

Republic of Ghana  
Root and Tuber Improvement and Marketing Programme (RTIMP)  
(Project number 1312, Loan no. 670)

Project Performance Evaluation  
Draft Approach Paper

A. Background

1. The Independent Office of Evaluation (IOE) undertakes: (i) validation of project completion reports (PCRs) for all completed projects, based on a desk review of PCRs and other documents; and (ii) project performance evaluations (PPEs) involving country visits for selected projects (about 10 in a year).<sup>1</sup>
2. The Root and Tuber Improvement and Marketing Programme (RTIMP) (implemented between 2005 and 2015) in the Republic of Ghana has been selected for a PPE, among others, to feed into the planned corporate level evaluation on IFAD's contribution to agriculture-related value chain development for poverty reduction. The RTIMP PPE mission is scheduled for September 2017.
3. This document presents a brief description of RTIMP, the PPE objectives, scope and methodology, and evaluation questions which would guide this PPE.

B. Project overview<sup>2</sup>

Project context.

4. Economy. Ghana is well endowed with natural resources such as arable land, forests and minerals, however, the economy and public revenue are highly vulnerable to world prices for exports and imports. In the 1990s, falling gold and cocoa prices and rising oil prices set off trade shocks that slashed macroeconomic performance, raised budget deficits, lowered exchange rates and stimulated rapid growth of money supply and inflation. In the early 2000s, increasing political stability, accompanied by market reforms<sup>3</sup>, resulted in a gradually improved growth performance, with the long-term growth trend in gross domestic product (GDP) accelerating, hitting the peak of 9.15 per cent in 2008. The years 2006–08, at the beginning of programme implementation, saw severe macroeconomic imbalances when the country suffered several exogenous shocks — an energy crisis in 2006, droughts and floods in late 2006, and rising world oil and food prices in 2008. Despite these challenges, the only dips in the rising post-2000 growth record took place in 2009 due to the global financial crisis, and in 2012, when growth reverted to its long-term trend after the start of commercial oil production in 2011 (World Bank, 2013). Remarkably, in July 2011, Ghana achieved the World Bank's per-capita income threshold for classification as a Lower Middle Income Country with a GDP growth rate topped at 14 per cent.
5. Poverty. Ghana is one of 16 nations comprising West Africa, with an estimated population of about 28.21 million (2016). Despite high rural exodus, 45 per cent of the population was still rural and over 80 per cent of the labour force worked either in low-return smallholder agriculture or the informal sector (Ghana Living Standards Surveys, 2014). The poverty landscape of Ghana changed considerably since the start of the programme with the per capita gross national income in Ghana rose from US\$470 in 2005 to US\$1470 in 2015. Although the poverty headcount fell

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<sup>1</sup> The selection criteria for PPE include: (i) information gaps in PCRs; (ii) projects of strategic relevance that offer enhanced opportunities for learning; (iii) a need to build evidence for forthcoming corporate level evaluations, country strategy and programme evaluations or evaluation synthesis reports; and (iv) a regional balance of IOE's evaluation programme.

<sup>2</sup> Information in this section is mostly derived from the 2005 RTIMP president report, appraisal report, financing agreement, project completion report, 2012 IOE country programme evaluation, and data from World Development Indicators.

<sup>3</sup> After the gross domestic product (GDP) growing at an average rate of 4.3 per cent in the 1990s, falling gold and cocoa prices and rising oil prices set off trade shocks that slashed macroeconomic performance, raised budget deficits, lowered exchange rates and stimulated rapid growth of money supply and inflation.

from 43.9 per cent in 1998/1999 to 31.9 per cent in 2005, and further to 24.2 per cent in 2015, food-crop farmers still showed high poverty rate at 45.5 per cent in 2005<sup>4</sup>. Poverty was more pervasive in the north (52-70 per cent) for the year 2005 and remained at a high level of 56% by 2015<sup>5</sup>. The poverty rate in the northern part of the country has also declined much less than in the rest of the country, largely reflecting the region's much higher rate of subsistence farming and much lower level of urbanization.

