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Republic of Rwanda

COUNTRY STRATEGY AND PROGRAMME EVALUATION





Republic of Rwanda

Country strategy and programme evaluation

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Photos of activities supported by IFAD-supported projects and programmes in the Republic of Rwanda

Front cover: Coffee washing centre in Gakenke district

Back cover (left and right): A beneficiary of the Girinka (one cow per poor family) Programme in Ngororero District.

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Foreword

This is the third evaluation of IFAD's country strategy and programme in the Republic of Rwanda. It covers the period 2013–2022 and provides an independent assessment of the relevance and effectiveness of IFAD's strategies and operations in the country.

The period under review was characterized by a slowdown in the pace of poverty reduction and increased pressure on scarce land resources, due to a growing rural population and greater exposure to the effects of climate change. While public interventions have successfully boosted agricultural productivity, the impact of such improvements will decline over time unless smallholders are connected to markets and their produce meets market standards. This would allow them to sell more and better-quality produce at higher prices. Climate change and other environmental factors pose a range of challenges for Rwanda. More intense rainfall, for example, has increased the incidence of floods and landslides. Critical watersheds and water catchments have also been converted into agricultural land, resulting in the destruction and drying up of streams and a decline in groundwater reserves. In addition, chronic malnutrition remains particularly high, especially among the poorest households and people living in rural areas.

The evaluation found that the country programme was strongly aligned with the Government of Rwanda's priorities. It built on IFAD's comparative advantage in helping smallholders to boost productivity and access markets by investing in livestock, agricultural export and irrigation. Increased agricultural and livestock production and productivity contributed to improving smallholder producers' income and food security. Increased attention was given to addressing climate change challenges.

However, the evaluation also found that youth outreach remained below the set targets. Mixed results were achieved in the strengthening of market linkages, and financial inclusion similarly remained a challenge. While there was an initial overreliance on the use of matching grants, a wider range of financial services was gradually promoted, which will contribute to increasing investments in agriculture and broadening outreach. Furthermore, although tackling malnutrition was a priority, no deliberate efforts were taken to promote dietary diversity. Finally, due to a lack of strategic approach to knowledge management, opportunities were missed to share lessons learned and increase IFAD's scale of impact and influence.

The evaluation concludes that the country programme should deepen its engagement in the thematic areas in which it has demonstrated a comparative advantage, through a greater reliance on markets and private initiatives. Future interventions should focus on environmental and natural resource management, climate change, malnutrition and youth inclusion. Lastly, IFAD and the Government should address recurrent challenges and make sure that the Single Project Implementation Unit is fit for purpose.

I hope that this evaluation will provide a foundation for the enhancement of country-level engagement in support of inclusive and sustainable rural transformation.



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Currency equivalent, weights and measures

Currency equivalent

Currency unit = USD

Weights and measures

1 kilogram (kg) = 1000 grams

1 000 kg = 2.204 lb.

1 quintal = 100 kg

1 metric ton (MT) = 1000 kg

1 kilometre (km) = 0.62 mile

1 metre = 1.09 yards

1 square metre = 10.76 square feet

1 acre = 0.405 hectare

1 hectare (ha) = 2.47 acres

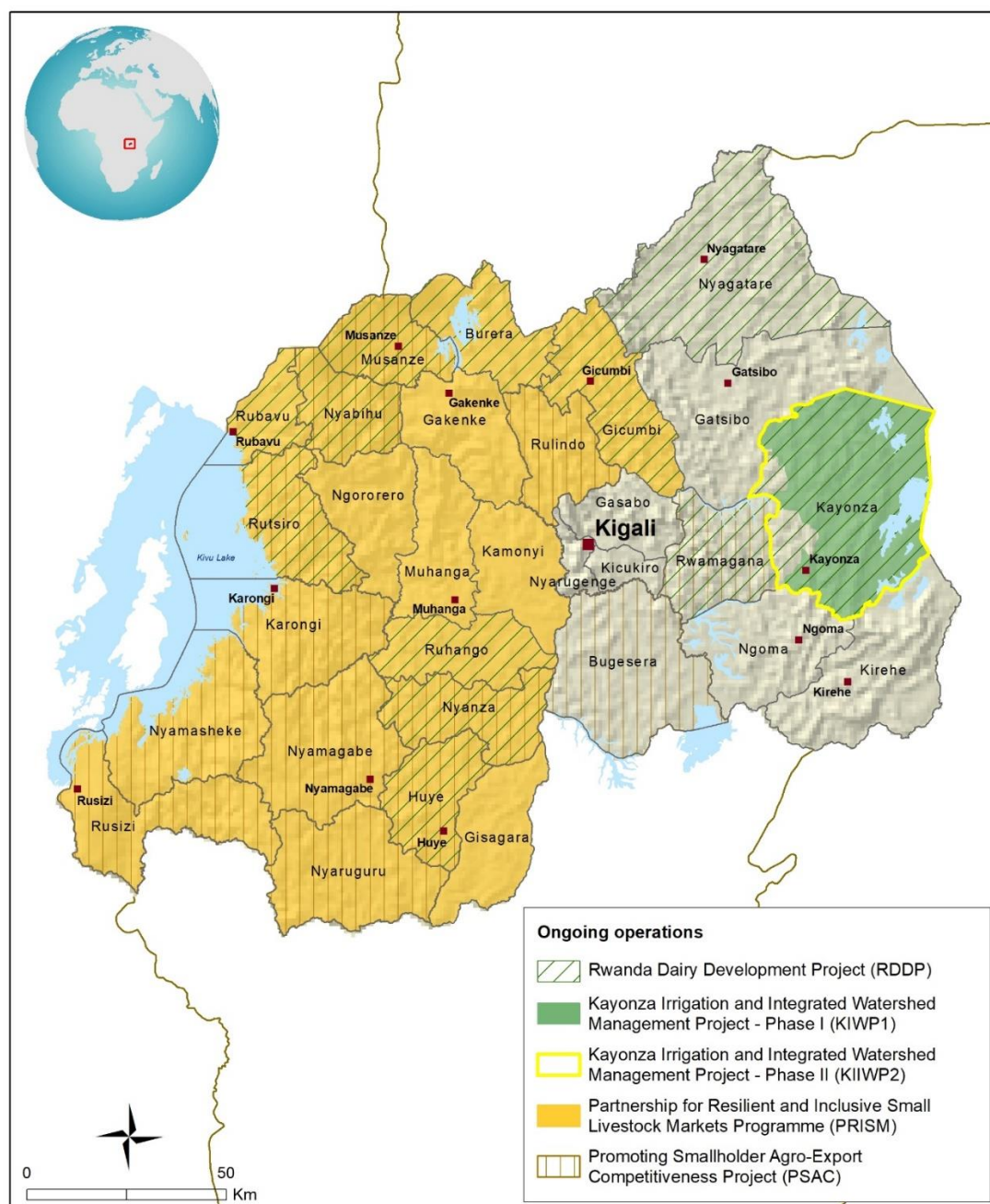
Abbreviations and acronyms

4P	public-private-producer partnership
ASWG	Agriculture Sector Working Group
BDF	Business Development Fund
CCI	community innovation centre
CLGS	comité local de gestion et de supervision
COSOP	country strategic opportunities programme
CPE	country programme evaluation
CSPE	country strategy and programme evaluation
EAFF	East Africa Farmers Federation
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FFS	farmer field school
GALS	Gender Action and Learning System
GEWE	gender equality and women's empowerment
GGCRS	Green Growth and Climate Resilient Strategy
HI	Heifer International
IAR	impact assessment report
ICO	IFAD Country Office
IOE	Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD
JP RWEE	Joint Programme on Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women
KIIWP1	Kayonza Irrigation and Integrated Watershed Management Project - Phase I
KIIWP2	Kayonza Irrigation and Integrated Watershed Management Project - Phase II
KM	knowledge management
KWAMP	Kirehe Community-based Watershed Management Project
L-FFS	livestock - farmer field school

MCC	milk collection centre
MCP	milk collection point
MINAGRI	Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources
MINECOFIN	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
MTR	midterm review
NAEB	National Agricultural Export Development Board
NRM	natural resource management
O&M	operation and maintenance
PAPSTA	Support Project for the Strategic Plan for the Transformation of Agriculture
PASP	Climate-Resilient Post-Harvest and Agribusiness Support Project
PCR	project completion report
PCRV	project completion report validation
PPE	project performance evaluation
PRICE	Project for Rural Income through Exports
PRISM	Partnership for Resilient and Inclusive Small Livestock Markets Programme
PSAC	Promoting Smallholder Agro-Export Competitiveness Project
PSTA	Strategic Plan for Agricultural Transformation
RAB	Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Development Board
RCA	Rwanda Cooperative Agency
RDDP	Rwanda Dairy Development Project
RIA	Research and Impact Assessment Division of IFAD
RYAF	Rwanda Youth in Agribusiness Forum
R-YES	Creating Employment Opportunities for Rural Youth in Africa-initiative
SECAP	Social, Environmental and Climate Assessment Procedures
SPIU	Single Project Implementation Unit
SRI	System of rice intensification
SSTC	South-South and Triangular Cooperation
SVR	supervision report
VBHCD	Value-Based Holistic Community Development
WFP	World Food Programme
WUA	water users' association

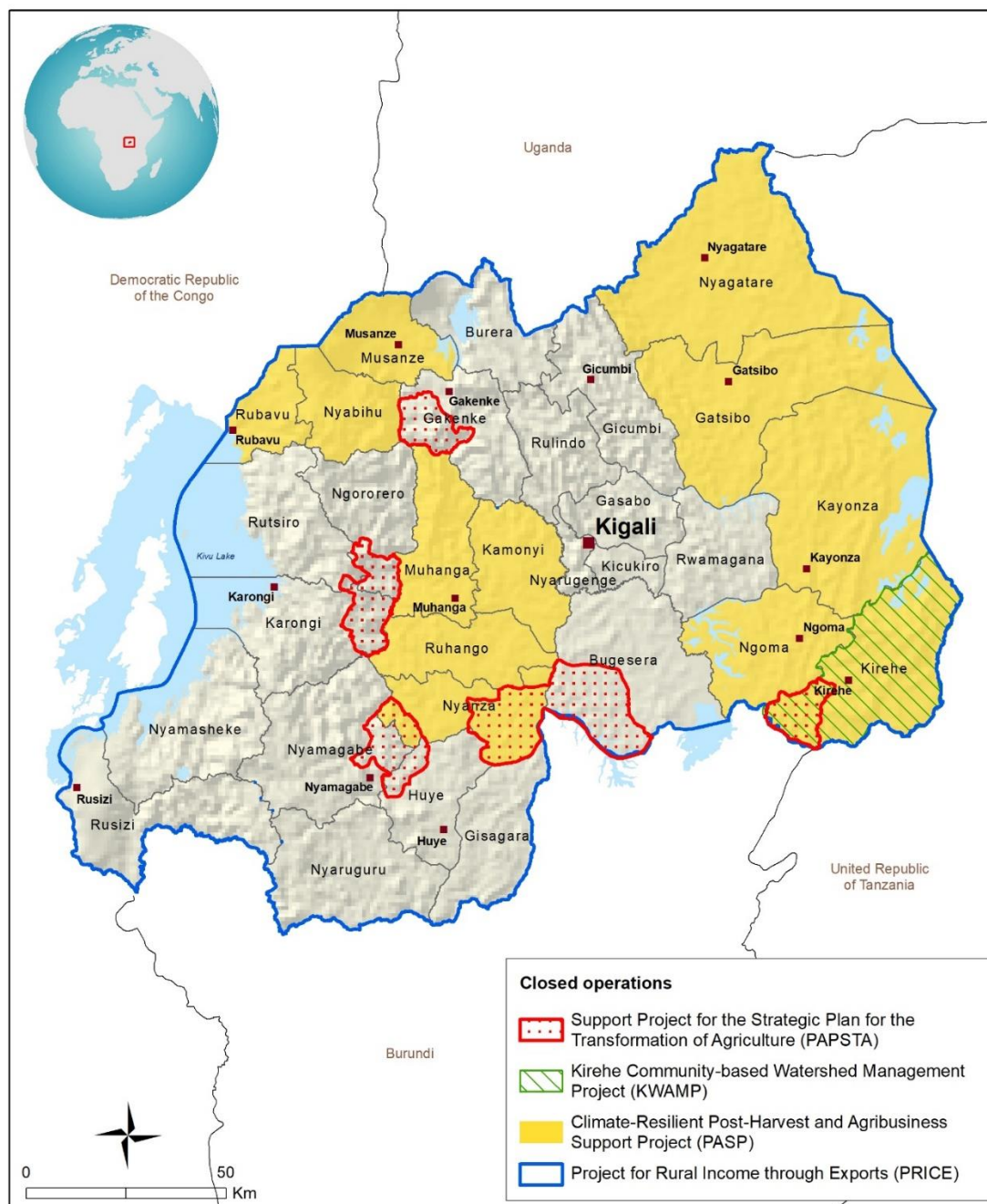
Map of IFAD-supported operations in the Republic of Rwanda

Ongoing operations



The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of IFAD concerning the delimitation of the frontiers or boundaries, or the authorities thereof.
Map compiled by IFAD | 10-03-2023

Closed operations



The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of IFAD concerning the delimitation of the frontiers or boundaries, or the authorities thereof.
Map compiled by IFAD | 16-12-2022

Executive summary

A. Background

1. The Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD (IOE) undertook a country strategy and programme evaluation (CSPE) in the Republic of Rwanda, as approved in IFAD's 2023 workplan by the Executive Board during its 137th session. The CSPE, which was the third country-level evaluation in Rwanda, covered the 2013–2022 period and was carried out in accordance with the Revised IFAD Evaluation Policy of 2021. The estimated cost of the nine investment projects covered by the CSPE amounts to US\$509.6 million, of which US\$280.1 million was financed by IFAD. The remaining funds came from the Government, other cofinanciers and beneficiaries.
2. **Objectives.** The main objectives of the CSPE, in accordance with the 2022 IFAD Evaluation Manual, were to: (i) evaluate the results and performance of the IFAD country strategy and programme; and (ii) generate findings and recommendations for the future partnership between IFAD and the Government of Rwanda to achieve enhanced development effectiveness and sustainable rural development. The evaluation also reviewed the implementation of the recommendations of the previous CSPE of 2012. The findings, lessons and recommendations will inform the development of the new country strategic opportunities programme (COSOP) in 2024.
3. **Country context.** Rwanda has an estimated population of 13.2 million, more than 72 per cent of which lives in rural areas. It is a low-income country. While GDP per capita has increased steadily since 2010, from US\$609.8 in 2010 to US\$834 in 2021, the GDP growth rate decreased from 7.3 per cent in 2010 to -3.4 per cent in 2020 due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic but bounced back to 10 per cent in 2021. Although the level of poverty has declined over the past decade, the pace of poverty reduction has slowed; almost one in three Rwandans lives in poverty, with a higher incidence in rural areas. Rwanda faces nutrition and food security challenges, characterized by limited consumption of nutritionally diverse foods and high rates of stunting.
4. According to the 2022 Global Gender Gap Index, Rwanda ranks first in Africa and sixth in the world in terms of gender parity. However, rural women face a number of socioeconomic challenges, including long working hours, limited access to credit, lack of skills and self-confidence to engage in decision-making, and limited control over agricultural assets. Women also face greater impacts from climate change due to having inadequate access to resources and opportunities. Rwanda has a youthful population, with 78 per cent of Rwandans below 35 years of age and 27 per cent between 16 and 30 years of age. However, the youth unemployment rate stands at 23 per cent and, of the employed young people, around 60 per cent hold low productivity jobs, including in subsistence agriculture, retail and construction.
5. Rwandan agriculture is mostly rainfed, with 57 per cent of households cultivating less than 0.5 hectares and 27 per cent cultivating less than 0.1 hectares. Livestock farming is both small and large-scale (above 5 hectares) and includes cattle, sheep, goats, rabbits, pigs and chickens, usually reared under zero-grazing systems. The sector faces many challenges, including land degradation and soil erosion, limited arable land, strong dependence on rainfall and vulnerability to climate shocks, low levels of productivity in both crops and livestock, weak processing capacity and limited market access.
6. **IFAD's strategy and operations for the CSPE period.** The goal and strategic objectives of the 2013 and 2019 COSOPs were very similar. Both programmes aimed to reduce rural poverty by empowering poor rural people and by strengthening resilience to climate change. The first strategic objective was to increase agricultural productivity sustainably, while the second objective was to improve post-harvest processes and strengthen market linkages. The 2013 COSOP also had a third

strategic objective: to improve nutrition and economically include vulnerable groups. Cross-cutting thematic areas included access to finance, cooperative development, nutrition, gender, youth and climate change. Greater emphasis was given to policy dialogue, institutional support and non-lending activities in the 2019 COSOP.

7. This CSPE covered nine loan-funded projects, of which four are closed and five are ongoing, and 24 IFAD-funded grants, which listed Rwanda as a country of interest. The CSPE also analysed the extent to which the investment portfolio and non-lending activities, namely, knowledge management, partnership-building and policy engagement, contributed to achieving the country strategy, and the role played by the Government and IFAD.

B. Main findings

8. **Relevance** is rated as moderately satisfactory. The strategic focus of the country programme on sustainably increasing agricultural productivity, improving post-harvest practices, strengthening market linkages and improving nutrition was consistent with Rwanda's development priorities. Interventions focused on meeting smallholder producers' main challenges and needs—including by supporting off-farm activities and zero-grazing to address land scarcity issues; and combining investments in hard infrastructure with soft investments to build human and social capital. The use of the Government's community-based targeting system, *Ubudehe*, helped to identify poor and disadvantaged groups. The design quality of projects was generally consistent with available knowledge. However, strategies to reach target groups, such as youth, were not always clearly developed, and several unrealistic and over-ambitious assumptions were made—including in terms of the capacity of cooperatives and of the Single Project Implementation Unit (SPIU). There was also an overreliance on the use of matching grants, while the design of value chain development interventions showed a number of weaknesses, including failure to properly estimate the feasibility of downstream interventions.
9. **Coherence** is rated as moderately satisfactory. The Government and development partners recognized IFAD's comparative advantage in helping smallholders to boost productivity and to access markets. IFAD was seen as an effective provider of sustainable financing for small-scale agriculture, which complemented interventions by others. Although IFAD and the SPIU were members of a number of coordination platforms, including agriculture sector working groups, harmonization efforts were lacking, leading to missed opportunities to coordinate build synergies and in policy engagement. Complementarity within the country programme was enabled through continued investment in certain subsectors, particularly watershed development, livestock and agricultural export, and through the SPIU approach used by the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources to implement projects in the agricultural sector. Through investments in certain subsectors, particularly watershed development, livestock and agricultural export, projects drew on predecessors' lessons and addressed their weaknesses. Linkages between IFAD-funded grants and the loan portfolio were generally weak.
10. **Knowledge management** is rated as moderately unsatisfactory. While efforts were made to capitalize on a number of experiences gained through the country programme, a strategic approach to knowledge management was lacking. Packaging and disseminating knowledge from research and grant-supported initiatives presented a challenge. Although innovations were introduced and disseminated through South-South and Triangular Cooperation, such experiences were limited to earlier projects. Channels foreseen for knowledge dissemination during design were not utilized.
11. **Partnership-building** is rated as moderately satisfactory. IFAD established a strong relationship with the Government, which sees IFAD as a key player in the agricultural sector. While several cofinancing partnerships were leveraged, implementation was sometimes hindered by partnerships that failed to materialize due to lack of financial

commitment at project design. Operational partnerships, such as those with Heifer International and Cordaid, added value to the portfolio by contributing essential knowledge and expertise. Efforts were increasingly made through the country programme to strengthen private sector engagement but yielded mixed results. While IFAD planned to collaborate with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP), there were challenges during implementation and opportunities were missed to leverage joint efforts and results.

12. **Policy engagement** is rated as moderately satisfactory. Projects, such as the Support Project for the Strategic Plan for the Transformation of Agriculture (PAPSTA), the Project for Rural Income through Exports (PRICE) and the Rwanda Dairy Development Project (RDDP), supported and informed policy processes, including by organizing meetings, recruiting short-term consultants and training ministry staff. Policy engagement included the strategic plans for agriculture transformation, the Animal Health and Production Law, the breeding policy, the importance of post-harvest investments and the removal of obstacles to the expansion of tea production. However, the IFAD Country Office and SPIU faced a number of capacity-related concerns, for example, in the development of useful policy products and supporting their adoption, and a number of planned priority areas for policy engagement, such as rural finance and nutrition, did not receive sufficient attention. However, the inclusion of more diverse financial products and services in newer projects, such as the Partnership for Resilient and Inclusive Small Livestock Markets Programme (PRISM) and the Promoting Smallholder Agro-Export Competitiveness Project (PSAC), reportedly resulted from IFAD's lobbying efforts.
13. **Effectiveness** is rated as moderately satisfactory. Overall, projects reached or exceeded their outreach appraisal targets in terms of persons receiving services promoted or supported by project interventions. The country programme made effective contributions to the 2013 and 2019 COSOPs' first objective of increasing agricultural productivity. Strengthening technical skills, supplying agricultural inputs and supporting irrigated agriculture contributed to productivity increases for coffee, tea, cassava, Irish potato, maize, rice and milk. However, increases in commodities, such as silk and tea, failed to meet expectations and were not always sustainable. The programme only partially met the COSOPs' second strategic objective of improving post-harvest processes and strengthening market linkages. Projects contributed to product, process and functional upgrading and built the capacities of producers' organizations. However, the business orientation of cooperatives and vertical linkages among stakeholders at different functional levels remained weak. Very limited results were achieved in fostering financial inclusion, with an overreliance on the use of matching grants and insufficient outreach. Regarding the 2013 COSOP's third objective of addressing malnutrition, the project designs did not include nutrition-sensitive interventions in a strategic manner. Consequently, few activities addressed the main cause of malnutrition in Rwanda, namely, the limited consumption of nutritionally diverse foods.
14. **Innovation** is rated as satisfactory. Various technological, financial, social and institutional innovations were introduced in the country programme, addressing key agricultural challenges. These innovations included intensive rice cultivation, improved animal breeds, a performance-based grant facility, community competitions for natural resource management and public-private-producer partnerships. While they contributed to enhancing productivity and, in some cases, to structural change, there remained challenges related to outreach, adoption and evidence.
15. **Efficiency** is rated as moderately satisfactory. The SPIU model, consisting of one team responsible for overall coordination and cross-cutting issues related to ongoing IFAD-supported projects, boosted efficiency by improving coordination, reducing transaction costs and increasing staff retention. Disbursement rates were generally

acceptable and in line with project disbursement profiles, projects started up in a timely manner and ex post economic and financial analyses were positive. Nevertheless, SPIU experienced staffing difficulties, PRISM was plagued by an 18-month start-up delay, service providers posed a number of capacity and coordination problems, and it was necessary to extend certain projects—namely, PRICE, Climate-Resilient Post-Harvest and Agribusiness Support Project (PASP), RDDP and Kayonza Irrigation and Integrated Watershed Management Project - Phase I (KIIWP1).

16. **Rural poverty impact** is rated as moderately satisfactory. Improved production and productivity, reduction in post-harvest losses, group selling, price mechanisms, diversification to higher value crops, new sources of income, functional upgrading, and increased demand for paid labour all contributed to increasing incomes. PRICE reported a severalfold increase in average incomes, while PASP's annual net income increased by an average of 26.1 per cent. However, the impacts differed according to the value chains (very positive for potato and horticulture, less so for silk and coffee) and the maturity levels of the supported producers' groups.
17. Despite significant investments in training and capacity-building, for example, on good agricultural practices, soil and water conservation and post-harvest handling processes, assessing the contribution of such investments to behavioural change was hampered by a lack of evidence. The supported cooperatives remained generally inadequate, particularly in terms of leadership, income generation, governance (including profit sharing) and record keeping. Social capital was strengthened mainly through support to community-based organizations and common interest groups, while inter- and extra-group relations remained weak. No strong farmers' apex organizations emerged under PAPSTA, while in the case of the Kirehe Community-based Watershed Management Project (KWAMP), relations between farmers, processors and traders were incipient, and in PRICE, value chain governance through federations remained fragile.
18. The country programme contributed to improving food security, mainly through increasing food availability and access, including by increasing the production of staple and horticultural crops, reducing post-harvest losses and introducing livestock. Regarding the PASP, the number of households consuming only one meal a day fell from 37.3 per cent at baseline to 21.1 per cent at completion, while under KWAMP, 78 per cent of households reported an improvement in eating habits, although this impact assessment did not produce robust evidence. Nevertheless, no deliberate efforts were taken to promote the consumption of nutritionally diverse foods, nor was this topic tracked through specific outcome indicators.
19. Although the institutional environment was enriched, particularly in terms of natural resource governance and market access, in all the projects apart from the KWAMP, insufficient attention was given to developing local government capacity, especially to ensure post-project follow-up. While projects supported and informed national policy processes, umbrella organizations and multi-stakeholder platforms, which could have helped small producers to voice their concerns and interests in policy-making processes, remained weak.
20. **Gender equality and women's empowerment** is rated as moderately satisfactory. This was an important dimension of the country programme, although women made up only 37 per cent of beneficiaries, which was slightly below the set target. Women's economic empowerment was strengthened in various ways, for example, by increasing access to inputs, technologies, finance and training. Women were also increasingly involved in agrifood value chains and represented in rural institutions, such as cooperatives and water user associations. However, gender strategies were often poor in respect of analysis or were developed too late. Women sometimes faced challenges in accessing economic services, such as business development support. Given that the largest contributor to women's disempowerment in Rwanda is an unbalanced workload, further support to purposely

reduce it should have been provided. Approaches seeking to challenge gender inequality by transforming harmful gender norms were introduced, mainly through the promotion of the Gender Action Learning System (GALS). While this contributed to improving gender relations in supported households, the scale was limited.

21. **Sustainability** is rated as moderately satisfactory. Strong government ownership helped to ensure sustainability, although districts had limited resources to ensure proper follow-up. While market linkages were stronger for certified export-oriented commodities, such as sustainable coffee and organic dried pineapple, they were weaker for others, such as silk and, in some cases, horticulture and tea. The economic and financial sustainability prospects for the supported cooperatives were mixed. Despite the support received, many cooperatives still grappled with insufficient working capital, financial sustainability, marketing issues, access to main roads and a lack of bookkeeping, accounting and business skills. The technical sustainability of infrastructure developments was generally ensured, while a number of problems were encountered in livestock interventions relating to access to feed. The country programme's use of participatory and empowering approaches, its strengthening of community-based organizations, targeting of vulnerable groups and focus on gender equality all contributed to social sustainability.
22. **Scaling-up** is rated as moderately unsatisfactory. The country programme continued to invest in watershed development, livestock and agricultural export, allowing projects to draw on their predecessors' lessons and address their weaknesses. However, replication in subsequent IFAD-funded projects and government cofinancing does not constitute scaling-up. There was little evidence of the country programme's innovations or successful experiences being adopted and disseminated by development partners or of stakeholders' resources being invested to bring these practices to scale. Although several development partners adopted certain practices promoted in the country programme, there was no evidence to substantiate how these practices actually built on IFAD's experience.
23. **Environment and natural resource management, and climate change** are rated as moderately satisfactory. Projects increasingly integrated environmental and climate issues by promoting practices to minimize damage caused by interventions and improving farming practices sustainably while boosting agricultural productivity. However, there were cases of negative impacts on the environment and natural resources, including inadequate waste management and deforestation. Despite efforts to address the effects of climate change from the PASP onwards, opportunities were missed to strengthen the capacity of smallholders to proactively and positively manage climate shocks, stresses and uncertainty. The focus was also on short-term climate risks instead of strategic planning to adapt to longer-term timescales. The application of IFAD's climate and environmental safeguard requirements should have received more attention.
24. **IFAD performance** is rated as satisfactory. IFAD is regarded as a responsive and committed partner and its comparative advantage is fully recognized. Projects were designed in close collaboration with the Government and were consistent with available knowledge. Through supervisory missions, IFAD provided support, guidance and recommendations to ensure effective project implementation. However, some areas required further support, including monitoring and evaluation, gender and safeguarding procedures, while limited human resources and the absence of a country director on the ground hampered non-lending activities. Nevertheless, improvements were made from 2019 onwards, for example, with increased mobilization of cofinancing and technical expertise.
25. **Government performance** is rated as satisfactory. The Government clearly took ownership of the country programme and showed commitment to achieving results. It provided leadership in the design and supervision of COSOPs and projects, ensured harmonized donor support and provided significant counterpart funding. This was

further enabled by the presence of a well-defined institutional structure and a functional accountability system. The SPIU model increased efficiency, particularly in terms of coordination, reduction of transaction costs and retention of staff. Additionally, it facilitated cross-project knowledge-sharing and performance monitoring. However, the model also faced several challenges such as staff turnover, long-term unfilled vacancies, overburdened staff and limited or inadequate capacity. Financial management was satisfactory, including in respect of disbursement rates, procurement and audit.

C. Conclusions

26. The country programme provided continuity in strategic areas and a certain amount of progression. It was consistent with Rwanda's development priorities and continued to unlock irrigable potential by promoting increased agricultural productivity in watersheds, while supporting the development of value chains for food and export commodities. This continuity allowed projects to draw on their predecessors' lessons and address their weaknesses. More attention was given to supporting downstream activities along agricultural value chains and tackling the effects of climate change, while building on previous experience in livestock value chain development. However, a number of concerns highlighted by the 2012 country programme evaluation were not adequately addressed, including an ongoing lack of emphasis on non-lending activities, support to districts and harmonizing approaches to rural finance and cooperative development.
27. Various innovations were introduced and significant results achieved, notably increased agricultural and livestock production and productivity. This contributed to positive results, including an increase in income and improved food security. The capacities of cooperatives were strengthened, and women's involvement increased. Projects also contributed to improved natural resource management and, from the PASP onwards, to strengthening the climate resilience of smallholder farmers. Finally, various committees under the country programme, and strong government ownership at national and local levels ensured the operation and maintenance of project interventions.
28. Projects often applied a blanket approach, without tailoring interventions to the actual needs of the target groups and context. Moreover, poverty-disaggregated outreach went unmonitored, hampering an assessment of projects' actual contribution to breaking the poverty trap. While all the projects targeted young people, youth outreach fell significantly below expectations. As the young population burgeons, creating economic opportunities for young people in the agricultural sector is vital.
29. The country programme showed mixed results in respect of embedding a market orientation. Although downstream activities received increasing support, emphasis on upstream value chain activities remained predominant. Cooperatives continued to face challenges in respect of management and business skills. Not enough attention was given to properly estimating the feasibility of downstream interventions, the existence of market outlets or the sustainability of input supply. Furthermore, an overreliance on the use of matching grants, inadequate access to finance, lack of collateral, poor financial literacy and limited tailored services continued to constrain the productive capacity and inclusion of smallholder farmers, small-scale entrepreneurs and vulnerable groups.
30. Chronic malnutrition remains high in Rwanda and, while both COSOPs under review placed high importance on nutrition, the projects failed to address the underlying causes of malnutrition, namely care practices, environmental health and food adequacy. Focusing on increasing food production and raising incomes had limited impact on improving nutrition.

31. The lack of strategic approach to non-lending activities and absence of a country director based in the country hindered knowledge management, partnership-building and policy engagement. While the creation of the SPIU improved efficiency and cross-learning, the SPIU itself faced challenges. Compared with other institutional set-ups for the management of IFAD-supported projects, the SPIU approach in Rwanda promoted greater efficiency and stronger government ownership. Nevertheless, it faced a number of challenges in relation to staff turnover, overburdened staff, coordination flaws and, in some instances, a lack of capacity or expertise. Failure to adequately address these challenges could jeopardize the implementation of IFAD-supported projects.

D. Recommendations

32. The CSPE offers the following five recommendations for the preparation of the upcoming COSOP:
33. **Recommendation 1. Sharpen the thematic focus, with a greater reliance on markets and private initiative.** IFAD should justifiably focus on thematic areas in which it has demonstrated a comparative advantage, for example, livestock, agricultural export and irrigation. It should deepen its engagement in such areas through a greater reliance on markets and private initiative, to ensure that investments are based on expected economic returns. This will require a gradual shift in the public sector's role in order to facilitate the fair implementation of private sector decisions. More detailed value chain analysis and closer engagement with the private sector should improve the response of supported value chains to market demand and strengthen economic sustainability. It will also require supporting a variety of financial providers and products, which respond to the various needs of smallholder farmers and poor rural people. Digital solutions should be given more prominence in such endeavours.
34. **Recommendation 2. The next COSOP should clearly include a focus on environmental and natural resource management, climate change and malnutrition.** The country programme should deepen its engagement in these areas, including in terms of non-lending activities. More attention needs to be paid to the management of environmental safeguards, ensuring that interventions are adapted to the context and actually tackle the root causes of malnutrition in Rwanda.
35. **Recommendation 3. Refine the targeting strategies to sharpen the poverty focus and increase attention to youth inclusion.** IFAD needs to make concerted efforts to build the assets, capabilities and agency of people living in extreme poverty, to enable them to break out of the poverty trap and graduate to sustainable and resilient socioeconomic livelihoods. This should be carried out by building on the experience of the PRISM and by incorporating clear graduation pathways for different target groups in the country programme. More specifically, the youth focus needs to be strengthened by addressing their unique challenges, especially by promoting their financial inclusion, supporting entrepreneurship and creating off-farm employment. Finally, targeting strategies require appropriate monitoring of disaggregated data, in terms of both poverty and social inclusion.
36. **Recommendation 4. Articulate a coherent action plan for non-lending activities to increase IFAD's scale of impact and influence.** At a minimum, this plan should identify: (i) priority themes, the main knowledge partners and target audiences; (ii) how results will be obtained, analysed, documented, shared and used to improve programme and project design and performance, policy influence and to scale up impact; (iii) tools and approaches to support knowledge flows and learning in the country programme; and (iv) related indicators. Dedicated human and financial resources need to be allocated to support the implementation of the plan. This calls for greater involvement from the country director, and from the various project delivery team members and regional thematic experts based in Nairobi.

37. **Recommendation 5. Ensure that the SPIU is fit for purpose.** IFAD and the Government should carry out an assessment and develop an action plan to address recurrent issues. Issues to be addressed include staff turnover, heavy workload and capacity shortfalls. This could be done by increasing the competitiveness of SPIU staff salaries, filling vacant positions as soon as possible, investing in building staff capacity in specific areas and making sure all necessary expertise is in place.

Agreement at Completion Point

A. Introduction

1. IFAD's Independent Office of Evaluation (IOE) undertook a country strategy and programme evaluation (CSPE) in the Republic of Rwanda, as approved in its 2023 work plan by the 137th Session of the IFAD Executive Board. The CSPE, which was the third country-level evaluation in Rwanda, covered the period 2013-2022 and was carried out in accordance with IFAD's Evaluation Policy (2021). The main objectives of the CSPE, in accordance with IFAD's Evaluation Manual (2022), were to (i) evaluate the results and performance of the IFAD country strategy and programme and (ii) generate findings and recommendations for the future partnership between IFAD and the Government of Rwanda in achieving enhanced development effectiveness and sustainable rural development.
2. This agreement at completion point (ACP) contains the recommendations made in the CSPE report, which were accepted by IFAD and the Government of Rwanda, as well as the proposed follow-up actions agreed on. The ACP is signed by the Government of Rwanda, represented by the IFAD Governor, and the IFAD Management, represented by the Associate Vice President of the Programme Management Department. The signed ACP is an integral part of the CSPE report in which the evaluation recommendations are presented in detail, and submitted to the IFAD Executive Board as an annex to the new country strategic opportunity programme. The implementation of the recommendations agreed upon will be tracked through the President's Report on the Implementation Status of Evaluation Recommendations and Management Actions, which is presented to the IFAD Executive Board on an annual basis by the IFAD's Management.

B. Recommendations and follow-up actions

3. **Recommendation 1: Sharpen the thematic focus, with a greater reliance on markets and private initiative.** There are good reasons for IFAD to focus on thematic areas where it has demonstrated a comparative advantage (e.g., livestock, agricultural export and irrigation) and deepen its engagement there, through a greater reliance on markets and private initiative, which will ensure that investments are based on expected economic returns. This requires a gradual shift in the public sector's role to facilitate the fair implementation of those private sector decisions. More detailed value chain analysis and closer engagement with the private sector should help to ensure the supported value chains respond to market demand and strengthen economic sustainability. It also requires supporting a diversity of financial providers and products, which respond to the different needs of smallholder farmers and rural poor. Digital solutions should be given more prominence in these endeavours.

Accepted✓

Proposed follow-up actions

- Improve market linkages between farmers' organisations and the private sector in order to inform them about markets' requirements.
- Facilitate contracts arrangements between farmers' organisations and the private sector.
- Invest in building the capacities of farmers' organizations and other actors along the agricultural value chains in order to effectively develop their business skills.

- Advocate for more policies and regulatory frameworks that create an enabling environment for private sector to be involved in agriculture.
- Promote innovative financial products, including guarantees and equity funds, while developing strategic partnerships.
- Embark on a series of pilots of innovative approaches to better integrate sustainable private sector engagement across the projects.

Responsibility	Timeframe
RAB/NAEB/SPIU	Continuous

4. **Recommendation 2: The next COSOP should clearly state a focus on environment and natural resources management and climate change and addressing malnutrition.** The country programme should deepen its engagement in these areas, including in terms of non-lending activities. More attention needs to go to the management of environmental safeguards, making sure that interventions being offered are adapted to the context and actually tackling the root causes of malnutrition in Rwanda.

Partially accepted✓

Proposed follow-up actions

- Incorporate climate change and natural resource management into the next COSOP that will be presented to the EB in December 2024.
- Partnerships and coordination will be sought with development partners investing in addressing malnutrition to compliment IFAD's work in access to nutritious foods
- Invest in capacity building, development of monitoring and evaluation frameworks, and foster partnerships to address environmental and nutrition challenges.

Responsibility	Timeframe
RAB/NAEB/SPIU/IFAD	Continuous

5. **Recommendation 3: Refine the targeting strategies to sharpen the poverty focus and increase attention to youth inclusion.** IFAD needs to make concerted efforts to building the assets, capabilities and agency of those living in extreme poverty so that they can break out of the poverty trap and graduate to sustainable and resilient socio-economic livelihoods. This should be done by building on PRISM's experience and incorporating clear graduation pathways for different target groups in the country programme. More specifically, the youth focus needs to be strengthened by addressing their unique challenges, especially by promoting their financial inclusion, supporting entrepreneurship and creating off-farm employment. Finally, targeting strategies needs to be followed up through appropriate monitoring of disaggregated data, both in terms of poverty and social inclusion.

Partially accepted✓

Proposed follow-up actions

- Assess the effectiveness of IFAD's interventions in supporting youth inclusion and develop tailored interventions targeting the youth, with a special focus on innovation and off farm activities.
- Put in place a robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track the impact of youth-targeted interventions while fostering partnerships with relevant stakeholders to support youth inclusion in agriculture.
- Maintain the focus on rural people already strong in IFAD country programme based on the "**social protection and graduation programme in beneficiaries' targeting**" put in place by the GoR, with clear strategies and modalities for reaching out to beneficiaries are focus on access to finance and off-farm interventions targeting the youth.

Responsibility	Timeframe
RAB/NAEB/SPIU	Continuous

6. **Recommendation 4: Articulate a coherent action plan for non-lending activities that allows to increase IFAD's scale of impact and influence.** At a minimum, this plan should: (i) identify priority themes, the main knowledge partners, and the target audiences; (ii) outline how results will be identified, analysed, documented, shared and used in support of improved programme/project design, performance, policy influence and scaled up impact; (iii) identify tools and approaches to support knowledge flows and learning in the country programme; and (iv) identify related indicators. Dedicated human and financial resources need to be allocated to support the implementation of the plan. This calls for a greater involvement of the Country Director, but also of the different project delivery team members and regional thematic experts based in Nairobi.

Accepted✓,

Proposed follow-up actions

- Articulate a coherent action plan for non-lending activities that allow to increase the portfolio's scale of impact and influence.
- Ensure that innovative/best practices of the country portfolio are documented and disseminated in order to support policies and strategies formulation.
- Ensure that supplementary funds are used to showcase

Responsibility	Timeframe
IFAD and SPIU	Continuous

7. **Recommendation 5: Make sure the SPIU is fit-for-purpose.** IFAD and the Government should carry out an assessment and come up with an action plan to address recurrent issues. Issues to be addressed include, amongst others, staff turn-over, heavy workload, capacity issues. This could be done, for example, by increasing the competitiveness of salaries of SPIU staff, filling vacant positions as soon as possible, investing in building their capacity in specific areas and making sure all necessary expertise is on board.

Accepted✓,

Proposed follow-up actions

Republic of Rwanda

Country strategy and programme evaluation

I. Background

A. Introduction

1. In line with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) Evaluation Policy and as approved by the 137th Session of the IFAD Executive Board in December 2022, the Independent Office of Evaluation (IOE) undertook a country strategy and programme evaluation (CSPE) in the Republic of Rwanda. This CSPE has been carried out in accordance with IFAD's Evaluation Policy (2021). It was the third country-level evaluation conducted in the country and covered the period from 2013, when the second country programme was carried out, to 2022.
2. In accordance with IFAD's Evaluation Manual (2022), the main objectives of the CSPE were to: (i) evaluate the results and performance of the IFAD country strategy and programme; and (ii) generate findings and recommendations for future partnerships between IFAD and the Government of Rwanda to achieve enhanced development effectiveness and sustainable rural development. The evaluation also provided an opportunity to review the extent to which the recommendations of the 2012 CSPE were implemented and assess how programme performance improved. The findings, lessons and recommendations will further inform the preparation of the new country strategic opportunities programme (COSOP) in 2024 by IFAD, in close consultation with the Government.
3. Since the inception of IFAD operations in Rwanda in 1981, the Fund approved 20 grant and loan-funded projects with a total cost of US\$699.5 million, of which IFAD financed US\$391.8 million (56 per cent). The total estimated cost of the nine investment projects covered by the CSPE amounts to US\$509.6 million, of which US\$280.1 million was financed by IFAD. The remaining funds came from the Government, other cofinanciers and the beneficiaries.

Table 1
Snapshot of IFAD operations in Rwanda since 1981

Description	Key figures
First IFAD investment project	1981
No. IFAD investment projects approved	20
No. IFAD ongoing investment projects	5
Total IFAD investment projects financing (from 1981 to date; in US dollars)	391 769 253
Beneficiary and other domestic cofinancing (in United States dollars)	177 764 028
International cofinancing (from 1981 to date; in United States dollars)	129 955 637
Total cost of portfolio to be evaluated (9 projects; in United States dollars)	509 601 492
Government cofinancing (9 projects; in United States dollars)	141 718 553
Total IFAD investment projects financing (9 projects; in United States dollars)	280 077 718
International cofinancing (9 projects; in United States dollars)	87 805 221
Current lending terms	Highly concessional

Source: IFAD Oracle Business Intelligence.

B. Objectives, methodology and processes

4. **Scope.** The CSPE covered the period 2013 to 2022. This included two COSOPs and nine projects. It reviewed the overall strategy pursued by IFAD, both implicit and explicit, and explored the synergies and interlinkages among different elements of the country strategy and programme. The CSPE also analysed the extent to which

the investment portfolio and non-lending activities (namely, knowledge management, partnership-building and policy engagement) contributed to achieving the strategy, and the role played by the Government and IFAD.

5. **Evaluation questions.** The CSPE answered the following overarching question: to what extent did the IFAD country strategy and programme contribute to tangible results, in terms of positive inclusive and sustainable changes on smallholder farmers and their communities, with a potential of rural transformation? Linked to this overarching question, specific questions according to each evaluation criteria are presented in Annex IV.
6. **Evaluation criteria.** As per IFAD's Evaluation Manual, the CSPE used the following assessment criteria: relevance; coherence (including knowledge management, partnership development and policy dialogue); effectiveness (including innovations); efficiency; impact; gender equality and women's empowerment; sustainability (including scaling up and natural resources and climate change adaptation); and partner performance (IFAD and government).¹ For each criterion, performance is rated on a scale from one (lowest) to six (highest).²
7. **Theory of change.** A theory of change was reconstructed for the country strategy and programme, which describes the results chain linking COSOP and project outputs to outcomes, impact and assumptions.³
8. People living in rural areas (especially women, youth and vulnerable groups) risk being left behind by Rwanda's transition to a market economy and are unable to adapt to climate change. They lack scale, productive assets and knowledge needed to produce efficiently for the market. Underdeveloped value chains do not create enough decent jobs for youth and land-poor households. Moreover, climate-related losses reduce resources and increase risks of investments. Limited consumption of nutritionally diverse foods further exacerbates food and nutrition security.
9. Three pathways contribute to the reduction of rural poverty in Rwanda:
 - By improving access to assets, finance, technologies and knowledge, the rural poor can increase their productivity, reduce post-harvest losses or benefit from off-farm employment opportunities. Infrastructure development and strengthening linkages between value chain actors improves their access to markets and contributes to increasing their incomes.
 - At the same time, better coordination among the various users of natural resources, and protection and rehabilitation investments (among others through the adoption of climate smart agricultural practices) contribute to more sustainable natural resource management (NRM) and increased adaptive capacities. This, in turn, leads to enhanced climate and environmental resilience of the rural poor.
 - Finally, specific efforts, such as nutrition education, are needed to improve diet diversity and increase food and nutrition security in rural areas.
10. There are, however, a number of necessary conditions for this to happen: relevant partnerships are leveraged; synergies between projects materialize; the government shows continued commitment; the promoted good practices are relevant; the private sector is willing to invest; and special efforts are made to target women, youth and vulnerable groups.
11. **Thematic areas.** Five thematic areas were recurrent and required specific analytical attention: (i) value chain development; (ii) rural finance; (iii) rural infrastructure;

¹ The table of annex I includes the definitions and details related to each criterion.

