on support for learning during IFAD's COVID-19 response. Three online learning events from this CoP covered themes including project repurposing, digital solutions and remote supervision. Through these discussions, learning notes with actionable recommendations, were prepared for senior management[58].

114. **KMCG's recent focus on predefined thematic areas neglects the diverse needs of country programmes, diverting resources from project-level priorities**. Since 2020, the role of the KMCG has expanded to include the production of thematic knowledge notes on priority areas.[59] It has produced learning notes (Knowledge in Focus) on SKD topics, such as mainstreaming themes.[60] Topics are decided directly by SKD and are discussed and shared within the KMCG, while regional and country staff are requested to provide lessons and good practices from operations.

115. **The effectiveness of harnessing operational experiences is undermined by the lack of adequate knowledge repositories**. Given that most of IFAD's primary knowledge arises from its operations, most KM efforts rely on inputs from IFAD country teams and, to a lesser extent, regional and thematic teams. Frequent requests from SKD, COM or GPR place an additional burden on country teams as they are already loaded with programme delivery. Across the organization, staff indicated that a better repository and information storage system would alleviate (although not eliminate) these requests and make better use of IFAD human resources. There are no digital repositories that are connected and searchable, with a consistent tagging and taxonomy of IFAD's main themes yet.[61]

B. Effectiveness of KM strategies

Effectiveness of the corporate KM strategy

116. The aim of the KM strategy was "to guide IFAD towards better integrated and more effective KM that is tailored to the new decentralized organizational structure and supports IFAD in achieving greater development impact".[62] The external MOPAN Assessment of IFAD (2023)[63] recognized the progress that IFAD has made since 2018, particularly through its decentralization reforms. The report stated that IFAD has developed tools and systems to help staff access and apply knowledge and lessons learned from past projects and evaluations, but their application in new project designs is uneven.[64] Overall, KM is not yet on track in IFAD. IFAD's self-assessment (RIDE 2022) noted the 72 per cent of COSOP completion reports that were rated moderately satisfactory or above on KM in IFAD 11 through self-evaluation. However, this was still below the Results Measurement Framework 11 target of 80 percent.[65] IOE evaluations showed that KM is among the lower performing activities in country strategies (see chapter II.C.).

117. A major deficit in the KM strategy is the lack of an effective monitoring and reporting system for KM results. This also implies that there is limited accountability on results and use of resources (see chapter VI). Since 2020, the Annual Report on Knowledge Management Action Plan Implementation has been included in the Report on IFAD's Development Effectiveness (RIDE) presented to the Executive Board each year. While the KM reports provide a useful description of the activities undertaken in the previous year, the focus is on the KM Action Plan and not the wider IFAD KM system. Moreover, the reports do not systematically review the results framework of the divisional KM action plans, and they provide a very limited assessment of performance.

57 A sample learning note from August 2020: https://www.ifad.org/en/web/knowledge/-/publication/covid-19-learning-notes.
58 RIDE 2022.
59 2021 Annual Report on KM (RIDE annex V, para 2).
60 https://intranet.ifad.org/knowledge-and-information/knowledge-in-focus.
61 SKD/KU and ITC have prepared an exploratory concept note to examine how AI could improve searchability.

62 2023 KM Annual Report.
63 This is the fourth assessment of IFAD conducted by MOPAN with earlier assessments completed in 2010, 2013 and 2017-2018. This assessment covers the period from 2018 through 2022.
64 QAG also noted the insufficient integration of lessons into project designs (QAG View #7 2020).
65 While this observation has been confirmed in the 2023 RIDE, the report did not provide the updated data.

118. At the country level, there was high variability in the strength of evidence underlying KM activities. In some cases (e.g. Angola, Argentina, Mexico), robust M&E systems and data collection provided a solid foundation for KM, while in others, data quality was lacking. Persistent gaps remain in many countries in moving from data collection to deep analysis, synthesis and packaging of lessons learned for decision-making. It is particularly concerning that the basic systematic assessments of project outcomes and impact beyond the project level are limited in most countries, with variable evidence of KM effectiveness (see chapter V). Data was not always leveraged effectively for learning. Challenges like high staff turnover, dependence on partner systems, and limited analytical capacity constrain the development of robust evidence for KM.

Effectiveness of regional KM strategies

119. This section examines the effectiveness of KM strategies, led and guided by the regional divisions in IFAD. The KM Strategy (2019-2025) explicitly states the intention to strengthen the linkages and synergies between operations and knowledge-intensive activities at country, regional and global levels.[66] The strategy notes that KM activities will be carried out at all levels, from project level to hub level to regional level, across themes, divisions and departments, without imposing a unified approach. The CLE found that in the absence of specific guidance from the corporate strategy and departments, the role of the regional divisions has been pivotal in shaping KM within regions and countries.

120. **The main role of regional divisions was to extract, distil and share knowledge from operations**. This function is currently being undertaken by regional divisions, who have been establishing knowledge repositories to make knowledge available for operations (see chapter IV.C.). Regional divisions also undertake annual portfolio reviews which provide updates on portfolio performance and some analytical insights, but these have a limited knowledge-sharing function. More recently, knowledge packs (K-packs) are being developed as tailor-made products to support project designs. They are a simple product that combines knowledge from existing platforms as an input into design processes.[67] While the use of K-packs is still at an early stage, it demonstrates an effort to enhance the use of knowledge for improved project designs.[68]

121. **Within the regional divisions, clarity on strategic direction has been guiding KM priorities**. Overall, PMD has maintained its commitment to KM, which is also reflected in the consistent use of the department's goal "greater innovation, policy advantage and lesson learning". The commitment has also transpired into the divisions, especially OPR, NEN, ESA and WCA. Some divisions, such as APR and LAC, have defined their own priorities for KM. Clarity on the strategic direction has been an important factor contributing to the positive performance of KM in LAC and APR regions, as also confirmed by IOE's CSPE ratings (see figure 2 in annex VI).

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66 The KM Framework 2014-2018 did not set out the role of the regional divisions.

67 The process begins with country teams sending the regional front office concept notes for future projects. The front office team then looks for literature of evidence-based examples and information regarding specific activities, project sub-components and components proposed in the concept notes. The country team uses the K-pack to fine-tune the proposals before beginning project design missions and documents. Recently, RIA also contributed to K-packs and have provided examples and evidence from other regions as well as impact studies.

68 At the time of this CLE K-packs have been created for Angola, Colombia, Comoros, Ecuador, El Salvador, Malawi, Mozambique and Uganda.

122. APR has set itself even more detailed divisional goals, with integrated communication and visibility as additional goals.[69] In 2021, APR further expanded one of its divisional goals to IFAD public goods, encouraging its staff's participation in technical working groups and discussion panels at global events. APR has adopted practices to support KM at operational level. The APR KM-COM clinics are a flagship KM practice that was reportedly useful for building project-level KM capacity, as well as in promoting greater harmonization between KM approaches across countries.[70]

123. LAC specified its learning opportunities under its divisional goals in 2021. In 2022, it further added internal knowledge-sharing goals under its divisional "teambuilding" goal, such as "knowledge-sharing space among assistants implemented", "dedicated space for teambuilding and knowledge-sharing during LAC planning week", fostering a unique knowledge-sharing culture within the division. In LAC, the development of complementary platforms and products has produced a system to support projects and, in the future, COSOP design by incorporating good KM practices. The LAC knowledge platform acts as a repository of knowledge products generated through the lending and non-lending portfolio, as well as of events.[71]

124. WCA had been spearheading some good KM practices early on, but they were later discontinued due to changes in staffing and leadership. One of the most interesting mechanisms at the subregional level was the KM committee established by the Dakar hub in 2019. The committee gathered all staff working on KM in the subregion and met regularly to exchange knowledge; it also supported project staff in the development of knowledge products. The practice was based on the hub model and has been discontinued since IFAD transitioned to the MCO model and hub staff retired. Attempts to extend the model to the other two hubs (Yaoundé and Abidjan) were reported, but did not succeed.[72] Some useful practices for sharing operational experiences were not continued.[73] The knowledge gap map pilot conducted by WCA was also not replicated in new designs.

125. **Knowledge drain has been an important factor undermining the continuity and consistency of KM in the regions**. The evaluation observed a significant loss of knowledge from regions as a result of staff reassignments. Between 2020 and 2023, IFAD went through a process of reassigning staff that had been in position for some time to new assignments. The three waves of reassignment resulted in changes of staff for 36 positions across the five divisions. The CD role was particularly affected, with 27 reassignments. The changes followed IFAD's strategic efforts to align leadership expertise with evolving regional requirements. APR division had nine reassignments in the initial two years. LAC and WCA divisions had six reassignments each. Reassignments have affected country-level partnerships and often disrupted KM processes. Newly arrived staff prioritized portfolio management first and took more time to familiarize themselves with KM practices.

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69 Relevant knowledge management activities, such as KM and communication plans, learning events, high-profile regional events, and knowledge products generated by regional grants and SSTC, were included under "learning" and "communication and visibility" subgoals.

70 APR also provided more targeted support to some countries, e.g. Bangladesh, for the establishment of a CoP (with monthly meetings) and the development of a KM plan; or in Malaysia, where the division was asked to do an induction on KM at project start-up. Systematic review of KM sections of design and supervision reports helped to strengthen project KM systems and created occasions for learning and knowledge-sharing to inform project management. This practice has been discontinued since the departure of the previous KM focal point, due to insufficient human resources.

71 In LAC, the MCO structure has helped knowledge-sharing across country portfolios. In addition, the network of LAC KM focal points facilitated knowledge flows from country portfolios to the SSTC and Knowledge Centre and to the LAC knowledge platform. Furthermore, ECG staff decentralized to LAC have set up a system to provide knowledge on a demand-driven basis.

72 KM practices developed by the Dakar hub included M&E and KM guidelines, a case study manual, KM training and annual hub workshops, aimed at strengthening project KM approaches. The Dakar hub Google website made products it generated accessible for regional project management units.

73 At the regional level, the review meetings of project design and supervision reports were explicitly aimed at improving country operations, but were discontinued. The meetings only resumed in 2023 for problem projects, with the aim of reducing the gap between PMD and IOE ratings. Annual hub workshops in West Africa, and regional implementation workshops, also provided opportunities to bring staff from country programmes to openly reflect, discuss and share their ideas and lessons learned, as well as to support cross-learning and innovation.

C. Effectiveness of mechanisms for sharing knowledge

126. **Since 2016, there has been an increase in KM events with a focus on knowledge-sharing within IFAD**. An emphasis on mainstreaming themes (e.g. climate change, nutrition, youth), the adoption of new operational processes and instruments (e.g. private sector development, SSTC) together with the turnover of staff have intensified the need for sharing knowledge within IFAD. There has been a steady increase in IFAD knowledge-sharing events, such as workshops, learning events and forums. The adoption of remote meeting tools during the COVID-19 pandemic (2020-2021) enabled broad-based participation in these events. This section looks at the tools and practices that have contributed to the growth of knowledge-sharing in IFAD.

Knowledge platforms

127. **Numerous digital KM platforms have emerged to support knowledge-sharing, contributing to the overall fragmented nature of the knowledge system**. The evaluation found that the KM platforms provided the required infrastructure to share and access lessons and good practices more effectively. The CLE identified 49 relevant KM platforms, which were of particular interest to the evaluation (see table 4 in annex III).[74] While the flexibility of platforms is an advantage to keep costs low and adaptive to demand, it also poses a challenge in terms of ICT infrastructure, which requires consistency and reliability of such platforms in order to keep maintenance costs low and ensure quality support. Platforms that have a dedicated facilitator or curator (e.g. EvalForward or the Smallholder and Agri-SME Finance and Investment Network [SAFIN]) are usually more effective in generating and sharing knowledge, but require funding to be continued. Others, such as the Dgroups, only rely on their members and can therefore be maintained at low cost. The MTR noted that the fragmentation of platforms did not enhance the effectiveness of the overall knowledge system.

128. Although outside the core scope of the CLE, the evaluation noted that platforms such as OBI and xdesk, where most internal documentation is stored (e.g. for grants and projects), provide an important repository for documentation but do not have any functionality supporting the exchange and management of knowledge. For example, in the KAP survey, IFAD staff and consultant respondents indicated that the IFAD knowledge platforms are not user-friendly. About 80 per cent of respondents disagreed that IFAD's corporate platforms were easy to navigate and helpful in finding relevant knowledge. In addition to these platforms, IFAD maintains a well-stocked library in the HQ premises. The library issues regular updates on newly acquired books and articles, as well as publication lists tailored to the interests of users.

129. **Beyond the corporate platforms, there is a demand for platforms providing contextualized knowledge in local languages**. For instance, regional platforms are operated in region-specific languages, such as Spanish in LAC. The LAC knowledge platform is a sharing tool and repository for key knowledge products and their dissemination, including studies, research articles and reports.[75] The vast majority of these documents are in Spanish. The LAC knowledge platform was originally conceived in 2020 as a LAC microsite, through conversations with COM and ITC. The purposes of the platform were to share experiences and KM products, retain documents at the end of project cycles, and host news and external partner publications. As of 30 March 2023, the repository has expanded to 446 items, and contains internal documentation (project documentation and knowledge products derived from these, IOE publications[76] and external documentation (scholarly articles) that relate to LAC. The platform is hosted on a publicly available website.[77] LAC also benefits from the ECG LAC knowledge repository, a Dropbox-based platform to share ECG documents specific to LAC.

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74 The desk review identified five subcategories of knowledge platforms within IFAD systems: (i) networks; (ii) CoPs listed in the IFAD corporate and KM resource centre website; (iii) living repositories; (iv) websites; and (v) social media platforms. Within this categorization, media used for the diffusion were also identified, specifically: Dgroups and learning platforms for CoPs; internal and external websites and social media groups and live feeds for social media platforms. For the scope of this study, only knowledge platforms were taken into account; external websites and live feeds for social media platforms are thus not included in the 49 platforms.

75 LAC portfolio stocktake 2022.
76 This was presented to the Beijing and Addis Ababa SSTC and knowledge centre heads, and justified as a good KM function and a way to reduce costs. It was rejected by other heads since APR found that it would be too complex, compete with IFAD.org, and require too much maintenance and staff time.
77 https://lac-conocimientos-sstc.ifad.org/es/inicio.

130. In sub-Saharan Africa, the IFAD-hosted regional platform (One ESA) is complemented by IFAD's presence in external regional platforms. The One ESA platform was launched to allow demand-driven collaboration between staff of ESA, PMI, ECG, FMD, COM and others as needed, who work on ESA operations. It is intended to aid planning, information-sharing, and collaborative problem-solving. One ESA meetings are held quarterly for 90 minutes, and members are free to propose items to the steering committee. Other external platforms in which IFAD participates are the "agribusiness deal room", hosted by the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA). This is a matchmaking platform that convenes stakeholders to facilitate partnerships and investments in African agriculture. It specifically supports governments and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with access to finance and partnership opportunities. SKD staff outposted to Nairobi have been involved with this event by providing and brokering knowledge on climate finance and resilience, and sharing IFAD's experience with financial institutions.

131. **The CLE found that many projects have invested in websites for information-sharing, but were unable to assess their effectiveness**. Project websites, established by individual projects, were easily accessible by external stakeholders and provide valuable material on project-specific achievements and lessons that can be the basis for broader learning-oriented analysis. Data on usage were not available. The CLE noted that in most cases, such websites are discontinued after projects close as governments do not continue paying for the hosting services, leading to a loss of valuable information.

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Communities of Practice

132. IFAD provides the basic infrastructure to support knowledge-sharing, which has enabled many communities of practice (CoPs) to be established and continued at low cost. CoPs and networks connect IFAD staff at country, regional and corporate levels and with external partners. They provide effective KM functions, allowing IFAD to link to external knowledge sources and supplying flexible, demand-driven services to IFAD staff. This is particularly the case when IFAD participates in CoPs with external institutions.

Communities of practice are informal (spontaneous) and formal (intentionally created by organizations) groups of professionals or practitioners within a specific thematic domain. Together, they develop a shared repertoire of resources: experiences, stories, KM tools, and ways of addressing recurring problems.

133. The CLE analysed 31 CoPs in which IFAD participates, either as a host and facilitator or as a member. About half of these are hosted on Dgroups, a development community cloud-based collaboration platform.[78] IFAD started a dedicated Dgroup on 18 May 2020; the group had 2,343 members when last visited and featured 16 subgroups, all established after 2020. These subgroups (also called Dgroups themselves) have an average membership of 142 members, ranging from 5 to 1,340. Their average life is 19 months, and the average number of messages posted is three per month – with no activity in the less active groups and up to 14 posts for the most active one. The largest Dgroup is the IFAD Innovation Network (with 1,340 members) and the most active is the Farmers' Organizations for Africa, Caribbean and Pacific (with an average of 14 messages per month); at least 4 of the 16 subgroups do not appear to be active, with only one or no messages posted since their establishment.

78 https://ifad.dgroups.io/g/IFAD.

134. **The CoPs contribute to bundling knowledge, expertise and data on a specific subject**. They also facilitate the transfer of good practices. When there is sufficient engagement, CoPs are efficient by making sure that efforts are not duplicated and mistakes are less likely to be repeated, because it makes it possible to find knowledge, information and data from IFAD but also from further afield. In addition, decision-makers are better informed when they are members of CoPs. CoPs nested within regional divisions might have more of a knowledge retention role and be able to support knowledge exchange between new and experienced IFAD staff. COPs can also expand the institution's capacity in a certain area – especially if this area does not have an institutional home. For example, GeoGroup bundles knowledge, expertise and data on GIS and remote sensing. IFAD gets access to innovation and new technology or data and applies it in its operations. The CoP provides networks and actual problems that can be solved with GIS. Finally, CoPs can support the integration of cross-cutting issues. For example, the Gender Network has over 2,000 members including IFAD gender focal points across the organization, as well as project staff at country level and external partners.

135. **CoPs support knowledge-sharing at an inter-organizational level**. For example, SAFIN has links to 50 entities including UN organizations, while the Gender Network links more than 2,000 members from the UN and IFIs but also those at local and national level. In some cases, KM partnerships such as platforms, forums and CoPs have been sustainable after external economic support ended. EvalForward, a joint initiative between RBAs and CGIAR, is part of IFAD's work programme and budget through 2024 with an explicit mention to support communication and KM.[79] EvalForward has a distinctive niche in evaluation capacity-strengthening, but needs a reinvestment of political capital to strengthen its position.

136. **IFAD CoPs are often set up spontaneously to address knowledge needs**. The advantage of CoPs are that their establishment and maintenance is relatively low incost. ECG staff who were decentralized to the LAC MCOs set up an informal CoP for colleagues in LAC to access their technical knowledge. The shared Dropbox includes documents enumerating tacit knowledge (which could be as simple as a list of IFAD-specific acronyms in English and Spanish) to more technical knowledge, such as how to do notes or social and environmental plan examples for project designs. In ESA, the Learning Series CoP is well known throughout the division and is popular. Its informality and distance from an institutional source is what seems to give it its greatest interest, and it provides opportunities for learning across offices, divisions and recently with partners (project management units [PMUs] as well as implementing partners) on a wide range of thematic and operational issues. In APR, the largest CoP is IFAD Asia, currently hosted on a Facebook group with around 12,000 members. It is managed by the regional division and administered by the Project Liaison Associates assigned to the South Asia MCO. IFAD Asia was founded in 2016 and was initially structured as a microsite hosted within the IFAD website; the original IFAD Asia platform is technically still live, but has become inactive since 2019 when the Facebook Group was launched. The IFAD Asia CoP is an effort to improve knowledge exchange within the region as well as with external stakeholders.

137. **While KM results stemming from CoPs are positive, the evaluation found that the lack of funding had an adverse impact on their sustainability**. Dgroups and social media provide low-cost options, when no funding is available (as in the case of the gender network, FIDAfrique).[80] In some cases, services that were provided by CoPs, such as newsletters, have been discontinued.[81] One of the most successful regional CoPs, FIDAfrique / IFADAfrica, moved to a Facebook page after funding expired in 2018. The page still counts over 18,000 members in more than 20 countries.[82]

79 FAO, CGIAR/IAES, IFAD & WFP. 2023. Independent Review of EvalForward Community of Practice – Final report. Rome. https://doi.org/10.4060/cc5375en.

80 Focus group discussion with retirees, 19 April 2023.
81 Focus group discussion with CoP facilitators, 4 May 2023.
82 IFAD, 2023. Summary of Knowledge Management in WCA. Working document, unpublished.

138. **Weak monitoring coupled with limited time and funding for the facilitation of CoPs were the major factors inhibiting their effectiveness**. The effectiveness of CoPs is not comprehensively monitored by IFAD. Quantitative data, such as the number of members and messages, can be easily generated and analysed, together with qualitative measures of usefulness from users. There are examples of good practices in M&E of CoPs, such as EvalForward, which analyses data and statistics related to use (Google analytics, number of views of the Mailchimp newsletter, and participation levels in webinars and discussions). It also collects "change stories", which represent the testimony of interactions with EvalForward over the years. SAFIN tracks the relationships and collaborations that have been emerging through social networks analysis and an annual survey. It has also developed a toolkit[83] for networks that can also be applicable to CoPs if the purpose is to foster collaboration.

139. **Despite the important roles that CoPs have played in the past, FGDs indicated that support for and interest in them is waning**. This may also be an indication that absorptive capacities are overstretched and that engagement in CoPs is no longer an immediate priority. For example, in the KAP survey, approximately 62 per cent of respondents disagreed that CoPs at IFAD are accessible and provide a useful platform for connection. Additionally, 61 per cent of respondents have never engaged in online discussions or posted comments in a CoP or a practitioners' forum related to their fields.

Knowledge forums

140. **IFAD's participation in global knowledge forums, while being relevant, is disconnected from the broader KM architecture**. International forums are recognized in IFAD's KM strategy as important venues to advance IFAD's visibility, and demonstrate that IFAD is active on key thematic areas. Global knowledge forums connect IFAD with key partners and stakeholders and support knowledge-sharing at national, regional and international levels for accountability and learning. The CLE analysed the three main forums established by IFAD: the Farmers' Forum, the Indigenous Peoples' Forum and the Global Forum On Remittances. The lack of monitoring around the results of these events posed a challenge for the evaluation's assessment. Despite this, the evaluation noted that the activities of forums are not well connected to the overall KM architecture. Forums focus on high-visibility events at HQ, and their thematic discussions appear to rely on the extraction of lessons and knowledge from IFAD's operations but have a limited ability to feed knowledge back into them.

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83   https://smallfoundation.ie/impact-networks-measuring-towards-success/.

BOX 3
Global forums for knowledge

Since 2005, the **Farmers' Forum** gathers farmers' leaders from around the world, representing the interests of millions of smallholders and rural producers who have direct interactions with IFAD and its partner institutions. The Seventh Global Meeting of the Farmers' Forum (February 2020) was held in collaboration with FAO at IFAD headquarters. In 2023, the Regional Farmers' Forum meetings took place in a decentralized (hybrid) format in Bangkok, Dar es Salaam, Grand-Bassam, Istanbul and Tunis.

Through the **Indigenous Peoples' Forum**, IFAD promotes the use of indigenous knowledge for the design of development programmes and policies. IFAD organizes the global meeting of the Indigenous Peoples' Forum in conjunction with the Governing Council, which serves as IFAD's main decision-making body. Through these consultations with Indigenous Peoples' representatives at national, regional and international levels, this Forum seeks to enhance IFAD's accountability, development effectiveness and leadership among other development organizations.

The **Global Forum on Remittances, Investment and Development (GFRID)** is a UN-recognized, informal process that brings together stakeholders working on remittances and migration for development. Since its inception in 2007, GFRID has been organizing biannual summits coinciding with the International Day of Family Remittances. The last GFRID Summit took place at the UN Office at Nairobi, Kenya, on 14-16 June 2023, in collaboration with the UN Office of the Special Adviser on Africa and the World Bank. Among the recommendations emerging from this summit was the need to strengthen the collection and analysis of remittance data for more informed decision-making, as well as to invest in financial and digital education.

Source: IFAD website.

D. KM and scaling up: a review of signature solutions in IFAD

141. The 2019 KM strategy recognized the need to improve the curation, sharing and use of evidence, lessons learned and scaling up of good practice. From the strategy, it is unclear whether KM is informing the next pilot or small project, or whether it can contribute to scale in a more meaningful way. Relevant knowledge generation and sharing have a key role in helping to enable the type of thinking, insights and action that will spur the required scale of action.

142. The CLE has used the term "signature solutions" to describe intervention methodologies or practices that were found repeatedly in IFAD's portfolios and operations. The evaluation used a mapping methodology to track how solutions were introduced, shared and used in IFAD.[84] For this analysis, 10 frequently used solutions were selected: leasehold forestry, public-private-producer partnerships (4Ps), small-scale irrigation, homestead gardens, Gender Action Learning System (GALS), learning routes (LRs), seeds certification, the New Ruralities grant, experience capitalization and farmer field schools (FFSs). The CLE was interested to know how knowledge on these solutions was shared. This review has helped to identify effective mechanisms for bringing implementation experiences to scale.[85]

84 A "snowball search" methodology was developed to track knowledge-sharing of signature solutions across IFAD platforms by using the IFAD website, IFAD intranet, IFAD Finder and cross-referencing information across tools. The scope of the mapping was comprehensive, as the items included in the analysis are not only those that primarily deal with the subject of the signature solution involved, but also those in which the signature solution is mentioned marginally, as long as the knowledge of this solution is shared to some extent.

85 The study was part of evidence block 3, "Thematic Deep Dives", covering a larger number of countries beyond the case studies.

143. **Scaling solutions that are based on local knowledge is part of IFAD's DNA**. Leasehold forestry, small-scale irrigation, seeds certification and homestead gardening were solutions based on local knowledge. FFSs provided platforms for linking experts and local knowledge. LRs and experience capitalization offer experiential learning opportunities, allowing farmers and development practitioners to glean insights from successful approaches and customize them for their specific contexts.

144. **The review showed that how knowledge was documented and shared had an effect on scaling**. Effective mechanisms for knowledge-sharing that led to the adoption of these solutions were project design missions, workshops and events. Presentation of solutions through formalized knowledge products and external studies enabled their visibility at high-level regional events (leasehold forestry, learning routes). Some signature solutions feature in a range of knowledge products, including technical guidance and case studies (e.g. GALS, experience capitalization). Solutions that have been less well documented and reviewed relied mainly on project-to-project sharing (small-scale irrigation, homestead gardens, seed certification).

145. **Independent assessment of success and failures was not systematically built into the scaling process**. Dissemination of signature solutions has extensively used communication tools, such as webposts, blogs, news items and events, and in the case of 4Ps, also the IFAD President's speech. An independent assessment of results was rarely done before scaling up.[86] For the FFSs, there was a stocktake undertaken by PMI together with FAO. Other solutions that were widely promoted in IFAD, such as GALS and 4Ps, were never independently assessed.

146. **Bringing local implementation experiences to scale depended on partnerships**. Solutions like experience capitalization and seeds certification were not inventions of IFAD. Collaborations with external partners led to impactful solutions, such as the development of the 4Ps approach with the Dutch development partner, SNV, for the Partnering Value project and the New Ruralities grant in collaboration with ECLAC. Experience capitalization was a methodology developed by the Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation. LRs were promoted through collaboration with the Corporation for Regional Rural Development Training (Procasur).

147. **Despite the success of these solutions in the field, their dissemination and outreach have declined in recent years**. Since 2019, there has been a marked decrease in the dissemination of solutions, especially in six areas: learning routes, 4Ps, GALS, seeds certification, new ruralities, and experience capitalization. Additionally, from 2020 onward, the reach of these solutions to external audiences has significantly diminished. With both internal and external outreach declining, there has been a noticeable shift in the dissemination pattern, moving from targeting external audiences to focusing more on internal ones (see annex VI).

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86 An exception was the evaluation of leasehold forestry as part of an IOE project evaluation. However, this did not have an effect on scaling up.

E. Overall effectiveness of IFAD's KM architecture

148. The CLE found that IFAD's KM architecture had limitations inhibiting it from delivering the expected results. Leadership at executive level fully supported the integration of the KM strategy in 2019. However, such support could have been more visible halfway through the delivery period, when the architecture became increasingly disjointed from the ongoing decentralization process and decentralized KM roles would have required most strengthening. While IFAD has put in place the infrastructure to support more broad-based and inclusive knowledge-sharing, mechanisms for support and coordination had limited effectiveness at regional and country levels.

149. IFAD's decentralization process has been a positive factor for generating contextualized knowledge and taking advantage of on-the-ground partnerships. Despite this, the centralized KM function at HQ has not adequately fused country-level knowledge with IFAD's corporate priorities and did not provide a flexible framework to support the generation or sharing of knowledge gleaned from projects. The regional divisions play a pivotal role, but currently do not have the capacities and tools to support a consistent approach to KM in the countries. The inability of the KM system to deliver a coherent approach has led to a visible disconnect between KM practices promoted at corporate level and the demands at country level. This disconnect meant that the limited financial resourcing and staff time to prioritize KM, along with a lack of recognition by leadership, prevented an adequately supportive environment.

150. Figure 6 below summarizes the forces that enabled or hindered the effectiveness of knowledge management in IFAD, alongside the weight of each factor in determining its influence, as identified during the CLE.

FIGURE 6

Enablers and barriers for effective KM in IFAD

Source of evidence	ENABLERS
CLE Decentralization	IFAD Decentralization
KAP survey Country case studies	Proactive attitudes regarding informal sharing and learning
KAP survey	High relevance of KM to staff's day-to-day work
Global staff survey	Accessible knowledge repository system
Grant review Regional case studies	Strategic use of grants for KM
Country case studies Signature solutions	Strong IFAD leadership championing knowledge
Corporate documents Country case studies	Clarity on strategic directions on KM
Country case studies Signature solutions	Active engagement of Stakeholders
Country case studies Signature solutions	Collaborative partnerships
Country case studies Signature solutions	Customization of knowledge to the local context
Country case studies	Strong government capacities and ownerships'

EFFECTIVE CORPORATE KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

BARRIERS	Source of evidence
Centralization of KM at HQ	• Key informant interviews HR analysis
Limited and decreasing financial resources dedicated for KM	• Financial analysis • country case studies • grant analysis
Limited staff's time to prioritize KM over implementation issues	• KAP survey country • case studies focus • group discussions
KM activities insufficiently championed by IFAD leadership	• KAP survey country • Case studies
Fragmented, ad hoc KM approach	• Corporate documents • Regional and country case studies
Low relevance of knowledge products to countries' knowledge needs	• IFAD stakeholder survey KM products review
Ineffective monitoring and reporting system for KM results	• Corporate documents • Country case studies
Inadequate staff resources and capacity to support local KM	• HR analysis • Country case studies
Limited language diversity of knowledge products and platforms	• KM products review • Country case studies
Mandated, ommunication-focused KM mindset focusing on document generation	• Country case studies • KM products review
Lack of government demand for KM	• Country case studies

Source: CLE.

151. Individual initiative has been a strong force in supporting some of the more salient results. Where the analysis saw staff recognizing the value of KM in their day-to-day work and proactively sharing knowledge, both informally and through accessible knowledge repositories, KM practices were more effective. Additionally, where country teams were led by CDs who prioritized KM through a clear approach and sought grants to support knowledge partnerships, KM led to more salient outcomes. In these instances, staff actively engaged stakeholders through collaborative co-creation and the contextualization of knowledge. But where KM took a more fragmented approach and monitoring systems were ineffective, where KM support was inadequate, or where the knowledge was irrelevant to the needs of partner countries, positive outcomes were not found. The low diversity of languages available for IFAD's knowledge products and a limited, communication-focused view of KM also prevented higher-level achievements and effectiveness. Finally, government partners' low prioritization and demand for knowledge played a significant role in determining the effectiveness of KM in our research. These factors will be further explored in chapter V.

Key findings on the effectiveness of IFAD's KM architecture

- Overall, there are clear limitations in the effectiveness of IFAD's KM architecture and strategies.

- **A major deficit in the KM strategy is the lack of an effective monitoring and reporting system for results**.

- **The corporate strategy does not seem effective in guiding KM practices in partner countries**. Regional divisions have taken different approaches to integrate KM.

- **The CLE did not find evidence that the EMC has been infusing ideas on how to adjust the KM framework under the ongoing decentralization process**.

- SKD currently does not have the technical capacity to provide organization-wide guidance on KM.

- The KMCG provides an important platform for interregional and inter-divisional knowledge-sharing, but it has not always been effective as a link into the regional divisions.

- **Effectiveness of harnessing operational experiences is undermined by the lack of adequate knowledge repositories**. Beyond the corporate platforms, there is a demand for platforms providing contextualized knowledge in local languages.

- The CoPs contribute to bundling knowledge, expertise and data on a particular subject. **Weak monitoring, coupled with limited time and funding for the facilitation of CoPs** were the major factors limiting their effectiveness.

- While there been a noticeable increase in knowledge-sharing activities, facilitated through new digital collaboration and meeting formats, the focus of knowledge-sharing was on IFAD's internal issues and audiences.

- The role of KM in enabling scaling up has been insufficiently defined at corporate level. Scaling of implementation experiences was overly focused purely on communication. The independent assessment of results was rarely part of scaling processes.
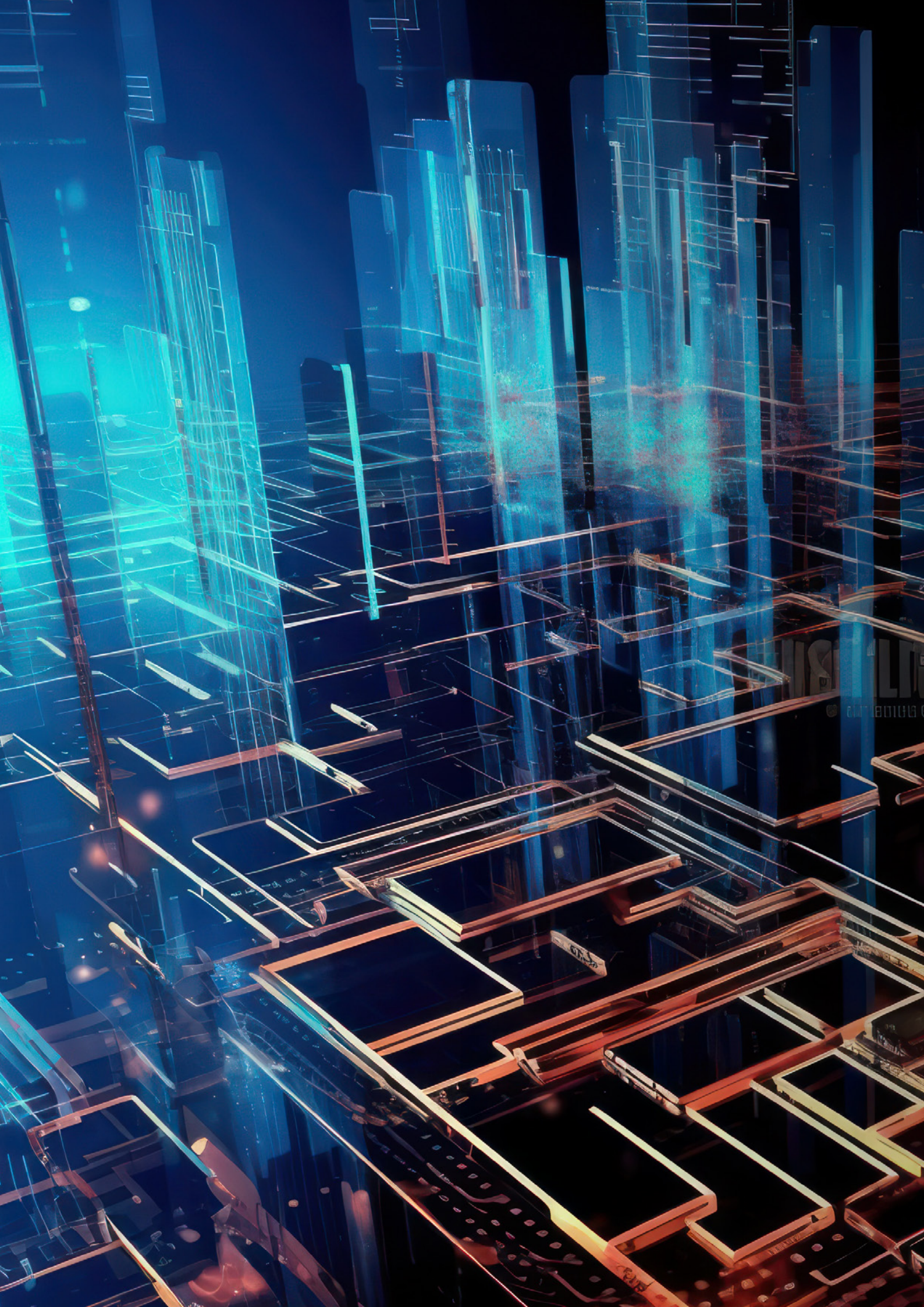
Chapter
V

Effectiveness of IFAD KM
practices in partner countries

V. Effectiveness of IFAD KM practices in partner countries

Evaluation question 2: To what extent has IFAD, through its KM practices, effectively contributed to rural transformation and what factors can explain its performance? (Effectiveness)

152. Working closely with partner countries to support transformative rural development lies at the heart of IFAD's mandate and strategy. The SF (2016-2025) expects IFAD to work "better" by strengthening the quality of its country programmes through innovation, knowledge-sharing, partnerships and policy engagement; and "smarter" by delivering development results in a cost-effective way that best responds to partner countries' evolving needs. This chapter examines the extent to which these results were achieved in case study countries. In addition to the better and smarter objectives, the CLE also assessed the "bigger", by enhancing its development impact through scale-up, replication and policy change. The bigger also requires assembling different types of knowledge for solutions addressing complex development problems.

153. The chapter assesses the effectiveness of country-level KM practices in their contribution to these results. The CLE case studies have reviewed the evidence on KM results that was reported for each country. The results were carefully triangulated and validated through stakeholder interviews, documents review and cross-country analysis. The evidence was then synthesized and mapped against the pathways in the ToC (annex 1). This exercise helped to identify the practices that were effective in their contribution to the three development results and validate the pathways that have been effective in leading to these results.

154. The chapter also examines the factors that can explain the presence of different types of KM practices and their effectiveness. In doing so, it also provides an assessment of the underlying assumptions of the ToC, which were mostly not met and therefore explain the areas of low effectiveness – a detailed table on these is presented in annex VIII. Evidence is drawn from the 20 country case studies but is also triangulated using reviews of

IOE CSPEs, QAG design reviews and data from corporate monitoring systems.

155. The overall finding from this study was that **KM has been operating inconsistently across IFAD's global operations and therefore has achieved inconsistent results**. While many country programmes have employed effective KM practices to enhance their development results, KM often remains ill-defined and inadequately supported.

A. Effective KM practices and contributing factors

156. The aim of the case studies was to map KM practices within the countries, determine their effectiveness and identify any factors that can explain these results. The case studies used the common categories: knowledge generation, knowledge-sharing, knowledge use and knowledge brokering. In addition, they used the six generations KM framework (see box 4 below). The framework helped to link the practices with their intended focus and results, and to identify practices supporting transformative change. In an effective KM system, different generations co-exist with complementary practices and results.

BOX 4

The six generations of knowledge management

The analytical framework for this CLE is based on the six coexisting generational approaches to Knowledge Management for Development (KM4D).

First-generation KM is anchored in an ICT-based approach and primarily treats knowledge as a commodity that can be stored in databases and repositories.

In the **second generation**, knowledge is increasingly recognized as an organizational asset and the focus is on KM systems.

Third-generation KM emphasizes knowledge-sharing between organizations, using more innovative tools like communities of practice (CoPs).

Fourth-generation KM is people-centric and focuses on organizational structures and cultures.

Fifth-generation KM broadens the scope further, aiming at stakeholder empowerment and inclusion in the KM process.

Finally, **sixth-generation KM** ("decolonization of knowledge") considers the various knowledges, including indigenous and local knowledges, and aims at sustainable, adaptive solutions.

Source: CLE elaboration, based on Cummings et al. 2013 and 2019, Boyes et al. 2023.

Effective KM practices in case study countries

157. The country case studies found high variability in KM practices, within and between countries. The common practices are mapped in figure 7. In addition to the common practices, those practices that the country case studies were able to link to concrete results were classified as "effective". (See table V in annex III for a comprehensive list of practices).

158. Maintaining repositories for knowledge products was the most common first- generation practice (9 of 20 countries). Use of a geographic information system (GIS) was an effective KM practice found in Kyrgyzstan. Periodic project reviews were more common (15 of 20), building on existing institutional mechanisms for project learning. They were effectively used for KM in five countries (Angola, Kenya, Malawi, Pakistan, the Philippines).

FIGURE 7
Common and effective KM practices in country case studies

COMMON KM PRACTICES

6: Farmer field schools (FFS)

5: Exchange visits and workshops with beneficiaries

4: Project social media platforms: WhatsApp group; Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn

3: Collecting and communication of success stories and best practices through newsletters, videos, etc.

2: Periodic project review/reflection workshops and webinars

1: Online-based document storage systems

EFFECTIVE KM PRACTICES

Farmer field schools (FFS)
(3 countries)

Participatory research/learning routes
(11 countries)

Cross-project learning activities/exchange visits/study tours
(6 countries)

Broadcasting on local TVs and radios; podcasts; vocal SMSs
(2 countries)

Periodic project review/reflection workshops and webinars
(5 countries)

Use of geographic information systems (GIS)
(1 country)

Source: CLE country case studies.

V.   Effectiveness of IFAD KM practices in partner countries

158. Maintaining repositories for knowledge products was the most common first- generation practice (9 of 20 countries). Use of a geographic information system (GIS) was an effective KM practice found in Kyrgyzstan. Periodic project reviews were more common (15 of 20), building on existing institutional mechanisms for project learning. They were effectively used for KM in five countries (Angola, Kenya, Malawi, Pakistan, the Philippines).

159. Consistent with the third and fourth generation focus of current KM4D, all country programmes collected and communicated success stories through newsletters, videos, and articles in local news to some extent. Social media (a fourth-generation practice), where content uses an informal, people-centred approach to knowledge-sharing and is primarily dependent on personnel initiatives, was used in 16 of 20 countries, although there was a notable conceptual difficulty for project and country staff in separating these efforts from pure communications activities. Nevertheless, this practice was very effective in DRC and Sierra Leone.

160. The more effective KM practices, with strong evidence for their contribution to results, were centred on the more transformative fifth- and sixth-generation practices. Cross-project exchanges and workshops with PMUs were common (16 of 20 countries) and effective for adaptive management. However, when coupled with more participatory practices and with learning focused on local knowledge, such as beneficiary study tours and exchanges using the learning routes methodology (Malawi, Angola, DRC, Brazil, Sudan), they were marked by a high level of effectiveness and led to more concrete development results.

161. FFSs, which integrate scientific best practices with local knowledge, were the most common sixth-generation practice found in the cases, present in 9 of the 20 countries, and highlighted as effective in 3 countries. This practice was marked by a high degree of stakeholder empowerment in finding adaptive and sustainable solutions in specific contexts. Combined with a foundation of earlier-generation practices and factors that will be laid out later in this chapter, countries like Brazil, the Philippines and Sudan stood out markedly in utilizing later-generation practices towards the three development results.

162. **Clearly defined KM frameworks play a crucial role, in guiding the types of KM practices and overall effectiveness of KM at the country level**. These frameworks include well-defined KM strategies, clear outlines of roles and responsibilities for KM, and aligned coordination between the headquarters of IFAD, regional offices, and countries. Brazil, the Philippines and Viet Nam had clear KM strategies or action plans at both the national and project levels. They also maintained consistent engagement with IFAD HQ and regional offices to support KM activities. Furthermore, these frameworks allowed Brazil and Pakistan to develop user-centric knowledge products aimed at diverse audiences; Argentina, the Philippines, Sudan and Viet Nam established effective mechanisms for knowledge exchange at local, national and regional levels. This amplified inclusion, and through KM practices, led to a higher level of transformation.

163. **Fragmented or lagging KM frameworks did not enable effective KM. Most projects only introduced KM** activities at a late stage of project implementation; therefore, the first- and second-generation KM practices aiming to strengthen KM infrastructure were insufficient. In Angola, China and the DRC, project-level KM did not receive consistent attention and commitment. The projects in those countries lacked a solid foundation in KM infrastructure and primarily relied on third- or fourth-generation KM practices. In Angola, China, DRC, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Sierra Leone and Tunisia, KM approaches tended to be ad hoc, with a lack of coherent understanding of KM among project-level stakeholders. The confusion between KM and communication persisted, causing prioritization of showcasing results over more holistic knowledge processes.

164. **There was often a broad disconnect between KM frameworks and demands on the ground**. Lack of strategic focus and alignment with country-specific needs did not enable effective KM. Corporate and regional strategies fell short in guiding KM practices on the ground, leading to less clarity on KM approaches and responsibilities at the project level. In China and Egypt, where the demand from the government on IFAD's knowledge was strong, KM frameworks were not effective in addressing the specific needs of the government.

165. **KM frameworks that were aligned with COSOP-defined thematic priorities were more likely to be successful, but these were rare**. Argentina's 2016-2022 COSOP was successful in setting strategic objectives for KM, and Sudan's 2021-2027 COSOP and KM strategy align well, providing clear objectives for KM. This suggests that KM should not be viewed as an isolated project component but, rather, integrated into broader country-level objectives. Despite this potential, most COSOPs rarely clarified how KM could be operationalized, leading to insufficient attention to implementation, resourcing and capacity-building factors.

166. **Inconsistent KM approaches and isolated KM practices had lower prospects for sustainability**. A recurring issue was the lack of a comprehensive strategy for KM sustainability, particularly in countries like the DRC, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan and Sierra Leone, where sustainability relies heavily on individuals or lacks consideration of project exit strategies. Issues such as staff turnover, project suspensions, and shifting government focus further compromise sustainability. These countries also did not exhibit robust M&E to assess the longevity of KM outcomes or ensure a systematic approach which planned for KM sustainability from the outset and did not place strong emphasis on institutionalization and partnerships. This compromised their sustainability.

IFAD country presence and capacities

167. **IFAD's country presence, including the type of country offices, operational mode and stability, contributed to KM effectiveness**. The Philippines, Sudan and Viet Nam showed the positive impact IFAD's presence can have on KM effectiveness. For instance, in the Philippines and Sudan, IFAD's long-standing presence and centralized approach to operationalizing KM – facilitated by country programme officers – enabled deep local insights and long-term partnerships to emerge. The enhanced knowledge collaboration with multiple stakeholders thus nudged KM practices to permit a higher level of transformation. On the contrary, countries like Angola and Sierra Leone struggled with high turnover rates among CDs and staff, undermining the retention of institutional memory and sustainable KM partnerships (see chapter VI.B for further details). Additionally, in countries like Angola, Nigeria and Sierra Leone, where IFAD projects operate under a decentralized model, broad project focus and small teams challenged the consolidated knowledge synthesis at the country level. Finally, some countries, including Angola, China, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC and Mexico, tended to have a higher proportion of risky projects in their portfolios. These projects suffered from delayed disbursements, performance issues or sluggish progress in implementation. As a result, the focus of interaction during implementation and supervision was typically on resolving these challenges at the expense of more transformative KM practices.

168. **Capacities and incentives of country teams and project staff to engage in KM activities were essential for effective KM practices to develop** (see chapter VI.A). Many countries lacked full-time KM staff or focal points in the ICOs (e.g. Angola, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Tunisia). Countries with full-time KM staff or units, as seen in Brazil, Pakistan and Viet Nam, have shown more evidence-based reporting and the creation of actionable knowledge products (for example, the National Poverty Graduation Programme in Pakistan). Staff assigned to KM roles also had broader responsibilities, which diluted their efforts in KM activities (e.g. China, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt and Sierra Leone). Furthermore, there was a challenge in systematically capturing, sharing and leveraging operational and grassroots knowledge from projects. This impacted IFAD's effectiveness as a knowledge provider, due to the limited capacity for packaging field lessons and challenges to inform policy and support the scaling up of good practices. The need for capacity training on KM was constantly highlighted in countries such as Angola, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria and Sierra Leone.

169. **Supervision missions provided an opportunity to address KM challenges and opportunities in a project**. Countries like Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan reported consistent, hands-on KM support during supervision. However, the availability of KM expertise during these IFAD supervision missions varies widely across countries. For instance, Argentina and Sierra Leone infrequently incorporate KM specialists into their supervision teams. When KM issues are addressed, they are often handled by M&E or communications specialists as an ancillary task, rather than by full-time KM professionals. Some countries, like Côte d'Ivoire, Tunisia and Viet Nam, have reported receiving high-quality KM support during specific supervision missions, although this support has not been systematically provided.

170. **IFAD country offices were not always able to utilize grants for KM**. The strategic integration of regional grants into country KM initiatives was inconsistent across the countries studied. The QAG discussion paper[87] on KM in project design noted that many IFAD grant-funded activities are specifically geared towards knowledge generation of interest to individual investment projects, but are not always anchored in design reports or strategies. In many countries (e.g. Brazil, Kenya, Madagascar, Nigeria, the Philippines, Sudan and Viet Nam), grants played a major role in supporting KM activities. Specific grants were highlighted that enabled knowledge generation, sharing and capacity-building. However, in several countries (e.g. Angola, China, DRC, Egypt, Pakistan and Sierra Leone), there was limited or no evidence of grants specifically targeting KM.

171. **Good examples of grant-funded partnerships supporting effective KM practices were found in Viet Nam, Tunisia and Sudan**. In Viet Nam, the regional South-South Cooperation for Scaling up Climate Resilient Value Chain Initiatives grant was impactful in supporting knowledge-sharing with the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Cambodia and China. In Tunisia, the regional Conservation Agriculture and Crop Livestock Project grant-generated valuable knowledge and inter-regional exchanges. In Sudan, the Strengthening Knowledge Management For Greater Development Effectiveness in the Near East, North Africa, Central Asia and Europe project's (SKiM) regional grant strongly supported KM activities through the creation of LRs highlighting IFAD-supported activities.[88] This dynamic was aided by a clear process to feed grant knowledge back into loan-funded projects. Nevertheless, while certain grants built on project lessons and best practices to generate new knowledge, this often happened without the cognizancecognizance of the country team and was siloed away from opportunities to scale or share the knowledge in other contexts. Awareness of new grant opportunities was also limited in several country programmes, indicating a systemic challenge.