6. Agricultural sector. Agriculture is an important economic sector for Ghana. Though its contribution to GDP reduced from 41 per cent in 2005 to 21 per cent in 2015, it still employs about 53.6 per cent of the labour force (2013)<sup>6</sup>. Agriculture has grown significantly since 2007, benefiting from high international prices, particularly for its main exports such as cocoa. Despite this growth, agriculture remains largely rain-fed and subsistence-based, with rudimentary technology used to produce 80 percent of total output. Within the sector, cocoa accounts for 14 per cent of agricultural GDP, cereal and root crops for 63 per cent, and forestry, livestock, and fisheries for the remaining 23 per cent. The following crops are grown for food and cash throughout Ghana: cassava and cocoyam in the rainforests; cassava, yam and sweet potato in the transition and savannah zones; and frafra potato (an indigenous crop) in parts of the Upper-East Region. The production of these root and tuber crops is mainly based on traditional practices and smallholder cultivation. The image of cassava is negative as it is closely identified with the rural poor, yet processed cassava products (gari, fufu) have strong markets in the rapidly expanding urban areas throughout West and Central Africa.
7. The Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA) was committed to developing the root and tuber (R&T) subsector. While strong in technical fields (e.g. selection/multiplication of planting material), the ministry lacked expertise in policy, economic, and marketing issues, paid limited attention to post-harvest stages (processing and marketing), and lacked experience in working with the private sector. RTIMP was designed as a follow-up to the Root and Tuber Improvement Programme (RTIP), which focused primarily on cassava research and development and was implemented from 1997 to 2005<sup>7</sup>.

#### Project Information

8. Project area. The programme was national in scope. The programme design aimed to cover at least 60 districts, rising to 85 at mid-term. In the end, it was expanded to 106 districts in Ghana across all ten regions.<sup>8</sup> The programme area covered all four major agro-ecological zones: Northern savannah, Transition, Forest and the Coastal Savannah zones.
9. Target group and targeting approach. The original 60 districts were selected based on the following criteria: significant production and marketing potential; vulnerability to food insecurity and low incomes; presence/absence of other interventions and related prospects for mutually beneficial collaboration; interest in crops other than cassava; and potential for collaboration with Rural Enterprises Project – Phase II (President's Report, p.5).
10. Regarding targeting approach, programme activities were self-targeted since the R&T subsector was dominated by the rural poor and most forms of support were too modest to attract the non-poor. Supported by a strong information, education and communication campaign, the PCR reported that MOFA and the programme's

<sup>4</sup> Ghana Statistics Service (2007): Pattern and trends of poverty in Ghana (1991-2006) [https://s3.amazonaws.com/ndpc-static/CACHES/NEWS/2015/07/22//GGLSS5+Pattern\\_Trends+Poverty+in+GH.pdf](https://s3.amazonaws.com/ndpc-static/CACHES/NEWS/2015/07/22//GGLSS5+Pattern_Trends+Poverty+in+GH.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> OECD <http://www.oecd.org/agriculture/agricultural-policies/46341169.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> FAO (2015), Socio-economic context and role of agriculture. downloaded from <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4490e.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> RTIP focused mainly on cassava research and development and was implemented from 1997 to 2005 at a total cost of US\$10.1 million with 750,000 household beneficiaries.

<sup>8</sup> Ghana is divided into ten administrative regions currently comprising 170 districts, increased from 138 in 2005.

other implementation partners adopted a fully transparent and participatory approach to targeting. Teams of locally posted agricultural extension agents and NGOs screened interested farmers, processors, and traders. Proactive targeting mechanisms were put in place to guarantee access by the poorest, particularly women who were more involved in cassava production and traditionally do most of the work.