² The standard rating scale adopted by IOE is 1 = highly unsatisfactory; 2 = unsatisfactory; 3 = moderately unsatisfactory; 4 = moderately satisfactory; 5 = satisfactory; 6 = highly satisfactory.

³ See Annex V for a graphical representation of the theory of change.

(iv) gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE); and (v) NRM and climate change.

12. **Methodology.** A mixed-methods approach was used to allow triangulation of qualitative and quantitative data collected from various sources. The methodological steps included: desk review; virtual stakeholder interviews; online survey; use of geospatial data and tools;⁴ field mission (including direct observation, key informant interviews and focus group discussions); data analysis; and report writing.
13. **Evaluation process.** The evaluation started with the sharing of the approach paper on 20 April 2023. The evaluation inception was implemented until end of May 2023, entailing secondary data collection, virtual interviews and thorough desk review. At the end of this phase, the evaluation team drafted working papers, which provided preliminary answers to the evaluation questions and highlighted evidence gaps. The field mission was implemented between 29 May to 13 June 2023 with the purpose of addressing evidence gaps identified in the working papers, as well as to seek for further evidence for an effective triangulation of information sources. Preliminary findings were discussed during a meeting with the Minister of Agriculture on 12 June 2023 and a wrap-up meeting with IFAD and the Single Project Implementation Unit (SPIU) on 13 June 2023. Further data analysis and report drafting followed this. After IOE internal peer review, the report was shared with IFAD's East and Southern Africa Division (ESA) and the Government of Rwanda for comments. The comments have been taken into account in the final report.
14. **Limitations.** Data availability issues were the main limitation for this CSPE. These issues related mainly to data quality, availability of disaggregated data, incomplete beneficiary information and the absence of geographic information systems data. Project M&E systems also focused more on the collection of output rather than outcome data. In addition, gaps were identified in the impact assessment methodology for two of the closed projects, which compromised their robustness. To address these limitations, the CSPE triangulated data and information from various primary sources. Furthermore, the CSPE leveraged the institutional memory residing in the SPIU.

Key points

- This CSPE is the third country-level evaluation in Rwanda and covered the period 2013–2022.
- The total cost of the portfolio evaluated was US\$509.6 million (US\$280.1 million financed by IFAD).
- This CSPE covered all evaluation criteria in line with the IFAD evaluation manual (2022).
- A theory-based and mixed-methods approach was applied to evaluation.
- The evaluation was conducted from April 2023 to October 2023, with the main mission in the country carried out between 29 May to 13 June 2023.
- A key limitation of the CSPE was the lack of evidence in terms of contribution. This was addressed through triangulation of information.

⁴ This was only done for KWAMP, as the required data for other projects were not available or interventions were only recent.

II. Country context and IFAD's strategy and operations for the CSPE period

A. Country context

Economic and social development

15. **Geography and demography.** Rwanda is a landlocked country located along the Great Rift Valley in the mountains of east Central Africa and covering 26,338km², 11,880km² of which is water. The bordering countries are Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, the United Republic of Tanzania, and Uganda. The western edge of the country along the Congo/Nile watershed rises steeply, formed by a chain of volcanoes, called the Virunga Mountains. Rwanda's population was estimated at 13.2 million, with more than 72 per cent living in rural areas. Population density is the highest in sub-Saharan Africa, with 503 inhabitants per square kilometre and a population growth rate at 2.3 per cent in 2022. Fifty-one per cent of the country's population are women and 49 per cent are men. Rwanda has a fertility rate of 3.8, with over 65 per cent of its population being under 30 years of age, putting increasing pressure on the already limited amount of available land. The average household size is four people per household.⁵
16. **Administrative setup.** The country is divided into four provinces and the City of Kigali, and these are further divided into 30 districts. Moreover, the districts are further divided into 416 subsectors, which are further divided into 2,148 cells and lastly, these cells are divided into 14,837 villages.⁶
17. **Economy.** Rwanda is a low-income country, characterized by an increasing gross domestic product (GDP) per capita from US\$609.80 in 2010 to US\$834 in 2021 and a constant decrease in GDP growth from 7.3 per cent in 2010 to -3.4 per cent in 2020. After contracting in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, GDP growth reached 10 per cent in 2021. GDP growth was expected to be moderate in 2022, in part, due to the effects of the war in Ukraine and the persistent risk of the COVID-19 pandemic in major economies.⁷

Table 2

Key economic development indicators

Indicator	2010	2015	2020	2021
GDP per capita (current US\$)	609.8	751	786	834
GDP growth (annual %)	7.3	2.69	-3.4	10.9
Foreign direct investment, net inflows (% of GDP)	3.5	1.9	1	1
Inflation (consumer prices %)	609.8	751	786	834

Source: World Bank databank (2022).

18. **Poverty.** While the level of poverty in Rwanda continued to decline over the past decade, its pace has slowed down. Headcount poverty ratios at national poverty lines reduced considerably from 58.9 per cent in 2000 to 39.1 per cent in 2013/14 and to 38.2 per cent in 2016/17.⁸ Similarly, poverty headcount ratio at \$2.15 a day (2017 PPP) decreased from 75.2 per cent in 2000 to 53.7 per cent in 2013 and 52 per cent in 2016.⁹ According to the national multidimensional poverty index, almost one in three Rwandans (28.7 per cent) lives in multidimensional poverty, while according

⁵ National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (2023). Fifth Rwanda Population and Housing Census (RPHC5).

⁶ <https://www.gov.rw/government/administrative-structure>.

⁷ World Bank (2022). Rwanda Economic Update: Boosting Exports Through Technology, Innovation, and Trade in Services.

⁸ National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (2018). Fifth Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey. Rwanda Poverty Profile Report 2016/17.

⁹ World Bank Databank (retrieved February 2023).

to the global index this affects almost half of the population (48.8 per cent).¹⁰ Poverty is essentially a rural phenomenon, hovering well over 40 per cent as opposed to rates as low as 15 per cent in urban areas.¹¹ It is most acute (76.6 per cent) among households that derive more than half of their income from working on other farms.¹² The provinces with the highest poverty rates are Southern Province (36.0 per cent) followed by the Eastern Province (32.2 per cent).¹³ The Government uses a community-based targeting system, "Ubudehe", to classify households into different vulnerability categories.¹⁴ The 2015 Ubudehe categorization included about 2.4 million households across the country and classified them as follows: Category 1 (very poor) - 16 per cent of households; Category 2 (poor) - 29.8 per cent of households; Category 3 (non-poor) - 53.7 per cent of households; and Category 4 (best off) - 0.5 per cent of households.¹⁵

19. **Human Development Index (HDI).** According to the UNDP's 2020 Human Development Report, between 2010 and 2019, Rwanda's HDI progressed little, from 0.492 to 0.543 (a rise of 10 per cent). In 2021, its HDI value stood at 0.534, which places the country in the "low human development" category and 165th out of 191 countries and territories. The 2021 female HDI value for Rwanda was 0.521 in contrast with 0.547 for males.
20. **Nutrition and food security.** Despite significant growth in agricultural production over the last decade, food security and nutrition remain a concern in Rwanda, particularly when considering household vulnerability to shocks.¹⁶ While stunting has been decreasing at a steady pace, overall stunting rates remain very high compared with international standards, as 33.1 per cent of children under five years of age are still affected.¹⁷ In comparison with 2018, the food security situation in Rwanda deteriorated by 2 per cent in 2021.¹⁸ Food insecurity and malnutrition are mainly caused by limited consumption of nutritionally diverse foods.¹⁹ In 2021, the Western Province of Rwanda had the highest prevalence of food insecure households (35.3 per cent), followed by the Southern Province (22.2 per cent), Northern Province (18.6 per cent) and Eastern Province (14.6 per cent).²⁰ The small land size per household is insufficient for supporting household food needs throughout the year and for providing income-generating activities to its members. This, in turn, leads to greater imports of staple crops, creating imbalances in the national food export/import ratio.²¹
21. **Gender.** While, according to the 2022 Gender Gap Index, Rwanda ranks first in Africa and sixth in the world in terms of gender parity,²² rural women still face a number of challenges. An estimated 92 per cent of women are involved in agriculture

¹⁰ UNDP (2020). Human Development Report. National multidimensional poverty indices reflect national contexts and priorities. They guide policies but can't be compared internationally. Rwanda's national index was based on data from its fifth integrated households living conditions survey.

¹¹ National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (2018). Fifth Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey. Thematic Report – Multidimensional Poverty Index.

¹² <https://www.ifad.org/fr/web/operations/w/pays/Rwanda>.

¹³ National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (2018). Fifth Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey. Thematic Report – Multidimensional Poverty Index.

¹⁴ Through a participatory poverty assessment methodology at village level, information is collected on the social and economic status of the population.

¹⁵ Recent legislation introduced reforms to the Ubudehe classification, increasing the number and changing the definitions of Ubudehe categories. The legislation also supported the introduction of a more objective targeting system, using household characteristics more correlated with poverty, to improve targeting accuracy.

¹⁶ WFP (2021). Rwanda: Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis 2021. Food security is a state in which all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

¹⁷ Global Nutrition Report 2022.

¹⁸ WFP (2021). Rwanda: Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis 2021.

¹⁹ WFP (2019). Fill the nutrient gap: National summary report.

²⁰ WFP (2021). Rwanda: Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis 2021.

²¹ World Bank (2015). Climate-Smart Agriculture in Rwanda.

²² The Global Gender Gap Index benchmarks the current state and evolution of gender parity across four key dimensions (Economic Participation and Opportunity, Educational Attainment, Health and Survival, and Political Empowerment). Global Gender Gap Report 2022.

and about 28 per cent of rural households are headed by women.²³ According to the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index Study (WEAI) from 2020, the largest contributor to women's disempowerment in Rwanda is workload.²⁴ Women's long working hours correlate to a triple work burden in the productive, reproductive and social spheres. In contrast with men, they do not have time to recover from their daily productive work or even socialize with others and this negatively impacts their productivity and well-being. Limited access to credit, lack of skills and self-confidence to engage in decision-making are also important contributors to disempowerment. In addition, women often have less control over agricultural assets, inputs, produce and capacity-building opportunities as compared to men. Women also have relatively low inclusion in formal financial services and face greater impacts of climate change due to their limited access to resources and opportunities and restricted autonomy to make decisions about their own lives. Many of these constraints are rooted in discriminatory social norms, practices and attitudes, which continue to limit women's full participation in the agricultural sector.²⁵

22. **Youth.** Rwanda has a youthful population: about 78 per cent of Rwandans are below 35 years of age and about 27 per cent is between 16 and 30 years old.²⁶ Youth unemployment rate stands at 23 per cent,²⁷ and of those that are employed, about 60 per cent are in jobs typically defined as low productivity, including subsistence agriculture, retail and construction. The mismatch between labour market needs and available skills is one of the main causes of widespread unemployment, especially among young people.²⁸ Forty-five per cent of young people are self-employed farmers and 16 per cent work as hired farmworkers.²⁹ Almost 30 per cent of young people live in households that are below the poverty line.³⁰ Gender disparities also exist, with more young women being extremely poor (12 per cent) compared to men (10.4 per cent).³¹

Agricultural sector and rural development challenges

23. **Agriculture.** Agriculture is the main economic activity in Rwanda with 69 per cent of the households engaged in the sector,³² and around 56 per cent of the working population employed in agriculture (48 per cent for men and 66 per cent for women).³³ The sector contributes about 25 per cent to GDP, and it stands out as one of the most strategic sectors in Rwanda's development. It accounts for 63 per cent of the foreign exchange earnings from the exports of products, including coffee, tea, hides and skins, pyrethrum and horticulture.³⁴ Smallholder farmers are responsible for 75 per cent of Rwanda's agricultural production.³⁵
24. Rwanda has a diversity of agriculture production systems spread throughout its various agro-ecological zones. The northern and western highlands are predominantly dedicated to the cultivation of potatoes, tea, maize, wheat, climbing beans and pyrethrum. The eastern lowlands are popular for banana, maize, bush bean, sorghum and cassava production. In the central and southern regions, farmers cultivate sweet potatoes, bush beans, tea, coffee and wheat. Cereals, roots and tubers, and banana are considered main food crops and are usually grown in association with legumes.³⁶ Livestock farming is both small- and large-scale and

²³ National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (2018). Fifth Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey. Thematic Report – Youth.

²⁴ DFID (2020). Women's Empowerment Agriculture Index Study (WEAI): Baseline report.

²⁵ MINAGRI (2019). Gender and Youth Mainstreaming Strategy Final Report.

²⁶ National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (2022). Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey EICV5.

²⁷ <https://ilostat.ilo.org/data/country-profiles/>

²⁸ AfDB (2022). Rwanda - Country Strategy Paper 2022-2026.

²⁹ National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (2018). Fifth Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey. Thematic Report – Youth.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (2022). Fifth Rwanda Population and Housing Census (RPHC5).

³³ <https://ilostat.ilo.org/data/country-profiles/>

³⁴ MINAGRI. Rwanda's agriculture sector transformation journey over the last 27 years.

³⁵ AfDB (2022). Rwanda - Country Strategy Paper 2022-2026.

³⁶ World Bank (2015). Climate-Smart Agriculture in Rwanda.

includes cattle, sheep, goats, rabbits, pigs, chicken, usually reared under zero-grazing systems. However, farmers with relatively large land endowments (above five hectares per farm) in the eastern savannah, keep their animals in semi-extensive systems using paddocks. Sugar cane is grown in Nyabugogo and Nyabarongo swamps located in Gasabo, Gicumbi, Kamonyi and Bugesera districts. Irrigated rice is grown throughout the country in swamps and extension of rice areas is ongoing. Agriculture industries include tea, coffee, pyrethrum and sugar processing plants. Other agro-processing units are producing maize flour, soybean oil, packed milk and its sub-products.³⁷

25. Rwandan agriculture is mostly rainfed, with only 9.2 per cent of households using some form of irrigation. Around 71 per cent of the cultivated area is a mixed cropping system. Sixty-nine per cent of households own farmland. Most of the households (57 per cent) cultivate less than 0.5 hectares and 27 per cent cultivate less than 0.1 hectares.³⁸ Thirty-two per cent cultivate between 0.3 and 0.9 hectares and only 1.4 per cent of farmers have more than three hectares.³⁹ Households keep only a small number of animals. As agriculture occupies the largest portion of land, cattle graze in fallows, on-road borders, and in some parts of marginal lands. This obliges farmers to adopt semi-permanent stabling and to grow fodder crops.⁴⁰ About 68 per cent of Rwandans raise livestock (mainly goats and cattle) and poultry (mainly chicken).⁴¹ The activities most commonly engaged in by households are agricultural production (90 per cent of households), livestock raising for sale (83 per cent but mainly as a second or third activity), daily labour agricultural work (49 per cent) and unskilled daily labour (26 per cent).⁴²
26. Despite remarkable improvements over recent years, the agricultural sector in Rwanda still faces many challenges, including: (i) land degradation and soil erosion due to the country's topography and slope; (ii) land use and distribution – land categorized as rural is nearly 98 per cent of the total land area, with around 49 per cent classified as arable; (iii) strong dependence on rainfall and vulnerability to climate shocks; (iv) low levels of productivity for both crops and livestock due to low input use, poor production techniques and inefficient farming practices; and (v) weak processing capacity and limited market access (e.g. higher value-added products placed on the market).⁴³
27. **Natural resources and climate change.** Environmental degradation and climate change have been recognized at the highest political level as one of the major barriers to realizing Rwanda's medium- and long-term development aspirations.⁴⁴ Rwanda is highly vulnerable to climate variability and climate change due to its high dependence on rainfed agriculture and natural resources. It is projected that by 2050 there will be an increase in average annual temperature of 1.4°C to 2.3°C; an increase in duration of heat waves and dry spells; and an increase in the frequency and intensity of heavy rainfall events.⁴⁵ The drier east is considered the most vulnerable to climate impacts because dry spells are increasing in length, leading to food shortages. In the west, rising temperatures are likely to force valuable tea and coffee production into higher, less productive lands. On the steep slopes that dominate much of the country, floods, landslides and soil erosion already impact agriculture, infrastructure and services.⁴⁶

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ MINAGRI (2021). Comprehensive Food Security & Vulnerability Analysis.

³⁹ National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (2018). Fifth Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey. Thematic Report on Environment and Natural Resources.

⁴⁰ MINAGRI (2021). Comprehensive Food Security & Vulnerability Analysis.

⁴¹ National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (2014). Fourth Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey.

⁴² MINAGRI (2021). Comprehensive Food Security & Vulnerability Analysis.

⁴³ AfDB (2022). Rwanda - Country Strategy Paper 2022-2026.

⁴⁴ MNR, Environment and climate change subsector strategic plan, 2013/14 – 2017/2018.

⁴⁵ USAID (2019). Climate Change Risk Profile: Rwanda.

⁴⁶ USAID (2019). Climate Change Risk Profile: Rwanda.

28. **Rural finance.** Agriculture finance is a national priority to achieve transformation of the agriculture sector and greater financial inclusion. Rwanda has key institutional foundations in place to scale up agriculture finance.⁴⁷ Financial inclusion, including both formal and informal financial services, stands at 93 per cent in Rwanda.⁴⁸ Levels of financial inclusion vary from 99 per cent in Gasabo district to about 83 per cent in Rusizi district. The gender gap in financial inclusion is closing, with women representing only 8 per cent of those excluded compared to 7 per cent for men. Eighty-two per cent of the people between 16 and 24 years of age have access to financial services.⁴⁹ Agricultural credit can play a catalytic role in enhancing agricultural productivity; however, its access is limited for smallholder farmers. For example, less than half of the farmers who needed agricultural credit were reported to have received it in the last five years.⁵⁰ The level of access to the formal financial sector for adults reporting agriculture as their primary income is comparable to the rest of the population, but usage of formal financial services is significantly lower. Their access to the formal financial sector is primarily through nonbanks—savings and credit cooperatives and mobile money providers in particular. About one third of adults use mobile money accounts only, illustrating the role of mobile money in terms of increasing financial inclusion, especially in rural areas. Nearly half of adults reporting agriculture as their primary income save with formal providers, but only around one in 10 borrows from formal providers; informal providers remain the primary providers of credit. Lastly, only 6 per cent has any type of insurance (not including social medical insurance and social security programmes), and less than 1 per cent uses agricultural insurance.⁵¹
29. **Food system transformation.** Rwanda faces a triple threat to the realization of its long-term, transformational vision and goals for the nation. These threats are: (i) low agricultural production, productivity and productivity growth; (ii) persistent malnutrition, including micronutrient deficiencies across the life cycle, despite significant progress in poverty reduction; and (iii) significant environmental challenges that are exacerbated by the country's vulnerability to climate change and limited adaptation capacity.⁵² While continued state-led efforts are needed to improve the efficiency of small farms and address market failures, higher agricultural growth in the longer run requires a rapid response to market signals, ready access to investment resources, technical expertise and the ability to organize production and provide appropriate incentives for workers, led by the private sector.⁵³ Moreover, a more nuanced, nutrition-sensitive understanding of food and agriculture is an essential element in Rwanda's food systems transformation, and emerging strategies and policies on agriculture, nutrition and dietary diversity need greater recognition and internalization. Finally, continued efforts focusing on a range of environmental and ecological conservation that simultaneously affect the food system are needed to confront urgent threats to Rwanda's natural resource base and environment caused by climate change.⁵⁴

⁴⁷ Key financial sector foundations include substantial outreach of regulated financial institutions, a relatively well-functioning retail payment system, an integrated financial regulator that supervises banks and nonbank service providers (including insurance), a credit registry that covers both banks and nonbanks, and a functional secured transactions registry. Key agricultural sector foundations include a modern land-title system that provides more than four-fifths of farmers with clear land titles, a relatively well-functioning agricultural input supply infrastructure, and a substantial number of farmers organized into producer cooperatives.

⁴⁸ World Bank (2018). Agriculture Finance Diagnostic Rwanda.

⁴⁹ FinScope (2020). Financial Inclusion: Rwanda.

⁵⁰ Taremwa et al. (2022). Determinants of access to agricultural credit among smallholder rice and maize farmers in the eastern and western provinces of Rwanda.

⁵¹ World Bank (2018). Agriculture Finance Diagnostic Rwanda.

⁵² IFPRI (2022). Rwanda's food systems transformation A diagnostic of the public policy landscape shaping the transformation process.

⁵³ World Bank (2020). Future Drivers of Growth in Rwanda: Innovation, Integration, Agglomeration, and Competition.

⁵⁴ IFPRI (2022). Rwanda's food systems transformation A diagnostic of the public policy landscape shaping the transformation process.

Agricultural policy and institutional framework

30. **Policies and strategies.** Agriculture remains a priority sector in Rwanda's national development strategy Vision 2050.⁵⁵ It aims to attain "agriculture transformation that is equally led by both women and men professional farmers and commercialized value chains." The agricultural sector in Rwanda is directly regulated by the 2018 National Agriculture Policy (NAP), which sets the policy framework for a productive, green and market-led agricultural sector. The Strategic Plan for Agricultural Transformation 2013–2017 (PSTA III) and that for 2018–2024 (PSTA IV) have guided public investments in agriculture. PSTA III focused on both increased production of staple crops and livestock products, and greater involvement of the private sector to increase agricultural exports, processing and value addition. Its key pillars were: (i) land, irrigation, inputs and infrastructure; (ii) soft skills and farmer capacity; (iii) value chains and markets; and (iv) private sector investment. PSTA IV builds on the achievements of the PSTA III, while envisaging a transformation of agriculture from a subsistence sector to a knowledge-based value-creating sector, that contributes to the national economy and ensures food and nutrition security. It is structured around four priority areas: (i) innovation and extension; (ii) productivity and resilience; (iii) inclusive markets and value addition; and (iv) enabling environment and responsive institutions.
31. Other related policies and strategies include the National Land Policy (2004; revised 2019); National Agricultural Extension Strategy (2009); National Post-Harvest Staple Crop Strategy (2011); National Dairy Strategy (2013); National Fertilizer Policy (2014); National Horticulture Policy and Strategic Implementation Plan (2014); Domestic Market Recapturing Strategy (2015); National Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for Agriculture Strategy (2016–2020); Livestock Master Plan (2017/18–2021/22); Made in Rwanda Policy (2017); National Agribusiness Investment Promotion Strategy (2017); National Feeder Roads Policy and Strategy (2017); National Policy on Promotion of Cooperatives (2018); Irrigation Master Plan (2020); and National Decentralisation Policy (2021).⁵⁶
32. **Institutional framework.** All agricultural programmes and policies have been institutionalized under the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI). MINAGRI collaborates with government ministries, local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and international development partners.⁵⁷ MINAGRI co-chairs the Agriculture Sector Working Group (ASWG), which brings together stakeholders and development partners in the agriculture sector.
33. **Investment in the agricultural sector.** In 2011 agriculture was, for the first time, the most important sector in terms of planned domestic and foreign investments, according to the Rwanda Development Board (RDB). RDB recorded US\$116.3 million of agricultural investment in 2011, out of a total of US\$598 million for all sectors of the economy combined, of which US\$371 million was foreign direct investment.⁵⁸ Out of a total investment in agriculture of US\$1,214 million between 2013 and 2018, the Rwandan Government invested US\$314 million or 25.9 per cent. Investments by development partners were: IFAD - 9.9 per cent; DFID - 7.4 per cent; European Union - 13.2 per cent; World Bank - 24.2 per cent; Swiss Development Cooperation - 0.5 per cent; Embassy of Netherlands - 0.8 per cent; USAID - 11.4 per cent; JICA

⁵⁵ Vision 2050 was launched in 2020 and has maintained agriculture as a priority sector. Vision 2020 was a crucial strategic document for the period under review.

⁵⁶ These policies are being enacted. See Annex VIII for more information on each policy/strategy.

⁵⁷ Government ministries: Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning – MINECOFIN; Ministry of Local Government – MINALOC; Ministry of Justice – MINIJUST, national boards (Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Development Board – RAB, National Agricultural Export Development Board – NAEB; NGOs: Caritas, Institute of Policy Analysis and Research – IPAR among others; international development partners: Food and Agriculture Organization – FAO; World Food Programme – WFP; World Bank; African Development Bank – AfDB; Belgian Development Agency – Enabel; Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office – FCDO; Canadian International Development Agency – CIDA; IFAD; United Nations Development Programme – UNDP; among others.

⁵⁸ Rwanda Investment Climate Statement 2012. U.S. Department of State Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs. U.S. Department of State. July 2012. URL: <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Rwanda-ICS-2012.pdf>

- 2.6 per cent; AfDB - 1.6 per cent; and FAO - 2.5 per cent.⁵⁹ In 2020, the agricultural sector received the highest amount of investment, accounting for 24.6 per cent of total investment in the country.⁶⁰ Nevertheless, in 2022, 7.58 per cent of Rwanda's national budget was allocated to agriculture development, which is below the 10 per cent commitment as part of the Maputo Declaration. Domestic Private Sector Investment in Agriculture stood at only 1.6 per cent, below the target of 5 per cent.⁶¹

B. IFAD's strategy and operations for the CSPE period

34. **Past country strategies and evaluations.** Since the beginning of IFAD's operations in the country, Rwanda has had five COSOPs (1999, 2002, 2007, 2013 and 2019). A new COSOP will be presented to IFAD's Executive Board in 2024. Performance over the first three COSOPs was assessed in the second Country Programme Evaluation (CPE) in 2012, covering the period 2000–2010. It showed that the partnership between IFAD and Government of Rwanda made significant contribution to reducing rural poverty and the portfolio's performance saw substantial improvement since the first Country Programme Evaluation in 2005.⁶²
35. The **2013 COSOP** built on the recommendations of the 2012 CPE. Its overall objective was to reduce poverty by empowering poor rural men and women to actively participate in the transformation of the agriculture sector and rural development and by reducing vulnerability to climate change. It focused on three strategic objectives: (i) sustainably increase agricultural productivity; (ii) develop climate-resilient export value chains, post-harvesting and agribusiness; and (iii) improve nutritional status of poor rural people and vulnerable groups. Cross-cutting thematic areas included access to finance, cooperative development and climate change.
36. The **2019 COSOP** maintained the overall goal and strategic objectives of the 2013 COSOP and aimed to reduce poverty by empowering poor rural men, women and youth to participate in the transformation of the agricultural sector and enhance their resilience. It has two strategic objectives: (i) sustainably increase agricultural productivity in priority food and export value chains; and (ii) improve post-harvest processes and strengthen market linkages. Cross-cutting thematic areas include access to finance; improved nutrition; empowerment of women and youth; and natural resource management and climate change. Greater emphasis was given to policy dialogue, institutional support and non-lending activities.
37. **Loan portfolio.** Performance-based allocations increased in IFAD10 and then remained stable but later dropped: IFAD9: US\$ 47.7 million; IFAD10: 64.5 million; IFAD11: US\$ 54.5 million; IFAD12: US\$ 44.3 million (plus US\$10 million through IFAD's Borrowed Resource Access Mechanism). While IFAD10 and 11 resources were fully utilized, there was an unspent amount of US\$5.4 million under IFAD9.
38. The investment portfolio covered by this CSPE include nine projects: four closed projects (Support Project for the Strategic Plan for the Transformation of Agriculture - PAPSTA; Kirehe Community-based Watershed Management Project - KWAMP; Project for Rural Income through Exports - PRICE; Climate-Resilient Post-Harvest and Agribusiness Support Project - PASP) and five ongoing ones (Rwanda Dairy Development Project - RDDP; Kayonza Irrigation and Integrated Watershed Management Project - Phase I – KIIWP1; Partnership for Resilient and Inclusive Small Livestock Markets Programme - PRISM; Kayonza Irrigation and Integrated Watershed Management Project - Phase II – KIIWP2; and Promoting Smallholder Agro-Export Competitiveness Project - PSAC).

⁵⁹ MINAGRI, Rwanda, 2nd Agriculture Sector Investment Plan (ASIP-2; 2013/14 – 2017/18).

⁶⁰ National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISIR).

⁶¹ African Union (2022). Biennial Report to the African Union Assembly on Implementing the June 2014 Malabo Declaration. The 3rd Report to the February 2022 Assembly.

⁶² See annex VI for more information.

39. The main common areas of interventions across the projects are support for agricultural production and productivity (PAPSTA, KWAMP, PRICE, RDDP, PSAC), rural finance services (PRISM and PASP) and irrigation (KIIWP1, KIIWP2). The preliminary analysis on the macro investment areas of the portfolio shows that 38 per cent has been dedicated to production services, followed by 27 per cent supporting inclusive rural finance and 17 per cent to access to markets.⁶³

Table 3

Evaluability of projects covered by the Republic of Rwanda CSPE

Project name	Implementation period	Project cost (US\$ m)	Project status; disbursement % if ongoing	Evaluation criteria
PAPSTA	2006–2013	31.5	Completed	All criteria
KWAMP	2009–2016	64.5	Completed	All criteria
PRICE	2011–2020	65.8	Completed	All criteria
PASP	2014–2020	83.4	Completed	All criteria
RDDP	2016–2023	68.8	Ongoing; 86%	Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency
KIIWP1	2019–2023	24.7	Ongoing; 88%	Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency
PRISM	2021–2026	45.6	Ongoing; 15%	Relevance and efficiency
KIIWP2	2022–2028	61.0	Ongoing; 6%	Relevance and efficiency
PSAC	2022–2029	62.9	Ongoing; 0%	Relevance

Source: IFAD Oracle Business Intelligence.

40. **Grant portfolio.** Since 2013, 24 IFAD-funded grants listed Rwanda as a country of interest with a total cost of US\$44.76 million.⁶⁴ Among these, there were two country-specific grants. Thematic areas included agricultural productivity, value chain development, water governance, rural finance, producers' organizations, gender equality, youth employment, nutrition, climate resilience, COVID-19 impact mitigation and knowledge management. The main grant recipients were NGOs, research centres, producers' organizations and UN agencies.
41. **Programme management.** IFAD opened its country office in Kigali in 2008, hosted in FAO premises. Until recently, the day-to-day activities of the office were managed by a country programme officer. Since January 2023, the country director has been based in-country. All IFAD-supported projects in Rwanda are implemented through an SPIU, housed at MINAGRI. Another key partner is Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN), which represents the Government.

⁶³ Basic information on macro areas investment projects covered in the evaluation is further presented in annex VIII.

⁶⁴ See annex III.

Key points

- Rwanda is a low-income country. Agriculture is the main economic activity. While the level of poverty in Rwanda continued to decline over the past decade, its pace has slowed down. Poverty is essentially a rural phenomenon.
- Despite significant growth in agricultural production over the last decade, food security and nutrition remain a concern in Rwanda.
- While, according to the 2022 Gender Gap Index, Rwanda ranks first in Africa and sixth in the world in terms of gender parity, rural women still face a number of challenges. The largest contributor to women's disempowerment in Rwanda is workload.
- Rwanda has a youthful population. The mismatch between labour market needs and available skills is one of the main causes of widespread unemployment, especially among young people.
- Environmental degradation and climate change are one of the major barriers to realizing Rwanda's medium- and long-term development aspirations. Rwanda is highly vulnerable to climate variability and climate change due to its high dependence on rainfed agriculture and natural resources.
- The Strategic Plan for Agricultural Transformation 2013–2017 (PSTA III) and that for 2018–2024 (PSTA IV) have guided public investments in agriculture.
- The 2013 and 2019 COSOPs share the overall goal to reduce poverty by empowering poor rural men, women and youth to participate in the transformation of the agricultural sector and enhance their resilience. While both have the strategic objectives to: (i) increase agricultural productivity; and (ii) improve post-harvest processes and strengthen market linkages, the 2013 COSOP also aimed at improving nutrition.

III. Performance and rural poverty impact of the country programme and strategy

A. Relevance

Alignment with priorities

42. **The country programme was consistent with Rwanda's development priorities.** The strategic focus of the 2013 and 2019 COSOPs on sustainably increasing agricultural productivity, improving post-harvest practices, strengthening market linkages, and improving nutrition was in line with PSTA III and IV.⁶⁵ While PAPSTA was fully dedicated to supporting the implementation of PSTA I, IFAD responded to specific critical needs of MINAGRI through its other projects: irrigation development (KWAMP, KIIWP 1&2); livestock development (RDDP, PRISM), post-harvest processes (PASP) and agricultural export (PRICE, PSAC).⁶⁶ It tapped on the country's potential to increase productivity, commercialization of agriculture production, and self-employment in small on- and off-farm businesses, with the aim of contributing to the transformation of the agricultural sector and rural poverty reduction. Projects also supported specific government-defined programmes: Girinka programme,⁶⁷ Crop Intensification Programme,⁶⁸ soil conservation, and the irrigation and terracing programmes.⁶⁹ The close alignment with government priorities was due to the strong involvement of the Government in the design and implementation of the country programme.
43. Rwanda has been carrying out a comprehensive and ambitious decentralization reform since 2000.⁷⁰ Following the 2012 CSPE, the role of district authorities in the planning and implementation of the country programme was considered to be strengthened.⁷¹ However, only PAPSTA, KWAMP and the 2013 COSOP included dedicated support to the decentralization process. Interventions were generally consistent with priorities at district level and local development strategies.
44. **Increased focus on agricultural value addition and environment and climate change.** The Government prioritized the promotion of higher-value commodities, private sector involvement in agriculture and increased engagement in post-harvest processes.⁷² The 2013 and 2019 COSOPs and the investment projects were consistent with this orientation, and also responded to a specific recommendation from the 2012 CSPE to increase emphasis on pro-poor value chain development. As such, PRICE and PSAC targeted export-driven value chains; PASP focused on supporting the aggregation and processing of production; RDDP and PRISM aimed to increase the profitability of the dairy and small-livestock sector; and KIIWP 1&2 also focused on farm business development. The selection of targeted commodities

⁶⁵ The 2013 COSOP was designed under PSTA III and the 2019 one under PSTA IV; PAPSTA and KWAMP were designed under PSTA I; PRICE under PSTA II; PASP and RDDP under PSTA III; and KIIWP 1 & 2, PRISM and PSAC under PSTA IV.

⁶⁶ There was consistency with the 2010 and 2021 Rwanda Irrigation Master Plan, 2013 National Dairy Strategy, 2017 Livestock Master Plan and 2010 National Post-Harvest Staple Crop Strategy.

⁶⁷ The Girinka programme was initiated in 2006 with the objective of reducing poverty through dairy cattle farming and increased milk consumption and income generation. It consists of giving one cow per poor family and includes a pass-on component whereby a recipient gifts the first-born calf to a neighbour. The following projects contributed to the programme: PAPSTA, KWAMP and RDDP.

⁶⁸ The Crop Intensification Programme (CIP) is a flagship programme implemented by MINAGRI since 2007. CIP focuses on six priority crops: maize, wheat, rice, Irish potato, beans and cassava and aims to significantly increase food crop production. The programme includes facilitation of access to improved seeds and fertilizers, consolidation of land use for more effective use, and provision of advisory services and improvement of post-harvest handling and storage facilities. The 2013 and 2019 COSOPs mention continued support to CIP. The following projects contributed to the programme: PAPSTA, KWAMP and PASP.

⁶⁹ PAPSTA, KWAMP, KIIWP 1&2.

⁷⁰ National Decentralization Policy 2000, with revisions in 2012 and 2021.

⁷¹ See Agreement at Completion of the 2012 CSPE (#13).

⁷² It features prominently in PSTA III and IV, but several related sector policies and strategies have also been adopted, such as the National Post-Harvest Staple Crop Strategy (2011), the National Dairy Strategy (2013), the National Horticulture Policy and Strategic Implementation Plan (2014), the Livestock Master Plan (2014); the Domestic Market Recapture Strategy (2015), the Made in Rwanda Policy (2017) and the National Agribusiness Investment Promotion Strategy (2017).

responded to the Government's priorities to enhance food and nutrition security, encourage import substitution and increase agricultural exports. All projects counted on a greater involvement of the private sector, promoting for example public-private-producer partnerships (4Ps).

45. Environmental degradation and climate change have been recognized at the highest political level as one of the major barriers to realizing Rwanda's medium- and long-term development aspirations.⁷³ In 2011, Rwanda adopted its first national strategy for climate change and low-carbon development: the Green Growth and Climate Resilient Strategy (GGCRS). The 2013 and 2019 COSOPs and the projects designed since then (i.e. PASP, RDDP, KIIWP 1&2 and PSAC) gave more prominent attention to environmental and climate risks and mitigation measures.⁷⁴
46. The country programme's focus on supporting the development of smallholder agriculture was aligned with IFAD's strategies and priorities (including on inclusiveness).⁷⁵ This was done by building the capacity, productivity and market participation of rural people; enhancing access to natural resources for poor rural women and men, and supporting more effective and sustainable management of these resources (PAPSTA, KWAMP, KIIWP 1&2); and developing pro-poor agricultural value chains (PRICE, RDDP, PRISM and PSAC). Project designs were compliant with the various editions of IFAD's Social, Environmental and Climate Assessment Procedures (SECAP).⁷⁶ Particular attention has been given to facilitating the economic and social empowerment of marginalized groups. While gender considerations were not fully mainstreamed in the 2013 COSOP,⁷⁷ the 2019 COSOP and all projects included specific support for gender equality and women's empowerment.⁷⁸ To address persistent discriminatory gender norms in rural areas, the use of the Gender Action and Learning System (GALS)⁷⁹ was included in the design of most projects. In response to IFAD's and the Government's⁸⁰ increased focus on rural youth, the 2013 and 2019 COSOPs and all projects include them as a special target group. They aimed to create employment opportunities, especially off-farm, and facilitate their access to rural finance. Finally, IFAD has increasingly emphasized on addressing malnutrition, which has been reflected in the 2013 and 2019 COSOPs.⁸¹ This has been very relevant given the high stunting incidence in Rwanda.⁸² Proposed interventions included nutrition-sensitive agriculture, good practices in post-harvest handling, small livestock and dairy development and social behavioural change communication, but only PRISM and KIIWP 2 incorporated this in a strategic manner in their designs.⁸³
47. **Interventions were aligned with the needs of the beneficiaries and tailored to very poor or disadvantaged groups.** The country programme intended to address challenges that smallholder producers faced in Rwanda: land degradation and soil erosion (e.g. promoting soil and water conservation); land use and

⁷³ It also features more prominently in PSTA III and IV.

⁷⁴ The designs of PAPSTA, KWAMP and PRICE did not include detailed assessments of environmental risks and trade-offs, and therefore neither any related mitigation plans. They were designed before the GGCRS.

⁷⁵ PAPSTA was designed under IFAD Strategic Framework (SF) 2002–2006; KWAMP under SF 2007–2010; 2013 COSOP, PRICE and PASP under SF 2011–2015; and 2019 COSOP, RDDP, KIIWP1&2, PRISM and PSAC under SF 2016–2025.

⁷⁶ 2012, 2015, 2017 and 2021. For the design of PAPSTA, KWAMP and PRICE detailed assessments of environmental and social risks and trade-offs and related mitigation plans were not yet required by IFAD.

⁷⁷ The 2013 COSOP only specifically targeted women under its third strategic objective and focuses on their economic empowerment. IFAD's 2012 Gender Policy, among others, calls for mainstreaming gender considerations in COSOPs and addressing women's economic empowerment, strengthening their voice and reducing their workload.

⁷⁸ Interventions have also been consistent with MINAGRI's 2010 Agriculture Gender Strategy and 2019 Gender and Youth Mainstreaming Strategy and PSTA III and IV orientations on gender equality.

⁷⁹ GALS is IFAD's most used gender-transformative approach. See e.g. IFAD (2019). Stocktake of the use of household methodologies in IFAD's portfolio.

⁸⁰ 2005 National Youth Policy PSTA III and IV orientations on youth participation.

⁸¹ While the 2013 COSOP has a specific strategic objective related to nutrition, the 2019 COSOP included it as a cross-cutting issue.

⁸² It is also consistent with the 2014 National Food and Nutrition Policy and PSTA III and IV orientations on addressing malnutrition.

⁸³ PRISM and KIIWP 2 have been categorized by IFAD as nutrition-sensitive projects.

distribution (e.g. supporting off-farm activities and zero-grazing); strong dependence on rainfall and vulnerability to climate shocks (e.g. supporting irrigation development, promoting climate-smart agriculture and climate-proofing infrastructure); low levels of productivity due to low input use, poor production techniques and inefficient farming techniques (e.g. promoting good agricultural and livestock husbandry practices and introducing improved seeds and animal breeds); weak processing capacity and limited market access (e.g. improving post-harvest processes and promoting pro-poor value chain development). This was done by combining investments in hard infrastructure⁸⁴ with 'soft' investments for building human and social capital (e.g. irrigation and marketing).⁸⁵ By using the Government's community-based targeting system "Ubudehe" and contributing to national social protection programmes, such as the Girinka programme, the poorest were targeted. Nevertheless, there are some cases where the proposed interventions were not in line with the needs and livelihood constraints of the very poor. There were, for example, cases reported of beneficiaries selling off the animals they had received or animal feed not being affordable for the poorest.⁸⁶

Design

48. **The design quality of projects was in general consistent with available knowledge.** Over the years there has been continued investment by the country programme in specific subsectors, which has allowed projects to build on the lessons from their predecessors and address their weaknesses. For example, the design of RDDP built on the experiences of PAPSTA and KWAMP, but also those of specialized agencies, such as Heifer International (HI). Subsequently, PRISM included HI as an important implementing partner. A second phase of RDDP is foreseen. PASP, on the other hand, was designed to fill a gap in post-harvest processes. Finally, KIIWP was implemented in two separate phases. The rationale behind this was to respond to the urgent demand of the Government to tackle drought-related issues and to conduct the feasibility studies and Environmental and Social Impact Assessments and validate the irrigation schemes ahead of large irrigation development and farm business development support under KIIWP 2. This allowed to speed up the project's start-up and implementation.
49. **Project designs made a number of unrealistic and overambitious assumptions, especially in terms of targets and capacities.** For example, KWAMP was ambitious, especially when considering the limited project timeframe and the emphasis on building local capacities⁸⁷ and PRICE had the overly ambitious goal of fully developing five very different export value chains.⁸⁸ Designs often held unrealistic assumptions in terms of financing. For example, several projects (e.g. PRICE and PASP) held unrealistic assumptions regarding the capacity of cooperatives (and hubs) to access commercial financing.⁸⁹
50. Implementation capacities were in some cases not estimated correctly. This was, for example, the case of the Rwanda Cooperative Agency (RCA), which played an important role in supporting cooperatives but faced capacity challenges,⁹⁰ while bureaucracy at the Business Development Fund (BDF) continued to inhibit timely access to the matching grants.⁹¹ SPIU capacity was also, at times, overestimated in

⁸⁴ The scale of the infrastructure developments was adapted to the needs and capacities of the beneficiary.

⁸⁵ For example, in the case of PRICE where the needs of target groups were met through a combination of 'hard' investments to increase cash crop acreage and build productive assets and infrastructure, and 'soft' interventions through technical extension services, facilitation of market linkages and access to financial services. (see PCRV).

⁸⁶ See e.g. KWAMP PPE #66; field interviews with Copemoka Cooperative in Bugesera. PRISM SVR 2023.

⁸⁷ This was already highlighted by IFAD's Quality Assurance Review.

⁸⁸ See KWAMP PPE (#157) and PRICE PCRV (#2).

⁸⁹ PASP (PCRV #2 and PCR #138); PRICE (PCRV #10).

⁹⁰ For example, RCA was very limited in terms of human and financial capacities (e.g. only three staff for the Eastern Province; three in the West and two in the North; key informant interview by mission with RCA).