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87 IFAD. QAG. 2021. *A discussion paper on the quality at entry of project designs in 2020: country-level policy engagement and knowledge management.*

88 The SKIM grant also benefited Morocco and Moldova and supported knowledge exchange between the three countries.

Government capacities for KM

172. **Very few governments had the capacities for KM readily in place**. The Philippines stands out as a positive case. The Philippine Government does have the capacities for effective KM, bolstered by well-defined strategies, sufficient funding, strong partnerships, and active engagement in knowledge-sharing activities. Through its collaborations with different government departments and local government units, the Philippines country programme has demonstrated strong government ownership over project implementation, which has enhanced its KM effectiveness. The Government's active participation in IFAD-led knowledge-sharing events also signified its capability and willingness to absorb and apply knowledge.

173. **Introducing KM was a challenge in countries that did not have prior experience with the concept**. In many countries, there was confusion between KM and communication functions. Partners in Angola, China, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC and Sierra Leone often struggled to understand the concept and did not have the capacities in place for effective KM. For example, Angola is still in the nascent to intermediate stages of developing its capacities for effective KM, while Côte d'Ivoire faced challenges due to the relatively recent introduction of any formal KM practices. The novelty of KM suggests there is significant room for growth and optimization of KM initiatives within governments. Moreover, high staff turnover in PMUs and relevant governmental bodies, institutional changes, retirements and recruitment challenges hindered KM effectiveness in these countries and many PMUs reported the need for capacity-building activities and training on KM.

174. **Language barriers were sometimes an obstacle for knowledge generation and use**. Interviews, such as the FGD on subsubregional KM issues, indicate that language barriers can significantly impede the effectiveness of KM. IFAD's publications are available in a limited number of languages. This does not account for the broad use of other languages, including local languages, in much of the portfolio. The use of non-local languages in official documentation and communication channels, such as in Kyrgyzstan and Viet Nam, requires extensive translation. This hinders direct engagement with local communities, data collection, and knowledge dissemination. In francophone Côte d'Ivoire and DRC, the lack of documents and communication in local languages restricts knowledge dissemination and accessibility among beneficiaries. These barriers underscore a need for accessible documents and diversified communication tools in local languages to facilitate more inclusive and efficient knowledge-sharing.

175. In fragile situations, challenges for effective KM did not fundamentally differ, but were even more pronounced. This required a high degree of flexibility and the ability to adapt to a volatile context, as shown in box 5.

BOX 5

KM in fragile situations

In fragile situations, **political and institutional instability** often pushes KM to the periphery, as immediate concerns like security, humanitarian aid and political stability dominate the discourse. Compounding this is the fragile institutional fabric characterized by **weak coordination** among development partners, **high government staff turnover, and an underdeveloped M&E function**. The landscape for knowledge generation is equally challenging, marked by a lack of tools for knowledge collection in local languages, insufficient KM budgets, and scant evidence emerging from projects. The inconsistency in knowledge-sharing, stemming from ad hoc policy engagement and the absence of structured communication platforms, further muddies the waters.

Some of IFAD's practices, like conducting studies for evidence generation, using the M&E system for lesson learning, and leveraging shorter videos and one-pagers for experience- sharing, have shown promise. Collaboration with research organizations and the use of digital platforms, including WhatsApp and project websites, are flexible and accessible approaches. Indeed, the use of social media has been crucial in reaching people outside capitals and maintaining communication with field locations. However, these efforts are sporadic and not uniformly effective across all fragile contexts.

The gaps in IFAD's approach are evident. FGDs indicated a clear need for more **dedicated resources** for KM at the project level, both in terms of funding and training. A deeper introspection into IFAD's KM culture is required to better support its potential, with an emphasis on mainstreaming **flexible KM practices**. Strengthening **partnerships** and **focusing on youth**, especially through social media, can offer new avenues for KM.

Source: CLE FGD.

B. Transformative KM practices and contributing factors

Factors supporting transformative KM practices

176. To understand the contribution of KM to rural transformation, the case studies assessed the factors which influenced the effectiveness and transformational nature of KM practices, including internal frameworks, staff capacities and incentives, IFAD's country presence, partnerships and government capacity. Contextual elements, such as language barriers and grants for KM, also played a role. Table 2 details which countries displayed evidence of these factors either enhancing or hindering KM effectiveness. Table 2 below also shows that some countries (cluster C and cluster D) had a larger number of favourable factors supporting the growth of transformative practices.

Transformative KM practices in case study countries

177. Many KM practices championed by IFAD are rooted in inclusivity and stakeholder-centric approaches. In some countries, these practices have been raising the bar towards transformational approaches, most notably in Brazil, the Philippines and Sudan.

178. The case studies found that effective KM was not merely an internal exercise; rather, it acted as a catalyst in collating various forms of knowledge—technical, indigenous, and experiential—to create impact at both the project and country levels. This result bridges IFAD's strategic goal of championing and elevating the perspectives of local stakeholders, as well as innovative approaches from outside the organization. This was particularly relevant in Argentina, Brazil, Kenya and Kyrgyzstan, where KM practices incorporated broad-reaching connections with multiple divisions, local actors and external organizations to create high-quality and useful products.

TABLE 2

Presence of KM practice types and key factors

Hindering factor   **Enabling factor**

Cluster A	Cluster B	Cluster C	Cluster D	Factors	Cluster A	Cluster B	Cluster C	Cluster D
↓	↓	●	●	**KM frameworks**	●	●	↑	↑
↓	↓	●	●	**IFAD presence**	●	●	↑	↑
●	●	●	↓	**Supervision missions**	↑	↑	↑	●
●	↓	↓	●	**Grants for KM**	↑	↑	↑	↑
●	●	●	●	**Government capacities**	●	●	↑	●
↓	↓	●	↓	**Language**	●	●	●	●
↓	↓	↓	↓	**Enabling environment**	●	●	●	↑
↓	↓	●	●	**IFAD leaderships**	●	●	↑	↑
↓	↓	●	●	**Partnerships**	↑	↑	↑	↑

Cluster A: Mix of 1st to 4th generation KM practices (Malawi, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Tunisia).

Cluster B: Mainly 3rd and 4th generation KM practices (China, Angola, Mexico, Egypt, DRC, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire).

Cluster C: Balanced KM proctices (Philippines, Pakistan, Madagascar).

Cluster D: Mix of 4th to 6th generation KM practices (Viet Nam, Argentina, Peru, Brazil, Sudan).

Source: CLE synthesis of 20 country case studies.

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179. Beneficiaries actively contributed to knowledge generation through practices such as participatory rural appraisals, beneficiary workshops and LRs. These, as seen in Brazil, the Philippines and Sudan, influenced project design and implementation. In Brazil and Kenya, innovative KM tools and approaches were employed, including the utilization of indigenous knowledge and sourcing technical insights from various stakeholders. Moreover, beneficiaries took an active role in co-developing knowledge products such as community action plans, participatory impact assessments and success stories.

BOX 6

Characteristics of transformative KM practices

Fifth- and sixth-generation KM practices become more transformative through exhibiting several qualities: **inclusivity and participation**, representing diverse interests and voices through participatory methods; **knowledge brokerage and co-creation**, bridging local and external knowledge for forward-looking strategies; continuous learning and understanding based on practice; having a **longer time span**, recognizing transformational change as a long-term process; a **cross-cutting focus**, understanding that rural transformation intersects various sectors; and taking **systems thinking and stakeholder-centred approaches**, challenging assumptions, understanding historical system contexts and including stakeholders in decision-making processes.

Source: CLE elaboration, based on Silici et al. 2022.[89]

89   Silici, L., Knox, J., Rowe, A., Nanthikesan, S. 2022. Evaluating Transformational Adaptation in Smallholder Farming: Insights from an Evidence Review. In: Uitto, J.I., Batra, G. (eds) *Transformational Change for People and the Planet*. Sustainable Development Goals Series. Springer, Cham. **https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-78853-7_13**; Lonsdale, K., Pringle, P. & Turner, B. 2015. *Transformative adaptation: what it is, why it matters & what is needed*. UK Climate Impacts Programme, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK.

180. **Contextual factors, like the media, internet availability and political landscape affected the types and effectiveness of KM practices across countries by affecting how knowledge was shared and with whom**. In countries like Argentina, Brazil and Peru, democratic systems and open digital spaces fostered robust knowledge-sharing, which enhanced a higher level of transformative KM practices. For instance, Argentina and Brazil have competitive elections, vibrant media and active civil society organizations. Argentina has an open and diverse online media environment; the digital ecosystem is populated with initiatives and content that reflect the interests of different groups, including indigenous groups. Peru's laws support indigenous participation in development projects. These factors ultimately facilitate the engagement of local stakeholders and indigenous groups in KM activities, thus enabling a higher level of rural transformation.[90]

181. In countries where civil society operates in a more centralized manner, citizens experience different, more restricted frameworks for political and civil processes. This poses challenges in curating and brokering different types of knowledge within the country. In China, Egypt, Kyrgyzstan, Sudan and Viet Nam, unique digital landscapes and cultural norms have necessitated alternative platforms for knowledge dissemination, posing distinct challenges for the continuity and durability of KM. Additionally, a lack of access to public services and state institutions in rural areas (e.g. in DRC) can hinder political participation; ethnic minority and Indigenous groups are often excluded in the political sphere. Inclusion of local and indigenous knowledge is usually difficult in these countries, constraining KM practices from achieving rural transformation.

IFAD leadership on KM at the country level

182. **Strong ICO leadership incentivized country teams and helped to advance KM to fifth- and sixth-generation practices**. For instance, in Brazil and Sudan, IFAD country teams showed exemplary leadership by dedicating attention to KM, establishing a well-defined KM structure, and engaging in multi-layered, participatory approaches to knowledge generation and sharing. The Brazil country team's focus on regional dialogue, policy engagement and participatory knowledge cultures distinguished it as a model for effective KM. The IFAD Viet Nam country team was also well equipped to manage knowledge effectively, benefiting from stable staffing and ongoing partnerships. The country and MCO teams in Viet Nam also provided KM training to project-level staff, leveraging the corporate KM resource centre and toolkit, and consulting regional KM focal points for input during training and working sessions.

183. In Sudan, the country team has invested in human resources, established effective frameworks for stakeholder engagement, and focused on continuous improvement and adaptation of their KM strategies. Specifically, there is a centralized KM structure led by the CD based in Khartoum. Furthermore, the country programme officer has been taking the focal point role seriously and coordinated the KM agenda effectively. The country's KM efforts are guided by a comprehensive KM strategy, which is aligned to the country's centralized political and administrative structures. A multidisciplinary team, involving various stakeholders (such as ICO staff, project staff and relevant line ministries) functions as a CoP. This group facilitated project-to-project learning, knowledge dissemination and policy advocacy. The KM team has been open to interested stakeholders, enhancing the quality and reach of KM activities.

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90   Country data sourced in this section from Freedom House. 2023. https://freedomhouse.org/countries/freedom-world/scores.

BOX 7

How IFAD's Philippines country team demonstrated good leadership in KM

Long-standing presence and commitment to KM: IFAD has been active in the Philippines since 1978, allowing the team to develop deep local insights and partnerships. Senior personnel within the ICO, including a senior advisor, CD and country programme officer exhibit a strong understanding and dedication to KM.

Strong KM culture and regional engagement: There is a strong culture of knowledge-sharing, with the entire country team recognizing and valuing the role of KM. The Philippines team has also been active in promoting regional approaches, sharing knowledge at the regional MCO in Viet Nam.

Effective human resources: Despite the lack of a full-time KM staff member, the senior advisor and former CPM function as key focal points, coordinating knowledge-sharing efforts while the CD leverages long-standing government partnerships for KM cofinancing.

Role as knowledge broker: The ICO acts effectively as a knowledge broker, facilitating platforms for country-level policy engagement (CLPE) and partnership-building. Reports such as the 2019 CSPE, COSOP completion report, and MTR have acknowledged the significant long-term contributions of the ICO to knowledge brokering. The 2017 COSOP emphasized IFAD's capability to offer global knowledge and best practices. The country team and projects echoed the pivotal role of IFAD's KM support in fostering knowledge generation and sharing.

Successful KM implementation and support to projects: KM in the Philippines is mature and deeply embedded, with the ICO playing a pivotal role in brokering knowledge through various platforms. The country team has skillfully used high-level knowledge-sharing events to foster connections between project beneficiaries, including Indigenous groups and governmental bodies. Projects have also reaped the benefits of interaction with knowledge holders and best practices from other initiatives. Project staff highlighted this support and feel empowered to participate in knowledge creation and sharing.

Source: Country case studies.

KM partnerships

184. **The level of diversification of KM partnerships and types of partners have played a key role in fifth- and sixth-generation KM practices**. In countries with fewer transformative practices, such as Angola, China, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Egypt, Malawi and Sierra Leone, strategic partnerships for KM were notably limited. These countries faced poor communication and lacked systematic knowledge exchanges. Interactions with UN partners typically focused on operational aspects of projects and joint publications, rather than deepening sustainable and coherent knowledge partnerships. Furthermore, IFAD's implementing partners possessed underutilized KM capabilities that IFAD could potentially leverage for learning and improvement.

185. **Country portfolios with fifth- and sixth-generation practices were better at forming multi-stakeholder partnerships for KM, which included beneficiaries, NGOs and governmental bodies**. For instance, Pakistan effectively harnessed its strong ties with local NGOs to enable community stakeholders, resulting in strong local stakeholder empowerment. In Argentina and Brazil, research institutes and UN partners provided valuable knowledge to the country programmes, while civil society organizations played a vital role in generating and using knowledge through their strong emphasis on stakeholder engagement. In Viet Nam, collaborations with government research organizations enriched policy dialogues and facilitated the assimilation of new insights. CoPs further enhanced knowledge-sharing among these diverse partners, providing a venue for rural transformation.

C. Achievements: creating pathways toward development results

KM practices and results in case study countries

186. The evaluation's theory of change assumed that KM plays a role in driving the impacts of IFAD's operations, particularly towards three broad development results. The ToC (annex 1) outlines how KM would contribute to both immediate and intermediate KM results and the development results, ultimately contributing to rural transformation. In analysing 20 country-level KM approaches over a multi-year period, the evaluation found that the implementation of moderately and highly transformative practices was most likely to directly contribute to concrete development results. However, a foundational structure of KM understanding and practices at a more basic level was observed in several countries. This suggests the nascent growth of KM infrastructure and underscores the need for a robust support system to foster its progression. With countries falling somewhere along this continuum, this signals a need for a flexible approach to country-level KM, acknowledging the diverse needs of country programmes – a nuance the current strategy has not demonstrated.

187. Based on the presence of different KM practices and practice types, along with evidence of contribution to the development results, the 20 countries can be grouped into four main clusters: (i) cluster A include countries with a blend of low transformative and moderately transformative KM practices, such as Malawi, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan and Tunisia; (ii) cluster B include countries predominantly using moderately transformative KM approaches, including Angola, China, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Egypt, Mexico, Nigeria and Sierra Leone; (iii) cluster C include countries like Madagascar, Pakistan and the Philippines, where KM practices are evenly distributed across different transformative levels; and (iv) cluster D include countries like Argentina, Brazil, Peru, Sudan and Viet Nam, which feature a combination of highly transformative and moderately transformative KM practices.

188. Table 3 below shows that **countries with a good mix of KM practices, including fifth- and sixth-generation KM practices, have achieved longer-term results and made a better contribution to development results, mainly by changing KM behaviours and through enhanced KM partnerships**.

TABLE 3

Share of countries per group achieving KM results

Different levels of KM results		Cluster A: Mix of 1st to 4th generational KM practices (Malawi, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Tunisia)	Cluster B: Mainly 3rd and 4th generational KM practices (China, Angola, Mexico, Egypt, DRC, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire)	Cluster C: Balanced KM proctices (Philippines, Pakistan, Madagascar)	Cluster D: Mix of 4th to 6th generational KM practices (Viet Nam, Argentina, Peru, Brazil, Sudan)
		Proportion of countries showing strong evidence for KM results within each cluster:			
Intermediate reults	Improved IFAD knowledge products	100%	50%	100%	100%
	Improved KM skills/capacities of IFAD staff	0%	0%	33%	80%
	Improved KM behaviours of IFAD staff	0%	38%	33%	100%
	Enhanced knowledge partenerships	25%	13%	33%	100%
	Better design and implementation of programmes	50%	38%	67%	100%
	Enhanced innovation and scaling up	50%	25%	67%	80%
	Enhanced CLPE	0%	25%	100%	100%
	Improved stakeholder capacities	25%	50%	100%	100%
	Stakeholder capacities	50%	50%	100%	100%
Development results	Improved enabling policy and institutional environmental	25%	25%	67%	80%
	More effective contribution from IFAD-supported interventions	50%	63%	67%	100%
	Improved assembling and use of different types of knowledge	50%	50%	100%	100%

Source: CLE synthesis of 20 country case studies.

Development Result 1: More effective contributions from IFAD-supported interventions

189. **Ultimately, KM has helped IFAD to become more effective in operations in a number of countries**. The most tangible development result outlined in the ToC is the exploration of how KM practices lead to more effective contributions from IFAD-funded interventions. Pathways toward this result encompass a broad range of activities and practices, with a need for KM to be considered during each phase of project implementation. For instance, improved KM skills and capacities at project and corporate levels entail ensuring conceptual clarity of KM to successfully take up KM activities, objectives and tools. This would lead to better performing operations through improved design and programme interventions, thus contributing to more effective IFAD project outcomes.

190. This was exemplified in the Nigeria programme, where a renewed focus on KM resulted in the first end-of-year strategic workshop. This allowed IFAD-funded projects to share major achievements and challenges encountered within the year, and to discuss solutions. This also gave the ICO the chance to address cross-cutting issues on project functions, such as M&E and internal audit, which has the potential to strengthen overall project performance.

191. **Incorporating KM from the first stages of project design allowed country programmes to effectively use lessons from the past**. Evaluations across the portfolio show that capitalizing on lessons learned was particularly instructive in two areas: (a) cross-project learning, especially related to grassroots institution-building, women's empowerment and technology; and (b) introducing innovations to make use of emerging opportunities. Building projects based on the lessons learned from previous IFAD-supported projects is an appropriate foundation for sound project planning, and for an increased understanding of the risks involved.

192. The incorporation of previous experiences and KM plans improved project design[91] in Brazil, Kenya and Viet Nam, where new project designs built on learning from past interventions on specific themes like value chains and rural finance. In most cases, systematic feedback loops to internalize lessons from the wider portfolio and non-lending activities into the design were missing and early guidance on KM objectives in project documents was found to be lacking, hindering PMUs in building a comprehensive KM plan.

193. **The suite of KM practices that included information exchange platforms, participatory processes and cross-learning, contributed to more effective interventions and allowed for adaptive management throughout implementation**. Participatory project reviews – regular participatory workshops involving project teams, partners, governments and beneficiaries – were found in 15 of the 20 cases. Such reviews have helped projects to adapt plans and promoted a culture of learning and knowledge exchange between stakeholders. Participatory planning workshops and FFSs at project level provided important platforms for joint reflection and co-creation of knowledge. Two examples of this can be found in box 8 below.

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91 According to the QAG review, project design often lacks clear guidance on knowledge management strategies, objectives, tools and processes, which is essential for developing comprehensive and flexible knowledge management plans. The absence of knowledge management ratings at the concept note stage might act as a disincentive for design teams to integrate knowledge management objectives thoroughly from the beginning of the design process.

BOX 8
Examples of cross-project learning-related KM practices

In Madagascar, the Support to Farmers' Professional Organizations and Agricultural Services Project organized an exchange visit for farmers to Nigeria in 2018 to learn about *gari* processing from cassava, a product not previously produced in the country. The visiting farmers received hands-on training and equipment for *gari* processing. Back home, the project supported the establishment of *30 gari* processing plants, successfully introducing this innovation into Madagascar. This experience was later scaled up by the Inclusive Agricultural Value Chains Development Programme, which established additional processing units leveraging the knowledge gained.

In Brazil, learning routes organized by PROCASUR brought together project teams and beneficiaries from different states to exchange best practices on specific themes like goat-rearing. Participants visited communities to learn first-hand how they had implemented successful practices. For instance, the Paulo Freire Project and EMBRAPA recently organized a learning route on goat-keeping and sheep-rearing, building on the knowledge exchange.

Source: Country case studies.

194. **Functioning M&E systems have enabled learning from KM by identifying lessons supported by concrete data systems**. However, where M&E systems are inherently weak, the limited availability of data hampers the effectiveness of KM practices in contributing to adaptive management. ICT tools, such as mobile apps and digital data collection, have enhanced the efficiency of M&E in recent projects (for example in Brazil). Still, challenges remain in data analysis and validation, and their subsequent use for KM, learning and decision-making. There is also an observed gap in linking KM processes systematically to M&E cycles, which limits capitalization on lessons learned (see chapter IV.A). Case studies found that at the project level, KM and M&E are frequently clustered in the same role, stretching the resources of a single individual or team, and risking their full attention and capacity for both areas.[92]

Development Result 2: Improved enabling policy and institutional environment

195. The CLE found only a few cases where KM contributed to an effective policy for rural transformation. In Kyrgyzstan, a study on changing pasture conditions has supported local pasture committees to better govern grazing areas and to prevent conflict over pasture resources and their degradation.[93] In countries like Nigeria, Peru, the Philippines and Viet Nam, IFAD programmes actively participated in policy discussions through their involvement in coordinating bodies, workshops and direct project-government collaboration. In other countries (e.g. Egypt, Pakistan, Sierra Leone and Tunisia), limited capacity for policy engagement was noted due to insufficient staffing, high workloads, budget constraints, and inadequate expertise. In DRC, Egypt and some projects in Cote d'Ivoire, the lack of systematic knowledge generation has resulted in limited availability of robust evidence for stakeholder engagement.

196. Including government and partners in project coordination and knowledge-sharing activities leveraged complementary capacities for policy influence and helped to facilitate the scaling up of innovations into national programmes (e.g. working groups in Nigeria and Peru). Including apex organizations, research institutions and civil society also facilitated direct collaboration and inclusive platforms, while also building capacity and buy-in (e.g. Viet Nam). Other examples illustrate where country-level policy engagement has been supported by strong KM practices (see box 9).

92 The QAG review of PDRs from 2020 noted that this is not always the case. "There are however some exceptions, and the Kenya Livestock Commercialization Project is one such example. The design put in place a solid and participatory M&E and KM plan from the outset, and at final desk review stage, the design provided a more detailed KM strategy with clearer links to the COSOP and M&E."

93 Partnered with the Climate Resilience Cluster of the Earth Observation for Sustainable Development (EO4SD CR), GIZ, and the European Space Agency, IFAD created multiple knowledge products, including a technical note and policy brief on *Low Carbon and Resilient Livestock Development* in Kyrgyzstan, which ultimately supported the government in updating their Nationally Determined Contributions.

BOX 9
Examples of KM platforms supporting country-level policy

The Agricultural Donors Working Group in Nigeria, which collaborates closely with the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, has contributed significantly to the formulation of key policies, such as the agricultural promotion policy, through active input and technical collaboration. The group identifies capacity gaps and technical deficiencies with government specialists and facilitates technical working groups with other development agencies. It fosters trust and shares knowledge, like supporting Nigeria's Livestock Transformation Plan.

Knowledge-sharing platforms in Viet Nam, such as the Mekong Delta working group and the International Support Group, enable lessons-sharing and joint policy engagement. Additionally, the Network for Agriculture and Rural Development Think Tank grant strengthened grassroots research networks on value chain development and climate change adaptation to influence national policies. Site visits and farmer exchanges showcase project results and provide first-hand experience for policymakers.

The Agropastoral Development and Local Initiatives Promotion Programme for the South-East-Phase II project in Tunisia developed a policy note on rangeland management that was discussed and validated by different government levels. Innovations were mainstreamed into public policies and taken up by other IFAD projects in regions with similar conditions. Policy notes shared Tunisia's experiences with politicians, the agriculture ministry, and parliament members. Workshops brought stakeholders together to expose project approaches and results.

Source: Country case studies.

197. **The CLE found that multi-stakeholder processes that went beyond individual projects in IFAD's KM practices supported policy engagement**. At regional level, IFAD-supported initiatives, like the 2018/2019 Mekong Learning and Knowledge Fairs, brought together diverse stakeholders from across sectors and countries to share knowledge. The MERCOSUR Commission on Family Farming (REAF) engagement in Latin America connected IFAD to a regional platform for policy dialogue on family farming across multiple countries. However, although IFAD has supported some multi-stakeholder processes at regional and national levels, most partnerships and platforms remain confined to individual projects. Participation in external forums was often limited to project staff, with little involvement of beneficiaries. Regional grants and peer-learning activities enabled some exchange across countries, but not necessarily multi-stakeholder engagement within countries. There is potential for IFAD country and regional teams to play a greater role in facilitating or promoting these platforms.

198. **Strategic use of regional grants supported KM for policy engagement**. IFAD's work with existing regional structures and institutions was usually facilitated through grant support. In LAC, IFAD has used grant projects to generate knowledge, curate local and indigenous knowledge, build the capacities of the organizations of these knowledge holders, and project them to ministers and line agencies. Regional policy engagement in REAF-MERCOSUR and Central American Integration System - Council of Ministers of Agriculture (SICA-CAC) reportedly led to normative and legal changes that improved the country-level enabling environment. IFAD's organizational structures in the form of MCOs and platforms such as REAF and SICA, acting as subregional CoPs on family farming, were effective as spaces for knowledge exchange on lesson learning and for exchanges between different loan projects.

199. In APR, regional grants have been the main instrument for policy engagement. A good example is Measurable Action for Haze-Free Sustainable Land Management in Southeast Asia. By combining the strategic allocation of relatively low-value IFAD country and regional grants with large-scale GEF and EU financing, and operating as the implementing agency for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and national governments in Indonesia and Malaysia, IFAD has played a role in policy engagement. In particular, IFAD has supported the strengthening of national and regional policy and regulatory frameworks to promote sustainable peatland management and fire control over the last decade. In addition to providing technical assistance, IFAD is also promoting knowledge exchange within the region on peatland ecosystems management and is currently extending its dissemination to the Congo Basin countries.[94]

200. In WCA and ESA, examples of regional policy engagement are less common. In WCA, the 2019 Youth Agropastoral Entrepreneurship Summit, organized by IFAD in partnership with PROCASUR under the grant YouthTools, resulted in the **Yaoundé Declaration on Youth Agro-Pastoral Entrepreneurship**.[95] Also, the 2022 Regional Forum on Agricultural and Rural Finance produced a **Declaration of Yaoundé** on a related theme, signed by delegates of participating countries and agencies. In ESA, KM policy engagement mainly took place at country level. There were instances of scaling up through lessons learned in ICOs, such as the success of Uganda's palm oil value chain project. This achievement also led to policy change on public-private partnerships, and the scaling up of gender and women's empowerment interventions on household mentors. IFAD's engagement with the African Union is a space for regional knowledge-sharing and has the potential for increased regional policy engagement.

201. LAC provided positive examples of KM contributing to policy engagement through SSTC, particularly within regional groups. There is significant room for IFAD to use opportunities in SSTC more systematically, to share lessons learned and promote their application in policy development across its portfolio. In Argentina, experiences with rural dialogue platforms inspired by projects in Uruguay were used for policy engagement through the Rural Areas Development Programme. Knowledge on semi-arid agriculture generated in Argentina through the Dryland Adaptation Knowledge Initiative grant is being explored for incorporation into projects in Bolivia and Paraguay.

202. In Mexico, collaboration between IFAD and ECLAC resulted in an online course and a platform for social enterprises that could potentially inform policy in other countries. ECLAC's experience in Central America was transferred to Argentina via IFAD for the development of the Relative Rurality Index, although evidence of policy influence is still pending. In Peru, IFAD's work with the Group for the Analysis of Development on a model inspired by the Sierra Sur project demonstrates the potential for lesson-sharing. However, across the case studies, few other examples were found of systematic cross-country lesson-learning through SSTC informing national policy engagement.[96]

Development Result 3: Assembling and use of different types of knowledge

203. **Meaningful engagement with local knowledge systems enabled appropriate and sustainable solutions**. In Kenya and Peru, participatory processes helped to validate and integrate local knowledge, blend indigenous and scientific systems, exchange grassroots innovations and scale contextual solutions. Peer-to-peer learning was facilitated through exchange visits and farmer networks. The Commodity Alliance Forum in Nigeria has been particularly effective in bringing forward knowledge from private sector off-takers.

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94 Enhancing the contribution of APR to the CLPE agenda in the Asia and Pacific Region.
95 WCA regional division study kick-off meeting, 24 March 2023.

96 For example, IFAD reportedly developed pro-poor value chain guidelines for the African Union. The African Union also requested IFAD's technical knowledge and expertise for rural development, although this could not be offered due to a lack of budget on IFAD's part.

204. In Brazil, KM practices were embedded in a participatory culture, which valued traditional agriculture and local knowledge. The participatory KM approach in Brazil empowered poor rural people, particularly women, youth and local communities,[97] by ensuring their equitable inclusion in the process of rural transformation. The insights from Quilombola communities, women and youth were amplified through knowledge exchanges and brought the local voice to a global audience; exchanges expanded boundaries and led to the adoption of eco-friendly stoves and solar energy solutions. Beyond their technical contributions, these innovations signified a behavioural change towards climate resilience. **The Learning Territories initiative** was another example of the transformative power of KM. Led by young managers, this programme recognized and leveraged rural youth talent – from skilled producers to local community members. By translating local knowledge and practical expertise into services and products, Learning Territories established a long-term monetizable KM network and spurred economic independence among the youth. The use of **artificial intelligence** in the initiative for real-time message analysis has also uncovered innovative solutions to rural challenges, forging a modern learning pathway for young farming generations.

205. In the Philippines, KM practices at the country level have been instrumental in shaping a policy environment favourable to rural development. Rural transformation was achieved by empowering the rural poor to participate in policy processes. Central to this transformation was the emphasis on participatory and multi-stakeholder approaches that prioritize local perspectives. **The IFAD Philippines Gender Network** has been instrumental in ensuring that rural projects are gender-sensitive, heralding a shift towards more equitable rural development. The considerations of how to address root causes of major challenges faced by Indigenous Peoples and their support in participating in the Indigenous People's Forum also led to a more culturally attuned decision-making process in the country. Lastly, the expansion of the Knowledge Learning Market and Policy Engagement efforts to support a multi-stakeholder agriculture and rural development knowledge and policy platform demonstrated the crucial role of drawing from diverse insights in policy formulation. These practices also played a key role in bolstering civil society, providing marginalized groups with legitimacy and fostering collaborations that have reshaped the country's rural development policy.

206. In Sudan, KM practices, particularly through **KM symposiums** and **learning routes**, have helped to internalize KM concepts into people's mindsets and established a web of connections from local to global levels. The rural poor reportedly experienced behavioural changes and empowerment. For instance, under the SKiM initiative, KM symposiums were designed to enhance the KM abilities of key rural institutions and stakeholders in Sudan. By promoting knowledge-sharing within Sudan and across the region, both the symposiums and the SKiM portal have championed the importance of KM across various sectors, irrespective of their KM development stage. This effort has borne fruit in the form of knowledge products that were tailored for a diverse group of stakeholders. This expanded to multiple countries, pulling in a spectrum of participants ranging from IFAD-supported projects to line ministries, converging on the shared goals of fostering peer-learning, enriching knowledge dissemination, and deriving actionable plans for IFAD projects. Participants of learning routes have turned to qualified IFAD knowledge providers, eliciting heightened attention from state industries, thus translating into more focused policy interventions and augmented governmental resource allocation for rural transformation.

207. **Use of digital solutions and links into national KM systems have enhanced the sustainability of KM practices in some countries**. There are noteworthy examples of sustainability initiatives, such as in Angola, Argentina and Brazil, where IFAD has taken steps like storing project documents on digital platforms and planning strategically for sustainability through public agency ownership. In Kenya, the focus has been on incorporating KM into national systems and establishing exit plans with government ownership. Similarly, Argentina and Brazil have emphasized strengthening local capacities and partnerships, while in Pakistan, collaboration with academic institutions has been a focus for long-term sustainability. These successes often hinge on partnerships and collaboration networks, promoting local capacity-building, and integrating KM into national institutions.

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97 Quilombola are an ethnic minority of African origin. Their ancestors escaped from slavery in the sixteenth century and formed closed communities in very remote locations in Brazil.

D. Overall effectiveness of KM practices at country level

208. **The country case studies found variable KM practices focused on third- and fourth-generation KM**. The CLE found high variability in the effectiveness of KM practices at country level. Effective practices were found in all countries covered, but most of them focused on third- and fourth-generation KM. They were mainly at project level and contributed to the improvement of IFAD-supported operations. More transformative types of KM practices were found in a smaller number of countries. While these KM practices have been part of the IFAD way of working for many years, they were put into place at operational levels through long-standing IFAD country presence and well-established partnerships.

209. **KM has enabled IFAD to make more effective contributions in a number of country programmes**. There were fewer cases where the systematic generation and sharing of knowledge has enabled effective policy engagement. In a small number of countries, IFAD has used participatory methods to mobilize different types of knowledge for improved policy and institutional frameworks.

210. **At country level, specific local realities shape the KM landscapes**. Countries where IFAD operates in a decentralized manner tend to have more diverse KM practices occurring at the project level, with limited coordination or strategy from the country programme level. Centralized country presence allows for more consolidated country-level KM strategies. Countries where the portfolio faces significant delays, performance issues or instability also see limited progress on non-lending activities like KM. Attention is diverted to implementation issues rather than knowledge activities. Language barriers can be a considerable constraint to KM in non-English-speaking countries.

BOX 10
Lessons from CLE country case studies

Strategy: a coherent country-level KM strategy motivates implementing partners to concentrate more on institutional learning. Strategic selection and monitoring of KM products help to ensure impact, replicability and innovation. Advance planning and increasing the professionalism of KM actions enhances the quality and effectiveness of documenting practices and lessons. Recording knowledge and lessons from the outset allows for adaptive management and flexible implementation, as well as supporting future programme development.

Local knowledge. The richness of local knowledges requires appropriate tools for cross-learning and knowledge-sharing mechanisms. Capturing knowledge and capitalizing on experiences can also enhance project performance. Digital tools for monitoring and evaluation facilitates the capture of operational knowledge. Knowledge products such as stories from the field and videos can aid knowledge-sharing, and the use of social media makes knowledge more accessible.

Collaboration and partnerships. Knowledge collaboration can mobilize technical expertise and build the capacity for resources. Robust partnerships with local NGOs are key, especially in unstable situations or when ICO resources are constrained. Practices such as knowledge-sharing workshops, monitoring field visits, and community meetings can enhance project performance and outcomes. Roundtables act as pivotal platforms for capacity-building and knowledge-sharing, and play an essential role in policy processes at both local and regional levels. The use of digital platforms for knowledge-sharing enhances transparency and stakeholder engagement.

Coordination: Coordination is key to avoid knowledge redundancy, and strengthening multi-stakeholder platforms can potentially offset such inefficiency. Anchoring IFAD projects in government structures offers benefits, such as better coordination with national programmes. However, IFAD would need to address administrative and resource constraints, such as low flexibility and limited human resources in PMUs.

Capacities. Partnerships that include research institutes, technical services and civil society organizations help to build capacities and enhance the effectiveness of KM. Capacity-building at the PMU level helps integrate KM into the institutional culture. Building and strengthening the knowledge-sharing culture at all levels will allow more transformative practices to take place.

M&E: Well-functioning M&E systems can support effective knowledge. Improving the monitoring of KM activities and outcomes raises the quality of analytical work to capitalize on project outcomes for more effective policy engagement. Access to data collection and analysis tools allows projects to better incorporate lessons and develop insight from operations. Monitoring KM outcomes is crucial to understand the long-term impacts of knowledge-sharing activities.

Policy engagement. Effectively documenting and sharing knowledge from operations supports policy dialogue and scaling up. Knowledge generated by the projects is more likely to be taken up if a government has directly seen the results. Grants to national research organizations can generate relevant knowledge for government and may be a more efficient mode of funding for KM, allowing for closer impact on country-level outcomes.

In **UMICs**, the fast pace towards development necessitates agile adaptation to the needs of governments. KM partnerships with national and regional stakeholders can help IFAD adapt to political and institutional changes.

Sustainability and knowledge retention. Institutionalizing KM in organizations ensures the consistent application of KM practices. Over-reliance on individuals for driving KM practices threatens their sustainability. Institutionalizing good practices such as virtual knowledge repositories can help overall sustainability and knowledge retention in the programme.

Language is an important consideration when undertaking KM. Expanding access to corporate knowledge products in languages other than English would broaden access by a greater number and diversity of partners. Creating knowledge resources in local languages would allow projects and partners to benefit from greater access to IFAD's knowledge base.

Source: CLE country case studies.

BOX 11

How knowledge transforms peoples' lives: stories from remote participatory video evaluations (PVEs)

Farmer story 1: "From nothing, we became businessmen. The members of our community can acquire the mindset that, 'Yes, everything can be overcome.'" During the COVID-19 pandemic, **Filo Esteban Lizarazo Huaman and his siblings** from Pacobamba, Peru, capitalized on their dairy knowledge to launch a yoghurt, flan and cheese business. Supported by the Pacobamba Ministry and a youth entrepreneur project, they embraced roles in sales, production and supply chain. Their venture expanded through training, community outreach, and collaboration with the Micro and Small Enterprise Support Service.

Farmer story 2: "A material thing can be temporary…but knowledge stays with you until your death. Until then, you must keep practicing." **Roberto Palomino Espinoza** from Porvenir Uyrus community, Pampas, Peru, epitomizes the fusion of ancestral wisdom with modern innovation. While the Uyrus community revered traditional farming, young members returning from the city introduced advanced agricultural techniques through workshops and training sessions. This evolution was augmented by the IFAD-funded Sustainable Territorial Development Project. Roberto emphasizes he feels that knowledge, blending the old with the new, is a lasting treasure and key to a thriving future.

Farmer story 3: "I usually say that I've been a farmer since the time I was born, because I am the daughter of a great farmer, and also the granddaughter of a great farmer". Hailing from Piauì, Brazil, **Francisca Gomes Da Silva** witnessed her family transition from traditional crops to cashew cultivation, facing challenges and pests. They tapped into resources from professional training centres (e.g. SENAC, SENAI, and the Technical Assistance and Rural Extension Agency of Ceará (EMATERCE)), embracing agroecological techniques to boost crop varieties and yields. The 2020 agroecological booklet became their knowledge beacon. Francisca champions sustainable farming and refutes misconceptions about collective associations, advocating for community-centric agriculture over mere profit.

Farmer story 4: "Everyone ends up winning and it is really cool." **Gonçalves Oliveira** of Fava Community, Piauí, Brazil, belongs to a family with deep bee-keeping traditions initiated by his pioneering grandfather. As cotton declined, the community shifted to bee-keeping, securing resources from the local church. Gonçalves honed his skills through familial observation and hands-on experience, later benefiting from affiliations with cooperatives like COMPAI and CASA APIS, the latter aiding in accessing international markets and introducing advanced methods. Through the Learning Territory of Piauí, he engaged in a reciprocal learning experience with Central American peers, sharing and enriching bee-keeping practices and narratives.

Source: CLE video pilots.

Key findings on the effectiveness of KM practices at the country level

- KM has been operating inconsistently across IFAD's global operations and therefore has achieved inconsistent results. The country case studies found **variable KM practices focused on third- and fourth-generation KM**.

- **KM practices were often effective in their contribution to country programmes**, but there were fewer cases where the systematic generation and sharing of knowledge has enabled effective policy engagement.

- **Fragmented or lagging KM frameworks did not enable effective KM**. KM frameworks that were aligned with COSOP-defined thematic priorities were more likely to be successful, but these were rare.

- Capacities and incentives of country teams and project staff to engage in KM activities were essential for effective KM practices. IFAD country offices were not always able to utilize grants for KM. Good examples of grant-funded partnerships supporting effective knowledge management practices were found in Sudan, Tunisia and Viet Nam.

- **Very few governments had the capacities for KM readily in place**. Introducing KM was a challenge in countries that did not have prior experience with the concept. Language barriers sometimes presented a barrier for knowledge generation and use.

- Contextual factors, like the media, internet availability and the political landscape, affected the types and effectiveness of KM practices across countries in terms of how knowledge was shared and with whom.

- **Transformative (fifth- and sixth-generation) practices were supported by strong ICO leadership and multi-stakeholder partnerships for KM, which included beneficiaries, NGOs and governmental bodies**.

- Use of digital solutions and links into national KM systems have enhanced the sustainability of KM practices in some countries. Inconsistent KM approaches and isolated KM practices had lower prospects for sustainability.

- The suite of KM practices that included information exchange platforms, participatory processes and cross-learning contributed to more effective interventions, and allowed for adaptive management throughout implementation.

Chapter VI

IFAD resources for KM and their efficient use

VI. IFAD resources for KM and their efficient use

211. The chapter reviews the financial and human resources available for KM and their efficient use in delivering KM products and practi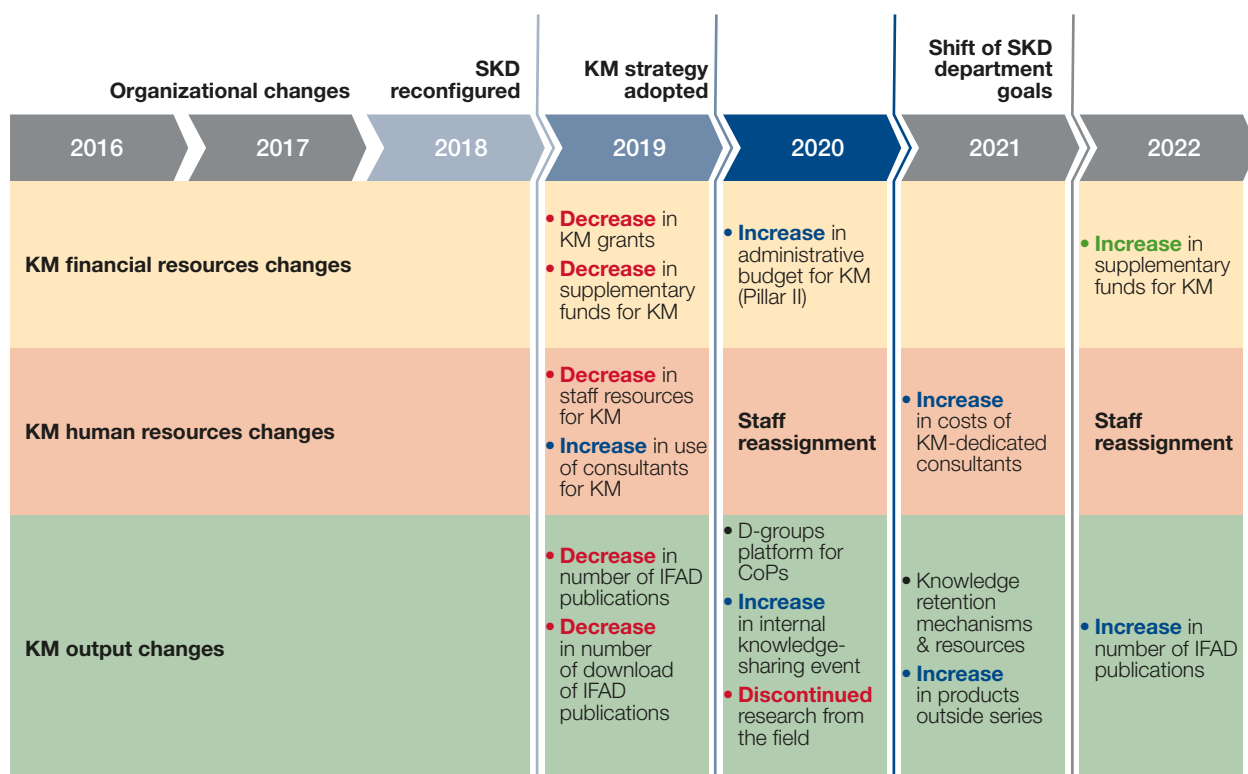ces. It probes the hypotheses with regard to appropriate resources to deliver effective KM tools at corporate and country levels. The financial resources include IFAD's administrative budget, supplementary funds and grants. It also reviews the availability of full-time staff for KM at HQ, regional and country levels and the capacities to deliver effective KM practices (see annex VIII).

212. This chapter therefore examines how KM supports IFAD's efforts to achieve the third of its goals – to be "smarter". The Strategic Framework notes that working smarter means "delivering development results in a cost-effective way that best responds to partner countries' evolving needs". Smarter will also entail the most efficient and effective use of all resources at IFAD's disposal.

A. KM strategy and resources

213. The KM strategy 2019-2025 aimed to be "budget-neutral" (not cost-neutral), meaning that it intended to use the available resources in a better way for KM. The limitations in budget for KM was highlighted in all conversations with Senior Management during the CLE. The purpose of this section is therefore to highlight areas where resources could be better used or adjusted in order to enhance KM performance.

214. **The review of financial and HR data shows that the adoption of the KM strategy did not lead to an increase in human and financial resources to match the ambition of the strategy**. On the contrary, IFAD cut the regular grants envelope starting in IFAD 12 (2022) and supplementary funds for KM decreased around the same time as the strategy was adopted, as did the staff on full-time KM positions (see annex VI for detailed data). While there was a slight increase in the administrative budget for KM in 2020, supplementary funds for KM did not increase until 2022, following the adoption of the related goals in SKD in 2021 (see chapter IV.A.). A parallel development was the reduction in the number of publications and the related downloads since 2019. The number of publications increased again in 2022, although the majority of products was now outside the established series.

215. Availability of human resources for KM also needs to be seen in the context of concurrent organizational reforms, namely the decentralization and wave of reassignments. The first reassignment exercise in 2020 correlates with the increased use of consultants for KM. Decentralization has implied posting senior staff from PMD and SKD to country offices, although at different speeds.

216. Figure 8 presents an overview of the main organizational changes that have affected the allocation of resources for KM, as well as the changes in KM outputs observed by this CLE. These issues will be discussed in further detail in this section.

Resources for KM in the context of organizational changes

	Organizational changes		SKD reconfigured	KM strategy adopted		Shift of SKD department goals	
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
KM financial resources changes				• **Decrease** in KM grants • **Decrease** in supplementary funds for KM	• **Increase** in administrative budget for KM (Pillar II)		• **Increase** in supplementary funds for KM
KM human resources changes				• **Decrease** in staff resources for KM • **Increase** in use of consultants for KM	**Staff reassignment**	• **Increase** in costs of KM-dedicated consultants	**Staff reassignment**
KM output changes				• **Decrease** in number of IFAD publications • **Decrease** in number of download of IFAD publications	• D-groups platform for CoPs • **Increase** in internal knowledge-sharing event • **Discontinued** research from the field	• Knowledge retention mechanisms & resources • **Increase** in products outside series	• **Increase** in number of IFAD publications

Source: CLE analysis of OBI and HRD data.

B. Human resources for knowledge management

217. The 2019 KM Strategy places people at its core, recognizing that it is the knowledge of its staff and consultants that "ultimately drives the quality of its operations and of the institution overall".[98] It also states that the knowledge of its staff and consultants is its most important asset – one that can give the organization a competitive edge.

218. Many of the IOE evaluations that were examined emphasized the importance of human resources for supporting effective KM, especially at the country level. Serving as a baseline, the 2016 ARRI noted that, "aligning human resources and incentives strongly supports the promotion of knowledge management". However, although evaluations consistently find that full-time KM staff strengthens KM, the evidence is often in relation to knowledge generation (more publications and videos) and sharing (more and better platforms), but does not necessarily translate into enhanced use of knowledge.

219. **Staff are the key asset for IFAD, and in all cases reviewed, success depended on their individual motivation and commitment**. At the same time, the CLE noted constraints in human resources as a limitation. High workloads, understaffed country offices, vacant positions and a knowledge drain due to reassignment and the turnover of staff were recurrent themes. High dependence on junior staff and consultants for KM further undermines the effectiveness and sustainability of KM initiatives.

220. KM also needs to be seen as a process that unfolds over a longer period of time and knits together various threads of work and engagement. QAG reviews note that KM and CLPE are continuous processes. KM is not a one-off activity to be undertaken during design and implementation, but a set of activities that require constant attention and commitment throughout the project, with dedicated staff time and resources as well as appropriate incentives. CLPE also requires constant focus at different levels for a sustained period of time.

Organization-wide human resources

221. **Human resources for KM are inadequate to fulfil the ambitions of the KM strategy**. According to HRD information, there were eight full-time KM officers in 2022, including seven in SKG and one in ERG (COM). Between 2016 and 2022, the annual average cost for IFAD's personnel having full-time KM positions was approximately US$1.79 million, comprising 1.5 per cent of the overall human resources (HR) costs. The review of data within this timeframe reveals that 4.8 per cent of HR costs were related to KM functions. This includes not only those full-time KM positions – personnel with knowledge and KM-related functions explicit in their position descriptions – but also HR costs associated with communication, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), SSTC and positions where KM responsibilities are combined with other functions (see figure 9 below).

98   2019 KM Strategy, paragraph 10.

FIGURE 9

IFAD HR costs overview (2016-2022)
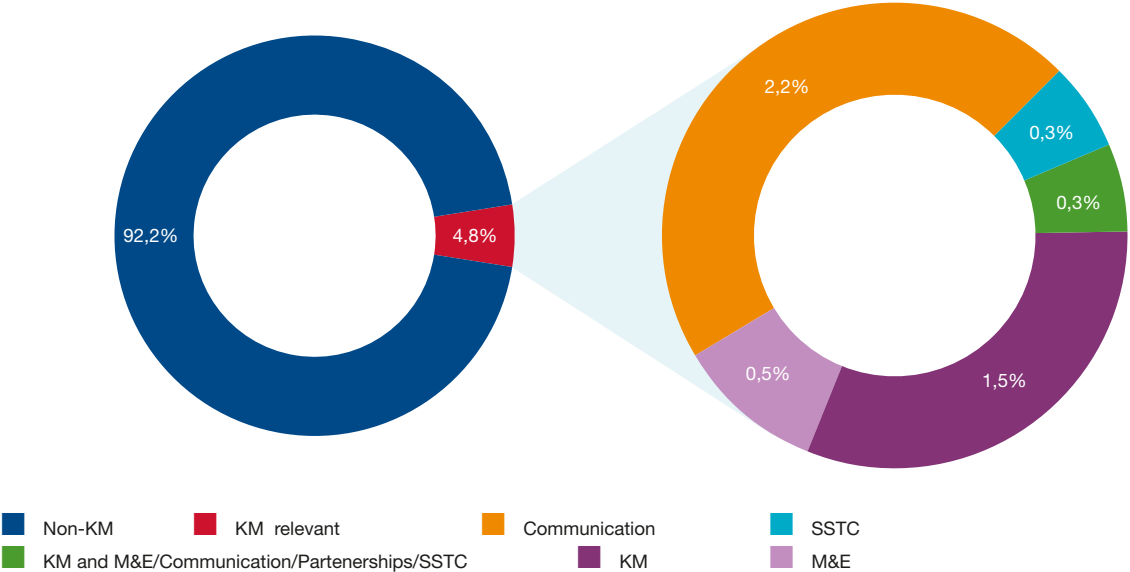
Source: CLE analysis, based on HR data.