11. Project goal and objectives. The programme's development goal was to enhance the food security and incomes of poor rural households in Ghana, with special emphasis on women and other vulnerable groups. Its specific objective was to build up competitive, market-based and inclusive commodity chains for R&T, supported by relevant, effective and sustainable services that are accessible to the rural poor.
12. Project components. According to the RTIMP design, the project originally comprised four components (A, B, C, E), and a fifth component was added commencing from July 2012.
  - i) Component A-Support to Increased Commodity Chain Linkages: The expected outcome of this component was the establishment of market-based R&T commodity chains. The five subcomponents were: (i) information, education and communication campaign; (ii) linking small producers to larger markets; (iii) developing new uses for R&Ts; (iv) strengthening formal/informal organizations of growers, processors and traders; and (v) support to R&T commodity chain partners and policy dialogue. An initiatives fund was to finance pilot activities designed to forge/strengthen linkages within the R&T commodity chains.
  - ii) Component B-Support to Root and Tuber Production: The expected outcome of this component was increased yields of R&T-based cropping systems. The component was expected to consolidate the achievements of RTIP. The five subcomponents were: (i) agricultural research; (ii) multiplication/distribution of planting material; (iii) improved cultivation practices; (iv) soil fertility management; and (v) integrated pest management. The existing range of new and indigenous varieties was to be expanded and private sector operators will be encouraged to take over service delivery. The main instrument for technology dissemination was farmer-field forums.
  - iii) Component C -Upgrading of Root and Tuber Processing, Business and Marketing Skills: Under this component, R&T processing and marketing was to be upgraded through access to improved equipment, training and backstopping on business management and marketing skills by R&T smallholder farmers and processors. The component also included support for the establishment of Good Practices Centres (GPCs), provision of relevant appropriate processing technologies, and the operation of a matching grant facility through the Micro-Enterprise Fund (MEF).
  - iv) Component D - "Promoting a value chain approach to climate change adaptation in agriculture in Ghana (PROVACCA)" is a three- year pilot project and was added from July 2012 as a component of RTIMP with a Global Environment Facility (GEF) grant. The project was designed to address climate change adaptation needs of cassava value chain actors to enable them to cope with the negative effects and build their resilience to climate change phenomenon.
  - v) Component E (previously D)-Programme Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation: Provision was made for the establishment of a programme coordination office (PCO) at Kumasi and three zonal offices. The implementation of field activities was to be outsourced to implementation partners willing to co-finance the work and/or to technical services providers under service provision contracts.

13. Implementation arrangements. The RTIMP Programme activities were managed by a Programme Coordinating Office (PCO) headed by a National Programme Coordinator, supported by Technical Officers in charge of the components and zonal offices. A National Programme Steering Committee (NPSC) was established and comprised of representatives of key stakeholders with a role to provide strategic orientations and facilitate collaboration and cooperation with Government institutions, research institutions, and the private sector. The oversight and policy direction provided by the NPSC and the Directorate of Crops Services was expected to enable the effective implementation of the programme (PCR, p.5).
14. The programme was implemented nationwide, covering all three agro-ecological zones of the country<sup>9</sup>. Each zone had project teams for ease of programme management and effective implementation. The management of the programme at PCO and zonal levels, in collaboration with District Agricultural Development Units, Regional Agricultural Development Unit, Business Advisory Centres and other Implementing Partners, was designed to provide an effective structure and the required processes for efficiency in programme implementation.
15. Project costs and financing. The project cost was initially estimated as US\$27.7 million, including a foreign exchange component of US\$2.9 million (10 per cent). The rest included an IFAD loan of about US\$19.0 million (68 per cent of total cost), Government counterpart funding of US\$3.9 million<sup>10</sup>, beneficiary farmers and processes' contribution of US\$832,200, and contribution from the partner financial institutions (PFIs) and a private equipment leasing company of US\$4.0 million (see Table 1).
16. In addition to initial core financing, Component D, PROVACCA, was financed by a grant of US\$2.5 million from (the IFAD-based) GEF under its Special Climate Change Fund, with complementary financial support from the Government. The grant of US\$523,800 OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID) funding was cancelled due to mis-procurement and weak financial management.
17. According to the PCR, the actual total project cost was US\$23.6 million (table 1). At project completion, the GEF grant had expended only 30 per cent of the available funds and the balance was "transferred" to co-finance another IFAD-financed project.
18. Grants related to RTIMP. In addition to the loan, IFAD has financed two regional and two country-specific grants which were expected to be linked to RTIMP. The Regional Cassava Processing and Marketing Initiative (a grant of US\$1.3 million) was to support market information systems, a manufacturers' equipment survey, and a feasibility study to assess a unit producing pre-cooked, vacuum-packed sterilized cassava chips to be marketed and distributed through a cold chain application. According to the Country Programme Evaluation (CPE) conducted by IOE in 2012, as of March 2011, the market information systems were still not functional, the study had not been implemented, and there were no signs that RTIMP was benefiting from the grant.
19. A country-specific grant, Sustainable Up-scaling of Seed Yam and Cassava Production Systems for Small-Scale Growers in Ghana (COFIN EC-20-GH) (funded by the EU Food Facility for EUR 1.087 million), was to support RTIMP to meet the escalating costs of food in 2008's food crisis. It was closed on 31 January 2012 with 87.47 per cent disbursed.
20. Another country-specific grant (US\$200,000) was the Fast Track Initiative on Partnership for Grains and Oilseed Development in Ghana provided to ACDI-VOCA,