⁹¹ The beneficiaries interviewed recounted their frustration in long and complex procedures which they said caused many to give up the pursuit for funding. This was corroborated by some stakeholder agencies who said the application process was too complex.

terms of the capacity to support several IFAD projects simultaneously and the lack of certain expertise, which hampered implementation.⁹² For example, projects could not always count on an expert in value chain development and market access to support the brokerage of partnerships between smallholders and other value chain actors.⁹³ Moreover, assumptions regarding the capacities of the newly created National Agricultural Export Development Board (NAEB) to lead the implementation of a complex project like PRICE were too optimistic.⁹⁴ Finally, capacities at district level were also often overestimated, for example, in terms of monitoring and evaluation (M&E).⁹⁵

51. **The country programme gradually started promoting a wider range of financial services.** The 2013 and 2019 COSOPs included rural finance as a cross-cutting issue and it is the second largest macro investment area of the country programme, making up 27 per cent of funds invested.⁹⁶ While the country programme did not include conventional or stand-alone rural finance interventions, earlier projects promoted a limited range of financial services through delivery models that were not market-driven.⁹⁷ Overall, there was an overreliance on the use of matching grants in older project designs, with limited involvement of financial institutions or consideration of potential side effects, particularly on the rural financial system.⁹⁸ While designs covered some aspects of value chain financing⁹⁹ (e.g. training and capacity building for smallholders), other aspects were given less attention (e.g. identification and addressing needs of other value chain actors and supporting smallholder negotiation/facilitating win-win contracts). In addition, financing was mostly directed to producers, with limited lending for agro-processors and input suppliers.¹⁰⁰ Furthermore, smallholders were expected to identify and negotiate with financial institutions on their own, without the projects' support to introduce and link value chain actors with financial institutions. However, on the other hand, the designs of newer projects like PRISM and PSAC adopted best practices in terms of inclusive rural finance by addressing both demand- and supply-side constraints, involving various suppliers, and developing a diverse set of products and services.
52. **The design of value chain development interventions showed some weaknesses.** While designs were informed by value chain and market assessments,¹⁰¹ some of these studies did not include a systematic analysis of the characteristics of target markets (local, regional, national, or international), marketing opportunities, demand trends, price evolution, investments required, and benefits of integrating smallholders and private sector into specific market segments. This led to giving more emphasis on upstream activities, without properly estimating

⁹² Notably in terms of gender, M&E and environment/climate change (see e.g. PRICE PCR V #2).

⁹³ RDDP MTR.

⁹⁴ PRICE PCR V (#2).

⁹⁵ CSPE key informant discussions with district officials and see, for example, KWAMP PPE #144

⁹⁶ See Annex VIII for information on the country programme's macro investment areas. The large majority of funds going into financing matching grants.

⁹⁷ The 2012 CSPE had already pointed out that support to rural finance during the period under review was not designed based on best practices and IFAD's rural finance policies. The guiding principles of IFAD's 2009 Rural Finance Policy include access to a range of financial services; involvement of a wide range of suppliers/diverse delivery models and/or channels; demand driven/innovative approaches; collaboration with private sector based on market system approaches with minimum distortion; long-term and sustainable approaches and poverty outreach; enabling environment through policy dialogue.

⁹⁸ See e.g. PRICE IAR (recommendations); RDDP SVR 2023 (#32). This was also recognized in the COSOP Completion Report (2018), which stated that support to rural finance remained a critical issue. It noted that, over the 2013 COSOP period, an ad hoc approach was applied to rural finance and systemic issues were not addressed in a coherent and harmonized manner.

⁹⁹ See IFAD (2012). Agricultural value chain finance strategy and design: Technical Note.

¹⁰⁰ PASP supported 395 business plans with matching grants, focusing on the provision of post-harvest infrastructure, machinery and transportation.

¹⁰¹ PRISM was an exception, as its design did not include value chain studies.

the feasibility of downstream interventions or the existence of market outlets.¹⁰² Other weaknesses included: (i) limited engagement with the private sector during project design;¹⁰³ (ii) limited coordination to address accessibility constraints, with feeder roads continuing to be a challenge for smallholders in terms of access to markets;¹⁰⁴ (iii) the promotion of cash and export crops was sometimes at the detriment of food crops and, therefore, the food security situation of smallholder families;¹⁰⁵ (iv) the benefits for the poorest households were not always clear;¹⁰⁶ and (v) insufficient attention was given to the affordability of feed and appropriateness of fodder varieties in the design of livestock value chain interventions.¹⁰⁷

53. **Stronger commitments from cofinancing partners and mitigation measures could have been sought at design.** Several projects were designed with a significant financing gap or experienced the withdrawal of a cofinancing partner. This impacted their implementation negatively, leading to prioritization of certain activities while cancelling or delaying others.¹⁰⁸
54. Changes were made to project designs during implementation to adapt to environmental changes and improve relevance, mainly after midterm. For example, the planned Tea Equity Participation scheme proved ineffective in PRICE and based on high demand, funds were repurposed for a Revolving Fertilizer scheme. The project also cancelled the foreseen debt write-off for coffee cooperatives and microinsurance products but did not seize the opportunity to further develop dedicated agro-finance products. PASP introduced the 4P-approach after midterm because the planned approach to mobilize loans from commercial banks and financial institutions proved to be ineffective. In view of emerging investments needs, horticulture was added to the value chains targeted by PASP. KWAMP also introduced some changes, e.g. change in commodities supported for value chain development (taking into consideration their potential and demand, although this increased the project's complexity), hilltop reforestation initiative (addressing dramatic deforestation caused by the rapid expansion of agricultural intensification activities in the district), livestock distribution through communal cowsheds (serving as a farmer field school to improve disease control, nutrition and reproduction), and the construction of relatively bigger dams than originally foreseen (based on the outcomes of hydrogeological studies). Finally, given issues of market saturation, RDDP's approach shifted from a focus on production towards a more comprehensive value chain approach, which included the demand side.

¹⁰² For example: KWAMP focused on supply side of value chains (KWAMP PPE #21); PRICE relied on a sole buyer for the silk value chain that withdrew from partnership (PRICE PCRV #21); PASP struggled to find private sector operators willing to work with smallholder farmer groups [IFAD (2019). Corporate-level Evaluation on IFAD's Engagement in Pro-poor Value Chain Development; CSPE field observations].

¹⁰³ CSPE key informant interviews, RDDP MTR.

¹⁰⁴ Only KWAMP supported the construction of feeder roads. The challenge of lack of feeder roads was mentioned several times during the CSPE field mission: e.g. Ngororero district (representatives from district and financial institutions related to the dairy value chain; Kayonza district (cooperatives involved in the horticulture value chain); and Huye district (users of livestock markets). While the financial resources of IFAD-supported projects might not have been sufficient to invest in road construction, the country programme could have sought more coordination with other interventions at district level.

¹⁰⁵ See PRICE PCRV (#17). This issue was already raised by the 2012 CSPE.

¹⁰⁶ E.g. PRICE's first grant facility worked mainly with better-off horticulture farmers and had much less positive impact on poorer coffee producers (PRICE IAR; lower limits of US\$50,000 were set under PRICE's second grant facility to avoid elite capture); while the development of the coffee and tea sectors generated low-skilled temporary jobs, the absence of precise recruitment criteria and relevant monitoring meant that it was not possible to know whether members of poorer families had easier access to these jobs groups [IFAD (2019). Corporate-level Evaluation on IFAD's Engagement in Pro-poor Value Chain Development]; poor farmers were not able to afford feed for pigs (PRISM SVR 2023).

¹⁰⁷ See e.g. RDDP SVR 2023; PRISM SVR 2023. This was already highlighted by IFAD's Quality Assurance Review of RDDP. The 2014 Livestock Master Plan identified feed as the main challenge toward improving animal productivity (particularly due to limited land availability).

¹⁰⁸ Examples include: KWAMP: Withdrawal of initial commitments by WFP (US\$8.1 million) and the German Service for Development (US\$0.5 million) had to be offset by IFAD's supplementary funding and slowing down implementation; PRICE: Government could not secure a cofinancier, thus creating a large financing gap that had to be filled by the first additional finance loan in 2017 leading to significant delays in the horticulture and finance components; KIIWP2: Delays in securing Spanish financing is leading to seriously impacting the implementing the second component on business development. The CSPE team was unable to ascertain the reason for these withdrawals.

55. Adaptive capacity was also demonstrated in the context of COVID-19. For example, PRICE awarded subsidies to air cargo charges to mitigate the pandemic-related impact of hikes in air freight costs, enabling horticulture exporters to maintain supply to overseas clients, which helped Rwandan horticulture exporters stay in business. The country programme also benefited from the support to address some immediate challenges faced by small-scale farmers as a consequence of COVID-19, by providing agriculture inputs and basic assets for production, and facilitating access to markets. This was also aimed at strengthening the capacity of the National Strategic Food Reserve.¹⁰⁹ KIIWP2's design included financial resources to provide a swift response in the event of unforeseen emergencies, such as a global pandemic or extreme climate events.

Targeting

56. **Target groups were defined, but the strategies to reach them were not always clearly elaborated.** The country programme focused on poor and food-insecure rural households with economic potential. Special attention went to women, youth and vulnerable groups. Targeting strategies in the country programme used national socioeconomic databases¹¹⁰, namely the Government-adopted Ubudehe system, which divides households into different categories by income. Projects targeted mainly those from categories 2, 3 and 4.¹¹¹
57. Poverty, vulnerability and livelihood analyses were often descriptions of current conditions, rather than actual analysis considering capability, opportunity and motivation for change of target groups. The quality of analysis has dropped since the replacement of detailed social assessment with IFAD's SECAP, using broad categories to demonstrate response to corporate requirements without taking into account intersectional differences and placing less emphasis on basing targeting decisions on listening to poor people through participatory approaches.¹¹² Project designs did not always provide enough guidance on social targeting, especially in terms of youth participation. KWAMP, for example, did not have a gender strategy and RDDP's youth strategy was only developed after the midterm review. Categorical targeting (women, youth, etc.) was often also used without properly understanding the differences between and within these groups.¹¹³ Various groups were stated as project target groups, such as orphans, people living with HIV/AIDS and persons with disabilities, but no specific interventions or strategies were identified to reach these groups.¹¹⁴
58. There is no evidence to show a critical eye was used to review the rigour or validity of government instruments, such as the Ubudehe categorization and the Girinka programme.¹¹⁵ Poorer and more marginalized groups were sometimes targeted to participate merely in "add-on" activities, not core project interventions. They were mainly targeted by social protection interventions (food-for-work, Girinka cow distribution). Besides for PRISM and PSAC, there was limited consideration (e.g. in the theories of change) on how these poorest could graduate and move out of poverty by, for example, gradually engaging in core project interventions. In some cases, efforts to reach the poorest were supported through partnerships with organizations, but these partnerships were not always adequately secured to meet

¹⁰⁹ Two grants were received from IFAD's Rural Poor Stimulus Facility (RPSF).

¹¹⁰ This is in line with IFAD (2007). Targeting policy: Reaching the rural poor.

¹¹¹ This is in accordance with orientations in the 2013 and 2019 COSOPs, but projects (e.g. PRISM and KIIWP1&2) have also targeted households from category 1.

¹¹² I.e. from PRISM onwards. The social component of the Social Environmental and Climate Assessment (SECAP) did not adequately replace the detailed social assessments conducted in the past to define target groups. See also IFAD (2023). Targeting in IFAD-supported projects: Evaluation synthesis note.

¹¹³ For example, there were few efforts to deliberately target adolescent girls and young women, the poorest women and youth, those with disabilities, etc.

¹¹⁴ For example, PAPSTA, KWAMP, KIIWP2 and PSAC.

¹¹⁵ See e.g.: IFAD (2023). Evaluation synthesis note - Targeting in IFAD-supported projects. And IDS (2015). Challenges of Measuring Graduation in Rwanda; Chronic Poverty Advisory Network & UKAid (2019). Understanding poverty trends and poverty dynamics in Rwanda; Challenges facing the girinka programme include favoritism, injustice, corruption and poor management by local leaders (see Rwanda Governance Board (2018). Assessing Girinka Programme).

the intended objectives.¹¹⁶ Finally, sometimes “better-off” people and value chain actors were targeted without thinking through or being realistic about how this would benefit the poor rural people. Most importantly, this was not monitored by projects and, therefore, assumptions could not be validated.

59. **A wide range of targeting instruments were used, but their importance varied.** Geographic targeting was used by all projects with intervention areas being selected based on a combination of different criteria: poverty and food insecurity; potential for growth and value chain development; and environmental degradation and climate change impact. While a number of districts in the Western and Southern Provinces have been among the poorest, most food insecure and vulnerable to climate shocks,¹¹⁷ these have not been prioritized by the country programme. KWAMP and KIIWP1&2 focused on one district, respectively Kirehe and Kayonza, which were not necessarily among the poorest districts in the country.¹¹⁸ They were however prone to land degradation, drought and had a high potential for irrigation development.
60. Community-based targeting was applied by a number of projects. For example, PAPSTA, PRICE and KIIWP1&2 tapped on local community knowledge to identify vulnerable households¹¹⁹ and KWAMP undertook a participatory poverty mapping exercise. Direct targeting was done mainly through: setting quantitative targets for participation in project activities; using of quota to ensure target groups represented are among the membership of producer groups, enterprises, etc. and in leadership positions; and earmarking funds for vulnerable groups. Furthermore, projects introduced empowering approaches, such as participatory planning, farmer field schools, GALS¹²⁰ and the Value-Based Holistic Community Development model (VBHCD).¹²¹ In some cases, targeting efforts were supported through partnerships. For example, PRISM leveraged ENABEL’s comparative advantage to engage more market-oriented value chain actors, which would create opportunities for poorer households, e.g. through job creation. Sometimes, however, these partnerships were not adequately secured to meet the intended objectives. This was the case in KWAMP, where the partnership with WFP to reach the poorest to provide “food for work” fell through after they withdrew funding.¹²²
61. **Overall relevance.** The country programme was consistent with Rwanda’s development priorities. Strong Government engagement in the design and implementation of IFAD interventions contributed to this. There was also close alignment with IFAD strategies, but not in terms of good practices in rural financial service provision. The design quality of projects was generally consistent with available knowledge, but there were some gaps and sometimes unrealistic and overambitious assumptions were made (e.g. in terms of targets and capacities). Finally, while target groups were defined, the strategies to reach them were not always clearly elaborated (e.g. in the case of youth inclusion). The CSPE rates relevance as **moderately satisfactory** (4).

B. Coherence

External coherence

62. IFAD’s comparative advantage in supporting smallholders to boost productivity and access markets was well recognized by the Government and development partners, while district-level support became less prominent.¹²³ Its alignment with national

¹¹⁶ This was the case in KWAMP, where the partnership with the World Food Programme to provide ‘food for work’ fell through with the withdrawal of funding from WFP.

¹¹⁷ EICV 3, 4 and 5.

¹¹⁸ Kayonza was among the least poor districts (25th out of 30 according to poverty rates in 2016/17 – EICV 5), while Kirehe was ranked among the poorest (5th out of 30 according to poverty rates in 2005/06 – EICV 2).

¹¹⁹ PRICE and KIIWP1&2 worked through local “umudugudu” committees.

¹²⁰ KWAMP, PRICE, PASP, RDDP, PRISM, KIIWP1&2 and PSAC.

¹²¹ RDDP, PRISM and PSAC.

¹²² IFAD (2023). Evaluation synthesis note - Targeting in IFAD-supported projects.

¹²³ This was confirmed during interviews and through the stakeholder survey.

policies, emphasis on pro-poor development, innovative approaches, and focus on support to specific sectors, especially livestock, agricultural export and irrigation,¹²⁴ were acknowledged as being distinct features of the country programme. IFAD was considered by its borrowers and partners as an effective provider of sustainable financing for small-scale agriculture, which complemented interventions by others. PRISM illustrated this complementarity, with ENABEL engaging more market-oriented value chain actors, while IFAD invested in small-scale producers. The Government's role in steering donors to take the lead in specific sectors contributed to this (e.g. livestock and agricultural export in the case of IFAD). IFAD's focus on small-scale farming and rural development sets it apart from the major international financial institutions operating in Rwanda. The World Bank supports improved human capital, improved conditions for private sector development, expanded access to infrastructure and the digital economy, increased agricultural productivity and commercialization and intensified urban agglomeration. AfDB focuses on infrastructure (transport, water/sanitation, energy) and financial sector development. While the 2013 COSOP stressed its support to capacity-building at district level, this was less prominent in the 2019 COSOP. Moreover, nutrition was not recognized by others as an important part of IFAD's work in Rwanda, although IFAD's support to nutrition was emphasized in the 2013 and 2019 COSOPs.

63. **Although IFAD and the SPIU were members of numerous coordination platforms, there was little evidence of harmonization efforts.** IFAD was a signatory to the United Nations Development Assistance Plan (UNDAP) for Rwanda 2013–2018 and UNDAF 2018–2023. Both plans recognized the crucial contribution of agriculture to pro-poor growth and economic transformation. Various development partners were active in the agricultural sector, including, among others, EU, FAO, UNDP, USAID, WFP and the World Bank. Several mechanisms exist at national level to enhance coordination among different stakeholders. These include the ASWG, the Sector Wide Approach Committee (SWAp), technical working subgroups, and the United Nations Network for Scaling-up Nutrition. At district level, local governments tried to strengthen coherence between development partners by enforcing, to the extent possible, alignment with their district development plans.
64. **IFAD's limited visibility led to missed opportunities in terms of coordination, building synergies and policy engagement.** While Rwanda Agricultural and Animal Resources Development Board (RAB) houses the SPIU for both IFAD- and World Bank-financed projects, there was sometimes a lack of coherence and coordination. In rural finance, IFAD mainly worked with matching grants, on the other hand, the World Bank supported de-risking of financial institutions and favoured catalytic market-building. It was also reported that there might have been some cases of "double-dipping," with the same people benefiting from grants from different projects. Another area where coordination could have been strengthened is that of agricultural value chain development, given the multitude of stakeholders involved. The importance of carrying out a mapping of interventions involved in value chain developed was discussed during Rwanda's Food Systems National Dialogues in 2021 but was not realized yet. Finally, under PRISM, IFAD- and ENABEL-supported interventions were supposed to complement each other, with IFAD focusing on smallholders and vulnerable households and ENABEL supporting larger-scale commercial and industrial actors. This did not occur during implementation "due to weak coordination."¹²⁵ Since January 2023 the Country Director has been based in-country, which is expected to contribute to improved coordination with other development partners.

Internal coherence

65. **Internal coherence was enabled through country programme continuity and the SPIU-approach.** The country programme continued investment in certain

¹²⁴ Livestock (RDDP, PRISM), agricultural export (PRICE, PSAC), irrigation (PAPSTA, KWAMP, KIIWP 1&2).

¹²⁵ See, for example, PRISM SVR 2022 and 2023.

subsectors (especially watershed development, livestock and agricultural export), which allowed projects to build on the lessons from their predecessors and address their weaknesses. The country programme was implemented through a SPIU. While each project had their own manager and a number of technical specialists, several functions were shared across projects. These included: M&E, knowledge management, gender mainstreaming, financial management and procurement. This set-up allowed for synergies and sharing knowledge among projects.¹²⁶ Staff from previous projects were also often retained to continue working on IFAD-supported projects, which allowed to maintain institutional memory. Several projects used the same service providers, such as HI and Cordaid, which allowed for a harmonized approach. On the other hand, the SPIU also faced some issues in terms of coherence. The RDDP midterm review, for example, found that synchronization and coordination of activities and service providers between projects was insufficient, leading to duplication of efforts and waste of resources.¹²⁷ Moreover, the overburdening of cross-cutting staff led to some projects not getting adequate support and missing opportunities for greater coherence.¹²⁸

66. **Linkages between IFAD-funded grants and the loan portfolio were generally weak, but there were improvements since 2019.** A large number of IFAD-funded grants were implemented in Rwanda during the period under review. They focused on a wide range of themes: agricultural productivity, value chain development, water governance, rural finance, producers' organizations, gender equality, youth employment, nutrition, climate resilience, COVID-19 impact mitigation and knowledge management. While these themes were relevant to the country programme, synergies and linkages with projects were overall limited. Neither the IFAD country office (ICO) nor the SPIU were aware of the existence of many of the IFAD-funded grants that included Rwanda as a country of interest.¹²⁹ There could have been greater strategic prioritization, focusing on fewer grants that demonstrated a strong catalysing effect and synergies with projects.
67. There were, however, a number of exceptions, especially since 2019. The Dairy Hub model Integration into IFAD-funded projects-initiative implemented by HI, for example, supported the implementation of the dairy hub development model. Building on its achievements, the partnership between IFAD and the Government was strengthened and HI became an implementing partner and cofinancier of RDDP, PRISM and PSAC. Another example is that of the Creating Employment Opportunities for Rural Youth in Africa-initiative, R-YES, implemented by Kilimo Trust, which aimed at supporting rural unemployed youth to access wage employment opportunities through a pathway of skills building and matching services. To this end, it has promoted an Agribusiness Hub-approach. Although youth outreach was a challenge in the country programme, foreseen linkages with projects, such as RDDP, PRISM and KIIWP, did not materialize. PSAC, on the other hand, incorporated the approach in its design. Finally, support from IFAD's Rural Poor Stimulus Facility was used by the SPIU to provide short-term assistance to smallholder farmers to mitigate COVID-19-related shocks by: purchasing and distributing improved seeds, planting materials, and fertilizers; constructing silos; purchasing agricultural produce; and providing food assistance. While linkages with the loan portfolio were limited, the support contributed to strengthening the National Strategic Food Reserve's capacity.

Knowledge management

68. There was a lack of a strategic approach to knowledge management (KM), although efforts were made to capitalize on some experiences from the country programme,

¹²⁶ This is done, for example, through issuing a joint newsletter "Paperweight," quarterly technical meetings of all ongoing projects, and district coordinators meetings.

¹²⁷ Coordination improved after the MTR, but challenges continued (see e.g. RDDP SVR 2022).

¹²⁸ E.g. gender in PRICE (PPE #29) and environment/climate/safeguards in RDDP (SVR 2023).

¹²⁹ The IFAD Country Office (ICO) or SPIU were not aware of the existence of many of the IFAD-funded grants. Weak linkages between projects and grants were also mentioned in a number of reports, e.g. CIAT (RDDP MTR), EAFF (GCR), FAO (Grant Status Report 2022).

especially from 2019 onwards. Both the 2013 and 2019 COSOPs emphasized the important role of KM to support the country programme, especially in terms of scaling up innovations and policy engagement. For each COSOP, a specific KM action plan was supposed to be developed, but this did not happen. While each project developed their own KM plan, it was sometimes developed late or not adhered to.¹³⁰ A KM and communications specialist was part of the SPIU, providing support to the different projects of the country programme. The SPIU developed several types of KM products (e.g. newsletters, publications, videos, etc.) and supported sharing of knowledge (e.g. agricultural fairs, farmer field schools, etc.). A number of improvements were noted from 2019 onwards. The SPIU started publishing a bulletin with regular updates from IFAD-supported projects from 2020 and since 2019, most of these products were stored on a dedicated SPIU website¹³¹ and YouTube channel.¹³² Good practices from the country programme were also documented in several IFAD publications.¹³³ There was, however, a lack of a strategic approach to KM to systematically capitalize on data and lessons from experience generated through the country programme. While the SPIU reported that they held regular meetings between projects to share lessons, this could have been institutionalized by, for example, managing a common repository for lessons learned.¹³⁴

69. **Foreseen channels for knowledge dissemination were not used.** The 2019 COSOP and designs of RDDP, PRISM and KIIWP1&2 anticipated close collaboration with MINAGRI's Agricultural Information and Communication Centre to produce relevant knowledge products and communication materials, but there was no evidence that this happened. Building on the partnership of PAPSTA and KWAMP with PROCASUR, an international NGO, peer-to-peer "learning routes" were expected to be the cornerstone of KM efforts. They were included in the design of subsequent projects, but there was no evidence that the use of this approach continued beyond a 10-day "learning route" organized by IFAD in collaboration with PROCASUR to learn from PASP's experience in climate change adaptation.¹³⁵ Existing platforms (such as the CCIs, Rwanda AB's national agricultural extension service and Access to Finance Rwanda - AFR¹³⁶) could have been leveraged more consistently to ensure that the knowledge also reached smallholders.
70. **There were challenges in packaging and disseminating knowledge from research and grant-supported initiatives.** To support agricultural intensification, PAPSTA tested new varieties of rice, the improvement in paddy soil fertility and seed multiplication. These practices were disseminated through the national agricultural extension service under RAB. Other projects also supported research initiatives (e.g. PRICE on banana-coffee intercropping and fertilizer requirements in coffee, and RDDP supported research on milk quality and animal health and productivity) but faced challenges with packaging and dissemination the generated knowledge.¹³⁷ Furthermore, while IFAD-funded grants also contributed to KM, there was little evidence that the knowledge generated by these grants was leveraged consistently

¹³⁰ E.g. RDDP (SVR 2022), PRISM (SVR 2022) and KIIWP (SVR 2022). In 2012 (before the period under review by this CSPE) PASTA supported the development of MINAGRI's Knowledge Management and Communication Strategy 2012–2015 and the SPIU developed a unified knowledge management strategy for the period 2023–2027 (after the period under review by this CSPE).

¹³¹ <https://spiu-ifad.minagri.gov.rw/>

¹³² <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTOI4ihPC-rNmuxHQybEinw>

¹³³ PRICE was featured in IFAD (2015). *Brokering development - Enabling factors for public-private-producer partnerships in agricultural value chains* & IFAD (2016). *How to do: Public-Private-Producer Partnerships (4Ps) in Agricultural Value Chains*, while RDDP's experience was captured in IFAD (2022). *Stock-taking exercise on Livestock Farmer Field Schools: East and Southern Africa*.

¹³⁴ As recommended by RDDP MTR.

¹³⁵ Twenty-five participants from seven different Africa countries, mainly from IFAD-supported projects, learned about multi-stakeholder strategies, tools, practices and mechanisms of increasing farmers' awareness and ownership in adapting to the negative impacts of climate change in order to reduce production and post-harvesting losses. <https://ifad-un.blogspot.com/2016/12/learning-route-on-practical-solutions.html>

¹³⁶ Access to Finance Rwanda was identified as an important platform for disseminating experiences from the country programme in the 2019 COSOP.

¹³⁷ See e.g. RDDP SVR 2022.

in the country programme. For example, the different products developed under the e-Granary initiative implemented by EAFF (which aimed at increasing farmers' organizations' access to extension, finance and markets), such as training material, crop protocols and farm budget tools, were not taken up more broadly in the country programme. An exception was the Strengthening Agricultural Resilience through Learning and Innovation-initiative or STARLIT implemented by CORDAID,¹³⁸ which put strong emphasis on sharing innovations and successful practices with a wide range of stakeholders in the agricultural sector to promote their scaling up.

71. Innovations were introduced and disseminated in the country programme through South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC), but these experiences were mainly limited to PAPSTA, KWAMP and PRICE. They included exchanges with Madagascar on the system of rice intensification (SRI), with Peru on community competitions and community innovation centres (CCIs), with Comoros on agroforestry or "bocage," with Nepal on biogas, and with Uganda on GALS. The 2019 COSOP puts emphasis on the importance of SSTC for the country programme and identified several opportunities, such as collaboration with the Government of Argentina and that of Brazil, but this was not followed through. An exception was the IFAD-funded grant STARLIT (2021–2024), which supported collaboration with a Chinese private company specializing in post-harvest equipment and introduced solar irrigation solutions.

Partnership-building

72. **IFAD established a strong relationship with the Government and was regarded as a key player in the agricultural sector.** Several ministries and agencies were involved in the implementation of the country programme. MINAGRI, RAB and NAEB acted as lead projects agencies, while MINECOFIN acted as the designated borrower. Other government agencies acted as operational partners (see below). The Government showed strong ownership of the country programme and commitment to achieve results, which was not only reflected in their close engagement in project design and implementation, but also its significant counterpart funding.
73. Cofinancing partnerships were leveraged to increase the scale of resources used to implement the country programme, but some did not materialize which impacted implementation. The main international cofinanciers for the lending portfolio were AfDB, the OPEC Fund for International Development, the Spanish Government, ENABEL and HI. It is worth noting that the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and Visa Foundation also provided significant cofinancing for the IFAD-financed grant, R-YES, implemented by Kilimo Trust of US\$11m and US\$3.5m, respectively. However, a number of cofinancing partnerships did not materialize or only to a significantly lesser extent, impacting project implementation.¹³⁹ There was a lack of strong financial commitment by some partners at project design. For example, this was the case with PAPSTA, where the contributions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands and the Belgian Survival Fund were withdrawn, and WFP, DFID and the German Development Service (DED) failed to provide the full amount committed. Another example is that of KWAMP, where WFP and DED withdrew their initial financial commitments.
74. **Operational partnerships added value to the portfolio by bringing in necessary knowledge and expertise.** Organizations were engaged as operational partners based on their specific expertise. Some key ones include: Heifer International (dairy business development, social mobilization, graduation and horticulture production); Cordaid (rural finance and value chain development);

¹³⁸ STARLIT is an IFAD-China SSTC Facility-funded initiative which aims to strengthen the resilience of farmers in the maize value chain. See also: IFAD (2023). Building Smallholder Farmers Resilience in Kayonza District: A Case Study of Starlit Project

¹³⁹ The CSPE Team was unable to ascertain the reason for the withdrawals. Delays in project approvals and start-ups also impacted the cofinancing availability of (e.g. Cordaid in PRISM & PSAC).

Business Development Fund (matching grant schemes and guarantee funds); Rwanda Cooperative Agency (capacity-building of cooperatives); Rwanda Youth in Agribusiness Forum (capacity-building of youth and cooperatives); and Rwanda Meteorological Agency (RMA) (weather information). These partnerships sometimes faced challenges. For example, communication and coordination between them and the SPIU did not always go smoothly.¹⁴⁰ The renewal of the annual performance-based contracts was sometimes delayed, negatively impacting implementation. More attention could have also been given to some other important partnerships. For example, projects sought collaboration with the Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA) to ensure compliance with national environmental and climate regulations, but this partnership remained weak.¹⁴¹ Some IFAD-financed grants were also used to leverage knowledge and expertise, as in the case of HI mentioned above, but in general, knowledge generated by grants remained underutilized.

75. **The country programme increasingly made efforts to strengthen private sector engagement, with mixed results.** The objective was to help create inclusive agriculture and food systems through better market access, improved service provision and financial contributions. The limited expertise in value chain development and private sector engagement within the SPIU mitigated the results achieved in this area. While some examples of partnerships between rice mills and farmers' cooperatives existed in KWAMP, there was a lack of strategy to better market the surplus production. Also, there was no clear plan to facilitate sustained and transparent relations between farmers, processors and traders, and to gain better prices for beneficiaries. PRICE managed to foster a number of partnerships between farmer cooperatives and private-sector investors, but was less successful in the sericulture and tea value chains. Projects increasingly included a 4Ps-approach, but still faced challenges. Due to a limited understanding of the governance of the maize value chain and the needs of its players, PASP, for example, struggled to find private entrepreneurs in cereals willing to buy from producer organizations.¹⁴² RDDP also faced challenges in terms of partnerships with private sector, including, for example, in the management of the Milk Collection Centres (MCCs).¹⁴³ After midterm review, the project managed to strengthen engagement with Inyange Industries, one of Rwanda's leading food processing companies. In general, market actors, such as traders and private companies, could have been more closely involved to ensure demand-oriented value chain development. Finally, partnerships with commercial banks also did not work as expected.¹⁴⁴ On the other hand, newer projects, such as PRISM, KIIWP2 and PSAC, put stronger emphasis on private sector partnerships.
76. **While IFAD collaborated with FAO and WFP, there were missed opportunities to leverage joint efforts and results.** The most successful collaboration was the Joint Programme on Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women (JP RWEE), although there were instances of limited complementarity and duplication of work.¹⁴⁵ FAO was involved in the design of several projects and collaborated in the implementation of a number of projects.¹⁴⁶ While the partnership experienced delays, the two agencies collaborated in the following areas: policy support data collection on the dairy sector animal health; food safety farmer field schools (FFS) study on greenhouse gas emissions; and

¹⁴⁰ This has, for example, been the case for BDF and ENABEL.

¹⁴¹ Examples of project engagement with Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA): KWAMP and KIIWP - validation of environmental impact assessments for irrigation development and the watershed management plans; RDDP - environmental impact assessments of bull station and water points; PRISM - environmental impact assessments of slaughterhouses/slabs. However, REMA and, for example, PASP PCRV mentioned in general limited engagement with IFAD supported projects.

¹⁴² See IFAD (2019). Corporate-level Evaluation on IFAD's Engagement in Pro-poor Value Chain Development.

¹⁴³ See RDDP MTR.

¹⁴⁴ See, for example, PASP MTR.

¹⁴⁵ See <https://www.ifad.org/en/jprwee>; FAO, IFAD, WFP & UN Women (2021). Joint Evaluation: Joint Programme on Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women (2014-2020).

¹⁴⁶ RDDP, PRISM and KIIWP1&2.

agricultural water management.¹⁴⁷ In addition, FAO benefited from an IFAD-financed grant “Increasing Water Productivity for Sustainable Nutrition-sensitive Agricultural Production & Improved Food Security” (2020 and 2023), but its performance was unsatisfactory.¹⁴⁸ WFP was a cofinancier and operational partner for a number of projects.¹⁴⁹ Areas for collaboration included: purchase-for-progress; food-for-work; home-grown school feeding; farmer-to-market alliance; and community-based participatory planning. However, this did not generate many actual results as, for example, WFP contributed much less to PAPSTA than originally committed and withdrew altogether from KWAMP.

Policy engagement

77. The 2013 and 2019 COSOPs identified several priorities for policy engagement. The 2013 COSOP identified: (i) PSTA III implementation, with a specific focus on SWAp investment, inclusive rural finance and harmonized support to cooperatives; (ii) fostering 4Ps; (iii) GGCRS implementation; and (iv) nutrition. The 2019 COSOP identified: (i) support for the formulation of sector policies, such as the National Dairy Policy; (ii) participation in sectoral working groups, such as the Horticulture Sector Working Group; and (iii) engagement in agricultural finance platforms at the national level, in cooperation with AFR. Resources and implementation details for such a large and ambitious policy engagement agenda were, however, not specified in the COSOPs.
78. **Projects supported and informed an important number of national policy processes.** PAPSTA made a significant impact on the structure and direction of the agricultural sector in Rwanda, as it was dedicated to the implementation of PSTA I and II and supported the drafting of various agricultural sector policies (e.g. organizing meetings, recruiting short-term consultants, training MINAGRI staff, making sure the interests of smallholders were represented).¹⁵⁰ RDDP, PRISM, KIIWP1&2 and PSAC included specific policy engagement components. KWAMP introduced irrigation management transfer agreements, which were considered a best practice by other donor and government-led initiatives. PRICE supported the development of a code of practice for silk cocoon production by the Rwanda Standards Board (RSB) and advocated on behalf of tea farmers for removing obstacles to expanding production levels. PASP contributed to the implementation of GGCRS and increased recognition at policy level of the importance of post-harvest investments. RDDP supported the finalization of the Animal Health and Production Law, the formulation of draft regulations on Sanitary Mandate and the drafting of the Breeding Policy.
79. IFAD-financed grants contributed to a limited extent only to policy processes, despite results in terms of innovations and knowledge generation.¹⁵¹ The East Africa Farmers Federation (EAFF) supported a national farmers’ organization to lobby government for the establishment of a joint seed certification system between MINAGRI, RAB and farmer organizations. Other grants included activities to support policy processes, such as the More Effective and Sustainable Investments in Water for Poverty Reduction-initiative implemented by the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) and FAO, but there was no evidence that these contributed to policy changes besides the development of policy briefs and organization of workshops.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁷ For example, significant delays were experienced in the implementation of the memorandum of understanding between FAO and RDDP (see RDDP MTR). PRISM faced similar issues with regards to foreseen collaboration on disease contingency plans and carbon accounting (see PRISM SVR 2023).

¹⁴⁸ The grant encountered many delays and had weak links with the loan portfolio (see Grant Status Report 2022)

¹⁴⁹ Namely PAPSTA, KWAMP, PASP, KIIWP1&2 and PSAC.

¹⁵⁰ PAPSTA supported the draft of PSTA II and III, and but also other agricultural sector policies, such as the Agricultural Sector SWAp, M&E Sector Framework and the Gender Mainstreaming Strategy.

¹⁵¹ For example, the “Green Technologies to Facilitate Development of Value Chains Perishable Crops and Animal Products” project implemented by SunDanzler produced several research products that were relevant in terms of policy engagement, but its dissemination was weak (see Grant Status Report 2022).

¹⁵² See Grant Completion Report 2018.

80. While there were missed opportunities to leverage development partner platforms, increasingly, efforts were made to influence policy processes through policy fora. The ICO provided support for Rwanda's Food Systems National Dialogues in 2021 and co-chaired one of the Action Tracks with MINAGRI. Coordination in the irrigation sector was also sought with International Finance Corporation (IFC), the World Bank and USAID in 2019. Through its participation in the ASWG, the Sector Review Joint Forum¹⁵³ and other national platforms, the ICO had the opportunity to bring evidence emerging from the country programme and influence policy processes, but there was limited evidence that this actually happened. A lack of human resources in the ICO reportedly contributed to limited policy engagement and capacity issues also existed in the SPIU, for example, in terms of being able to develop useful policy products and supporting their adoption.¹⁵⁴ This led to delays in the implementation of their policy engagement activities, as was, for example, the case for RDDP. More efforts could have also been made to ensure closer engagement of representatives of IFAD target groups, such as farmers' organizations, in policy processes.¹⁵⁵
81. **A number of priority areas for policy engagement did not get enough attention:** (i) inclusive rural finance; (ii) nutrition; and (iii) the nexus between livestock, climate change, environment and livelihoods. One of MINAGRI's priority areas is increasing agriculture financial access and discussing appropriate agri-finance interventions with different stakeholders.¹⁵⁶ The country programme's experience, especially with matching grants, could have provided important inputs to this discussion, but there is no evidence that this happened, nor of cooperation with AFR.¹⁵⁷ On the other hand, the inclusion of more diverse financial products and services in newer projects, like PRISM and PSAC, is reportedly a result of IFAD's lobbying efforts with the Government.¹⁵⁸ Furthermore, although IFAD reportedly was a member of Rwanda's Scaling up Nutrition Network and nutrition was a priority area for the 2013 and 2019 COSOPs, there was no evidence that the ICO or SPIU meaningfully engaged in any related policy processes.¹⁵⁹ Finally, while RDDP provided evidence into discussions with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change regarding livestock impacts on climate change adaptation and mitigation, its experience could have been used to contribute more actively to international debates on the opportunities and challenges related to the nexus between livestock, climate change, environment and livelihoods.¹⁶⁰
82. **Overall coherence.** IFAD's comparative advantage was well recognized. The Government's role in steering donors to take the lead in specific sectors contributed to this. Continued investment in certain subsectors and the use of an SPIU allowed for strengthening internal coherence. Synergies and linkages of IFAD-supported grants with the loan portfolio were limited. In general, there was room for improvement in terms of performance of the country programme in non-lending activities. The CSPE rates coherence as **moderately satisfactory (4)**.
83. **Overall knowledge management.** While knowledge from the country programme was captured to some extent through the development of different KM products,

¹⁵³ The joint sector review forum is a platform bringing together MINAGRI, development partners and other stakeholders to assess the implementation of policy actions in the agriculture sector. The Agricultural Joint Sector Review forum brings together all stakeholders to engage in policy dialogue and to ensure ownership, accountability and transparency of national medium-term development strategy implementation and monitoring processes.

¹⁵⁴ See IFAD (2019). COSOP Completion Report (#45).

¹⁵⁵ See, for example, PAPSTA PPE #58

¹⁵⁶ See MINAGRI Annual Report (2021-2022)

¹⁵⁷ It was foreseen in the 2019 COSOP and in the design of KIWP1&2. Access to Finance Rwanda participated in the design of PSAC.

¹⁵⁸ According to the government-led division of labour among donors, finance was not a priority intervention area for IFAD for the period 2013-2018 (Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (2013). Division of Labour in Rwanda).

¹⁵⁹ For example, IFAD was not a member of the Food systems Summit first action track "ensuring access to safe and nutritious food for all, while FAO and WFP were and there was limited evidence of IFAD's active engagement in the SUN movement.

¹⁶⁰ See IFAD (2023). Thematic Evaluation of IFAD's Support for Smallholder Farmers' Adaptation to Climate Change: Rwanda case study.

there was a lack of a strategic approach to KM. The foreseen COSOP-specific KM action plans were not developed, and project-specific plans were often developed late or not adhered to. Important themes such as pro-poor value chain development and inclusive rural finance could have been capitalized better. Experiences from research initiatives and IFAD-funded grants were often not packed well or disseminated. The CSPE rates knowledge management as **moderately unsatisfactory (3)**.

84. **Overall partnership-building.** Partnerships were leveraged for different purposes, including resource mobilization and brokering knowledge and expertise. The partnership with the Government was strong. However, a number of cofinancing partnerships did not fully materialize, impacting project implementation. Partnerships with the private sector, including commercial banks, were not always strong. There were missed opportunities to leverage joint efforts and results with FAO and WFP. The CSPE rates partnership-building as **moderately satisfactory (4)**.
85. **Overall policy engagement.** Projects supported and informed several important national policy processes, especially PAPSTA, PRICE and RDDP. On the other hand, ICO's involvement was marked by a discrepancy between ambition and (human and financial) resources. Capacity issues also existed in the SPIU, for example, in terms of being able to develop useful policy products and supporting their adoption. There were a number of priority areas for policy engagement that did not get enough attention, such as rural finance and nutrition. However, improvements were witnessed since 2019. The CSPE rates policy engagement as **moderately satisfactory (4)**.

C. Effectiveness

86. This section starts with an assessment of effectiveness in terms of beneficiary outreach. It is followed by a discussion of the achievements of the country programme in terms of outputs and outcomes in each of its three pathways of change: (i) improving access to assets, finance, technologies and knowledge to increase productivity, reduce post-harvest losses or benefit from off-farm employment opportunities, and increasing access to markets through infrastructure development and strengthened linkages among value chain actors; (ii) promoting protection and rehabilitation of natural resources, and coordination among the various users; and (iii) supporting specific efforts to improve diet diversity and increase food and nutrition security.¹⁶¹ Finally, the contribution of the country programme to the achievement of the COSOPs' strategic objectives is presented.

Outreach

87. Overall, projects reached or exceeded their outreach appraisal targets in terms of persons receiving services promoted or supported by project interventions, but COSOP outreach targets were unrealistic. While KWAMP only reached 84 per cent of its overall outreach target, PASP exceeded its target by more than 200 per cent. Approximately 46 per cent of PASP's beneficiaries, however, were only reached through the distribution of hermetic bags, which proved to be an unsustainable activity that did not directly relate to the project objective or outcomes.¹⁶² The outreach targets¹⁶³ in the 2013 and 2019 COSOPs appear to have been unrealistic. Under the 2013 COSOP, the aim was to take 700,000 people out of poverty. In terms of outreach, this target was only reached by less than half (45 per cent), although it must be noted that the extent to which they have been taken out of poverty in a sustainable manner, which was the actual goal, was not monitored.¹⁶⁴ The 2019 COSOP aimed to reach 350,000 rural households. Based on available data, it is

¹⁶¹ See the country programme's theory of change developed for this CSPE in annex V.

¹⁶² See PASP PCR V (#6 & #12).

¹⁶³ In terms of number of persons receiving services promoted or supported by the project.

¹⁶⁴ See IFAD (2018). COSOP Completion Report: 315 733 people receiving services promoted or supported by project interventions against a target of 700 000.

estimated that also in this case the target will not be met. PRICE, PASP and RDDP had the highest anticipated outreach, but were also allocated the largest share of financial resources. KWAMP and KIIWP1&2 had the lowest anticipated outreach due to the fact that they only intervened in one district.

Table 4

Synthesis of outreach data based on cumulative figures

Programme	Target	Outreach	Outreach against target	Share of women	Share of youth
PAPSTA	11 000	11 847	108%	N/A	N/A
KWAMP	48 000	40 264	84%	40%	N/A
PASP	33 400	70 420	211%	40%	9%
PRICE	145 200	142 296	98%	38%	N/A
RDDP	100 000	152 880	153%	30%	16%
KIIWP 1	8 140	9 198	113%	41%	10%

Sources: President Reports, PPEs, PCRVs, SVRs and validated M&E data from ongoing projects.

88. **Projects did not systematically, or only partially, collect disaggregated data in terms of sex, age and vulnerability status.**¹⁶⁵ Outreach to target groups, such as different Ubudehe categories, orphans, people living with HIV/AIDS and persons with disabilities, was not systematically captured, which posed a challenge to assess the effectiveness in reaching out to the poorest groups and bringing them out of poverty.¹⁶⁶ Finally, intersectional dimensions were also not monitored, for example, by collecting sex-disaggregated data on youth inclusion.

Youth engagement

89. **Outreach to youth remained below targets, with projects lacking age-sensitive strategies to ensure their participation.** In terms of youth participation in the country programme, the 2013 and 2019 COSOPs had a target of 20 and 30 per cent, respectively. However, on average only 12 per cent of those receiving services promoted or supported by project interventions were young people, which is significantly below the average target of 23 per cent for the various projects and 25 per cent for the two COSOPs. KIIWP1 performed poorly, with young people representing only 10 per cent of those involved in project interventions against a target of 30 per cent.¹⁶⁷ This is in spite of the fact that several project designs included a number of activities directly targeting youth. For example, RDDP engaged youth as farm assistants, supported the formalization of youth-led organizations, and assigned young graduates (RYAF consultants) to MCCs to provide cooperatives with technical support on production and animal husbandry issues and established a specific youth window under its matching grant scheme. The project also created employment opportunities for youth, for example, managing MCCs and MCPs, and acting as veterinary practitioners or milk collectors. KWAMP placed young graduates in hillside irrigation schemes to support farmers in good agricultural practices and also trained youth in the installation, operation and maintenance (O&M) of biogas units.
90. Projects faced a number of challenges. Actual strategies to target youth in project interventions were missing, developed late or of poor quality, as in the case of PASP, RDDP and KIIWP1.¹⁶⁸ Most importantly, projects were not able to address the structural barriers that limit the youth's participation in supported interventions, such as access to land and finance.¹⁶⁹ In the case of PASP, for example, youth represented

¹⁶⁵ See, for example, PRICE PCRV, RDDP MTR and PRISM SVR 2023.