222. **The use of consultants to initiate and sustain KM practices in regional and HQ divisions sets limitations on ownership and integration within the organization**. The majority of IFAD's KM personnel are consultants and the use of consultants for KM has increased over the period under review. While the costs for IFAD staff with full-time KM positions have decreased since 2016, the costs for KM consultants have nearly doubled, rising from approximately US$453,000 in 2016 to US$854,000 in 2022. The use of consultants for KM increased more significantly in ESA (from two consultants in 2016 to six in 2022) and APR (from three KM consultants in 2016 to seven in 2022) and LAC (from none in 2016 to two in 2022). In NEN and WCA, the use of KM consultants decreased over the same period, from one to none in NEN and six to three in WCA.

FIGURE 10

Costs for full-time KM staff and consultants over time (US$)
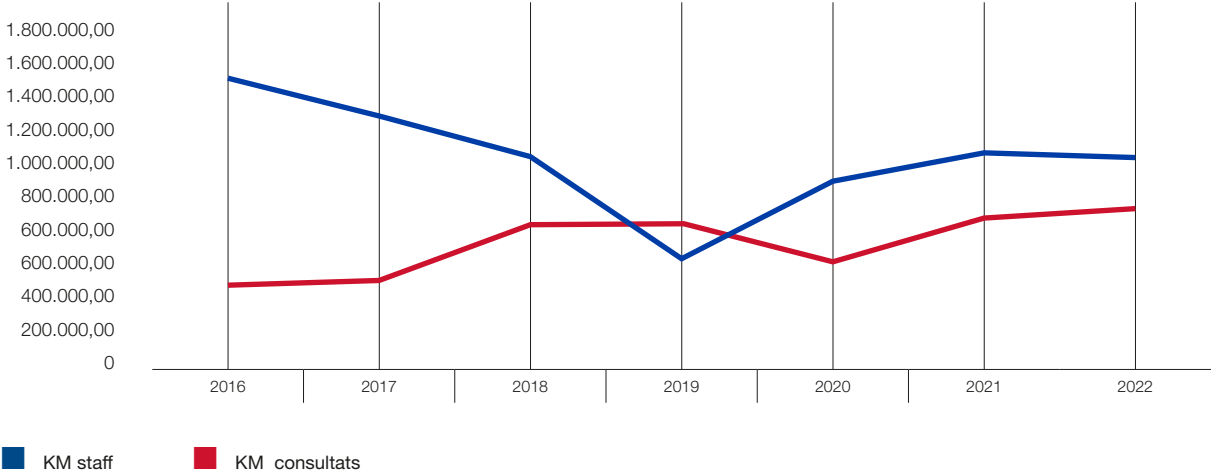
Source: CLE analysis, based on HR data.

223. **IFAD's staff with full-time KM positions are predominately HQ-based, at junior levels, and financed from supplementary funds**. Out of the total costs for IFAD's full-time KM personnel (2016-2022), 56 per cent went to SKD and 33 per cent were spent by PMD. IFAD's full-time KM staff were all based in HQ, whereas the majority of KM consultants were home-based or in the field. The full-time KM personnel were often women (67 per cent of the costs). Furthermore, the full-time KM staff positions were usually at junior level. Half of the staff positions (9 out of 18) financed were at P2 level, followed by five P3 staff and three P4 staff. **Currently, there is no full-time KM specialist at P5 level in IFAD, including SKD, who could supervise and guide KM in the organization**.

224. **Staff on full-time KM positions are scarce and mostly funded from supplementary funds**. In 2022, the total costs of supplementary funding for full-time KM staff in SKD was approximately US$2.05 million. These positions are limited to the duration of funding. In PMD, there is currently only one IFAD staff position for KM, in the WCA division. KM specialists in LAC and APR are consultants. SKD has a greater number of KM specialists, including two KM staff positions based in SKD front office. The majority of SKD staff positions related to KM are in PMI and most are financed by supplementary funds (five staff positions

related to KM,[99] four of them funded by supplementary funds). In ECG, funding is more diversified. Out of the three positions related to KM,[100] two are based in Rome and funded by IFAD, while the Dakar-based position is funded from supplementary funds.

225. **Currently, the capacity of SKD to support systematic KM at the country level is limited**. The 2023 CLE on decentralization found that deploying a critical mass of technical staff to provide the required support to ICOs continued to be challenging in many locations. In addition, SKD's ability to strengthen non-lending activities in ICOs and promote knowledge management across the organization remained constrained.[101] The review of HR data shows that the current allocation of SKD staff to MCOs remains insufficient to support effective KM at regional and country levels.

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99 These are KM and M&E Analyst (FO4ACP); KM Analyst (SAFIN); KM Officer (FFR); and one vacant P3 position. (PMI list of staff positions, July 2023).
100 A knowledge management specialist based in Rome; a KM and M&E Officer based in Dakar; and a vacant position advertised in Rome for an administrative assistant (ASAP) on KM (ECD organigram, status July 2023).
101 CLE Decentralization, para 27, page viii.

FIGURE 11

Distribution of SKD technical staff in duty stations

Legend: NO-B, NO-C, P-2, P-3, P-4, P-5
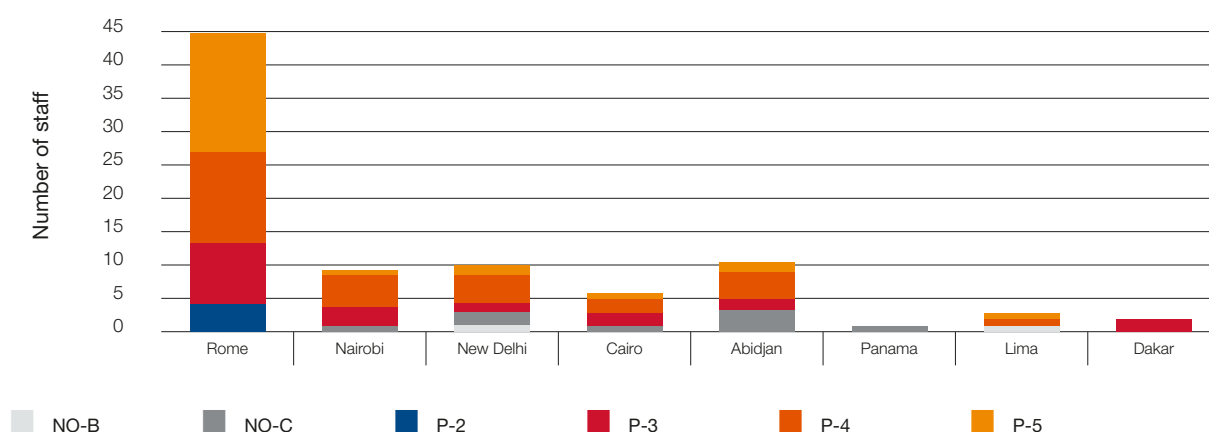
Source: CLE analysis of SKD organigrams (status July 2023).

226. Progress in deploying SKD staff to MCOs has been slow (see figure 11) and there is a large number of vacancies still to be filled in in large MCOs, such as Abidjan, Dakar and New Delhi.[102] Furthermore, 17 out of 29 positions (59 per cent) funded by supplementary funds are based in Rome. The majority (72 per cent) of technical leaders (P5) are based in Rome. The Dakar MCO, which traditionally played a leading role in subsubregional KM, only has two P3 positions financed from supplementary funds (both vacant at the time of the CLE). Furthermore, mainstreaming themes (ECG) are predominantly Rome-based, while the thematic expertise of PMI is more equally distributed across the regions (see annex VI).

227. **SKD staff with project assignments have little time to support KM, even if they are posted to the region or country**. Within SKD, ECG and PMI staff lead the bulk of technical knowledge generation in their fields. ECG and PMI staff are heavily loaded with project assignments, including design and supervision missions. SKD has 57 technical staff, but only 41 of them have project assignments (72 per cent).[103] SKD experts based in field offices have an equal or even higher workload (12.94 assignments per person on average compared to 11.95 for HQ-based staff). This means that SKD specialists spend a major part of their time on design and supervision missions and are not necessarily in country offices, leaving little time for knowledge-sharing. Most of the lesson-learning from operations remains at project level. Furthermore, SKD technical specialists, such as regional and global experts, usually work in more than one region. The majority of SKD staff have project assignments outside their duty stations. This does not support stronger links into the decentralized office structures, an observation also confirmed by the MCO FGDs. Reporting lines also do not support close integration into field offices. Out-posted SKD specialists still report to HQ, not to the regional or CDs.

228. **Project management staff have KM within their duties**. In most countries, KM is only one of their many responsibilities. The CLE found very few positive cases with full-time KM specialists or consultants coordinating KM across projects (Philippines, Viet Nam), or project teams dedicated to KM (Côte d'Ivoire).

229. IFAD CDs, given their authority and credibility, hold pivotal roles in CLPE, which is supported by KM. As the official representatives of IFAD authorized to make decisions and articulate policy stances, their involvement in KM is crucial. It is noteworthy that CDs in Brazil, the Philippines, Sudan and Viet Nam have successfully instituted robust KM roles and mechanisms. However, many do not adopt this proactive approach because of a general lack of incentives. Senior staff tend to prioritize operations and implementation over KM. Lack of buy-in at senior levels constrains KM progress in many contexts. In several countries, KM activities remain the responsibility of junior project staff or assistants. While enthusiastic, they may lack the influence or experience to drive KM effectively. This was seen in Côte d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone. KM is often merged with M&E roles across projects and countries. While existing senior staff contend with broad responsibilities, evidence from the PROCASUR grants showcases the impactful potential of senior leadership in KM, leveraging their expertise for more meaningful outcomes.

230. **IFAD country offices rely heavily on consultants to fill gaps in KM expertise due to insufficient staff capacity, which is to be expected given IFAD's business model at country level. However, a risk of knowledge loss arises when there is insufficient transfer of knowledge to IFAD staff**. The CLE observed this in most of its country case studies, including Argentina and Brazil. Country offices with full-time KM staff appear more balanced in internal capacity versus external support. The Philippines and Viet Nam demonstrate strong in-house KM coordination through long-time national staff. DRC attempted to recruit a knowledge management officer for the retention and dissemination of learning, but the role was not clearly defined. Many projects lacking KM staff depend on M&E officers or short-term consultants to deliver KM activities, which is neither optimal nor sustainable.

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102 The analysis based on the review of the updated organization charts showed that the total number of technical posts available in SKD is 87 (35 in ECG, 46 in PMI and 6 in RIA), of which 57 are filled and the remaining 30 are vacant.

103 Staff financed from supplementary funds usually do not have project assignments.

231. Some country programmes have put in place KM focal points, who may fulfil varying roles in coordinating or supporting KM activities. Viet Nam's country operations analyst acts as KM focal point, with clear coordination duties and the support of an experienced consultant. The Philippines has a senior advisor playing a key role as KM focal point across the portfolio. Kyrgyzstan has recruited a part-time KM consultant specifically to support strategy development and knowledge curation. In Sudan, the CPO is playing an effective coordination role within a clearly defined structure. In other cases, the expectations on KM focal points seem less clear. Peru mentions KM focal points in project units, but provides no details on actual job duties. Argentina has qualified staff, but heavy workloads limit their KM activities. No dedicated KM budget exists. DRC's attempt to recruit a knowledge management officer lacked a defined workplan. In several countries, dedicated KM focal points were not identified at the ICO level (Egypt, Madagascar and Sierra Leone). KM responsibilities often fell to technical specialists or M&E officers.

232. **Supervision budgets are generally tight and often do not allow a specialist for KM to be included**. Therefore, supervision missions often do not provide quality guidance on KM practices. Positive examples exist where skilled KM staffing and strategic partnerships fill gaps (Brazil, Kyrgyzstan and Viet Nam). However, in general, specialized KM human resources are insufficient, pointing to a need for greater prioritization and strategic deployment of KM capacities across multiple levels.

C. Staff capacities and incentives to engage in KM

Knowledge management capacities

233. **Project-level capacities**. Although the country case studies show that project-level know-how on knowledge management and the use of KM tools varies significantly, overall, project-level KM know-how is constrained across many countries by lack of understanding, insufficient skills and capacity gaps. While pockets of strong expertise exist, they do not appear widespread. Sustained capacity-building alongside structured KM resourcing from project outset could significantly improve the use and application of KM tools.

234. Insufficient understanding of KM concepts and lack of capacity in using KM tools and approaches is a common theme. This is noted in country case studies of Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Egypt, Sierra Leone and Tunisia, among others. Where full-time KM staff exist at project level, they appear to have strong expertise in countries, such as Madagascar and the Philippines. However, these resources are stretched thin. Reliance on M&E officers for KM activities can be problematic due to differences in the skills required. A conflation between M&E and KM was indeed common in the studies. Moreover, several projects lack tailored KM strategies and instead retrofit communications approaches, pointing to capability gaps.

235. **Training and capacity-building on KM tools and best practices is frequently recommended, signalling important unmet needs**.[104] There have been efforts to strengthen the capacity of IFAD staff in KM, as set out in recent annual reports on knowledge management. The 2021 report noted that 22 IFAD staffers benefited from various KM training products, such as the advanced KM courses by Henley Forum and IMA International Knowledge Management and *Writing for online audiences* by Emphasis. These are now being considered by the Talent Management Unit in its upskilling and reskilling exercises. A KM capacity-building training programme was also extended to the Dgroups platform and focuses on information exchanges between project and IFAD staff. Based on the review of outcome and output indicators, each regional division developed dedicated KM capacity-building initiatives for PMUs. Three PMUs have been supported to develop project-level KM plans in the Asia and the Pacific Region, while also planning dedicated KM training for IFAD hub teams and PMUs in 2021.

236. The 2022 KM Annual Report noted that to bolster the learning culture and produce a better fit-for-purpose workforce, IFAD launched the revamped Operations Academy, which offered learning opportunities for staff in operational competencies, technical capacities and cross-cutting skills. A dedicated KM module is also being developed. So far, 8 courses have been launched and 16 are in development. A total of 125 staff from 16 divisions completed 196 courses. The Operations Academy's mentorship programme was launched to offer more effective knowledge-sharing opportunities.

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104 This aligns with the KAP survey where 76 per cent of the IFAD staff respondents believed that training for staff on KM is weak. (annex VII)

237. The Egypt and Philippines country studies found that appointing full-time KM staff midway through projects has helped build expertise, but delays the impact possible from the early stages. In DRC, project staff were invited to join an online KM course to build their capacity. Positive examples also exist where structured KM units demonstrate strong expertise, like the "Team KM" approach in Madagascar. However, these appear limited.

238. **IFAD staff consulted during the CLE highlighted the limited time they have available for KM**. This limitation was consistently raised in CLE interviews, case studies and FGDs. In the CLE KAP survey,[105] 35 per cent of the survey respondents said they practiced KM as daily work. While 90 per cent of respondents agreed that knowledge management was an important part of IFAD's work and 81 per cent of respondents understood how to support and participate in knowledge generation and sharing, 47 per cent of respondents argued that they did not have sufficient time to adequately prioritize knowledge management. Staff time to adequately devote to responsibilities and training for staff on KM were highlighted by respondents as the top challenges hindering IFAD's performance in knowledge management. Approximately 30 per cent of respondents fulfilled their KM roles during processes such as programme design, project implementation, communications and establishing and maintaining database. On average, respondents dedicated 39 per cent of their time to KM activities; Rome-based respondents spent 30 per cent more time on KM than those are field-based.

239. **The most commonly used KM practices by IFAD staff are peer-to-peer knowledge exchanges, participation in KM training and the creation of knowledge products**. IFAD personnel are less engaged in collaborative knowledge generation (fifth- and sixth-generation types), including documenting indigenous and local knowledge, often acquired through collaboration with farmers, in formats useable during project design phases. Responses to the KAP survey revealed that the main KM practices are people-centric and within the organization; informal knowledge-sharing among colleagues was most appreciated by IFAD staff and consultants. For instance, many respondents frequently share lessons about project implementation informally (more than eight times a month), whereas 61 per cent of respondents never posted a comment or discussion in an online Community of Practice (CoP) or practitioners' forum devoted to their fields (see Annex VII). The most favoured channel for searching knowledge was through IFAD colleagues or peers, accounting for 23 per cent of all knowledge sources.

Staff incentives to engage in KM

240. The 2014 KM Framework stated as its vision that "IFAD integrates knowledge-sharing and learning functions into key business processes and provides appropriate incentives to help drive a culture of sharing, innovation and application of knowledge and learning." IFAD still has some way to go to achieve this vision. The MTR noted the lack of adequate incentives for KM and a need to reassess incentives for knowledge, both recognition (e.g. awards) and "built-in" measures (e.g. KPIs in a performance evaluation system), as well as goal-setting for knowledge curation, synthesis, generation and use.

241. **KM engagement relies on personal motivation more than institutional drivers**. Providing adequate incentives will require KM objectives and responsibilities to be clarified in staff performance reviews; public recognition rewards for contributions to KM; opportunities for career advancement linked to KM expertise; and shared learning forums for teams to unleash knowledge exchange. With KM visibility, appreciation, and benefits enhanced, country and project teams are likely to become more proactively engaged in managing knowledge.

105 The KAP survey had 81 respondents, including 39 per cent Rome-based IFAD staff, 23 per cent field-based IFAD staff, 20 per cent Rome-based consultants and 14 per cent field-based consultants (annex VII).

242. In most cases, the country case studies found limited or unclear incentives for ICO and project staff to engage in knowledge management activities. No financial or career incentives explicitly linked to KM performance were mentioned for individuals or teams. Heavy workloads, lack of time allocation,[106] and competing priorities were cited frequently as disincentives to focus on KM. This observation was noted in Argentina, Egypt, Peru and elsewhere.

243. **Continuity of national staff in country offices has been a positive force for more effective KM**. The CLE country case studies found that as staff remains in the same country-based role over time, there is greater capacity and motivation to engage in KM. In the Philippines and Viet Nam, consistent staffing provides continuity in focus, and the team actively champions KM initiatives. Peer learning and interactions reinforce KM's value in Brazil and a sense of personal commitment helps some KM specialists persevere, despite limited structural incentives (Côte d'Ivoire). In other cases, the dispersal of country teams due to decentralization has reportedly reduced collaboration opportunities and the motivation for knowledge-sharing (Mexico, Peru). Changes in project or country leadership also disrupted incentives and momentum to promote KM.

Knowledge retention

244. **The Annual Reports on the Knowledge Management Action Plan included in the RIDE (2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023) have consistently highlighted knowledge retention as a key challenge**. Strengthening knowledge retention was part of the enabling environment action area of the 2019 KM Strategy, and two activities were developed in the action plan (3.4.1 and 3.4.2)[107] Since 2021, IFAD put in place mechanisms and resources to facilitate knowledge retention and onboarding of reassigned or new staff, including handover clinics and notes. The knowledge retention process underlines the importance of individual responsibility and the opportunity provided to leave a recognized legacy. In addition, a series of handover clinics for retirees and reassigned staff was organized to explain the handover note.[108] IFAD also established a dedicated website for material supporting knowledge retention.[109] Most importantly for sustainability, the 2022 RIDE notes that efforts are being made to systematically embed knowledge retention in human resources processes.

245. **Decentralization and the massive reassignment of staff during the period from 2020 to 2023 had major implications for managing knowledge retention**. It led to the discontinuation of KM practices and loss of institutional memory, which in turn created a need to reinvest in local relationships and networks. Newly recruited staff had to undergo a steep learning curve and required, although did not always receive, significant onboarding. The arrival of new and highly motivated staff has been an opportunity, but it will take time for them to grow into their roles and acquire similar levels of experience and knowledge within the context of their work. The CLE country case studies consistently noted the disruptions in knowledge management caused by reassignments.

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106 This corresponds with the findings of the KAP survey where 73 per cent of the 81 IFAD staff respondents believed that time available to adequately devote to KM was insufficient (annex VII).

107 The Annual Report on the Implementation of the KM Action Plan, included in the 2022 RIDE (para 25), notes that "several divisions carried out KM activities and organized 10 conversations: among them, an event for four long-serving technical experts, and the words of wisdom with CDs session for five outgoing country directors in APR."

108 The 2022 RIDE reported a number of further activities in this area, including six knowledge retention clinics, where staff were trained in structured knowledge retention processes with facilitated conversations and standardized handover notes. Ten formal knowledge retention conversations were held for outgoing IFAD staff to pass their knowledge on to their successors.

109 https://xdesk.ifad.org/sites/kr/SitePages/Home.aspx.

246. **The evaluation noted the absence of systematic plans for capturing and transferring tacit knowledge before staff depart in most country case studies**. High turnover of key staff, especially CDs, has led to a loss of tacit knowledge and institutional memory in several countries, including Argentina, Egypt, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. There were no effective plans to retain such tacit knowledge and no robust knowledge retention strategies to capture and transfer insights from departing staff. Effective approaches to retain implicit knowledge during staffing changes have not been prioritized or budgeted for in many countries. Positive examples show structures and strategies can be implemented to promote knowledge retention despite the turnover. For example, in Egypt, the country case study found that documenting handover processes facilitates the transition of knowledge to new staff at country and project levels. Moreover, consistent involvement of technical specialists in supervision missions allows for knowledge transfer to PMUs despite any changes in country presence.

247. FGDs were held with retirees and youth on the issue of knowledge retention, and the results are summarized in box 11.

Focus group discussion with retirees and youth

With their long-standing knowledge of IFAD, the retirees sketched the image of an institution in which learning is taking second place to bureaucratic control of processes and systems. The younger members of staff show the reverse coin of this image, in which they struggle to understand processes and procedures – and the internal systems for knowledge-sharing – while not always receiving the support and access to the tacit knowledge of more experienced staff, which would help them to become effective faster.

Neither group felt that their knowledge was valued. The younger members of staff did not feel that young talent was valued, while the retirees would have welcomed more contact with current members of staff to continue to share their long-standing experiences and insights. While the knowledge of retirees has been lost to IFAD, many younger members of staff are also leaving because of the short-term and intermittent contracts available. In addition, there are no systematic efforts apparent to tap into the knowledge and expertise of consultants who often have unique field-level knowledge. Finally, both retirees and younger members of staff expressed the view that the current processes might mean that the institution is less able to learn from failure.

Source: CLE focus group discussions.

D. Funding for knowledge management

248. The 2016 ARRI flagged that more attention is needed to provide resources commensurate with the KM strategy. It noted that since there is no institution-wide funding allocation for KM, it has to compete with other priorities, so that funding is uncertain. It also noted that this means that it is difficult to know how much is being spent on KM, or whether the spending is justified by the results. The ARRI 2016 identified a potential conflict between two interrelated challenges: (a) KM activities are often seen as supplementary rather than essential components of projects and programmes; and (b) the lack of dedicated resources for KM.

249. The ARIE 2022 identified "securing financing of knowledge management either via grant or as a project component (loan)" as one of the factors for successful KM. More specifically, it also suggests that "earmarking financial resources, such as grant financing or specific loan components, to support capacity development in knowledge management activities" is a key success factor. Alternatively, it identified a "failure to allocate adequate resources (i.e. lack of specific budget allocations or full-time KM staff in projects and in IFAD country offices)" as a key constraint to KM.

255. KM funding sources are diverse in general. Loan-based KM financing is often restricted due to governmental preferences for tangible interventions, and occasional legislative constraints. Tracking KM expenditures in loan projects is complicated by inconsistent data from IFAD's OBI/Operations Document Centre (ODC) systems. Although grants once prominently positioned IFAD in KM, their allocations have notably decreased. For instance, the CSPE Indonesia reported a 50 per cent drop in KM and policy funding from 2013 to 2021. Yet, supplementary KM funding has surged since 2019. The adoption of Reimbursable Technical Assistance remains minimal given that the organization's experience with such assistance has been "mixed" and only "partially successful".[110]

KM funding under IFAD's administrative budget (Pillar II)

256. **IFAD's administrative budget includes a budget for KM under Pillar II**. Since 2018, IFAD has integrated the Institutional Output Groups (IOGs)[111] approach into its administrative budgeting process. The IOGs link divisional outputs to IFAD's four Results Pillars in the IFAD Strategic Framework. This CLE particularly examined Pillar II, "Knowledge Building, Dissemination, and Policy Engagement", out of the four results pillars contributed by IOGs. Outputs under Pillar II focus on amplifying global or corporate knowledge and enhancing IFAD's visibility in its field of work. They also emphasize the scaling up of best practices and innovative solutions. These outputs play a crucial role in strengthening the capacity to learn, generate and disseminate lessons and innovations related to rural development, including policy engagement at a global level.[112]

257. In general, the majority of the budget for Pillar II is directed towards P2002 - communication, visibility, and outreach, accounting for 24 per cent of the total Pillar II budget. The minimal portion is allotted to P2003 – knowledge promotion and P2004 – SSTC. Between 2018 and 2021, the share of the administrative budget allocated to Pillar II slightly increased from 11.03 per cent to 12.36 per cent of the total administrative budget. The largest part of this increase was attributed to the increased budget for P2002, which directly supports IFAD's communications, visibility and outreach to external audiences, including communication products, tools, and events that promote IFAD's brand (see figure 23 in annex VI).

258. **The departmental budgets under Pillar II show great variation**. In 2021, departments with the highest Pillar II budget were SKD (US$7.05 million), primarily invested in corporate knowledge and research; ERG (US$7 million), predominantly focused on communication and outreach and PMD (US$3.25 million). Among various divisions, COM was allocated the largest amount of Pillar II budget (US$4.13 million), followed by PMI (US$3.21 million) and GPR (US$2.27 million).

259. The CLE has discerned a substantial ambiguity and inconsistency in the methodologies employed for the allocation of Pillar II budget among the five regional divisions within PMD. LAC allocated the largest share of its divisional administrative budget to Pillar II, accounting for 9 per cent of total divisional budget, whereas WCA allocated the least of its administrative budget to Pillar II, accounting for only 2 per cent of total divisional budget. APR, LAC and NEN primarily allocated their Pillar II budget to communication products and outreach. In contrast, ESA focused more on global policy and partnership and SSTC, and WCA primarily invested in enabling management and support (see figure 25 in annex VI). Further, when analysing expense types under Pillar II among the five regional divisions, APR allocated the largest portion of its budget to staff costs, while ESA allocated the most to travel costs and consultancy services. Overall, the varied approaches to allocating the Pillar II budget among the five regional divisions suggest a potential need for enhanced uniformity and standardized procedures to ensure efficient resource mobilization for knowledge management within the department.

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110 The QAG review on Reimbursable Technical Assistance highlighted several key challenges, including: (i) the eligibility of the country; (ii) the potential risk to IFAD's reputation regarding its expertise and knowledge for the foreseen investments under the assistance grant; (iii) the availability of human and financial resources to guarantee seamless execution of related activities, which is crucial as IFAD's country and technical teams frequently face challenges in meeting its demands due to the vastness of their traditional lending portfolio; and (iv) the unclear role of the lead division for IFAD Reimbursable Technical Assistance.

111 IFAD uses IOGs to map divisional plans, staff time, and non-staff resources to the four pillars. See 2019 IOG reference guide.

112 IFAD. 2018. *Institutional Output Groups (IOGs) Reference Guide for 2019.*

FIGURE 12

Top 5 divisions with highest share of Pillar II budget vs. total corporate budget (2021) by component (US$)

Legend:
- ■ P2001 - Corporate Knowledge & Research
- ■ P2002 - Communication Products & Outreach
- ■ P2004 - South-South & Triangular Coop.
- ■ P2005 - Impact Assessments
- ■ P2006 - Global Policy Engagement & Partner
- ■ P2007 - Enable & Support
- ■ P2008 - Enabling Management Functions
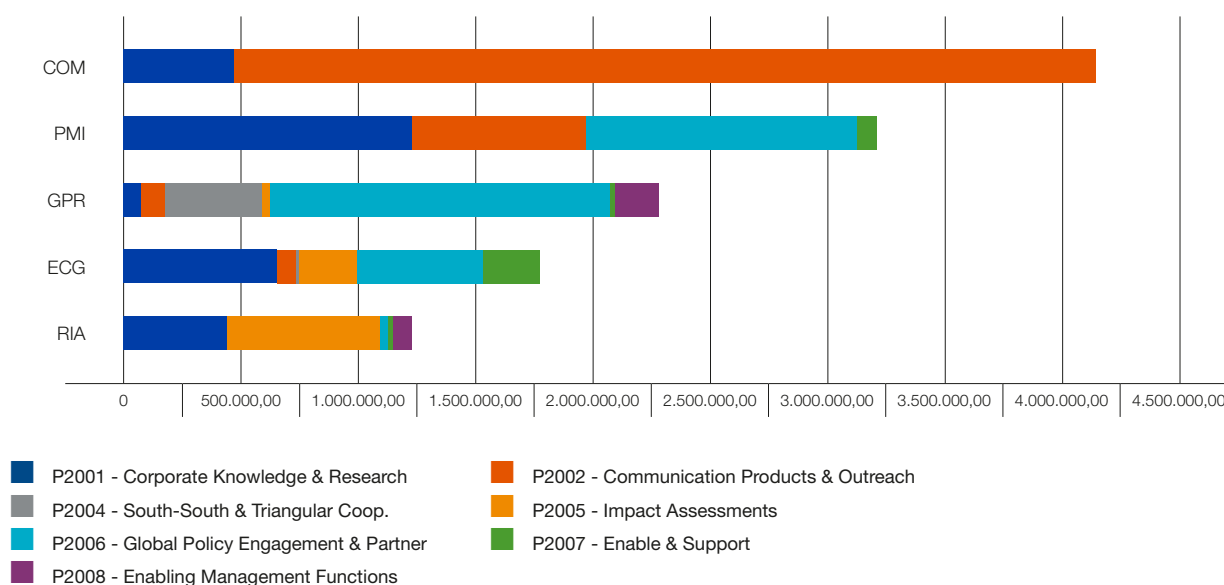
Source: CLE analysis on data provided by the Office of Strategic Budgeting (OSB).

Supplementary funds

260. **Supplementary funds were an important source of funding for KM**. IFAD received a total amount of US$43.84 million as supplementary funds tagged for KM over the period 2016-2023. The main beneficiaries were PMI (US$25.79 million), GPR (US$13.3 million) and ECG (US$3.7 million). Within the IFAD divisions, GPR managed the highest number of KM supplementary fund agreements (19 agreements). The supplementary funds for the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development,[113] managed by GPR, made up 52 per cent of all KM-themed supplementary fund donor agreements. Furthermore, the Global Programme for Small-scale Agroecology Producers and Sustainable Food Systems Transformation, managed by PMI, represented the largest funding amount, accounting for 58 per cent of the total amount of KM-themed supplementary funds. Following this, the China-IFAD SSTC Facility held the second-largest supplementary funding amount for KM.

261. From 2016 to 2023, there was a notable increase in the share of supplementary funds relevant to knowledge management, growing from 0 per cent to 10.92 per cent of total supplementary funds. The peak of KM supplementary fund agreements was reached in 2020, with nine agreements, which then decreased to five by 2023. Over the review period, the top four donors or Member States contributing to KM-themed supplementary funds were the European Commission, China, Belgium and the Visa Foundation (see table 4 below).

113 The Global Donor Platform for Rural Development is a network of 41 bilateral and multilateral donors, international financial institutions, intergovernmental organizations, foundations and development agencies. It has three strategic objectives: (i) strategic influencing; (ii) knowledge-sharing; and (iii) networking and convening.

TABLE 4
Top five donors' supplementary funds labelled with the theme of KM (2016-2023)

Donors/Member States	Sum of donor agreement amount (US$)
European Commission	20 147 080
China	10 000 000
Belgium	5 474 750
Visa Foundation	3 500 000
Italy	1 426 173

Source: CLE analysis on OBI data.

Grants for knowledge management

262. **Grants have been a major source of funding for KM in IFAD**. IFAD's review of 52 grants to five major grantees in 2017-18 noted that its capacity to provide a continued flow of grants to support research and knowledge institutions in the rural development sector placed IFAD as a significant knowledge partner. There is no recent independent evaluation of IFAD's grants programme. The last IOE CLE on grants was completed in 2014. Other reports, such as the 2019 MOPAN and the 2013 CLE on institutional efficiency, included analysis of the grant instrument from their respective points of view. These assessments highlight the usefulness of grants to advance IFAD's mandate, for instance by strengthening government capacities to implement IFAD-funded projects and by funding research and innovation. Grants have also been instrumental to policy engagement, establishing partnerships and providing rapid responses to crisis situations.

263. A review of the grant's portfolio by IFAD (QAG 2020) and the grant recipient reports commissioned by IFAD between 2017 and 2018 on five major grant recipient organizations[114] provide several supporting examples of grants in each of these areas. These findings illustrate that overall, grants play a significant knowledge management role, in that they contribute to primary knowledge production, building capacities in support of project implementation and promote sharing of lessons. At the regional level, there is a more mixed picture. Grants in LAC clearly placed IFAD as an important player in the regional policy debates (LAC regional case study). A series of regional grants to regional bodies such as MERCOSUR have enabled IFAD to enter the regional policy debates by providing funding for learning-oriented studies and knowledge products. The same has clearly not occurred in other regions, according to the CLE's regional case studies.

264. The reduction in financial resources for regular grants, the revised procedure for grant allocations and the shift in the grant policy's objectives have led to declining opportunities for using grants for knowledge management. The amount allocated to regular grants has declined sharply in IFAD 12, compared to previous cycles, with a significant impact on the use of grants for knowledge management. In the IFAD 11 cycle, regular grants consisted of 6.5 per cent of the IFAD programme of loans and grants, resulting in an actual allocation of US$190 million. In IFAD 12, the amount allocated to grants was substantially reduced and capped at US$75 million[115] and the grant application and reporting process was revised.

114 The grant recipient organizations were the International Centre for Tropical Agriculture, the International Center for Tropical Agriculture in the Dry Areas, the World Agroforestry Centre, the International Food Policy Research International and PROCASUR.

115 See GC 44/L.6/Rev.1, and revised replenishment assumptions in EB 2021/133/R.13.

265. In addition, the 2021 Corporate Grant Policy aimed at integrating grants more closely with IFAD projects and strengthening quality assurance mechanisms. However, this resulted in a heavier proposal and approval process for IFAD divisions submitting grant proposals, which now must go through QAG's review process, as IFAD loans do. Also, proposals for country-specific grants can come only from IFAD country teams, stretching their limited human resources, which are primarily focused on programme delivery. In addition, the centralization of grant allocations and a competitive application process means that IFAD divisions face a decreasing likelihood of their grant proposals being approved. Finally, the new grants policy of 2021 identified two strategic objectives for regular grants: leveraging impact on the ground for IFAD's programme of work; and fostering a more conducive policy and investment environment for smallholder agriculture and rural development.

266. This reflected a desire to realign the use of regular grants more strictly towards programme delivery, thereby **reducing the scope for fifth- and sixth-generation knowledge practices, which focused on supporting collaborative research and innovation**. The combination of all these factors has led to decreasing interest and time that IFAD divisions and country offices invest in preparing grant proposals, which is likely to negatively impact the previously strong role grants play in knowledge management. As a mitigating action, technical divisions are increasingly seeking to mobilize grant funds from supplementary external resources. However, this do not allow IFAD the same degree of freedom to design grant activities, as the divisions need to negotiate these with the donor agency.

267. Despite the positive contribution grants make to KM, the knowledge generated by them has not been sufficiently managed and exploited. This was due to weak monitoring and reporting on grants and the lack of a well-organized document repository. The new grant policy of 2021 aimed to address this issue by establishing a portfolio-level monitoring of grant activities by the Quality Assurance Group (QAG). However, the issue of storage and organization of documents remains an issue. While many of IFAD's regular grant-funded operations are specifically geared towards knowledge generation, more can be done to systematically and explicitly mine and utilize grant outcomes to inform project design. Design reports do not often mention linkages between ongoing subregional or global grants that focus on knowledge generation on specific themes, which could be beneficial to individual IFAD-financed projects.

268. In fact, grants that were strongly linked to IFAD projects (loans) could leverage project resources for supervision and monitoring, which would ensure a more direct uptake of its knowledge products into IFAD projects. For example, the grant to the World Agroforestry Centre[116] leveraged the Centre's expertise in land degradation to inform the design of several IFAD projects addressing land degradation in the East and Southern Africa region. Similarly, the grant to the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services[117] was designed to link to IFAD-funded value chain projects, strengthening their relevance and effectiveness. Since grants do not have allocated funds for supervision, the linkage to the project ensured that project supervision missions could also extend the monitoring to the grantee's performance, ensuring a greater likelihood of effective implementation. Furthermore, the linkage of the grant to projects ensured strong government buy-in.

Regional-level resources for KM

269. **An examination of the regional divisions indicated an uneven distribution of financial and human resources, with some better equipped than others, but all facing distinct challenges**. **APR** boasted a dedicated KM team in 2020 and 2021, albeit small in size, with financial resources seemingly piecemeal, relying primarily on the regional budget and grants. This set-up sufficed for elementary KM duties but fell short when aiming for more substantial KM results, which require a steady budget stream. Similarly, **NEN** is navigating a declining grant portfolio, placing its non-lending, policy engagement initiatives at risk. These financial constraints, coupled the an absence of a dedicated KM framework, have resulted in an unsustainable, though at times positively impactful, KM approach driven by a handful of grants. **ESA**'s situation was particularly stark, with palpable constraints in staffing and funding, signalling a need for greater dedication to KM endeavours. While indicating budgets in its KM action plans, ESA often grappled with the uncertainty of these funds being realized. Moreover, grants have been frequently disconnected from their core KM strategy. The **LAC** region presented a varied picture. While units like the SSTC&KC Centre in Brasilia have the necessary KM expertise, others, such as the Panama MCO, are stretched thinly in resources. Their financial strategy for KM, primarily fuelled by regional grants, was effective but presented

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116 Grant 2000001302.
117 Grant 2000001996.

uncertainties for future activities due to a reliance on savings. Lastly, **WCA** grappled with significant constraints in both personnel and budget. Extended vacancies in key KM roles and an ambiguous budgetary outline have hindered the consistent roll-out of their KM initiatives, and point to the absence of committed financial allocation to KM. In essence, for the regional divisions to thrive in their KM capacities, there is a clear need for a more structured and sustainable resource allocation strategy.

270. **At country level, KM is grossly underresourced and relies on ad hoc measures to plug funding gaps**. In 2017-18, IFAD's assessment of 52 grants given to five primary beneficiaries underscored its consistent funding ability for research and knowledge institutions within the rural development sector, establishing itself as an integral knowledge collaborator. Beyond this grant-focused approach, IFAD's country teams tapped into other internal funds, like regional budgets and project savings, to support KM activities. Nonetheless, in several evaluated countries, there was a notable gap or absence of systematic endeavours to secure additional financial resources for KM outside these grants, with a prevailing reliance on individual project allocations. This suggests that, despite some countries taking proactive steps to seek alternative funding, a broader opportunity remains to enhance financial diversification for KM at the country level. A concerted effort to consistently source funds from a range of channels could significantly elevate KM initiatives.

E. The cost-effectiveness of knowledge products and practices

Cost-effectiveness of knowledge products

271. **Cost-effectiveness of knowledge products is not analysed in IFAD, which poses the risk of an inefficient allocation of resources**. The reformulated results measurement framework of the KM strategy, following the midterm review, makes adjustments to the indicators of knowledge products' quality and use. However, these are not analysed in relation to the costs of the products. Downloads and citations are the main indicators of the use of knowledge products, although studies from the World Bank and ADB illustrate how these are ineffective at tracking use. Knowledge products are a major investment. For instance, the World Bank was found to invest 25 per cent of its country services' budget in knowledge products, with limited research on their impact. However, the indications of their use were troubling, as over 31 per cent were never downloaded, and almost 87 per cent received no citations.[118] Accurate monitoring systems are challenging to establish, because for example, knowledge products used internally (e.g. for project design) are usually not cited, and the putative measure would underestimate their use. In its analysis of its knowledge products, the ADB identified a number of challenges relating to their effectiveness, their classification systems, lack of clear definitions, time-constraints for staff members using the knowledge products, and lack of definitions of what they are.[119]

118 Doemeland, D. & Trevino, J. 2014. *Which World Bank Reports Are Widely Read?* Policy Research Working Paper 6851, Washington DC: World Bank.
119 ADB. 2012. *Knowledge Products and Services: Building a Stronger Knowledge Institution*. Manila. https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/evaluation-document/35981/files/ses-kps.pdf

272. **The CLE used a qualitative approach for estimating the average costs of IFAD's key knowledge products**. The team conducted interviews with key resource persons to obtain "ballpark" estimates of the average cost for IFAD's knowledge products.[120] It then divided these with the products' average number of views on IFAD's website in the period 2016-2022.[121] Both views and costs were organized into three groups (low, medium and high) based on the range of costs and views obtained from the data, and plotted in figure 13 below.[122] The review shows that policy briefs and the advantage series were among the low- and medium-cost products which had good outreach. Impact assessments are more costly because they require primary data collection. The Rural Development Report has the highest costs, but also high outreach. **The review also shows that IFAD is short of relevant knowledge products that can be produced at reasonable costs**. The k-packs are a low-cost product, but their effectiveness cannot be ascertained yet.[123]

120 Tables with estimated cost data included in annex III.
121 The analysis used the total number of views of each publication in the period 2016-2022 (not per year). It then created averages for each series, averaging the views of each product within each series. The series-level averages were then used to produce the figure.
122 The data on the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World only take into account views through the IFAD website, and are therefore likely to be very much underestimated. Indeed, the report is also available through the websites of the other four co-authoring agencies (FAO, UNICEF, WFP, WHO), which however had not provided their download data in a timely manner and could not be included in this CLE.
123 K-packs show promise, though the only case out of the four developed in LAC that had gone through QAG review at the time of this CLE showed poorer ratings in QAG design ratings compared to annual averages in other LAC project designs.

FIGURE 13

Costs and views plot of selected IFAD knowledge products
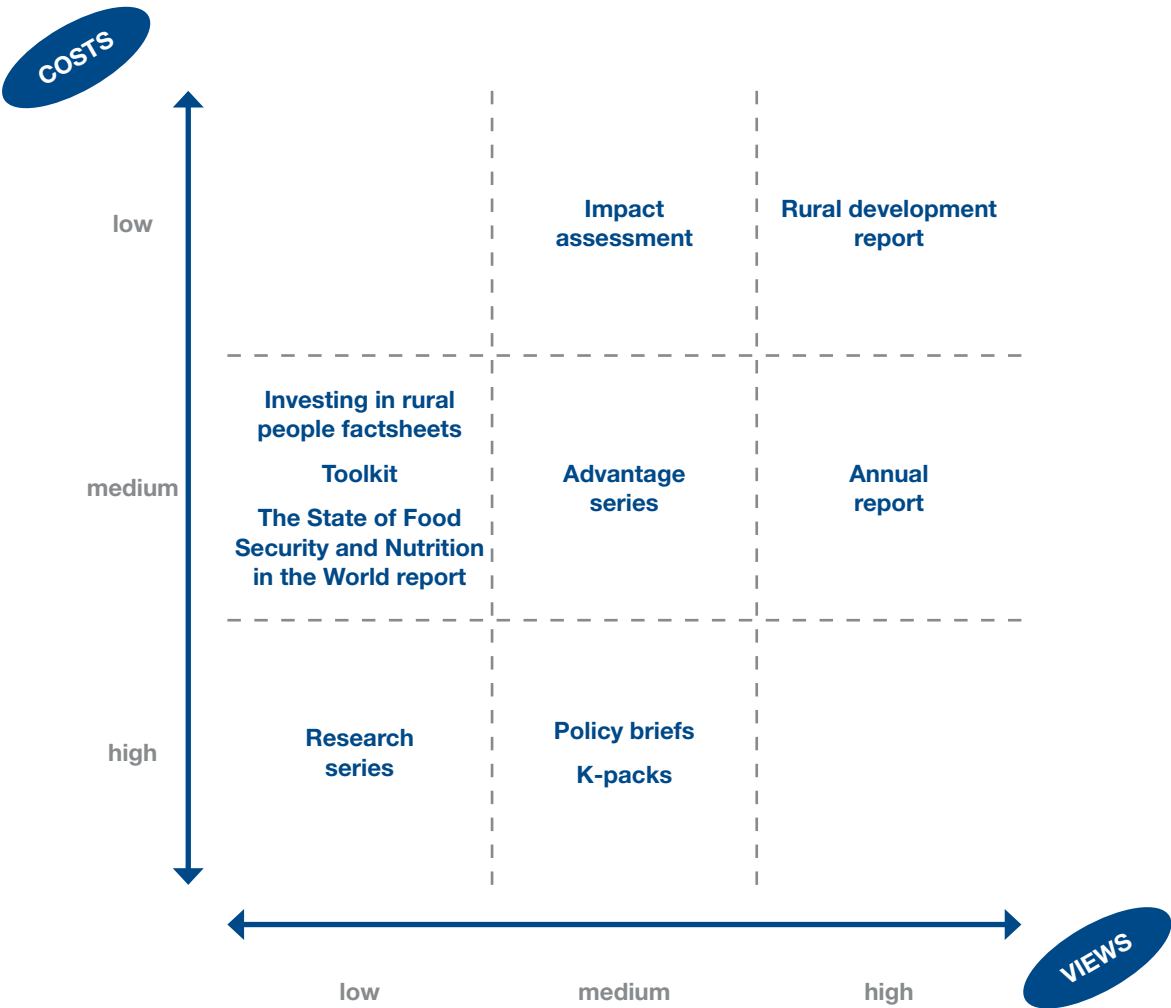
Source: CLE analysis based on views data from ICT and cost data from CLE interviews.

273. **Harmonization of knowledge products, including publishing in limited series, offers inherent advantages in terms of cost-efficiency**. The MTR noted that there has been progress on the process of harmonization, including digitizing design. A free design and layout app, Canva, for creating publications cost-effectively is available online. Interviews by the CLE, however, indicate that harmonization efforts have stalled. Analysis of the series and individual publications indicates that the harmonization efforts are even going in reverse; there is evidence of deharmonization. In the period 2016-2019, the majority of publications were part of series. For example, in 2016, some 88 per cent of publications were part of a series, while in 2017-2019 the number was roughly 82 per cent each year. By 2020, the number of publications in series was roughly half (53 per cent) but in 2021 and 2022, non-series publications were the majority, reaching 70 per cent and 67 per cent respectively.

274. **Better access to knowledge products could also improve their cost-efficiency**. CLE interviews and staff survey interviews indicate a large amount of time is wasted by IFAD staff in locating knowledge products, as a result of an ineffective archiving and document storage systems and the taxonomy/classification system to manage documents. The absence of a functioning searchable document system leads to IFAD staff resorting to ad hoc requests to colleagues to meet the demands of the production of specific communication or analytical material. This burdens staff, especially in country offices, who have limited capacity in relation to the requests received. Staff indicated that a better repository system would be beneficial to reducing this burden, while understanding that such requests could not be entirely eliminated. Furthermore, the predominance of English-language publications also limits their use in non-English-speaking countries. CLE interviews point to the willingness of IFAD staff to make knowledge products available in all languages but lacking the funding for translation. In the future, this problem might be mitigated through the effective use of artificial intelligence.

Cost-effectiveness of knowledge management practices

275. **Direct exchanges between project-level stakeholders are among the most cost-effective knowledge management practices**. The CLE's country case studies indicate that practices such as cross-project learning activities, project periodic reviews and FFSs are among those with a good balance between cost and effectiveness. The costs of such practices vary broadly, depending, for instance, on the geographical scope of the exchanges and the number of participants. Therefore, the CLE cost-effectiveness analysis is based on broad estimates. Effectiveness, as measured by CLE interviews in country case studies, relates to the extent to which these practices led to KM outcomes such as improved project performance.

276. Figure 14 presents an overview of the KM practices found. Low-cost practices with low outcomes include the documentation of success stories, social media and project websites. The analysis also illustrated that the presence of KM strategies and action plans at country level was not a highly effective practice, while it bears medium-level costs. On the contrary, the participatory research conducted within projects showcases a robust 75 per cent success rate (based on the 20 CLE country case studies), as its deep level of analysis of project-related issues provided valuable contributions to project performance; this, however, comes at a relatively higher cost. Finally, the SKD knowledge clinics are low-cost and high-effectiveness practices, as they entail short 30-minute demand-driven sessions for IFAD staff to obtain guidance from the KM unit in SKD on various aspects of KM, such as getting basic guidance on KM, extracting relevant data from projects and managing limited resources allocating to KM.