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<sup>9</sup> The country was demarcated into three zones: the Northern Zone (Zone 1-Tamale) comprising the Northern, Upper East, and Upper West regions; the middle Zone (Zone 2-Techiman), comprising Brong Ahafo and Western regions; and the Southern zone (Zone 3-Koforidua), comprising Eastern, Volta, Greater Accra and Central regions.

<sup>10</sup> It is from both the regular budget and from foregone taxes and duties.

an international NGO, providing expertise in value chain development and analysis, agribusiness, and enterprise development.

21. The last, regional grant is the Potential Use of Cassava Wastes to Produce Energy (with grant funding provided by the Italian Development Cooperation) for US\$0.2 million<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> The information regarding these last two grants was so far found only in the CPE. The PPE team will try to identify relevant grant documents by consulting the PCO and field visits to update their status.

Table 1  
Planned and actual programme costs and financing by component (US\$ '000)

Components	IFAD Loan		GEF		OFID		GOG		PFI		Beneficiaries		Total			
	Allocat ion	Actual	Allocat ion	Actual	Allocat ion	Actual	Allocat ion	Actual	Allocat ion	Actual	Allocati on	Actual	Allocati on	%	Actual	%
<b>A. Support to Increased Commodity Chain Linkages</b>	5,840	1,977					287	7					6,127	20.0%	1,984	8.4%
<b>B. Support to Root and Tuber Crop Production</b>	6,194	2,815					1,456	223			692	1148	8,342	27.2%	4,186	17.7%
<b>C. Upgrading of Small-Scale Root and Tuber Processing, Business and Marketing Skills</b>	4,028	2,529					368	9	3,998	398	140	141	8,534	27.8%	3,078	13.0%
<b>D. Promoting a value chain Approach to climate change adaptation in Agriculture in Ghana</b>			2,500	758	500								3,000	9.8%	758	3.2%
<b>E. Programme Coordination, Monitoring &amp; Evaluation</b>	2,903	11,508					1,783	2,084					4,686	15.3%	13,592	57.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,965</b>	<b>18,829</b>	<b>2,500</b>	<b>758.44</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,894</b>	<b>2,322</b>	<b>3,998</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>832</b>	<b>1289</b>	<b>30,689</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>23,598</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>%</b>	<b>99.28</b>		<b>30.34</b>		<b>-</b>		<b>59.63</b>		<b>9.97</b>		<b>154.88</b>					

Source: Project Completion Report (2015)