¹⁶⁶ Evidence on outreach to the most vulnerable groups was mainly anecdotal (e.g. PAPSTA PPE).

¹⁶⁷ KIIWP1 SVR 2022.

¹⁶⁸ See PASP PCRV, RDDP MTR and KIIWP1 SVR 2022.

¹⁶⁹ See, for example, PASP PCRV and RDDP SVR 2023.

only 7 per cent of those accessing saving services, 4 per cent of those accessing credit and 7.5 per cent of those trained. Reliable data on employment creation for youth was not collected by the projects. Two of the newer projects, PRISM and PSAC, were categorized by IFAD as being youth-sensitive.¹⁷⁰ PSAC's design built on the initial positive results of the IFAD-financed grant initiative R-YES, which aims to promote youth employment through the setting up of agribusiness hubs and will hopefully lead to increasing outreach to youth.

First pathway of change - Improving productivity, access to markets and financial inclusion

91. The country programme contributed significantly to increasing agricultural and livestock productivity, although for some commodities it was below expectations and increases were not always assured in the long run. This was done in several ways: (i) strengthening technical skills; (ii) supplying agricultural inputs; and (iii) supporting irrigated agriculture. There was a strong focus on milk and various crops (including rice, coffee, cassava, maize, sorghum, sweet and Irish potatoes, horticulture, beans and tea).
92. All projects built the technical skills of rural producers. For example, PAPSTA and KWAMP promoted rice intensification by introducing the intensive rice cultivation (*système de riziculture intensive* - SRI) system. This allowed smallholder rice farmers to use less seeds, land and water, and increase their yields. They also supported soil and water conservation interventions,¹⁷¹ which contributed to increased crop productivity. Projects like KWAMP, PRICE, PASP and KIIWP1 also promoted good agricultural practices, which contributed to yield increases. Through Livestock Farmer Field Schools (L-FFS), RDDP promoted good animal husbandry practices, which contributed to improved animal health and increased milk production, while PASP trained producers on post-harvest handling practices leading to reduced post-harvest losses.¹⁷² PAPSTA, KWAMP and PRICE supported the use of improved seeds and fertilizer, while KWAMP and RDDP introduced improved animal breeds (dairy cows, pigs and goats) and distributed livestock through a solidarity chain, known as Pass on the Gift (PoG). PAPSTA, KWAMP and KIIWP1 also promoted irrigated agriculture on hillsides and in marshlands. It is estimated that, on average, irrigated agriculture is at least twice as productive per unit of land as rainfed agriculture, thereby allowing for more production intensification and crop diversification. The following results were achieved: PAPSTA - 185ha (123 per cent of target); KWAMP - 1,189ha (105 per cent of target); and KIIWP1 - 1,320ha.¹⁷³ These interventions resulted in an increase in agricultural and livestock productivity (see table 5 below).
93. The resulting productivity increases (see table 5 below) were generally in line with expectations.¹⁷⁴ Significant increases were seen, for example, for maize under PAPSTA (167 per cent) and KWAMP (313 per cent), sorghum under KWAMP (167 per cent) and 45 per cent less milk rejected under RDDP. However, exceptions included silk production (reportedly caused by low productivity per egg box, suboptimal number of silkworm rearing cycles per year, and lack of farmers' own rearing houses) and tea productivity in new cooperatives supported by PRICE.¹⁷⁵ While livestock productivity increased, there were some challenges related to limited access to feed

¹⁷⁰ PRISM, however, already faced issues regarding youth inclusion: poor quality of youth targeting strategy at design; districts not aware of PRISM's youth focus; no engagement with the Ministry of Youth and Culture, youth councils at local level, nor youth cooperatives; youth selection criteria not finalized; etc. (PRISM SVR 2022 & 2023).

¹⁷¹ This included the construction of full and half terraces, the digging of anti-erosion ditches/cut off drains and soil bunding, the planting of living hedges (bocage) on the earth bunds with various fodder/agro-forestry tree species and grasses, the fixing of ravines with different earth and vegetative measures, excavating water retention basins, rehabilitation and protection of rural roads and tree planting.

¹⁷² However, technical support to cooperatives on post-harvest management, as foreseen as per PASP design, was not available to farmers in the maize, beans, Irish potato and cassava value chains following non-renewal of contracts of service providers (see PASP PCRV).

¹⁷³ PAPSTA PPE and KWAMP PPE.

¹⁷⁴ For some commodities productivity data were not available, e.g. beans in the case of PASP (see PASP PCRV).

¹⁷⁵ PRICE PCRV.

and veterinary services.¹⁷⁶ Farmers' faced difficulties such as regular access to training and extension services, which is important to ensure continued adoption of improved technical skills. For example, system of rice intensification adoption rates quickly decreased to 40 per cent of rice farmers trained by PAPSTA due to a lack of continued training.¹⁷⁷ Another example can be found in PRICE, where lack of after-project follow-up training hampered coffee farmers' adoption of new techniques.¹⁷⁸ Finally, agricultural productivity was increased without always ensuring market absorption or taking into account nutrition outcomes (see below).

Table 5
Productivity data per project

PAPSTA	KWAMP	PRICE	PASP	RDDP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase maize: 1.5 to 4.0-5.0 tons/ha • Increase beans: 0.6-0.8 to 1.1-1.2 tons/ha • Increase cassava: 15-20 to 30-40 tons/ha • Increase sweet potatoes: 15-17 to 25-30 tons/ha • Increase rice: 3-4 to 6-7 tons/ha 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion or intensification of the agricultural area (satellite images from 2009 and 2016)¹⁷⁹ • Increase maize: 313% • Increase sorghum: 167% • Increase rice: 6% • Increase beans: 70% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase coffee yields: 1.6 kg to 3.1 kg per tree • Increase tea yields: 2 to 4.1MT/ha (old plantations) & 0.5 to 2.6MT/ha (new plantations) • Silk productivity: 130.4MT of fresh cocoons (only 1% of target)¹⁸⁰ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in post-harvest crop losses: between 13% and 70% • Increase maize productivity: 2.8 tons/ha to 3.7 tons/ha • Increase Irish potatoes: 12.4 tons/ha to 16.8 tons/ha 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase milk production: 4.5 to 7.9 litres/day • Reduction mastitis prevalence: 50% to 20-25% • Reduction amount of milk rejected per farmer: 45%

Source: PCRs, PPEs, PCRVs, RDDP outcome survey and RDDP L-FFS impact assessment.¹⁸¹

94. The country programme increasingly supported value chain development, with mixed results, especially in terms of market linkages. Access to markets and value chain development was supported in several ways: (i) promoting product and process upgrading; (ii) supporting functional upgrading; and (iii) strengthening horizontal and vertical value chain linkages. While PAPSTA did not have a strong market orientation, subsequent projects put emphasis on value chain development.
95. Projects effectively supported product and process upgrading by promoting product diversification and improved product characteristics and quality. KWAMP, for example, supported the diversification from traditional crops (e.g. rice and maize) into higher value products (e.g. vegetables) and new sources of income (e.g. milk), while RDDP helped to improve milk quality through testing and awareness campaigns on mastitis (with a reduction of prevalence from about 50 per cent previously to 20 to 25 per cent)¹⁸² and training of managers of MCC and milk collecting points (MCPs) on milk quality testing. Furthermore, several projects supported improvements in certification, food safety and traceability. PRICE, for example, supported

¹⁷⁶ See e.g. RDDP SVR 2023, PRISM SVR 2023, CSPE focus group discussions.

¹⁷⁷ Ingabire, C. et al. (2013). Awareness and Adoption in the Eastern Province of Rwanda Following the PAPSTA Project. A presentation at the 2013 conference "Confronting challenges of food insecurity and poverty in the era of climate change and variability."

¹⁷⁸ PRICE IAR.

¹⁷⁹ See also Annex VII for report on GIS data review of KWAMP.

¹⁸⁰ This was attributed to low productivity per egg box, suboptimal number of silkworm rearing cycles per year, and lack of farmers' own rearing houses (PRICE PCRv).

¹⁸¹ It should be noted that for KWAMP, neither the baseline nor the impact assessment report included comparison groups, making assumptions about the attribution of observed changes difficult, while for PASP agricultural production data was incomplete for some of the main value chain commodities, and certain impacts on productivity lacked quantitative substantiation or robustness. These reported data are generally in line with national statistics on agricultural productivity.

¹⁸² RDDP SVR 2022.

cooperatives to: obtain certification in schemes including Fairtrade and UTZ/Rainforest Alliance; introduce new coffee and tea brands; and finalize a tea mark of origin.¹⁸³ PASP and RDDP, respectively, supported maize and fodder seed certification. Finally, by increasing agricultural and livestock productivity (see above), projects reduced unit production costs and increased output volumes, leading to efficiency gains.

96. By introducing value-added activities, mainly in processing, and reducing the role of intermediaries, the country programme contributed to functional upgrading, although production and processing facilities were not always optimally utilized. PASP, for example, provided matching grants to private sector entrepreneurs and cooperatives for building warehouse facilities and enhancing their transport, storage and handling capacity. In PRICE, the grants were used for establishing production or processing facilities, including coffee washing stations, tea leaves collection hangars, silkworm rearing hangars. PASP and RDDP supported cooperatives with equipment and infrastructure, such as milk cooler tanks, milk cans, transport facilities, water tanks, cans, washing points, solar panels, and the construction of MCCs and MCPs, which brought collection and selling points closer to producers and their cooperatives. In PASP, MCCs paid producers 80 per cent above the average price offered by intermediaries.¹⁸⁴ PRICE supported primary coffee cooperatives to form a union responsible for direct sales of coffee on the international market. This significantly decreased income otherwise “lost” to intermediaries.¹⁸⁵ It should be noted that these production or processing facilities were not always used optimally. In the case of RDDP, for example, less than 60 per cent of dairy farmers reported that they were using the services of the MCCs or MCPs (mainly due to distance, but also operational issues of some MCCs/MCPs, such as non-functional cooling equipment), while under PRICE the utilization of coffee washing stations appeared to be more temporary.¹⁸⁶
97. To improve horizontal linkages at the same functional level, projects supported producer mobilization, aggregation and capacity-building of producer organizations, but their business orientation remained weak. PRICE supported 129 coffee cooperatives, six tea cooperatives, 29 sericulture cooperatives and 30 horticulture cooperatives; while PASP supported 277 cooperatives involved in various commodities. PRICE, furthermore, built the capacity of 115 coffee cooperatives through the Turnaround Programme (TAP), which focused on improving governance, financial management and operational support, also enhancing the operations and marketing activities of their coffee washing stations.¹⁸⁷ However, minimal evidence was found of projects effectively promoting market orientation and “farming as a business” among cooperative members and micro, small and medium-size enterprises.¹⁸⁸ For example, in the case of the joint ventures supported by PASP between cooperatives and private agribusiness companies, business plans were prepared by the private firm, the cooperatives and BDF, without providing any technical assistance to the cooperative members. Under PRICE the planned formulation of sustainable business models in the horticulture value chain did not materialize due to late recruitment of an international service provider.¹⁸⁹
98. **Vertical linkages among stakeholders at different functional levels generally remained rather weak.** Projects supported contracting agreements between farmers, processors and buyers, for example, through the establishment of PPPs and 4Ps, but faced challenges due to design weaknesses, implementation delays and

¹⁸³ PRICE PCR.V.

¹⁸⁴ IFAD (2019). IFAD's engagement in pro-poor value chain development.

¹⁸⁵ IFAD (2019). Corporate-level Evaluation on IFAD's Engagement in Pro-poor Value Chain Development: Rwanda case study.

¹⁸⁶ See RDDP IAR 2021 & SVR 2022 and PRICE IAR.

¹⁸⁷ PRICE PCR.V.

¹⁸⁸ See section below on impact on institutions.

¹⁸⁹ PRICE PCR.V.

capacity issues (see relevance section). While KWAMP, for example, did not manage to create effective market linkages, PRICE's experience depended on the supported value chain, being less effective in the tea, horticulture and silk value chains.¹⁹⁰ PASP, struggled to find private entrepreneurs in cereals willing to buy from producer organizations, while MCCs faced challenges ad selling all their milk to processors.¹⁹¹

Table 6

Experience of support provided by projects in terms of contracting agreements

PAPSTA	KWAMP	PRICE	PASP	RDDP
4 cooperatives acquired business contracts directly with WFP (drying and store facilities for maize, beans and rice)	No strategy for surplus marketing, no plan to facilitate sustained and transparent relations between farmers and processors and traders Some partnerships between rice mills and farmers cooperatives	11 horticulture outgrower schemes (4 000 farmers) linked to 11 exporters No success in establishing tea PPPs Cancellation of silk PPP (after withdrawal of sole buyer)	263 cooperatives established contracts with public or private entities 85% of the supported maize and beans value chain cooperatives signed contracts with buyers MCCs selling milk to large national food processing companies, hotels, guest houses, supermarkets and restaurants	MCCs struggled to sell all their milk to processors

Sources: Impact assessment surveys, PCRs, PPEs, PCRVs, RDDP MTR.

99. **The development of market infrastructure contributed to improving vertical linkages.** This included the construction and rehabilitation of feeder roads, storage and market facilities, drying facilities, veterinary laboratories, MCCs, MCPs, artificial insemination centres, bull stations, spray race construction, communal cowsheds, livestock market centres, animal shelters, rehabilitation of sheep stations and slaughter slabs. Management committees and users' associations were established to ensure appropriate maintenance of these infrastructures. Road access remained a recurrent challenge in terms of market access. KWAMP was the only project to support road construction, with 76km built or rehabilitated.¹⁹²
100. **Multi-stakeholder platforms were given limited attention by the country programme.** One exception is RDDP, which supported the engagement of District Dairy Platforms, but their capacity still needed to be strengthened to effectively perform their role and the effective representation and participation of target groups remained unclear.¹⁹³ This was a missed opportunity for the portfolio as, through effective representation of target groups, these platforms have proven in other countries to be effective in improving value chain governance, reducing power asymmetries, negotiating better prices and services for farmers, establishing more trust and transparency, and bolstering commitment among value chain stakeholders.¹⁹⁴ In addition, ICT solutions to enhance access to finance, promote informational flows and improve market access were not widely used in the country programme.
101. The country programme was insufficiently effective in fostering the financial inclusion of its target groups, with an overreliance on matching grants. Access to financial services was an important vehicle to strengthen poor rural people's productive capacities, increase benefits they received from market participation, and the resilience of their economic activities to climate change and other shocks. Matching grants were the main tool utilized by projects to promote financial inclusion. Projects provided one-off, non-reimbursable cash grants to individuals or cooperatives, on the condition they could contribute the other 30 to 50 per cent of the funds required

¹⁹⁰ KWAMP PPE, PRICE PCRV.

¹⁹¹ See IFAD (2019). Corporate-level Evaluation on IFAD's Engagement in Pro-poor Value Chain Development and RDDP MTR.

¹⁹² This was only 58 per cent of its appraisal target. PRICE was supposed to rehabilitate 200km of roads to improve access to coffee washing stations, but this did not materialize.

¹⁹³ RDDP SVR 2023.

¹⁹⁴ See IFAD (2023). Focus on Multi-Stakeholder Platforms: Lessons learned about their role in IFAD value chain projects.

to finance their business plans from their own resources or through commercial loans.¹⁹⁵ In addition to the 50 per cent cash contributions, most beneficiaries made in-kind contributions (equipment, labour, etc.). Women and youth received grants of 70 per cent and made their own contributions of 30 per cent.

102. The grants size varied for individuals and cooperatives. In the case of PASP, those who borrowed from banks to finance their own contributions could only access the total portion of the grant once they paid off the loans. This arrangement was complex and meant that funds could only be accessed in tranches. While this worked well for some recipients, it disadvantaged the small borrowers who would usually require funds covering total project costs to record some success. Under PRICE's Performance-Based Grant Facility farmers accessed loans for the total amount of their investment project and the grant was disbursed to beneficiary by partnering financial institutions once the full loan portion had been paid back. By tying the grant to the loan, investments were de-risked. The matching grants were managed by BDF, while partnering financial institutions were engaged for the loans. The BDF service delivery experienced delays due to beneficiaries facing challenges in meeting their matching contributions, but also delays in disbursements by BDF (often caused by confusion about requirements for subsequent instalments).¹⁹⁶ These matching grants were useful as they allowed the projects' target groups to access grants and loans and helped financial institutions to recognize opportunities within the agriculture sector, as opposed to viewing the sector as risky. However, these grants did not lead to effective linkages between the target groups and the formal financial sector for access to a full range of financial products and services, including credit, savings and insurance.¹⁹⁷ Project-specific experiences with matching grants are presented in Box 1 below.

Box 1

Experience of projects with matching grants

Under **KWAMP**, beneficiaries were assisted in preparing business plans, which they then presented to financial institutions. Some beneficiaries were able to obtain credit, but in the absence of guarantee mechanisms and risk mitigation instruments, the risky nature of farming deterred many financial institutions from providing finance to beneficiaries.¹⁹⁸ The project provided 28 matching grants for value chain development focusing on agribusinesses such as construction of input shops and collection points and value-addition activities such as storage, grading and processing.¹⁹⁹

PRICE introduced a performance-based grant facility, which leverages finances and raises equity investments from farmers through performance-based grants matched with loans. Out of the more than 3,000 applicants, 1,198 received a matching grant (in line with the project funding).^{200, 201} The open call forced small farmers who have never engaged with a savings and credit cooperative organization (SACCO) or other financial lender to compete with the larger farmers who are often more familiar with accessing capital. As a result, the grants were awarded mainly to better-off farmers.²⁰² Lower limits of US\$50,000 were set under the second grant facility to avoid elite capture.

PASP supported 395 business plans with matching grants, focusing on the provision of post-harvest infrastructure, machinery and transportation. Forty per cent of the grants supported maize and beans-related activities, 29 per cent Irish potatoes, 15 per cent dairy, 11 per cent horticulture and five per cent cassava.²⁰³

RDDP also provided 3,298 matching grants for production-related purposes (such as shed improvements and rainwater harvesting tanks) and the purchase of milk collection or

¹⁹⁵ Beneficiary contributions varied from 30 per cent to 50 per cent depending on the matching grant categories.

¹⁹⁶ See, for example, RDDP SVR 2022.

¹⁹⁷ See, for example, RDDP SVR 2022.

¹⁹⁸ KWAMP PPE #161.

¹⁹⁹ KWAMP PCR.

²⁰⁰ However, providing horticulture farmers, who did not receive the matching grant, with official documents validating their business idea by NAEB motivated a number of them to finance and implement their ideas (PRICE IAR 2019).

²⁰¹ PRICE IAR (2019).

²⁰² PRICE IAR (2019).

²⁰³ PASP PCR.

processing equipment.²⁰⁴ Originally, the project mainly used the matching grants for financing production and capacity building and did very little regarding processing and market access.²⁰⁵ This was rectified after the midterm review.

103. Besides providing matching grants, several projects also supported the provision of other financial services, but its scale was limited and results were mixed. Under PRICE, in terms of risk-mitigation services, BDF provided a guarantee to financial institutions to help beneficiaries access loans and meet their portion of the matching grant contribution, while the Development Bank of Rwanda (BRD) provided a specific guarantee to support horticulture export. Under the BDF guarantee, seven loans were disbursed (six to coffee cooperatives and one to a tomato cooperative).²⁰⁶ The Horticulture Export Guarantee Facility improved access to working capital for eight horticulture exporters and enabled them to increase their export volumes.²⁰⁷ The Tea Equity Participation scheme, planned by PRICE, proved to be ineffective and was replaced with a Revolving Fertilizer Scheme involving five tea cooperatives.²⁰⁸ PRICE also foresaw a coffee cooperatives bad debt fund and risk mitigating fund meant for micro-insurance development, but this was cancelled without alternative replacements. PAPSTA, KWAMP and RDDP also supported the uptake of animal health insurance, but adoption rates were low.²⁰⁹
104. **Available financial inclusion data from projects showed that outreach remained low and significantly below design targets.** In terms of persons accessing credit, PRICE only achieved 33 per cent of its appraisal target of 60,000 people. Of the people PASP supported in accessing credit, only 4 per cent were youth. With regards to people accessing saving services, PRICE only achieved 67 per cent of its appraisal target of 40,000 people. Again, of the people PASP supported in accessing saving services, only 7 per cent were youth. Furthermore, PASP only achieved 49 per cent of its target to train 40,000 people in financial literacy and/or use of financial products and services. RDDP was also off-track, only having reached 17 per cent of its target to support 23,000 persons in accessing financial services (savings, credit, insurance, remittances, etc.).²¹⁰

Second pathway of change - Promoting sustainable natural resources management

105. The country programme effectively contributed to improve NRM, but there were some cases of negative environmental impacts and missed opportunities to strengthen climate resilience (see detailed elaboration in section below on sustainability). PAPSTA and KWAMP promoted soil and water conservation practices. This included the construction of full and half terraces, the digging of anti-erosion ditches/cut off drains and soil bunding, the planting of living hedges (bocage) on the earth bunds with various fodder/agro-forestry tree species and grasses, the fixing of ravines with different earth and vegetative measures, excavating water retention basins, rehabilitation and protection of rural roads, and tree planting. As a result, under PAPSTA, 44,180ha of degraded land was hedged and protected against erosion (443 per cent of its target), 32,950,456 of agro-forestry trees were grown and transplanted (92 per cent of its target), 683ha layouts of progressive terraces were established (105 per cent of its target). KWAMP supported the protection against erosion of 652ha of land through land husbandry techniques (97 per cent of its target) and 18,556ha of watershed with trenches, tree and grass hedges planting material (104 per cent of its target), and planted 3.4 million of forestry and agroforestry trees (90 per cent of its target). These initiatives slowed down soil erosion.

²⁰⁴ RDDP SVR 2022.

²⁰⁵ See RDDP MTR.

²⁰⁶ There were no targets set.

²⁰⁷ PSAC has foreseen to continue supporting this facility.

²⁰⁸ Continued support for this scheme is foreseen under PSAC.

²⁰⁹ See RDDP SVR 2023.

²¹⁰ PRICE PCR, PASP PCR, RDDP SVR 2022.

106. To improve natural resource governance PAPSTA, KWAMP, RDDP and KIIWP1 supported the creation and strengthening of, respectively, 4, 18, 32 and 25 water users' associations.²¹¹ Moreover, PAPSTA and KWAMP supported the establishment of, respectively, 11 and 18 watershed management institutions (*Comité Local de Gestion et de Supervision* or CLGS), and the development of a watershed management plan for each of them. This resulted in more efficient water management, better erosion control and the integration between crop and livestock production.
107. Through a specific matching grants-window, PASP and RDDP supported water efficiency and the integration of renewable energy technologies into smallholder agriculture. The grants aimed at covering the incremental costs associated with investments in climate-resilient infrastructure and focused on facilitating the introduction of climate-smart post-harvest technologies and infrastructures. While PASP financed a total of 222 projects, RDDP supported 2,859 projects. The following investments were made: rainwater management and harvesting technologies; metallic/plastic silos; renewable solar energy systems; solar-powered cold room systems; and solar water heaters. These interventions allowed for more efficient water use, prevent erosion, but also reduced electricity costs.

Third pathway of change - Increasing food and nutrition security

108. **The country programme did not address the challenges of malnutrition adequately.** The 2013 and 2019 COSOPs highlighted the importance of addressing malnutrition in the country programme and identified several interventions. These included nutrition-sensitive agriculture, good practices in post-harvest handling, small livestock and dairy development, and social behavioural change communication. This focus and these activities have, however, not been included in a strategic manner in the project designs, resulting in few activities addressing the main cause of malnutrition in Rwanda, i.e. limited consumption of nutritionally diverse foods. Projects contributed to improving food and nutrition security by increasing food production (especially staple crops and vegetables), improving access to small livestock and milk, promoting improved processing and storage, and increasing income.²¹² However, the country programme did not make deliberate efforts to promote the consumption of nutritionally diverse foods. The actual impact of the country programme in terms of food and nutrition security is elaborated in the impact section below.

Achievements against COSOP objectives

109. The strategic objectives of the 2013 and 2019 COSOPs were very similar. The aim of the first strategic objective was to sustainably increase agricultural productivity, while that of the second objective was to improve post-harvest processes and strengthen market linkages. The 2013 COSOP also had a third strategic objective: to improve nutrition and economically include vulnerable groups.
110. As indicated in table 7 below, the country programme performance was satisfactory in terms of increasing agricultural productivity. All projects contributed to this. Data shows significant productivity increases for milk and various crops (such as rice, coffee, cassava, maize, sorghum, sweet and Irish potatoes, horticulture, beans and tea). Secondly, regarding the improvement of post-harvest processes and strengthening of market linkages, the country programme showed moderately satisfactory results, to which mainly PRICE, PASP and RDDP contributed. KWAMP was also supposed to support value chain development, but limited results were achieved. Projects promoted product and process upgrading and supported functional upgrading. Horizontal and vertical value chain linkages needed further strengthening. Finally, in terms of addressing malnutrition, the country programme performed unsatisfactory. There were very few activities purposely promoting the

²¹¹ PAPSTA PCR, KWAMP PCR, RDDP SVR 2022, KIIWP1 SVR 2022.

²¹² Agricultural and livestock production and productivity data are presented above.

consumption of nutritionally diverse foods. Projects aimed to foster the economic inclusion of vulnerable groups, but the lack of disaggregated data did not allow to adequately assess the extent to which this was achieved.

Table 7

Experience of support provided by projects in terms of contracting agreements

Strategic objectives	CSPE assessment	Contributing projects
<p>SO 1 (COSOP 2013–2018): Agricultural productivity sustainably increased through management of the natural resource base and investments in physical and social capital resulting in improved incomes and livelihoods.</p> <p>SO 1 (COSOP 2013–2018): To sustainably increase agricultural productivity in priority food and export value chains.</p>	<p>Satisfactory</p> <p>Increased productivity for coffee, tea, cassava, Irish potato, maize, rice cultivation and milk per dairy cow</p>	<p>PAPSTA, KWAMP, PRICE, PASP, RDDP & KIIWP1</p>
<p>SO 2 (COSOP 2013–2018): Climate-resilient export value chains, post-harvesting and agribusiness developed to increase market outlets, add value to agricultural produce and generate employment in rural areas.</p> <p>SO 2: (COSOP 2019–2024): To improve post-harvest processes and strengthen market linkages</p>	<p>Moderately satisfactory</p> <p>Increased value addition and reduced post-harvest losses</p> <p>Market/processing facilities constructed or rehabilitated, but issue of road access</p> <p>Weak market linkages and limited business orientation of cooperatives</p>	<p>PRICE, PASP, & RDDP</p>
<p>SO 3: (COSOP 2013–2018): Nutritional status of poor rural people improved and vulnerable groups included in economic transformation process.</p>	<p>Unsatisfactory</p> <p>Projects did not include activities purposely addressing the root cause of malnutrition in Rwanda</p> <p>Lack of disaggregated outreach data does not allow to assess the level of economic inclusion of vulnerable groups</p>	<p>PAPSTA, KWA MP, PRICE, PASP, RDDP & KIIWP1</p>

Source: Project documents and interviews.

Innovation

111. The 2013 and 2019 COSOPs identified specific opportunities and priorities for the promotion of innovations in the country programme, addressing key agricultural challenges. These included the use of renewable energy and ICTs; promotion of 4Ps, weather insurance systems and more efficient NRM; and creating programme and institutional synergies regarding malnutrition reduction and social inclusion. Partnerships and IFAD-supported grants were instrumental in this regard. Various technological, financial, social and institutional innovations were introduced, which were new to the farmers, relevant to the specific context and addressed certain challenges they faced.
112. **Technological innovations.** In terms of technological innovations, PAPSTA and KWAMP promoted system of rice intensification and biogas technology. KWAMP and RDDP introduced improved animal breeds (dairy cows, pigs and goats). Furthermore, PASP supported drying facilities for the reduction of post-harvest losses and introduced a unique design of post-harvest infrastructures to include: green or climate-smart technologies and equipment; ventilation; water harvesting; the use of high-quality materials; and supported climate information services.²¹³ These technological innovations contributed to increased agricultural productivity, reduced post-harvest losses and more resilient infrastructure. There were however some issues regarding the adoption of some of these technologies (as mentioned above).

²¹³ PASP PCRv notes that it is not clear to what extent these design elements to include green or climate-smart technologies truly constituted innovations, as the design features merely received limited consideration previous to PASP. The sustainability of the climate information services also remained unclear.

Cooking with biogas instead of fuelwood or coal reduced the time spent collecting fuelwood and the amount of smoke and health-damaging particles. The foreseen scaling up of the use of biogas technologies (e.g. in RDDP and PRISM) did not materialize due to limited financial and technical viability.

113. **Financial innovations.** The country programme also introduced a number of financial innovations. PRICE, for example, introduced the Performance-Based Grant Facility to leverage finances and raise equity investments from farmers through performance-based grants matched with loans. They also supported setting up guarantee funds managed by BRD and BDF, allowing smallholders to obtain matching grants and, at the same time, borrow from commercial banks. Additionally, PRICE introduced a revolving fertilizer scheme²¹⁴ for tea cooperatives. It was innovative in combining product and funding (instead of being product, funding or delivery oriented), but there was no evidence that it was scaled-up beyond the project. PAPSTA, KWAMP, RDDP and PRISM promoted the uptake of animal health insurance, but adoption rates remained low.²¹⁵ RDDP and PRISM supported a number of microfinance institutions and savings and credit cooperative organizations to develop new products, such as asset and lease financing. They also introduced a credit assessment tool to assist financial institutions to properly assess agriculture loans. While these innovations contributed to increasing the financial inclusion of target groups, their outreach remained low. There was, however, room for scaling up these practices.
114. **Social innovations.** PAPSTA and KWAMP introduced several social innovations: CLGSs, CCIs and community competitions. The CLGS was responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of watershed management plans. Its multi-stakeholder nature ensured the participation of a multitude of local stakeholders in watershed and allowed for strengthening local decision-making.²¹⁶ Furthermore, CCIs were supported, which served as platforms for information, coordination and delivery of services to farmers and training centres for participatory planning.²¹⁷ PAPSTA and KWAMP piloted community competitions²¹⁸ or “Inteko y’Imihigo” aimed at supporting natural resources management. A competition was then organized to select the natural resources management plan that best met the community’s collective interests, with the winning community benefiting from a grant to implement their plan.²¹⁹
115. Two other social innovations aimed to bring about behaviour change at household and community levels. First, GALS was mainstreamed in the country programme, which is a community-led household methodology that aims to give women and men more control over their personal, household, community and organizational development.²²⁰ Secondly, with support from HI, RDDP and PRISM introduced the VBHCD-model, a multi-pronged approach, which places community groups at the heart of their poverty-alleviating development efforts. It is supported by HI’s 12 Cornerstones²²¹ and comprises a set of trainings, discussions and reflections that inspire behavioural change among people and create a conducive environment for personal growth. Besides some anecdotal evidence, there was no proof that this had effectively led to behavioural or social change.

²¹⁴ This will be scaled up under PSAC.

²¹⁵ See for example RDDP SVR 2023.

²¹⁶ In 2015, the CLGS were changed into District and Sector hydrographic basin committees as per the law. KIIWP 1&2 foresee the creation of 10 hydrographic basin committees.

²¹⁷ Six CCIs were constructed under PAPSTA and three under KWAMP. This innovation was discontinued in subsequent IFAD-supported projects.

²¹⁸ See <https://www.ifad.org/es/web/latest/-/story/supporting-natural-resources-management-through-community-innovation-centres>.

²¹⁹ Six community competitions were organized by PAPSTA and 12 by KWAMP. KIIWP2 also manages the organization of these competitions.

²²⁰ GALS was included in the design of KWAMP, PRICE, PASP, RDDP, PRISM, KIIWP1&2 and PSAC.

²²¹ See <https://www.heifer.org/our-work/our-model/community-mobilization/cornerstones.html>

116. **Institutional innovations.** Several institutional innovations were introduced in the country programme. It included the 4Ps-approach promoted under PASP and RDDP, although linkages with the private sector in general remained weak (as mentioned above). Another innovation were the irrigation management transfer agreements between the district, RAB, water users' associations (WUA) and cooperatives active in irrigation perimeters under KWAMP, which have been used in other schemes. Moreover, the project's interventions in terms of hillside irrigation scheme development and organization brought change to farming system structures and functions by introducing new ways of farming.²²² KWAMP supported the development of hillside irrigation schemes, which entailed the construction of mini dam ponds or cisterns for water storage. This was coupled with the strengthening of WUAs by training them and signing irrigation management agreements with them. Irrigation schemes showed results in addressing challenges of productivity, NRM and climate change adaptation. The WUAs showed effectiveness in terms of higher social capital and applied regulations. Combining significant improvements in productivity and internal organization allowed for a significant and reliable increase of productivity and income and ensured maintenance of the investments. The entire process was backed up by a CLGS, which was linked to district authorities.
117. **Overall effectiveness.** Overall, projects reached or exceeded their outreach appraisal targets, although the involvement of youth remained low and below targets. Several projects faced issues in collecting sex-, age- and poverty-disaggregated data. The country programme performed well in terms of increasing agricultural productivity. Mixed results were found in improvement of post-harvest processes and strengthening of market linkages, while the country did not address malnutrition adequately. The CSPE rates effectiveness as **moderately satisfactory** (4).
118. **Overall innovations.** Various technological, financial, social and institutional innovations were introduced in the country programme, which addressed key agricultural challenges. While they contributed to enhancing productivity and, in some cases, also to structural change, there were sometimes issues in outreach, adoption and evidence. The CSPE rates innovations as **satisfactory** (5).

D. Efficiency

Operational efficiency

119. **The SPIU-model allowed for efficiency gains but faced some challenges in staffing.** IFAD-supported projects used to be managed by separate project coordination units. In line with government policies, in 2012, an SPIU was established at MINAGRI for all IFAD-finance projects. The SPIU was responsible for the overall coordination of the country programme, M&E, knowledge management, gender issues and fiduciary aspects, including procurement. The model allowed for efficiency gains, especially in terms of coordination, reduction of transaction costs and retention of staff.²²³ It has also facilitated cross-project knowledge-sharing and performance-monitoring. The country programme's M&E was, furthermore, harmonized with MINAGRI's Management Information System (MIS). The results-based contracts used for national and local staff contributed to installing a results-oriented culture (e.g. by including project-related targets in contracts). Nevertheless, the SPIU faced some staffing challenges which negatively impacted project implementation. These included: staff turnover; prolonged vacancies; difficulties in attracting competent candidates due to limited competitiveness of

²²² KWAMP's experience with hillside irrigation scheme development and organization was categorized as a transformative innovation in IFAD (2020). Corporate-level evaluation on IFAD's support to innovations for inclusive and sustainable smallholder agriculture.

²²³ PAPSTA and KWAMP were awarded by IFAD for the good performance of the SPIU.

salaries; overburdened staff; limited or inadequate capacity; and staffing gaps at field-level.²²⁴

120. **Project management costs varied across projects, but increased at completion.**²²⁵ The country programme showed a variety of project management costs at design: ²²⁶ PAPSTA and KIIWP1 had relatively high operational costs (16 and 14 per cent of total project costs, respectively); those of KWAMP, PRICE, PASP and RDDP ranged between 7 and 9 per cent; while PRISM, KIIWP2 and PSAC had more modest project management costs (between 6 and 7 per cent). These costs had increased at completion. While this was only a slight increase for PAPSTA and PRICE (from 12.3 to 13 per cent and from 9.4 to 10.1 per cent, respectively), project management costs of KWAMP and PASP increased substantially (from 4.9 per cent²²⁷ to 8.14 per cent and from 4.7 per cent to 13 per cent, respectively). These increases were mainly due to staff salary increases, inflation and project extensions due to delays in implementation.
121. Service providers offered timely and complementary support, although there were some challenges in terms of coordination and capacity. International and national service providers were called upon to fill some of the capacity gaps at SPIU and at the district level and provide specialized support. For example, HI supported the integration of the dairy hub model in RDDP, PRISM and PSAC, while Cordaid was engaged to support rural finance interventions in PRISM and PSAC. Working with local service providers, such as BDF, RCA, RYAF and Rwanda Meteorology Agency, resulted in building the ownership of local actors. Many service providers collaborated in different IFAD-supported projects, allowing for the capturing and transmission of institutional memory and experience. The use of performance-based contracts helped to ensure the timeliness and quality of services provided. Nevertheless, there were some issues related to the engagement of service providers. These included: weak coordination among different service providers leading to duplication of efforts; weak capacities of certain service providers; delays in signing contract with service providers; and a lack of analytical reporting.
122. **The relationship between planned (annual workplan and budget) and actual (implementation) activities varied among projects.** For example, RDDP and PRISM's implementation was generally on target, while other projects encountered obstacles, such as a delay in receiving no objection from IFAD (e.g. KWAMP) or lagging behind in implementing planned activities (e.g. RDDP, PRICE and PASP).

Financial efficiency

123. **The start-up of projects slowed down and more extensions were needed.** Both the time lags between approval and effectiveness and those between effectiveness and first disbursement increased when comparing the two COSOP periods.²²⁸ For projects implemented during the 2013 COSOP, it took 2.5 months from approval to effectiveness and one month from effectiveness to first disbursement.²²⁹ This increased to 10.7 and 4.7 months respectively for those projects implemented during the 2019 COSOP.²³⁰ These delays were mainly due to the need to clarify conceptual and coordination issues, delays in staff recruitment

²²⁴ For example, of turnover of SPIU coordinators and project managers; capacity issues in terms of value chain development, climate and gender; field staff gaps in PRISM.

²²⁵ See annex VIII.

²²⁶ IFAD uses 10 per cent as a benchmark for the proportion of project management cost against total project.

²²⁷ The low percentage at appraisal was mainly obtained by having the PAPSTA PCU serving also as PCU for KWAMP (KWAMP PPE #83).

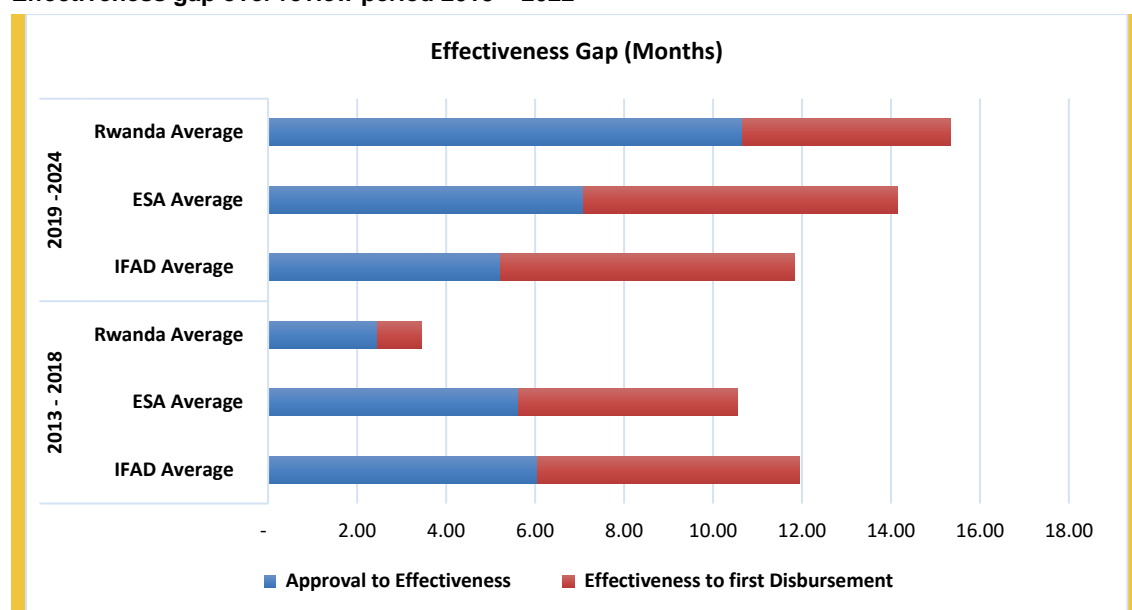
²²⁸ PAPSTA and KWAMP from an earlier COSOP than the two COSOPs considered took six and seven months from approval to effectiveness, and from effectiveness to first disbursement, two and one months, respectively.

²²⁹ This was significantly below the ESA averages of 5.6 and 4.9 months, respectively.

²³⁰ While the time lag between approval to effectiveness was above the ESA average of 7.1 months, the time lag between effectiveness to first disbursement was below the ESA average of 7.1 months.

and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.²³¹ PRISM experienced the slowest start-up, with a delay of 18 months.

Figure 1
Effectiveness gap over review period 2013 – 2022



Source: IFAD's Operational Results Management System (ORMS).

124. While PAPSTA and KWAMP managed to respect their original implementation timelines, all other projects needed an extension.²³² PRICE and PASP were extended twice, for a total of 2 years and 18 months, respectively. The justifications for these extensions included: implementation delays, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the arrival of additional funds to cover financing gaps.
125. **Disbursement rates of total project budgets were satisfactory.** Top performers were PAPSTA, KWAMP and PRICE, with disbursement rates at completion of 100 per cent, 99 per cent and 93 per cent, respectively.²³³ PASP, on the other hand, had a disbursement rate of only 57 per cent at completion, which was especially due to underperformance during its second component. While disbursement performance of ongoing projects by December 2022 was satisfactory in the case of RDDP, KIIWP1&2 (with disbursement rates of 86 per cent, 88 per cent and 18 per cent, respectively), it was moderately unsatisfactory for PRISM (with a disbursement rate of 15 per cent).²³⁴ Disbursements were usually slow during the first two to three years of implementation. While staff retention within the SPIU and the phasing of projects²³⁵ positively impacted disbursement performance, common disbursement challenges included implementation delays (also caused by a reduction in cofinancing), disbursement caps introduced by IFAD and delays in disbursement processing by IFAD and BDF.²³⁶

²³¹ PRISM SVR 2022 and CSPE key informant interviews.

²³² See annex VIII.

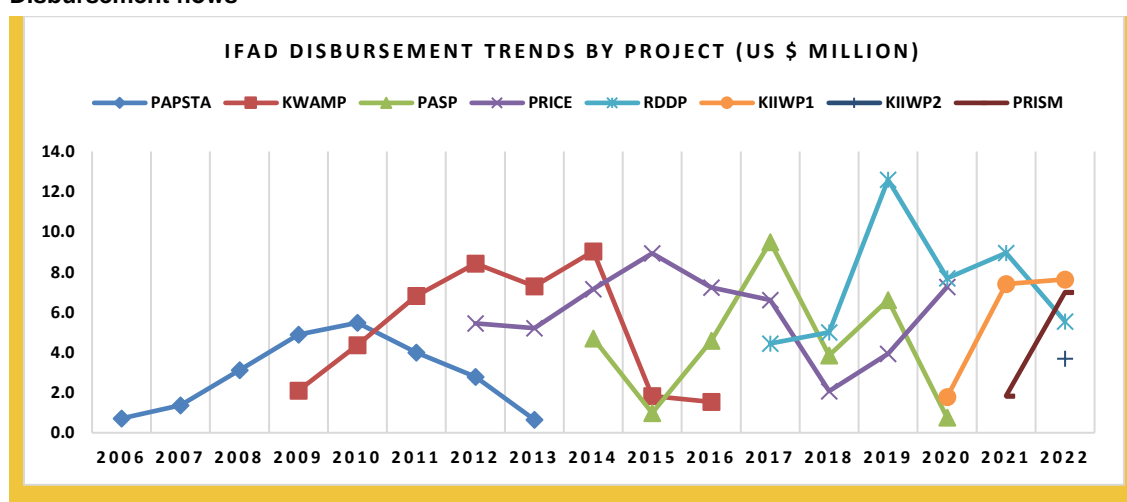
²³³ This despite challenges faced by the projects, such as the withdrawal of co-financiers.

²³⁴ See RDDP SVR 2022, KIIWP1 SVR 2022, KIIWP2 SVR 2023 and PRISM SVR 2022. The unsatisfactory disbursement performance of PRISM was partly impacted by IFAD's decision not to entirely disburse the advance to the designated authority as per withdrawal application submitted by the project.

²³⁵ For example, in the case of KIIWP1 and 2.

²³⁶ See, for example, PASP SVR 2016 and PRISM SVR 2022. Delays in disbursement processing were commonly experienced by beneficiaries of matching grants, who received BDF funding late (RDDP SVR 2020).

Figure 2
Disbursement flows



Source: IFAD's Oracle Business Intelligence (OBI).