FIGURE 14

Costs and outcomes of selected IFAD knowledge practices
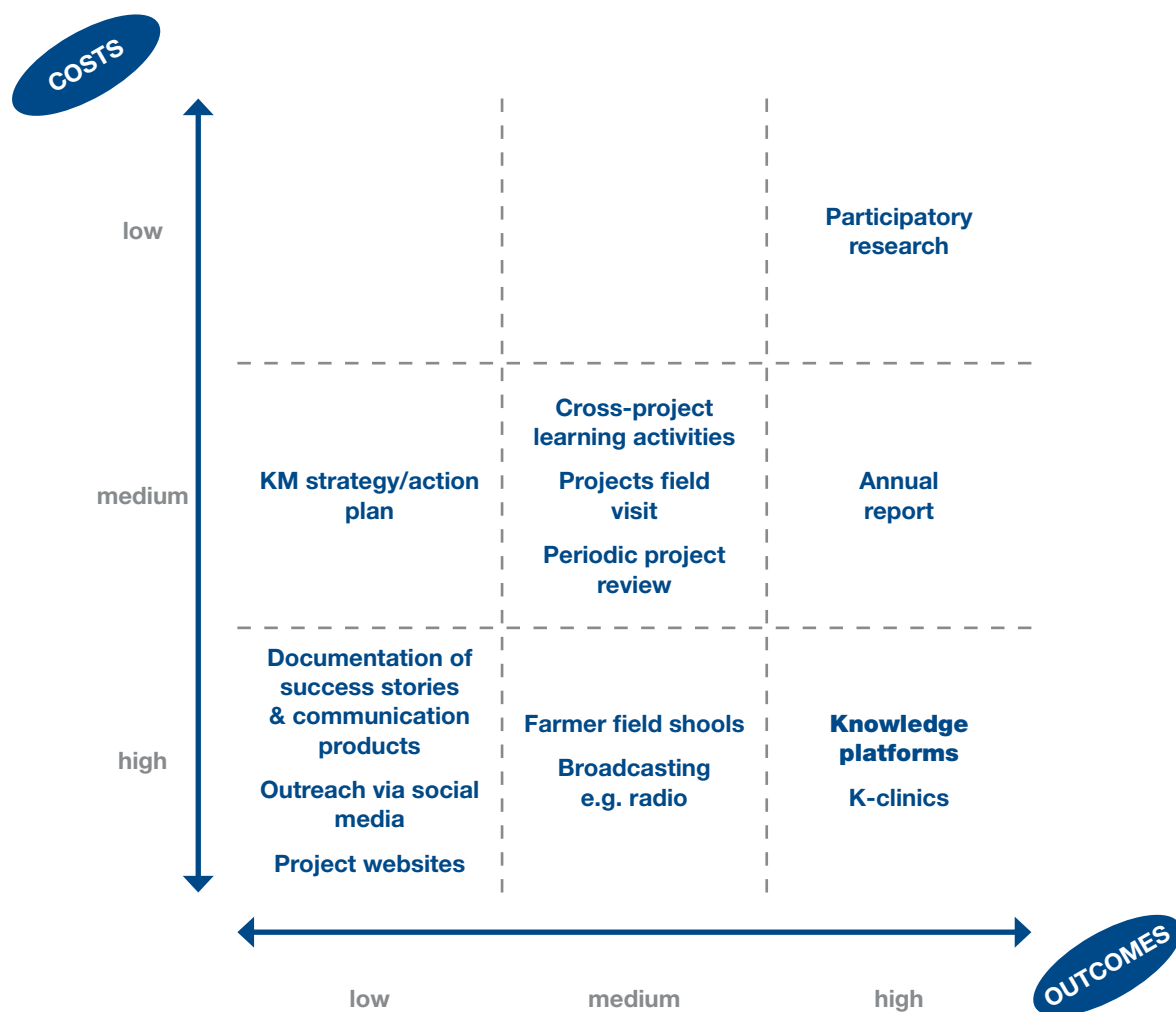
Source: CLE analysis based on website viewing data from ICT and cost data from CLE interviews.

277. Communication and social media-related practices are among the most frequently mentioned KM practices. Despite being low in cost and often perceived as less effective for knowledge management, country studies have confirmed their effectiveness. Collecting and disseminating success stories, especially through local TV and radio channels, serve primarily as communication and outreach tools. While their direct contribution to knowledge management may be low, they are moderately cost-effective at the country level. Furthermore, IFAD promotes the use of radio to share local knowledge among farmers.

278. **IFAD's knowledge platforms generally require relatively low costs, while their effectiveness varies significantly depending on the level of engagement of members**. Within IFAD's arrangement of knowledge management platforms, there exists a diverse range of platforms tailored to different audiences, objectives, and methods of engagement. These include websites (e.g. IFAD.org), communities of practice, social media platforms (e.g. Facebook groups), networks (e.g. SAFIN) and living repositories (e.g. IFAD's KM resource centre). While detailed costings are not available, the CLE assessed through interviews that the costs of maintaining these platforms is low, with somewhat higher costs associated with websites, which require a basic IT infrastructure to be maintained, as opposed to other platforms. Engagement is measured by the number of members and the number of messages exchanged on the platform. However, as these data were not available for all platforms, they were complemented with interviews and, where possible, direct observation.

279. **Platforms that cater to both internal and external stakeholders have greater reach and influence**. Examples include the IFAD Biodiversity Knowledge Platform, Cambodia Data Use Community for Agriculture and Rural Development, and IFAD Innovation Network, which report high levels of engagement. Similarly, social media outreach is evident in platforms like IFADASIA and FIDAfrique/IFADAfrica, with significant audience numbers on Facebook. Such platforms underscore IFAD's commitment to connecting with a wider audience, harnessing the power of popular digital platforms to amplify messages.

280. Engagement remains paramount in measuring the vitality of these platforms. Notably, the IFAD Innovation Network and Farmers' Organizations for Africa, the Caribbean and Pacific stand out with high message engagement, suggesting vibrant, active communities of users who frequently interact and share information. In contrast, platforms like Uganda Data Use Community and ESA-Division Country programme assistant's Group appear more muted, hinting at their primary role as an information dissemination channels.

281. **Externally owned platforms introduce the potential for enriched collaborative engagement, broadening the scope of influence and knowledge-sharing**. Platforms such as KM4DEV, SAFIN,[124] and the Platform for Agriculture Risk Management[125] serve as avenues where IFAD can potentially harness a more extensive range of expertise, perspectives and resources. Furthermore, such collaborations might just be the gateway to amplify the effect of KM as a whole, offering richer insights and fostering a more holistic approach to addressing challenges. However, it is important to recognize that the tangible effects and contributions of these platforms to IFAD vary. While the potential is vast, the actual outcome depends on several factors, including the alignment of goals, availability of resources and mutual commitment.

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124 The Smallholder and Agri-SME Finance and Investment Network, hosted by IFAD: **https://safinetwork.org/**.
125 The Platform for Agricultural Risk Management, hosted by IFAD: **https://www.p4arm.org/**.

282. Platforms are flexible tools, with their use rising and falling depending on the engagement of their members, keeping costs low, and allowing IFAD to adapt to emerging needs. While certain platforms have showcased continued relevance from 2014 to 2023, others, particularly more recent ones, are yet to demonstrate that they tailor to specific demands. In particular, posts on the IFAD social reporting blog only extend to 2020, pointing to limited reader interaction thereafter.

283. Platforms have diverse uses and purposes. CoPs such as the IFAD Biodiversity Knowledge Platform offer specialized insights, while more universal platforms like social media and websites provide broader outreach. IFAD's Philanthropy Learning Lab (developed by IFAD's Partnerships and Resource Mobilization Office) stands out with its actionable objectives, hinting at the potential for real-world impact in forms like partnerships or fund sourcing.

284. Region-specific platforms allow IFAD to fine-tune content and engagement strategies, providing a more targeted and effective KM approach. To maximize the potential of these external platforms and what they can bring to the table for KM, it is imperative that there be a consistent and guaranteed flow of resources. This not only includes financial investments but also involves dedicated time, effort and commitment from all involved parties. Guaranteeing these resources ensures that the platforms can operate at their optimum capacity, bringing their fullest potential contribution to KM within IFAD's context.

F. Overall efficiency of resources for KM

285. Resources for KM are unevenly distributed in IFAD. Financial and human resources are concentrated in IFAD headquarters, and more specifically in SKD. Regional divisions and country offices are notoriously short of financial and human resources for KM. There is a small number of full-time KM staff and experts, the majority of whom are at junior levels and paid from supplementary funds. This pattern does not enable broad-based ownership among IFAD staff and limits the prospects for a sustained integration of KM practices into the organization. The review found that IFAD is short of a broader range of cost-efficient knowledge products. Cost-efficient KM practices such as knowledge clinics and knowledge platforms are currently run by consultants and would require qualified staff to be sustained.

Key findings on the efficient use of resources for KM

- The adoption of the KM strategy did not lead to an increase in human and financial resources to match the ambition of the strategy.

- Staff are the key KM asset for IFAD. In all cases, success depended on the individual motivation and commitment of staff. **High workloads, understaffed country offices, vacant positions and a knowledge drain due to reassignment and the turnover of staff** were recurrent themes.

- **The use of consultants to initiate and sustain KM practices in regional and HQ divisions limits the ownership and integration of KM within the organization**. Staff positions fully dedicated to KM are scarce and mostly funded from supplementary funds.

- The capacity of SKD to support KM at the country level is limited. SKD staff with project assignments have little time to support KM, even if they are posted in the region or country.

- An examination of the regional divisions indicated an uneven distribution of financial and human resources. **At country level, KM is grossly underresourced and relies on ad hoc measures to plug funding gaps**.

- The evaluation noted the absence of systematic plans for capturing and transferring tacit knowledge before staff departure in most country case studies.

- **Cost-effectiveness of knowledge products is not analysed in IFAD**, which poses the risk of an inefficient allocation of resources. The review also shows that IFAD is short of relevant knowledge products that can be produced at reasonable costs.

- At country level, project staff have adapted a number of low-cost KM practices. Direct exchanges between project-level stakeholders are among the most cost-effective KM practices. Communication and social media-related practices are low in cost and country studies have confirmed their effectiveness.

- Better access to knowledge products could also improve their cost-efficiency. Platforms and CoPs are a cost-efficient way to increase access to knowledge, but the large number of platforms in IFAD also reduces efficiency. Platforms and CoPs that cater to both internal and external stakeholders have greater reach and influence.

Chapter VII

Conclusions and recommendations

VII. Conclusions and recommendations

A. Conclusions

286. The CLE has reviewed a period which has seen major strategic developments and organizational reforms. SKD was reconfigured in 2018. This involved moving the technical arm of PMD – the PTA – into SKD, where it became PMI and ECG. IFAD Senior Management adopted the KM strategy in 2019 with an action plan focused on SKD; at the same time, it established the CDI and the three SSTC and KM Centres under different departments. While continuing with the decentralization reforms, the organization implemented significant reassignment exercises in 2020 and 2022, causing major movements and disruptions in country programmes, as previously noted in the IOE CLE on decentralization (2023). Furthermore, many senior staff, including the senior knowledge officer, have retired and younger staff have taken their positions. The extent of these changes, and their disjointed nature, made it challenging for the organization to discharge a forceful organization-wide KM initiative in line with the ambitions of its knowledge management strategy.

287. **The KM architecture is lagging behind the unfolding decentralization process**. The 2019 KM strategy was a state-of-the-art document with the potential to align its evolving KM architecture to the ongoing decentralization reforms. IFAD has made substantive progress in enhancing its field presence since 2019; CDs, who have a responsibility for KM in partner countries, are now outposted. In order to fulfil its decentralization targets IFAD has dismantled some of the HQ-based PMI teams that had been leading knowledge exchange at global levels, for example on rural finance, by deploying them to different regions. The SKD staff outposted to decentralized offices retain a reporting line to HQ, limiting integration into the decentralized structure. Nevertheless, the majority of SKD staff, especially those at senior levels, remain in HQ. Providing effective support to regions, while maintaining visibility and excellence globally in areas that are of strategic importance for IFAD, will be a difficult balancing act.

288. **IFAD's institutional set-up for KM is not adequate to position itself as a knowledge player on rural transformation within the larger landscape**. The formal KM architecture is focused on SKD, disregarding the organization-wide nature of KM in IFAD and the diversity of KM roles within the organization. Within this fragmented institutional framework, the KMCG has been useful as an entity-wide platform for knowledge-sharing. As a convener of the KMCG, SKD front office does not have the capacity to support a more coherent and effective KM approach across various departments. IFAD's ambition to contribute to rural transformation, including scaling up solutions, requires recognizing the different roles in KM that would adequately consolidate and share different types of knowledges with its stakeholders at global, regional and country levels. IFAD's knowledge is produced in a piecemeal, fragmented, "projectized" way, without thinking strategically about contributions to necessary systemic changes needed for rural transformation. There is no overarching knowledge agenda, which would enable such a systems approach to knowledge generation and sharing.

289. **Gaps in KM capacity and senior guidance were the underlying reasons for the absence of evidence on KM effectiveness**. IFAD's conceptualization of the role of KM within the organization demonstrates its strategic commitment to use KM to enhance its development effectiveness, recognizing its importance in serving its clients through improved programmes and policy support. Yet, IFAD does not have the frameworks in place to demonstrate its effectiveness as a knowledge provider at corporate, regional and country levels. KM budgets and results are not being tracked, and reporting of corporate-level results is focused on HQ-based activities only. As front-line implementers of KM in IFAD, regional divisions struggle to adequately support KM activities. This dovetails with more structural challenges: the absence of dedicated KM frameworks in some areas points to gaps in strategic planning and KM prioritization. The challenge deepens with lack of capacities and sustainable human resources. Relying on sporadic grants, supplementary funds or project savings introduces uncertainties, hinting at shortfalls in long-term KM planning. Such an approach, while rendering short-term benefits, poses risks for more enduring results.

290. **IFAD has not kept pace with contemporary evolution on KM paradigms**. An effective KM architecture requires different generations of KM practices working together and sustaining one another. IFAD has shown some improvements in first- and second-generation practices through regional-level platforms, repositories and knowledge gap maps, and recent attempts to improve the usability of its corporate data systems. The few examples of the most advanced attempts that emphasize the importance of wider knowledge ecosystems harness ecosystem-diverse knowledges, linking organizational, societal and indigenous knowledge. Transformational fifth- and sixth-generation practices were often funded through regular grants, which are now less available.

291. **Evidence from CLE case studies found positive cases where KM practices in countries have shown results, but overall, they require more support**. Evidence from the country case studies demonstrates that IFAD has the potential and knowledge to deliver highly transformative KM practices at country level that can support rural transformation, and, in some cases, has been able to do this. Projects depend considerably on IFAD support for institutionalizing KM. There is no established body of experiences being leveraged in any country to build foundational capacity for KM during design or implementation. Approaches were typically one-off or ad hoc; the lack of institutional capture of these experiences has led to an inconsistent and fractured approach to KM. Later-generation practices based on multi-stakeholder engagement bring the most tangible routes toward the development results for rural transformation, but are impacted by the availability of a supportive structure and more foundational understanding of the role of KM within projects. Knowledge partnerships can enhance IFAD's effectiveness and impact for rural transformation, as shown by the country case studies. They also strengthen the efficiency of IFAD's KM practices and increase the likelihood that practices and their results will be sustainable.

292. **The CLE highlights the challenges that IFAD will have to address in order to become more effective and efficient in the generation and use of knowledge**. IFAD's internal structures and mechanisms have not been conducive to effective and efficient KM practices. Knowledge retention mechanisms have not been sufficient to mitigate knowledge attrition under IFAD's decentralization and reassignment policies. This was in part due to the lack of well-functioning digital platforms to enable sufficient storage and sharing of knowledge. The absence of senior KM specialists and the scarcity of full-time knowledge managers within the organization are also obstacles to professionalizing KM. Currently, KM expertise and performance is neither well-recognized nor incentivized. The reduced availability of regular grants for KM is a limitation for introducing innovative (fifth- and sixth-generation) KM practices that IFAD will have to overcome.

293. Knowledge will be key for IFAD to raise its relevance as a development player. Knowledge is vital matter to ensure organizations exist at the forefront of rural transformation. IFAD can play a major role in translating knowledge from operations and contributing to the global understanding of how rural transformation can happen. In order to do so, IFAD needs to align its knowledge products and extract the knowledge embedded in its projects. Currently, knowledge from operations is not effectively synthesized and integrated with rigorous assessments for scaling up. Successful mobilization of resources will also require IFAD to keep abreast of the latest development and good practices. Artificial intelligence offers huge imminent potential for IFAD in terms of searching its complex of internal databases and navigating and importing external knowledge. However, this potential and the above related challenges are moving targets, as the field develops very rapidly, making it extremely important for IFAD KM staff to continue in knowledge partnerships.

B. Recommendations

294. The proposed recommendations address the challenges above within the current resource constraints. IFAD could mitigate resource constraints through more effective and efficient use of existing capacities and resources, to some extent. In addition, the CLE recommends that resources for KM should be mobilized through reallocations of internal funding and additional resources from knowledge partnerships.

295. **Recommendation 1: IFAD should reclaim its role in elevating the operational knowledge it generates to a global level, in order to inform the rural transformation debate**.

1a. The current KM strategy should be complemented by a lighter, more flexible '**knowledge agenda**' outlining the goals and priorities of KM throughout IFAD with a greater emphasis on rural transformation and fifth- and sixth-generation practices, such as multi-stakeholder processes and recognizing the importance of local knowledge in country programmes. This will also involve more pluralistic definitions of knowledge. It would also cover the relevant non-lending areas, including SSTC, CLPE and innovation.

1b. **Knowledge partnerships** should be at the core of IFAD's approach to KM and will lead to greater effectiveness and impact. They will also strengthen the efficiency of IFAD's KM practices and increase the likelihood of the sustainability of practices and their results. The agenda would guide stronger engagement with knowledge partnerships at global, regional and country levels.

1c. To address the fragmented institutional framework, IFAD should establish **a small strategic office at executive level**, similar to or combined with CDI, with adequate capacity to guide the implementation of the knowledge agenda. The office would be in charge of initiating, developing and managing the knowledge agenda for IFAD.

1d. **Communities of Practice** (CoPs) should be more systematically used to support innovation and learning and their performance should be monitored.

296. **Recommendation 2: IFAD Management should initiate a decisive shift away from its overly centralized KM architecture and allocate sufficient human and financial resources across decentralized levels**.

   2a. The ongoing decentralization in IFAD would also require more **devolved responsibilities and resources for KM**, with a lighter touch in terms of central planning and reporting. The decentralized KM roles currently in PMI, ECG and SSTC should be firmly integrated into regional structures and reporting lines adjusted accordingly. Reporting on SSTC and KM should transfer into regional divisions – to provide effective support for country offices.

   2b. Regional divisions should consolidate the available **KM capacities** dispersed throughout the organization, and appoint full-time knowledge managers responsible for consolidating knowledge from operations and facilitating knowledge exchanges with stakeholders at country and regional levels. Gaps in KM expertise could be compensated by leveraging knowledge partnerships.

   2c. Regional divisions should develop a framework for monitoring the effectiveness of KM practices at regional and country levels, with adequate indicators to measure **KM outcomes** in terms of changing KM behaviours, skills and capacities, as well as the uptake and use of knowledge products. Performance on KM should be recognized and adequately rewarded.

   2d. The **KMCG** should play an important role as an inclusive platform to support good practices on KM across regions. The **KM resource centre** should continue providing useful standardized tools and resources across KM.

297. **Recommendation 3: IFAD Management should monitor KM effectiveness and focus on practices and products that provide the best value for money at global and operational levels**.

   3a. **Monitoring knowledge products and platforms** needs to be results-focused so that choices can be made between the most effective products and platforms.

   3b. Divisions should adopt a **consistent and comparable budgeting** system for KM. Regional divisions would monitor the cost-effectiveness of the KM practices at regional and country levels.

   3c. Prioritize KM practices that involve local partners in the **co-creation of knowledge**, linking different knowledge systems. Knowledge practices that involve multiple stakeholders are likely to be more effective and sustainable.

   3d. **Annual reports on budget use** and KM results should be reported to the President.

298. **Recommendation 4: IFAD's next Strategic Framework should define how knowledge would enable IFAD to position itself as a driver of rural transformation within a global context of uncertainty and crisis**.

   4a. **Knowledge production** should be guided by a systems approach connecting the multiple dimensions of transformative change and the stakeholders and partners who would contribute to this knowledge. Demand, quality and cost-effectiveness should be among the key criteria driving knowledge generation and sharing.

   4b. Knowledge management should aim to contribute to the "bigger, better and smarter" agenda in IFAD's framework through its role in scaling up, **replication and policy engagement** for transformational change.

   4c. Enhancing the effectiveness of corporate knowledge management should be an integral part of IFAD's **reform agenda**. IFAD would need to define its comparative advantage against other strong KM players among the IFIs and private sector who are also supporting transformative change.

   4d. **Application of international standards** would raise the bar for knowledge management in IFAD. The ISO 30401 provides common definitions and standards for organizational processes that IFAD should consider its future KM strategy.

Annexes

Annex I.
Conceptual framework

A. Overall theory of change

Annex I. Conceptual framework

113

KM ARCHITECTURE

DRIVERS OF CHANGE

| 2030 AGENDA | DECENTRALIZATION 2.0 | CHANGING RESOURCE ENVELOPE | EVOLVING KM4D |

KM DRIVERS

| CULTURE OF RESULTS | INCENTIVES | STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION | STRATEGY | LEADERSHIP | RESOURCES | PARTNERSHIPS |

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

| KM ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN HQ, REGIONAL DIVISION, COUNTRY OFFICES | ARRANGEMENTS FOR KM IN IFAD-SUPPORTED PROJECTS | KM RESPONSIBILITIES IN GOVERNMENT | COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE |

DRIVERS OF CHANGE / IFAD KM PRACTICES

- Local knowledge
- Policy knowledge
- Contextual knowledge
- Indigenous knowledge
- Scientific knowledge
- Experiential knowledge
- Technical knowledge

Relevant knowledges

Knowledge generation
Knowledge sharing/brokering
Knowledge use
Choise
Methods (formal, informal)
Tools

Managing knowledge
Practicing knowledge
More transformative

KM FRAMEWORK

KM practices and tools

- 6th generation KM → Knowledge base of adaptive and sustainable solutions
- 5th generation KM → Stakeholder inclusion and empowerment
- 4th generation KM → Capacities and changing behaviours
- 3rd generation KM → Generating and sharing different types of knowledge
- 2nd generation KM → KM systems embedded in organizational structure
- 1st generation KM → Functioning database and repositories

KM immediate results

IFAD KM RESULTS

Intermediate results

- Improved KM skills/capacities of IFAD staff
- Improved IFAD knowledge products
- Improved KM behaviours of IFAD staff
- Enhanced knowledge partnership
- Improved stakeholder capacities
- Stakeholder empowerment
- Better design and implementation of programmes
- Enhanced innovation and scaling up
- Enhanced country-level policy engagement

Pathways continue in page 2

Development results

- Improved enabling policy and institutional environmental
- More effective contribution from IFAD supported interventions
- Different types of knowledge assembled and used in the process of rural transformation

Inclusivity and participation
Knowledge brokerage and co-creation
Learning from practice
Coss-cutting, long-terme scope
Systemic thinking

Rural transfomation and greater contribution towards the towards 2030 Agenda

FIGURE ANNEX I. 2

B. The pathways to results

Improved KM skills/capacities of IFAD staff
- Conceptual clarity on KM;
- Specific KM training;
- KM mentoring;
- Dissemination and use of existing KM products;
- Contributions to improved KM products/practice.

Enhanced knowledge partnership
- Memorandums of Understandings (MOUs);
- IFAD's added value on K recognised;
- Strategic partnerships at the Policy Level;
- Strategic partnerships with external stakeholders (other IFIs, dev. organizations etc.);
- Enhanced stakeholder collaboration.

Improved KM behaviours of IFAD staff
- Incentives to generate/share/use KM products;
- K sharing culture, active contributions to CoPs;
- Prioritizing/generating innovative KM strategy/products/tools/practice.

Improved IFAD knowledge products
- Quality (language/text flow, relevance of content, targeted to final user);
- Supply/demand from/to relevant stakeholder.

Gov., NGOs, IFIs, Academia, others
- Space for policy engagement;
- Timeliness of k inputs;
- Constant dialogue and engagement with stakeholders.

IFAD
- K retention (attention to turnover/handover/internal sharing of k);
- Sustainability of KM practices and mechanisms;
- K flow/generation/dissemination;
- Opportunities for partnership.

Partners

Corporate level

HQ
- Corporate KM interventions;
- Active CoPs;
- K flow (field-HQ);

Field staff
- Active CoPs
- KM programme implementation;
- K flow (field-HQ);
- Lessons learned from implementation
- Technical/process oversight.

Project level

Government staff (imp.)
- Ownership of KM;
- Responsability for KM in government;
- Use of knowledge for decision making;

PMUs
- Functioning M&E;
- KM strategy;
- K sharing mechanisms;
- Lesson learning from interventions;
- Quality of KM products;
- KM sharing (diff. types);

Use of KM products
- K to inform innovative approaches;
- Lessons learning;
- Collecting best practices.

Access
- Communication;
- Feedback;
- Innovative methods;
- Access to k platforms;

- Informed inputs into stakeholder dialogue;
- Visibility to IFAD;
- Partnerships opportunities.

Improved stakeholder capacities
- Ability to use and generate K.

- Contribution/uptake of rigorous M&E data;

Enhanced country-level policy engagement
- Knowledge by government ministries.
- Alligment with gov. dev. objectives.

Enhanced innovation and scaling-up
- Scale up innovation in other contexts;
- Demand for innovative approaches;
- Innovations appropriate for context.
- Innovative K shared;
- More effective use of K.
- New solutions.

Better design and implementation of programmes
- Stakeholder engagement;
- M&E performance;
- Use of lessons for design;
- Coherence with AWPB;
- Adaptive management;
- Achievement of abjectives;
- Project sustainability.
- Deliver better results.

Stakeholder empowerment
- Capacity-related interventions using K based on needs of stakeholders;
- Not repeating mistakes.
- Stakeholder K (indigenous, farmers,…);
- Ownership;
- Contributio at design stage:
- Policy related projects.

Dev. result 3:
Different types of knowledge assembled and used in the process of rural transformation

Dev. result 2:
More effective contribution from I FAD supported interventions

Dev. result 1:
improved enabling policy and institutional enviromental

Annex II.
Evaluation framework

Overarching evaluation question 1: How relevant and coherent is IFAD's institutional framework for knowledge management given the mandate and needs of the organization and within the global, regional and local contexts in which IFAD works? (relevance and coherence criterion)

Sub-question	Specific questions	Indicators	Data sources
1.1 Is there a clearly articulated strategy guiding KM (at corporate and regional level)? KM STRATEGY	1.1.1 Do **IFAD's corporate KM** strategy and action plan provide clear orientation on KM?	• IFAD's KM strategy is aligned with IFAD's mandate. • IFAD's KM strategy reflects contemporary good practice on KM. • KM strategy objectives and targets are aligned with the allocated budget. • Corporate KM strategy makes explicit the types of knowledge involved for rural transformation. • The KM strategy clarifies the roles of different levels of IFAD and different units. • The KM action plan results framework has clear metrics for knowledge uptake, quality, and influence that are actively tracked, and the results used to adjust future actions on KM.	(1) Corporate review of KM strategy and action plan (4) Corporate level: HQ interviews and FGDs
	1.1.2 Do **regional KM strategies** provide clear orientation on KM?	• Regional KM strategies are aligned with corporate KM strategies. • Regional KM strategies set out clear roles and responsibilities on KM. • Regional KM strategies clarify links with country-level KM. • Regional KM strategies include priorities, actionable areas and related budgets for KM.	(5) Regional division studies
1.2 Is there visible and effective corporate leadership on KM in IFAD and clear strategic direction for corporate, regional and country levels? LEADERSHIP	1.2.2 Does IFAD corporate leadership show strong and visible commitment to KM?	• The Executive Management Committee acts as IFAD's KM champion. KM is regularly discussed at EMC meetings and EMC minutes and decisions reflect the importance of KM. • • Importance of KM is reflected in leadership speeches and presentations (for example, to the Executive Board). • KM delivery is prioritized against other key demands by management.	(1) Review of corporate documents and data: speeches, EMC minutes/decisions (4) Corporate level: HQ interviews and FGDs

Sub-question	Specific questions	Indicators	Data sources

1.3 Are IFAD's institutional arrangements for KM fit for purpose, functioning and well understood? KM architecture	1.3.1 Are there appropriate institutional arrangements for relevant and effective KM in place at the corporate level?	• CoPs and networks are in place to connect IFAD staff at country, regional or corporate levels, as well as with external partners, and strengthen access to the technical expertise and knowledge required to deliver the KM plan.
		• Approaches and tools that support knowledge flows and joint learning, especially user-oriented technologies and platforms combined with targeted communities of practice, support faster access to the collective knowledge of staff, more efficient problem-solving and increased knowledge retention.
		• The KM coordination group is effective at:
		  v. identifying opportunities to change incentives, behaviours, and IFAD's organizational culture to support prioritization of KM;
		  vi. tracking IFAD's performance in KM across the organization through the KM action plan results framework.
		• The KM coordination group effectively develops solutions to KM challenges as they arise, identifies gaps, proposes new initiatives, and contributes to the development of KM guidelines and capacity-building activities.
		• The KM coordination group works as an effective link to convey country and regional concerns and demands to corporate-level partners and access to corporate KM resources for use in country programme delivery.
			(1) Review of corporate documents and data: KM strategies, action plans and related strategies
			
			(4) Corporate-level and partner interviews and surveys: HQ interviews and FGDs
			
			(5) Regional division studies

	1.3.2 Are the appropriate institutional arrangements for relevant and effective KM in place at the regional level?	• KM tools developed at regional division level align with and effectively support delivery of strategic objectives in COSOPs. • Formalized processes to connect IFAD country programme staff with each other, staff at regional/corporate level, and with external partners through communities of practice and networks, are in place and strengthen access to the technical expertise and knowledge required to deliver the KM plan. • There is scope to deliver an effective KM strategy in a cost-neutral way at regional division level. • Regional KM focal points or KM and communication specialists prioritize supporting KM. • Mechanisms to support coordination and exchange among KM staff are in place. • The role of the regional division is well understood at regional, country and corporate levels.	(5) Regional division studies

Sub-question	Specific questions	Indicators	Data sources
1.4 Are types of IFAD knowledge aligned with its strategic objectives and relevant to stakeholder needs? Relevance of knowledge	1.4.1 How relevant was the knowledge produced at HQ, regional and country levels to the three strategic objectives set out in the IFAD Strategic Framework 2016-2025? To what extent are the substantive types of knowledge[126] aligned with IFAD's Strategic Framework? INTERNAL RELEVANCE	• Different types of knowledge (tacit knowledge, codified knowledge, scientific knowledge, evidence for policy, best practices, indigenous knowledge, local knowledge, and others) are being curated and used. • Knowledge products sufficiently address cross-cutting themes of environment and climate, gender, nutrition and youth, and private sector engagement aligns with priorities. • Knowledge products address evidence gaps in IFAD's knowledge on rural development (for example, using IFAD knowledge gap maps). • The corporate decision to prioritize curation of knowledge in the cross-cutting themes of environment and climate, gender, nutrition and youth, and private sector engagement aligns with key knowledge needs of country programmes and partners at country level. • An effective system is in place to capture lessons learned within country programmes and curate them at corporate level.	(1) Review of corporate documents and data: KM strategies, action plans and related strategies; review of KM products (4) Corporate-level and partner interviews and surveys: KAP survey (5) Regional division studies (6) Country case studies
	1.4.2 How relevant was the knowledge produced at HQ and regional levels to the needs of beneficiaries, partners and clients? Are there differences in the relevance of different KM products? EXTERNAL RELEVANCE	• The knowledge products found in corporate knowledge repositories are useful and relevant to IFAD stakeholders. • IFAD KM products and practices rely on and integrate the voices of the rural people, and build on local and indigenous knowledge. • Knowledge generation and curation has been closely informed by the knowledge gaps and priorities identified by SKD, in the broader context of rural development.	(1) Review of corporate documents and data: review of KM products (4) Corporate-level and partner interviews and surveys: KAP survey (5) Regional division studies
	1.4.3 Are diverse types of knowledge found in corporate knowledge repositories? SUPPLY OF DIVERSE TYPES OF KNOWLEDGE	• Many different types of knowledge (tacit knowledge, codified knowledge, scientific knowledge, evidence for policy, best practices, indigenous knowledge, local knowledge and others) are found. • Partners' knowledge is effectively leveraged at global level.	(1) Review of corporate documents and data: review of corporate KM tools and practices
	1.4.4 What are the factors explaining the presence of different KM practice types?		

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126 These include tacit knowledge, codified knowledge, scientific knowledge, evidence for policy, best practices, indigenous knowledge, local knowledge.

Sub-question	Specific questions	Indicators	Data sources
1.5 Are IFAD's knowledge products and tools targeted to and accessible for IFAD's key stakeholders? TARGETING KNOWLEDGE AND ACCESSIBILITY	1.5.1 How effective is the access to IFAD knowledge products and tools by staff posted in different parts of the organization? ACCESS/TARGETING	• IFAD staff store knowledge in accessible ways. • IFAD knowledge platforms and repositories are easily accessible by IFAD staff. • Ease of access is in line with those of other IFIs and development organizations. • IFAD knowledge platforms and repositories store information in an efficient way with limited fragmentation, gaps and overlaps. • Search tools are easy to use and reliable.	(1) Corporate-level KM documents and data review: review of corporate KM tools and practices; review of KM products (4) Corporate-level and partner interviews and surveys: KAP survey; HQ interviews and FGDs
	1.5.2 To what extent are products targeting external audiences accessing and using the knowledge products and tools? ACCESS/TARGETING	• IFAD knowledge platforms and repositories are easily accessible by external users. • IFAD actively ensures its knowledge is available on external platforms.	(1) Corporate-level KM documents and data review: review of corporate KM tools and practices; review of KM products
	1.5.3 Do KM tools make it is easy to find knowledge relevant to demands at country programme level? EASE OF ACCESS	• Existing knowledge within IFAD's systems is easy to locate. • Existing knowledge within IFAD's systems is maintained and updated through curation to remain valuable.	(1) Corporate-level KM documents and data review: review of corporate KM tools and practices; review of KM products (4) Corporate-level and partner interviews and surveys: partner interviews (5) Regional division studies
1.6 How coherent are IFAD's KM practices, internally and externally? COHERENCE	1.6.1 How coherent is IFAD's internal approach and understanding of knowledge management? INTERNAL	• Regional and global grants provide consistent support to IFAD's KM strategic objectives and to the integration of the four mainstreaming themes in IFAD's operations. • There is a shared understanding of KM practices and processes across divisions, at national, regional and central levels. • IFAD's KM approaches and understanding are consistent with approaches and understanding in the areas of SSTC, communications, monitoring, evaluation, digitalization (ICT4D) and country-level policy engagement. • Coherent monitoring and lessons-sharing	(3) Thematic deep dives: grants review (4) Corporate-level and partner interviews and surveys: HQ FGDs and interviews (5) Regional division studies (6) Country case studies
	1.6.2 How coherent are IFAD's KM practices with external partners, especially the UN system and the IFIs and the wider KM4Dev community? EXTERNAL	• IFAD's understanding of KM is consistent with other UN entities (especially the RBAs), IFIs and the KM4Dev community. • At the country level, IFAD engages with the members of the UN Country Team in KM and related areas, including membership of system-wide working groups and sharing knowledge for system-wide programming processes.	(2) Analysis of corporate performance data and evaluations: review of relevant KM evaluations; review of UN organizations and IFIs (4) Corporate-level and partner interviews and surveys: HQ focus group discussions and interviews (6) Country studies

Sub-question	Specific questions	Indicators	Data sources
1.7 What are IFAD's comparative strengths in KM? IFAD COMPARATIVE STRENGTH	1.7.1 What advantage does IFAD have as a knowledge provider relevant to the goals of rural transformation, within the landscape of development organizations?	• A focused, prioritized approach to knowledge development and mobilization exists at corporate level that aligns with investment opportunities, and that delivers in areas where IFAD has a comparative advantage over other IFIs and relevant UN agencies that are in place and operating effectively. • IFAD has been able to position itself as a stakeholder at global level as a "knowledge provider and partner" with UN organizations, IFIs and donors, through its participation in key networks, such as MDLP and KM4dev. • IFAD's comparative strengths are recognized by its development partners.	(1) Corporate-level documents review (2) Analysis of corporate performance data and evaluations: IOE corporate evaluations (CSPE review; CLE synthesis) (4) Corporate-level: partner interviews and FGDs (3) Thematic deep dives: Comparative analysis of good practices from other IFIs and UN entities. (6) Country case studies
	1.7.2 Does IFAD make full use of its comparative strengths when designing its strategies and developing its practices and tools at country level?	• IFAD's comparative strengths on KM are clearly articulated in COSOPs and/or KM strategies. • Evidence exists of assessment of comparative strengths at the country level in developing the COSOP.	(6) Country case studies
	1.7.2 Does IFAD recognize the comparative strengths of external partners and effectively use the most up-to-date global knowledge?	• References to recent research from external sources is found in KM products. • Use of recent peer-reviewed scientific knowledge is evident in KM products.	(4) Corporate-level and partner interviews and surveys: focus group discussions with UN and IFI KM staff; review of knowledge products
1.8 Other factors and lessons learned	1.8.1 What could IFAD learn from comparable UN organizations and IFIs to improve its KM relevance and coherence in the future?		(3) Thematic deep dives: comparative analysis and good practices from other IFIs, UN partners. (4) Corporate-level and partner interviews and surveys: FGDs with UN and IFI KM staff.
	1.8.2 What other factors can explain the relevance and coherence of IFAD's KM practices?		All evidence blocks

Overarching evaluation question 2: To what extent has IFAD, through its KM practices, effectively contributed to rural transformation in a sustainable manner and what factors can explain its performance? (effectiveness criterion)

Sub-question	Specific questions	Indicators	Data sources
2.1 How effective were KM practices in supporting development results? DEVELOPMENT RESULTS	2.1.1 How effective were KM practices in supporting the country-level enabling environment for rural development, including policy development and implementation? Which types of practices have been most effective? (Development Result #1)	• Robust and relevant knowledge is available for stakeholder engagement at the country level. • Lessons learned from operations are systematically documented and shared for country-level policy engagement (CLPE) and scaling up advocacy. • Knowledge generated through SSTC contributes to CLPE at country level. • Lessons learned from IFAD programmes support the scaling up of successful initiatives in country and through SSTC. • Consistently high scaling up ratings are seen in supervision missions and evaluations (ratings 5 and above) – if available. • Forums for policy dialogue exist between the government and its development partners (such as sector working groups) or CoPs, and effectively mainstream innovation experiences for scaling up.	(1) Review of corporate documents and data: review of corporate KM products; SSTC programme review (3) Thematic deep dives: grants analysis (4) Corporate-level and partner interviews and surveys: HQ FGDs and interviews (5) Regional division studies (6) Country case studies

	2.1.2 To what extent have KM practices contributed to strengthen IFAD-funded interventions? Which types of practices have been most effective? (Development Result #2)	• Processes that bring people together to openly reflect, discuss and share their ideas and lessons learned are regularly used and include an openness to discussing failure.
		• Effective mechanisms are in place to support the principles of proximity and adaptability, thereby emphasizing IFAD staff's ability to learn, respond and adapt on a continuous basis. This may relate for example to IFAD country presence, staff turnover, dedicated staff and resources to KM at project and office levels; but also to efficiency of M&E and innovative management approaches such as modules.
		• Tacit knowledge and know-how of staff and consultants is consistently used and maintained.
		• Systematic processes are in place to support cross-learning and innovation from both lending and non-lending activities.
		• Strong evidence that lessons from success and failure are fully embedded in IFAD's operations and informed new strategies and project design.
		• Evidence that KM practices are contributing to IFAD's organizational learning at corporate, regional and country levels via:
		  ▸ Improved quality of project designs
		  ▸ Improved quality of supervision
		  ▸ Improved performance of M&E systems
		  ▸ Adaptive project management.
			(1) Review of corporate documents and data: SSTC programme review
			(2) Analysis of corporate KM performance data and evaluations: QAG publications; climate change evaluation; CLE review
			(3) thematic deep dives: tracking signature solutions
			(4) Corporate-level and partner interviews and surveys: HQ interviews and FGDs
			(5) Regional division studies
			(6) Country case studies

Sub-question	Specific questions	Indicators	Data sources
	2.1.3 To what extent did KM enable and facilitate the assembling and use of different types of knowledge at country level? Which types of practices have been most effective? (Development Result #3)	• Systematic curation of different types of knowledge enables stakeholder access and sharing experience and lessons beyond individual projects. • Co-creation of knowledge: local stakeholders and beneficiaries are **fully engaged** in the design, generation and dissemination of knowledge through practice-based learning and participatory action research in lending and non-lending initiatives. They are perceived as primary contributors of knowledge and active partners in dissemination. • Participatory, qualitative methods are used in consultation processes with national and local stakeholders. There is some evidence that priority is increasingly being given to local and indigenous knowledge and languages, reflecting sixth-generation KM4Dev. • Multiple knowledges of all stakeholders are taken into account in efforts to address the wicked or complex problem of rural transformation, characteristic of fifth-generation KM4dev. • Multi-stakeholder processes are evident in which KM practices go beyond the scope of the project/programme, or the administrative boundary, and reach out to other stakeholders, also using a community or a landscape dimension, consistent with fifth-generation KM.	(6) Country case studies
2.2 How effective were KM strategies in supporting the development and implementation of transformative KM practices? KM STRATEGY	2.2.1 To what extent did IFAD's corporate and regional knowledge management strategies address the conditions for effective generation and use of knowledge in partner countries?	• IFAD's KM practices met the demand from key partners, principally within government, for knowledge. • Systematic curation of project-level documentation takes place that allows stakeholders to both easily access and share experiences and lessons learned from the project portfolio and that can also be used by the IFAD country programme in scaling up and country-level policy engagement. • Existing knowledge within IFAD's systems is easy to locate and country programme staff are willing to search for it. • Ways to effectively link/coordinate support through global and regional grant outputs with contributions to the country programme strategic objectives is possible. • Knowledge that is shared is not context-specific and is useful in other environments.	(6) Country case studies
	2.2.2 To what extent did IFAD's COSOPs and, where available, country knowledge management strategies, address the conditions for effective generation and use of knowledge in partner countries?	• IFAD's KM practices met the demand from key partners, principally within government, for knowledge. • Systematic curation of project-level documentation takes place that allows stakeholders to both easily access and share experience and lessons learned from the project portfolio and that can also be used by the IFAD country programme in scaling up and country-level policy engagement. • Existing knowledge within IFAD's systems is easy to locate and country programme staff are willing to search for it. • Ways to effectively link/coordinate support through global and regional grant outputs with contribution to the country programme strategic objectives is possible. • Knowledge that is shared is not context-specific and useful in other environments.	(6) Country case studies

Sub-question	Specific questions	Indicators	Data sources
2.3 Is IFAD engaging in effective knowledge partnerships at the country level? PARTNERSHIPS	2.3.1 How effective are country-level partnerships to generate, share, broker and use knowledge?	• IFAD's partnership approach is embedded in consultative policy processes in the agricultural sector. • Knowledge partnerships are established with other development organizations, including NGOs. • Knowledge partnerships are established with international research organizations. • Knowledge partnerships are established in the country, with local partners including government and local NGOs. • CoPs are active at inter-organizational level and beyond. • IFAD makes full use of external knowledge to meet its needs.	(2) Analysis of corporate performance data and evaluations: IFAD client surveys (6) Country case studies
	2.3.2 Is there demand from key partners, principally within government, for IFAD knowledge? DEMAND FOR KNOWLEDGE	• Government at different levels expresses demand for knowledge from IFAD. • Government at all levels is using and/or engaging with IFAD KM practices and tools, including through using KM platforms, attending KM events, and participating in CoPs. • Consultative policy processes exist in the agricultural sector, which provides opportunities for IFAD to engage in the process. • Processes that bring people together to openly reflect, discuss and share their ideas and lessons learned are regularly used and include an openness to discussing failure. • Effective operational partnerships for knowledge management are in place. • Knowledge co-creation, involving multiple knowledges and external stakeholders is used for resolving wicked problems.	(6) Country case studies
	2.3.3 Does the government have the capacities for effective KM?	• Adequate capacity for/approaches to policy formulation and implementation exist in relevant institutions of government (in the ministry of agriculture and beyond, as relevant) responsible for policy development and implementation. • The government's ability to engage in effective dialogue is not affected by high staff turnover within the institutions responsible for implementation, irregular fulfilment in providing counterpart funds or problems with monitoring and assessing the impact of operations. • Evidence is found of sufficient know-how on KM and how to use KM tools to support effective curation of project-level documentation.	(6) Country case studies
2.4 Did IFAD share, broker and use the best available knowledge for effective in-country engagement? SUPPLY OF KNOWLEDGE	2.4.1 Was the knowledge generated, shared, brokered and used developed based on strong evidence?	• Robust and relevant knowledge is available and provided in a way that is accessible to country programmes in an unfragmented manner. • KM tools developed at regional-division level align with and effectively support the delivery of KM to achieve strategic objectives in COSOPs. • The KM coordination group effectively develops solutions to KM challenges as they arise, identifies gaps, proposes new initiatives and contributes to the development of KM guidelines and capacity-building activities. • Monitoring, evaluation and learning tools set milestones and track changes over a sufficient length of time, allowing them to capture long-term, iterative processes beyond project time and physical boundaries.	(1) Corporate-level KM documents and data review: review of KM products (5) Regional division studies (6) Country case studies
	2.4.2 Was the knowledge generated, shared and brokered relevant to the needs of users, in IFAD and externally including in other countries (SSTC)?	• Evidence of use of IFAD knowledge platforms and products by external actors. • Evidence of direct learning of external actors of IFAD project interventions.	(6) Country case studies

Sub-question	Specific questions	Indicators	Data sources
2.5 How sustainable have been the IFAD KM practices, tools and results? SUSTAINABILITY	2.5.1 Did IFAD undertake efforts to ensure the sustainability of the KM practices and tools it developed?	• Projects explicitly consider the sustainability of KM practices in design, for example in a planned exit strategy. • Finance and staffing are in place to ensure continuity. • KM partnerships such as platforms, forum and communities of practice are sustainable after external economic support ends.	(6) Country case studies
	2.5. Has IFAD considered and undertaken actions to ensure the sustainability of KM results?	• Projects explicitly consider and plan for the sustainability of results. • Integration of KM practices and products into national structures.	(6) Country case studies
2.6 Other factors and lessons learned	2.6.1. What other factors can explain the effectiveness of IFAD's KM practices?		(3) Thematic deep dives: comparative analysis and good practices from other IFIs, UN partners (4) Corporate-level and partner interviews and surveys: FGDs with UN and IFI KM staff
	2.6.2. What can IFAD learn from its partners to improve KM effectiveness at country level?		All evidence blocks

Overarching Evaluation Question 3: How efficient has been the use of the available (financial and human) resources to deliver the intended knowledge practices and outcomes? (Efficiency criteria)

Sub-question	Specific questions	Indicators	Data sources
3.1 Are human resources for KM efficiently and appropriately deployed and is sufficient staff capacity in place? HUMAN RESOURCES AND CAPACITY	3.1.1 Are human resources for KM efficiently and appropriately deployed at the **corporate level** and is sufficient staff capacity in place?	• Sufficient and qualified staff are in relevant corporate units. • Effective approach is in place to retain tacit knowledge, with low turnover of staff. • Adequate seniority of staff with KM responsibility are available. • Incentives for corporate staff to engage in KM practices are in place. • KM training opportunities areare in place for staff. Other possibilities for KM capacity development also exist.	(1) Review of corporate documents and data: human resources data (4) Corporate level: HQ interviews and FGDs; KAP survey
	3.1.2 Are human resources for KM efficiently and appropriately deployed at the regional level and is sufficient staff capacity in place?	• Sufficient and qualified staff are in regional divisions. • Effective approach is in place to retain tacit knowledge with low turnover of key regional division staff. • Regional team resources are available to fill gaps in skills of any country teams. • Access to a specific budget allocation for knowledge management activities exists. • KM focal points have clear job descriptions in regional divisions. • A good balance is achieved between using IFAD staff and consultants for KM activities (to promote sustainability). • There is adequate seniority of staff with KM responsibility. • Incentives for regional division staff to engage in KM practices and prioritize KM against other demands are in place.	(5) Regional division studies
	3.1.3 Are human resources for KM efficiently and appropriately deployed at the country level and is sufficient staff capacity in place?	• Sufficient country presence and qualified staff in ICOs are in place. • Country programme staff can clearly identify knowledge needs that can be filled by IFAD and that will make significant contributions to the delivery of COSOP strategic objectives. • An effective approach is in place to retain tacit knowledge with low turnover of CDs and other key country programme staff. • A good balance is achieved between using IFAD staff and consultants for KM activities (to promote knowledge retention and sustainability). • Access to a specific budget allocation for knowledge management activities by country offices is available. • KM focal points with clear job descriptions are in place in ICOs. • Sufficient know-how on knowledge management and how to use KM tools to support effective curation of project-level documentation exists. • KM expertise is regularly present on IFAD supervision missions. • Adequate seniority of staff with KM responsibility is in place. • Incentives for ICO and project staff to engage in KM practices are in place.	(6) Country case studies

Sub-question	Specific questions	Indicators	Data sources
3.2 Are financial resources adequate and appropriate for supporting effective and sustainable KM practices? FUNDING	3.2.1 To what extent were grants used to support KM at the regional and country levels? What funding patterns emerge?	• The use of country grants in delivery of KM plan is fully considered at the regional corporate levels and well channelled to the country level. • Global and regional grants offer an effective alternative pathway, rather than only through the country programme, for using knowledge to contribute to IFAD's strategic goals in the Midterm Strategic Framework.	(3) Thematic deep dives: grants review (5) Regional division studies
	3.2.2 Are grant resources allocated for KM sufficient and appropriately targeted?	• Country programmes make good use of grants to support generation and use of knowledge in line with country programme objectives. • Global and regional grants are effectively leveraged to support KM's contribution to COSOP strategic objectives.	(6) Country case studies
	3.2.3 Did IFAD mobilize other resources to support its KM practices?	• Access is available to a specific budget allocation for knowledge management activities by country offices. • Reimbursable technical assistance is available to fill key knowledge gaps.	(5) Regional division studies (6) Country case studies
3.3 How cost-effective are the KM architecture, practices and tools? COST EFFECTIVENESS	3.3.1 Are IFAD knowledge products and tools cost-effective?[127]	• Costs for knowledge products and tools are in line with those of other IFIs and development organizations. • Number of downloads (disaggregated by country) and costs is measured. • Number of printed copies disseminated (disaggregated by country) and costs is measured. • Number of citations by type of document is measured.	(1) Review of corporate documents and data: review of KM tools and practices; review of KM products (4) Corporate-level and partner interviews and surveys: HQ interviews and FGD; KAP survey
	3.3.2 Is the KM institutional architecture cost-effective?	• The relationship between the costs and the benefits show that the investment is worthwhile.	(1) Review of corporate documents and data: review of KM tools and practices; review of KM products (4) Corporate-level and partner interviews and surveys: HQ interviews and FGD; KAP survey
	3.3.3 Did IFAD make full use of partnerships in the generation, sharing, brokering, dissemination and use of knowledge to improve cost-effectiveness?	• Evidence exists of greater cost-effectiveness from partnerships.	(1) Review of corporate documents and data: review of KM tools and practices; review of KM products
	3.3.4 Do IFAD staff conduct KM activities with a clear idea of what they will be used for and their added value?	• IFAD staff are clear about the purpose of their KM activities. • KM activities make clear the expected results and added value.	(1) Review of corporate documents and data: review of KM tools and practices; review of KM products (6) Country case studies
	3.3.5 Did IFAD put in place mechanisms to effectively measure the costs and benefits of KM practices and products?'	• Clear reporting of costs of KM practices and tools is in place. • Efforts to assess benefits of KM practices and tools is in place.	(1) Review of corporate documents and data: review of KM tools and practices; review of KM products

127 Calculated by a consideration of proportionality, in terms of the expected benefits deriving from a product or tool relative to the cost.