22. Timeframe. The original loan of SDR 13.05 million (equivalent to US\$19.0 million) was approved on 8 September 2005. The loan agreement was signed on 20 January 2006, and the loan became effective on 8 November 2006. Additional GEF grant US\$2.5 million was approved in November 2012. The programme was completed on 31 December 2014, and the loan closing was on 30 June 2015 as per original schedule.
23. Supervision arrangements. Initial supervision of RTIMP was delegated to the World Bank, with occasional participation by IFAD staff and consultants. However, IFAD took control of fielding supervision and implementation support missions after the MTR following IFAD policy on supervision and implementation support. The direct supervision started from 18 December 2009.
24. Amendments to the financing agreement. The financing agreement was amended four times: (i) reflecting the change to direct supervision (December 2009); (ii) reallocation of the loan funds to be in line with the recommendations of the mid-term reviews (October 2010); (iii) revision of the SOE thresholds applicable to reflect IFAD's update disbursement procedures; and (iv) requirement of prior-review by IFAD for payment of allowances.
25. Adjustments during implementation. The PCR reports two main adjustments made during the MTR, including the following:
  - i) Component C (Upgrading of R&T Processing and Marketing): The programme scaled down the MEF to a pilot initiative to be implemented in partnership with other IFAD projects, and to use commercial banks, e.g. Agricultural Development Bank.
  - ii) Programme coverage: The number of districts increased from 60 to 85 in the post-MTR period, then expanded to 106 districts by completion.
26. Project implementation results - snapshot. According to the PCR, in total, the programme reached 217,258 direct beneficiaries (against an appraisal target of 290,000) of which 40 percent were women.
  - i) Through the Farmer Field Fora (FFFs), which were used as the platform for improved technology transfer, a total of 15,154 farmers (52 per cent females) and other stakeholders, including MoFA personnel, participated in four hundred and fifty-one (451) FFF.
  - ii) RTIMP also implemented an adaptive research programme and carried out trials on different technologies. As at the end of 2014, 16 (70 per cent of target) on-farm action research had been conducted to address the challenges identified through the FFFs. A total of 780 farmers participated in the on-farm research projects (93 per cent of the MTR target).
  - iii) To reduce post-harvest losses and promote good processing, quality management, and business development practices, the programme upgraded 26 existing processing enterprises to Good Practice Centres (GPCs) (against MTR target of 40). Output per week increased from an average of 5.2 tons before the upgrade to 15 tons of fresh cassava roots at the GPCs. Through 201 exposure visits, 3,777 (74 per cent females) R&T chain actors were introduced to improved processing technologies at the GPCs (69 per cent of target).
  - iv) Regarding R&T marketing, the Programme trained 3,959 clients (66 per cent of appraisal target) in business development and marketing skills (58 per cent females) focusing on records keeping and basic financial management, banking culture, business plan preparation, and implementation.
  - v) With respect to R&T chains development, with the support from Supply Chain Facilitators, four specific commodity chains, namely gari, fresh yam, plywood cassava flour and high quality cassava flour were established. A total of 3,146

actors, made up of 2,731 farmers, 359 processors and 56 transporters, were involved in the development of the four commodity chains.

- vi) Regarding market linkages, 350 District Stakeholder Fora were organized across the country with a total of 12,983 participants (46 per cent females) reached.
  - vii) The operation of a matching grant facility was through the Micro-Enterprise Fund. However, only about half of the districts had access to the Fund.
27. According to the self-rating on the project performance at completion, the overall project achievement was considered as moderately satisfactory (4), with the ratings for relevance and rural poverty impact as moderately satisfactory (4), while effectiveness and efficiency as moderately unsatisfactory (3).

### C. PPE Objectives and Scope

28. The PPE will be undertaken in accordance with the IFAD's Evaluation Policy<sup>12</sup> and the IFAD Evaluation Manual (second edition, 2015), building on a desk review of PCR and other available data. The main objectives of the PPE are to: (i) assess the results of the project; (ii) generate findings and recommendations for the design and implementation of ongoing and future operations in the country; and (iii) provide project-level evidence that will feed into the corporate level evaluation on the value chain.
29. Scope. A PPE provides assessment and independent ratings on the project performance according to the standard evaluation criteria defined in the IOE Evaluation Manual (see paragraph 39). At the same time, given the time and resources available, the PPE is not expected to examine the full spectrum of project activities, achievements, and drawbacks. Rather, it will focus on selected key issues of focus with consideration to the following: (i) contextual, project design and/or implementation issues that had a critical bearing on project achievements or challenge and unsatisfactory performance; and (ii) issues of importance that cut across the thematic issue of commodity chain development. The PPE will take account of the preliminary findings from a desk review of PCR and other key project documents and interviews at the IFAD headquarters. During the PPE mission, additional evidence and data will be collected to verify available information and each an independent assessment of performance and results. A theory of change for the project, which has been reconstructed by the PPE team in the absence of its clear presentation in the project design, will be used to guide the identification of key issues (presented later in the section) and the evaluation approach.
30. RTIMP theory of change. A summary theory of change (TOC) was developed for RTIMP by PIALA team<sup>13</sup>. The PPE team adjusted it based upon the desk review and consultation conducted (see annex 1). The overall TOC narrative is that livelihoods and poverty status could be improved by commercializing the root and tuber production and processing businesses of smallholders. The District Stakeholder Forums (DSF), Farmer Field Forums (FFF), Good Practice Centers (GPC) and Micro-Enterprise Fund (MEF) were designed as the main mechanisms for developing competitive market-driven and inclusive supply chains, and linking these to bigger markets. The TOC was built around three main impact pathways as follows.
- Enhanced market linkage – DSFs would help develop the roots and tubers supply chains and link these to markets. Farmers and processors participating in the supply chains would gain better access to training and finance for investment and innovation, commercialize and develop viable businesses.