Economic efficiency

126. The cost per beneficiary decreased from design to completion as a result of an increasing number of beneficiaries, but some were not comprehensively assisted.²³⁷ For the completed projects, the average cost per beneficiary was US\$1,373 per household and US\$338 per individual at design; and US\$680 per household and US\$153 per individual at completion. PAPSTA and PASP displayed the most substantial improvements in cost efficiency given the increased number of beneficiaries. However, it should be noted that in the case of PASP, 46 per cent of beneficiaries were not comprehensively assisted by the project (they only received hermetic bags). Discounting these marginal beneficiaries and adding the unspent amount of value chain financing, the cost per beneficiary would be much closer to its appraisal value. PRICE exhibited the lowest cost per beneficiary for individuals at completion, while both RDDP and KIIWP1 had a low cost per beneficiary at design compared to the other projects.
127. **The ex-post economic and financial analyses (EFA) were favourable for the four closed projects.** Their economic internal rates of return were positive, ranging from 15 per cent to 43 per cent. The ex-post rates were generally higher than those at appraisal: between 34 per cent and 38 per cent ex-post against 26 per cent ex-ante for PAPSTA; between 31 per cent and 38 per cent ex-post against 17 per cent ex-ante for KWAMP; and 43 per cent ex-post against 15.7 per cent ex-ante for PASP. These increases were mainly due to an increase in the number of beneficiaries and in agricultural and livestock productivity. For PRICE, economic internal rates of return were slightly lower: 15 per cent ex-post against 17.2 per cent ex-ante. Similarly, the economic net present values (ENPV) of the closed projects were positive. When comparing ex-post and ex-ante ENPVs, PASP showed a significant increase (US\$126.9 million against US\$8.3 million), while PRICE's ENPV was markedly lower (US\$2 million against US\$18.6 million). Nevertheless, it should be noted that the quality of PAPSTA's ex-post economic and financial analysis was unsatisfactory. Moreover, while PASP's ex-post EFA was favourable, its economic efficiency was limited due to the large number of marginal beneficiaries and the unspent amount of value chain financing. Finally, not all of KWAMP's investments yielded the desired results. For example, the decision to construct four big dams instead of several smaller ones to increase the command area led to a lack of sufficient runoff water needed to fill the dams to service the increased command area. The drier-than-usual season for a couple of years exacerbated the situation. As a result, since the

²³⁷ See annex VIII.

completion of the Mahama dam in 2013, the dam has not received sufficient runoff for irrigation, thereby reducing some of the intended effects.

128. **Overall efficiency.** The SPIU-model allowed for efficiency gains through improved coordination, reduction of transaction costs and staff retention. Disbursement rates were satisfactory, project start-ups happened in a timely manner and ex-post economic and financial analyses were positive. On the other hand, the SPIU experienced some staffing issues, PRISM experienced an 18-month start-up delay, there were some capacity and coordination issues with service providers and a number of projects had to be extended. The CSPE rates efficiency as **moderately satisfactory** (4).

E. Rural poverty impact

129. Assessing the rural poverty impact of the country programme in terms of actual contribution was hampered by variations in data quality and the design of the impact assessments. For example, only PASP and PRICE included a comparison group in their impact assessments, while PAPSTA and KWAMP relied on before-after comparisons. In addition, providing a comprehensive assessment of impact from an equity perspective was hampered by a lack of adequate disaggregation of data for the different social groups, e.g. women, youth, landless. In the case of PASP, impacts on assets, productivity, food access and nutritional status lacked quantitative substantiation or robustness. The CSPE incorporated and triangulated evidence from various sources, including project M&E data, PCRs, impact assessments (including one of PRICE by IFAD's Research and Impact Assessment Division - RIA), IOE products (e.g. PPEs), and qualitative field observations gathered during the CSPE field mission.²³⁸

Income and assets

130. **There are indications for improvements in household incomes and assets.**²³⁹ Project interventions that contributed to increasing incomes include improved production and productivity, reduction in post-harvest losses, group selling, price mechanisms, diversification to higher value crops, new sources of income, functional upgrading, increased demand for paid labour (e.g. in soil and water conservation interventions, infrastructure works, jobs at processing plants or for farmers with additional cultivated land). It should be noted that disaggregated employment data was not available, making it impossible to know if poorer households and other target groups had easier access to these jobs.²⁴⁰ More specifically, PRICE reported a several-fold increase in average incomes of beneficiary households, as well as higher income gains for beneficiary than for "non-PRICE" households across all value chains, except for tea.²⁴¹ In the case of PASP, an average increase in annual net income of 26.1 per cent per beneficiary household was witnessed, against an average of 17.5 per cent per household achieved by "non-PASP" households.²⁴²
131. Other proxy indicators for increased income reported by beneficiaries include purchase of both productive (livestock, land, transport) and non-productive assets (TVs, radios, beds, mobile phones, chairs, bikes), ability to pay for school needs for their children and contributions to health and life insurance. With increased incomes,

²³⁸ See annex VIII.

²³⁹ CSPE focus groups discussions.

²⁴⁰ For example, in coffee washing stations and tea leaf collection centres (see PRICE final outcome survey). However, the absence of precise recruitment criteria and relevant monitoring meant that it was not possible to know whether members of poorer families had easier access to these jobs (IFAD [2019]. Corporate-level Evaluation on IFAD's Engagement in Pro-poor Value Chain Development).

²⁴¹ Average income increases were 3.6-fold for coffee production; 4.2-fold for tea production; and 3.1-fold for sericulture. A possible reason for the lower average income levels in PRICE households to be low levels of productivity of tea in the relatively new cooperatives established under the project, as compared to the better-established tea zones of Nyabihu and Mulindi in the 'non-project' household group (PRICE final outcome survey). It is important to note that protection measures were missing for very small landholders until coffee trees and tea bushes come into production. This was already noted in the 2012 CSPE.

²⁴² PASP final impact assessment study.

KWAMP beneficiaries, for example, made improvements to their houses and acquired means of transport. Furthermore, cattle possession also substantially increased and KWAMP's support to land registration contributed to improved land ownership and security.²⁴³ Under PRICE, moderately increased levels of house ownership and house improvements were recorded in beneficiary households, while PASP also recorded enhanced household assets, including communication equipment, household items and transportation.²⁴⁴

132. According to the project impact assessment reports (which did not present robust evidence), PAPSTA witnessed a reduction of the poorest households from 52 per cent to 17 per cent, while medium households went up from 46 to 77 per cent, KWAMP experienced an improvement in wealth categories, with a reduction in the category of "poor" and improvement in the categories of "middle" and "rich" and PRICE reported an increase by 48 per cent in the beneficiary households' welfare index.²⁴⁵ However, for the horticulture farmers supported by PRICE, as pointed out by RIA's impact assessment, there was no significant impact on poverty reduction given that most of them were already above the international poverty line thresholds.²⁴⁶ CSPE focus group discussions indicated that these improvements in household incomes and assets were largely sustained beyond the life of the projects.
133. There were, however, differentiated impacts on income according to the value chains and the maturity levels of the supported producers' groups. For PRICE, for example, RIA's impact assessment showed that there was no significant impact on income for the first group of coffee cooperatives (TAP1) benefiting from a comprehensive capacity-building programme (Turnaround Programme or TAP). These cooperatives were weaker from the onset, older and located farther from Kigali than the second group of coffee cooperatives (TAP2) and might have needed more support to ensure a sustainable income increase. While the TAP2 farmers experienced increases in their crop and coffee income, there was no significant impact on their total income (most likely due to increases in input and marketing costs - especially hired labour). Increases in input and marketing costs appear to prevent these household-level gains from transferring to net income.²⁴⁷ Profitability was also a serious challenge in the sericulture value chain supported by PRICE, especially after the withdrawal of the sole buyer.²⁴⁸ Under PASP, the largest income gains came from Irish potato (50.5 per cent) and horticulture (40.5 per cent), followed by maize and beans (34.8 per cent), milk (21.7 per cent) and cassava (16.5 per cent).²⁴⁹

Human and social capital empowerment

134. Despite the significant investments in training and capacity-building, evidence of the extent to which this contributed to behaviour changes was limited. Several types of skills and capabilities of small-scale agricultural producers to successfully manage farming enterprises were strengthened, including technical agricultural skills, functional and social skills, and managerial and business skills. This included training on forage preparation, livestock husbandry, good agricultural practices, SRI, soil and water conservation, post-harvest handling processes, financial literacy, etc. Community-based organizations and common interest groups, such as CLGS, WUAs and cooperatives, also received trainings, for example, on leadership, good governance and conflict management. Skills providers included extension staff, lead farmers involved in farmer field schools and community advisers (such as the local volunteer extension workers or *personne ressource/relais villageois* supported by PAPSTA and KWAMP).

²⁴³ KWAMP final impact assessment survey.

²⁴⁴ Household assets with the largest incremental increase in ownership under PASP were mobile phones (38.7 per cent), chairs (16.1 per cent), bikes (14.9 per cent) and radios (12 per cent) (PASP final impact assessment study).

²⁴⁵ PAPSTA impact assessment report, KWAMP final impact assessment survey and PRICE final outcome survey.

²⁴⁶ PRICE IAR.

²⁴⁷ PRICE IAR.

²⁴⁸ PRICE PCR and focus group discussions (e.g. Cobamu Sericulture Group in Bugasera District).

²⁴⁹ PASP impact assessment report.

135. Nevertheless, the extent to which these investments in human capital also translated into actual changes in behaviour was difficult to assess due to the lack of monitoring of adoption rates by the IFAD-supported projects. Although agricultural productivity rates increased, there were indications that the effects of trainings in some cases wore off quickly, e.g. for coffee and SRI, while limited access to extension services also posed a challenge, e.g. to veterinary services (see above). A lack of disaggregated data, that would have allowed checking the participation of young, remote, poor, vulnerable or female farmers, furthermore, hampered the assessment. Despite the significant investments in training and capacity-building, the supported cooperatives remained, in general, weak, especially in terms of leadership, income generation, governance (including profit-sharing) and record keeping. Trainings were often only one-off sessions, not always tailored to their needs or limited to the original executive committee members (leading to capacity issues in case of turnover).²⁵⁰
136. **Intragroup relations were strengthened, while inter- and extra-group relations remained rather weak.** Social capital was strengthened mainly through support to community-based organizations and common interest groups, such as CLGS, cooperatives, FFS, infrastructure management committees and WUA. Through intragroup relationships, farmers gained self-confidence and knowledge to analyse their own problems, make informed decisions, and act collectively around a common objective and with a shared identity. The continued mobilization of cash and in-kind contributions from the members of farmers' organizations and WUAs supported by KWAMP was a sign of collective identity and willingness to support common goals. Community cohesion was strengthened through the use of participatory approaches (FFS, GALS, VBHCD, participatory watershed management, community competitions, etc.) and home-grown solutions, such as Ubudehe and Umuganda.²⁵¹
137. On the other hand, intergroup (bridging between small-producer groups to form apex organizations) and extra-group relations (linking between producers' groups, apex organizations, public and private business and service providers, as well as policymakers) remained weak. Under PAPSTA, strong farmers' apex organizations did not emerge; while in the case of KWAMP, relations between farmers, processors and traders were incipient; and in PRICE, value chain governance through federations remained fragile and with mixed levels of support provided.²⁵² The capacity of District Dairy Platforms supported by RDDP lacked the capacity to effectively perform their role.²⁵³

Food security and nutrition

138. **The country programme contributed to improving food security, mainly through increasing food availability and access.** Food availability was improved through increased production and productivity (especially of staple and horticultural crops), the reduction of post-harvest losses, and also the introduction of livestock.²⁵⁴ Regarding the latter, the contribution of PAPSTA, KWAMP and RDDP to the Girinka programme, which gave one cow per poor family and included a pass-on component, stimulated milk consumption. PAPSTA reported that Girinka beneficiaries consumed 75 per cent of their milk production.²⁵⁵ Moreover, the distribution of small livestock by PAPSTA, KWAMP and PRISM also contributed to improving food availability, while PAPSTA also supported landless households to set up home gardens. Increased

²⁵⁰ See PAPSTA PCR, PAPSTA PCRV #116, PRICE PCRV #18, PASP PCRV #22 & RDDP SVR 2023. It was also confirmed by several of the cooperatives met during the field visits and already highlighted in the 2012 CSPE.

²⁵¹ The Ubudehe ranking ensures the participation of vulnerable households in project activities, not only as beneficiaries, but also providing them with short-term employment opportunities (e.g. in public works). In addition, the practice of Umuganda (a community-based work approach used to support neighbours on tasks such as building a house or tending to crops, followed by a communal meal) has been widely utilized in the context of the IFAD-funded projects for the O&M of various community infrastructure projects.

²⁵² PAPSTA PPE #111, KWAMP PPE #160 and PRICE PCRV #18.

²⁵³ RDDP SVR 2023.

²⁵⁴ See also section above on effectiveness and the impact pathways.

²⁵⁵ PAPSTA PCRV #104.

household incomes furthermore improved access to food and, therefore, food security.²⁵⁶

139. As a result of increased food production and income, for example, under KWAMP 78 per cent of the households reported that their eating habits had changed for the better, although its impact assessment did not produce robust evidence. The households with one meal or less per day decreased from 7 per cent to 2 per cent, and those with one meal or more grew from 28 per cent to 33 per cent, while households with higher meal frequencies per day remained unchanged.²⁵⁷ In the case of PASP, the number of households consuming only one meal a day decreased from 37.3 per cent at baseline to 21.1 per cent at completion; the percentage of beneficiary households consuming at least two or three meals a day increased by 12.7 per cent and 3.2 per cent, respectively.²⁵⁸ Exceptions, however, were found in the case of PRICE, where RIA's impact assessment showed that food security among coffee farmers remained fragile due to their overall dependency on their crop income and low income diversification. Furthermore, there was no significant impact found in terms of improved food security for horticulture farmers. This could be explained by the fact that the project worked with wealthier, already food secure, horticulture farmers.²⁵⁹
140. **The country programme's impact on addressing malnutrition was limited.** Despite nutrition being a priority for the country programme, no deliberate efforts were taken to address the main cause of malnutrition in Rwanda and promote the consumption of nutritionally diverse foods.²⁶⁰ Moreover, projects did not track their performance in this regard with specific outcome indicators.²⁶¹ In the case of PRICE, interventions did not have a significant impact on improving dietary diversity; while, under PASP, the nutritional status of children reportedly improved, with stunting rates declining by 2.8 per cent. Nevertheless, the reliability of PASP's impact was questionable, due to methodological constraints.²⁶² Incidences of stunting remained high across the country.²⁶³ Two newer projects, PRISM and KIIWP2, have been categorized by IFAD as nutrition-sensitive projects, integrating specific interventions (such as nutrition education) and tracking dedicated indicators.

Institutions and policies

141. The institutional environment was enriched by the country programme, especially in terms of natural resource governance and market access. PAPSTA and KWAMP supported organizations and institutional arrangements that regulate access to and help manage natural resources for small farmers. More specifically, both projects strengthened CLGSs and WUAs, while KWAMP also supported land registration.²⁶⁴ This allowed to enhance access to and management of natural resources for smallholder farmers by providing incentives for small producers to manage natural resources in a sustainable way, while creating benefits for the rural communities. The country programme also supported a vast array of producer-organization initiatives, which enabled small producers to increase their access to markets and to productive assets, while reducing transaction costs. By acting collectively through their organizations small producers were able to access seeds and fertilizers. All projects provided capacity development support to cooperatives and worked with

²⁵⁶ See PAPSTA PCR/V #105 and section above on impact on income.

²⁵⁷ KWAMP PPE #98.

²⁵⁸ PASP PCR/V #16.

²⁵⁹ PRICE PCR/V #17 and PRICE IAR.

²⁶⁰ This was also noted in IFAD (2019). Rwanda – COSOP Completion Review.

²⁶¹ Such as "women reporting minimum dietary diversity" or "households with improved knowledge, attitudes and practices."

²⁶² PRICE IAR and PASP PCR/V #16.

²⁶³ See section on country context.

²⁶⁴ See related numbers in part on effectiveness.

service providers like RCA and RYAF, that, however, faced capacity challenges.²⁶⁵ Support was often not tailored to their needs, so cooperatives continued to face capacity gaps, especially in terms of governance and management capabilities.²⁶⁶ While the PPPs and 4Ps, supported by PRICE and PASP, facilitated access to markets for smallholder producers, these vertical linkages remained, in general, weak.²⁶⁷ Finally, FFS organized by all IFAD-supported projects, and CCIs, supported PAPSTA and KWAMP to help small-scale producers build their skills to access and use appropriate information and knowledge to innovate and adapt to changing markets.

142. **With the exception of KWAMP, limited attention was given by the country programme to developing local government capacity.** To strengthen decentralized government structures and institutionalize the project's activities, KWAMP worked closely with district staff to build up their individual and corporate capacities. While district authorities played an important role in the projects' exit strategies, concerns remained regarding the human and financial capacity of district administrations to ensure post-project follow-up.²⁶⁸
143. While projects supported and informed nationally owned policy processes, limited efforts were made by the country programme to help small producers voice their concerns and interests in policy-making processes.²⁶⁹ For example, PAPSTA contributed to shaping the agricultural sector in Rwanda through its support to PSTA I, II and III; PASP managed to put post-harvest investments higher on the policy agenda.²⁷⁰ Nevertheless, a number of priority areas for policy engagement did not get enough or any attention; and umbrella organizations and multi-stakeholder platforms, which would have allowed to strengthen the political capital of smallholders, remained weak.²⁷¹
144. **Overall rural poverty impact.** Variations in data quality and the design of the impact assessments hampered the assessment of the country programme's impact on rural poverty. Household incomes and assets improved and were largely sustained beyond the life of the projects. There were, however, differentiated impacts on income according to the value chains and the maturity levels of the supported producers' groups. The country programme strengthened the skills and capacities of agricultural producers, but gaps remained, for example, in terms of the maturity levels of the supported cooperatives and weak apex organizations. While the country programme contributed to improving food security, mainly through increasing food availability and access, its impact on addressing malnutrition was limited. Although the institutional environment was enriched, limited attention was given by the country programme to developing local government capacity. The CSPE rates rural poverty impact as **moderately satisfactory** (4).

F. Gender equality and women's empowerment

145. **While GEWE was an important dimension of the country programme, strategies were often not solid or developed late.** Gender considerations were not fully mainstreamed in the 2013 COSOP, which only targeted women under its third strategic objective and focused mainly on their economic empowerment. On the other hand, the 2019 COSOP and all IFAD-funded projects did include specific support for GEWE. However, very few of the project design documents were explicit about what analysis underlay the interventions, what the most important gender

²⁶⁵ For example, RCA was very limited in terms of human and financial capacities (e.g. only three staff for the Eastern Province; three in the West and two in the North; key informant interview by mission with RCA). Furthermore, the Cooperative Support Officers employed by PASP through the Rwanda Youth in Agribusiness Forum lacked sufficient experience and in-depth knowledge (PASP PCRVR #2). See section on relevance and related numbers in part on effectiveness.

²⁶⁶ See also section above on impact on social capital.

²⁶⁷ See section on effectiveness.

²⁶⁸ See e.g. PAPSTA PPE #133-4 and CSPE key informant interviews.

²⁶⁹ See also section above on policy engagement.

²⁷⁰ PAPSTA PPE #110 and PASP PCRVR #19.

²⁷¹ See section above on social capital.

constraints were, and what strategies were chosen to identify these. The needs of different groups of women that were more likely to be left behind, such as very poor women, landless women, single women, female-headed households, young women and women with disabilities, were not clearly identified. For example, in the case of PASP, a gender analysis of the dairy and commodity value chains was not undertaken, while RDDP's gender baseline study was only finalized after mid-term.²⁷²

146. Given the limited analysis undertaken, project gender strategies were often not solid or developed late.²⁷³ Therefore, outreach to women was the result of self-targeting or other factors, rather than deliberate targeting strategies. Projects also faced challenges in terms of human and financial resources to support GEWE. While the SPIU did have a gender specialist, who was supposed to support all projects, this was not sufficient and, as a result, hampered some of the projects' efforts.²⁷⁴ In KWAMP, a gender focal point was appointed only after five years. PRICE and PRISM did not have a dedicated gender specialist at project-level.²⁷⁵ Projects, like PRICE and PASP, did not have sufficient resources to address issues related to GEWE.²⁷⁶ A lack of guidance and support from IFAD was also reported, for example, in terms of GALS rollout.²⁷⁷ Finally, there were only a few female staff at the SPIU and among field staff, including those of service providers.²⁷⁸
147. In general, except for overall outreach, sex-disaggregated project data was scant. Disaggregated data for specific groups of women, such as young women or women from Ubudehe category 1, were not systematically collected. Documentation on the analysis of gender inequalities and the project's impact in this regard was very limited. This hampered projects in monitoring their performance and taking corrective measures when needed.²⁷⁹ It also limited the analysis of this CSPE, which had to rely on more anecdotal evidence in terms of the country programme's impact on GEWE.
148. **Overall outreach was just below targets.** The 2013 and 2019 COSOPs had a target of 40 and 50 per cent, respectively, in terms of women receiving services promoted or supported by project interventions. On average, however, women made up only 37 per cent of the beneficiaries (which was below the average target of the various projects (44 per cent) and that of the two COSOPs). KWAMP was the only project that exceeded its target, although it was set rather low (40 per cent women reached with a target of 30 per cent). RDDP performed the worst in terms of outreach to women, as they represented only 30 per cent of beneficiaries with a target of 45 per cent.²⁸⁰ While sex-disaggregated data from PAPSTA was not available, it reportedly faced challenges in reaching out to highly vulnerable groups of women, such as widows.
149. Women's economic empowerment was strengthened in various ways, but in some cases, they faced challenges in accessing economic services. IFAD-supported projects increased their access to and control over assets (inputs, technologies and finance) and to economic services (such as extension, training and business development). They supported stronger links to profitable markets and offered them the opportunity to participate in decent work.²⁸¹ Crop and livestock intensification interventions allowed to improve women's economic situation, as in the case of

²⁷² PASP PCR/V #31 and RDDP MTR.

²⁷³ For example, KWAMP PPE #123; PASP PCR/V #31; RDDP Gender Strategy 2020; PRISM SVR 2023; KIIWP SVR 2022. There was no information on the existence of a gender strategy for PAPSTA, although the project did assist MINAGRI in drafting the National Agriculture Gender Strategy.

²⁷⁴ See, for example, PRICE PCR/V #13. The gender specialist was recruited in 2017.

²⁷⁵ KWAMP PPE #123; PRICE PCR/V #29; PRISM SVR 2023.

²⁷⁶ PRICE PCR/V #29; PASP PCR/V #42.

²⁷⁷ PRICE PCR/V #29; PASP PCR/V #31.

²⁷⁸ See, for example, RDDP MTR.

²⁷⁹ See, for example, PRICE PCR/V and RDDP MTR.

²⁸⁰ RDDP SVR 2022.

²⁸¹ See also above part on effectiveness.

KWAMP, where they also obtained more secure land tenure rights.²⁸² There was an increasing involvement of women in agrifood value chains. In PASP, for example, women's involvement in the dairy value chain increased by 11 per cent and by 47 per cent for that of maize and beans.²⁸³ Certain activities specifically targeted women, such as coffee roasting and egg production in sericulture under PRICE.²⁸⁴ Women also benefited from increased access to finance, as, for example, in the case of PRICE where 34 per cent of women entrepreneurs in the horticulture value chain benefited from access to financial services through the Performance-Based Guarantee Facility.

150. While women made up between 30 and 40 per cent of those reached, there were some instances where they faced challenges in accessing economic services. In PASP, women made up only 17 per cent of those trained in production practices and technologies, and women in RDDP sometimes faced challenges of adequate access to veterinary and extension services.²⁸⁵ Moreover, in PASP only 35 of the 395 business plans financed by the project (or 8.8 per cent) were women-owned. Although wage labour opportunities were created (e.g. civil works, soil and water conservation interventions, coffee, horticulture and dairy value chains), the lack of related sex-disaggregated data and information on the working conditions did not allow to assess the extent to which women's access to decent jobs increased.²⁸⁶
151. Through the use of quota systems women's participation in rural institutions increased, but there is no evidence that this resulted in equal voice. The quota-system was meant to strengthen women's participation and allow for equal voice and influence in various rural institutions and organizations both as members and as leaders. For example, women made up 35 per cent of the members of the 63 cooperatives supported by KWAMP.²⁸⁷ Their highest participation was in maize cooperatives (43 per cent), while they were least represented in milk cooperatives (28 per cent).²⁸⁸ In PASP, women's membership in dairy cooperatives increased from 23 to 34 per cent.²⁸⁹ Women also increasingly took up leadership positions. In PRICE, women represented at least 30 per cent of the cooperative board members, including as office holders and committee members. Significant results in terms of women's leadership were seen in the coffee value chain, particularly in the coffee washing stations, with women representing 31 per cent of the managers, 25 per cent agronomists, 55 per cent accountants, and 2 per cent station operators. In the sericulture value chain, 45 per cent of the lead farmers were women.²⁹⁰ In the case of PASP, one out of five positions in the executive committee of the supported cooperatives was held by a woman, most often as the treasurer; while, in KWAMP, women were reportedly active members on the project-supported committees, such as WUAs and others, holding prominent positions.²⁹¹ It must be noted that this was mostly backed up by anecdotal evidence, as disaggregated data was very limited and evidence of the extent to which women actually had equal voice and influence was lacking. The issue of voice at household level was addressed through the promotion of GALS (see below).
152. **Limited attention was given in the country programme to promote balanced workloads.** Given that the largest contributor to women's disempowerment in Rwanda is unbalanced workload,²⁹² much more support should have been given to purposely reduce the drudgery and daily workload of women. This was even more

²⁸² KWAMP PPE #12.

²⁸³ PASP PCR #31; baseline figures, or information on the other commodity value chains, were not available.

²⁸⁴ PRICE PCR #27.

²⁸⁵ PASP PCR and RDDP SVR 2022.

²⁸⁶ See IFAD (2019). Corporate-level Evaluation on IFAD's Engagement in Pro-poor Value Chain Development.

²⁸⁷ KWAMP PPE #103.

²⁸⁸ KWAMP PCR.

²⁸⁹ PASP PCR #96.

²⁹⁰ PRICE PCR #28.

²⁹¹ PASP PCR #32 and KWAMP PPE #122.

²⁹² DFID (2020). Women's Empowerment Agriculture Index Study (WEAI): Baseline report.

important as it was reported that project interventions led to the increase in production, which resulted in increased workload for women.²⁹³ A number of interventions contributed to reducing their workload, including the introduction of labour-saving technologies, (e.g. rainwater harvesting facilities, biogas systems, drought-resistant crop varieties and mechanized processing) and practices (e.g. crop-livestock integration and integrated pest management). Although biogas systems contributed significantly to reducing women's workload in PAPSTA and KWAMP, this technology was not promoted in subsequent projects.²⁹⁴ There was anecdotal evidence in PRICE of women reporting positive changes at household level, notably in terms of more balanced workload between household members.²⁹⁵ Women's care-giving responsibilities, which posed a challenge for participation in project interventions, were not addressed.²⁹⁶

153. Gender transformative approaches were introduced, mainly through the promotion of GALS, which contributed to improving gender relations in supported households, however, its outreach was limited. Except for PAPSTA, all projects foresaw the promotion of GALS as a cornerstone of their support to GEWE. Anecdotal evidence suggested a positive impact on women in terms of economic empowerment, voice in decision-making and workload, and positive changes in intra-household gender relations (e.g. participation of women in determining household priorities and spending patterns and the overall distribution of workloads).²⁹⁷ Some innovations were introduced, such as the incorporation of GALS into L-FFS and more attention being given to nutrition and climate change challenges through "GALS+." Nevertheless, GALS outreach was limited, with only 60 people trained in KWAMP, 537 in PASP, and 21 in PRICE, while 840 champions were trained in RDDP and 192 in PRISM.²⁹⁸
154. The extent to which people actually applied what they had learned during the GALS training and the extent to which champions actually contributed to its dissemination was not monitored.²⁹⁹ Projects furthermore faced challenges in terms of delayed implementation, limited financial resources and a lack of guidance from IFAD on how to support the rollout of GALS.³⁰⁰ While PAPSTA did assist MINAGRI in drafting the National Agriculture Gender Strategy, no other examples of formal systemic changes were found, for example on laws, policies and government capacities. There was no engagement with the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, although this was included in the design of some projects (e.g. PRISM). Again, there was no evidence that these approaches actually translated into gender-transformative outcomes. The newly approved PSAC was categorized by IFAD as a gender-transformative project and comprises different pathways for achieving women's empowerment and gender-transformative outcomes.
155. **The JP RWEE fostered collaboration with other UN agencies but faced some issues in terms of complementarity.** Since 2016, Rwanda was one of the countries where IFAD, together with FAO, WFP and UN Women, implemented the JP RWEE. This is a global initiative that builds on each agency's comparative advantage and strengths to improve the status of women in rural areas. The first phase of the JP RWEE was implemented from 2014 to 2021 in Ethiopia, Guatemala, Liberia, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Niger and Rwanda, and its second started in 2022 and also

²⁹³ KWAMP PPE #122 and CSPE focus group discussions.

²⁹⁴ See, for example, KWAMP PPE #120S and the section below on environment and climate change.

²⁹⁵ PRICE PCR #30.

²⁹⁶ Focus group discussions.

²⁹⁷ This was also confirmed in IFAD (2022). Assessing the outcomes of GALS (Gender Action Learning System) in the Joint programme, "Rural Women Economic Empowerment" of Rwanda. However, the study did not use control group, which did not allow to ascertain if changes were due to the use of GALS. Furthermore, linkages between the Joint Programme and IFAD operations were weak, with the beneficiaries not necessarily being those supported by IFAD-financed projects.

²⁹⁸ KWAMP PCR; PASP PCR; PRICE PCR; RDDP SVR 2022; PRISM SVR 2022.

²⁹⁹ See, for example, RDDP SVR 2023.

³⁰⁰ See, for example, PRICE PCR and RDDP MTR.

includes Rwanda. JP RWEE contributed to rural women's improved livelihoods in the project countries through improved agricultural practices, linkages to the market, awareness-raising and leadership-building. In Rwanda, the programme had a total budget of US\$4.3 million and benefited about 18,000 people, of whom 57 per cent were women. Women's groups and cooperatives received different types of support: agricultural inputs, small livestock and post-harvest equipment, extension, business training, promotion of saving and lending culture, leadership training and awareness-raising of land rights. The programme also supported the development of MINAGRI's Gender Strategy 2019–2024. IFAD's support focused on the promotion of GALS, distribution of goats and rainwater harvesting facilities, and carrying out a WEAI-survey. There were instances of limited complementarity and duplication of work between the agencies and overall linkages with IFAD-supported projects were weak.³⁰¹

156. **Overall gender equality and women's empowerment.** Women made up 37 per cent of the beneficiaries, which was slightly below design targets. Given the limited analysis undertaken, project gender strategies were often not solid or developed late. Projects also faced challenges in terms of human and financial resources to support GEWE. By increasing their access to and control over assets and economic services, and supporting stronger links to profitable markets, women's economic empowerment was strengthened. By using a quota-system, women's voice in various rural institutions and organizations was increased. More support should have been given to purposely reduce the drudgery and daily workload of women. The promotion of GALS was a cornerstone of the country programme's support to GEWE, but its outreach remained limited. The CSPE rates GEWE as **moderately satisfactory** (4).

G. Sustainability of benefits

157. Strong ownership at the national level and engagement with district authorities helped to ensure institutional sustainability, but the handover to districts also faced some challenges. At completion, PAPSTA and KWAMP formally handed over the activities and institutional structures they had supported (e.g. CCIs, CLGS and the maintenance of soil and water conservation interventions) to the districts. In the case of KWAMP, irrigation management transfer agreements were signed between the district, RAB, WUAs and cooperatives, which fostered ownership and was a driver of sustainability. The 22 district staff positions dedicated to the implementation of KWAMP were offset by the recruitment of 85 new district staff.
158. On the other hand, the annual operation costs of CCIs were high and included staff salaries, costs of electricity, water and internet access. While CCIs have continued to serve as training and meeting venues for local farmers, they were operating below capacity³⁰² and faced difficulties in the absence of adequate budgetary allocation by the district.³⁰³ The sustainability of CCIs remained fragile in the absence of their national recognition as formal rural institutions.³⁰⁴ Limited financial resources at district level was also a challenge to ensure feeder road maintenance.³⁰⁵ Furthermore, changing CLGS into district and sector hydrographic basin committees,

³⁰¹ FAO, IFAD, WFP & UN Women (2021). Joint Evaluation: Joint Programme on Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women (2014–2020).

³⁰² KWAMP PPE #110; at the time of the CSPE, the CCI in Kirehe hosted about on average five trainings over a period of three months (key informant interview).

³⁰³ Out of the six CCIs, only a few generated some income to cover some of their operating costs, through the provision of services for pay such as photocopies or access to internet. The CCIs located in remote areas, such as in Nyamagabe, Nyanza, Gakenke and Ngororero, were struggling to generate income (KWAMP PPE #110). At the time of the CSPE, the CCI in Nyange had stopped its income-generating activities and was providing service free of charge. Only five of the 10 computers provided by PAPSTA to the CCI in Nyange were still operational and other equipment, such as projectors and sound system provided were no longer working (key informant interview).

³⁰⁴ KWAMP PPE #125.

³⁰⁵ KWAMP PPE #110. The Kirehe District attempted to address budgetary constraints to support the O&M activities by using funds of the Vision Umurenge Programme (VUP) funds. This has contributed to ensuring sustainability of benefits, but it also generated short-term employment benefits, especially for the most vulnerable households and young engineers.

as per law in 2015, and moving from watershed to an administrative sector made them less congruent with the physical boundaries of a given watershed, and posed the danger of loss of institutional knowledge and skills to manage watershed effectively.³⁰⁶ Finally, although highly appreciated in their communities, the networks of local volunteer extension workers, supported by PAPSTA and KWAMP, did not find a formal place in the district structures.

159. **The sustainability of market linkages was mixed.** These linkages were stronger for certified export-oriented commodities, like sustainable coffee and organic dried pineapple, and for specific commodities supplied to local agribusinesses, such as grade A milk for dairy SMEs. They were weaker for others, like silk and, in some cases, horticulture and tea. The cooperatives supported in the country programme often had limited access to markets and little voice in policymaking processes. By acting collectively and reducing fragmentation, apex organizations could have enabled cooperatives collectively to access assets, increase market power, and influence decision-making. This would have helped to transform them into reliable partners by achieving delivery targets (quantity, quality and timeliness of produce) of interest to market actors and policymakers. Nevertheless, there were no strong farmers' apex organizations that evolved from the country programme's support (see e.g. PAPSTA and PRICE).³⁰⁷
160. **The economic and financial sustainability prospects for the supported cooperatives were mixed.** On the one hand, productivity gains achieved by smallholders appeared sustainable and a lot of emphasis had been put on strengthening their capacities.³⁰⁸ The same cooperatives received support from different IFAD-supported projects, which allowed to further strengthen their capacities.³⁰⁹ Increased engagement of smallholders with the private sector and financial institutions demonstrated economic feasibility, as was the case of PRICE, and created trust for future collaboration.³¹⁰ Matching contributions from cooperatives furthermore strengthened ownership and self-reliance. On the other hand, and despite the support received, many cooperatives still grappled with insufficient working capital; financial sustainability; marketing issues; access to main roads; and a lack of bookkeeping, accounting and business skills.³¹¹ Regarding PASP, almost half of the supported cooperatives were classified as under- or low-performing at completion, while in PRICE, the cooperatives involved in sericulture faced sustainability issues after the withdrawal of the sole buyer, combined with low production levels.³¹² Access to finance remained a challenge for smallholders and rural micro, small and medium-size enterprises due to the high interest rates and collateral requirements by commercial banks, and the banks' lack of understanding of the agriculture sector's finance needs.³¹³
161. The technical sustainability of infrastructure developments was, overall, ensured; while livestock interventions faced some issues with access to feed. The establishment of various committees, such as WUAs and infrastructure management committees, and their training contributed to ensuring the operation and maintenance (O&M) of project-supported interventions. Their ability to mobilize members' cash and in-kind contributions showed a high level of ownership and

³⁰⁶ KWAMP PPE #109.

³⁰⁷ PAPSTA PPE #58; The upper-level tea and coffee federations supported by PRICE support lacked robustness to sustain themselves without external resources (PRICE PCR V #21).

³⁰⁸ The KWAMP PPE was not able to confirm whether observed productivity changes are sustainable (#113).

³⁰⁹ This was for example the case in PASP, where cooperatives supported by the project also benefited from RDDP and KIIWP1 interventions (PASP PCR V #21; CSPE focus group discussions). Prolonged support to cooperatives, for example over more than a decade, may be necessary [IFAD (2019). Corporate-level Evaluation on IFAD's Engagement in Pro-poor Value Chain Development]. This however also raises an issue in terms of outreach and equity, with different projects serving the same people and communities over time.

³¹⁰ PRICE PCR V #21.

³¹¹ See, for example, PAPSTA PPE #116, PASP PCR V #21-22, CSPE focus group discussions,

³¹² PASP PCR V #21; PRICE PCR V #21; CSPE focus group discussions.

³¹³ CSPE focus group discussions, key informant interviews.

management capacity.³¹⁴ In general, the scale of the infrastructures built was adapted to the capacities of the beneficiaries. Infrastructure repair works were beyond the WUA's capacity, they called on the financial support from districts (who also faced budget availability issues).³¹⁵ While projects did not present evidence for effective or adequate O&M of infrastructure investments, the committees met by the CPSE were, with some exceptions,³¹⁶ operational and water fees were still regularly collected. In a few cases, there were technical issues with the design of irrigation schemes, leading to instances of underutilization of the schemes due to a lack of water.³¹⁷ The combination of erosion control and soils conservation works with hedge planting, as done by PAPSTA and KWAMP, was an appropriate and locally manageable technology. There were, however, some concerns regarding the ability of local farmers to ensure the O&M of larger soil and water conservation interventions without outside support.³¹⁸ Finally, insufficient attention was given to the affordability of feed and appropriateness of fodder varieties in the design of livestock value chain interventions, while in other cases, the late distribution of some inputs undermined sustainability.³¹⁹

162. **Several of the country programme's intervention approaches contributed to social sustainability.** Among other things, these include: the use of participatory and empowering approaches (participatory watershed management, FFS, GALS, etc.); strengthening community-based organizations (WUAs, cooperatives, etc.); targeting vulnerable groups; and focusing on gender equality.

Scaling up

163. The country programme continued to invest in certain subsectors, namely watershed development, livestock and agricultural export. This has allowed projects to build on the lessons from their predecessors and address their weaknesses. However, replication in subsequent IFAD-funded projects and Government cofinancing does not constitute scaling up. There was little evidence that innovations or successful experiences from the country programme were being adopted and disseminated by development partners, stakeholders' resources being invested or the Government adopting a policy framework to bring these practices to scale. This was hampered by the ICO and country programme's limited engagement in policy dialogue, partnership-building and knowledge management. There was also an opportunity to provide more institutional support to local government for scaling up agricultural innovations.
164. A number of development partners reportedly picked up some practices promoted in the country programme, although evidence was lacking on if it was really building on IFAD's experience. Examples included: KWAMP's matching grants funding mechanism by USAID; PASP's approach to beneficiary cofinancing of value chain investments; RDDP's L-FFS by the World Bank; and RDDP's dairy hub model by Land O'Lakes and USAID.³²⁰ Other initiatives were replicated in subsequent IFAD-supported projects, but this could not be considered as strong evidence of scaling up. Examples include participatory watershed management, the horticulture export guarantee facility and the performance-based guarantee facility. Some scaling up also took place in the policy area.³²¹ For example, the mechanism of setting up "Irrigation Management Transfer Agreements," developed by KWAMP, was

³¹⁴ There were however also cases of WUAs facing challenges in terms of organizational management and accountability (e.g. RDDP SVR 2022).

³¹⁵ For example, in the case of the Isabane rice cooperative in KWAMP (CSPE focus group discussion).

³¹⁶ For example, the Kibaza Marshland rice WUA in Bugasera district, supported by PAPSTA.

³¹⁷ The expected water runoff did not materialize in the Mahama catchment in Kirehe district, which was supported by KWAMP (KWAMP PPE #24; CSPE focus group discussion). The Kibaza catchment in Bugasera, one of the two marshland irrigation schemes supported by PAPSTA, suffered from bad drainage design.

³¹⁸ PAPSTA PPE #117.

³¹⁹ See e.g. RDDP SVR 2023; PRISM SVR 2023; E.g. post-harvest equipment distributed by PASP (PASP PCRV #22)

³²⁰ KWAMP PPE #129. USAID and Land o Lakes were already working through the dairy hub model before RDDP, as part of the Rwanda Dairy Competitiveness Program.

³²¹ See also section above on policy engagement.

considered best practice by other districts and adopted by them.³²² PASP contributed to increased recognition at policy level for the importance of post-harvest investments, now forming a focus of district development plans.

Environment and natural resources management, and climate change

165. Environmental and climate issues were increasingly integrated in the country programme, but the focus was too much on addressing climate “variability” risks, rather than climate change, per se. The designs of PAPSTA, KWAMP and PRICE did not include detailed assessments of environmental risks and trade-offs, and therefore, neither any related mitigation plans. Environmental and climate risks and mitigation measures were given more attention in the 2013 and 2019 COSOPs and in the projects designed since then (i.e. PASP, RDDP, KIIWP 1&2 and PSAC). In general, there was a lack of clarity on differentiating between addressing short-term climate risks (variability) and the strategic planning needed to adapt to the longer-term timescales associated with climate change. Furthermore, projects made frequent and often vague reference to the term “resilience” without really considering how resilience fitted into each project in terms of the “robustness” of the agricultural system (livestock or cropping), how the interventions would contribute to the recovery from a climate shock, and whether a shift or reorientation would then be beneficial.³²³

Environment and natural resource management

166. Projects promoted several practices to minimize damage caused by their interventions, while also sustainably improving farming practices and increasing agricultural productivity. Key interventions included: (i) engaging in soil protection and conservation practices to reduce soil erosion; (ii) promoting water efficiency; (iii) improving governance of natural assets by strengthening land tenure and community-led empowerment; (iv) enforcing waste management; and (v) integrating renewable energy technologies.
167. PAPSTA and KWAMP supported reforestation and the construction of hedgerows, terraces and trenches against erosion control. The installation of rainwater harvesting structures, by projects such as PASP, RDDP and PRISM, has also helped to prevent soil erosion and flooding from run-offs. FFS were used to train farmers on topics like integrated pest management, conservation agriculture, good agricultural practices and SRI. As part of HI’s work in PRISM and RDDP, farmers learned how to restore soil nutrients and retain moisture in their fields. RDDP also promoted the adoption of organic practices including cover crops, crop residue retention, mulching and composting to improve soil water moisture retention. Data on the actual adoption rates of these practices was not collected.³²⁴
168. The supported WUAs helped to ensure a rational and sustainable use of water in irrigation schemes and of boreholes or valley tanks.³²⁵ Furthermore, projects supported the installation of rainwater harvesting facilities, at farm level, but also at warehouses, MCCs and livestock markets. Farmers were also trained on on-farm water efficiency practices, but adoption rates of these practices were not collected.
169. Projects applied a community-based approach and supported setting up watershed management committees and the development of watershed management plans.³²⁶ This allowed for planning NRM activities together with irrigation development (e.g.

³²² KWAMP PPE #128

³²³ See IFAD (2023). Evaluating sustainable pathways to climate resilience: Rwanda case study.

³²⁴ No related outcome indicators were included in the projects’ logical frameworks.

³²⁵ PAPSTA and KWAMP supported the creation of 4 and 19 WUAs respectively; RDDP supported 34 borehole water users’ committees; KIIWP1&2 foresee supporting the creation of 13 irrigation water users’ organizations and 35 water-for-livestock users’ organizations.

³²⁶ PAPSTA and KWAMP supported the creation of 11 and 18 CLGS, respectively. In 2015, the CLGS were changed into District and Sector hydrographic basin committees as per the law. KIIWP 1&2 contributed to the creation of 10 hydrographic basin committees.

the integration between crop and livestock production, combined with a wide range of erosion-control and water-retention measures).³²⁷ Buffer zones around water bodies and sensitive areas were protected. KWAMP, for example, did this by planting grasses and agroforestry trees, and soil erosion control measures. KWAMP also improved land tenure security through land registration.³²⁸

170. PASP assisted Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA), RAB and RBS to develop guidelines for waste management and the use of by-products (e.g. maize bran, bean residue, potato wastes, cassava leaves and waste milk), focusing on cost-effective ways to manage waste (e.g. as animal feed). Under RDDP and PRISM, HI trained farmers on waste management, while RDDP taught them how to use manure to enhance soil fertility.
171. PAPSTA and KWAMP³²⁹ successfully piloted biogas technology, enabling people to meet their energy requirements for cooking and lighting, and protecting against deforestation and soil erosion.³³⁰ The biogas digesters' slurry also provided excellent manure for the fields. While it was recommended to scale up these pilots—and several subsequent projects included the promotion of biogas technology in their designs³³¹—in practice, its use was not promoted.³³² Furthermore, the use of solar energy was also promoted and had gradually been mainstreamed in the country programme, e.g.: solar-powered cold rooms, dryers, milk-cooling tanks, water heaters and other post-harvest facilities (PASP); solar-powered milk coolers, communal cowsheds and boreholes (RDDP); solar-powered water heaters in slaughter slabs (PRISM); stand-alone solar powered pumping stations for irrigation, small-scale solar pumps for valley bottom tanks and solar-powered boreholes (KIIWP 1&2); and solar-powered dryers (PSAC).
172. **There were some cases of negative impacts on the environment and natural resources.** Under PRICE, for example, tea production and related processing activities had certain negative impacts on the natural resources base, including deforestation to make way for tea plantations and for firewood needed by factories and high water demand by tea nurseries, leading to competition with domestic needs.³³³ There were also some waste management issues, such as design flaws in the case of PRISM (absence of fence protecting toxic waste disposal pits and inadequate design of the cover of the carcass disposal pit); inadequate liquid waste management in the beer and wine processing facilities supported by PASP; and direct discharge of wastewater from some tea factories under PRICE.³³⁴ Finally, while those affected by the economic displacement resulting from KWAMP's dam construction were compensated (e.g. in-cash or by involving them in other project-supported activities), there was limited follow-up to ensure that they were not left worse-off by the loss of their productive assets.³³⁵ Since then, IFAD's safeguard procedures became stricter and projects potentially causing physical or economic resettlement, like KIIWP1&2, are required to have a resettlement action plan.