Sub-question	Specific questions	Indicators	Data sources
3.4 Other factors and lessons learned	3.4.1 What other factors can explain the efficiency of IFAD's KM practices?		(3) Thematic deep dives: comparative analysis and good practices from other IFIs, UN partners.
			(4) Corporate-level and partner interviews and surveys: FGDs with UN and IFI KM staff.
	3.4.2 What can IFAD learn from its partners to improve KM efficiency at country level?		All evidence blocks

Annex III.
Background tables

Overview of number of publications per year (per series)

Year	Series									Series total	Non-series	Total
	Advantage series	Impact assessments	Research series	Research from the field	Toolkits	Factsheets	In brief	Annual reports	Books and reports			
2023	0	0	2	0	0	13	2	0	0	17	27	44
2022	1	1	20	0	2	13	6	0	0	43	82	125
2021	2	0	2	0	8	5	5	1	4	27	64	91
2020	1	4	3	0	0	20	5	1	8	42	37	79
2019	4	6	28	0	1	16	16	1	5	77	16	93
2018	4	5	13	1	5	14	36	1	3	82	18	100
2017	3	2	13	2	1	28	29	1	1	80	17	97
2016	3	1	6	0	7	41	42	1	1	102	17	119
total post-2016	18	19	87	3	24	150	141	6	22	470	278	748
pre-2016	6	5	2		12	141	147	15	3	331	155	486
Total	**24**	**24**	**89**	**3**	**36**	**291**	**288**	**21**	**25**	**801**	**433**	**1234**

Source: CLE analysis.

Publications outside series identified through "title"

Title-based type	Description	SKD type
Grant results sheets	Consistently formatted four-page documents presenting results of completed grants, including lessons learned	Grant results sheets
Adaption for Smallholder Agriculture Programme factsheets	Consistently formatted two-page documents showcasing Adaption for Smallholder Agriculture Programme planned initiatives in recipient countries	Factsheets
Investing in rural people factsheets	Consistently formatted four-page documents showcasing IFAD's strategy and operation in beneficiary countries	Factsheets
Partnership factsheets	Consistently formatted two-page documents showcasing IFAD's partnerships with specific donors	Factsheets
SKD learning notes	The series was initiated in 2022 and only two issues have been published so far – to be further analysed	Learning notes
COVID-19 learning notes	Six of them were published and posted under a single heading, hence they appear as only one product – to be further analysed	Learning notes
Lessons learned	Most of them are part of consistently formatted toolkits and will hence be considered as part of that series; only two of the more recent ones are not part of toolkits, but are not formatted consistently enough to represent a type	Toolkit
How to do notes	Most of them are part of consistently formatted toolkits and will hence be considered as part of that series; only two of the more recent ones are not part of toolkits, but are not formatted consistently enough to represent a type	Toolkit
Policy briefs	Consistently formatted documents, to be further explored as they may also include other types of documents stemming from grants	Policy briefs
Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme technical series	Full-fledged reports, only two have been published in the CLE period – to be further explored	N/A
IFAD briefing notes	The series was initiated in 2022 and only three issues have been published so far	N/A

Source: CLE analysis.

Full list of KM platforms covered by the CLE

Platform	Category	Media	Audience	URL
IFAD intranet	Website	Intranet	Internal	**https://intranet.ifad.org/** (last access: 05/01/2024)
Knowledge and information page	Website	Intranet	Internal	**https://intranet.ifad.org/knowledge-and-information?inheritRedirect=true** (last access: 05/01/2024)
IFAD knowledge repository	Website	Intranet	Internal	**https://intranet.ifad.org/knowledge-and-information/knowledge-repository?inheritRedirect=true** (last access: 05/01/2024)
IFAD biodiversity knowledge platform	Community of practice	Dgroup	Internal	**https://ifad.dgroups.io/g/IFADBiodiversityKnowledge** (last access: 05/01/2024)
Cambodia data use community for agriculture and rural development	Community of practice	Dgroup	Internal	**https://ifad.dgroups.io/g/CambodiaDataUseCommunity** (last access: 05/01/2024)
Uganda data use community	Community of practice	Dgroup	Internal	**https://ifad.dgroups.io/g/UgandaDataUseCommunity** (last access: 05/01/2024)
The gender network	Community of practice	Dgroup	Internal	**https://ifad.dgroups.io/g/gender** (last access: 05/01/2024)
GEOGROUP	Community of practice	Dgroup	Internal	**https://ifad.dgroups.io/g/GeoGroup** (last access: 05/01/2024)
ICT4D CoP	Community of practice	Dgroup	Internal	**https://ifad.dgroups.io/g/ICT4D** (last access: 05/01/2024)
IFAD innovation network	Community of practice	Dgroup	Internal	**https://ifad.dgroups.io/g/IFADInnovation** (last access: 05/01/2024)
Knowledge management CoP- Ethiopia portfolio	Community of practice	Dgroup	Internal	**https://ifad.dgroups.io/g/KMCoPEthiopia** (last access: 05/01/2024)
50x2030 initiative	Community of practice	Dgroup	Internal	**https://ifad.dgroups.io/g/50x2030Initiative** (last access: 05/01/2024)
IFAD development practices community	Community of practice	Dgroup	Internal	**https://ifad.dgroups.io/g/IFADDevelopmentPractices** (last access: 05/01/2024)
Farmers' organizations for Africa, Caribbean and Pacific	Community of practice	Dgroup	Internal	**https://ifad.dgroups.io/g/FO4ACP** (last access: 05/01/2024)
ESA monitoring and evaluation CoP	Community of practice	Mailing list	Internal	
Land tenure updates	Community of practice	Mailing list	Internal	
OPR group for all IFAD programme officers	Social media platforms	MS Teams group	Internal	
ESA group for CDs	Social media platforms	MS Teams group	Internal	
GEOGROUP - WhatsApp	Social media platforms	WhatsApp Group	Internal	
APR M&E Officers	Social media platforms	WhatsApp Group	Internal	
IFAD KM resource centre	Living repository		Internal, external	
Philanthropy learning lab	Community of practice	Learning platform	Internal	**https://intranet.ifad.org/-/launch-of-ifad-s-philanthropy-learning-l-1** (last access: 05/01/2024)
KM4DEV	Community of practice	Learning Platform	External	**http://www.km4dev.org/** (last access: 05/01/2024)
Multi-donor learning platform	Community of practice	Learning Platform	External	**https://www.mdlp4dev.org/** (last access: 05/01/2024)

Platform	Category	Media	Audience	URL
UNSDG knowledge portal	Community of practice	Learning Platform	External	https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.html (last access: 05/01/2024)
IFADASIA	Social media platforms	Facebook group	External	**https://www.facebook.com/groups/ifadasia** (last access: 05/01/2024)
FIDAfrique / IFADAfrica	Social media platforms	Facebook group	External	**https://www.facebook.com/groups/257024485045670/** (last access: 05/01/2024)
EvalForward	Community of practice	Learning platform	External	**https://www.evalforward.org/user/register** (last access: 05/01/2024)
Forum for agricultural risk management in development	Network		External	**https://www.farm-d.org/** (last access: 05/01/2024)
IFAD social reporting blog	Website	IFAD.org	External	**https://reporting2160.rssing.com/chan-35378318/index-latest.php** (last access: 05/01/2024)
LAC knowledge platform	Living repository		External	**https://lac-conocimientos-sstc.ifad.org/es/publicaciones** (last access: 05/01/2024)
IFAD knowledge webpage	Website	IFAD.org	External	**https://www.ifad.org/en/web/knowledge/publications** (last access: 05/01/2024)
IFAD Impact Assessment Report 2019-2021	Website	IFAD.org	External	**https://www.ifad.org/ifad-impact-assessment-report-2021/index.html** (last access: 05/01/2024)
Rural solution portal	Community of practice	Learning platform	External	**https://ruralsolutionsportal.org/en/home** (last access: 05/01/2024)
LAC learning lab	Community of practice	Learning platform	Internal	**https://intranet.ifad.org/-/lac-kicks-off-its-knowledge-lab** (last access: 05/01/2024)
Financing Facility For Remittances	Community of practice	Learning platform	External	**https://www.ifad.org/en/ffr** (last access: 05/01/2024)
Platform for agricultural risk management	Network		External	**https://www.p4arm.org/** (last access: 05/01/2024)
Smallholder and agri-SME finance and investment network	Network		External	**https://www.safinetwork.org/** (last access: 05/01/2024)
Global donor platform for rural development	Network		External	**https://www.donorplatform.org/** (last access: 05/01/2024)
Operation academy	Website	Intranet	Internal	**https://intranet.ifad.org/opac** (last access: 05/01/2024)
Learning management system	Community of practice	Learning platform	Internal	**https://ifad.csod.com/client/ifad/default.aspx** (last access: 05/01/2024)
National Designated Authorities partnership platform	Community of practice	Learning platform	External	**https://www.ifad.org/en/ndapp** (last access: 05/01/2024)
GALS platform	Community of practice	Learning platform	External	**https://empoweratscale.org/** (last access: 05/01/2024)

Source: CLE analysis.

Full list of KM practices and tools identified by 20 country case studies

Generation	Practices/tools	Frequency	Countries
6	Inclusion of community groups in SSTC activities	1	Pakistan
6	Farmer field schools	8	Angola, Brazil, DRC, Egypt, Kenya, Madagascar, Pakistan, Philippines
6	Participatory thematic roundtables	1	Argentina
6	Subregional agriculture CoP	2	Argentina, Viet Nam
6	Agroecological notebooks (Cadernetas Agroecológicas)	1	Brazil
6	Indigenous knowledge consulted and leveraged by projects	5	Kenya, Mexico, Pakistan, Peru, Sudan
6	Documentation and dissemination of indigenous and local knowledge	1	Peru
6	KM ecosystem platform for rural youth	1	Brazil
6	Inclusion of CSOs and marginalized groups in policy engagement activities	2	Pakistan, Philippines
6	Community knowledge-based peer networks	1	Sudan
6	Hosted Mekong knowledge and learning fair	1	Viet Nam
5	Participatory research or project implementation	12	Argentina, Brazil, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Kyrgyzstan, Madagascar, Pakistan, Philippines, Sudan, Tunisia, Viet Nam
5	Capturing and disseminating practical farmer case studies	1	Viet Nam
5	SKiM KM symposium	1	Sudan
5	Participatory KM strategies and action plan	1	Philippines
5	Farmer business schools	1	Philippines
5	Training of trainers/local champions	6	China, Madagascar, Nigeria, Philippines, Pakistan, Viet Nam
5	Community learning centres	1	Madagascar
5	ICT-based extension services/e-extension	4	China, Egypt, Malawi, Nigeria
5	Exchange visits and workshops with farmers; capacity-building for beneficiaries	16	Angola, Argentina, Brazil, China, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Tunisia
5	Beneficiary needs assessment workshops	3	Côte d'Ivoire, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan
5	District meetings with local stakeholders for feedback	2	Pakistan, Sierra Leone
5	Establishment of KM core group	1	Sudan
5	Thematic CoPs/forums	6	Argentina, Madagascar, Malawi, Peru, Sudan, Viet Nam
5	Collaboration with local universities and NGOs on knowledge products	7	China, Egypt, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Mexico, Pakistan, Sierra Leone
5	KM & learning routes/learning territories	6	Argentina, Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Madagascar, Sudan, Viet Nam
5	Scheduled coverage on cross-cutting themes by local television and newspapers	1	Viet Nam
5	Launch of agricultural gender network	2	Nigeria, Philippines
4	Promotion of digital agriculture applications	1	Egypt
4	Project steering committees/regular technical meetings with the government and partners	5	Côte d'Ivoire, Mexico, Pakistan, Sudan, Viet Nam
4	ICT4D working group on WhatsApp	1	Nigeria
4	SSTC exchanges	3	Argentina, China, Pakistan
4	Leveraging technology such as live streams	1	Kenya
4	Dissemination through social media: WhatsApp group; Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn	16	Angola, Argentina, Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Madagascar, Malawi, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Tunisia, Viet Nam

Generation	Practices/tools	Frequency	Countries
4	Project field visits/supervision missions	15	Angola, Brazil, China, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Egypt, Kyrgyzstan, Madagascar, Malawi, Pakistan, Philippines, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Tunisia, Viet Nam
4	Project after action reviews	1	Nigeria
4	Public awareness campaigns	2	Kyrgyzstan, Malawi
4	Cross-project learning activities/exchange visits/ study tours	17	Angola, Argentina, Brazil, China, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Kyrgyzstan, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Tunisia
4	Replication of partner interventions/leveraging knowledge from project partners	2	Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt
4	Systematic knowledge-sharing through various channels	2	Côte d'Ivoire, Pakistan
4	Farming extension activities	3	Argentina, Egypt, Viet Nam,
4	Lessons learned shared with all stakeholders	3	Mexico,Philippines, Sudan
3	Organization of knowledge-sharing forums	2	Mexico, Nigeria
3	Co-chair donor working group	1	Nigeria
3	Project experience capitalization	4	Côte d'Ivoire, Mexico, Sierra Leone, Tunisia
3	Agriculture/trade exhibitions	2	Angola, Philippines
3	Thematic workshops/ KM seminars and workshops/ webinars	7	Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Kenya, Malawi, Mexico, Nigeria, Viet Nam
3	Project websites	12	Angola, Argentina, Brazil, China, DRC, Egypt, Kenya, Madagascar, Pakistan, Sudan, Tunisia, Viet Nam
3	Technical thematic knowledge products/research and publication	11	Argentina, Brazil, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Sudan
3	Collecting and communicating success stories and best practices through newsletters, videos, etc.	20	Angola, Argentina, Brazil, China, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Egypt, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Madagascar, Malawi, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Tunisia, Viet Nam
3	High-level KM practices influencing policy (policy briefs/policy dialogue workshop)	9	Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Kenya, Madagascar, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Tunisia, Viet Nam
3	Documentation of success stories, best practices, case studies	12	Angola, Argentina, Brazil, DRC, Egypt, Kenya, Madagascar, Nigeria, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Viet Nam
3	Documentation of lessons learned	9	Angola, Brazil, DRC, Egypt, Kenya, Madagascar, Mexico, Peru, Philippines
3	Project-level manuals/guides	5	Angola, China, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Viet Nam
3	Stocktaking and knowledge systematization	1	Argentina
3	Curation of knowledge products on government-run websites	4	China, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan
3	Broadcasting on local TVs and radios; podcasts; vocal SMSs	11	Angola, Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Malawi, Nigeria, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Tunisia, Viet Nam
2	Rome-based agency technical coordination group	1	Kenya
2	Periodic project review/reflection workshops and webinars	15	Angola, Argentina, Brazil, China, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Egypt, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Tunisia, Viet Nam
2	KM training for project staff	5	China, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Philippines
2	Direct technical support by task team leaders	1	Egypt
2	KM strategy/action plan	11	Angola, Argentina, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Egypt, Madagascar, Malawi, Nigeria, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Tunisia
2	Participation in KM working groups/knowledge-sharing forums	5	Kenya, Pakistan, Peru, Mexico, Viet Nam
2	Participation in IFAD CoPs	2	Côte d'Ivoire, Philippines

Generation	Practices/tools	Frequency	Countries
2	Participation in global high-level events	5	Côte d'Ivoire, Kyrgyzstan, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines,
2	Partnerships with media organizations	2	China, Nigeria
2	Participation in development partners forums/donor working group	6	China, Egypt, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Tunisia
2	COSOP Review	6	Angola, Brazil, Madagascar, Sudan, Tunisia, Viet Nam
2	Synchronised M&E/MIS and KM systems/eliciting M&E data for knowledge products	6	Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Pakistan, Philippines, Tunisia
1	Online document storage systems (Dropbox; Kobo toolbox; Google Drive)	10	Angola, Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Pakistan, Philippines, Sierra Leone
1	Information resource centre/library	5	Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Pakistan, Tunisia
1	Market information system	1	DRC
1	Web-platform and apps /communication and KM platform	4	Mexico, Pakistan, Philippines, Nigeria
1	County/project-level dashboard	2	Kenya, Pakistan
1	Data collection and tracking tools/use of geographic information systems	5	Egypt, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tunisia

Source: CLE 20 country case studies.

Data for cost-effectiveness of knowledge products

Products	No. of products	Total no. of views	Average of views	Views category	Estimated average cost (US$)	Cost category
Research series	87	195,051	2241.97	Low	850	Low
Investing in rural people factsheets	56	167,401	2989.30	Low	17 731	Medium
Toolkit	44	147,506	3352.41	Low	15 800	Medium
Advantage series	18	134,368	7464.89	Medium	16 100	Medium
Impact assessment	18	97,802	5433.44	Medium	350 000	High
Policy brief	12	107,773	8981.08	Medium	7 250	Low
Annual Report	7	106,267	15181.00	High	85 000	Medium
State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World	6	9,455	1575.83	Low	20 000	Medium
Rural Development Report	3	62,085	20695.00	High	1 200 000	High

Source: View data was provided by ICT. Average cost was estimated based on IOE interviews. Cost estimates are intended as "ballpark figures" and are not precise estimates.

Data for cost-effectiveness of knowledge practices

Generation	Practices	Frequency (number of countries)	Effectiveness (number of countries)	Effectiveness category	Success rate	Success rate category	Estimated average cost (US$) (per product)	Cost category
4	Cross-project learning activities/exchange visits/study tours	17	6	Low	35%	Medium	5,000 – 15,000	Medium
4	Outreach via social media	16	0	Low	0%	Low	Free	Low
2	Periodic project review/reflection workshops and webinars	15	5	Medium	33%	Medium	20,000 – 25,000	Medium
4	Project field visits/supervision missions	15	3	Low	20%	Medium	50,000 – 60,000	Medium
5	Participatory research or project implementation	12	9	Medium	75%	High	50,000 -300,000	High
3	Documentation of success stories, best practices, case studies & communication products	12	0	Low	0%	Low	3,000 (for a light product) – 10,000	Low
3	Broadcasting on local TVs and radios; podcasts; vocal SMSs	11	2	Low	18%	Medium	3,000 – 15,000 (or free)	Low
3	Project websites	11	0	Low	0%	Low	300 – 1,000	Low
3	Technical thematic knowledge products/research and publication	11	0	Low	0%	Low	10,000 – 15,000	Low
2	KM strategy/action plan	10	0	Low	0%	Low	25,000	Medium
6	Farmer field schools	9	3	Low	33%	Medium	1,000 for one- day session	Low

Source: Cost estimates are intended as "ballpark figures" and are not precise estimates. Effectiveness and success ratings are based on the CLE's assessment of these practices in its country case studies.

Mapping IFAD publications to type of knowledge

Document type (website)	Series	Type of products	Type of knowledge
Series	Research series	Research	Technical knowledge
	Advantage series	Research	Technical knowledge
	Results from the field series	Research	Technical knowledge
Research	N/A	Research	Technical knowledge
Books	N/A	Research	Technical knowledge
Papers and briefs	N/A	Research	Technical knowledge
	N/A	Report	Technical knowledge
	N/A	Policy brief	Policy knowledge
Tools and guidelines	Toolkit	Tools and guidelines	Technical knowledge
How to do note	Toolkit	How to do note	Technical knowledge
Lessons learned	Toolkit	Lessons learned	Technical knowledge
Case study	N/A	Case study	Experiential knowledge
	N/A	Policy case study	Policy knowledge
Annual reports	Annual reports	Report	Technical knowledge
Series	Impact assessments	Not included in the mapping	
In brief		Not included in the mapping	
Factsheets		Not included in the mapping	

Source: CLE analysis.

Annex IV.
Data collection, analysis and synthesis

299. This annex provides details of the data collection and analysis methods within each of the six blocks of evidence described in the evaluation report (chapter 1.C). Figure 1 uses the evidence blocks to illustrate the structure of this chapter.

FIGURE ANNEX IV. 1

CLE evidence blocks and sections of this annex.

(IV.1) Corporate-level KM documents and data review

- KM strategy, action plans and related strategies
- Institutional arrangements for KM
- After-action review
- Review of corporate KM tools and practices
- Platforms and products reviews
- KM financial data

(IV.2) Analysis of corporate KM performance data and evaluations

- PSR ratings
- IOE ratings
- Client surveys
- RIDE
- QAG reviews
- IOE corporate evaluation

(IV.3) Thematic deep dives

- Tracking signature solutions
- Grants review
- Participatory video pilots
- Comparative review with other IFIs and UN entities

(IV.4) Surveys and interviews

- Knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) survey
- Surveys of knowledge platforms and CoPs
- Interviews with IFAD Headquarters staff
- 10 focus group discussions (FGDs) with IFAD staff
- Interviews and FGDs with partners

(IV.5) Five regional studies

(IV.6) Twenty country case studies

IV.1 Corporate-level KM documents and data review

300. The review of IFAD's KM strategy and its implementation drew its evidence from corporate-level documents and data. A **desk review of corporate policies, strategies and guidance** that guided KM over the period was conducted. This included an analysis of the 2014-2018 and the 2019-2025 KM strategies as well as their associated action plans. It also looked at strategies adjacent to KM such as the SSTC Strategy and the Guidebook on country-level policy engagement as well as corporate guidance on COSOP creation, grants, and financial frameworks.

301. The review of **institutional arrangements** for KM included an assessment of the relevance and effectiveness of the KM architecture outlined in IFAD's KM strategy as well as the evolution of the architecture since 2016. The CLE reviewed the functioning of the formal arrangements for KM and how their interaction in the generation, sharing and use of knowledge contributes to development results.

302. SKD completed the **midterm review of IFAD's 2019-2025 Knowledge Management Strategy** in September 2022. The MTR was an important source of information for the CLE as it was based on: (i) quantitative data from the KM Strategy Results Measurement Framework indicators; (ii) multiple interviews and focus groups with a broad range of stakeholders at corporate, regional, and country levels; and (iii) triangulation of insights from ARRI, RIDE, PRISMA and IOE's independent evaluations.

After-action review

303. The **after-action review (AAR)**, a tool designed to capture reflection and learning, was employed as part of the CLE's self-evaluation session with the Strategy and Knowledge Department (SKD). As a standard IOE tool, the CLE enhanced the value of the midterm review (MTR) of IFAD's knowledge management strategy by reviewing the strategy's implementation using the AAR methodology. Through the AAR, teams delved into what was intended to happen, what actually transpired, the reasons behind those outcomes, and the lessons that were drawn. This structured reflection ensured that insights were both shared among participants and documented for a wider audience. In the context of the MTR, the AAR aimed not only to facilitate learning among the MTR team but also to inform the ongoing CLE.

304. The findings from the AAR centred on understanding SKD/IFAD's learning outcomes, the MTR's impact on improving IFAD's knowledge management, and the identified gaps. The key questions that emerged were: (i) What came out of the AAR in terms of SKD/IFAD learning? (ii) How did the MTR help to improve KM in IFAD? (iii) What were the gaps noted and to what extent were they addressed by the CLE? (iv) What did the AAR reveal about SKD (its KM strategy, MTR) as the leading KM player in IFAD?

Platform review

305. The CLE undertook a **review of knowledge platforms in IFAD** in order to qualify how they are used by IFAD staff and consultants (as well as partner organizations and others) and what results they have delivered to the organization. For the purposes of this evaluation, the term "knowledge platform" refers to a category of websites which include interactive platforms for knowledge-sharing, such as online communities of practice. Its scope did not include databases such as document repositories.[128]

306. **Classification**. The desk review identified five subcategories of knowledge platforms within IFAD systems: (i) networks; (ii) CoPs listed in the IFAD corporate[129] and KM resource centre website; (iii) living repositories; (iv) websites;[130] and, (v) social media platforms. Within this categorization, media used for diffusion were also identified, specifically: DGroups[131] and learning platforms for CoPs; internal and external websites and social media groups and live feeds for social media platforms.

307. **Scope**. For the scope of this study, only knowledge platforms were taken into account. The graph below defines the scope of this analysis with a dotted line. On the other side of knowledge platforms, two different subcategories were identified: (i) the library system; and (ii) the record keeping system, which were outside the scope of this analysis.

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128 A sample of knowledge products was reviewed elsewhere (see products review). The use of living repositories was covered in further detail through the regional studies.
129 IFAD CoP webpage: https://www.ifad.org/en/web/knowledge/communities.
130 KM centre CoP webpage: https://ifadkmcentre.weebly.com/cops-in-ifad.html.
131 IFAD Dgroups webpage: https://ifad.dgroups.io/g/IFAD/subgroups.

Knowledge platform
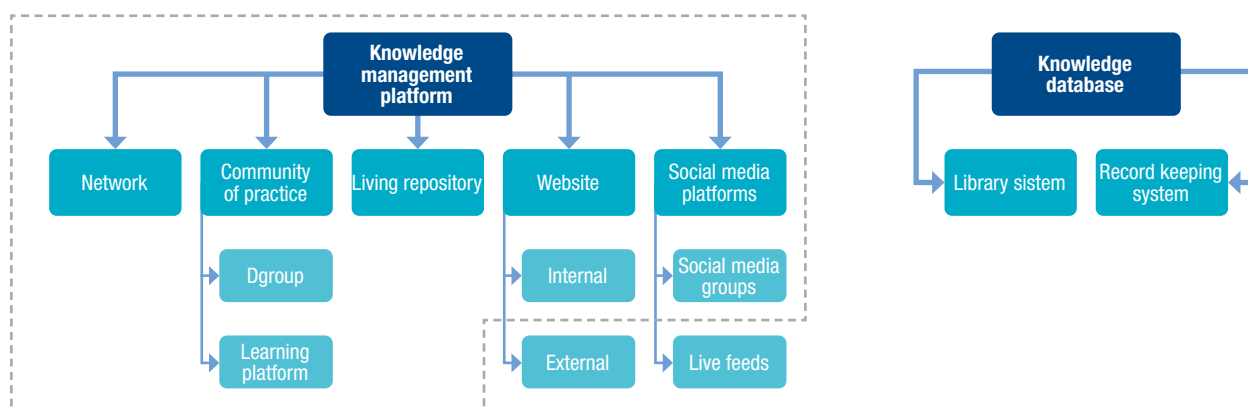
Source: IOE

308. Following the identification of these platform and media types, they were consolidated into a dataset with 54 entries. The dataset was checked for consistency and additional inputs stemming from ongoing interviews were added, resulting in a total of 63 entries. Considering many IFAD knowledge platforms originated from the personal initiatives of individual staff scattered across the organization, it was not considered exhaustive (see annex VII).

309. The (formalized) **communities of practice** (CoPs) managed through IFAD's DGroups platform[132] or highlighted by the resource centre were also assessed. This included the IFAD development practices community, the IFAD innovation network, the gender network, the CoP for geospatial application, IFADASIA and FIDAfrique. The full list of CoPs is included in annex III.

310. **Methodology**. The review of knowledge platforms mainly used qualitative methods, including desk research, surveys and FGDs, complemented by quantitative analysis where data was available (mostly DGroups and Facebook groups). The research comprised an analysis by desk review to provide a general overview of the population through documentary sources, followed by a FGD with the moderators of the range of knowledge platforms in order to validate and extend its findings. These platforms were then categorized according to the generational framework presented in the CLE's approach paper. Lastly, a survey was developed and disseminated to the members of the platforms to gauge their relevance and use. The survey was disseminated through the KMCG and had 83 responses.

Products review

311. For the review of **knowledge products**, the evaluation drew evidence from the MTR (2023) and the PMI review of KM products (2022).[133] In addition, the CLE team reviewed a sample of knowledge products, using the standard quality criteria applicable to publications, such as generation, substance, intended audience and citations. To complement the observations, the team undertook interviews with the originating divisions (PMI, RIA and ECG). The evaluation covered knowledge products originating from PMD as part of the regional and country studies.

312. IFAD developed a typology of knowledge products in five categories based on their purpose[134] (table IV.1). The CLE focused on the first three categories, excluding pure communications materials and social media posts. While these are necessary for communicating with the public, they are not considered knowledge products as such.

132 https://ifad.dgroups.io/g/IFAD.

133 IFAD classifies its explicit knowledge products in the following categories: https://www.ifad.org/en/web/knowledge/publications?mode=search&catSeries=40703883 Advantage Series, Impact Assessment, Research Series; Results from the Field, and Toolkits)

134 https://ifadkmcentre.weebly.com/knowledge-products.html.

An overview of knowledge products

	Purpose	Products
1	**Knowledge-sharing products** • Sharing information on project activities, results and lessons learned with a wide variety of audiences from beneficiaries to high-level decision-makers. • Typically, short (a few pages) and not too technical.	Stories from the field
		Lessons learned
		Project briefs
		Policy briefs
2	**Analytical products** • Addressing topics in significant detail, normally longer and more analytical, and targeted towards audiences with specialist knowledge or interest in the topic. • Considerable investment of time and resources.	Reports and studies
		Technical guidelines
		Working papers
		How to do notes
		Research publications
3	**Policy engagement products** • In-depth analytical work supported by evidence in order to underpin policy engagement efforts.	Inputs to government policies and strategies
4	**Communications products** • Useful for communicating information about project activities and results achieved and reaching a wide general audience.	Articles (newspaper/magazine)
		Blog posts
		Newsletters
		Press releases
		Articles (newspaper/magazine)
5	**Social media products** • Content for dissemination through social media. • Links to other content.	Videos
		Photos
		Interviews
		Infographics
		Videos

Source: CLE analysis.

313. **Scope**. The analysis focused on products created by SKD, expanding on those in the KM strategy MTR, which reviewed KM series and PMI knowledge products. An inventory of knowledge products was taken, using IFAD's public website and specifically, the IFAD knowledge webpage for publications during 2016-2022. The analysis noted that two micro-sites hosted by IFAD are used to publish unique knowledge products: the IFAD Impact Assessment Report 2019-2021 micro-site, managed by RIA, and the LAC knowledge platform, managed by LAC. An effort was made to include such publications, supported by data from ICT.

314. The IFAD knowledge webpage highlights the following series: *Advantage Series, Impact Assessment, Research Series, Results from the Field and Toolkits*.[135] Other products that have the recurrent character of a series but were not identified as such included the IFAD Annual Report and the IFAD Rural Development Report, described as "flagship reports". Most knowledge products published on the IFAD website did not fit into either category of series or reports. These include lessons learned (also called learning notes), case studies, grant results sheets, policy briefs, and two types of factsheets (investing in rural people and partnerships factsheets).

315. The study covered the different knowledge products, divided into the following categories: (i) flagship reports; (ii) main series; (iii) main types and (iv) other products. The number of products falling into each is summarized in the table below. Factsheets that fall under the "main types" category have been included in the preliminary screening but were excluded from the in-depth analysis as their goal relates more to showcasing IFAD's work than to sharing knowledge.

135 IFAD SKD Knowledge website. https://www.ifad.org/en/web/knowledge/publications.

Types of publications and numbers produced

Category	Count
Flagship	16
Series	170
Main types	145
Other products	399
Total	730

Source: CLE analysis.

316. **Methodology**. The review of knowledge products combined quantitative and qualitative research methods. Quantitative analysis was applied to the total inventory in the dataset using data from the IFAD website and Google analytics. This was followed by a qualitative analysis and a further in-depth desk review was applied to a sample, featuring two to three products per type. The analysis followed the following three steps.

317. **Step 1: Full inventory**. The first step involved drawing conclusions through an analysis of the entire population of data. The bulk of this data was extracted from the IFAD publication webpage and Google analytics, which covered: types of products, publication year, thematic, geographic scope, number of views. To address its inherent inconsistencies, the inventory dataset was further cleaned and refined before finalizing the analysis – particularly for the categorization of document types.

318. **Step 2: Focused inventory**. The second step was to take a closer look at the main product series and types. This was based on the assumption that more information was available for formalized series than for other products, that a stronger homogeneity of the population allows more general findings without an in-depth review. In addition, this step assessed the target audience and intended objectives to understand their contribution to rural transformation.

319. **Step 3: Selected sample**. This step collected evidence to answer the remaining evaluation questions using an in-depth review of a selected sample and targeted interviews. In addition to validating the elements addressed earlier, this step collected evidence on the following areas: quality (formal and substantive), dissemination (online and offline), use (including number of downloads and citations) and associated costs.

320. **Sampling approach.** A purposive sampling strategy was adopted to identify the products of greatest interest to the evaluation. The selection of individual products was deliberate to respond to their potential to illuminate specific evaluation questions and objectives and their evaluability (i.e. the availability of information on key aspects, such as dissemination and cost). An attempt was made to ensure the highest possible level of representation, by applying the following criteria in the sample selection: (i) product type; (ii) publication date; (iii) geographic focus; and, (iv) thematic focus.

321. The assessment focused on the value of IFAD's knowledge products in terms of their ability as a resource for learning and to support country programmes in delivering their results and also the organizational network analysis conducted by the MTR of the KM strategy to the extent possible.

322. IOE classified knowledge partnerships based on the modality of engagement and the nature of the knowledge management activities resulting from the partnership. A review of IFAD's partnerships on KM and the tools surrounding them was undertaken across four steps, outlined below.

323. **A preliminary desk analysis** was done to determine the breadth of IFAD's individual agreements with partners, including Member States, IFIs, UN institutions, research organizations and others using data provided by GPR. The desk analysis covered all of the 179 active formal partnership agreements. These agreements are regulated by IFAD's 2019 Partnership Framework, and include letters/statements of intent, memoranda of understanding, decision memos and assignment agreements. The stated objectives of the agreements (as they appear in the partnership database) were then analysed to extract information on their intended contribution to KM, particularly around knowledge production, sharing, strengthening of KM and technical cooperation. This allowed the CLE to map how often KM has been a formalized feature of partnership-building.

324. **Grant review**. The CLE analysed data from grant status reports (provided by QAG) for 2021 and 2021 and focused on the KM ratings assigned to each grant. Grant status reports are self-reported by grantee organizations and follow the rating guidance provided in IFAD's Operations Manual. KM ratings of grants were analysed over time and disaggregated by type of partner organization (e.g. UN agencies, research organizations etc.). A limitation was that, according to GPR, a "rigorous assessment of partnerships in the grant supervision process has not yet been fully implemented."

325. **Interviews with GPR staff**. Interviews with IFAD's Global Engagement and Resource Mobilization Division (GPR) were conducted on the role of IFAD's partnership agreements. GPR reports on the implementation of grants and contributions to the EB were also reviewed. Interviews also covered whether opportunities for monitoring and compilation of lessons from the interactions with these partners had been undertaken and the conditions necessary for effective partnerships. Interviews helped to bring more contextual substance to the quantitative review of partnerships and grant agreements.

326. **Extraction from CLE country and regional case studies**. Data from the country case studies were extracted on the extent of country-level partnerships, particularly UN Country Teams, donor coordination groups and project steering committees, in addition to research institutions and NGOs receiving grant funding related to KM. Through interviews conducted, the CLE explored partners' own KM practices and their perspectives on the role of IFAD as a knowledge partner, including how they have cooperated with country or corporate operations to generate, use and share knowledge.

327. The regional division studies used a similar approach, analysing partners such as multilateral and regional development organizations and relevant research institutions on their work with regional divisions. Through these analyses, a triangulation of data and deeper analysis of partnerships was possible in the context of country-level and regional operations. This also allowed for a clearer understanding of the role of grant-funded partnerships and practices, leading to short and long-term KM results and ultimately the development result pathways outlined in the theory of change. A quantitative review of partners identified in preliminary case study stakeholder mapping (conducted for all 20 studies) also illustrated which organizations were found to be important KM partners.

328. **An overview of supplementary funds** was conducted by downloading the relevant data from Oracle Business Intelligence (OBI). This determined the amount and direction of supplementary funding for knowledge management in IFAD, and identified the main funding partners. This was then cross-referenced with partnership agreements and documents related to donors without a formalized agreement. Interviews with AVP-PMD and from country case studies provided further triangulation of this data.

Analysis of financial and human resources for KM

329. To quantify the financial resources for KM, the CLE used grants review and project cost data (from OBI database). Data analysis showed that there are significant data gaps with regarding to how KM is budgeted and funded. It was therefore not possible to obtain reliable data on budgets for KM in loans, grants or supplementary funds. There are also gaps in the data available on human resources for KM. During an FGD with regional economists, the CLE team discussed the issue, but it remained impossible to obtain accurate KM budget data. In addition to dedicated KM specialists in SKD and KM focal points at corporate and regional level, staff time used for knowledge creation, use and dissemination is not budgeted separately, but it is routinely part of many job descriptions within IFAD. To complement existing data gaps, the CLE team used qualitative and quantitative information from surveys, focus group discussions and interviews.

330. The CLE team analysed available grants and project cost data (from OBI database), to quantify **financial resources for KM** at corporate, regional and country levels. This includes costs associated with the development of tools and systems directly supporting KM; budgets allocated for the curation and delivery of knowledge products; and staff time. From OBI databases, the allocation of costs to KM component in loans and grants were identified. KM-related activities funded from other components were difficult to track through the system.

331. A review of **HR data on** KM-related roles from the PeopleSoft platform - and with assistance from HRD and SKD - enabled the CLE team to identify the dedicated KM specialists and focal points at corporate and regional level and how staffing patterns have changed over the period

covered by the evaluation. It also identified the personnel resources from SKD assigned to project countries. The CLE used the country case studies to identify those with KM mandates and quantify their knowledge-related activities through a review of project budget, implementation plans, and staff terms of reference, likely available through the review of project documentation.

332. **Cost-efficiency analysis**. The team conducted interviews with key resource persons to obtain estimates of the average costs for IFAD's knowledge products (see annex VII). It then divided these by the average number of online views these products had in the period 2016-2022. Both views and costs were organized into three groups (low, medium and high) based on the range of costs and views obtained from the data.

TABLE ANNEX IV. 3

Classification of effectiveness and views

Classification of effectiveness	
High	> 10
Medium	between 10 and 5
Low	< 5
Classification of success rate	
High	> 70%
Medium	between 70% and 10%
Low	< 10%
Classification of costs	
High	> 100,000
Medium	between 100,000 and 15,000
Low	< 15,000
Classification of views	
High	> 10,000
Medium	between 10,000 and 5,000
Low	< 5,000
Classification of costs	
High	> 100,000
Medium	between 100,000 and 15,000
Low	< 15,000

Source: IOE

IV.2 Analysis of corporate KM performance data and evaluations

333. **Review of existing survey data**, such as the Global Staff Survey and the biannual stakeholder/client survey, representing the views of partners and governments, provided a baseline on the engagement with IFAD's knowledge management practices both at organizational and project/country level. The stakeholder survey specifically evaluates the perception of partners in other multilateral or bilateral organizations, civil society, governments, and the private sector to assess the favourability of different aspects of IFAD's operations and provide reflection on improving. At the same time, the Global Staff Survey provided insights into how IFAD staff members' working life and organizational culture may affect knowledge management practices. These two bodies of data provided perspectives from different groups as to how IFAD leverages knowledge in relation to partnerships and SSTC, along with how it is integrated into project implementation.

334. **Project supervision ratings** (from ORMS) include ratings for KM at project level. The CLE team analysed the ratings on the project performance of KM from 2016 to 2022 based on IFAD's supervision and implementation support reports. Relevant analyses include the trend analysis of KM performance over time, comparison of KM performance by regions and countries and correlation and outlier analysis.

335. **Report on IFAD's Development Effectiveness (RIDE)** is an annual internal evaluation assessment produced by PMD and OPR. The CLE assessed all RIDES from the start of the period being covered by the evaluation and focused on the most recent three years (2019-2021) where the RIDE reported on the implementation of the IFAD KM strategy.

336. The **Quality Assurance Group (QAG)** has produced reviews and learning papers in relation to KM, highlighting the role of knowledge in project design and the continued challenges in embedding and mainstreaming knowledge management consistently across IFAD's portfolio. A QAG discussion paper in 2021[136] reviewed how project proposals integrated learning and knowledge generation within the project architecture. The "QAG Views" on KM and on embedding SSTC in project design highlighted knowledge management's connection with CLPE and South-South and Triangular Collaboration and reviewed its integration in the design of country-level projects. A paper on IFAD regular grants[137] showed that grants were one of the primary vehicles for country and regional-level KM activities and for sharing and piloting scalable innovations for rural transformation.

337. **Review of IOE evaluations** as well as of Annual Reports on Impact and Evaluation (ARIE) 2016-2022. Evaluations included country strategy and programme evaluations (CSPEs), which evaluate country programmes on relevance, sustainability, innovation, etc., as well as knowledge management. IOE performance ratings for KM would enable the team to see trends and patterns over the evaluation period. Seven recent CSPEs not included in the 2022 ARIE study on KM in IFAD and which were not a country case study were selected.

338. In addition, IOE has produced CLEs and syntheses which are related to KM, such as the CLEs on grants, innovation, value chains, RBA collaboration, climate change adaptation and decentralization. Evaluation synthesis reports examined included those on rural poverty reduction, partnerships, scaling up, country-level policy dialogue and infrastructure.

136 A discussion paper on the quality at entry of project designs in 2020: country-level policy engagement and knowledge management.
137 IFAD regular grants: a synthesis of results, lessons and future directions.

IV.3 Thematic deep dives

339. The thematic deep dives took a horizontal approach to reviewing selected practices, cutting across the organizational and geographic divides. This enabled the evaluation team to obtain a broader understanding of KM in practices and complement the (vertical) sampling for country case studies.

340. A **review of grants** was undertaken to gain an understanding of the financing of KM practices. Due to the challenge of financing KM through investment activities, small-scale grant-making at IFAD has been identified as a primary mode by which funds are allocated toward non-lending activities and a main tool for supporting KM. During the period covered by the evaluation, explicit reference has been made to the use of grants to enhance policy engagement and to generate and disseminate knowledge for development impact. A QAG paper highlights the important role of grants to fund activities that are important but difficult to include in loan-funded investments, such as capacity-building, global advocacy, knowledge work and partnership-building.[138]

341. The CLE undertook an assessment of grant funding specifically earmarked for knowledge management activities as identified through the grants database. This allowed the team to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of resource allocation in supporting KM practices and assess whether grants have provided added value in the countries in which they are utilized. In addition to single grants, the evaluation reviewed the role of funding facilities such as the China-IFAD SSTC Facility and the Indigenous Peoples' Assistance Facility in generating, using and sharing knowledge across IFAD's programme countries. This approach was strengthened by the use of grants as an evaluative component in the CLE's country case studies, which helped to more clearly articulate and identify grant availability and use.

342. As part of this evaluation, an innovative mapping methodology was used to track knowledge-sharing on IFAD's signature solutions. **The term "signature solutions" indicates those solutions championed by IFAD that have improved the life of rural people**. For this analysis, 10 signature solutions were identified, based on the extent to which the solution was IFAD-branded and the availability of information on its use. The selected signature solutions were: leasehold forestry, public-private-producer partnerships (4Ps), small-scale irrigation, homestead gardens, Gender Action Learning System (GALS), learning routes, seeds certification, new ruralities, experience capitalization and farmer field schools.

343. **A "snowball search" methodology** was developed to track knowledge-sharing of signature solutions across IFAD platforms by using the IFAD website, IFAD intranet, IFAD finder and cross-referencing information across tools. This approach helped to map and identify recurring patterns in sharing practices and helped to develop a timeline to track the dissemination of information related to each solution. The scope of the mapping was comprehensive, as the items included in the analysis are not only those that primarily deal with the subject of the signature solution involved, but also those in which the signature solution is mentioned marginally, as long as the knowledge of this solution is shared to some extent.

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138 QAG: a discussion paper on the quality at entry of project designs in 2020: country-level policy engagement and knowledge management

Remote participatory video evaluations

344. The CLE employed remote participatory video evaluations (remote PVEs) to delve into indigenous and local knowledge within the framework of IFAD's projects. This hybrid approach combined participatory video techniques with traditional evaluation and interview principles. Evaluators obtained new footage, either from semi-structured video interviews or self-filmed recordings and integrated it with existing footage and photos from participants. This method sought to amplify the voices of local and indigenous communities and address the challenges of remote access. By merging these techniques, the evaluation encompassed a broader range of participants in a cost-effective manner. In this CLE, remote PVEs were piloted in Brazil and Peru, where in-depth remote interviews with farmers in various ethnic groups explored their methods of generating, capturing and sharing knowledge. The methodology offered a representation of their experiences and ensured their insights were incorporated into the evaluation. Adapting to the challenges brought about by COVID-19, the approach leveraged the growing wi-fi accessibility in rural regions, using platforms like Zoom and WhatsApp. Tailored interview guides were designed to engage participants, with themes centred on knowledge dissemination and communal learning in relation to IFAD's initiatives.

Lessons learned from other evaluations

345. An analysis of relevant experience of KM in comparable organizations was undertaken. A number of international entities with business models similar to that of IFAD have completed evaluations of their KM in the past three years. The focus of these evaluations is corporate KM systems, and they do not generally reach down to the country level. In addition, they do not focus on KM practices. Despite these differences in focus, the evaluative evidence available allowed the CLE to identify lessons that could inform IFAD's KM strategy.

346. The review aimed to identify key lessons learned from IFIs and UN evaluations about knowledge management. The reviews used Claude,[139] a next-generation artificial intelligence assistant. All the documents used are in the public domain and so avoid issues of data privacy. The evaluations were uploaded, and Claude was asked the following question for each: "What are the key lessons learned about knowledge management in this document?" The results were then compiled into one document and a second question was asked "What are the top ten lessons on knowledge management from this document". Using data from both the IFIs and the UN, Claude identified a series of key lessons for effective knowledge management in international organizations.

347. The following IFI evaluations were used:

- ADB Independent Evaluation Department. 2020. *Knowledge Solutions for Development: An Evaluation of ADB's Readiness for Strategy 2030.* Thematic Evaluation.

- EBRD Evaluation Office. 2021. *Learning and Knowledge Management at the EBRD.* Summary Report.

- GEF Independent Evaluation Office. 2020. *Evaluation of Knowledge Management in the GEF.*

- IDB Office of Evaluation and Oversight. 2019. *Review of Knowledge Generation and Dissemination in the Inter-American Development Bank.* Corporate Evaluation.

- World Bank Independent Evaluation Group. 2019. *Knowledge Flow and Collaboration under the World Bank's New Operating Model.*

348. The following UN evaluations and assessments were used:

- JIU. 2016. *Knowledge Management in the United Nations System*. JIU/REP/2016/10.

- JIU. 2018. *Strengthening Policy Research Uptake in the Context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. JIU/REP/2018/7 (not used in the top ten lessons learned).

- ILO Evaluation Office. 2020. *High-level independent evaluation of ILO's research and knowledge management strategies and approaches 2010–2019*. Evaluation report September 2020.

- IOM Office of the Inspector General. 2018. *A Review of Knowledge Management in IOM: Current Status and Future Perspectives*.

- UNESCO Division of Internal Oversight Services. 2023. *Evaluation of the Knowledge Products of the Social and Human Sciences Sector (SHS)*. Final Report IOS/EVS/PI 209. March 2023.

- UN Women WCA. 2019. *Knowledge Management Evaluation*. WCA/RO/2019/3.

IV.4 Surveys and interviews

Surveys

349. An **electronic survey** was launched through SurveyMonkey at an initial stage of this CLE, using the **knowledge, attitude and practice (KAP)** survey format. The survey consisted of a set of KM-related questions of which nine were multiple choice and two open-ended. KAP surveys focus on knowledge, attitudes and practices, which means they are well suited to the analysis of KM practices (Jackson 2019). The survey was sent to IFAD staff through the general mailing list; 83 responses were received. Following the conclusion of the KAP survey, the CLE team held focus group meetings and individual follow-up interviews with respondents who elected to contribute to the CLE.

350. Additional surveys were carried out towards the end of the data collection phase to better understand the role of knowledge platforms and CoPs.

Interviews

351. **Key informant interviews** were held with IFAD staff, consultants and external partners. In total the CLE has met more than 560 people through bilateral or group interviews and focus group discussions (See annex IX for a list of persons met).

352. A series of 11 **focus group discussions (FGDs)** facilitated by members of the CLE team was held during the data collection and analysis phase.

Focus group discussions

Topics	Attendees
FGD1: Capturing knowledge from local and indigenous communities through participatory videos (LAC)	CDs, regional specialist, senior portfolio advisor, behavioural insights and knowledge expert, country communications analyst, country operations analyst
FGD2: KM in specific subregions and country contexts (NEN)	Lead regional economist, CDs, country programme officers
FGD3: Practices for knowledge retention / extracting tacit knowledge	Former senior advisors, former senior regional communication officer, former hub director, IFAD youth network members
FGD4: Budgeting and funding KM: preliminary CLE analysis with discussion	Lead regional economists, lead portfolio advisors, regional officers
FGD5: Lessons from effective communities of practice	Facilitators of CoPs, regional officers, communication analysts, knowledge management analysts
FGD6: KM in fragile situations (WCA, NEN)	Country programme assistants/officers, CDs, lead advisor
FGD7: KM and SSTC in UMICs (LAC)	CDs, SSTC Analyst, country programme assistants/officers, policy and institutional specialist
FDG8: KMCG: Feedback on role and function	KMCG members
FGD9: Pathways to KM results: mapping theories of change for KM practices	Country programme assistants/officers, regional programme officers, regional programme manager
FGD10: Emerging findings: feedback session with KMCG	KMCG members
FGD11: FGDs with MCOs in Nairobi and Cairo	Head of MCO, CDs, PMI/ECG specialists, communications analyst

Source: CLE team.

IV.5 Five regional division studies

353. The regional divisions have adopted different approaches to KM and its practice, and how they deliver on their role in support of KM at the level of country programmes. The CLE team conducted five regional studies to evaluate the differing regional KM strategies, whether formalized in a document and action plan or approached more informally, and how effectively they were guiding practice within the regional division and in support of the country programmes. In addition, whether and how lessons from regional practice were adopted at the corporate level or spread between regions was explored, as was the effectiveness of the KM coordination group as a link between corporate and regional levels.