³²⁷ Rwanda has been one of the few countries where IFAD successfully promoted a watershed management approach [see IFAD's Independent Office of Evaluation (2019). *Infrastructure at IFAD (2001–2019): Evaluation Synthesis*].

³²⁸ 100 per cent of farmers had their land registered and 92 per cent of households had land titles at completion (KWAMP PCR).

³²⁹ For example, KWAMP sponsored 451 flexi biogas systems at household level.

³³⁰ It also contributed to freeing up women's time usually spent in fetching firewood and reduced the amount of smoke and health-damaging particles (see for example KWAMP PPE).

³³¹ See PAPSTA PPE and KWAMP PPE; PASP, PRISM, RDDP and PSAC foresaw biogas support in their designs.

³³² For example, PRISM dropped the promotion of biogas technology due to "low adoption potential" (PRISM SVR 2022) and RDDP did not have sufficient financial resources allocated to this activity and questioned its viability (RDDP SVR 2023). A recent study by FAO pointed out that biogas systems were often not technically and financially viable. They can still represent an important part of the green solutions for growth and climate change mitigation and adaptation, but the systems need to be designed more accurately and be based on robust knowledge of key parameters, such as manure production rates, water access rates, livestock numbers and management practices and household cooking energy demand.

³³³ See PRICE PCR.

³³⁴ See PRISM SVR 2023, PASP PCR and PRICE PCR.

³³⁵ See KWAMP MTR.

Climate change adaptation

173. While, from PASP onwards, efforts were made to address the effects of climate change, there were some missed opportunities to strengthen smallholders' absorptive and adaptive capacities. PAPSTA, KWAMP and PRICE did not have a focus on climate change adaptation. PASP was the first project to address this systematically with support from a dedicated Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme (ASAP) grant. Projects contributed to strengthening climate resilience by: (i) providing support to absorb the damage; (ii) strengthening preparedness; and (iii) enhancing learning to facilitate system change.³³⁶
174. In collaboration with RMA, PASP supported climate information services and early warning systems, which gave people, communities, authorities and institutions timely and relevant information about shocks, such as storm surges, cyclones and droughts, enabling appropriate action to be taken to reduce the impact of anticipated shocks.³³⁷ While RDDP's foreseen continuation of PASP's work did not materialize, KIIWP 1&2 continued collaboration with RMA to provide climate and weather information to smallholders and local authorities. PRICE was supposed to promote weather-indexed insurance, but funds allocated to this at design were cancelled due to limited capacities, limited success with previous experiences and limited demand.³³⁸ RDDP and PRISM introduced livestock insurance for cows, pigs and poultry, allowing livestock keepers to build resilience to climate shocks, but adoption rates remain low and the poultry insurance was not successful at all.³³⁹ Furthermore, projects contributed to protecting natural capital (e.g. promoting reforestation, and soil and water conservation) and maintaining social capital (e.g. CLGS, WUAs, self-help groups and cooperatives).
175. Projects promoted sustainable NRM (see above) and the adoption of climate-resilient agro-technologies by introducing: (i) climate-smart cropping practices (e.g. short-season and drought-tolerant crop varieties, crop diversification, soil and water conservation methods, and natural resource regeneration in PASP and KIIWP); (ii) climate-resilient livestock practices (e.g. climate-resilient fodder production, proposing resilient breeds, integrated crop-livestock systems and strengthening value chain links, such as milk cooling centres in RDDP and PRISM); (iii) climate-smart value chain development (e.g. in PASP and KIIWP); and (iv) infrastructure development (irrigation infrastructure and rainwater harvesting systems reduced water losses, renewable energy technologies allowing for saving costs and reducing carbon emissions, climate-resilient storage minimized post-harvest losses, roads and market buildings minimized disruption to business functioning in PASP, RDDP, PRISM and KIIWP). Projects earmarked funds for these activities under their matching grant schemes.
176. However, sometimes there was a mismatch between the intervention offered and the available resources or existing status of resources on the ground, which negatively impacted its uptake. Examples include: the unavailability of suitable rainwater harvesting technologies and technicians to support the installation; local conditions impeding the implementation of some recommended climate-smart agro-technologies; and unavailability of appropriate energy sources in some areas.³⁴⁰ Some opportunities were missed to strengthen the adaptive capacities of smallholders, for example in RDDP, where some promoted fodder varieties were not drought- and heat-resistant enough.³⁴¹ Furthermore, land availability was a key constraint, with plot sizes of 0.5 ha being too small to plant forests or diversify their

³³⁶ See conceptual framework for climate resilience in the rural agricultural sector in IFAD's Independent Office of Evaluation (2023). Thematic Evaluation of IFAD's Support for Smallholder Farmers' Adaptation to Climate Change.

³³⁷ The sustainability of climate information services was questionable (see PASP PCR).

³³⁸ See PRICE PCR.

³³⁹ See RDDP SVR 2023; PRISM SVR 2023.

³⁴⁰ See IFAD (2023). Thematic Evaluation of IFAD's Support for Smallholder Farmers' Adaptation to Climate Change: Rwanda case study.

³⁴¹ See RDDP SVR 2023.

crops sufficiently. Finally, actual changes relating to climate resilience, and adoption rates of climate-smart technologies were not captured.

177. There were some efforts to strengthen transformative capacity. PAPSTA, KWAMP and KIIWP, for example, promoted a switch from rainfed agriculture to irrigated systems and invested in community-based watershed management to address the nexus of rural poverty, environmental degradation and climate change. Furthermore, projects supported livelihood diversification and enhanced market links.

Safeguard management

178. The development of marshlands into irrigated crop production by PAPSTA, KWAMP and KIIWP involved a number of environmental risks, which were not systematically addressed, e.g. biodiversity loss, water availability reduction, water contamination, excessive drainage causing lowlands to dry up and an increase in the number of malaria and bilharzias cases. IFAD's SECAP only became mandatory in 2015 and, therefore, PAPSTA and KWAMP's marshland development was not preceded by Environmental and Social Impact Assessments and mitigation strategies (e.g. leaving some areas uncultivated and ensuring ecological corridors between remaining wetlands to protect the habitat of endemic plant and animal species). Subsequent projects involved in marshland development, like KIIWP, now have Environmental, Social and Climate Management Plans (ESCMP).
179. **Some challenges were faced in applying SECAP requirements.** For example, RDDP did not develop an environment and social action plans, nor a grievance redress mechanism.³⁴² In addition, a study on greenhouse gases (GHG) was supposed to have been undertaken before RDDP started implementation, to ensure that dairy production intensification did not result in a higher GHG production, but at the time of the CSPE, this important study was yet to be finalized. Preliminary findings, however, showed that RDDP activities led to an overall increase in GHG emissions, but a decrease in emission intensity.³⁴³ Furthermore, PRISM did not develop its ESCMP and related monitoring plan, while its grievance redress mechanism had yet to be disseminated.³⁴⁴ The quality of SECAP-related documents produced by KIIWP was not always optimal (e.g. lacking means of verification, frequency of verification and cost estimate of the proposed mitigation measures) or they suffered delays.³⁴⁵ Finally, PASP supported the processing of gin (which is on IFAD's exclusion list³⁴⁶) and Free, Prior and Informed Consent processes were not always duly followed.³⁴⁷
180. Infrastructure had sometimes been damaged by land erosion and landslides or had been built in risk-prone areas.³⁴⁸ For example, a number of cowsheds in Ruhango district had been destroyed by landslides and a storage facility build by PASP in Ngororero district was no longer operational as it was built in a high-risk area.
181. **Overall sustainability.** Strong government ownership ensured sustainability. The establishment of various committees and their training contributed to ensuring the O&M of project-supported interventions. Furthermore, productivity gains achieved by smallholders appeared sustainable and the use of participatory and empowering approaches contributed to social sustainability. On the other hand, the sustainability

³⁴² See RDDP SVR 2023.

³⁴³ The ex-post assessment of GHG emissions conducted in 2022–23 by FAO using the Global Livestock Emission Assessment Model (GLEAM) has revealed that RDDP activities had led to a total increase in emissions of 14.6 per cent compared to baseline, and of 9 per cent compared to the Without Project Situation at endline. However, emission intensities have decreased by 30 per cent compared to baseline and are 24 per cent lower at the endline in the "with project situation" compared to the "without project situation." Net emissions however were not calculated. (RDDP SVR 2023).

³⁴⁴ See PRISM SVR 2023.

³⁴⁵ See KIIWP1 SVR 2022.

³⁴⁶ This was the case of Rugali agro-processing cooperative in Kayonza district. PASP, however, was designed before IFAD issued an exclusion list.

³⁴⁷ For example, Pass on the Gift (see PRISM SVR 2023); orchard development around the Rwindwavu dam (see KIIWP1 SVR 2022).

³⁴⁸ See PRISM SVR 2023.

prospects for the supported cooperatives were mixed and districts sometimes had limited available resources to ensure proper follow-up. The CSPE rates sustainability as **moderately satisfactory** (4).

182. **Overall scaling up.** A number of development partners picked up some practices promoted in the country programme, but evidence was limited. Some scaling up also took place in the policy area. Other initiatives were replicated in subsequent IFAD-supported projects, but this could not be considered as strong evidence of scaling up. The CSPE rates scaling up as **moderately unsatisfactory** (3).
183. **Overall environment and natural resources management, and climate change.** Projects tried to minimize damage caused by their interventions, while also sustainably improving agricultural productivity. There were some cases of negative impacts on the environment and natural resources. While earlier projects did not have a focus on climate change adaptation, from PASP onwards, projects contributed to strengthening climate resilience in several ways. There were, however, some missed opportunities or challenges that projects faced in strengthening climate resilience. More attention could have been given to the application of IFAD's SECAP requirements. The CSPE rates environment and natural resources management, and climate change as moderately **satisfactory** (4).

H. Overall country strategy achievement

184. The country programme acted only on some of the 2012 CSPE recommendations. There was a move towards more strategic programme management and reliance on national systems through the SPIU approach. Subsectoral support activities were strengthened around watershed development and value chains development in food, cash and export crops. Areas that were not adequately addressed include greater emphasis on non-lending activities, dedicated support to districts and a more harmonized approach to rural finance and cooperative development.
185. The country programme contributed to poverty reduction in rural areas. This was done mainly through improved agricultural and livestock productivity, supporting value addition and linking smallholders to markets. There are indications that this contributed to higher incomes, but income effects were mitigated by capacity issues in cooperatives, weak market linkages and limited financial inclusion. Furthermore, increased efforts were made to manage natural resources in a sustainable manner and support smallholders to adapt to climate change. On the other hand, insufficient emphasis was put on addressing malnutrition. While women's economic empowerment was strengthened, youth inclusion in the country programme remained weak.

Table 8
CSPE ratings

Evaluation criteria	Current rating	2012 CPE ratings
• Relevance	4	5
• Coherence	4	NA
• Knowledge management	3	4
• Partnership development	4	4
• Policy engagement	4	3
• Effectiveness	4	5
• Innovation	5	4*
• Efficiency	4	5
• Rural poverty impact	4	5
• Sustainability	4	4
• Natural resource management and climate change adaptation	4	NA
• Scaling up	3	4
• Gender equality and women's empowerment	4	5
Overall achievement	3.92	4.36

* Innovation was rated together with scaling up.

Key points

- The country programme was aligned with priorities of the Government, IFAD and target groups. The design quality of projects was in general consistent with available knowledge, but there were some gaps.
- While IFAD's comparative advantage in supporting smallholders to boost productivity and access markets was well recognized, there remained room for increased synergies with development partners.
- The portfolio showed a consistent succession of projects, but there was room to increase coordination between projects.
- While knowledge from the country programme was captured to some extent through the development of different knowledge products, there was a lack of a strategic approach to knowledge management.
- While projects supported and informed national policy processes, due to a lack of human resources, the ICO's involvement was limited.
- Partnerships were leveraged by the country programme for different purposes. Those with the private sector, Rome-based agencies of the United Nations and international cofinanciers could have been strengthened.
- The country programme performed satisfactorily in terms of increasing agricultural productivity, had mixed results regarding the improvement of post-harvest processes

and strengthening of market linkages, and performed unsatisfactorily in terms of addressing malnutrition.

- Various technological, financial, social and institutional innovations were introduced in the country programme, which addressed key agricultural challenges.
- The SPIU model allowed for efficiency gains. Disbursement rates were satisfactory and project start-ups happened in a timely manner. Ex-post economic and financial analyses have been positive. Nevertheless, a number of projects had to be extended.
- Project contributed to improvements in household incomes, food security and human and social capital. Some gaps remained, for example in terms of the maturity levels of the supported cooperatives, weak apex organizations and developing local government capacity.
- Projects have contributed to increasing women's economic empowerment and strengthening their voice. The SPIU, however, faced some challenges in terms of capacity to deal with gender issues, dedicating strategies, resources and solid analysis.
- Strong government ownership of the country programme ensured overall sustainability. On the other hand, the sustainability prospects for the supported cooperatives were mixed and districts sometimes had limited available resources to ensure proper follow-up.
- A number of development partners picked up some practices promoted in the country programme, while other initiatives were replicated in subsequent IFAD-supported projects.
- Projects tried to minimize damage caused by their interventions, while from PASP onwards, projects also contributed to strengthening climate resilience.

IV. Performance of partners

A. IFAD

186. IFAD's project designs were done in close collaboration with the Government and consistent with available knowledge, but also had some gaps. IFAD worked closely with the Government on the design of the COSOPs and project portfolio, which allowed for strengthening country ownership and alignment with country priorities. Its comparative advantage in supporting smallholders to boost productivity and access markets was not only clearly recognized by the Government, but also by development partners.³⁴⁹ Continued investment in certain subsectors (especially watershed development, livestock and agricultural export) allowed project designs to build on lessons from their predecessors and address their weaknesses. While project designs were consistent with available knowledge, they sometimes made unrealistic and overambitious assumptions in terms of targets and capacities and included some gaps.³⁵⁰ In general, issues raised during IFAD's quality assurance process were adequately addressed in the final design documents, although there were some exceptions, such as concerns about project complexity, cofinancing guarantees, implementation capacity of SPIU and NAEB, capacity support to cooperatives, sustainability prospects of the sericulture value chain, animal feed issues and poverty-disaggregated outreach monitoring. Project designs were adapted during implementation to address implementation challenges. Since 2019, there has been an increasing engagement with partners to mobilize cofinancing and technical expertise.
187. Although there were a number of areas where more guidance was required, through supervision missions, conducted at least once a year, IFAD provided the required support, guidance and recommendations to ensure effective project implementation and was seen as a responsive and committed partner. For example, IFAD provided additional financing when other cofinanciers withdrew and supported the Government's COVID-19 response initiatives through two grants from the Rural Poor Stimulus Facility.³⁵¹ In addition, withdrawal applications and no-objection approvals were processed in a timely manner. There were, however, a number of areas where more guidance was required, namely gender equality and women's empowerment (especially in terms of strategy and the rollout of the GALS approach), M&E (in terms of IFAD requirements) and the implementation of IFAD's social, climate and environmental safeguards procedures.³⁵² While, in general, disbursement rates were satisfactory, the disbursement caps introduced by IFAD negatively affected government engagement and trust. The unsatisfactory disbursement performance of PRISM, for example, was partly impacted by IFAD's decision not to entirely disburse the advance to the designated authority as per the withdrawal application submitted by the project.³⁵³ Finally, IFAD could have sought stronger insurances of cofinanciers upfront to avoid a negative impact on project implementation due to the withdrawal, reduction, or delay of cofinancing.
188. **Non-lending activities did not get enough attention by the country team, although there were improvements since 2019.** The establishment of a country office in 2008 allowed IFAD to become a more active and responsive partner. During the period under review, three country directors have been responsible for the country programme.³⁵⁴ It was mentioned that limited human resources and the absence of a

³⁴⁹ See section above on coherence.

³⁵⁰ See section above on relevance.

³⁵¹ See for example, KWAMP PPE #149 and sections above on relevance and coherence. It should be noted that the lengthy IFAD approval process of the RPSF grants negatively affected government engagement and trust.

³⁵² KWAMP PPE #151; PRICE PCR#29 & 41; RDDP SVR 2023; CSPE key informant interviews. A number of SPIU staff did receive training through IFAD's Programme in Rural Monitoring and Evaluation (PRIME), but challenges remained.

³⁵³ PRISM SVR 2022.

³⁵⁴ The post of Country Director was vacant at the beginning of the period under review (until August 2013).

country director in the office, however, had a restraining effect on non-lending activities, namely knowledge management, policy engagement and partnership building.³⁵⁵ The absence of a country director in country reportedly did not always allow for smooth communication with the Government.³⁵⁶ Nevertheless, this improved from 2019 onwards and since January 2023 the country director has been based in-country. The Government and development partners welcomed this move and expected that this would help to enhance performance in non-lending activities.

189. **Overall, IFAD performance.** IFAD worked closely with the Government on the design of the COSOPs and project portfolio. Its comparative advantage is well recognized and seen as a responsive and committed partner. Through supervision missions, IFAD provided support, guidance and recommendations to ensure effective project implementation, although some areas required more support. Limited human resources and the absence of a country director on the ground had a restraining effect on non-lending activities. The CSPE rates IFAD performance as **satisfactory** (5).

B. Government

190. The Government showed strong ownership of the country programme and commitment to achieve results, while more attention should have been given to addressing district capacities. It took leadership in the design and supervision of COSOPs and projects and ensured harmonized donor support by guiding development partners to take the lead in specific sectors (e.g. livestock and agricultural export in the case of IFAD). This resulted in close alignment of the country programme with national policies.³⁵⁷ The Government participated actively in COSOP and project design, negotiation of the loan agreements, implementation, supervision and offering implementation support, carrying out annual performance reviews, auditing and reporting. The projects' steering committees met regularly to discuss progress and provide guidance.³⁵⁸ In PRISM there were two steering committees – one for the ENABEL supported operations and another for the IFAD-supported ones– which did not contribute to an optimal alignment and coordination between the two interventions.³⁵⁹
191. The presence of a well-defined institutional structure and a functional accountability system further enabled government ownership. It must be noted that emphasis in terms of accountability was often mainly on ensuring output targets were met, instead of assuring the achievement of quality outcomes and impact. Significant counterpart funding also reflected the Government's commitment to the country programme, with contributions up to as much as 48 per cent (PRISM).³⁶⁰ Although, according to the Agreement at Completion of the 2012 CSPE, the role of district authorities in the planning and implementation of the country programme would be strengthened, limited attention was given to strengthening the ownership of districts.³⁶¹ They often faced challenges in terms of technical capacities and financial resources to ensure post-project follow-up.³⁶² Moreover, there was room for closer integration of interventions into local development planning processes.
192. **The SPIU-model allowed for efficiency gains, but also showed some gaps.** Gains were achieved especially in terms of coordination, reduction of transaction costs and

³⁵⁵ See section above on non-lending activities.

³⁵⁶ CSPE key informant discussions.

³⁵⁷ See section above on relevance.

³⁵⁸ See for example, PRICE PCR V #43.

³⁵⁹ PRISM SVR 2022; A harmonized PRISM steering committee was established in 2023 (PRISM SVR 2023).

³⁶⁰ See annex XIII.

³⁶¹ Only PAPSTA, KWAMP and the 2013 COSOP foresaw dedicated support to the decentralization process. Results in terms of strengthened district capacities were mainly limited to KWAMP, although also here some issues were faced leading to less ownership of the project on the part of the district staff (KWAMP PPE #144).

³⁶² See, for example, PAPSTA PPE #133-4.

retention of staff and facilitated cross-project knowledge sharing and performance monitoring. The SPIU was made up of highly motivated expert staff, however, it faced some challenges, such as staff turnover, prolonged, overburdened staff and limited or inadequate capacity.³⁶³ SPIU staff had annual performance-based contracts, which helped to ensure the achievement of results.³⁶⁴ Supervision mission recommendations were generally adhered to and regular SPIU meetings contributed to ensuring coordination. However, there were consistent shortcomings in M&E.³⁶⁵ This included staff capacity, data quality issues, lack of disaggregated data, output focus, limited use of GIS, and limited use of information for knowledge management and decision-making.

193. There were some specific issues related to the management of PRICE, which was the only IFAD-supported project implemented by NAEB during the period under review.³⁶⁶ The capacities of the newly established NAEB to lead the implementation of a complex project, such as PRICE, were overestimated. NAEB lacked familiarity with IFAD procedures, while the SPIU (housed in RAB) provided inadequate support in gender mainstreaming, M&E and contract supervision. In practice, PRICE ended up with two implementation units (one under the SPIU and the other under NAEB) working in parallel.³⁶⁷ Communication between NAEB (main implementing agency for PRICE) and the SPIU did not always go smoothly, leading to implementation delays and challenges in performance management.
194. **Financial management was satisfactory.**³⁶⁸ Integrated financial management information systems were used to support management of budgetary, financial and accounting operations. Disbursement rates were, with some exceptions, satisfactory.³⁶⁹ Loan covenants and financial agreements were well respected by the Government. There were some issues including late submission of annual work, plans and budgets³⁷⁰ and reduced or delayed counterpart funding.³⁷¹ While audits were of good quality and carried out on time, they also highlighted concerns, for example, the underutilization of funds by implementing partners and data gaps in BDF's matching grants database.³⁷² The quality, reliability, transparency and efficiency of procurement processes was, overall, satisfactory. Good systems for record keeping were used, such as the e-procurement system. Some minor shortcomings were experienced, including cases of not evaluating tenders using the three-stage process (preliminary, technical and financial evaluation); not following the IFAD format regarding the content of award notices; non-compliance with national procurement procedures; contracts lacking reference to IFAD's policies concerning fraud, corruption, sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse, money laundering and terrorist financing; late approval of procurement plans; delays in awarding tenders; and ineffective contract monitoring systems.³⁷³
195. **Overall government performance.** The Government showed strong ownership of the country programme and commitment to achieve results. This was further enabled by the presence of a well-defined institutional structure and a functional accountability

³⁶³ See section above on efficiency.

³⁶⁴ The annual contracts however also led to job insecurity (KWAMP PPE #143; CSPE key informant interviews). At the time of the CSPE discussions were ongoing to provide contracts to SPIU staff for the entire period of a project.

³⁶⁵ See, for example, PAPSTA PPE #138, KWAMP PPE #145, PRICE PCR/V #44, PASP PCR/V #51, RDDP MTR, PRISM SVR 2022, KIIWP1 SVR 2022.

³⁶⁶ PSAC will also be implemented by NAEB.

³⁶⁷ See for example PRICE PCR/V #2 & #13 PRICE PCR #20 & #212.

³⁶⁸ PAPSTA and KWAMP received awards from IFAD for their exemplary financial management performance (PAPSTA PPE #137 & KWAMP PPE #119).

³⁶⁹ See section above on efficiency.

³⁷⁰ See for example, RDDP SVR 2022, PRISM SVR 2022, KIIWP1 SVR 2022.

³⁷¹ See for example, KWAMP PPE #30, PASP PCR, PRISM SVR 2022, KIIWP1 SVR 2022. There were also some issues with valuing the government's in-kind contributions (e.g. KIIWP1 SVR 2022).

³⁷² See for example, RDDP SVR 2022.

³⁷³ See PAPSTA SVR 2012, RDDP SVR 2020 & 2022, PRISM SVR 2022, KIIWP1 SVR 2022.

system. The SPIU model allowed for efficiency gains, but also faced some challenges. In general, financial management was satisfactory. The CSPE rates government performance as **satisfactory (5)**.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

A. Conclusions

196. The CSPE reviewed IFAD's support in Rwanda over a period that was characterized by a slowdown of the pace of poverty reduction and increased pressure on scarce land resources due to a growing rural population and greater exposure to the effects of climate change. The focus of public interventions has been on stabilizing and expanding terraces, boosting the use of more adapted fertilizers, increasing farmers' use of better seeds, improving farmer skills, and extending the irrigated area, which helped the sector to grow at an average rate of more than 5 per cent annually since the early 2000s. However, the impact of such improvements will decline over time unless producers can profitably become more market-oriented and embedded in regional and global value chains. Moreover, climate change and other environmental factors pose a range of challenges for Rwanda and stunting remains a major challenge, especially among the poor.
197. In this context, the country programme showed continuity in terms of strategic themes and some progression, but several weaknesses persisted. The country programme was consistent with Rwanda's development priorities and continued to unlock irrigable potential by promoting the increase of agricultural productivity in watersheds, while also making efforts to support the development of value chains for food and export commodities. This continuity allowed projects to build on the lessons from their predecessors and address their weaknesses. More attention was given to supporting downstream activities along agricultural value chains, including, among others, a stand-alone project on post-harvest and agribusiness support. In addition, the country programme built on previous experiences in dairy and small livestock value chain development. Finally, projects increasingly addressed the effects of climate change. On the other hand, a number of issues highlighted by the 2012 CPE were not adequately addressed, with continued limited emphasis on non-lending activities, support to districts and harmonizing approaches to rural finance and cooperative development.
198. The country programme introduced various innovations and achieved significant results, especially in terms of increased agricultural and livestock production and productivity. This contributed to positive results with regard to income increase and improved food security. The capacities of cooperatives were strengthened, with an increasing involvement of women, both as members and as leaders. Projects also contributed to improved natural resource management and, from PASP onwards, to strengthening the climate resilience of smallholder farmers. Finally, various committees supported by the country programme, along with strong government ownership at national and local levels, allowed to ensure the O&M of project-supported interventions.
199. To help translate Rwanda's growth into poverty reduction, the country programme needs to strengthen its poverty-targeting strategies and improve its youth focus. Projects often applied a blanket approach, without tailoring interventions to the actual needs of the different target groups and the context. This tended to foster aid dependency or decreased the value for some of the services leading to low interest or demand. To address the complex nature of poverty, target groups needed to receive an integrated set of interventions. Moreover, poverty-disaggregated outreach was not monitored during implementation, making it difficult to assess if projects actually contributed to breaking the poverty trap. While all projects targeted youth, outreach to them was significantly below expectations and interventions were often not tailored to their needs. With the rapidly growing youth population, creating economic opportunities for them in the agricultural sector is vital. The youth offer the opportunity to introduce

and leverage technology, build entrepreneurship and create off-farm employment through agribusiness ventures.

200. **The country programme showed limited success in terms of embedding a market orientation.** Although downstream activities received increasing support, emphasis to upstream value chain activities remained predominant. Cooperatives continued to face challenges in terms of management and business skills. Not enough attention was given to properly estimating the feasibility of downstream interventions, the existence of market outlets or the sustainability of input supply. There was room for greater engagement of the private sector, both in project design and implementation. Maintaining strong agricultural growth requires rapid responses to market signals, ready access to investment resources, technical expertise, and the ability to organize production that can only be accomplished by the private sector. A greater reliance on markets and private initiative will ensure that investments are based on expected economic returns. Furthermore, with an overreliance on the use of matching grants, little consideration was given to alternative options involving financial institutions or to potential effects, particularly on the rural financial system. Limited access to finance, lack of collateral, poor financial literacy and limited tailored services continued to constrain the productive capacity and inclusion of smallholder farmers, small-scale entrepreneurs and vulnerable groups.
201. While the country programme had a strong focus on increasing agricultural production and productivity, insufficient efforts were made to effectively address malnutrition. Chronic malnutrition remains high in Rwanda, especially among the poorest households and those living in rural areas. While both COSOPs under review placed high importance on nutrition, projects did not address the underlying causes of malnutrition—care practices, environmental health and food adequacy. Focusing only on increasing food production and raising incomes had limited impact on improving nutrition. There were also missed opportunities for policy engagement and partnership-building in this area. It was only very recently that addressing malnutrition was given due attention, with two nutrition-sensitive projects—PRISM and KIIWP2 (which have just started implementing dedicated activities).
202. There is a clear expectation that the presence of the country director in the country office will allow for increased attention to KM, partnership-building, and policy engagement. The country director has only recently been based in-country, which limited prior ability to engage in non-lending activities. It will be important to apply a more strategic approach to KM and increase coordination with partners, which would open up opportunities for policy engagement and scaling up. This also requires ensuring adequate resources are allocated, but also strengthening the government's capacity in KM, including in M&E.
203. **The recent merger of the IFAD SPIU with that of the World Bank entails both opportunities and threats.** The creation of the joint SPIU allowed for efficiency gains and cross learning, but also faced a number of challenges. Compared to other institutional set-ups for the management of IFAD-supported projects, the SPIU approach in Rwanda enabled greater efficiency and stronger government ownership. However, there were issues with staff turnover, overburdened staff, coordination flaws and, in some instances, lack of capacity or expertise. If these issues are not adequately addressed during the merger, the implementation of IFAD-supported projects might be jeopardized.

B. Recommendations

204. The CSPE offers the following five recommendations for the preparation of the upcoming COSOP.
205. **Recommendation 1: Sharpen the thematic focus, with a greater reliance on markets and private initiative.** There are good reasons for IFAD to focus on thematic areas where it has demonstrated a comparative advantage (e.g. livestock, agricultural export and irrigation) and deepen its engagement there, through a greater reliance on markets and private initiative, which will ensure that investments are based on expected economic returns. This requires IFAD to support: (i) the creation of an institutional, infrastructure and policy environment where the market decides the where, when and how of agriculture produces and trades; and (ii) a gradual shift in the public sector's role to facilitate the fair implementation of those private sector decisions. More detailed value chain analysis and closer engagement with the private sector should help to ensure the supported value chains respond to market demand and strengthen economic sustainability. While investment in "better-off" farmers or market actors can help to stimulate the participation of poorer farmers, the benefits for poor rural people should be carefully monitored (e.g. in terms of job creation).
206. There is also a need to move away from an overreliance on the use of matching grants and promote a more sustainable approach that supports a diversity of financial providers and products, which respond to the different needs of smallholder farmers and rural poor. This calls for: (i) greater efforts to document and understand the rural finance needs of target beneficiary groups in terms of rural finance; and (ii) engaging proactively with financial service providers and other stakeholders to understand and reduce the constraints they face and assist them in designing appropriate interventions and incentives to serve the agricultural sector and the rural poor.
207. Digital solutions should be given more prominence in these endeavours, given their significant potential to address some of the key remaining gaps in the Rwandan agricultural sector, including decision support and agro-advisory services, access to financial services, mechanization, risk management mechanisms, supply chain traceability and post-harvest facilities. A combination of low-tech and high-tech digital solutions offers the greatest promise for tackling challenges (including the high cost of equipment and technologies, a domestic skills gap, and low digital literacy) and facilitating adoption.
208. **Recommendation 2: The next COSOP should clearly state a focus on environment and natural resources management, and climate change and addressing malnutrition.** The country programme should deepen its engagement in these areas, including in terms of non-lending activities. More attention needs to go to the management of environmental safeguards (especially waste management), making sure that interventions being offered are adapted to the context and actually tackling the root causes of malnutrition in Rwanda (namely care practices, environmental health and food adequacy). It would also entail, among other things, engaging more actively in Rwanda's Scaling up Nutrition Network, mobilizing more climate funding and contributing to international debates on the opportunities and challenges related to the nexus between livestock, climate change, environment and livelihoods.
209. **Recommendation 3: Refine the targeting strategies to sharpen the poverty focus and increase attention to youth inclusion.** IFAD needs to make concerted efforts to building the assets, capabilities and agency of those living in extreme poverty so that they can break out of the poverty trap and graduate to sustainable and resilient socio-economic livelihoods. This should be done by building on PRISM's experience and incorporating clear graduation pathways for different target groups in the country

programme, which is in line with IFAD's 2022 Targeting Policy, the Government of Rwanda's 2022 National Strategy for Sustainable Graduation and the outcomes of Rwanda's 2021 Food Systems National Dialogues. Where IFAD has limited capacity or resources, partnerships should be sought more proactively to fill gaps and linkages with local development planning processes should be improved. More thorough poverty analysis should underpin targeting strategies, which should justify the selection of interventions, including the choice of commodities and value chains. This needs to be done on the basis of the likelihood of clear benefits to poorer producers and effectiveness in achieving different development outcomes, that is, declining poverty, economic growth, job growth and improved diets. More specifically, the youth focus needs to be strengthened to address their unique challenges, especially by promoting their financial inclusion, supporting entrepreneurship and creating off-farm employment. Finally, targeting strategies need to be followed up through appropriate monitoring of disaggregated data, both in terms of poverty and social inclusion.

210. **Recommendation 4: Articulate a coherent action plan for non-lending activities that allows to increase IFAD's scale of impact and influence.** At a minimum, this plan should: (i) identify priority themes, the main knowledge partners, and the target audiences; (ii) outline how results will be identified, analysed, documented, shared and used in support of improved programme/project design, performance, policy influence and scaled-up impact; (iii) identify tools and approaches to support knowledge flows and learning in the country programme; and (iv) identify related indicators. Partnerships with other actors in the agricultural sector, such as the Rome-based agencies of the United Nations and World Bank, and the private sector should be strengthened. These partnerships need to be underpinned by strong mutual interests and good alignment of operating procedures. Dedicated human and financial resources need to be allocated to support the implementation of the plan. This calls for greater involvement of the country director, but also of the different project delivery team members and regional thematic experts based in Nairobi.
211. **Recommendation 5: Make sure the SPIU is fit-for-purpose.** IFAD and the Government should carry out an assessment and come up with an action plan to address recurrent issues. Issues to be addressed include, among others, staff turnover, heavy workload and capacity issues. This could be done, for example, by increasing the competitiveness of salaries of SPIU staff, filling vacant positions as soon as possible, investing in building their capacity in specific areas (e.g. gender, M&E, developing policy products...), and making sure all necessary expertise is on board (e.g. value chain development, safeguard management). The assessment should not only look at capacity issues at national level, but also at district level.

Definition of the IFAD evaluation criteria

Evaluation criteria

Relevance

The extent to which: (i) the objectives of the country strategy and programme are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, institutional priorities, and partner and donor policies; (ii) the design of the strategy and the targeting strategies adopted are consistent with the objectives; and (iii) the adaptation of the strategy to address changes in the context.

Coherence

This comprises two notions: internal and external coherence. Internal coherence is the synergy of the intervention/country strategy with other IFAD-supported interventions in a country, sector or institution. The external coherence is the consistency of the intervention/strategy with other actors' interventions in the same context.

Non-lending activities are specific domains to assess coherence.

Knowledge management

The extent to which the IFAD-funded country programme is capturing, creating, distilling, sharing and using knowledge.

Partnership-building

The extent to which IFAD is building timely, effective and sustainable partnerships with government institutions, private sector, organizations representing marginalized groups and other development partners to cooperate, avoid duplication of efforts and leverage the scaling up of recognized good practices and innovations in support of small-holder agriculture.

Policy engagement

The extent to which IFAD and its country-level stakeholders engage to support dialogue on policy priorities or the design, implementation and assessment of formal institutions, policies and programmes that shape the economic opportunities for large numbers of rural people to move out of poverty.

Effectiveness

The extent to which the country strategy achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives and its results at the time of the evaluation, including any differential results across groups.

A specific sub-domain of effectiveness relates to:

Innovation, the extent to which interventions brought a solution (practice, approach/method, process, product, or rule) that is novel, with respect to the specific context, timeframe and stakeholders (intended users of the solution), with the purpose of improving performance and/or addressing challenge(s) in relation to rural poverty reduction.¹

Efficiency

The extent to which the intervention or strategy delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way.

"Economic" is the conversion of inputs (funds, expertise, natural resources, time, etc.) into outputs, outcomes and impacts, in the most cost-effective way possible, as compared to feasible alternatives in the context. "Timely" delivery is within the intended timeframe, or a timeframe reasonably adjusted to the demands of the evolving context. This may include assessing operational efficiency (how well the intervention was managed).

¹ Conditions that qualify an innovation: newness to the context, to the intended users and the intended purpose of improving performance. Furthermore, the 2020 Corporate-level Evaluation on IFAD's support to Innovation defined transformational innovations as "those that are able to lift poor farmers above a threshold, where they cannot easily fall back after a shock." Those innovations tackle simultaneously multiple challenges faced by smallholder farmers. In IFAD operation contexts, this happens by packaging / bundling together several small innovations. They are, most of the time, holistic solutions or approaches applied of or implemented by IFAD-supported operations.

Evaluation criteria

Impact

The extent to which the country strategy has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects.

The criterion includes the following domains:

- changes in incomes, assets and productive capacities
- changes in social/human capital
- changes in household food security and nutrition
- changes in institutions and policies

The analysis of impact will seek to determine whether changes have been transformational, generating changes that can lead societies onto fundamentally different development pathways (e.g. due to the size or distributional effects of changes to poor and marginalized groups).

Sustainability and scaling up

The extent to which the net benefits of the intervention or strategy continue and are scaled-up (or are likely to continue and be scaled-up) by government authorities, donor organizations, the private sector and other agencies.

Note: This entails an examination of the financial, economic, social, environmental and institutional capacities of the systems needed to sustain net benefits over time. It involves analyses of resilience, risks and potential trade-offs.

Specific domain of sustainability:

Environment and natural resources management, and climate change adaptation. The extent to which the development interventions/strategy contribute to enhancing the environmental sustainability and resilience to climate change in small-scale agriculture.

Scaling up* takes place when: (i) bi- and multilaterals partners, private sector and communities adopted and generalized the solution tested / implemented by IFAD; (ii) other stakeholders invested resources to bring the solution at scale; and (iii) the government applies a policy framework to generalize the solution tested/implemented by IFAD (from practice to a policy).

*Note that scaling up does not only relate to innovations.

Gender equality and women's empowerment

The extent to which IFAD interventions have contributed to better gender equality and women's empowerment. For example, in terms of women's access to and ownership of assets, resources and services; participation in decision-making; workload balance and impact on women's incomes, nutrition and livelihoods; and in promoting sustainable, inclusive and far-reaching changes in social norms, attitudes, behaviours and beliefs underpinning gender inequality.

Evaluations will assess to what extent interventions and strategies have been gender transformational, relative to the context, by: (i) addressing root causes of gender inequality and discrimination; (ii) acting upon gender roles, norms and power relations; and (iii) promoting broader processes of social change (beyond the immediate intervention).

Evaluators will consider differential impacts by gender and the way they interact with other forms of discrimination (such as age, race, ethnicity, social status and disability), also known as gender intersectionality²

Partner performance (assessed separately for IFAD and the government)

The extent to which IFAD and the government (including central and local authorities and executing agencies) ensured good design, smooth implementation and the achievement of results and impact and the sustainability of the country programme.

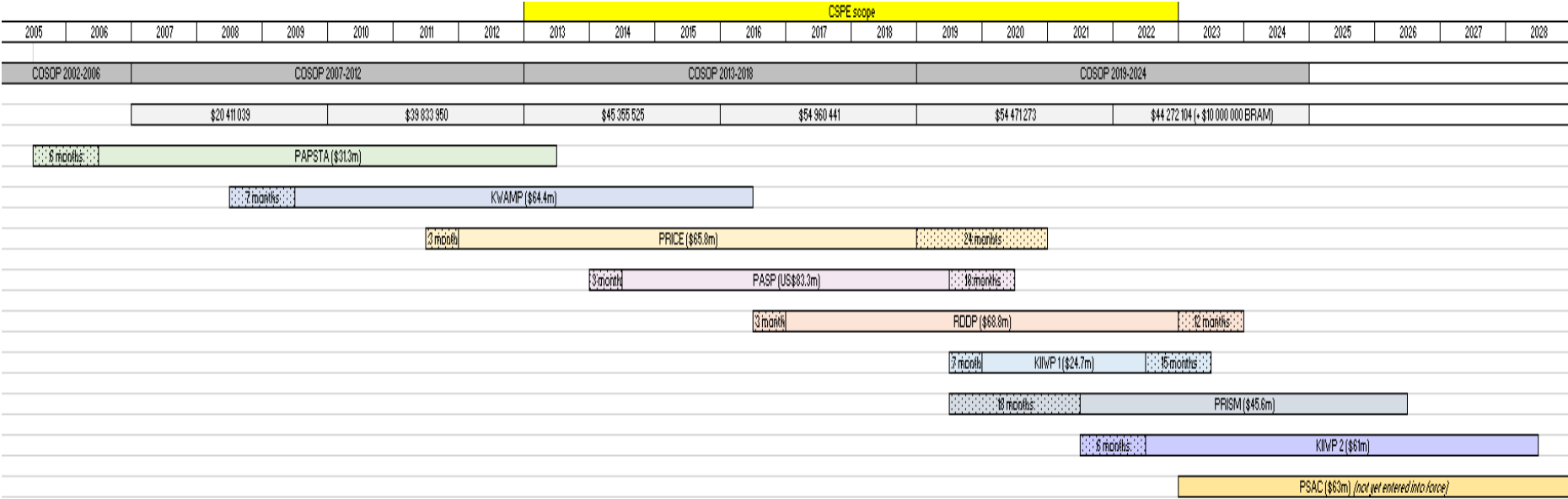
The adequacy of the borrower's assumption of ownership and responsibility during all project phases, including government, implementing agency, and project company performance in ensuring quality preparation and implementation, compliance with covenants and agreements, establishing the basis for sustainability, and fostering participation by the project's stakeholders.

² Evaluation Cooperation Group (2017) Gender. Main messages and findings from the ECG Gender practitioners' workshops. Washington, DC. <https://www.ecgnet.org/document/main-messages-and-findings-ieg-gender-practitioners-workshop>

IFAD-financed projects in Rwanda

Project name	Total project cost US\$ million	IFAD approved financing US\$ million	Cofinancing US\$ million	Counterpart financing US\$ million	Beneficiary contribution US\$ million	Executive Board approval	Loan effectiveness	Project completion date	Project status
PAPSTA	31.5	13.9	11.1	2.8	3.7	08/09/2005	31/03/2006	31/03/2013	Financial closure
KWAMP	64.5	42.2	2.8	14.9	4.5	11/09/2008	30/04/2009	30/06/2016	Financial closure
PRICE	65.9	57.2	2.8	5.2	0.6	15/09/2011	20/12/2011	31/12/2020	Project completed
PASP	83.4	33.9	34.6	3.4	11.5	11/12/2013	28/03/2014	30/09/2020	Project completed
RDDP	68.8	44.7	11.2	4.5	5.9	22/09/2016	19/12/2016	31/12/2023	Available for disbursement
KIIWP 1	24.7	17.8	-	5.4	1.5	02/05/2019	10/12/2019	30/09/2023	Available for disbursement
PRISM	45.6	14.9	25.0	3.3	2.4	09/09/2019	10/03/2021	31/03/2026	Available for disbursement
KIIWP 2	61.0	21.8	29.0	8.1	2.1	01/10/2021	05/04/2022	30/06/2028	Available for disbursement
PSAC	62.9	30.0	26.1	5.4	1.4	27/12/2022		31/12/2029	EB approved

Timeline of IFAD-supported interventions covered in the CSPE



Source: OBI.

Loan projects and their main components

Project name	Implementation period	Total project cost US\$ million	Implementing agency	Components
Support Project for the Strategic Plan for the Transformation of Agriculture (PAPSTA)	2006–2013	31.5	MINAGRI	(i) Institutional support for the agricultural sector; (ii) Pilot actions through innovative models; (iii) Project coordination and management
Kirehe Community-based Watershed Management Project (KWAMP)	2009–2016	64.5	MINAGRI	(i) Agricultural intensification; (ii) Feeder roads; (iii) Local institutional development; (iv) Project management
Project for Rural Income through Exports (PRICE)	2011–2020	65.9	MINAGRI and NAEB	(i) Coffee development; (ii) Financial services; (iii) Horticulture; (iv) Project management; (v) Silk development; (vi) Tea development
Climate-Resilient Post-Harvest and Agribusiness Support Project (PASP)	2014–2020	83.4	MINAGRI	(i) HUB capacity development programme and business coaching; (ii) Post-harvest climate resilient agribusiness investment support; (iii) Project management and coordination
Rwanda Dairy Development Project (RDDP)	2016–2023	68.8	MINAGRI	(i) Climate-smart dairy production intensification; (ii) Institutional and policy development; (iii) Producer organization and value chain development; (iv) Project coordination and management
Kayonza Irrigation and Integrated Watershed Management Project - Phase I (KIIWP 1)	2019–2023	24.7	RAB under the auspices of MINAGRI	(i) Strengthening resilience to droughts; (ii) Institutional development and project coordination
Partnership for Resilient and Inclusive Small Livestock Markets Programme (PRISM)	2021–2026	45.6	RAB under the auspices of MINAGRI	(i) Climate-smart intensification of small production systems; (ii) Policy support and coordination; (iii) Support to small livestock value chain development
Kayonza Irrigation and Integrated Watershed Management Project - Phase II (KIIWP 2)	2022–2028	61.0	RAB under the auspices of MINAGRI	(i) Strengthening resilience to droughts; (ii) Institutional development and project coordination (iii) Support for farm business development
Promoting Smallholder Agro-Export Competitiveness Project (PSAC)	2023–2029	62.9	NAEB under the auspices of MINAGRI	(i) Investments to enhance climate-smart production and productivity of selected export-driven value chains; (ii) Enabling business environment along selected export-driven value chains; (iii) Policy support and coordination

IFAD-funded grants in Rwanda (full list)

Project/grant name	Grant number	Grant amount US\$	Recipient type	Grant recipient	Approval date	Effective date	Completion date
Soutenir La Diversité Culturelle	1000003429	20 000	Non-governmental organization	COPORWA	13/05/2009	06/07/2009	05/07/2010
Documentation Training for IFAD Supported Projects (Rwanda, Eswatini, Ethiopia)	1000004047	150 000	Foundation / Trust	Stichting INKGA	27/07/2011	09/08/2011	31/12/2013
Programme for Scaling Up Biological Control of the Diamondback Moth on Crucifers in East Africa to Other African Countries (ICIPE)	1000004250	1 449 975	Research institution	ICIPE	05/05/2012	06/08/2012	31/03/2016
Plantwise, A Country-based Approach to Improve Farmer Livelihoods through Reduced Crop Losses and Increased Productivity (CABI)	1000004385	1 842 500	Inter-governmental organization	CABI	30/11/2012	20/02/2013	31/03/2016
Support to Farmers' Organizations in Africa Programme (SFOAP) - Main Phase (EAFF)	1000004387	500 000	Farmer / producer organization	EAFF	30/11/2012	27/03/2013	21/12/2017
More Effective and Sustainable Investment in Water for Poverty Reduction. (CRP5 - IWMI) - backstopped by PMI	2000000119	2 000 000	CGIAR organization	IWMI	09/12/2013	14/04/2014	30/06/2018
Mainstreaming Land Policy and Governance in CAADP National Agricultural and Food Security Investment Plans (NAFSIPs)	2000000145	325 000	United Nations Agency	UN ECA	25/11/2014	03/09/2015	30/09/2018
Learning Alliance for Adaptation in Smallholder Agriculture	2000000517	3 100 000	CGIAR organization	CIAT	01/12/2014	30/01/2015	31/03/2018
Capitalizing on Experiences for Greater Impact Rural Development	2000001091	1 500 000	Not-for-profit organization	CTA	04/12/2015	21/03/2016	31/03/2019
Strengthening Capacity for Assessing the Impact of Tenure Security Measures on Outcomes of IFAD Supported & Other Projects in SDGs	2000001310	220 000	United Nations Agency	UN Habitat	12/08/2016	20/01/2017	31/12/2019
Scaling Up Rural Youth Access to Inclusive Financial Services for Entrepreneurship and Employment.	2000001352	1 000 000	Farmer / producer organization	EAFF	26/11/2016	11/10/2017	30/06/2021
Integrating ICT Tools in Plantwise to Support More Effective Data Capture and Use	2000001515	2 814 000	Inter-governmental organization	CABI	03/12/2016	16/03/2017	31/03/2021
Scale Up Empowerment through Household Methodologies: from Thousands to Millions	2000001628	2 734 000	Non-governmental organization	Oxfam Novib	07/12/2017	07/05/2018	30/06/2022
Green Technologies to Facilitate Development of Value Chains Perishable Crops and Animal Products	2000001635	2 640 000	Private sector organization	SunDanzer	11/12/2017	22/06/2018	30/09/2023
Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP)	2000001801	2 981 000	Farmer / producer organization	EAFF	27/12/2017	07/05/2018	30/06/2022

Strengthening the Rice Sector in East Africa for Improved Productivity and Competitiveness of Domestic Rice	2000002009	2 000 000	CGIAR organization	Africa Rice	08/12/2018	08/03/2019	31/12/2022
Strengthening Nutrition in Agri-food Systems in East and Southern Africa through Root and Tuber Crops	2000001639	1 626 000	CGIAR organization	CIP	22/12/2018	17/05/2019	30/06/2022
Management of the Technical Assistance Facility of the AgriBusiness Capital Fund	2000001991	5 200 000	Not-for-profit organization	Agriterra	30/12/2018	05/07/2019	05/07/2023
Dairy for Social Impact: Enhanced Knowledge and Sustainability	2000002846	955 000	Non-governmental organization	GDP	10/12/2019	30/12/2019	31/12/2022
Creating Employment Opportunities for Rural Youth in Africa: Support to Integrated Agribusiness Hubs in Rwanda	2000003141	2 797 000	Foundation / Trust	Kilimo Trust	11/12/2019	16/06/2020	31/12/2024
Increasing Water Productivity for Sustainable Nutrition - Sensitive Agricultural Production & Improved Food Security	2000002864	2 400 000	United Nations Agency	FAO	29/11/2019	06/02/2020	31/03/2023
Support to Smallholder Farmers to Mitigate COVID-19 by Improving Their Food Security, Resilience & Livelihood	2000003483	630 000	Governments	MOA - RWA	22/07/2020	23/11/2020	30/09/2022
Promoting the Sustainability and Resilience of Smallholder Irrigation Impacts in SSA	2000002828	1 490 000	Academic organization	UNL_DWFI	24/07/2020	18/12/2020	31/12/2023
Support to Smallholder Farmers to Mitigate COVID-19 (Improve Food Security, Resilience & Livelihood) 2nd Allocation	2000003872	1 281 794	Governments	MOA - RWA	16/06/2021	05/11/2021	30/09/2022
SSTC Rwanda & Kenya	2000003917	546 618	Non-governmental organization	CORDAID	26/10/2021	15/12/2021	31/12/2024
Strengthening Resilience of Agro Food Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Under Rural Poor Stimulus Facility	2000004023	2 580 750	International financial institution	NCTTCA	02/11/2021	18/12/2020	30/06/2022

IFAD-funded grants in Rwanda (selected list)

Project/grant name	Grant number	Grant amount US\$	Recipient type	Grant recipient	Approval date	Effective date	Completion date
Documentation Training for IFAD Supported Projects (Rwanda, Eswatini, Ethiopia)	1000004047	150,000	Foundation / Trust	Stichting INKGA	27/07/2011	09/08/2011	31/12/2013
Plantwise, A Country-based Approach to Improve Farmer Livelihoods through Reduced Crop Losses and Increased Productivity (CABI)	1000004385	1,842,500	Inter-governmental organization	CABI	30/11/2012	20/02/2013	31/03/2016
Support to Farmers' Organizations in Africa Programme (SFOAP) - Main Phase (EAFF)	1000004387	500,000	Farmer / producer organization	EAFF	30/11/2012	27/03/2013	21/12/2017
More Effective and Sustainable Investment in Water for Poverty Reduction. (CRP5 - IWMI) - backstopped by PMI	2000000119	2,000,000	CGIAR organization	IWMI	09/12/2013	14/04/2014	30/06/2018
Scaling Up Rural Youth Access to Inclusive Financial Services for Entrepreneurship and Employment	2000001352	1,000,000	Farmer / producer organization	EAFF	26/11/2016	11/10/2017	30/06/2021
Green Technologies to Facilitate Development of Value Chains Perishable Crops and Animal Products	2000001635	2,640,000	Private sector organization	SunDanzer	11/12/2017	22/06/2018	30/09/2023
Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP)	2000001801	2,981,000	Farmer / producer organization	EAFF	27/12/2017	07/05/2018	30/06/2022
Strengthening the Rice Sector in East Africa for Improved Productivity and Competitiveness of Domestic Rice	2000002009	2,000,000	CGIAR organization	Africa Rice	08/12/2018	08/03/2019	31/12/2022
Strengthening Nutrition in Agri-food Systems in East and Southern Africa through Root and Tuber Crops	2000001639	1,626,000	CGIAR organization	CIP	22/12/2018	17/05/2019	30/06/2022
Creating Employment Opportunities for Rural Youth in Africa: Support to Integrated Agribusiness Hubs in Rwanda	2000003141	2,797,000	Foundation / Trust	Kilimo Trust	11/12/2019	16/06/2020	31/12/2024
Increasing Water Productivity for Sustainable Nutrition - Sensitive Agricultural Production & Improved Food Security	2000002864	2,400,000	United Nations Agency	FAO	29/11/2019	06/02/2020	31/03/2023
Support to Smallholder Farmers to Mitigate COVID-19 by Improving Their Food Security, Resilience & Livelihood	2000003483	630,000	Governments	MOA - RWA	22/07/2020	23/11/2020	30/09/2022
Support to Smallholder Farmers to Mitigate COVID-19 (Improve Food Security, Resilience & Livelihood) 2nd Allocation	2000003872	1,281,794	Governments	MOA - RWA	16/06/2021	05/11/2021	30/09/2022
SSTC Rwanda & Kenya	2000003917	546,618	Non-governmental organization	CORDAID	26/10/2021	15/12/2021	31/12/2024

Evaluation framework

Evaluation criteria and definition	Key evaluation questions	Data sources and collection methods
Relevance: The extent to which: (i) the objectives of the intervention/strategy are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, institutional priorities and partner and donor policies; (ii) the design of the interventions/strategy and the targeting strategies adopted are consistent with the objectives; and (iii) the intervention/strategy has been (re-) adapted to address changes in the context.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent and in what ways was the country strategy and programme relevant and aligned to: (i) the country's development priorities and challenges, national policies and strategies in the evolving context; (ii) IFAD's relevant strategies and priorities; and (iii) the needs of the target group? How appropriate was the targeting strategy, with attention to the poorest Ubudehe categories, gender, youth, landless, persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups? Did it evolve over the years? Are geographic focus and targeting criteria of different projects/programmes (and interventions) sufficiently aligned? Was the design quality in line with available knowledge? How was the quality of project designs? Were there recurrent or common design issues? Did assumptions hold during the programme period? Were lessons from previous interventions adequately taken into consideration in strategies and projects? To what extent and how were the institutional arrangements appropriate to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of the implementation? Was the design realistic in terms of suitability to the context and implementation capacity? To what extent and how well was the design re-adapted to changes in the context in Rwanda? Are IFAD priority themes (e.g. gender, youth, climate change and nutrition) sufficiently addressed in the COSOP? How did the project address climate change within Rwanda and were adequate resources allocated? How relevant, inclusive and pro-poor were the rural finance and value chain development interventions? How relevant and inclusive has IFAD's approach been to supporting livestock value chains? Were the institutional arrangements for programme management, coordination and oversight relevant and appropriate for the interventions? Were government capacities (at central and district levels) adequately considered in programme designs? What are the reasons for the continued capacity gaps? 	<p>COSOP and programme/project documents: design reports, PCRVs, PPEs and impact evaluation/assessment reports</p> <p>In-depth desk review of national policies, IFAD design reports, and other reports</p> <p>Interviews with IFAD staff and national stakeholders</p> <p>Interviews and focus groups with beneficiaries during field visits</p>
Coherence: This criterion comprises the notions of external and internal coherence. The external coherence is the consistency of the strategy with other actors' interventions in the same context. Internal coherence looks at the internal logic of the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent were there synergies and interlinkages between different elements of the country strategy and programme (i.e. between projects, between lending and non-lending activities)? 	<p>COSOP and programme/project documents: design reports, PCRVs, PPEs and impact evaluation/assessment reports</p>

Evaluation criteria and definition	Key evaluation questions	Data sources and collection methods
strategy, including the complementarity of lending and non-lending objectives within the country programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent and how did the country strategy and programme take into consideration other development initiatives to maximize the investments and efficiency and added value? How complementary are the IFAD-supported interventions with those supported by other development partners working on similar themes (e.g. climate change adaptation, value chains, rural finance)? What mechanisms exist for promoting complementarity, harmonization and coordination with other actors working in the same space? Did the country programme allocate sufficient (human and financial) resources for non-lending activities? 	<p>In-depth desk review of strategies documentation (COSOP, COSOP review), and reports of projects supported by other development partners</p> <p>Key informant interviews with IFAD staff, government stakeholders and representatives of partners</p> <p>Interviews with other relevant stakeholders</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge management: The extent to which the IFAD-funded country programme is capturing, creating, distilling, sharing and using knowledge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent lessons and knowledge have been gathered, documented and disseminated? How have these informed new strategies and project design? Which knowledge management tools and approaches have been used? How relevant were the knowledge products to the target audience? How have the knowledge mechanisms and/or materials been aligned with effectiveness of the programme? How has organizational learning been enabled within the country programme? Which results were achieved? What was the contribution of grants to that end? What were key factors for successes and the main challenges? What are the specific features of IFAD SSTC activities? How has it contributed to country programme objectives? Are knowledge management activities outlined in the COSOP and/or is there a specific country strategy for KM? Did the projects have any KM/communication strategy? To what extent did the data and information generated through M&E systems feed into lessons learning and KM for IFAD and its partners (both at local and central levels)? What is the government's approach to managing knowledge on innovations and results from IFAD projects, through which channels? How does this relate to the knowledge produced through IFAD grants? Is there any evidence that lessons and knowledge produced through IFAD lending and non-lending activities have been effectively used to support scaling up successful initiatives? 	<p>COSOP and programme/project documents: design reports, PCRVs, PPEs and impact evaluation/assessment reports; previous CSPE reports, COSOP review report</p> <p>In-depth desk review of programme documents</p> <p>Key informant interviews with IFAD staff and government stakeholders</p> <p>Interviews with IFAD partners and other national non-governmental players</p> <p>Field visits and discussion with local partners and evidence gathering</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership development: The extent to which IFAD is building timely, effective and sustainable partnerships with government institutions, international organizations, private sector, organizations representing marginalized groups and other development partners to cooperate, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How did IFAD position itself and its work in partnership with other development partners working on similar themes (e.g. climate change adaptation, value chains, rural finance)? How did IFAD position itself and its work in partnership with the private sector, civil society organizations and research institutions? 	

Evaluation criteria and definition	Key evaluation questions	Data sources and collection methods
<p>avoid duplication of efforts and leverage the scaling up of recognized good practices and innovations in support of smallholder agriculture and rural development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What types of partnerships with other partners were established and to what end (e.g. influence policy, leverage financial resources, enable coordinated country-led development processes; generate knowledge and innovation; strengthen private sector engagement; enhance visibility)? • Which results were achieved? What was the contribution of grants to that end? • What were key factors for successes and the main challenges? • Did IFAD loans and grants contribute to create and support partnerships at different levels (local, national, international) with the aim to leverage resources, broker knowledge, avoid duplication of efforts and influence policy in supporting Rwanda smallholder agriculture? Were these partnerships effective? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy engagement: The extent to which IFAD and its country-level stakeholders engage, and the progress made, to support dialogue on policy priorities or the design, implementation and assessment of formal institutions, policies and programmes that shape the economic opportunities for large numbers of rural people to move out of poverty. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent and how did IFAD contribute to policy discussions drawing from its programme experience (for example, on themes addressed by the country programmes)? • Which specific policy engagement activities (e.g. policy brief, policy discussion, etc.) were implemented and how these yielded positive results? • Is there any actual policy change that IFAD has contributed to? • What has been the contribution of grants to better policy engagement and results? • What were key factors for successes and the main challenges? • Is there any explicit strategy on policy engagement in COSOP? • Did IFAD use in-house knowledge and resources to engage and inform government on relevant policies and regulatory frameworks? How effective was policy engagement around the key issues identified in the COSOP? • How were the grants expected to support policy engagement? And were the expected outputs/contributions from grants realistic? • Was there a consistent follow-up in documenting and supervising results on IFAD policy engagement in areas of strategic focus? 	
<p>Effectiveness: The extent to which the intervention/country strategy achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives and its results at the time of the evaluation, including any differential results across groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation: the extent to which interventions brought a solution (practice, approach/method, process, product, or rule) that is novel, with respect to the specific context, time frame and stakeholders (intended users of the solution), with the purpose of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent were the objectives of the country strategy and programme (outcome-level) achieved or are likely to be achieved at the time of the evaluation? • What were the key achievements of the country strategy programme, i.e. what would not have happened, or happened as quickly without the country strategy programme? • To what extent did the country strategy programme contribute to the intended outcomes? What worked well and why? What did not work well and why? • Which were concrete achievements for each thematic area identified? • Did the interventions/strategy achieve other objectives/outcomes, or did it have any unexpected consequence? • How effectively were the implementation issues/challenges addressed? 	<p>COSOP and programme/project documents: design reports, project completion reports, PCRVs, PPEs and impact evaluation/assessment reports; previous CSPE reports; COSOPs review reports</p> <p>In-depth desk review of programme documents and etc.</p> <p>Interviews with IFAD staff and national stakeholders</p> <p>Interviews and focus groups with beneficiaries during field visits</p> <p>GIS data Analysis</p>

Evaluation criteria and definition	Key evaluation questions	Data sources and collection methods
improving performance and/or addressing challenge(s) in relation to rural poverty reduction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What factors had positive or negative influence on the achievement of the intended results? What about the COVID-19 pandemic? How did the grant programme contribute to better effectiveness? To what extent did the programme reduce the vulnerabilities of poor men and women (environmental and economic)? What factors contributed to the success? What were the key challenges? What efforts were employed to address the key challenges and what results did such efforts yield? <p>Innovation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What innovations were successfully introduced and scaled up? How innovative was in the given context? What factors contributed to the successful introduction and scaling up of these innovations? Which innovations did not do well and why? What could have been done differently to make such innovations succeed? To what extent did the programme or project support/promote innovations, aligned with stakeholders' needs or challenges they faced? In what ways were these innovative in the country/local context? Were the innovations inclusive and accessible to different groups (in terms of gender, youth and diversity of socioeconomic groups)? To what extent and how have those innovations led to positive outcomes in addressing challenges within the system? What is the contribution of grants in leveraging the promotion of successful innovations? <p>Youth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent have interventions contributed to improve the resilience and livelihoods of rural youth by increasing: (i) their productive capacities; (ii) their capacities to undertake/engage in economic activities; and (iii) their access to markets? How effective have interventions been in reaching out to young women and youth from the poorest Ubudehe categories? What evidence is available in terms of positive changes in youth empowerment that can be attributed to programme support? What have been the contribution of non-lending activities, especially grant supports, to those change? 	<p>Field visits and discussion with direct and indirect beneficiaries during field visits</p> <p>Secondary data for benchmarking</p>
<p>Efficiency: The extent to which the intervention or strategy delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way.</p> <p>“Economic” is the conversion of inputs (e.g., funds, expertise, natural resources, time) into outputs, outcomes and impacts, in the most cost-effective way possible, as compared to feasible alternatives in the context. “Timely” delivery is within the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the relation between benefits and costs (e.g. planned and actual net present value, internal rate of return)? How did this compare with similar interventions (if the comparison is plausible)? Are programme management cost ratios justifiable in terms of intervention objectives, results achieved, considering contextual aspects and unforeseeable events? 	<p>In-depth desk review of IFAD documentation and database (e.g. Oracle Business Intelligence), including: historical project status reports; project financial statements; disbursement data; project financing data; economic and financial analyses; information on project timeline; etc.</p> <p>M&E data</p>

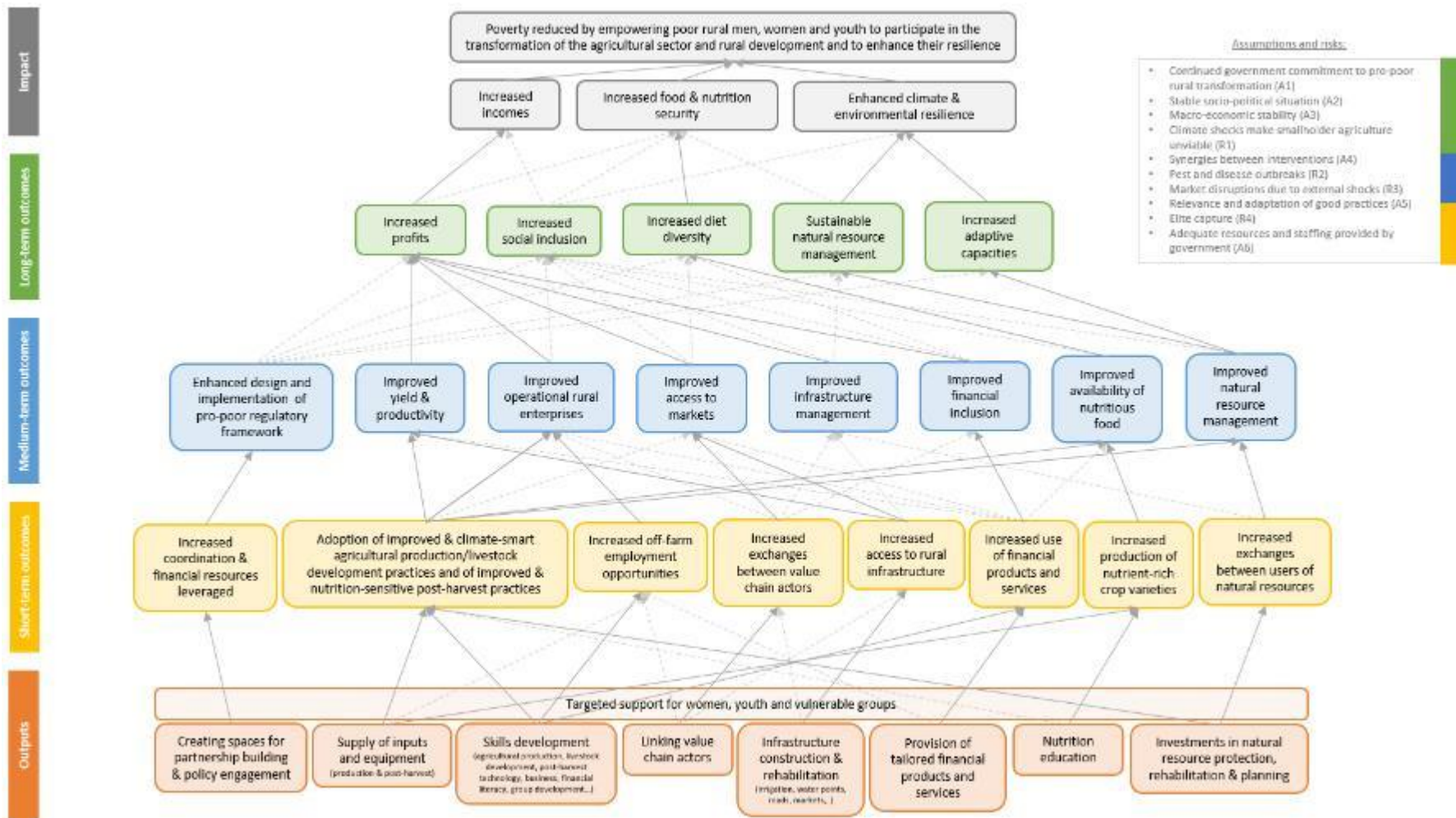
Evaluation criteria and definition	Key evaluation questions	Data sources and collection methods
<p>intended timeframe, or a timeframe reasonably adjusted to the demands of the evolving context. This may include assessing operational efficiency (how well the intervention was managed).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the timeframe of the intervention development and implementation justifiable, taking into account the results achieved, the specific context and unforeseeable events? • Were the financial, human and technical resources adequate and mobilized in a timely manner? • Are unit costs of specific interventions (e.g. infrastructure works) in line with recognized practices and congruent with the results achieved? • What factors affected efficiency of IFAD interventions? • How efficiently were the projects processed and implemented, including: (i) project preparation and processing timeliness; (ii) implementation/disbursement timeliness (including project management performance); (iii) cost-benefit, economic internal rate of return; and (iv) project management cost. • How were IFAD's human resources deployed and organized to supervise and support the lending portfolio and engage in non-lending activities? • What were the main factors affecting efficiency in the closed projects? What are the trends in the ongoing project? Did COVID have an impact? What lessons can be learned from the results achieved in terms of efficiency, for better performance in the future? • How did the Single Project Implementation Unit (SPIU) perform? Does it lead to efficiency gains? What are the challenges? Is there room for improvement? What are the lessons learned? 	<p>Cost and benefit data from other similar project</p> <p>Interviews with IFAD staff and national stakeholders</p> <p>Interviews and focus groups with direct and indirect beneficiaries during field visits, spot validation of reported costs, benefits</p>
<p>Impact: The extent to which an intervention/country strategy has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects.</p> <p>The criterion includes the following domains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -changes in incomes, assets and productive capacities; -changes in social/human capital; -changes in household food and nutrition security; and -changes in institution and policies. <p>The analysis of impact will seek to determine whether changes have been transformational—generating changes that can lead societies onto fundamentally different development pathways (e.g. due to the size or distributional effects of changes to poor and marginalized groups)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the country strategy and programme had the anticipated impact on the target group and institutions and policies? Why? • What is the evidence of the contribution of IFAD-funded interventions to changes in household incomes, assets, food and nutrition security, human and social capital of the target groups? • What are the observed changes in terms of emergence and/or strengthening of rural institutions within communities, as well as policy change? How did the intervention result in or contribute to those changes? What were the challenges? • To what extent did the interventions contribute to increased resilience of beneficiary households and communities? • From an equity perspective, to what extent have the interventions had a positive impact on women, youth, the very poor/marginalized groups, and how? • Was there any unintended impact, either negative or positive? • What evidence is there that project beneficiaries achieved higher productivity and incomes? How do the changes in productivity and impact compare to the overall changes in Rwanda? 	<p>COSOP review reports, PCRVs, PPEs and reports of impact evaluation and assessment; previous CSPE reports</p> <p>In-depth desk review of strategy and programme documents, etc.</p> <p>GIS data analysis</p> <p>Interviews and focus groups with beneficiaries during field visits</p> <p>Key informant interviews with IFAD staff and national stakeholders</p> <p>Evidence and testimonies gathering</p> <p>Field visits and discussion with direct and indirect beneficiaries during field visits</p> <p>Secondary statistical data on poverty, household incomes and nutrition where available and relevant (possible benchmark)</p>

Evaluation criteria and definition	Key evaluation questions	Data sources and collection methods
<p>Sustainability: The extent to which the net benefits of the intervention or strategy continue and are scaled-up (or are likely to continue and be scaled-up) by government authorities, donor organizations, the private sector and other agencies.</p> <p>Note: This entails an examination of the financial, economic, social, environmental and institutional capacities of the systems needed to sustain net benefits over time. It involves analyses of resilience, risks and potential trade-offs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How effective were the value chain linkages promoted by the projects in ensuring sustainable market access as well as inclusive benefits for smallholder farmers, poor people, women and men? To what extent did the intervention/country strategy and programme contribute to long-term technical, social, institutional and financial/economical sustainability? What have been the challenges? What is the level of engagement, participation and ownership of the government, local communities, grassroots organizations and the rural poor? In particular, did the government ensure budget allocations to cover operation and maintenance? Did/would community-based organizations and institutions continue operation without external funding? What are the explaining factors? What about the sustainability of inclusive financial institutions in rural areas? Are the infrastructure micro projects financed by the projects likely to be maintained? And what about the outcomes of other types of micro projects? Did/would national-level institutions continue activities they initiated with IFAD support? What are the explaining factors? Did the programme include an exit strategy? 	<p>In-depth desk review of IFAD documentation</p> <p>Interviews with IFAD staff and national stakeholders</p> <p>Interviews and focus groups with direct and indirect beneficiaries during field visits</p> <p>M&E data</p> <p>Interviews with other development partners with similar/relevant support</p>
<p>Scaling up: takes place when: (i) bi- and multi laterals partners, private sector, communities adopt and diffuse the solution tested by IFAD; (ii) other stakeholders invested resources to bring the solution at scale; and (iii) the government applies a policy framework to generalize the solution tested by IFAD (from practice to policy).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent were results scaled-up or gave clear indication for future scaling up by other development partners, or the private sector? Is there an indication of commitment of the government and key stakeholders in scaling up interventions and approaches, for example, in terms of provision of funds for selected activities, human resources availability, continuity of pro-poor policies and participatory development approaches, and institutional support? 	<p>In-depth desk review of strategy and programme documents, etc.</p> <p>Interviews with IFAD staff, national stakeholders and other development partners</p> <p>Key informant interviews with IFAD staff and government stakeholders</p> <p>Interviews with development partners</p>
<p>Environment and natural resources management, and climate change adaptation. The extent to which the development interventions/strategy contribute to enhancing the environmental sustainability and resilience to climate change in small-scale agriculture.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent is the intervention/strategy: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Improving farming practices? Minimizing damage and introducing offsets to counter the damage caused by those farming practices? Minimizing environmental damage and introducing compensation to counter the damage caused by these agricultural practices? Supporting agricultural productivity that is sustainable and integrated into ecosystems? Channelling climate and environmental finance to smallholder farmers through the intervention/country programme, helping them to reduce poverty, enhance biodiversity, increase yields and lower greenhouse gas emissions? Building climate resilience by managing competing land use systems while reducing poverty, enhancing biodiversity, increasing yields and lowering greenhouse gas emissions? 	<p>COSOP and programme/project documents: design reports, PCRVs, PPEs and impact evaluation/assessment reports; previous CSPE reports; COSOPs review reports</p> <p>In-depth desk review of strategy and programme documents, etc.</p> <p>Interviews and focus groups with beneficiaries during field visits</p> <p>Key informant interviews with IFAD staff and government stakeholders</p> <p>Field visits and discussion with direct and indirect beneficiaries during field visits</p> <p>GIS data analysis</p>

Evaluation criteria and definition	Key evaluation questions	Data sources and collection methods
<p>Gender equality and women's empowerment: The extent to which IFAD interventions have contributed to better gender equality and women's empowerment. For example, in terms of women's access to and ownership of assets, resources and services; participation in decision-making; workload balance and impact on women's incomes, nutrition and livelihoods; and in promoting sustainable, inclusive and far-reaching changes in social norms, attitudes, behaviours and beliefs underpinning gender inequality.</p> <p>Evaluations will assess to what extent interventions and strategies have been gender transformational, relative to the context, by: (i) addressing root causes of gender inequality and discrimination; (ii) acting upon gender roles, norms and power relations; (iii) promoting broader processes of social change (beyond the immediate intervention).</p> <p>Evaluators will consider differential impacts by gender and the way they interact with other forms of discrimination (such as age, race, ethnicity, social status and disability), also known as gender intersectionality.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What were the project's achievements in terms of promoting gender equality and women's empowerment? • What were the contributions of IFAD-supported interventions to changes in: (i) women's access to resources, income sources, assets (including land) and services; (ii) women's influence in decision making within the household and community; (iii) workload distribution (including domestic chores) and sharing of benefits; and (iv) women's health, skills, nutrition? • Were there notable changes in social norms, attitudes, behaviours and beliefs and policies/laws relating to gender equality? • Was attention given to programme implementation resources and disaggregated monitoring with respect to gender equality and women's empowerment goals? • Did the programme (and projects) have gender strategies and action plans? How transformational were these strategies? • Were sufficient (human and financial) resources allocated to implement these strategies? • Were indicators (and data) to monitor targets and results disaggregated (according to gender, age and ethnic groups)? 	<p>COSOP and programme/project documents: design reports, PCRVs, PPEs and impact evaluation/assessment reports; previous CSPE reports</p> <p>In-depth desk review of strategy and programme documents, etc.</p> <p>Interviews with IFAD staff and national stakeholders</p> <p>Interviews and focus groups with beneficiaries during field visits</p> <p>Key informant interviews with IFAD staff and national stakeholders</p> <p>Evidence and testimonies gathering</p> <p>Field visits and discussion with direct and indirect beneficiaries during field visits</p> <p>Secondary statistical data on gender</p>
<p>Performance of partners (IFAD & government): The extent to which IFAD and the government (including central and local authorities and executing agencies) supported design, implementation and the achievement of results, conducive policy environment, and impact and sustainability of the intervention/country programme.</p> <p>The adequacy of the borrower's assumption of ownership and responsibility during all project phases, including government and implementing agency, in ensuring quality preparation and implementation, compliance with covenants and agreements, supporting a conducive policy environment and establishing the basis for sustainability, and fostering participation by the project's stakeholders.</p>	<p>IFAD:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How was the IFAD's strategic oversight effective? • How did IFAD take into account contextual issues and challenges in working in the country? • How effectively did IFAD support the overall quality of design, including aspects related to project approach, compliance and implementation aspects? • How proactively did IFAD identify and address threats to the achievement of project development objectives? • To what extent did the design consider factors of fragility and/or vulnerability of the system components? • How effectively did IFAD support the implementation of projects on aspects related to project management, financial management, and setting up project-level M&E systems? Did IFAD provide capacity building opportunities? How timely and adequate were they? • How did IFAD position itself and its work in partnership with other development partners? 	<p>In-depth desk review of strategy and programme documentation—including the quality of design, frequency and quality of supervision and implementation support mission reports, project status reports, PCRs, key correspondences (IFAD-government), COSOP and COSOP review</p> <p>Project M&E data and systems</p> <p>Interviews with IFAD staff and government stakeholders</p> <p>Interviews and focus groups discussion with other non-governmental stakeholders</p>

Evaluation criteria and definition	Key evaluation questions	Data sources and collection methods
	<p>Government:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How tangible was the government's commitment to achieving development objectives and ownership of the strategy/projects? • Did the government adequately involve and consult beneficiaries/stakeholders at design and during implementation? • How did the government position itself and its work in partnership with other development partners? • How well did the SPIU manage startup process, staff recruitment, resource allocation, implementation arrangements, the involvement and coordination with other partners, especially public institutions? • How timely did the SPIU identify and resolve implementation issues? Was project management responsive to context changes or the recommendations by supervision missions or by the Project Steering Committee? • How adequate were project planning and budgeting, management information system/M&E? Were these tools properly used by project management? • How well did the SPIU fulfil fiduciary responsibilities (procurement, financial management)? • How adequate were M&E arrangements made by the PMU, including the M&E plan, and the utilization of evaluation M&E data in decision-making and resource allocation? 	

Theory of change



Theory of change narrative:

People living in rural areas (especially women, youth and vulnerable groups) risk being left behind by Rwanda's transition to a market economy and are unable to adapt to climate change. They lack the scale, productive assets and knowledge needed to produce efficiently for the market. Underdeveloped value chains do not create enough decent jobs for youth and land-poor households. Moreover, climate-related losses reduce resources and increase the risks of investments. Limited consumption of nutritionally diverse foods further exacerbates food and nutrition security.

Three pathways contribute to the reduction of rural poverty in Rwanda:

- By improving access to assets, finance, technologies and knowledge, the rural poor can increase their productivity, reduce post-harvest losses or benefit from off-farm employment opportunities. Infrastructure development and strengthening linkages between value chain actors improve their access to markets and contribute to increasing their incomes.
- At the same time, better coordination among the various users of natural resources and protection and rehabilitation investments (among others, through the adoption of climate-smart agricultural practices) contribute to more sustainable natural resource management and increased adaptive capacities. This, in turn, leads to enhanced climate and environmental resilience of the rural poor.
- Finally, specific efforts, such as nutrition education, are needed to improve diet diversity and increase food and nutrition security in rural areas.

There are, however, a number of necessary conditions for this to happen: relevant partnerships are leveraged; synergies between projects materialize, the government shows commitment; the promoted good practices are relevant; the private sector is willing to invest; and special efforts are made to target women, youth and vulnerable groups.

2012 CSPE conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions. The performance of the portfolio has improved significantly since the CPE of 2005, especially with regard to effectiveness and efficiency, impact on household incomes and food security. A key factor contributing to such improvement was the stronger policy and institutional environment that the country has built up over the past decade, which started to show results in recent years. At the same time, IFAD improved the alignment of its interventions with national strategies and has introduced direct supervision and implementation support together with a country presence. IFAD's cooperation with Rwanda had been essentially project-based, and its value addition had been mainly in terms of well-designed and well-performing projects and in generating field-level effects. Insufficient complementary efforts and resources were devoted to non-lending activities. Furthermore, replicating and scaling up innovations or successful experience called for more involvement in policy dialogue, partnerships and knowledge management.

Recommendation 1: Place greater emphasis on institutional support and non-lending activities to promote the scaling up of innovations and harmonized approaches to rural finance and cooperative development. These recommendations include two sub-areas: (i) providing institutional support to local government for scaling up agricultural innovations and promoting the agricultural sector-wide approach to planning (SWAp) preparation; and (ii) programme-based support to participate in harmonized frameworks in rural finance and cooperative development. This calls for a gradual shift from project focus towards more attention on the systematization of lessons learned from within and outside the IFAD portfolio. It also calls for further dialogue and harmonization with development partners, and for sharing knowledge, experiences and values in the policy arena.

Recommendation 2: Move towards more strategic programme management and reliance on national systems, in line with the Paris Declaration. Increased engagement in non-lending activities will call for a review of current transaction costs in individual project follow-up. In line with the Paris Declaration, IFAD/government project cooperation should rely more on the Government of Rwanda's accountability and implementation systems, recognized as among the best and most efficient in sub-Saharan Africa. IFAD should move away from micromanagement, leaving this to government systems, while adopting a more strategic management approach. In this new role, IFAD would use more of its country programme management resources for addressing strategic issues both within and above projects.

Recommendation 3: Develop strengthened subsectoral support activities around three main axes: (i) protection of the natural resource base in the watersheds; (ii) development of pro-poor agricultural value chains based on private-public partnerships in food crops; and (iii) development of pro-poor agricultural value chains based on cash and export crops. IFAD's future programme should continue its watershed development initiatives, including the promotion and scaling up of agricultural innovations and soil and watershed protection. It should better assess and document environmental risks as well as opportunities. IFAD should support the development of value chains for food crops and livestock products through private-public partnerships. While many farm households have increased their production of food crops and livestock products beyond subsistence needs over the last three years, the systems needed to handle these surpluses (e.g. warehouses, processing and marketing) are not available. Major capital and human resources investments are required to handle the rapidly increasing surpluses. IFAD should support the pro-poor development of export and cash crops, and other products through private-public partnerships. Apart from their foreign exchange contributions, some crops have potential for generating significant on- and off-farm employment. There are still a number of unexploited value addition activities for tea and coffee. Sericulture could well create many on- and off-farm jobs in activities that are highly labour-intensive and with products of high value to weight. In pursuing public-private partnerships, support will be needed to promote transparent agreements and

competition in order to address situations whereby a large private investor, owing to limited competition, might exploit producers. Consideration will need to be given to the complexity and scale of operations. Thus, an approach for private-sector development, including development of public-private partnerships, should be developed to guide such support.

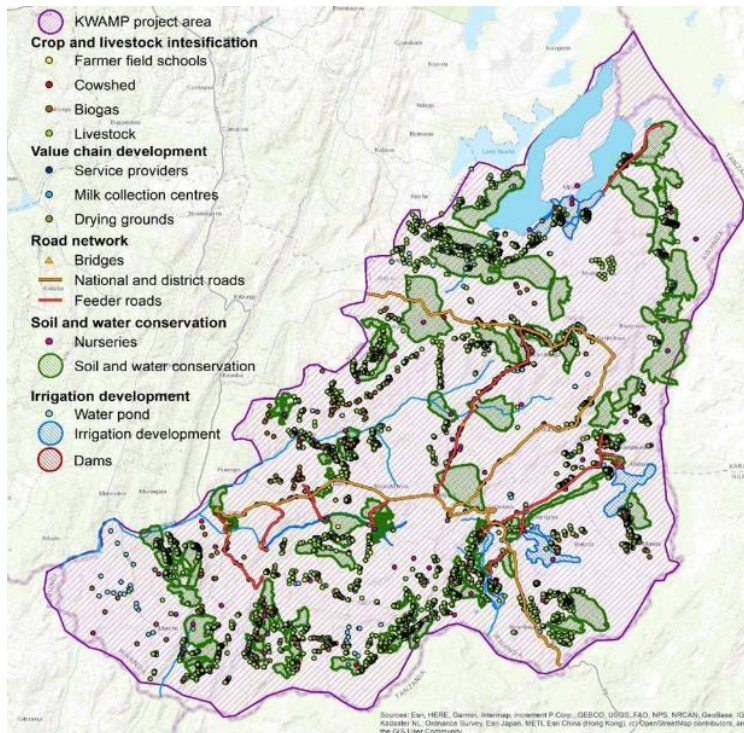
Follow-up 2012 CPE recommendations

CPE recommendation	Follow-up
Place greater emphasis on institutional support and non-lending activities to promote the scaling up of innovations and harmonized approaches to rural finance and cooperative development.	<p>Partially implemented</p> <p>The performance on non-lending activities remained moderately unsatisfactory. There was lack of a strategic approach and resources allocated. Improvements were made since 2019.</p> <p>The performance on scaling up also remained moderately unsatisfactory. Support to local governments to scale up innovations was given less prominence.</p> <p>There was little evidence of efforts to promote harmonized approaches to rural finance and cooperative development. However, newer projects like PRISM and PSAC adopted best practices in terms of inclusive rural finance by addressing both demand- and supply-side constraints, involving various suppliers and developing a diverse set of products and services. The country portfolio continued to work with RCA and made some efforts to increase coordination among service providers involved in capacity-building.</p>
Move towards more strategic programme management and reliance on national systems, in line with the Paris Declaration.	<p>Partially implemented</p> <p>An SPIU was set up to manage the country programme.</p> <p>The country office's engagement in non-lending activities remained moderately unsatisfactory, although improvements were seen since 2019.</p>
Develop strengthened subsectoral support activities around three main axes: (a) protection of the natural resource base in the watersheds; and develop pro-poor agricultural value chains based on private-public partnerships in (b) food crops and (c) cash and export crops.	<p>Fully implemented</p> <p>Building on KWAMP, KIIWP 1 and 2 focused on watershed development.</p> <p>There was an increased focus on agricultural value addition. As such, PRICE and PSAC targeted export-driven value chains; PASP focused on supporting the aggregation and processing of production; RDDP and PRISM aimed to increase the profitability of the dairy and small-livestock sector; and KIIWP 1&2 also focused on farm business development. All projects counted on greater involvement of the private sector, promoting, for example, public-private-producer partnerships (4Ps).</p>

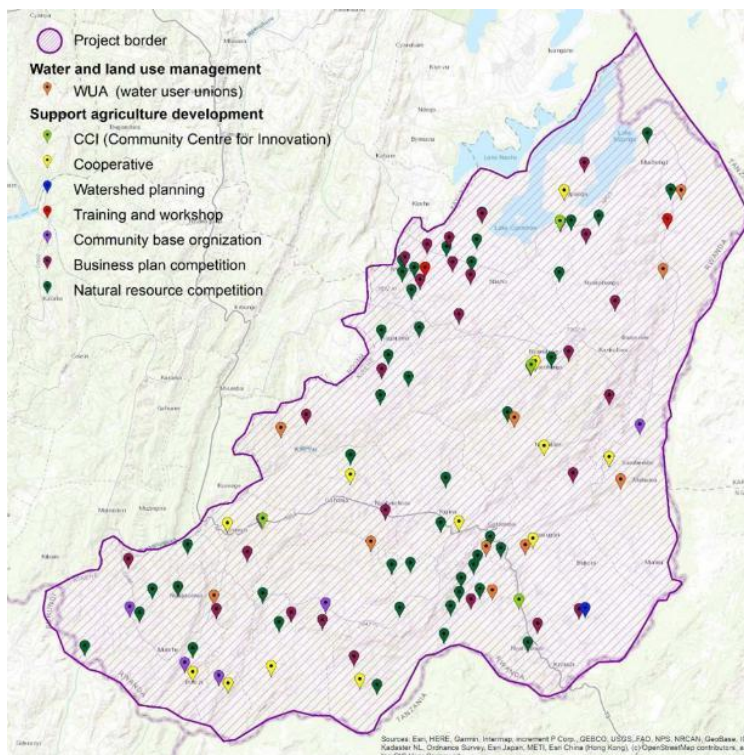
Source: Document review and interviews.

GIS data review of KWAMP

Investment locations



Overview map of Implemented Activities for Agriculture Intensification



Overview map of implemented activities for local institutional development.

Spot-checking investment locations

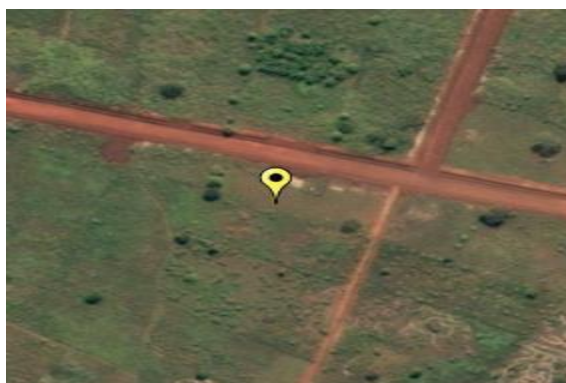
The reviewers checked several randomly chosen locations against recent satellite images from Google Maps and checked for their spatial logic (e.g. irrigated farmland is most likely located in valleys, sheds are in proximity to buildings, structures should be visible for water tanks, etc.).