354. The CLE looked at the five IFAD regional divisions to analyse how knowledge flows at the regional and subregional levels, including via regional offices, multi-country offices (MCOs) and SSTC knowledge centres. At each level, the analysis mapped and assessed: (i) human resources dedicated to KM, and their specific roles and responsibilities; (ii) financial resources allocated to regional or multi-country KM initiatives; (iii) available systems for knowledge exchange, such as regional newsletters, knowledge packs, non-lending trackers; (iv) KM and policy-relevant products produced; (v) knowledge platforms in place, including CoPs and other formal/informal platforms; (vi) physical events hosted or co-hosted by the offices, including conferences, training, study tours. Wherever formal strategies and action plans are in place (as is the case in LAC and APR), existing practices were also evaluated against the objectives.

355. Ultimately, the analysis sought to understand how regional practices supported the flow of information between projects and HQ, fuelling a feedback loop between the country and global levels. The regional studies also complemented the grant review by providing deep dives in selected grants, with the aim of shedding light on their role in promoting and sustaining KM and policy engagement efforts regionally. Existing partnerships with a focus on KM were mapped and evaluated, alongside IFAD's engagement with external regional structures such as UN Knowledge Hubs and issue-based coalitions on relevant themes.

356. As for the other evidence blocks, the evidence collected through the regional studies was fed into the evaluation framework to answer the evaluation questions and sub-questions. To facilitate this process, a synthesis of the five regional studies was undertaken at the end of the data collection phase.

IV.6 Twenty country case studies

357. Purpose and focus of country case studies. Country case studies were used to answer evaluation questions as elaborated in the evaluation framework (annex I), through testing the hypotheses in a range of countries, in order to identify which country programmes contribute to good KM and to document cases of good practice. Case studies analysed how IFAD's KM architecture at corporate and regional level contributed to the delivery of effective KM within country programmes. It utilized the CLE's generational framework to identify practices which exhibited higher levels of transformative capability, in essence, isolating which practices had the most potential to contribute to rural transformation in the context of IFAD's operations.

358. The CLE used four criteria to identify countries for this study: (i) KM performance ratings; (ii) country income status; (iii) country portfolio size; and (iv) country presence. The evaluation team selected four countries from each regional division, which provided a total sample of 20 country cases.

TABLE ANNEX IV. 5

Case study countries by region

APR	ESA	LAC	NEN	WCA
Viet Nam	Malawi	Argentina	Kyrgyzstan	DRC
Philippines	Madagascar	Peru	Tunisia	Sierra Leone
Pakistan	Angola	Brazil	Sudan	Nigeria
China	Kenya	Mexico	Egypt	Côte d'Ivoire

Source: CLE team.

359. The intentional sample selection encompassed **both well performing and poor performing countries** (based on recent CSPE KM ratings), **all country income classifications** (based on IFAD data), and **varying sizes of country portfolios**, from Kyrgyzstan as the smallest portfolio, to China as the largest.

Distribution of case studies by KM rating

- LIC
- UMIC
- LMIC
- N/A
- Satisfactory
- Moderately satisfactory
- Moderately unsatisfactory
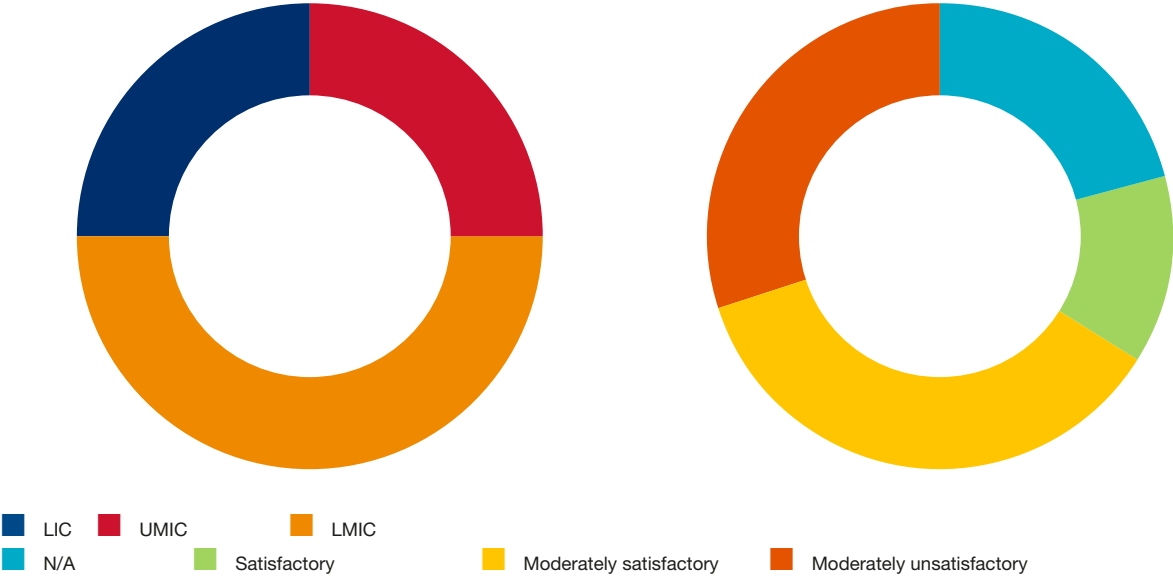
FIGURE ANNEX IV. 4

IFAD country portfolio size
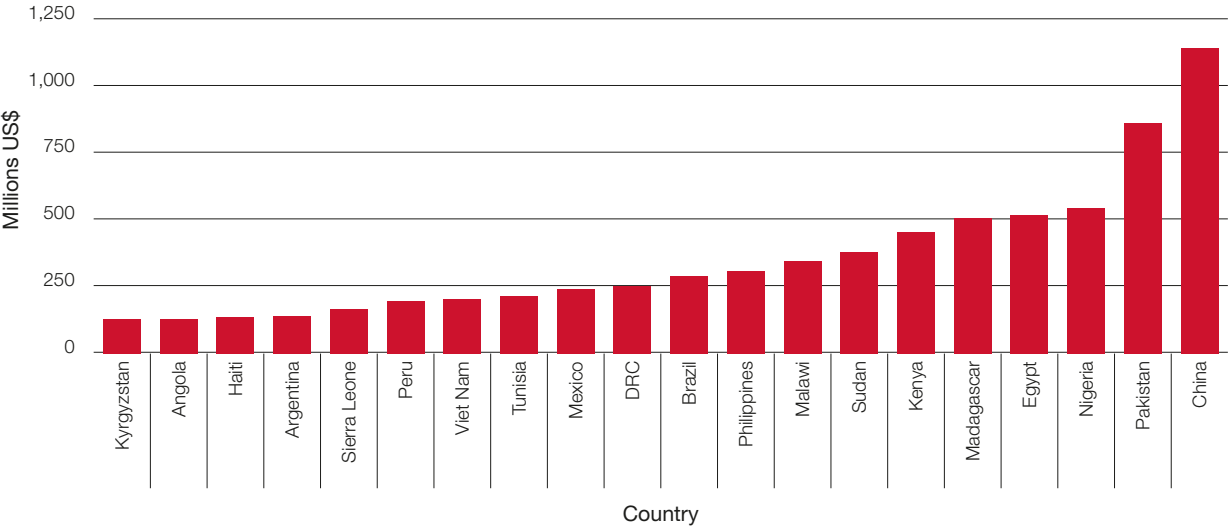
360. **Country presence** varies strongly throughout IFAD due to the decentralization process. The basic rationale underpinning Decentralization 2.0 was that IFAD's presence would enhance performance on non-lending activities. The sample covered countries with and without country presence. It also considered countries hosting regional offices and SSTC/KM centres.

361. The remote case studies were conducted through an **extensive desk review of project and country level documents**, including design, supervision and completion reports for projects implemented during the evaluation period. Country strategies (COSOPs and country strategy notes where relevant) were reviewed and knowledge management strategies were provided by the country teams in several instances, to build a more complete background. Knowledge products generated by IFAD on the countries analysed were also collected for review. This and other information from IOE evaluations were used to triangulate findings.

362. Following initial desk review, a **standardized table was developed to collect landscape-level data** about country presence and other areas which may contribute to KM, including the level of fragility, degree of decentralization of government, human development, knowledge-sharing culture and languages used. The review also covered the history of IFAD presence and project portfolio and identified relevant grant programmes operating in the country. The table was used later to identify patterns of contextual issues impacting knowledge management.

363. **Stakeholders involved in KM were mapped** according to relevance and type and feedback from the country teams was added during inception meetings, which informed the generation of an interview plan and shaped interview guides. These tools enquired how knowledge is generated, shared, used and brokered by IFAD and its partners, following the guidance of the evaluation framework. Interviews were conducted with country and project staff, and stakeholders such as government ministries, implementing partners and service providers. Interviewers also met, where relevant, with grant recipient agencies, particularly CGIAR centres and research organizations with observations on knowledge generation and linkages across divisions. The interviews also covered partnerships with other IFIs and UN agencies such as the RBAs, with whom IFAD has often collaborated on KM.

364. Four countries (China, Egypt, Kenya and Viet Nam) received **in-person country visits**, which allowed for further interviews with government partners and direct observation of IFAD operations in the generation, use and sharing of knowledge in country.

FIGURE ANNEX IV. 5

Distribution of case study countries by country presence

■ Regional office/Multi-country office   ■ IFAD country office   ■ SSTC KM centre   ■ No ICO
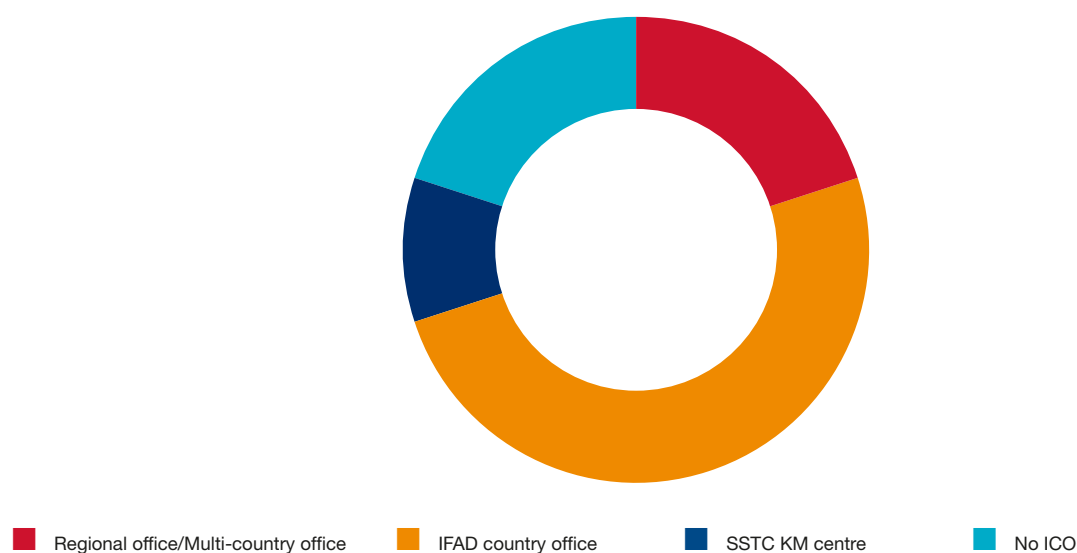
365. The case studies used the common categories (knowledge generation, knowledge-sharing, knowledge use and knowledge brokering), to map knowledge management practices that were uncovered during this process. In addition, they used the six-generations KM framework, which helped to link practices with their intended focus and results, and to identify the practices commonly supporting transformative change. In an effective KM system, different generations coexist with complementary practices and results.

Template for recording KM practices at country level

		Practice type			
		Generating	Sharing	Use	Brokering
Generation	6				
	5				
	4				
	3				
	2				
	1				
		Overall practices			

366. Analysis included a mapping of KM practices against the generational framework, to identify those practices that can be seen as truly transformative. In the CLE's conceptual framework, practices from the fifth- and sixth-generation are seen as more transformative – an assumption that was tested by this process. Chapter V shares several distinct qualities which were used to determine the level of the transformative capacity of a given practice once analysed.

367. The effectiveness of a given KM practice was judged based on the extent to which it achieved, or was expected to achieve, the long- and short-term results laid out in the ToC, contributing ultimately to the three development results. Because of the complex interplay of practices and factors elaborated in the studies, the evaluation primarily captured practices with direct evidentiary links to the results, which leaned heavily toward those in the later generations of practices, the most transformative. The case studies also tested the assumptions on KM drivers as well as the assumed linkages between different levels of the organizations where knowledge is generated, shared between corporate, regional and country levels, to validate effective linkages between them.

Rubric for synthesizing KM practices from country case studies

Level of KM practices	Low transformative	Moderately transformative	Hight transformative
Country	Mainly 1st and 2nd generation KM practices	Mainly 3rd and 4th generation practices	KM practices for all generations including 5th and 6th generation

368. These studies allowed the development of a comprehensive narrative of change, describing how changes came about in country and in project-level operations and the contribution KM practices made. It also identified, through use of a standardized rubric, the presence of factors either enabling or hindering successful KM. Based on evidence for these linkages, a synthesis for case study data was primarily within-case analysis and was triangulated through cross-case analysis.

369. **Analysis of performance outliers**, identified through the ARRI database, provided further insights on good or poor KM practices in countries not covered by the case studies. Analysis of CSPEs conducted between 2016 and 2021 allowed the evaluation to explore more broadly the qualities and types of practices at country level that contributed to either good or poor KM performance, and supplement the more in-depth analysis provided by the country case studies.

IV.7 Synthesis of evidence

370. The CLE team synthesized and structured findings from the six blocks of evidence around the conceptual framework to develop a system-level picture of knowledge management at IFAD, looking at how this contributes to the delivery of the development impacts identified in the conceptual framework, and determine the status of current KM practices against the six-generation model and their implications for contributing to rural transformation.

371. Analysis across the 20 case studies allowed the identification of patterns using the variables that affect performance, such as the type of KM practice, region or country context. Building on this analysis, IOE then explored the extent to which KM results contributed to rural transformation processes.

372. The approach recognized the fact that different types of practices coexist, and they have been chosen and adapted to the different contexts which are characteristic for IFAD's work. This also implied that a good KM strategy would require aspects of each of the different generations, developing them further and adapting generational perspectives as the needs for knowledge evolve.

373. For generalization and validation, key findings and conclusions drawn from the cross-country/regional case analysis were validated through the series of focus group discussions at regional and corporate level and triangulation with findings from the KAP survey, as well as other sources of evidence e.g. from CSPEs or corporate monitoring data.

Annex V.
Glossary of terms used[140]

Brokering	Brokering, or knowledge brokering, is concerned with linking multiple types of knowledge that are important in international development. Knowledge brokers act as cognitive bridges between these different types of knowledge, but many actors are knowledge brokers without necessarily identifying themselves as such.
Coloniality of knowledge	Coloniality is defined as the entrenched power dynamics that have emerged from the historical power relations of colonial domination. These power dynamics continue to have implications for patterns of knowledge creation and use, such as the undervaluing of local knowledge and indigenous knowledge. The inverse of this state is the Decolonization of knowledge, which aims to reverse this dynamic.
Communities of practice	Informal (spontaneous) and formal (intentionally created by organizations) groups of professionals, known as practitioners, within a specific thematic domain. Through time and sustained interaction, they develop a practice or a shared repertoire of resources, experiences, stories, KM tools and ways of addressing recurring problems, namely a shared practice.
Experience capitalization	A KM method for learning and exchange involving a process by which a specific project or programme (or "an experience" in general) is described and analysed, and from which lessons are identified, shared and used.
External knowledge	Policy knowledge, scientific knowledge, technical knowledge, local knowledge and indigenous knowledge.
Internal knowledge	Explicit (written down, accessible and easy to share), implicit (practical application of explicit) and tacit (organizational, based on personal experience and context, less easy to express) knowledge. This knowledge is invested in individual members of staff as practices but also carried by KM tools and products.
Knowledge	Awareness, understanding or information that has been obtained by experience or study, and that is either in a person's mind or possessed by people generally.
Knowledge management	For this CLE, knowledge management is defined as: the systematic management of the generation, sharing, use and brokering of substantive knowledge through tools and practices at organizational and individual levels with a view to enhance IFAD's role and contribution to rural transformation globally and in partner countries.
Knowledge management for development	Since the late 1990s, knowledge management has been widely adopted in international development as the subdiscipline of knowledge management for development (KM4D)[141] It has also been widely implemented by IFIs and UN organizations, including IFAD.[142] It includes a prominent community of practice of the same name, KM4Dev.
Knowledge management practices	A shared repertoire of resources developed by practitioners, including experiences, stories, tools and ways of addressing recurring problems. KM practices relate to how knowledge is generated, shared, used and brokered by IFAD. These practices involve personal and organization choices, behaviours and insights of individual staff, organizational units and the organization as a whole, both formally and informally.

Annex V. Glossary of terms used

153

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140 The definitions in this glossary have been purposely collected for this
 CLE and do not have universal application.
141 Kalseth and Cummings 2000; Cummings et al. 2013
142 Dumitriu 2016; Bocock and Collinson 2022.

Knowledge partnerships	Partnerships that are either focused on learning and coordination of knowledge and knowledge management (MDLP, KM4Dev) or thematic efforts at knowledge-sharing, such as communities of practice. These partnerships can be global, regional or local, and involve either formal partnerships with other development organizations or informal efforts to share knowledge by individuals in other development organizations and the grassroots actors. These partnerships provide the opportunity for IFAD staff to influence the international and national policy and development agenda, leverage financial resources, enable country-led development processes, generate knowledge and innovation, strengthen engagement with all actors, including the private sector, and enhance the visibility of IFAD and its expertise. Communities of practice are one form of knowledge partnership which can also cover the whole subset of activities described above.
Rural transformation	Comprehensive socio-economic changes, embedding considerations of equity and power relations, in areas where IFAD has been investing heavily, namely: promoting diversification and resilience; advancing gender equality and empowering women; building sustainable food systems by creating opportunities for smallholders; and enhancing rural-urban connectivity and linkages. It involves changes which reach beyond project boundaries, generating multi-level (local, subnational, national and global) and cross-sectoral links which can ultimately contribute to systems change.
Storytelling	A KM method for learning and exchange which is employed to create an authentic, experienced-based narrative to illuminate complex problems and expose deeper truths.[143]
Contextual knowledge	The knowledge of the particular circumstances of time and place in which work is carried out.
Experiential knowledge	Knowledge gained through direct experience, such as that of project implementation, rather than formal or informal training.
Indigenous knowledge	Cumulative, complex bodies of knowledge, know-how, practices and representations that are maintained and developed by Indigenous Peoples with extended histories of interaction with the natural environment. These cognitive systems include language, attachment to place, spirituality and world view.[144] Indigenous communities also have specific local knowledges. Indigenous knowledge is usually not written down or codified but can be captured on video.
Local knowledge	A dynamic system of knowledge which belongs to a living community, and which is relevant to local society, although it may express itself in local and ethnic modes. It is social and people-centred, represents a community's distinctive resources and capacities, and recognizes the importance of multiple knowledges.[145] Synonyms include endogenous knowledge, rural people's knowledge and traditional knowledge. This knowledge is often not written down or codified but can be captured on video or through conversations with local people.
Multiple knowledges	Different types of knowledges (local, indigenous, technical, scientific, practical, etc.), derived from different knowledge cultures, which are needed to address the complex problems of sustainable development in a holistic manner. This conception does not recognize a hierarchy in these different knowledges but rather argues that all are needed to solve complex problems.[146]
Practical knowledge	Knowledge acquired by day-to-day hands-on experience, gained by doing things. It is often not written down but can be written into how-to-do manuals. Experts, for example, will acquire practical knowledge over time to add to their store of technical and scientific knowledge. Farmers also have practical knowledge.
Scientific knowledge	Knowledge derived from the sciences (including social and technical sciences), based on the observation and classification of facts with the goal of establishing verifiable knowledge derived through induction and hypothesis. It represents the knowledge accumulated by systematic study and organized by general principles and is published in scientific articles and books. Although itself scientific, new trends of transdisciplinary study are increasingly recognizing the importance of multiple knowledges to solve complex problems, undermining the hierarchy in which scientific knowledge alone is seen as the best knowledge in all contexts.[147]
Substantive knowledge	For the purposes of the CLE, substantive refers to knowledge which is of particular priority for IFAD, based on the assumption that some knowledges are more important than others.
Technical knowledge	Professional know-how of experts for solving agricultural challenges in the field or in policy. Examples of technical knowledge include, for example, IFAD's signature solutions. Technical knowledge is often founded on scientific knowledge but includes additional aspects of practical knowledge from implementation in the real world. It is published as best practices and technical notes.
Wicked problems	Wicked problems are socially embedded, complex problems, such as climate change and sustainable development, which cannot be solved with linear solutions and often require multiple knowledges.[148]

143 https://ifadkmcentre.weebly.com/storytelling.html
144 Derived from UNESCO 2021.
145 Cummings 2016.
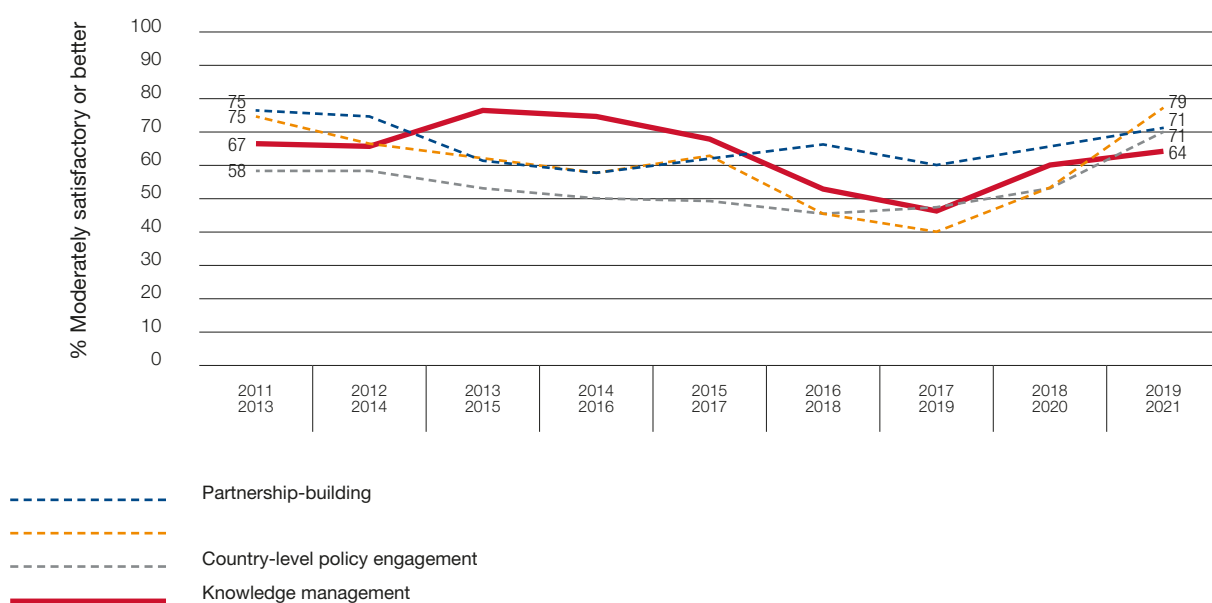146 Brown 2008; 2011.
147 Brown et al. 2010.
148 Rittel and Weber 1973.

Annex VI.
Supporting figures and graphs

Corporate KM performance, knowledge products and platforms

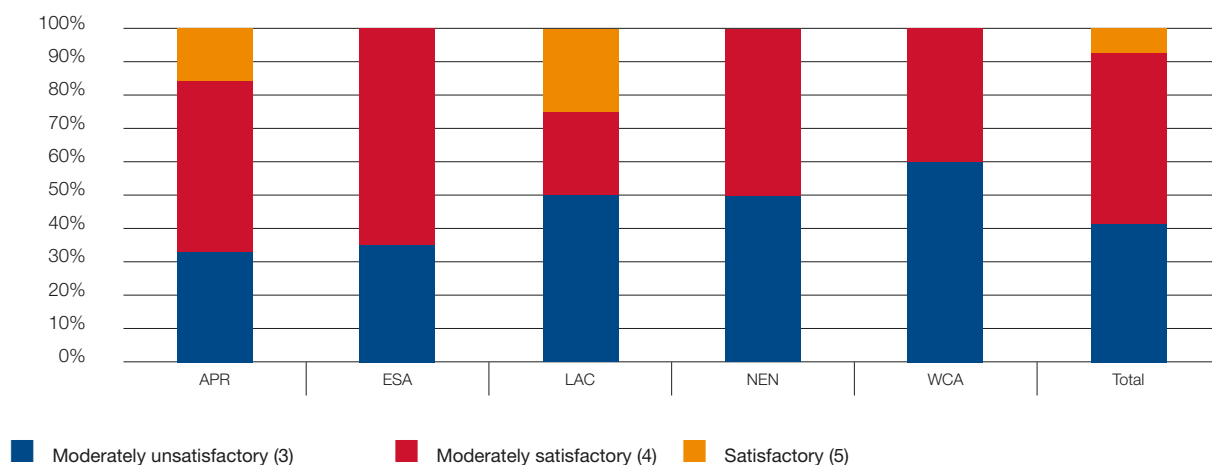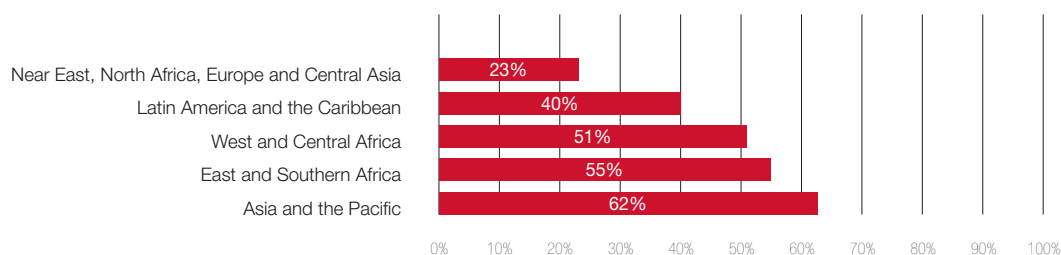**CSPE ratings of non-lending activities**

Source: ARRI database.

CSPE ratings of non-lending activities

Source: ARRI database.

**Geographic focus of IFAD publications (231 publications with regional focus indicated)**

Near East, North Africa, Europe and Central Asia — 23%
Latin America and the Caribbean — 40%
West and Central Africa — 51%
East and Southern Africa — 55%
Asia and the Pacific — 62%

Source: CLE analysis on ICT database.

FIGURE ANNEX VI. 4

Number of IFAD publications by series and year

■ Research series   ■ Impact assessment   ■ Advantage series
■ Toolkit   ■ Results from the field series
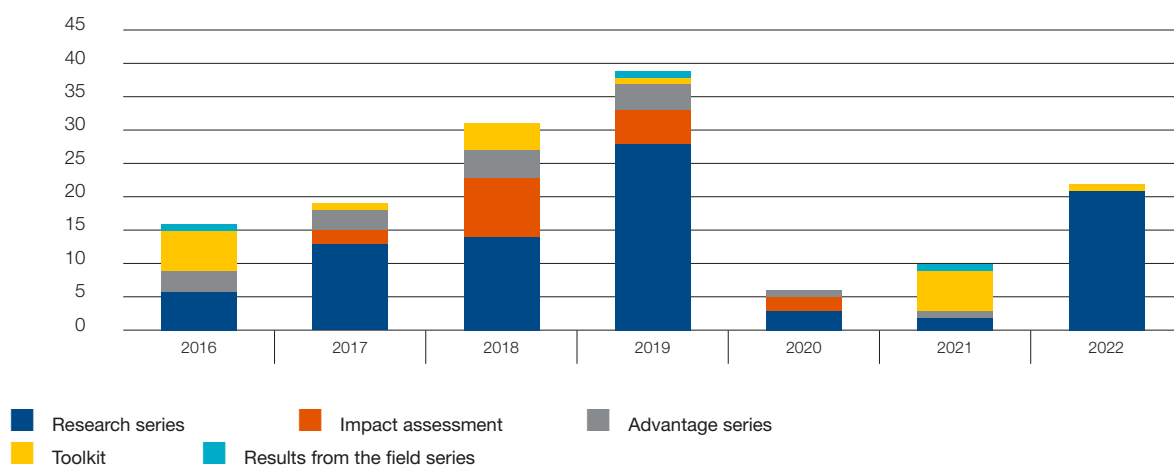
Source: CLE analysis on ICT database.

FIGURE ANNEX VI. 5

Number of publication entries – Flagships

Rural development report — 30%
SOFI — 60%
Annual report — 70%
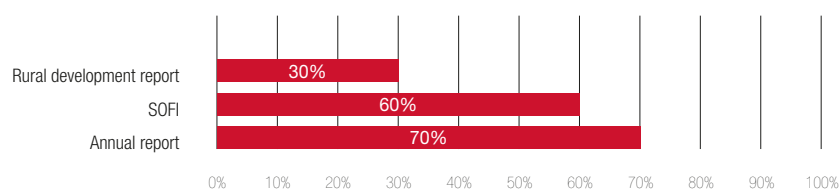
Source: CLE analysis on ICT database.

Number of IFAD publications and page views by series
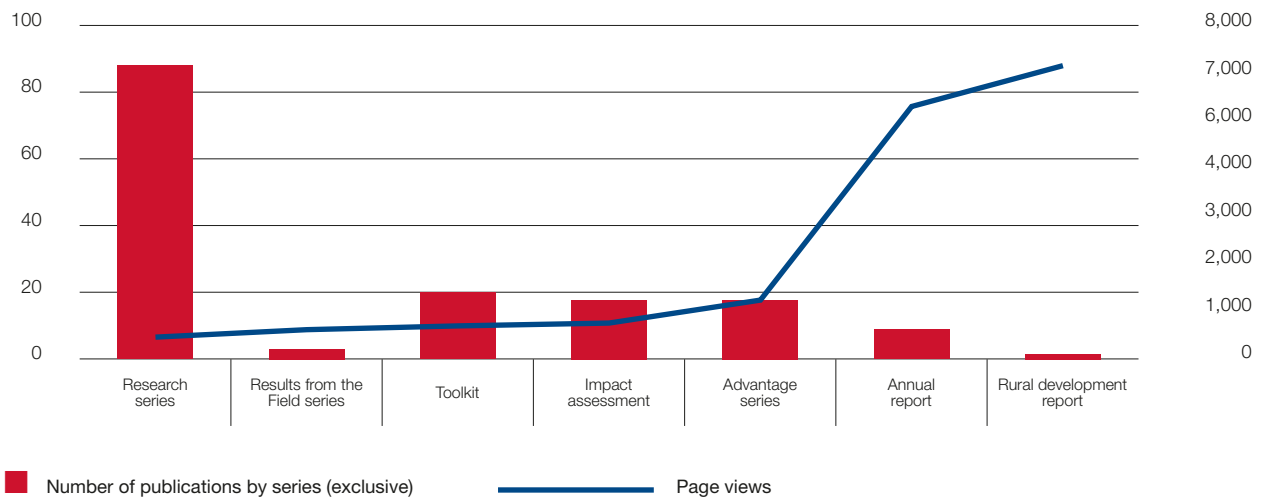
Source: CLE analysis on ICT database.

IFAD publications by type of knowledge
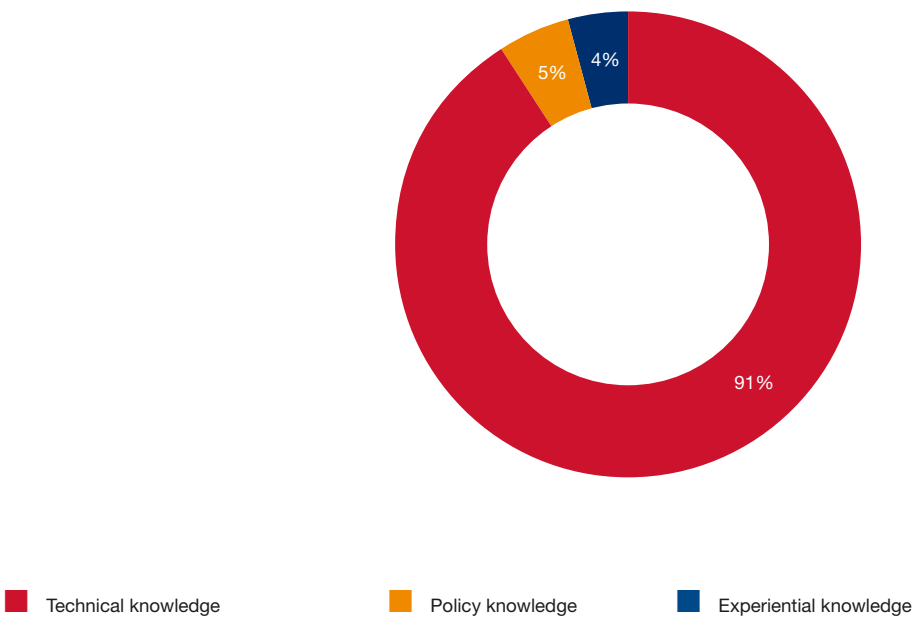
Source: CLE analysis of ICT database and CLE mapping (table 8 in annex III).

Annex VI. Supporting figures and graphs

157

FIGURE ANNEX VI. 8

Type of publications by technical knowledge
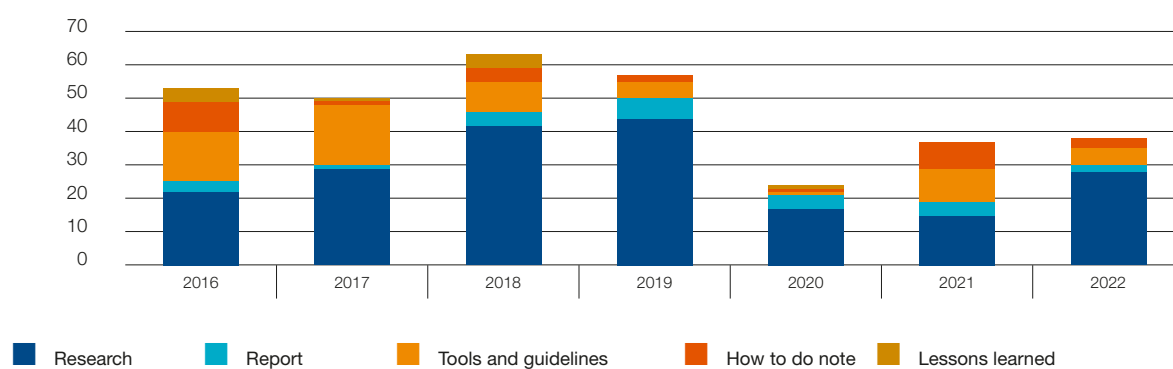
Source: CLE analysis on ICT database and CLE mapping (table 8 in annex III).

FIGURE ANNEX VI. 9

Number of IFAD knowledge platforms by media
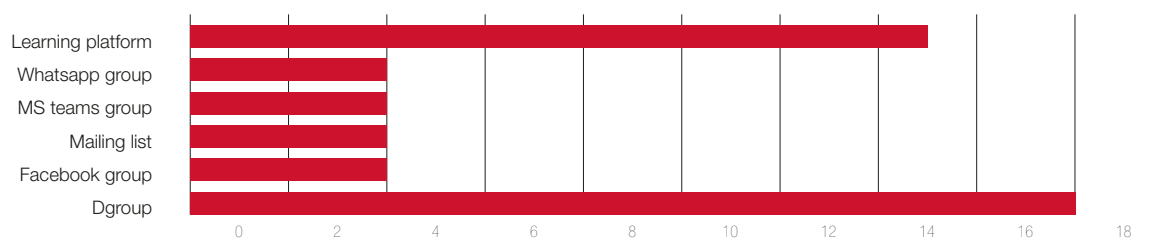
Source: CLE analysis.

Number of messages per month and members by Dgroups
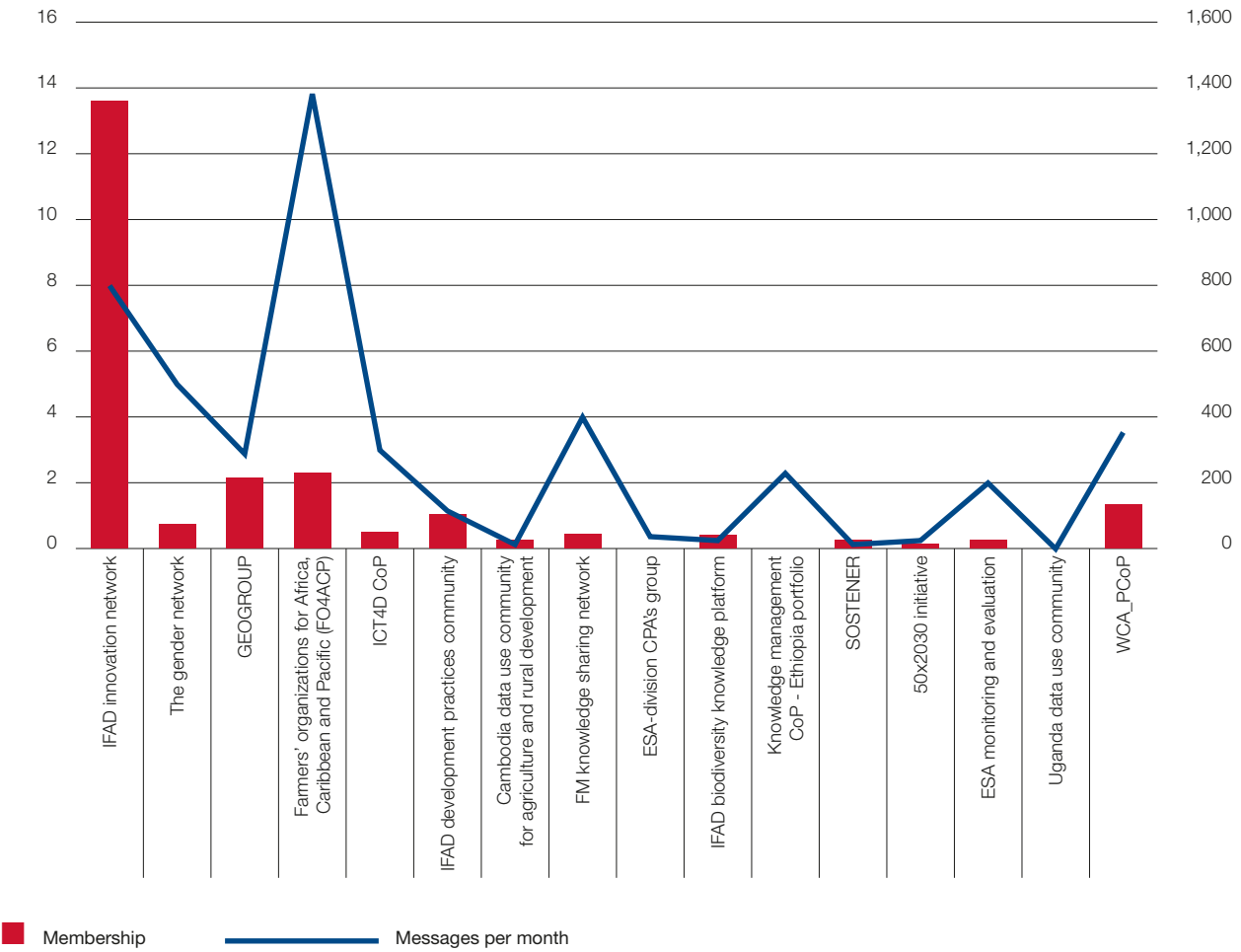
Source: CLE analysis.

Trend of IFAD events and total received supplementary funds (2016-2022)
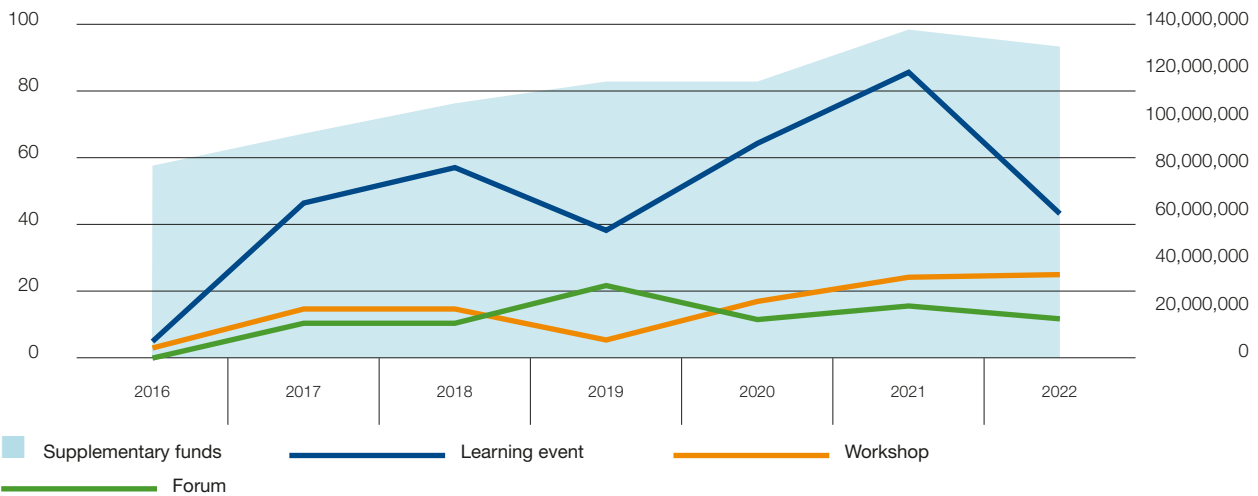
Source: CLE analysis.

Mapping of IFAD events with supplementary funds by thematic areas (2016-2022)

■ % of supplementary funds ■ % of total events
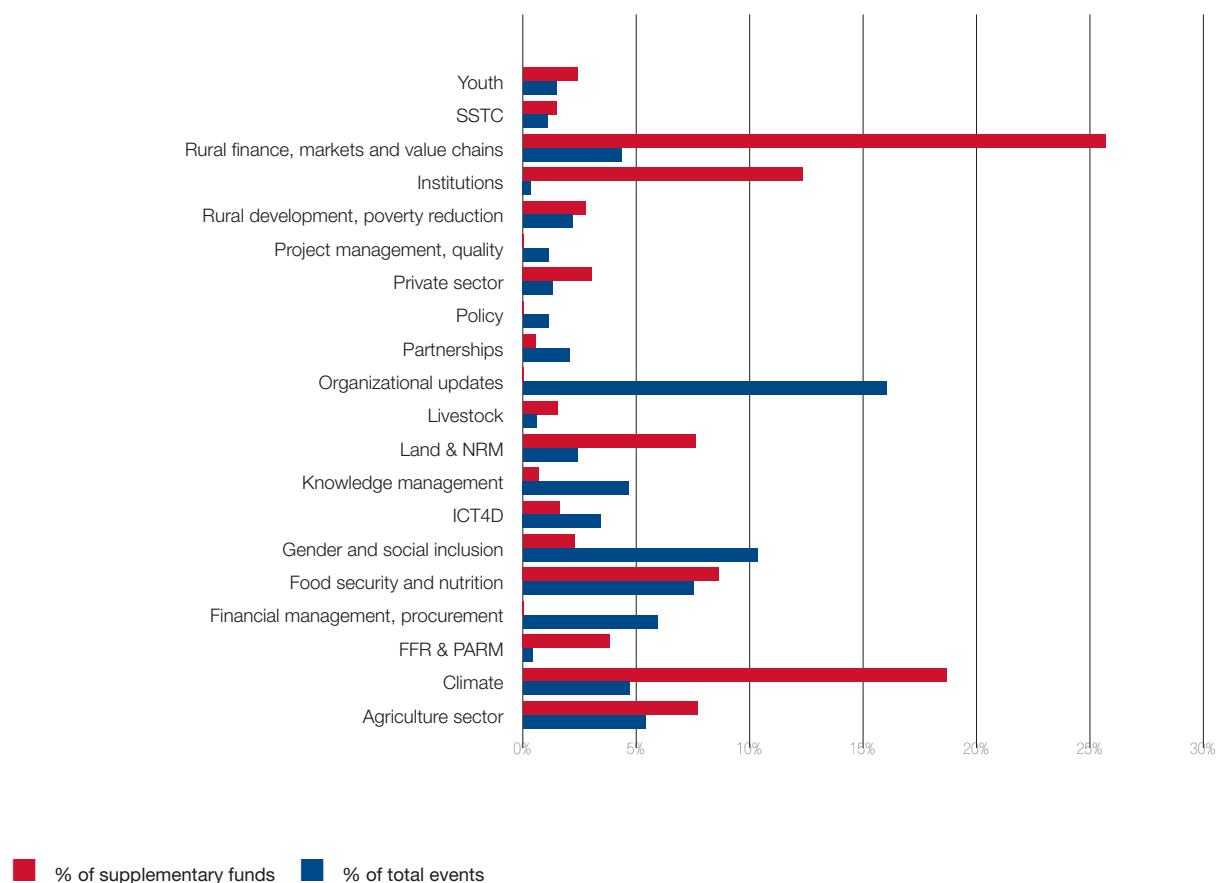
Source: CLE analysis.

IFAD's signature solution (2016-2023)

LEGEND

IFAD reach

External reach

	Communications (newsletter/blog/article/video)	Practice/action	Publication/document	Personal communication (emails)	Event/meeting/workshop

GENDER ACTION LEARNING SYSTEM (GALS) - solution started in 2007

2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023

2016
- Oxfam publishes progress report on GALS-related IFAD grant.
- IFAD, Oxfam and Hivos organize forum on empowerment through HHM and publish a concept note.
- Publication of GALS workshop report.
- GALS included in more projects and COSOPs.

2017
- Experience from Rwanda shared on IFAD Youtube channel.
- GALS inception workshop in Sudan.
- Adolfo Brizzi suggest to include GALS in NEN projects at PDMT.
- Sudan CD Liam Lourdes shares knowledge about GALS to sudanese gov.

2018
- Supervision report proposes use of GALS in Kenya.
- LAC knowledge lab explaining GALS'impact.
- Sharing and learning event on empowerment through household methodologies.
- IFAD gender newsletter n. 25 mentioning GALS.
- Rural development report includes a case on GALS.
- RBA collaboration report highlighting GALS opportunities.

2019
- Publication of "stocktake of the use of household methodologies".
- CCRIP sharing session including information on GALS.

2020
- GALS recommended in Madagascar CSPE.

2021
- ECG event for the launch of Empower@scale platform on GALS.
- ECG event showing GALS results in Kyrgyzstan.

2022
- How to do note on GALS.
- EC
- G newsletter 6th edition praising GALS achievements.
- GAME Change network includes GALS as a main HHM.

FIGURE ANNEX VI. 13.2

IFAD's signature solution (2016-2023)

PUBLIC-PRIVATE-PRODUCER PARTNERSHIP (4PS) - Solution started in 2011

2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023

2016
- More 4Ps projects are implemented.
- MSs encourage replication of 4Ps in public speeches.
- IFAD president discusses 4Ps at Harvard University.
- PTA publishes how to do note on 4Ps.
- IOE Evaluation synthesis on smallholders access to market highlights 4Ps.

2017
- Case studies and event on how to broker 4Ps in agricultural value chain.
- More project design include/are based on 4Ps.
- SKD director Ashwani Muthoo publishes a blog on UN reform mentioning 4Ps.
- Interview on intranet to Francisco Pichon, Tanzania and Rwanda CD, highlighting 4Ps achievements.

2018
- 2017 annual report highlights the benefits of 4Ps.
- PMI knowledge-sharing event on 4Ps.
- Story on 4Ps in Tanzania published on IFAD's website.
- Knowledge-sharing conference in Sri Lanka about 4Ps publicized and article written about it.
- News published a on website sharing knowledge of valuable $ps experiences.
- President's bullettin distributed to all IFAD mentioning 4Ps.
- Blog by Marco Camagni on 4Ps in Coconut Oil Production.

2019
- IFAD private sector engagement strategy envisages expansion of 4Ps.

2020
- IFAD president highlights that IFAD has pioneered 4Ps at international conference.
- CLE by IOE highlighting 4Ps as a transformative innovation.
- Blog by Nigel Brett on Covid-19 adaptation emphasizing 4Ps inclusiveness.
- Zoom conference on partnership discussing 4Ps.

2022
- NEN communication mentioning 4Ps' operational results.

LEASEHOLD FORESTRY - Solution started in 1989–2001

2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023

2017
- IFAD results series issue 2 provides detailed info on the project in Nepal.

2018
- Document on indigenous rights includes case study on leasehold forestry.

2019
- IOE evaluation synthesis on inclusive financial services dedicates a box to leasehold forestry.

2020
- CLE on IFAD's support to innovations mentions leasehold forestry as a positive example.

2021
- Website article by Nigel Brett mentions leasehold forestry.

2022
- Paper and event on CLPD: leasehold forestry as a successful example.

IFAD's signature solution (2016-2023)

SMALL-SCALE IRRIGATION (SSI) - Solution started in 1981–2000

2016 | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023**

Water is critical to development: story.

SSI included in the risk risk management framework (ECG).

FAO and IFAD workshop on SSI in WCA.

Impact assesment on SSI in Ethiopia highlights very good results.

Blog by David Sutte and policy brief mentioning the relation between SSI and SDG 6.

Research series issues 31 on irrigation.

RBA collaboration report highlighting SSI in Madagascar.

Blog by Daniel Higgins on irrigation.

Research article published on SSRN.

Partnership agreement between IFAD and Italy to finance PSSI phase II in Ethiopia.

Research paper on youth implementing SSI (CIAT & BIA).

Blog by Tarek Kotb on challenges and opportunities of inventing in SSI.

HOMESTEAD GARDENS (HG) - Solution started in 1989–2001

2016 | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023**

Supervision report: backyard gardens developed in Malawi.

Indonesia COSOP: homestead gardening proposed as a risk mitigation solution.

Technical report on project ion Myanmar: scaling up of Bangladesh HG concept.

Project involving HG implemented in Tonga.

Revised operational guidelines on targeting mentions HG as an activity dedicated to the poorest.

Joint report by WFP, FAO,IFAD,Unicef proposes HG as a solution to fill the nutrition gap.

IFAD 2.0 discussion paper mentions HG in India's Orissa project.

Publication of how to do note on mainstreaming nutrition includes HG.

Mainstreaming lab by ECG involving HG.

Publication of photographic essay on empowerment including pictures and experience oh homestead and kitchen gardens.

APR communication on rural poor stimulus facility in Bangladesh and HG impact.

VP mentions IFAD's HG at FAO event in occasion of IWD.

News: grant to Gambia for a project including modernization of gardens.

Virtual workshop on the impact of Covid-19 in Fiji and Solomon Oslands involves discussion of HGs upscaling potential.

Blog by Nigel Brett mentioning IFAD's contribution to nutrients-rich HGs.

Mid-term review submitted by ltad mentions HG intervention in Bangladesh.

Food gardens proposed as a solution in United Nations Food Systems Summit.

Project implemented in Zimbabwe involving HG.

Blog by Alessandra Garbero and Neha Paliwal showcasing process in Brasil that successfully proved home autonomy through HG.

Progress report on farmers' organizations highlights results of kitchen, backyard, and market gardens.

ECG newsletter reports experience of Mrs. Leng's garden in Laos.

FIGURE ANNEX VI. 13.4

IFAD's signature solution (2016-2023)

LEARNING ROUTES (LR) - Solution started in 2006

| 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 |

2016
- External blog on IFAD LR.
- Publication of guidelines paper on LR.
- Implementation of LR within projects (e.g. email about implementation in Sudan).

2017
- HQ event with PROCASUR, regions presenting achievements through LR.
- PMI communications - call for applicants for LR on water in Mauritania and Senegal (20 participants).
- PROCASUR article on Medium about LR with IFAD.

2018
- Relief web article about LR on GALS in Sudan.
- QAG grant recipient analysis on PROCASUR reporting LR's impressive results.
- Paper on lessons from IFAD projects highlighting LR.
- Factsheen on ROUTASIA presenting the grant on LR in Asia.
- IFAD Youth Action Plan 2019–2021 by ECG presenting LR as a peer learning tool.
- Email about LR on innovative livestock marketing.
- Report on facilitation of experience capitalization recommending LR.

2019
- PMI lessons learned communication on 9 days LR in India.

2020
- IFAD action plan on indigenous people 2020–2021 involving LR.
- Virtual LR organized by NEN.

2021
- PMI paper on lessons learned on rural institutions through LR.

2022
- IFAD KM strategy mid-term review recommends LR.

IFAD's signature solution (2016-2023)

FARMER FIELD SCHOOLS (FFS) - Solution started in 2016

2016

Video on the adoption of system of rice intensificatio (SRI) in a FFS.

2017

Report on IFPRI.

Report on World Agroforestry Center.

Implementation of FFS in the project on smallholder agriculture development and commercialization project in Angola.

2018

Mention in a blog by the RBAs.

Impact assessment of two projects implementing FFS.

2019

Mention of FFS in the report on activities financed under the supplementary funds.

Mention in the blog on community gardens in Gambia.

Mention in the blog on improving the food value chain through women empowerment in Guinea.

2020

Case study on FFS in reducing hunger in Mozambique.

Mentions in the decision memo on the RPSF.

Mention in the mid-term review of IFAD adaptation for smallholder agriculture programme.

Mention in the report by PMI on IFAD's engagement pro-poor value chain development.

2021

Mention in the rural institutions desk report.

Blog on FFS story.

Mention in the central Africa MCO newsletter.

2022

Report on stocktaking of FFS in African countries.

FAO webinar on the institutionalization of FFS in West and Central Africa.

Report on FFS for family poultry producers.

Report on livestock FFS in ESA.

Blog on FFS in a project in Ethiopia.

2023

Mention in the SKD knowledge for impact newsletter.

Mention in the biannual biodiversity newsletter.

NEW RURALITIES - Solution started in 2013

2016

2017

President's report on the ECLC grant for the new narratives for rural transformation in LAC programme.

Approval of the grant for the new for the new narratives for rural transformation in LAC programme.

2018

A new paradigm for rural development story.

News on rural development in the 21st century.

2019

2020

2021

Communication on the strategic partnership with Costa Rica.

2022

PPT on the portfolio stocktake of LAC.

Mention in the president report on PRISMA.

2023

Regional preparatory meeting in Chile.

IFAD's signature solution (2016-2023)

SEED CERTIFICATION - Solution started in 2011

2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023

HTDN on supporting smallholder seed systems.

Teaser on supporting smallholder seed systems.

Article on a call for proposal for a grant to strengthen the supply of improved seeds in Central Africa.

Mention in the decision memo on the RPSF.

Blog on transforming rural agriculture through technology and innovation.

Brief on influencing the policy environment of cassava seed systems in Rwanda and Burundi.

Mention in a HTDN on knowledge gap mapping.

Project completion report on the national agriculture project in Eritrea.

IFAD's signature solution (2016-2023)

EXPERIENCE CAPITALIZATION- Solution started in 2015

2016
- Project implementation on capitalizing on experiences for greater impact in rural development.
- Webinar by FAO on the methodology of experience capitalization.

2017

2018
- Experience capitalization report on learning from farmer organisations in East Africa.
- Experience capitalization report on 4PS in Kenya, Rwanda and Tanzania.
- Experience capitalization report on rural development in West Africa.
- Experience capitalization report on fighting rural poverty in India, Nepal and Bhutan.
- Collection of articles on capitalizing experiences from Mozambique and Brazil, vol. I.
- Guidebook on experience capitalization.
- SKD webinar with CTA on experience capitalization.
- Booklet on EC in South East Asia.
- EC report on resilience and productivity in the Pacific.
- Collection of articles on capitalizing experiences from Mozambique and Brazil, vol.I

2019
- Guidebook on facilitating EC.
- Report on EC institutionalization.
- Report on EC approach.
- Online training sessions on EC

2020

2021

2022

2023
- Webinar by Yenkasa Africa, FAO and IFAD on the value of EC.

Source: CLE analysis.

Human and financial resources for KM

KM-dedicated head count over time (number)
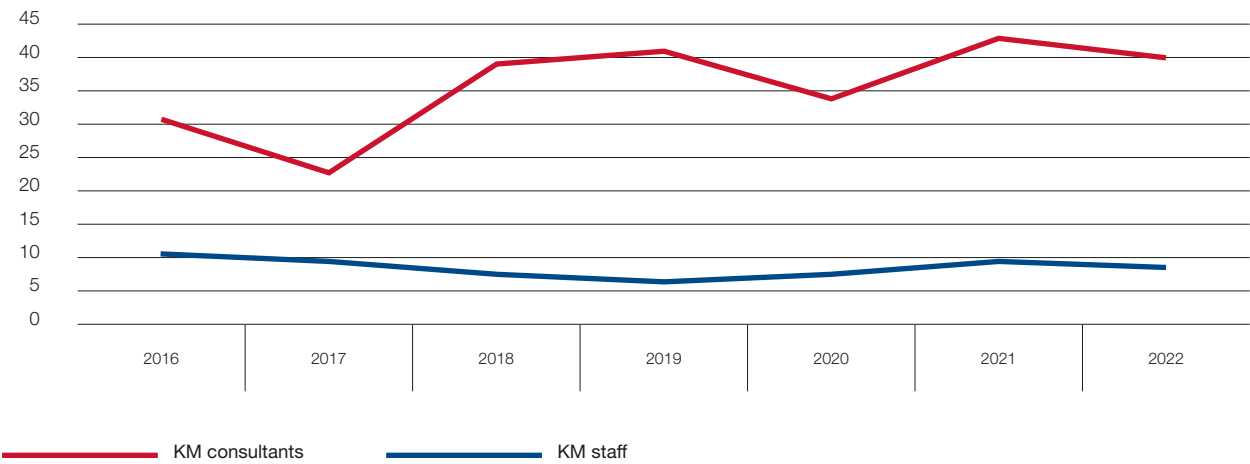
Source: CLE analysis on HR data.

KM-dedicated HR costs by location (US$)

Source: CLE analysis on HR data

Annex VI. Supporting figures and graphs

168
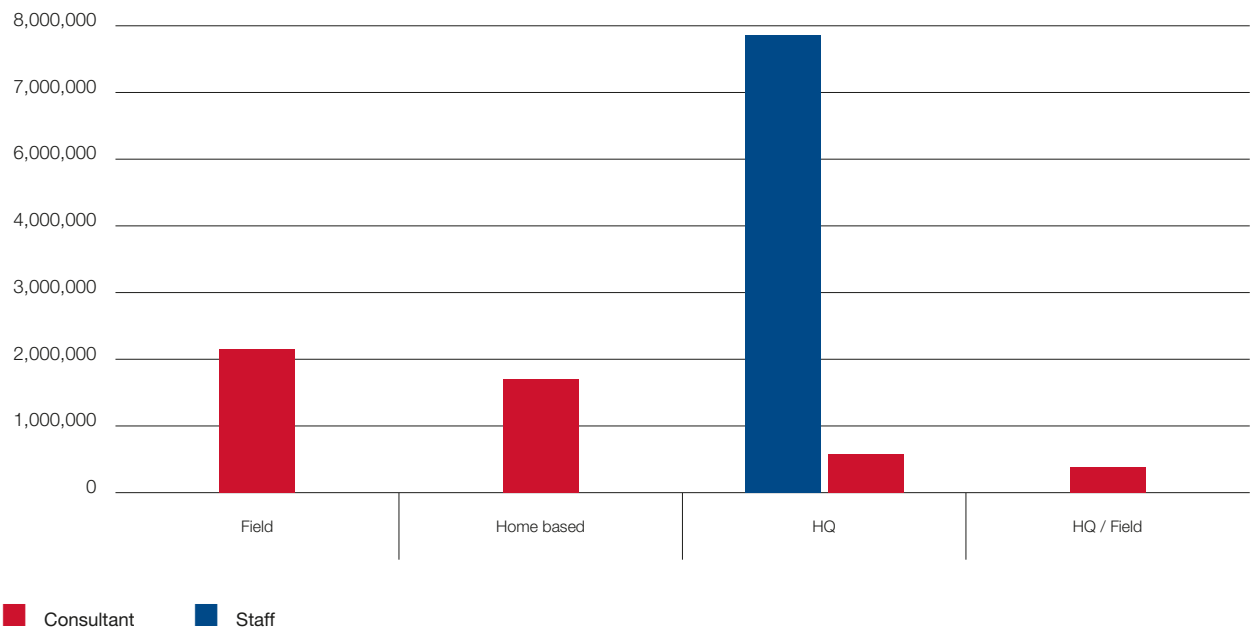
Number of KM-dedicated staff by grade
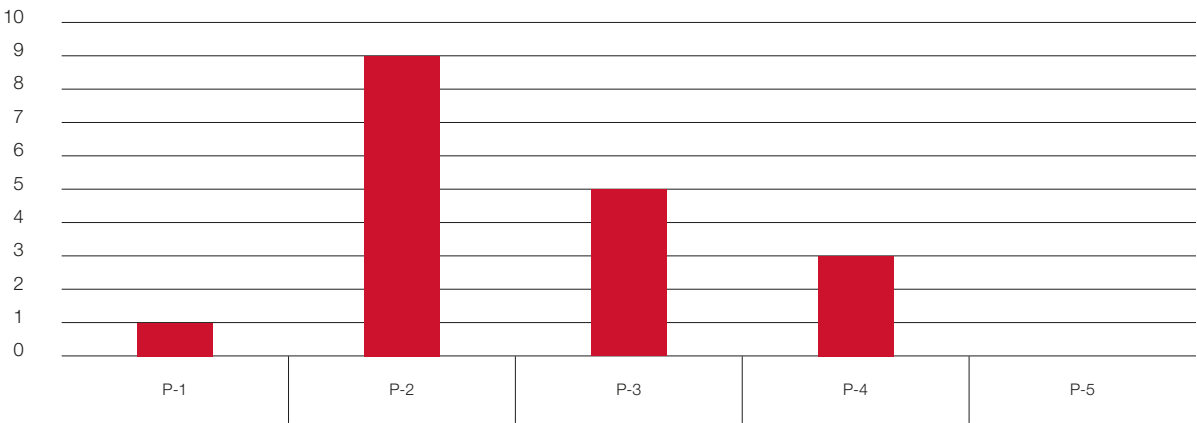
Source: CLE analysis on HR data

KM-dedicated HR costs by gender

■ Female   ■ Male

Source: CLE analysis on HR data.

Annex VI. Supporting figures and graphs

169

FIGURE ANNEX VI. 18

Number of KM-dedicated consultants by regional divisions per year

APR   ESA   LAC   NEN   WCA
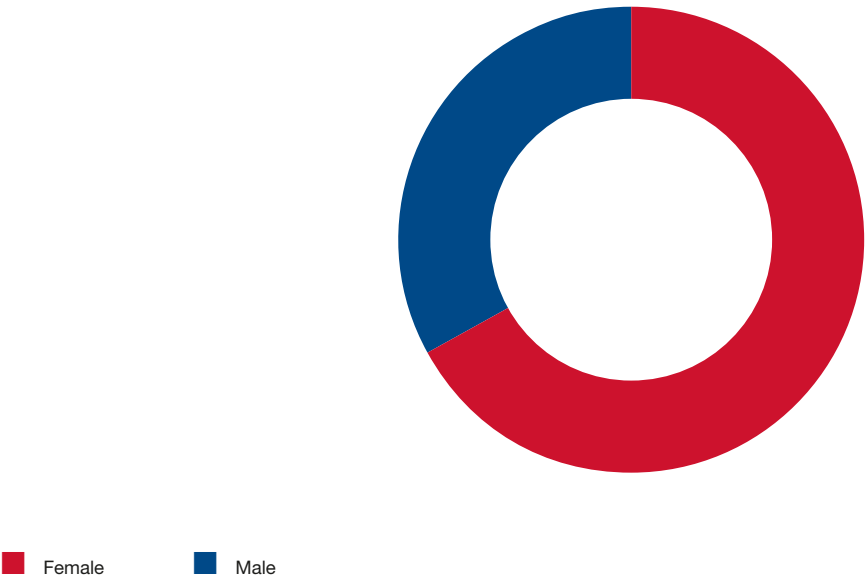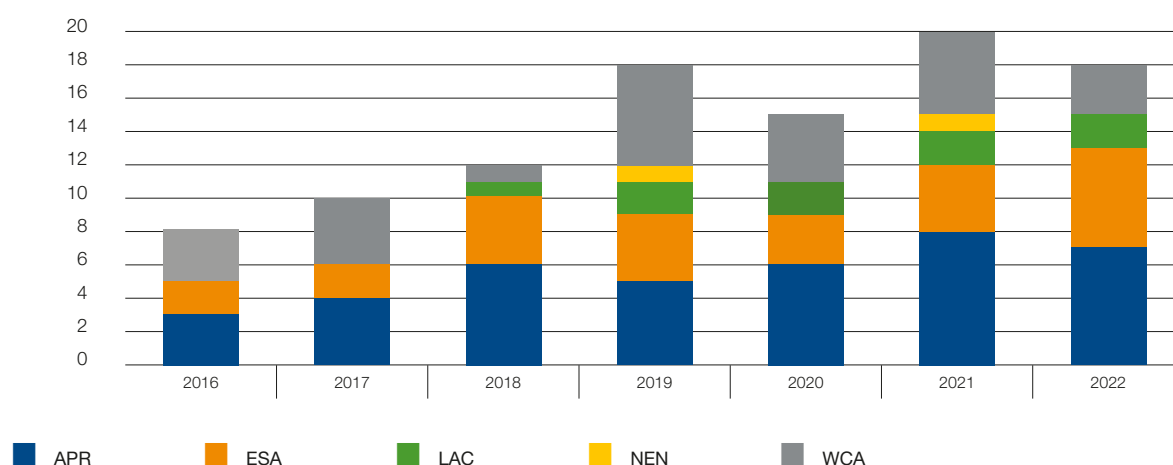
Source: CLE analysis on HR data.

FIGURE ANNEX VI. 19

Type of funding for SKD technical specialists by duty stations

IFAD   Supplementary funds   Management fees position   Secondment   JPO
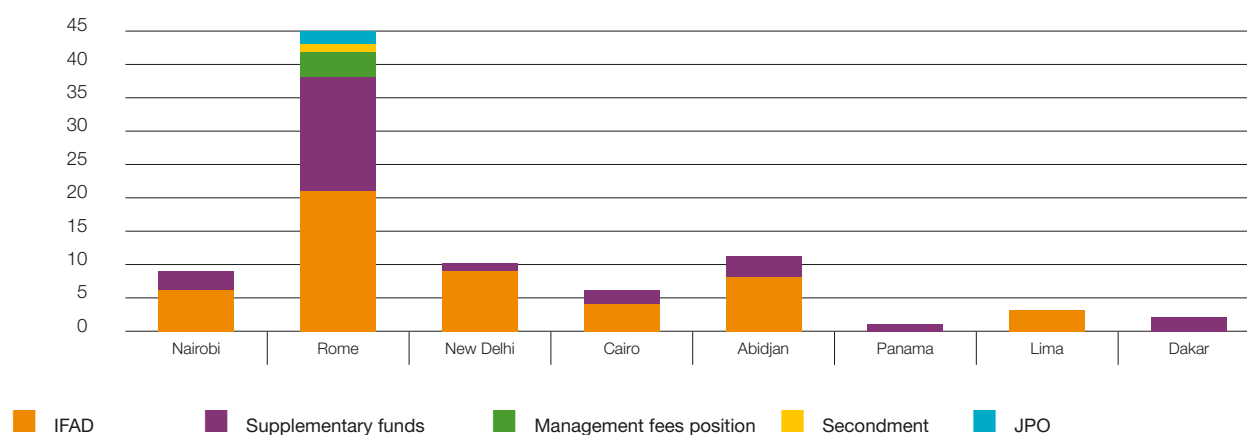
Source: CLE analysis on HR data.

FIGURE ANNEX VI. 20

SKD specialists by divisions and duty stations
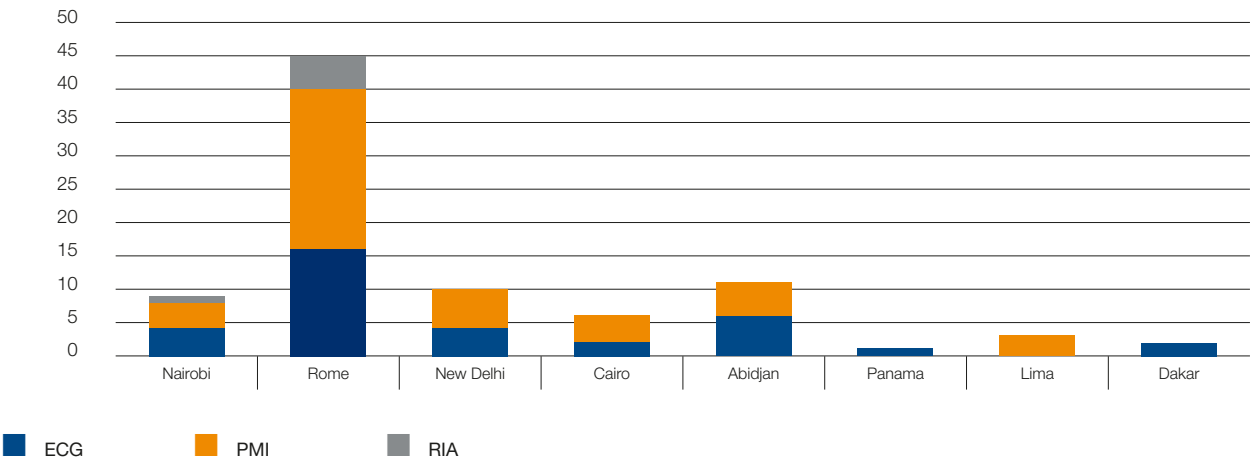
Source: CLE analysis on HR data.

FIGURE ANNEX VI. 21

Distribution of SKD expertise

Source: CLE analysis on HR data.

Annex VI. Supporting figures and graphs
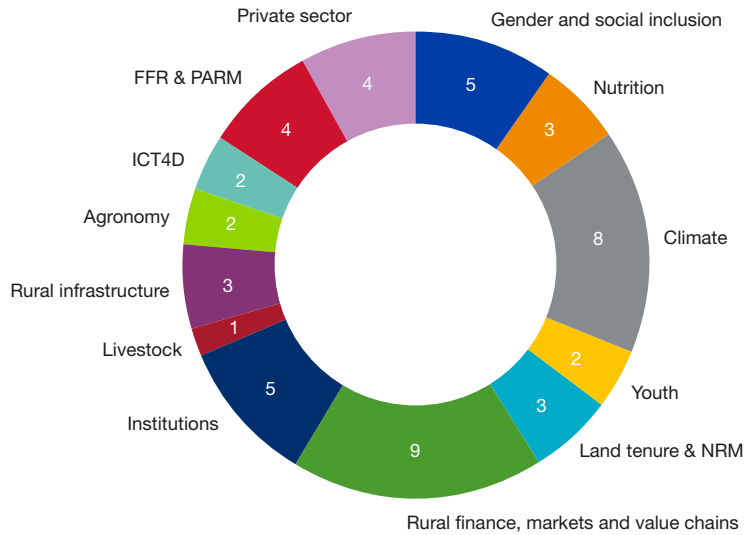
Distribution of SKD expertise and duty stations
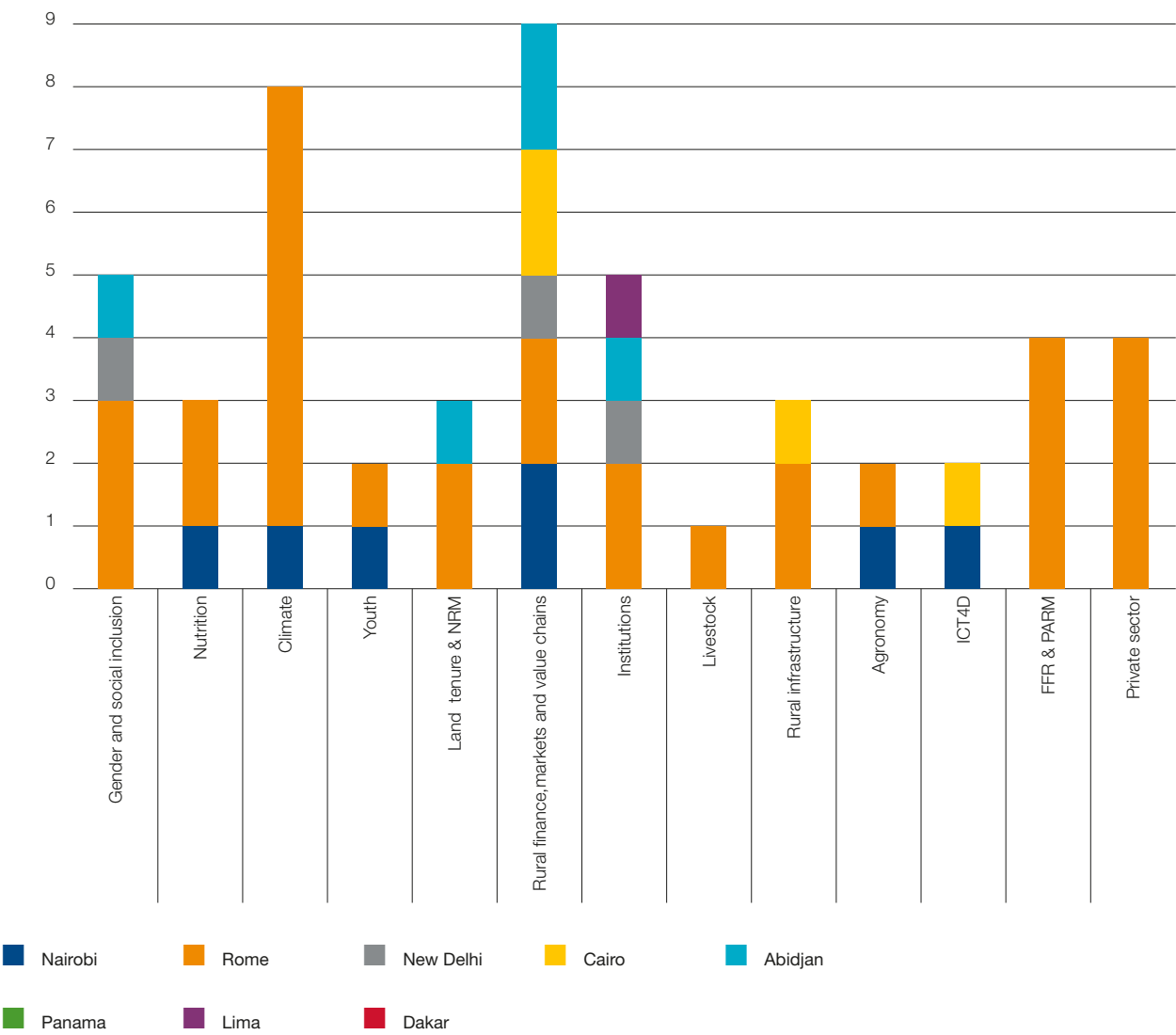
Legend:
- Nairobi
- Rome
- New Delhi
- Cairo
- Abidjan
- Panama
- Lima
- Dakar

Source: CLE analysis on HR data.

Approved IFAD budget allocated to Pillar II by year by its sub-component

■ P2001 - Corporate knowledge & Research ■ P2002 - Communication Products & Outreach

■ P2003 - Knowledge promotion ■ P2004 - South-South & Triangular cooperation ■ P2005 - Impact assessments

■ P2006 - Global policy engagement & Partnerships ■ P2007 - P2-Enable & Support ■ P2008 - P2-Enabling management functions

Source: CLE analysis on OSB data.

Approved IFAD budget allocated to Pillar II by year by expense type

■ Administrative costs ■ Consultancy services ■ IT service ■ Others ■ Staff costs

■ Travel costs

Source: CLE analysis on OSB data.

2021 regional divisions budget for Pillar II by expense type (US$)

- Administrative costs
- Consultancy services
- IT service
- Others
- Staff costs
- Travel costs
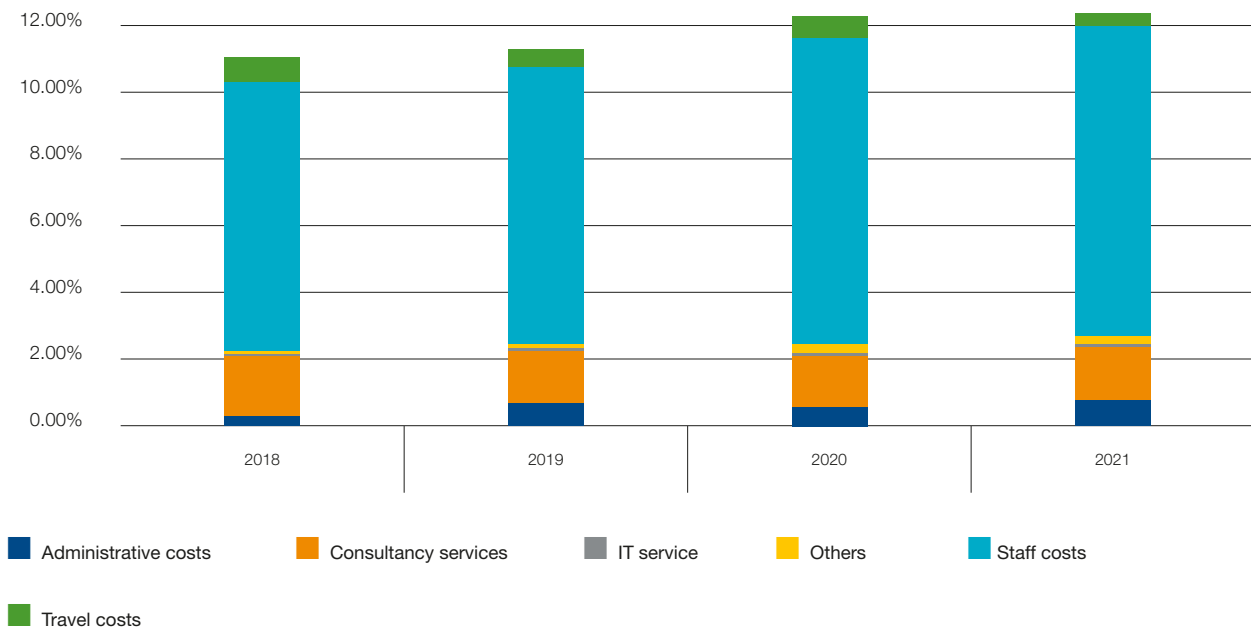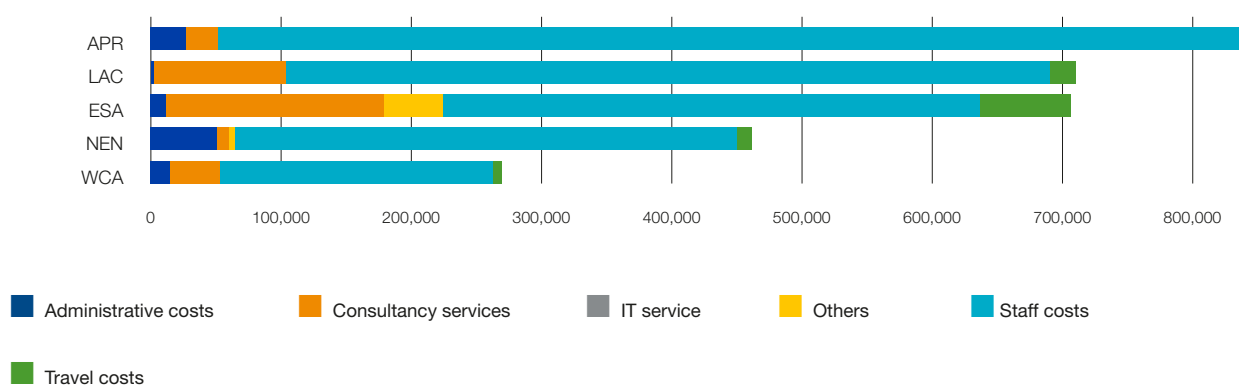
Source: CLE analysis on OSB data.

FIGURE ANNEX VI. 26

Share of supplementary funds on the theme of KM vs. total amount
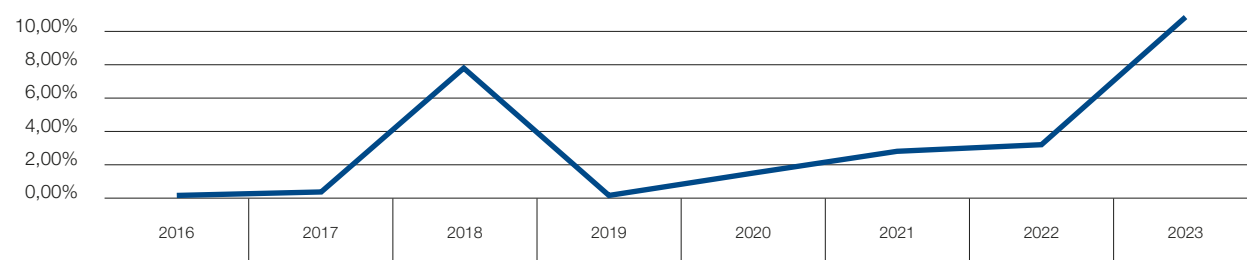
Source: CLE analysis on OBI data.

FIGURE ANNEX VI. 27

Supplementary funds on the theme of KM by managing division

- Sum of donor agreement amount (US$)
- Count of donor agreement amount

Source: CLE analysis on OBI data.

Amount of grant funding for KM (as share of total grant amount)

Source: CLE analysis on OBI data.

Amount of KM grants per financier type per year

Source: CLE analysis on OBI data.

Annex VI. Supporting figures and graphs

Frequency of organizations identified as key partners in country case studies conducted by the CLE-KM
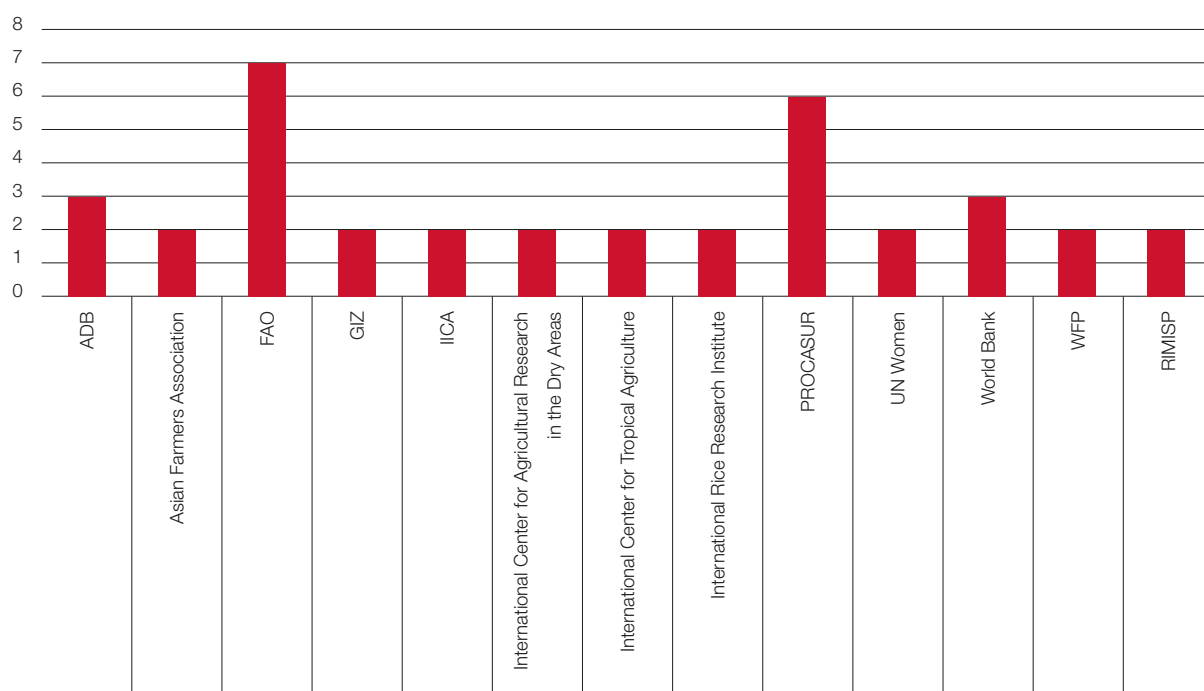
Source: CLE 20 country case studies.

CLE case studies: KM practices at the country level

KM practices and tools overview

Source: CLE 20 country case studies synopsis.

FIGURE ANNEX VI. 32

KM practices: most commonly implemented by countries

KM PRACTICES AND TOOLS	COUNTRIES
6th generation KM: farmer field schools	Philippines, Pakistan, Malawi, Madagascar, Angola, Kenya, Brazil, Egypt, DRC
5th generation KM: exchange visits and workshops among beneficiaries	Philippines, Pakistan, China, Malawi, Madagascar, Angola, Kenya, Argentina, Peru, Brazil, Tunisia, Kyrgyzstan, Sudan, DRC, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire
4th generation KM: project social media platforms: Whatsapp group, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Youtube, Linkedin	Viet Nam, Pakistan, Malawi, Madagascar, Angola, Kenya, Argentina, Brazil, Tunisia, Sudan, Egypt, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire
3rd generation KM: collecting and communicating success stories and best practices through newletters, videos, etc.	All 20 countries
2nd generation KM: project review workshop and webinars	Viet Nam, Philippines, Pakistan, China, Malawi, Madagascar, Angola, Kenya, Brazil, Mexico, Sudan, Egypt, DRC, Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire
1st generation KM: online-based document storage systems	Viet Nam, Pakistan, Malawi, Angola, Kenya, Mexico, DRC, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire

Source: CLE 20 country case studies synopsis.

FIGURE ANNEX VI. 33

KM practices: effective KM practices and tools highlighted by country case studies

EFFECTIVE KM PRACTICES AND TOOLS	COUNTRIES
6th generation KM: farmer field schools	Malawi, Angola, DRC
5th generation KM: participatory research/learning routes	Viet Nam, Pakistan, China, Madagascar, Argentina, Brazil, Kyrgyzstan, Tunisia, Egypt, Sudan, Côte d'Ivoire
4th generation KM: cross-project learning activities/exchance visits/study tours	Viet Nam, China, Madagascar, Angola, Argentina, Nigeria
3rd generation KM: broadcasting an local TVs and radios, podcasts, vocal SMSs	DRC, Sierra Leone
2nd generation KM: periodic project review/reflection workshop and webinars	Philippines, Pakistan, Malawi, Angola, Kenya
1st generation KM: use of geographic information systems	Kyrgyzstan

Source: CLE 20 country case studies synopsis.

Annex VII.
Knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) survey results

What is the nature of your work with IFAD? (Answered: 81; skipped: 0)

Source: CLE KAP survey.

FIGURE ANNEX VII. 2

In which geographic areas have you worked while with IFAD? (Answered: 81; skipped: 0)
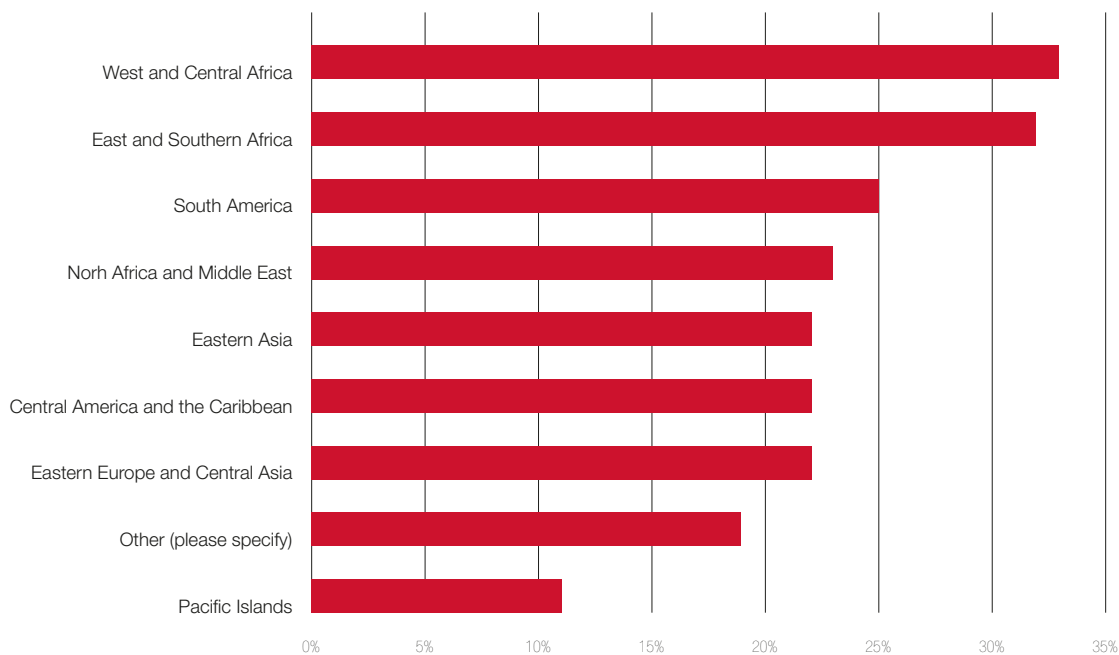
Source: CLE KAP survey.

FIGURE ANNEX VII. 3

Which of the following best describes your role in knowledge management? (Answered: 81; Skipped: 0)
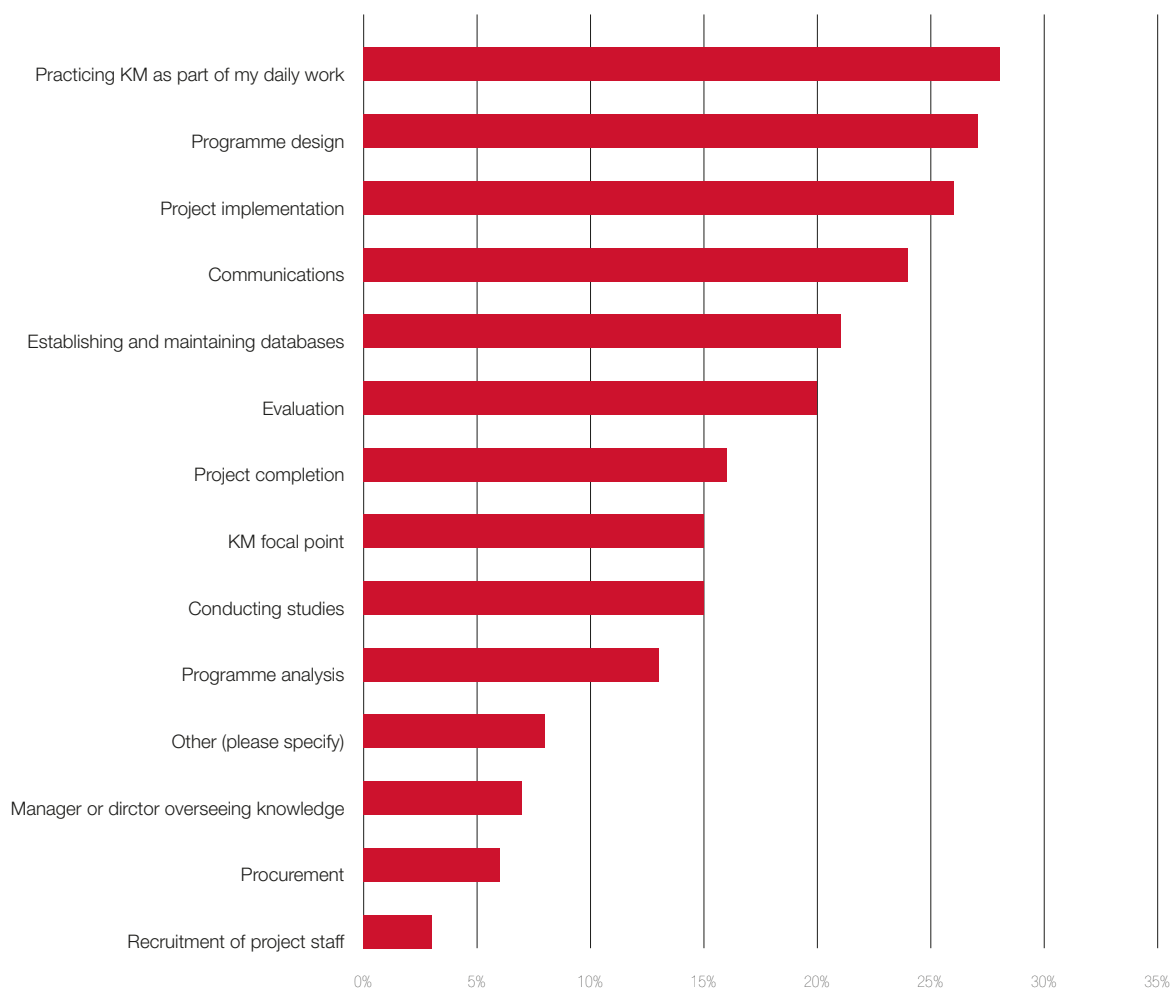
Source: CLE KAP survey.

Percentage of time spent on knowledge management (average: 39%)
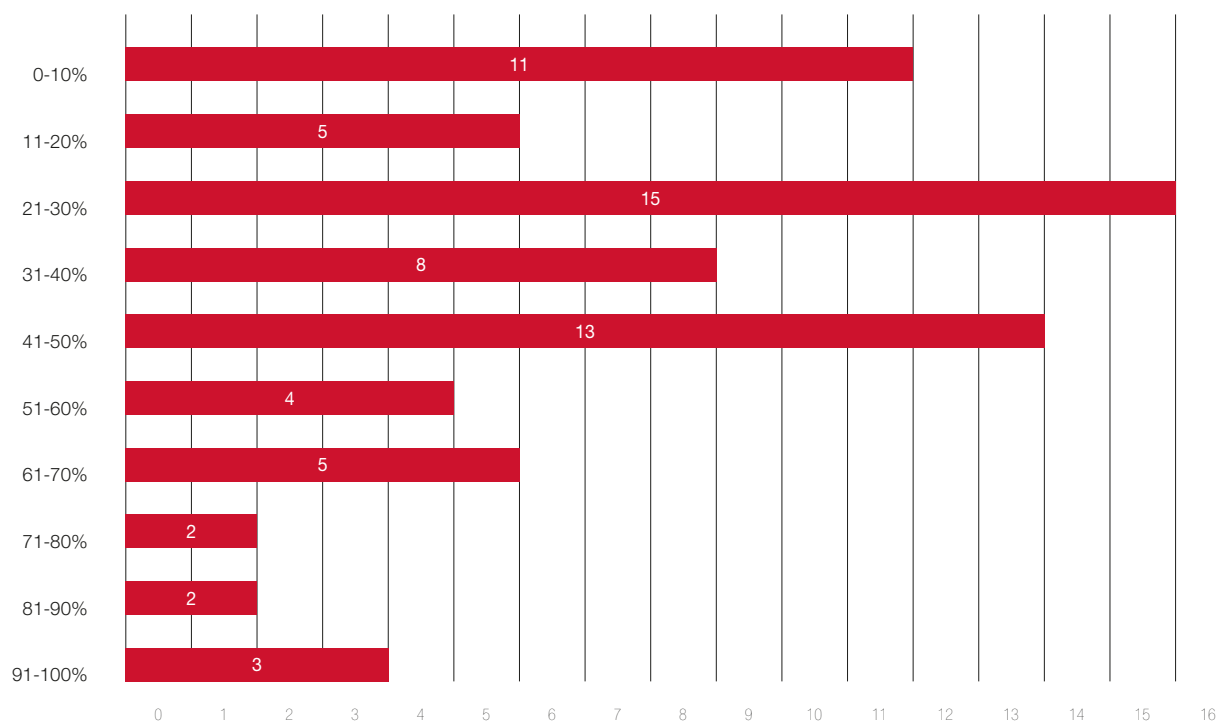
Source: CLE KAP survey.

Knowledge generation - In the course of your work with IFAD, how often have you done the following activities?
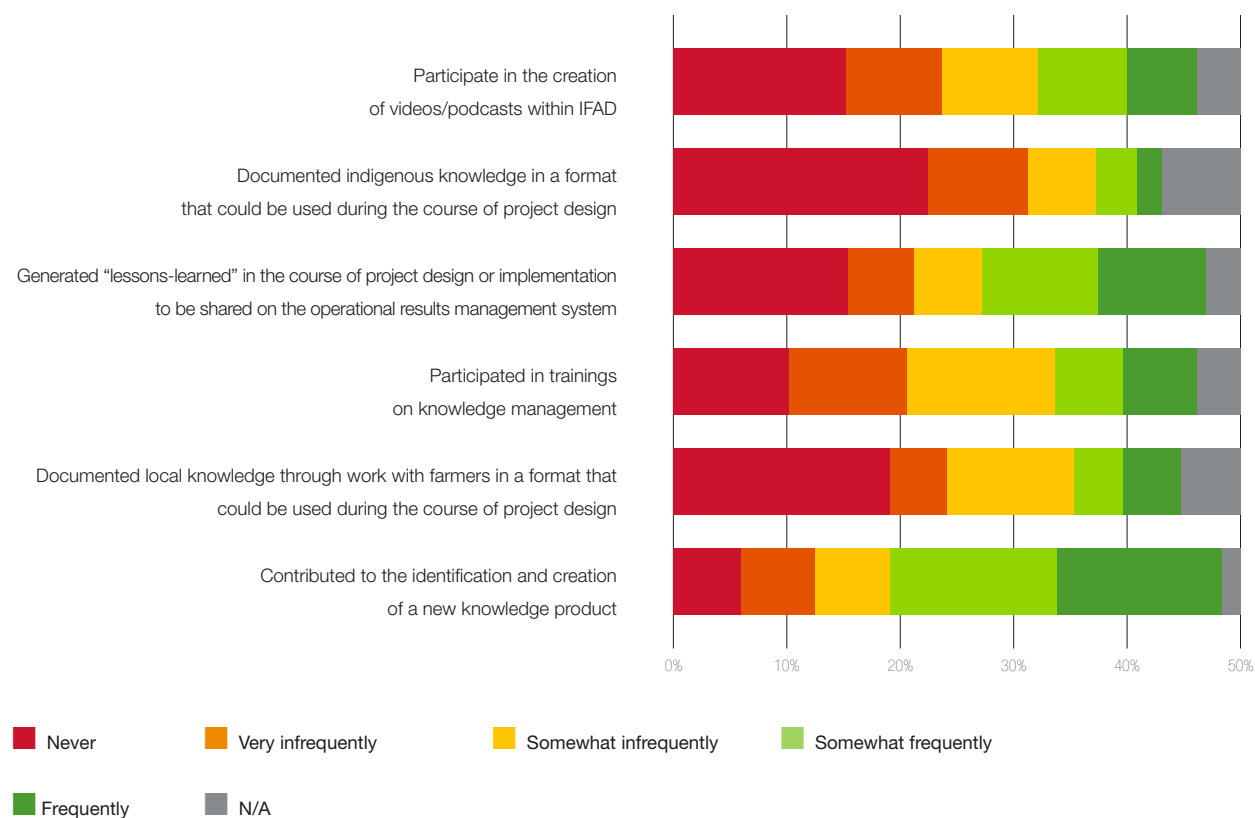
Source: CLE KAP survey.

Knowledge generation - in the course of your work with IFAD, how often have you done the following activities? The two least frequent KM activities identified.

CONTRIBUTED TO THE IDENTIFICATION AND CREATION OF A NEW KNOWLEDGE PRODUCT

DOCUMENTED LOCAL KNOWLEDGE THROUGH WORK WITH FARMERS IN A FORMAT THAT COULD BE USED DURING THE COURSE OF PROJECT DESIGN
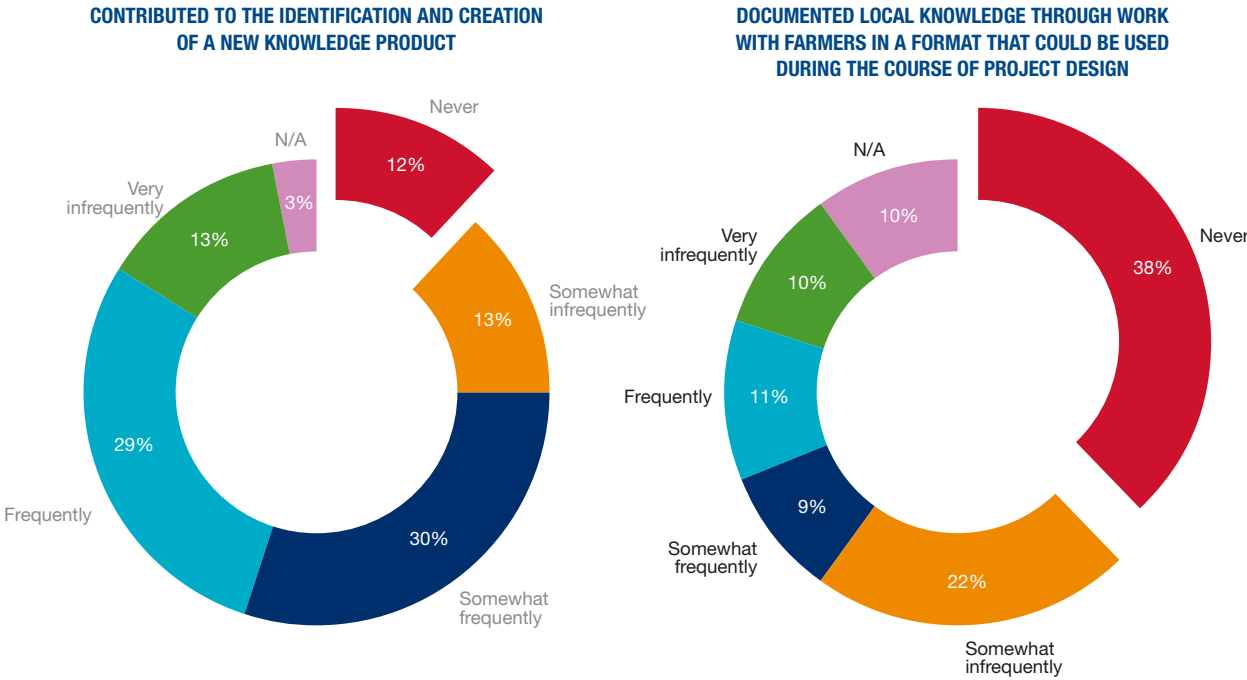
Source: CLE KAP survey.