Date: September 2013



Date: July 2022
Cowshed in Munini village



Date Jun 2011
Cowshed in Kabuye1 village



Date: July 2022
Cowshed in Kabuye1 village (not detected)



Date: July 2006
Feeder road Gatore Nyarwogo, 5 km



Date: August 2021
Feeder road Gatore Nyarwogo, 5 km



Date: June 2011
Dam in village Kabungwe, Karengwe II, 6 ha



Date: August 2021
Dam in village Kabungwe, Karengwe II, 6 ha



Date: June 2011
Dam in village Munini, 9.5 ha



Date: August 2021
Dam in village Munini, 9.5 ha



Date: June 2006
Irrigation Development in Mpanga Irrigation Scheme, in 2011. 189,2 ha



Date: March 2021
Irrigation Development in Mpanga Irrigation Scheme, in 2011. 189,2 ha

Logframe check

The reviewers checked the extent to which the GIS layers represent indicators in the project's logical framework.

Alignment of logframe indicators and GIS layers

Indicator	Logframe output 2016	GIS data	% covered
Ha of the irrigated command area fully utilized	1819 ha of the irrigated command area fully utilized	1,785 ha of total irrigation	98
	1118 ha developed for hillside	1,701 ha of hillside irrigation*	152
	701 ha developed for marshland	1,701 ha of hillside irrigation	12
Ha of watershed protected	18,556 ha of watershed protected	15,884 ha of terracing and trenching	86
Number of km of feeder road rehabilitation in deprived areas, using labour intensive methods	76.4 km of feeder road rehabilitated	61 km	80
Use of biogas to reduce consumption of fuel wood	451 households regularly operating a biogas fermenter	233 biogas plants	NA
Introduction and distribution of calf heifers, pure bulls and heads of small stock	Distribution of 3,667 in-calf heifers, 15 pure bulls and 5,123 heads of small stock	4,905 livestock (2,872 cows, 1,371 goats and 662 pigs)	NA

Source: Project documentation and GIS data.

*Note that there are no irrigation schemes around the Kagogo Dam. Also, polygons classified as hillside irrigation are likely to also include marshland irrigation.

The full report is available on request: evaluation@ifad.org

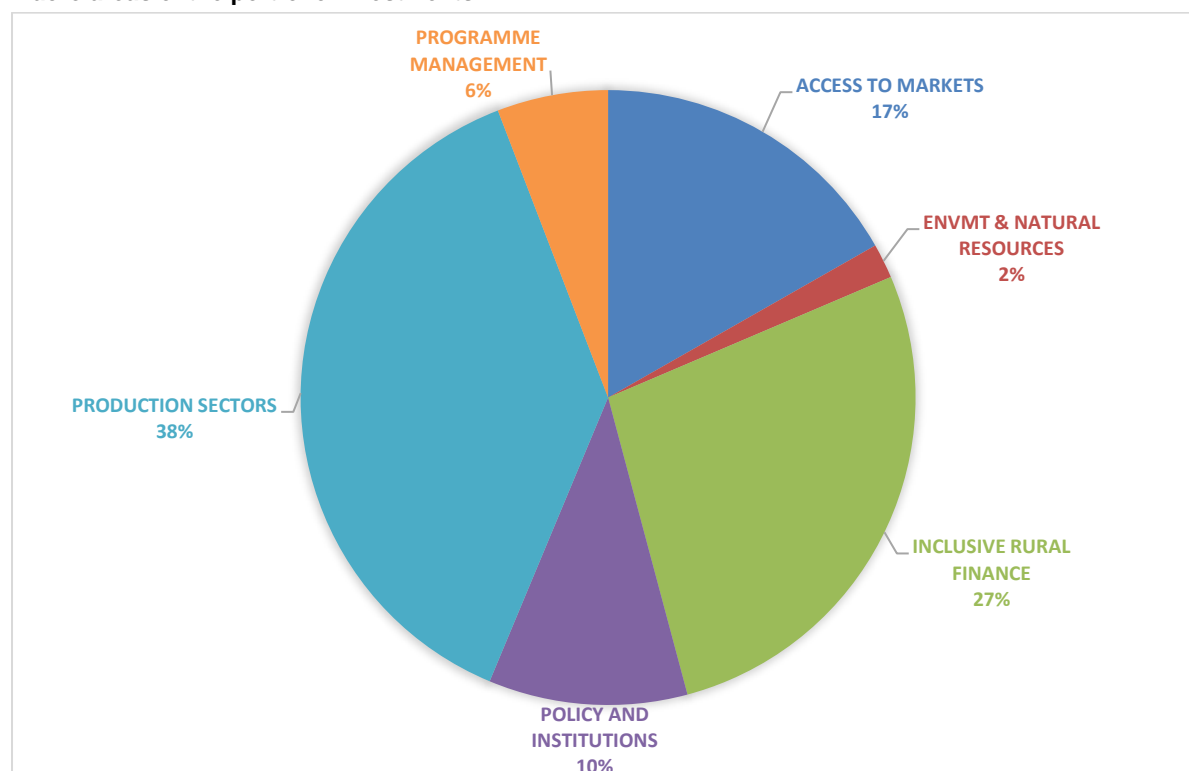
Supplementary data

Highlights from national policies and strategies

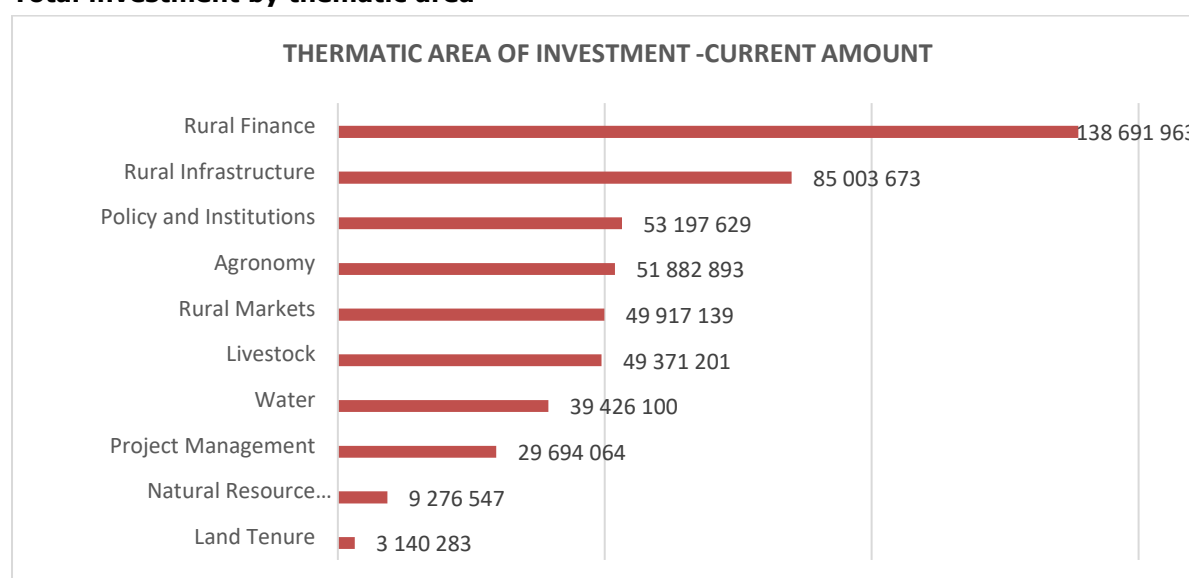
Policy/Strategy	Highlights
National Land Policy (2004; revised 2019)	The revised land policy builds on the achievements of the 2004 land policy and ensures continuity of the unfinished agenda in different land thematic areas such as land-use planning, land-use management and land administration. Actions are organized around three main pillars: land-use planning, surveying and mapping; land-use management; and land administration. Within the three pillars are eight thematic areas: (i) land-use planning, surveying and mapping; (ii) land utilization by various sectors; (iii) efficient land-use management; (iv) land for private sector investment; (v) land registration; (vi) administration of land lease fees, real property taxes and land markets; (vii) securing land rights and management of land disputes; and (viii) institutional and coordination framework of the land subsector.
National Agricultural Extension Strategy (2007)	The global objective of the National Agricultural Extension Strategy is to contribute to the professionalization of producers and to the effective adoption of innovations, in order to increase, diversify, specialize and intensify agricultural production, under conditions of economic profitability for the State and for farmer households while preserving the environment. The strategy is based on a number of guiding principles, which are: (i) participatory extension; (ii) multi approach and multi method; (iii) demand-driven and market-oriented extension; (iv) Process- and result-oriented extension; (v) Multi-actor extension; and (vi) building on already existing initiatives.
National Post-Harvest Staple Crop Strategy (2011)	The National Post-harvest Staple Crop Strategy aims to: (i) strengthen food security among rural staple crop producers; (ii) improve consumer access to safe and affordable food; (iii) support the private sector to invest in strengthening the competitiveness of the staple crop value and supply chain; (iv) improve efficiency and decrease marketing costs along the staple crop value chain; and (v) enhance producers' access to, and linkages with, markets.
National Dairy Strategy (2013)	The NDS has three broad objectives relating to production/ecosystems, marketing (all activities involving value-added and transformation beyond the farm gate), and policies (institutions, programs, governance). Together, these objectives should contribute to achieving maximum benefits to the larger Rwandan society.
National Fertilizer Policy (2014)	The objective of the policy is to contribute to increased agricultural productivity, leading to greater economic returns and incomes through increased and sustainable access and use of fertilizers. Its specific objectives are to: (i) create an enabling environment for the development of a privately driven and liberalized fertilizer importation and distribution system that fosters competition and innovation; (ii) promote fertilizer trade; (iii) establish an efficient regulatory and monitoring system; (iv) create awareness and improve knowledge of the benefits of fertilizers; (v) promote diverse fertilizer products and technologies that enhance efficient utilization of fertilizers; (vi) promote integrated nutrient management and conservation agriculture for environmental sustainability; (vii) establish incentives that permit increased access and use of fertilizers at affordable rates by all the farmers; (viii) support agricultural research and development; (ix) facilitate the application of balanced fertilizer; (x) support the local production of fertilizers; (xi) foster institutional linkages and gender issues; and (xii) promote the harmonization of fertilizer policies at regional levels.
National Horticulture Policy and Strategic Implementation Plan (2014)	The objectives of the national horticulture policy are for the horticulture subsector to contribute directly to rapidly improving welfare through rapid increase in: (i) national horticulture production and in the efficiency of production; (ii) the value added domestically within the horticulture sector and in the efficiency of such value adding; (iii) accelerated growth in net export earnings from trade in fresh and processed horticultural produce, thereby easing the foreign exchange constraint on national economic growth; and (iv) rapid increase in the access of poor households to fruits and vegetables coupled with rapid improvement in the nutritional efficiency of fruit and vegetable use within poor households.
Domestic Market Recapture Strategy (2015);	The objective is to increase domestic production for local consumption while contributing to structural transformation of the productive sector and increasing international competitiveness.
National ICT for Agriculture Strategy (2016–2020)	The overall objective of ICT4RAg is to achieve agricultural productivity increase through use of ICT by: (i) developing a common user interface and a repository database for farmers and farm information; (ii) increasing the number of skilled and knowledgeable farmers; (iii) spur job creation among youth in agricultural sector and peripheral services; (iv) improving and increasing access to agricultural information, knowledge and markets; and (v) expanding access to and the uptake of rural and agricultural financial services.

Policy/Strategy	Highlights
Livestock Master Plan (2017)	The Rwanda Livestock Master Plan (LMP) is a national sectoral plan of Rwanda for the period of 2017/18–2021/22. The main objectives of the plan include reducing poverty, achieving food and nutritional security, increasing economic growth, increasing exports, contributing to industrialization and employment, and mitigating climate change.
Made in Rwanda Policy (2017)	The overall objective of the MIR Policy is to: “Address the trade deficit and increase job creation by promoting exports, boosting production of and stimulating sustainable demand for competitive Rwandan value-added products by addressing factors constraining their quality and cost competitiveness.”
National Agribusiness Investment Promotion Strategy (2017)	The National Agribusiness Investment Promotion Strategy (NAIPS) of 2017, is a subsidiary of NAP. It mainly seeks to promote increased private sector agribusiness investment in Rwanda and to guide public sector measures to achieve this goal.
National Feeder Roads Policy and Strategy (2017)	The policy vision of the Feeder Roads subsector is to contribute to the goal of connecting all agricultural potential production areas to markets with a basic access, resilient and a motorable road. The National Feeder Roads Policy has identified three main strategic and enabling pillars upon which core policy principles have been based: (i) enabling and stimulating rural socioeconomic development; (ii) institutional framework in feeder roads operations; and (iii) means and resources use efficiency in feeder roads.
National Policy on Promotion of Cooperatives (2018)	The overriding objective of the policy is to enable the cooperative movement to play its vital role to transform the national economy. The specific objectives of the policy includes, among others, to: (i) revisit the structure of the Rwanda Cooperative Agency to respond to new dynamics in the various sectors of the cooperative development; (ii) redefine the organizational structure of cooperative movement; (iii) improve the current management and accountability system in the overall structure of cooperative movement; and (iv) improve the government and cooperative policy dialogue to enhance cooperative's contribution to national development.
Irrigation Master Plan (2020)	The Rwanda Irrigation Master Plan (IMP) is a ten-year national sectoral plan providing planning tools for rational exploitation of its soil and water resources. The goal of the Rwandan Government is to foster a rapid transition from subsistence-based agriculture, in which the majority of Rwandan farmers are currently involved, to market-oriented commercial agriculture. The plan also seeks to address the social dimensions of the irrigation strategy, paying special attention to the role of gender in irrigation projects. In order to enable more inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems, participatory irrigational management (PIM) will be applied.
National Decentralisation Policy (2021)	The overall objective is to deepen and sustain grassroots-based democratic governance and promote equitable local development by enhancing citizen participation and strengthening local government systems. It is guided by the following principles: (i) subsidiarity; (ii) national unity, indivisibility and equitable development; (iii) demarcation of roles and responsibilities; (iv) local autonomy; (v) government as a single system or entity; (vi) recognizing that “one size does not fit all”; (vii) accountability; (viii) gender equality; and (ix) inclusive governance.

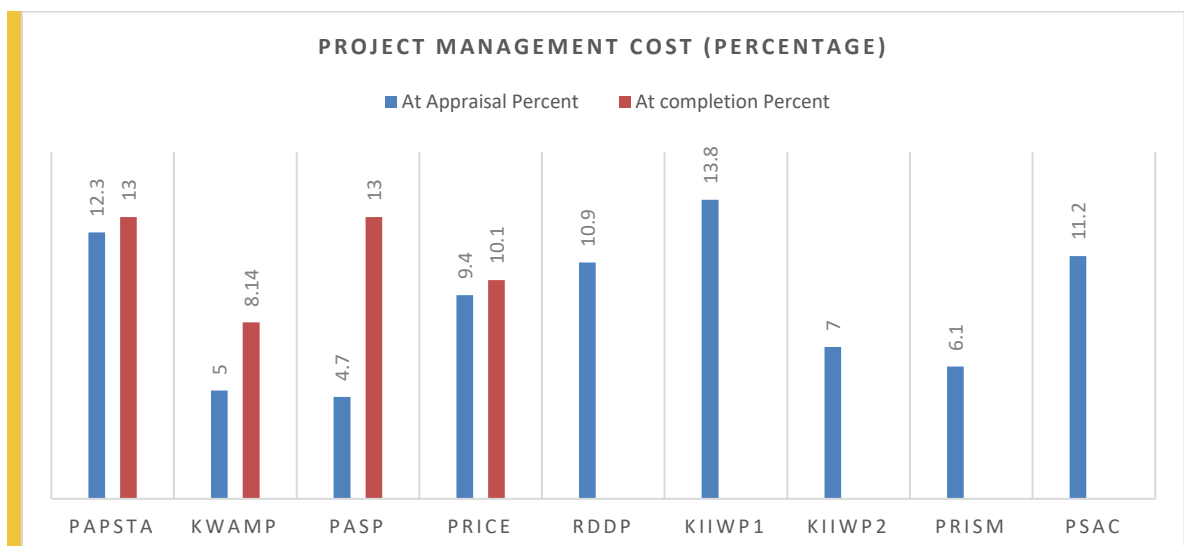
Source: document review.

Macro areas of the portfolio investments

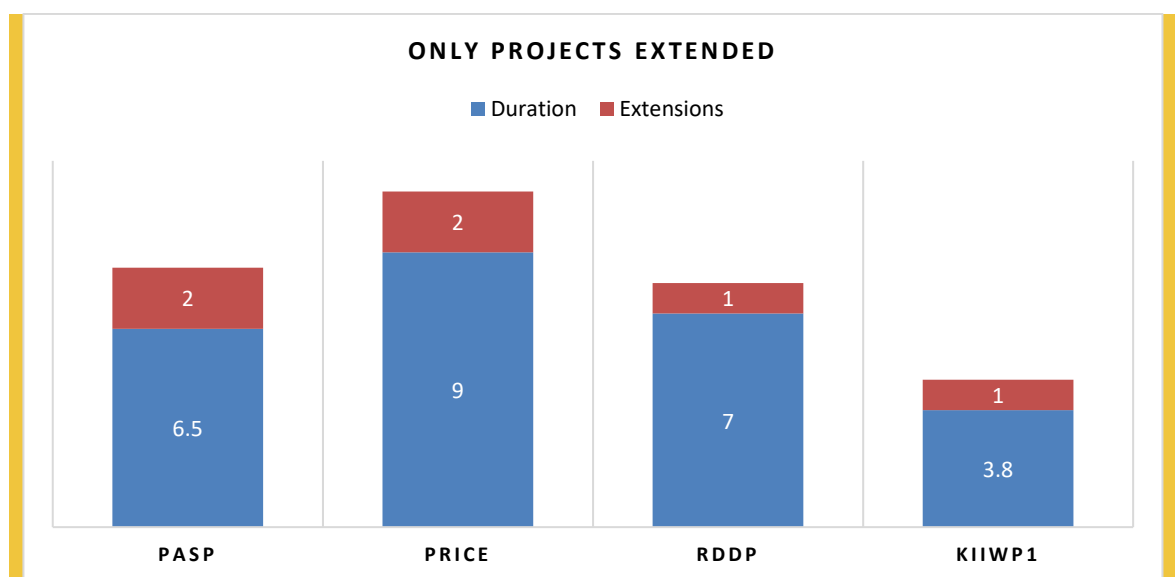
Source: IOE analysis based on Oracle Business Intelligence data. Period covered: 2013–2022.

Total investment by thematic area

Source: IOE analysis based on Oracle Business Intelligence data. Period covered: 2013–2022.

Project management costs

Source: IFAD's Operational Results Management System (ORMS).

Project extensions

Source: IFAD's Operational Results Management System (ORMS).

Cost per beneficiary

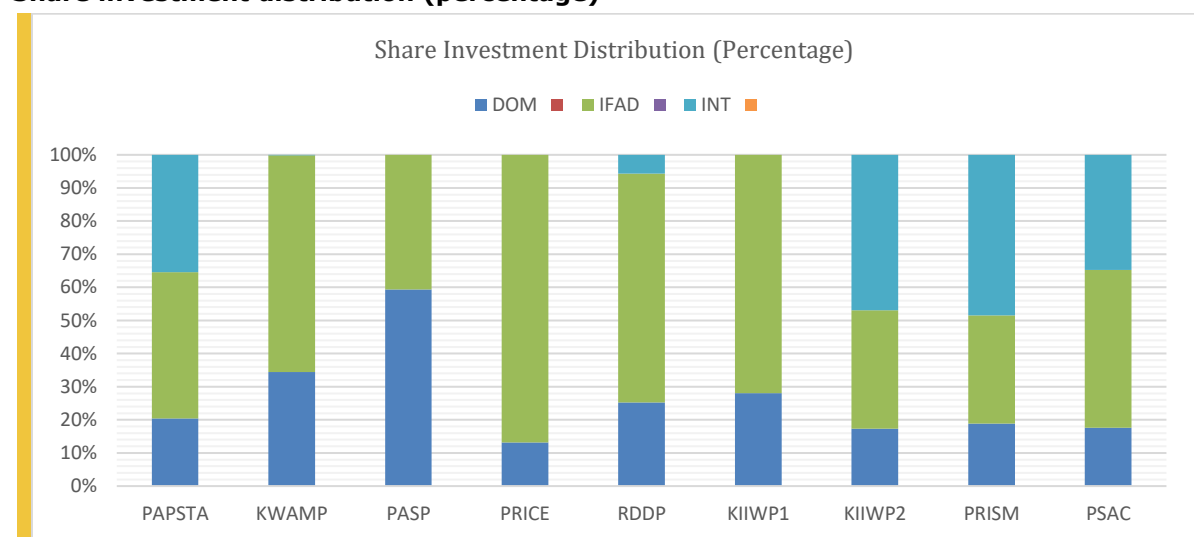
Project	Cost per Beneficiary (USD)- Per Household		Cost per Beneficiary (USD)- Per Beneficiary	
	At design	At completion	At design	At completion
PAPSTA	1 134.23	845.36	462.65	169.07
KWAMP	1 349.13	765.82	255.96	189.89
PASP	2 572.54	673.97	535.95	156.16
PRICE	473.38	433.57	96.22	95.09
RDDP	688.09	-	-	-
KIIWP1	618.36	-	-	-
KIIWP2	1 298.40	-	-	-
PRISM	1 731.82	-	393.59	-
PSAC	1 109.34	-	246.52	-

Source: CSPE review (cost tables).

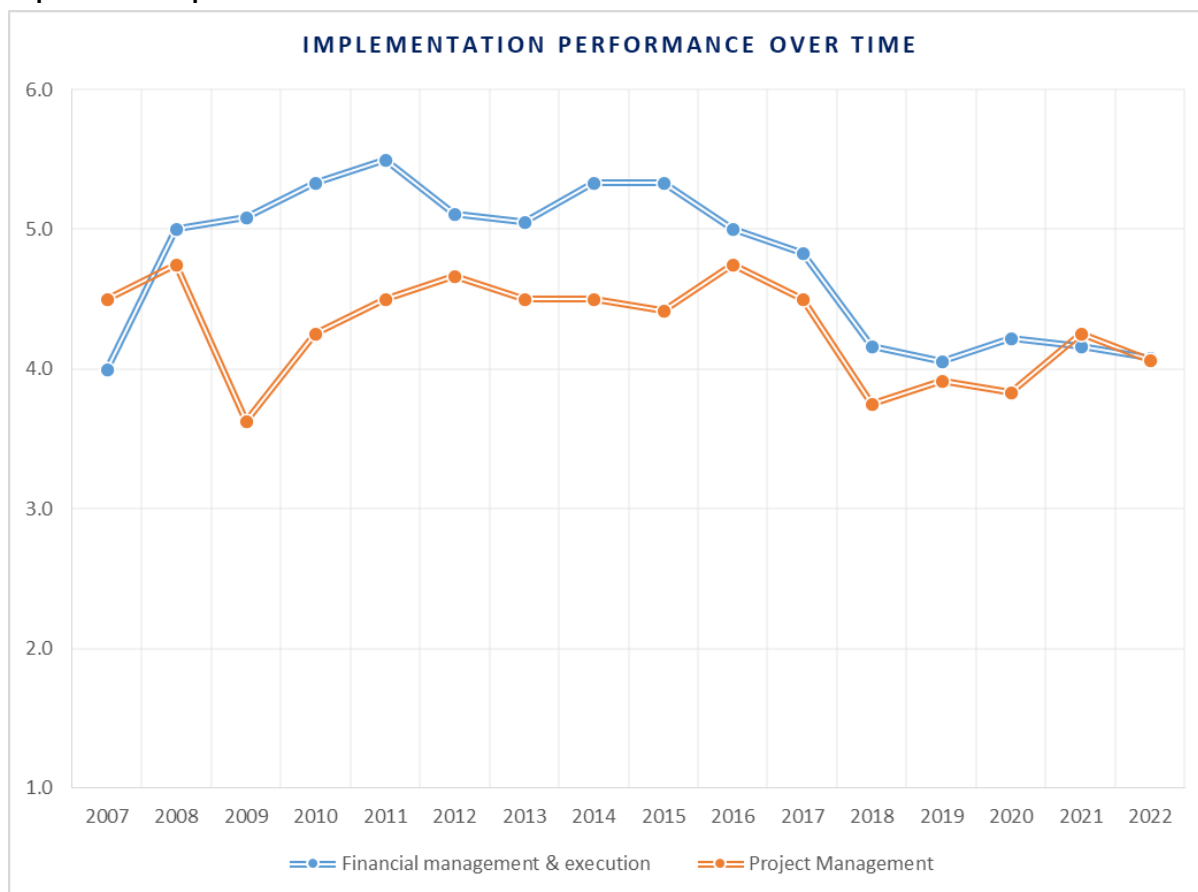
Summary of data availability for the assessment of rural poverty impact

Project	Data availability	Notes
PAPSTA	Baseline survey Impact Assessment Study	The impact assessment utilized a before-and-after-study by comparing the conditions or outcomes before and after the implementation of the intervention. No comparison/counterfactual group
KWAMP	Baseline survey Impact Assessment Study	The impact assessment utilized a before-and-after-study by comparing the conditions or outcomes before and after the implementation of the intervention. No comparison/counterfactual group
PASP	Baseline survey Impact Assessment Study	Impact assessment had control group but adopted a non-matched control group design. Baseline assessment was not used at endline
PRICE	Baseline survey Impact Assessment Study	Two impact assessments available – project/government-led and IFAD Research and Impact Assessment Division IAS. Project-led impact assessment used a counterfactual control/comparison group (matched comparison was a requirement from the ToRs); focused on all supported value chains. IFAD impact assessment used a comparison group to assessment (matched comparison) and constructed a counterfactual – detailed approach/methodology was documented on how the counterfactual was developed; focused on coffee and horticulture.

Source: IOE evaluation team, review of closed projects impact assessment studies.

Share investment distribution (percentage)

Source: IFAD's Oracle Business Intelligence (OBI).

Implementation performance over time

Source: ORMS.

Examples of programmes by other development partners that converge with the IFAD programme

The World Bank's Commercialization and De-Risking for Agricultural Transformation Project (CDAT) (US\$300 million) aims to increase the use of irrigation and commercialization among producers and agribusiness firms across the country (2022–2027).

The World Bank Transformation of Agriculture Sector Project (\$300 million) 2015–2018 aimed to increase and intensify the productivity of the Rwandan agricultural and livestock sectors and expand the development of value chains.

UNDP - Poverty Environment Action for SDGs project addressed the relationship between unsustainable management of environment and natural resources (ENR) and multi-dimensional poverty in Rwanda. (2018–2022)

Hinga Weze was the USAID/Rwanda Project (US\$32.6 million for 2017–2021, awarded June 2017), implemented by Cultivating New Frontiers in Agriculture (CNFA). The project's objective was to sustainably increase smallholder farmers' incomes, improve the nutritional status of Rwandan women and children, and increase the resilience of the agriculture and food systems to the changing climate.

USAID/PSDAG was a five-year Private-Sector Driven Agricultural Growth Project, implemented by IRG (now RTI) from 2014–2019 at US\$25 million. PSDAG's goal was to increase smallholder farmers' incomes by promoting private-sector investments that contribute to the Government of Rwanda's Vision 2020 of "transforming agriculture into a market-oriented, competitive, and high-value sector."

The European Union supported the agricultural sector by committing €200 million (US\$244 million) for six fiscal years (2015–2021) "to enhance the agriculture sector's sustainable use of land and water resources, value creation and contribution to nutrition security."

The Clinton Development Initiative (CDI) supported agribusiness development through the Anchor Farm Project, which targeted 35,000 smallholder farmers (in five districts including N.E. Rwanda) to utilize good agricultural practices to increase yields.

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) had significant agricultural programming within Rwanda, as exemplified by the Gikuriro Project (2015–2020) (in eight districts) and the Byumba Family Nutrition Project.

World Vision International (WVI) implemented the agriculture program, THRIVE, implemented from 2017–2022. THRIVE had four parts: income generation; natural resource management; disaster risk and mitigation; and an empowered world view to target poor farmers with some means.

Source: Feed the Future. 2018;¹ World Bank. 2023;² UNDP.2023.³

¹ Feed the Future. 2018. Rwanda: Desk Study of Extension and Advisory Services Developing Local Extension Capacity (DLEC) Project March 2018.

² World Bank. 2023. Rwanda—Transformation of Agriculture Sector Program Phase 2 Program-for-Results. Independent Evaluation Group, Project Performance Assessment Report 177336, Washington, DC: World Bank.

³ <https://open.undp.org/projects/00115035>

Examples of specific policy interventions

PRICE

- Research on banana/coffee intercropping and soil and leaf analyses (for defining fertilizer requirements for the different coffee growing areas) was successfully conducted and approved at the technical level by RAB/NAEB. At the cabinet level, development of a national policy with respect to intercropping is now underway through MINAGRI. This is an important intervention for coffee farmers from food security and crop productivity perspectives.
- PRICE assisted coffee farmers with organic certification for fairtrade.
- PRICE conducted a national coffee census in 2015 and updated the database of coffee trees, coffee farmers, etc. It has become a planning tool for application of fertilizers and pesticides. It was also used for zoning of coffee washing stations and coffee sector projections, that, in turn, helps the Government of Rwanda to enhance the participation of the private sector in the coffee sector. The coffee zoning developed under PRICE has been accepted at the national level.
- Setting up standards: The “Silk Cocoon - Code of Practice” has been developed by Rwanda Standards Board (RSB) with PRICE support and has been in public circulation for comments. The standard establishes the production practices for *Bombyx mori* fresh cocoons and elaborates production activities from the rearing house to cocoon transportation in order to ensure quality is maintained.
- Successful lobbying for tea farmers: Previous IFAD missions had identified BRD loans owed by tea cooperatives as an impediment to production expansion as deductions of the principal loan, penalties and interests were high and tended to deplete farmer earnings. This concern was addressed by the Government which has waived all accrued penalties amounting to almost RWF2 billion. Upon successful lobbying of PRICE, the Government and Rwanda Tea Association (RTA) have also increased the ratio of made tea price payable to farmers from 40 to 50 per cent. This increased rate of green leaf payment is a real breakthrough, expected to further motivate farmers to expand production and increase productivity of their bushes.

PASP

- RAB conducted research activities and the results were useful for policy makers. For example, the mycotoxin survey was completed and published to inform policy; and the Government financed the adoption and scaling up nationally of the maize drying approach.
- PASP introduction of distinctive designs and structures for drying and storage facilities for maize and beans contributed to development of policies for building codes for drying facilities which were adopted by the Rwanda Bureau of Standards (RBS) and MINAGRI.
- PASP (PCR, 2020) contributed to national and international policies on climate issues and to the implementation of the following policy actions: Rwanda National Environment & Climate Change Policy (2018); Nationally Determined Contributions (2015); Rwanda’s Green Growth and Climate Resilience Strategy (2011); and National Energy Policy (2014).

PRISM

- Under the MoU with MINAGRI, PRISM and RDDP jointly supported the finalization of the Animal Health and Production Law and its three Ministerial Orders. Under the same MoU, PRISM supported the National Agriculture Insurance Scheme (NAIS) at MINAGRI to develop insurance products for small livestock. Insurance companies’ local staff were trained and supported to develop product which are now available on the market.
- Another ongoing initiative in the domain of policy is the formulation of the Small Livestock Investment Strategy.

RDDP

- Adoption of regulations on sanitary mandate. District platforms are now operational and play a substantial role in terms of representation, advocacy and value chain organization.
- A report reviewing experience with Twigire Mworozu Livestock Promoters in Musanze was shared among stakeholders, and the draft L-FFS Impact Study, commissioned by IFAD, was produced. These insights now must translate into a Policy Note on Livestock Extension.

- Animal health and production law has been validated and is now going through Cabinet approval.
- Sanitary Mandate: on this important policy option, RDDP has made significant progress during the last semester. This was accomplished through the partnership with Rwanda Council of Veterinary Doctors (RCVD), which has commissioned a study and provided inputs for the development of the Ministerial Order and Ministerial Instructions.
- Breeding policy: the formulation of the breeding policy is still ongoing through a partnership between RAB and FAO. It will be critical to finalize this work and have the policy adopted and shared with stakeholders by the end of the project, as it will guide the design of the next phase of RDDP.
- MINICOM sets the price of milk in a bid to protect dairy farmers. It was mentioned that IFAD, through MINAGRI, has also been active in advocating for these milk price regulations. The farmgate price for milk is currently pegged at RWF320/litre.

Source: CSPE, based on document reviews and interviews.

Examples of research activities

PRICE

PRICE's partnership with RAB has strengthened coffee production interventions in the country through the following research achievements for coffee:

- A new coffee leaf rust-resistant variety (RAB C15) was developed and released to coffee growers in 2015. Its multi-locational adaptive breeding conducted for over four years resulting in the choice of Line 6 for higher yield of 3.8 kg of cherries per tree.
- IPM packages were developed to control the Antestia bug and coffee berry disease.
- Research on banana/coffee intercropping formed the basis of the national policy on intercropping practices in coffee.
- Soil and leaf analyses to finetune the fertilizer requirements for different coffee growing areas; and to address the issue of mulching, cultivation of *themeda* was taken up on 175 ha. (PRICE PCR, 2021).

Applied research: RAB research focused mostly on citrus, mango and avocado. It managed to secure rootstock for disease-free citrus varieties, developed IPM packages, explored new intensive mango cultivation systems, and undertook research to increase stevia yields. From 2016, it started to also focus on the development of virus-free tamarillo seedlings and improved chili seeds to respond to the specific demand of Rwandan exporters. Seven kilograms of hot chili seeds and 37.7 kg of clean tamarillo seeds were produced and distributed in 2017/18. The Project, however, has not made a clear follow-up on the outcome of this seed distribution. Also, despite repeated IFAD recommendations, no proper cost-benefit analysis has been released and, thus, RAB has not come up with clear recommendations on the most economically attractive fertilizing, disease and pest control packages for smallholder farmers.

PASP

RAB conducted research activities and the results were useful for policymakers. For example, the mycotoxin survey was completed and published to inform policy; and the Government financed the adoption and scaling up nationally of the maize drying approach.

RDDP

Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources and International Fund for Agricultural Development (2015). Study on Development of Dairy Policy, Regulatory and Institutional Framework for proposed Rwanda Dairy Development Project (RDDP).

KWIIP has an MoU with the University of Rwanda for research, including soil and water research.

Source: Documents review and interviews.

Examples of innovations

Technological innovations PAPSTA

- Promotion of zero-grazing contributed to increased availability of manure, soil fertility and improved crop production for the project beneficiaries.
- Promotion of the SRI, "Système de Riziculture Intensive," of rice intensification as an innovative method combining plantation techniques, rational water use and fertilizers.
- At household level, PAPSTA promoted "kitchen gardens" as a technique accessible to poor farmers, providing them an opportunity to produce a variety of vegetables that had a tangible impact in terms of improved nutrition and additional revenues.
- The bocage was a technique of protecting and restoring soil fertility. It consisted of fencing a plot previously protected against erosion, with fresh hedges.

Social innovations PRICE

- Performance-based grant facility to improve horticulture producers' access to backward finance market - PRICE used the Performance-based Grant Facility to address limited access to finance for horticulture farmers and to develop confidence among the financial institutions about financing this sector, which was widely unknown to them and, thus, considered as risky by default.
- Horticulture Export Guarantee Facility - A breakthrough was made by PRICE to improve the access to working capital of horticulture exporters.
- Revolving Fertilizer Scheme-The design of RFS is innovative and tries to address the productivity issues over a period of about five years. It involves farmers, farmers' bodies (cooperatives and their unions) and tea factories to monitor the productivity at every cycle of production to ensure timely breakeven.
- Linking exporters to smallholder producers through innovative training packages. This innovation facilitates direct engagement between value chain actors while building capacity of each other to face the bigger and better market. Farmers are at the base of the value chain. On the contrary, exporters touch the top of the larger chain.
- Subsidies to air cargo charges to mitigate the COVID-19 impact. This is an emergency situation's specific innovation which has potential to apply locally, regionally and globally considering disturbance in food movements created by the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Cocoon-processing unit (silk production) (processing)

KWAMP

- Participatory approach for management of: (i) watersheds (PIPA, NRM); (ii) sustainable rice intensification (SRI) (Production); (iii) flexi-biogas systems (NRM); (iv) community cowsheds (Production, PIPA); and (v) hillside irrigation scheme, and organizations (Production, NRM, social capital, environment and CC, policy)

Source: CSPE, based on document reviews and interviews.

The JP-RWEE grant in Rwanda

The Joint Programme on "Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women" (JP RWEE) is a global initiative that aims to secure rural women's livelihoods and rights in the context of sustainable development. Jointly implemented between 2014 and 2021 by the FAO, IFAD, UN Women and WFP, JP RWEE builds on each agency's comparative advantages to improve the status of women in rural areas. In Rwanda, JP-RWEE benefited from the experience of IFAD in promoting gender inclusion through community-based approaches (GALS) and addressing gender at the household level.

The JP RWEE worked in 8 out of 30 districts in Rwanda, reaching a total of 18,275 rural women and men (10,406 women and 7,869 men) and 82,237 household members. With the technical assistance of local service providers, 220 beneficiaries (190 women and 30 men) were trained in the GALS methodology and became GALS Champions. Nutrition and climate change were also integrated as topics into the GALS trainings (GALS+). With sequential visual tools and pictorial mapping, GALS enabled household members to jointly build a vision of their future and plan a strategy to achieve it, thus fostering a more inclusive and equitable decision-making process within households. GALS was then scaled-up to 4,116 community members (2,351 females and

1,765 males) through pyramid peer sharing. Endline results (for the implementation period 2018–2021) included:

- 91 per cent average achievement of planned objectives (e.g. agriculture production, purchase of assets, savings).
- 100 per cent average increase in the production and consumption of fruit and vegetables at family level.
- 92 per cent achievement of environmental protection goals (e.g. erosion control and rainwater retention).
- 211 per cent increase in gender equality in decision-making, including decisions on land and selling of produce.
- 206 per cent increase in equal property rights including ownership of bank accounts, land and other assets.
- 215 per cent increase in equality of movement and association, work and leisure, with women and men equally attending meetings, being in leadership positions and sharing household tasks.

Most of the beneficiaries were also found to have made changes in household gender relations. Both men and women were making decisions on the use of household income, the use of land for good nutrition and environmental protection, and both were involved in household chores such as water collection and cooking.

JP-RWEE suffered from staff turnover at its beginning, which likely contributed to the weak coordination with IFAD operations. The Steering Committee, which was made up of the four agencies, Government and service providers at country level, met regularly but it has not always been attended by the same government representatives, thus, limiting the potential for knowledge dissemination and impact at the national level.

Source: (1) FAO, IFAD, UN Women and WFP. 2022. JP RWEE Good Practices – Phase 1: Joint Programme on: Accelerating Progress towards Rural Women's Economic Empowerment. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc2240en>. (2) Buchy M. et al. 2021, Global End-term Evaluation of the JP-RWEE in Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Nepal, Niger and Rwanda from 2014 to 2020. (3) CSPE mission.

List of key persons met

IFAD

Sara Mbago Bhunu - Regional Director, East and Southern Africa Division
Dagmawi Habte-Selassie - Country Director, East and Southern Africa Division
Aimable Ntukanyagwe - Country Programme Officer, East and Southern Africa Division
Francesco Rispoli - Former Country Director
Francisco Pichon - Former Country Director
Sara Kouakou - Regional Portfolio Adviser, East and Southern Africa Division
Shirley Chinien - Regional Economist, East and Southern Africa Division
Yongeun Lee - Programme Analyst, East and Southern Africa Division
Beatrice Gerli - JP RWEE Coordinator

Government

Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources

Hon. Dr. Mr. Ildephonse Musafiri - Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources
Eric Gatera Iyeze - Chief Technical Advisor
Jean-Claude Ndorimana - Director General of Animal Resources Development
Joas Tugizimana - M&E Officer
Ritah Nshuti - Advisor to the Minister of State
Olivier Kamana - Permanent Secretary

Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning

Innocent Mugabe - IFAD Focal Point

National Agricultural Export Development Board

Alexis Nkurunziza - Traditional Commodities Division Manager
Eric Kabayizo - SPIU Coordinator
Maurice Habiyaambere - Former PRICE Operations Manager
Mose Munyaneza - Export Service Division Manager
Sandrine Urujeni - Chief Operations Officer

Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Development Board

Eugene Niyonzima - Division Manager for Animal Resources Processing and Biotechnology

Rwanda Cooperative Agency

Innocent Ngoga Baziga - Director of Cooperative Promotion and Capacity Building Unit

Single Project Implementation Unit

Alexis Ndagijimana - RDDP Operations Manager
Andre Ndagija - KIIWP Cooperatives and Value Chains
Bruce Ndaga - Chief Accountant
Edison Gakuru - KIIWP Accountant
Eliane Kayitesi - PRISM M&E Officer
Jean-Claude Mudahunga - SPIU Head of MIS
Joseph Nshokeyinka - PRISM Operations Manager
Juvenal Masabo - SPIU Knowledge Management & Communication Specialist
Madeleine Usabyimbabazi - SPIU ENRM/CC Expert and Acting KIIWP Operations Manager

Martin Kayiranga – RDDP M&E Officer
Michel Ngarambe – Farmers Organizations Specialist
Ngabonziza Anselme – KIIWP Horticulturist
Nkawa – KIIWP Irrigation Specialist
Raymond Kamwe - SPIU Gender Officer
Olivier Faïda – KIIWP M&E Officer
Samuel Barabwiriza - Head of Financial Management
Sarah Nyiramutangwa - Acting Coordinator
Stephen Rwamulangwa - SPIU Coordinator
Telesphore Ntivuguruzwa – RDDP Nutrition Specialist
Yves Murenzi – Chief Accountant
Vedaste Nteziyaremye – PRISM Vet Research Technician
Vincent Niyiranga – RDDP Animal Health Specialist
Emmanuel Gisagra - Rural Finance Specialist

District officials

Aimé François Niyonsenga - Vice-Mayor of Gakenke District
Ange Sebutege - Mayor of Huye District
Bruno Rangira - Mayor of Kirehe District
Christophe Nkusi - Mayor of Ngororero District
David Mugiraneza - Executive Secretary of Bugesera District
Erasme Ntazinda - Mayor of Nyanza District
Hope Munganyinka - Vice-Mayor of Kayanza District
Jean Paul Twagirayezu - Accountancy Division Manager of Nyabihu District
Valens Habarurema - Mayor of Ruhango District
Business Development Fund (BDF)
Jean Cyubahiro – Investment Analyst
Hildebrand Zirimwabagabo – IT Officer
Vincent Munyeshayaka - Chief Executive Officer

Development Bank of Rwanda

William Furaha – Access to Finance Grant Facility
Rwanda Meteorology Agency
Aimable Gahigi – Director General
Anthony Twahirwa – Division Manager of Weather / Climate Services and Application Division

Development partners

CORDAID

Heleen Saad van der Beek –Regional Director
Patrick Birasa –Country Manager
Shyaka Francis Revocatus – IFAD STARLIT Project Manager

ENABEL

Gerrit John Bosman – Intervention Manager

Heifer International

Emmanuel Bahati – Project Manager
Harriet Mutoni – Programme Manager

FAO

Coumba Sow - FAO Representative and Country Director
Emiel Buffel – FAO Evaluation Analyst
Sara Holst – FAO Evaluation Specialist
Otto Muhinda - Former Assistant FAO Representative
Rwanda Youth in Agribusiness Youth
Alice Ingabire - Project Manager
Donath Nemeye – Quality Assurance Officer
Esperance Nyiramucyo - Corporate Liaison Manager
Jean-Marie Vianney Rwiririza – CEO

WFP

Ahmareen Karim - Acting Country Director

World Bank

Åsa Giertz - Senior Agriculture Economist
Esdras Byiringiro – Agriculture Economist

Beneficiaries

Rice Cooperative Nyarubuye
L-FFS/GALS Ruhango
Cooperative TUZAMURANE
Cooperative COPACEL
DUHAMIC-ADRI
MCC Ruhango
Cooperative COPEMOKA
KACC Business Group Ltd.
GALS/FFS Twitezimbere Mubworozi
Cooperative Twungubumwe
Rugali agro-processing cooperative
Murundi Farmers' Cooperative
Water User Committee at Gakoma borehole
Garden Cooperative fruit farming KOTWIDIKA
Water Users' Committee (Sagatare)
Cooperative KODUTIGA
Water Users' Committee (Cyunuzi 1)
Water Users' Committee (Kibaza)
TUGENDANE N'IGIHE RUHASHYA SACCO
KARAMBI GARLIC Limited
SACCO Teganya Busasama
FFS Giramata Mworozzi
Self-help group Nyange
FFS Nyange
Ingabo Dairy Company
MCP Rambura
Twongere Kawa Coko managing coffee washing station
BHE & MGAC company
Self Help Group Dukunde Umurimo Mwumba

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