In a normal month, how often do you do the following activities?
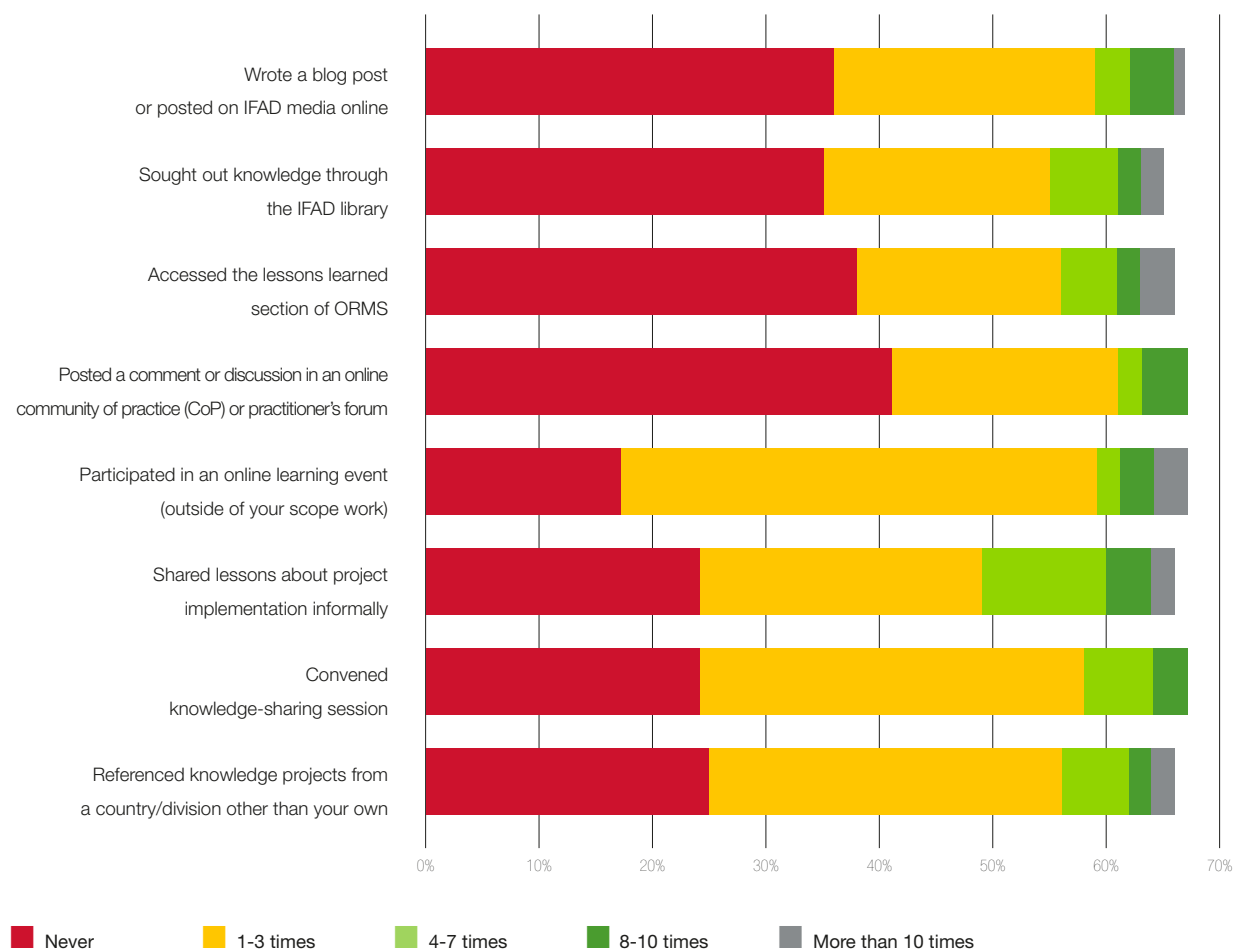
Source: CLE KAP survey.

FIGURE ANNEX VII. 8

Which platforms do you use to search for knowledge about a given project or thematic area?
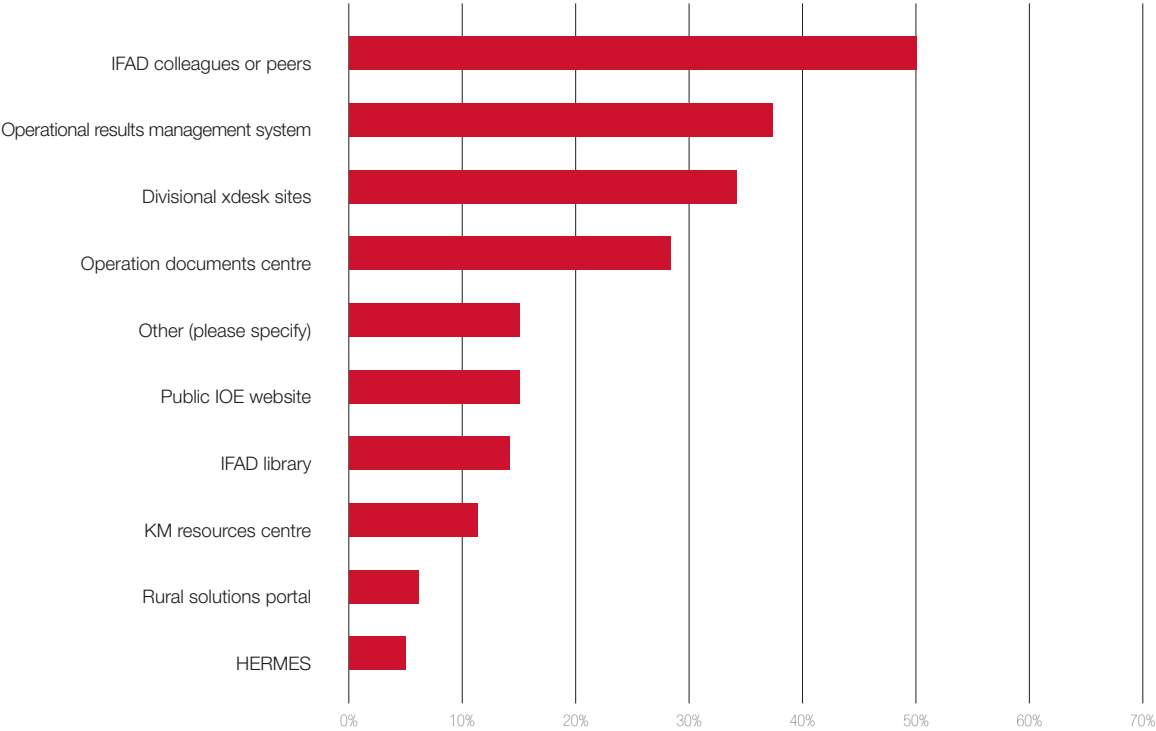
Source: CLE KAP survey.

FIGURE ANNEX VII. 9

Please rank (1 to 7) the following departments by how relevant the knowledge they produce and share is in your role.
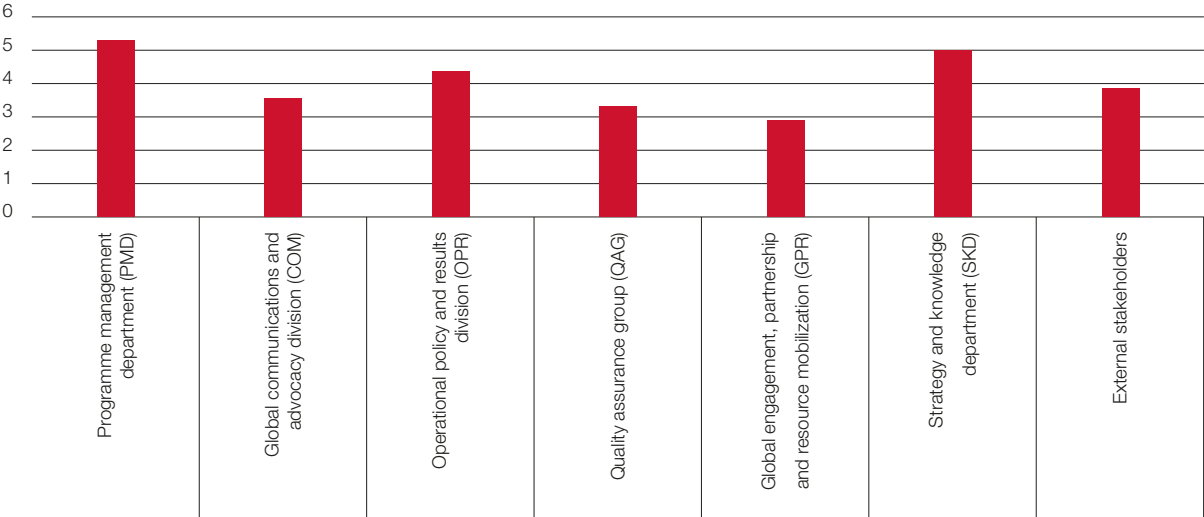
Source: CLE KAP survey.

My role in KM. Please select how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.
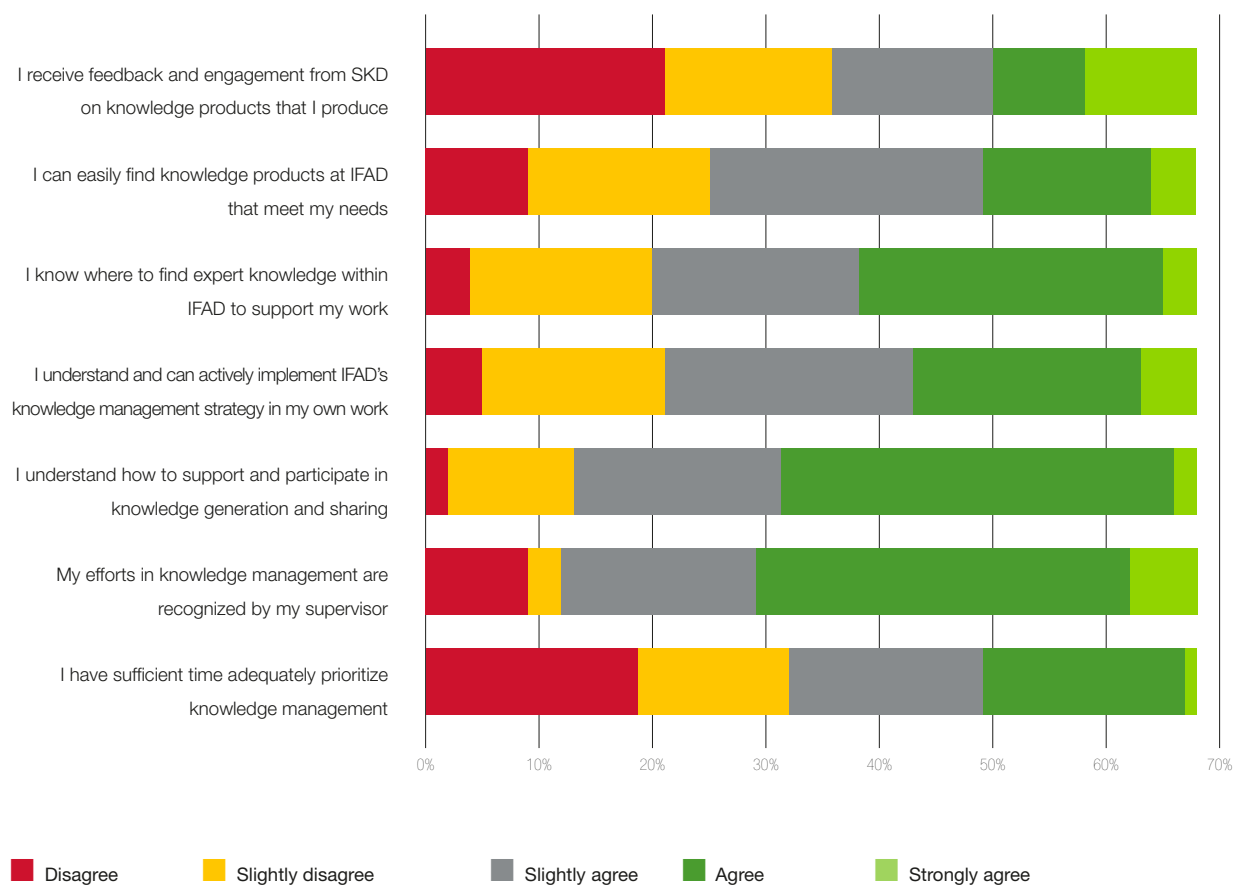
Source: CLE KAP survey.

IFAD's performance on KM. Please select how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Knowledge management activities are sufficiently championed by IFAD leadership

Communities of practice at IFAD are accessible and provide a useful platform for connection

Knowledge management is an important part of IFAD's work

IFAD's knowledge products respond well to needs of implementing partners and recipient governments

IFAD's corporate platform are easy to navigate and helpful in finding relevant knowledge

IFAD values indigenous and local knowledge

■ Disagree   ■ Slightly disagree   ■ Slightly agree   ■ Agree   ■ Not sure

Source: CLE KAP survey.

Priorities for KM: In your experience, how strong are the following considerations in driving KM activities at IFAD?

Availability of in-house expertise

SKD leadership in KM implementation

Regional and country-level strategies and action plans for KM

Government demand for knowledge/project lessons

■ Very strong   ■ Somewhat strong   ■ Somewhat weak   ■ Very weak   ■ Not sure

Source: CLE KAP survey.

Annex VII. Knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) survey results

185
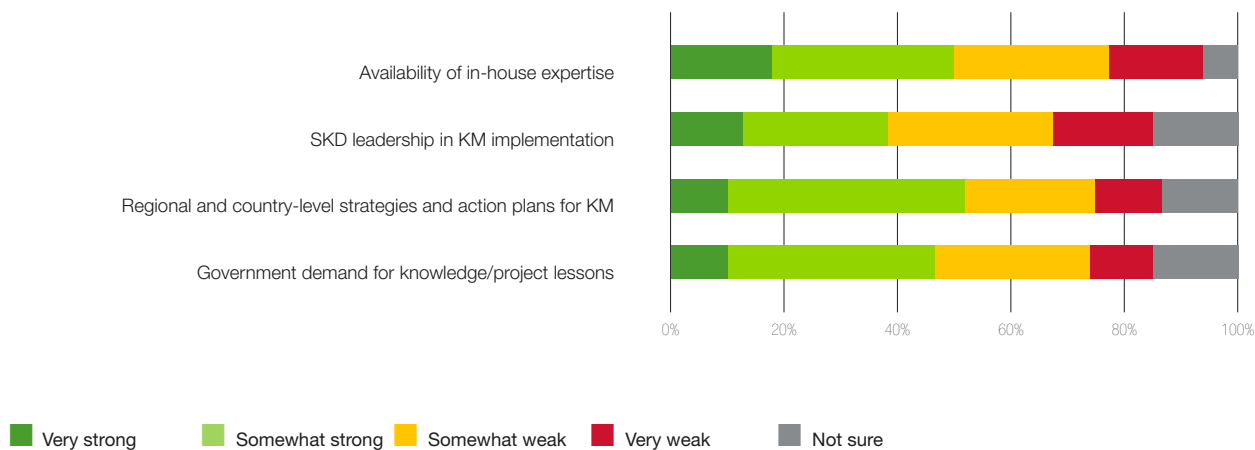
Challenges with KM: Please rate IFAD's performance on the following common challenges in KM.
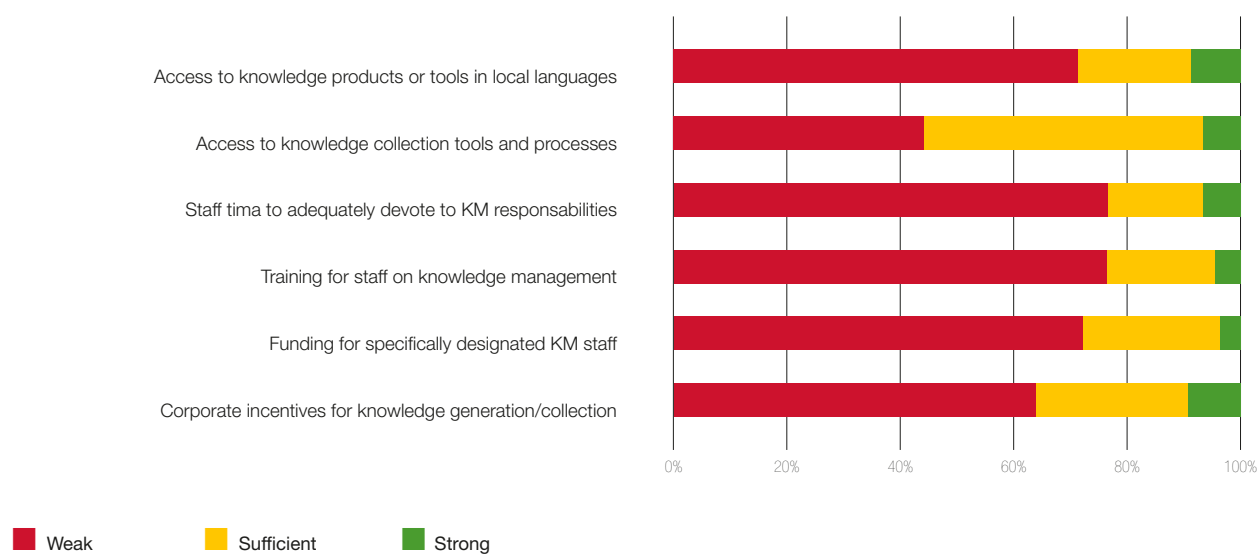
Source: CLE KAP survey.

Annex VIII.
Hypotheses and supporting probe questions[149]

TABLE ANNEX VIII. 1

Corporate level (relevance and efficiency)

Hypothesis	Probe	CLE justification
There is visible and effective leadership of the KM agenda which means that relevant KM is prioritized by staff within IFAD.	7. Executive Management Committee acts as IFAD's KM champion.	**Partly**. • The Executive Management Committee (EMC) fulfilled its role as KM champion during the earlier part of the 2019 KM Strategy. • Since 2019, EMC has not taken decisions to further align KM with the decentralization process (see chapter IV.A).
	8. The KM coordination group is effective at: (i) identifying opportunities to change incentives, behaviours, and IFAD's organizational culture to support the prioritization of KM; and, (ii) tracking IFAD's performance in KM across the organization through the KM action plan results framework.	**No**. • KMCG has been useful as platform for exchange. • KMCG has not been effective in ensuring consistent implementation of KM across the organization (see chapter IV.A).
	9. The KM action plan results framework has clear metrics for knowledge uptake, quality and influence that are actively tracked, and the results used to adjust future actions on KM.	**No**. • The main assumptions underpinning the ToC did not hold. • Indicators in the results framework have not been monitored (see chapter IV.B).
	10. Leadership focuses on enhancing organizational effectiveness through effective KM and helping business units at corporate and regional level to deliver greater collaboration across relevant groups within IFAD and focus on KM within the country programmes.	**Partly**. • Frequent changes in leadership within the SKD, accompanied by SKD's shifting priorities towards KM and its inadequacy in offering organization-wide guidance on KM are concerning. • In regional divisions leadership on KM has been uneven. • ICO leadership on KM also varies (see chapter IV.A; chapter V.).

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149 The hypotheses and supporting probe questions were part of CLE Approach Paper.

Hypothesis	Probe	CLE justification
Relevant KM tools mean that it is easy to find knowledge relevant to demands at country programme level.	11. Partners' knowledge is effectively leveraged at a global level.	**Partly**. • Global platforms, forums and CoPs have been a source of knowledge. • Fragmentation and inconsistency of KM platforms, discontinued information captured after project ends, the inability of corporate KM platforms to be user-friendly, language barriers and spontaneously set up CoPs hindered effective sharing and utilization of partners' knowledge (see chapter IV.C).
	12. Existing knowledge within IFAD's systems is easy to locate, and is maintained and updated through curation and adaptive learning to remain valuable.	**No**. • Access to knowledge is inadequate to meet the demands of IFAD staff. • Corporate platforms are not easy to navigate or helpful in finding relevant knowledge. (see chapter IV.C.)
	13. Formalized processes to connect IFAD country programme staff with each other, staff at regional/corporate level, and with external partners through communities of practice (CoPs) and networks are in place and strengthen access to technical expertise and the knowledge required to deliver the KM plan.	**Yes**. • IFAD has put the infrastructure in place to connect staff. • There are processes and infrastructure in place that connect various stakeholders through CoPs and networks. • CoPs are often short-lived due to their dependency on funding, weakness in monitoring and evaluation, and declining engagement (see chapter IV.C).
	14. Approaches and tools that support knowledge flows and joint learning, especially user-oriented technologies and platforms, combined with targeted communities of practice support faster access to the collective knowledge of staff, more efficient problem-solving, and increased knowledge retention.	**No**. • While KM platforms provide flexibility, they also require consistent and reliable ICT infrastructure for efficient maintenance and quality support. • Most IFAD staff and consultants found them not user-friendly, difficult to navigate, and not helpful in accessing relevant knowledge. (see chapter IV.C).
	15. Effective system is in place to capture lessons learned within country programmes and curate it at corporate level.	**Partly**. • Lessons are captured in ORMS, but the format is not conducive to learning beyond project level. • QAG publishes lessons from design at corporate level. • Gaps remain in many countries in moving from data collection to deeper analysis, synthesis and packaging of lessons learned for decision-making (see chapter IV.B).

Hypothesis	Probe	CLE justification
Diverse types of knowledge are found in corporate knowledge repositories.	16. A clearly-articulated approach to how to achieve a focused, prioritized pathway to knowledge development and mobilization is in place and operating effectively at corporate level. It should align with investment opportunities and those areas where IFAD has a comparative advantage over other IFIs and relevant UN agencies.	**No**. • There is no corporate knowledge agenda guiding knowledge development. • KM strategy does not recognize the value of local and indigenous knowledge (see chapter III.A.).
	17. Many different types of knowledge (tacit knowledge, codified knowledge, scientific knowledge, evidence for policy, best practices, indigenous knowledge, local knowledge, and others) contribute to the IFAD Strategic Framework. Knowledge generation and curation, has been closely informed by the knowledge gaps and priorities identified in operations under the leadership of PMD, as well as by identification, led by SKD, of evidence gaps in the broader context of rural development.	**No**. • Knowledge production does not adequately cover different types of knowledges. • There are clear challenges in their relevance, usage, and alignment with local and operational needs. • Country programmes had limited focus on addressing gaps in IFAD's evidence base on effective rural development. (see chapter III.B).
	18. The corporate decision to prioritize curation of knowledge in the cross-cutting themes of environment and climate, gender, nutrition and youth, and private sector engagement aligns with the key knowledge needs of country programmes and partners at country level.	**No**. • Corporate knowledge products cover cross-cutting themes. • Knowledge production is not demand-oriented (see chapter III.B).
	19. KM coordination group (KMCG) effectively develops solutions to KM challenges as they arise, identifies gaps, proposes new initiatives, and contributes to the development of KM guidelines and capacity-building activities.	**Partly**. • The KMCG has demonstrated initiatives in promoting inter-regional knowledge-sharing during the COVID-19 period. • Its effectiveness in guiding KM initiatives in regions has been limited (see chapter IV.A).
	20. IFAD has been able to position itself as a stakeholder at a global level as a knowledge provider and partner with UN organizations, IFIs and donors through its participation in key networks, such as MDLP and KM4dev.	• Partly • Recently IFAD has been less engaged in KM networks.
Resources are appropriate to deliver an effective KM system in a cost-effective way at corporate, region and country levels.	21. Adequate resources have been allocated to KM at corporate and country level.	**No**. • Human and financial resources allocated to KM were not sufficient to meet the ambitions of the KM strategy, especially at country level (see chapter VI.B).
	22. Visible and effective leadership of the KM agenda which means that its delivery is prioritized against other key demands of staff at corporate level.	**No**. • SKD does not have the human resources to lead KM across the organization and the available human resources for KM are unlikely to sustain consistent quality KM (see chapter VI.A).
	23. Assumptions on availability of resources needed to implement the KM Action Plan have been upheld.	**No**. • The lack of adequate resources, both in terms of dedicated budget allocations and dedicated staff within projects and IFAD country offices, has been a barrier to effective knowledge management. • Constraints on human resources further limit KM capabilities (see chapter VI.B/C).

TABLE ANNEX VIII. 2

Regional level

Hypothesis	CLE justification
The KM coordination group works as an effective link to convey country and regional concerns and demands to corporate-level partners and provide access to corporate KM resources for use in country programme delivery.	**No**. • The KMCG has not been effective in linking regions and countries to KM resources and support (see chapter IV.A).
KM tools developed at regional division level align with and effectively support the delivery of KM to the delivery of strategic objectives in COSOPs.	**Partly**. • Variable KM approaches, discontinuations, and inconsistencies across regions highlight a lack of coherence (see chapter IV.B.C.).
There is scope to deliver an effective KM strategy in a cost-neutral way at regional division level.	**Partly**. • The existing financial challenges, disparities in resource allocation, and heavy reliance on uncertain funding sources make it a complex endeavour (see chapter VI.C).
KM focal points prioritize supporting KM.	**Yes**.

TABLE ANNEX VIII. 3

Country programme (conditions for effectiveness)

Hypothesis	Probe	CLE justification
The COSOP is an effective tool in delivering clear strategic orientation on knowledge management in a country programme.	1. Rural transformation implies considerable use of knowledge and it is important to make explicit what knowledges are involved.	• n/a
	2. Country programme staff can clearly identify knowledge needs that can be filled by IFAD that will make significant contributions to delivery of the strategic objectives identified in COSOPs.	**Yes**. • Confirmed in countries: Brazil, Philippines, Sudan, Viet Nam (see chapter V).
	3. IFAD KM objectives and processes in the COSOP respond to the needs of national actors, bringing in the voices of rural people, building on local KM practices, and providing training and resources (where necessary).	**Partly**. • Confirmed in countries: Argentina, Brazil, Viet Nam. • Not confirmed in countries: DRC, Egypt, Malawi (see chapter V).
	4. An operational KM plan within the programme with full ownership and implementation by all stakeholders is available.	**Partly**. • Confirmed in countries: Brazil, Pakistan, Philippines, Sudan, Viet Nam. • Not confirmed in countries: Angola, DRC, Kyrgyzstan (see chapter V.A).

Hypothesis	Probe	CLE justification
Robust and relevant knowledge is available from country programmes.	5. Project-level M&E systems are designed to support the development of knowledge products through identifying relevant lessons that could be applicable at both project and country level to support policy engagement and scaling up advocacy.	**Partly**. • Confirmed in countries: Argentina, Brazil, Pakistan. • Not confirmed in countries: China, Egypt (see chapter V.C).
	6. Systematic curation of project-level documentation that allows stakeholders to both easily access and share experience and lessons learned from the project portfolio and which can also be used by the IFAD country programme in scaling up and country-level policy engagement.	**No**. • While there are good examples of scaling up informed by project lessons, the use of lessons learned to scale up successes in a systematic way appears limited. • Reasons for this include insufficient documentation and sharing of lessons, limited policy engagement, and inadequate replication-oriented KM (see chapter V.C).
	7. Existing knowledge within IFAD's systems is easy to locate and country programme staff are willing to search for it.	**No**. • IFAD knowledge products are available in few languages only, limiting their use for country stakeholders. • IFAD knowledge products are not commonly used at country level (see chapter III.B)
	8. Much of IFAD's support for knowledge and learning work at country level comes from grants. Ways to effectively link or coordinate support through global and regional grant outputs with contributions to the country programme strategic objectives is possible.	**Partly**. • Confirmed in countries: Brazil, Kenya, Madagascar, Nigeria, Philippines, Sudan, Tunisia, Viet Nam. • Not confirmed in countries: Angola, China, DRC, Egypt, and Sierra Leone (see chapter V.A).
Availability of sufficient dedicated staff in ICO who are competent in using KM within the country programme.	9. Effective approach is in place to maintain tacit knowledge, even with turnover of CDs and other key country programme staff.	**No**. • Case studies did not find systematic and/or effective plans for capturing and transferring tacit knowledge before staff departure in most countries. • High turnover of key staff, especially CDs, has led to the loss of tacit knowledge and institutional memory in several countries including Argentina, Egypt, Nigeria and Sierra Leone (see chapter VI.B).
	10. Regional team resources are available to fill gaps in the skills of the country team.	**No**. • Case studies show that in many countries staff capacity for KM is overstretched. • Training and capacity-building on KM tools and best practices is frequently recommended, signalling important unmet needs. • All regional divisions faced financial challenges in supporting their KM roles (see chapter VI.B/C).
Resources, outside of grants, for KM are available.	11. Country offices have access to a specific budget allocation for knowledge management activities.	**No**. • Lack of specific budget allocations or dedicated staff in projects and in IFAD country offices was identified as a key constraint to KM (see chapter VI.C).
	12. Tacit knowledge and know-how of staff and consultants is consistently used and developed.	**No**. • Between 2020 and 2023, staff reassignments disrupted KM practices, leading to a loss of institutional memory. • Annual reports consistently flagged knowledge retention challenges, despite new measures being introduced. • Case studies showed a widespread absence of plans to capture and transfer tacit knowledge, further exacerbated by high staff turnover and a lack of prioritization in many countries (see chapter VI.B).

Hypothesis	Probe	CLE justification
Grants are effectively leveraged to support KM's contribution to COSOP strategic objectives.	13. The use of country grants in delivery of KM plan is fully considered upstream and well channelled downstream.	**No**. • Country offices were not always able to utilize grants for KM. The strategic use and integration of regional grants into wider country KM initiatives appears to be an area in need of attention (see chapter V.A).
	14. Global and regional grants are effectively leveraged to support KM's contribution to COSOP strategic objectives.	**Partly**. • Confirmed in countries: Sudan, Tunisia and Viet Nam. • Not confirmed in countries: Angola, China, DRC, Egypt, Pakistan and Sierra Leone (see chapter V.A).
	15. Global and regional grants offer an effective alternative pathway to the country programme, for using knowledge to contribute to IFAD's strategic goals in the midterm Strategic Framework.	**Partly**. • Confirmed in countries: Sudan, Tunisia and Viet Nam. • Not confirmed in countries: Angola, China, DRC, Egypt, Pakistan, , Sierra Leone (see chapter V.A).
There is sufficient capacity to implement a credible approach to KM within country programmes.	16. Sufficient know-how exists on knowledge management and how to use KM to support effective curation of project-level documentation.	**Partly**. • Confirmed in countries: Philippines, Sudan and Viet Nam. • Not confirmed in countries: Angola, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Tunisia (see chapter V.A).
	17. Formalized processes to connect IFAD country programme staff with each other, with staff at regional/corporate level, and with external partners through communities of practice and networks are in place and strengthen access to the technical expertise and knowledge required to deliver the KM plan.	**Partly.** • Confirmed in countries: Argentina, Philippines, Sudan, Viet Nam. • Not confirmed in countries: Angola, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Tunisia (see chapter V.A).
Country programmes' partnership approaches to use of knowledge are effective.	18. Sufficient know-how exists on knowledge management and how to use KM to support effective curation of project level documentation.	**Partly**. • Confirmed in countries: Philippines, Sudan and Viet Nam. • Not confirmed in countries: Angola, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Tunisia (see chapter V.A).
	19. Formalized processes to connect IFAD country programme staff with each other, with staff at regional/corporate level, and with external partners through communities of practice and networks are in place and strengthen access to the technical expertise and knowledge required to deliver the KM plan.	**Partly**. • Confirmed in countries: Argentina, Philippines, Sudan, Viet Nam. • Not confirmed in countries: Angola, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Tunisia (see chapter V.A).
	20. Processes that bring people together to openly reflect, discuss and share their ideas and lessons learned are regularly used and include an openness to discussing failure.	**Partly**. • Confirmed in countries: Argentina, Brazil, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Philippines, Nigeria, Sudan, Viet Nam.Not confirmed in countries: Angola, Malawi, Sierra Leone (see chapter V.A).
	21. There are effective operational partnerships for knowledge management.	**Partly**. • Confirmed in countries: Brazil, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Sudan, Viet Nam. • Not confirmed in countries: DRC, Egypt (see chapter V.A).
	22. Knowledge co-creation, involving multiple knowledges and external stakeholders is needed for resolving complex problems, such as rural transformation.	**Partly**. • Confirmed in countries: Argentina, Brazil, China, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Nigeria, Sudan, . • Not confirmed in countries: Angola, Malawi, Sierra Leone (see chapter V.C).

Hypothesis	Probe	CLE justification
There is demand from key partners, principally within government, for knowledge provided through IFAD's partnership approach.	23. The extent to which responsibilities for policymaking and implementation are decentralized (to state/provincial/district levels) and there is an effective and relevant link between policymaking at the different levels.	**Partly**. • Confirmed in countries: Nigeria, Peru, Philippines. • Not confirmed in countries: Argentina, China, Sierra Leone (see chapter V.C).
	24. Adequate capacity for/approaches to policy formulation and implementation exist in the relevant institutions of government (in the ministry of agriculture and beyond, as relevant) responsible for policy development and implementation.	**Partly**. • Confirmed in countries: Philippines. • Not confirmed in countries: Argentina, China (see chapter V.C).
	25. There is a history and culture of consultative policy processes in the agricultural sector which open opportunities for IFAD's partnership approach to use of knowledge and government buy-in into IFAD objectives.	**Partly**. • Confirmed in countries: Brazil. • Not confirmed in countries: China (see chapter V.B).
	26. High staff turnover within the institutions responsible for implementation, irregular fulfilment in providing counterpart funds, and problems with monitoring and assessing the impact of operations have affected the government's ability to engage in effective dialogue.	**Partly**. • Confirmed in countries: Angola, China, DRC and Sierra Leone. • Not confirmed in countries: Philippines, Sudan (see chapter V.A).
	27. Forums for policy dialogue between the government and its development partners (such as sector working groups) or communities of practice that mainstream innovation experiences for scaling up by others, or farmer field schools and participatory planning at the district level are active and within which opportunities to discuss lessons learned are found.	**Partly**. • Confirmed in countries: Peru, Philippines, Sudan. • Not confirmed in countries: Angola, Argentina, China, Malawi, Sierra Leone (see chapter V.A).

Annex IX.
List of key persons met

Name	Function / organization
IFAD stakeholders	
Programme Management Department (PMD)	
Mr. Donal Brown	Associate VP Operational Policy and Results Division (OPR)
Ms. Chitra Deshpande	Lead Advisor Results and Resources
Ms. Dimitra Stamatopoulos	Specialist Policy and Results
Mr. Michele Pennella	Policy Specialist, Former Country Programme Officer
Ms. Priscilla Torres	Lead Advisor, Project Procurement
Ms. Sylvie Marzin	Former Senior Special Operations Advisor
Asia and the Pacific Division (APR)	
Mr. Arnoud Hameleers	Country Director, Bangladesh
Mr. Fabrizio Bresciani	Lead Regional Economist
Mr. Liam Chicca	Lead Portfolio Advisor
Mr. Peter Ekblad	Junior Professional Officer
Ms. Ilaria Firmian	Regional Specialist
Ms. Mehri Ismaili	Programme Liaison Associate
Ms. Liliana Miro Quesada	Regional Officer, Logframe Analyst, Regional Specialist
Ms. Paraskevi Peglidou	KM Consultant
Mr. Abdelkarim Sma	Lead Regional Economist
Ms. Sumaira Sumaira	Country Programme Analyst
Ms. Francesca Tarabella	Programme Liaison Officer
Mr. Dong-Jin Yoon	Special Programme Officer (Republic of Korea Secondment)
IFAD Country Office in China	
Mr. Nii Quaye-Kumah	Country Director
Ms. Lei Han	Country Programme Analyst
Ms. Shi Yinyin	Country Programme Assistant
Mr. Sun Yinhong	Country Programme Officer
Ms. Yang Ge	Administrative Assistant
IFAD Multi-country Office in Viet Nam	
Mr. Ambrosio Barros	Country Director/Head Mekong MCO
Mr. Frew Behabtu	Country Director
Ms. Rachele Arcese	Programme Officer
Ms. Khanh Nguyen	Country Programme Assistant
Ms. Thu Hoai Nguyen	Country Programme Analyst MCO
Ms. B. Lucia Rakotovololona	Temporary Professional Officer
Mr. Thanh Tung Nguyen	Country Programme Officer
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Annex XI.
Senior independent advisor's report

Overall, this is a very well-designed and executed evaluation. It has been done with a keen awareness of the challenges when defining, institutionalizing and inspiring the use of 'knowledge' in a financing organization. It gave much thought to the rationales for the evaluation framing and approach, brought together multiple lines of evidence based on sound methodologies, and engaged with the needs and interests of the intended users. Evaluations inevitably have limitations; the art of credible, useful evaluation lies in ensuring multiple strengths within given constraints, while minimizing weaknesses. The evaluation team deserves praise for doing this well.

Significance of the evaluation

The CLE can help to evolve IFAD's knowledge flows and KM structures and processes to be truly fit for this new era. Quality knowledge has always been essential for development. Successful countries, societies and communities are defined by how well they gain, create and work with knowledge for the benefit of their economic, social and environmental advancement. And today this is more important than ever. The hope of achieving the SDGs within the foreseeable future has faded, and the world is now entering a state of **permacrisis** coupled to an extraordinarily rapid evolution in AI and a definitive shift in geopolitical power. The time of piecemeal "business as usual" approaches to crafting development solutions is clearly past; none of us can shirk the responsibility and challenge of crafting and using knowledge and insights that respond to the challenges and opportunities of this time.

State-of-the-art knowledge and innovation are essential for truly transformative action on the ground. Progress towards transformative rural development now demands insights beyond convention - even beyond IFAD's current focus on "holistic thinking", on connecting multiple knowledges, engaging in multi-stakeholder processes and ensuring diversity, equality and inclusion. It requires r mastery of the implications of culture and context as well as the use of complexity concepts - often inherent in Indigenous philosophies – suitably translated for use on the ground. Few (peer) organizations have been able to do this with success.

The CLE can support IFAD's positioning as leader in its special niche as - at least in part - a knowledge "boundary organization", one with financing power and a focus on transformation. The CLE acknowledges well those aspects of IFAD that makes it a boundary organization[1] as far as its knowledge function is concerned. Aside from its financing strategies, it interprets knowledge and evidence for practice, and helps a diversity of stakeholders to put research, evaluation and experience- based insights into practice. As the main multilateral actor with the power and responsibility that financing transformative rural development provides, IFAD is very well positioned to play a strong leadership role in assisting country stakeholders to design, implement and evaluate strategies and programmes based on what is today known about how transformative development happens. It is therefore fitting that the CLE emphasized "knowledge for practice" and "knowledge practices", and especially notable that it recommends IFAD to develop a knowledge agenda rooted in practice despite often being hampered by its own and country capacity, as well as structural weaknesses.

I note, among others, some additional issues below for possible further urgent study.

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[1] See for example **this paper** and **this one** on relevant boundary organization insights, and **this one** on the role of boundary-spanning networks.

Conceptualization

The two frameworks used in the evaluation worked well to guide the methodology and evaluative reasoning that led to the findings and conclusions. (i) The theory of change allowed the hypotheses or narratives about how change is assumed to happen to be tested. (ii) The six generational approaches helped to make sure that the evaluation team designed the CLE aware of how the KM field today supports transformative change. Together, these two frameworks also complement the existing KM "maturity model" that IFAD developed to monitor and assess the evolution of, and progress in, its knowledge work.

There were two limitations in the conceptualization that can be addressed in follow-up actions.

- **An in-depth assessment of the quality**[2] of the knowledge and insight that IFAD assembles, uses and shares. The CLE focus on organizational systems and practices using the DAC principles and criteria was pragmatic and appropriate. However, influencing policy or practice through knowledge and understandings unfit or incomplete for what is needed for this time will at best not contribute to transformation, and at worst do damage. I therefore recommend a rapid evaluative study in the near future that can delve deeper into this important matter.

- **Future-proofing the knowledge agenda will be crucial**. We are entering a highly uncertain and unpredictable period. IFAD may therefore want to add a stronger ongoing emphasis on global and regional trends analysis and future scenarios in its knowledge agenda for the benefit of both its programming and evaluation functions. For example, a simple "three horizons" perspective can help management think through the dynamic contexts in which KM has to prove its value. The CLE recommendations can also be further detailed with this in mind.

Operationalization

The methodology detailed in the annexes confirm the efforts made to ensure that the CLE findings and conclusions are robust: useful frameworks, a theory-based mixed methods design, multiple lines of evidence, many sources with good rationales for their selection, and a strong focus on qualitative information, as well as defensible triangulation. Not all biases could be avoided, but inadequacies in data sets, such as the low response rate for the KAP survey, were recognized and considered. A red-amber-green map detailing the strength of evidence would add to its credibility; this can be considered for future evaluations. Some of the data classifications in the annexes may also be useful to inform future monitoring and learning efforts.

The boundary-setting is well justified, but inevitably raises further questions that may be important to help shape and guide IFAD's KM in the near future. Knowledge-focused evaluations can seldom address all desirable issues, and their scope tends to be hard to pin down. KM is a contested concept and tends to infuse all organizational systems, while knowledge flows in unpredictable ways among (potential) users. It is therefore no surprise that the intended users of the CLE have outstanding questions. It will be helpful to record key omissions, consider their implications, and if necessary, address them through self-reflections or rapid reviews as a complement to independent evaluations and MTRs.

The evaluative reasoning is generally sound, cumulating in a few substantive key recommendations that can also spark further conversation. Evaluation helps to clarify and prioritize strategy and action based on the best available evidence and evaluative reasoning, connecting findings, conclusions and recommendations. It seldom claims to be the last word on what should be done. The nuanced analyses and detailed secondary recommendations in the CLE can spark further conversations and decisions that can combine the independent expertise of the evaluation team with internal experience.

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[2] Including aspects such as its relevance, timeliness, technical credibility, values-informed legitimacy, positioning for (immediate) use. If valued, in-depth assessment of their (potential or actual) impact can also be done.

KM benchmarking is seldom informative. Instead, KM management and staff need to be in the thick of things to gain insight into what is current and worth translating for IFAD's context. Unsurprisingly, comprehensive benchmarking has been a notable challenge in the CLE. Few relevant peer evaluation reports were available – and inevitably, unless intentionally designed for comparison, such reports yield limited useful information. Instead, it is beneficial to have a consistent finger on the pulse of the KM state-of-the-art in theory and in practice, including in generative AI and among INGOs, foundations and other 'non-peer' organizations that work on the ground. IFAD can also at the same time advance the KM field and profile its contributions as a transformative development financier, together with its country partners. High-profile writings, events, collaborations, and attention to the effectiveness of IFAD-linked CoPs will help to confirm in IFAD that KM is a specialist field worthy of specialist expertise.

Use

The value of the CLE can now be further enhanced, led by Management, also for the public good. I appreciate the CLE team's consultations at various stages, even as they strive to maintain a good degree of independence. I also appreciate the reports of constructive, thoughtful engagement by Management. Beyond IFAD, wider conversations initiated by Management around key issues emerging from the CLE can now strengthen KM practice for transformation, and position IFAD's knowledge role more intentionally among the Rome-based agencies and other key players in the same ecosystems.

Findings, conclusions and recommendations

The questionable assumptions underlying the IFAD's KM theory of change are a major cause of concern – including the potential 'killer' assumptions around adequate resources and appropriate IFAD and country capacities. The CLE therefore correctly points to the need for urgent action on multiple fronts with regard to IFAD's positioning, organizational systems, coherence and culture.
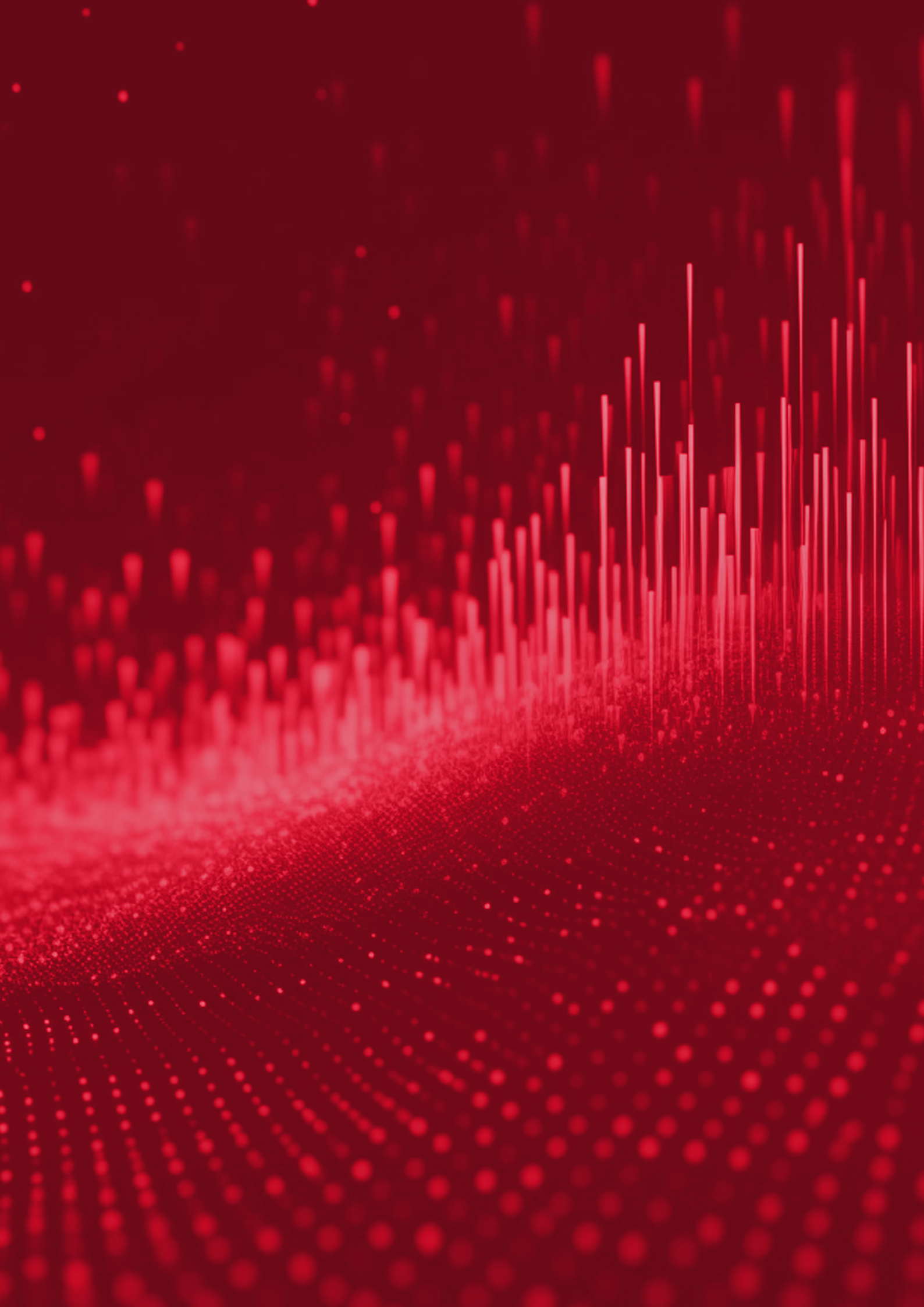
Artificial Intelligence is set to change everything, including all aspects of KM. The CLE has not addressed this aspect in detail. Indeed, much is still unknown, including how AI will impact the Global South. But it is clear that KM as a field will be increasingly pressed to grow in sophistication resulting from advances in AI. IFAD will benefit from tracking how this will affect the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and impact of its knowledge work.

Its long track record in this field can now help IFAD to commit more robustly to a KM fit for this era. It is important that such experience and commitment are reflected in the five priority actions indicated in the CLE. (i) Appropriate positioning of the KM custodian office. KM is often paired with innovation, evidence and/or impact-related functions. (ii) Resources and capacities commensurate with IFAD's important knowledge role, as well as its ability to stay abreast of AI developments. (iii) Organizational culture and systems that work for impactful KM. (iv) Recognition of KM as specialist field through allocation of clearly-defined high profile roles – that is, KM specialists with authority, capabilities and explicit responsibilities[3] to steward the KM strategy and agenda. These are in addition to the "extended team" – that is, all staff enabling knowledge flows within and beyond IFAD. (v) Fully engaging with the meaning of an effective "learning culture" in IFAD and among potential knowledge users, and inspiring action accordingly.

The value of South-South cooperation, and the key contributions South-rooted knowledge can make, require further concerted attention across IFAD. Across the Global South we need to continue developing new or adjusted narratives about how transformative change can work. In doing so, it takes special skill and commitment to ensure that knowledge from the Global South takes its rightful place – blending knowledge from different knowledge systems in ways that give equal or even more profile and respect to SSC (and appropriate SSTC) experiences and insights. This includes decolonizing the frameworks, concepts and approaches used in KM, and making SSC- and SSTC-generated knowledge a more integral part of the culture of working with knowledge and learning in IFAD.

I trust that these few observations will add to the value of the CLE for IFAD's corporate strategy and KM deliberations and plans as 2024 unfolds.

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3   A **few examples** (see also **here**): KM Sponsor, KM Lead, KM Champion, Knowledge Manager, Knowledge Architect, Knowledge Analyst, Knowledge Editor, Technology Lead, Content Manager, etc.

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