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.ifad.org/pub/policy/oe.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> Heinemann, E, Van Hemelrijck, A, Guijt, I, Insights from piloting a Participatory Impact Assessment and Learning Approach (PIALA) with IFAD, (undated)

- Enhanced roots and tubers production – FFFs would enable resource-poor farmers and seed producers to enhance their production and become commercial growers by adopting improved planting materials and technologies and organising into Farmer-Based Organizations.
  - Enhanced roots and tubers processing – Upgrading of small roots and tubers enterprises into GPCs serving as demonstration and market hubs, would attract and expose small processors to high-quality processing operations using improved technologies and standardized equipment. This would help them to enhance the quantity and quality of their production, obtain loans through the MEF to invest in these new technologies and standardized equipment, and develop profitable businesses.
31. Key issues for evaluation in PPE. Based on a desk review of the PCR and preliminary discussions held with the current and former Country Programme Managers, key issues for this PPE (to be covered under different evaluation criteria) have been identified as below. These may be fine-tuned based on further considerations or information availability, consultation with Western and Central Africa Division (WCA) and the Government.
32. Enhanced production as a means of supply chain commercialization. The project continued extensive research on roots and tubers production technology that commenced under the preceding RTIP project. There was an expectation that a technology-driven approach to the supply chain would lead to increased supply and, with other component support, greater market activation, resulting in improved benefits for farmers. The project results demonstrate that increases in production did occur and more farmers were attracted to plant roots and tubers due to the increase in productivity. However, the PCR states that markets failed to absorb the increased production volumes, which caused prices to drop, hence negatively affecting farmers' and processors' livelihoods from 2013 onward. The PCR suggests that this was due to lack of coordination between the production and processes aspects of the project and that the project did not pay sufficient attention to the learning from the RTIP evaluation in this regard<sup>14</sup>. The PPE will consider the extent to which the positive advances in production led to supply chain development and investigate how the project activities in different components were linked to create optimum benefits for farmers.
33. Balances between marketing and production at project design. In general, the programme performed well for the component related to R&T production (i.e. Component B), while the performance was weak for activities related to marketing and value chain development (i.e. Component A and C). This is partially because the programme was largely implemented by MOFA staff who has technical knowledge but lacks business and marketing skills. In order to fill the expertise gap on marketing, the programme was to engage Technical Service Providers under performance-based contracts, but the design did not adequately consider the availability of Technical Service Providers in the market, did not identify available agencies that could provide those services, and did not specify whether competent training providers and value-chain facilitators would be available if needed (CPE, p.31). The PPE team will further explore the design documents using the theory of change and identify factors that prevented effective implementation of value chain development in the country by consultation with relevant stakeholders.
34. Microenterprise fund and access to finance. The use of matching grants through the MEF was designed to stimulate the supply chain by improving access to finance for consolidators and processors. The MEF was intended to improve access to finance by private sector actors and also to attract their engagement in the supply chain in project areas. The Initiative Fund and the MEF were considered to be under-

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<sup>14</sup> IFAD, RTIMP Project Completion Report, 2014, para 75

performing at MTR, which adjusted the relevant targets and reallocated the funds to other better-performing activities. By project completion, 1,235 processors received matching grants associated with a loan or a leasing arrangement, to upgrade their level of technology, resulting in higher productivity, improved product quality, and higher incomes. This represented 68 per cent of the target of 1,800. The PFIs provided up to 50 per cent of required capital, the programme provided 40 per cent as a matching grant and the borrower was required to contribute 10 per cent. The PCR indicates that there were improvements in performance in the latter stages of programme implementation but that access to finance was still uneven across project areas. The PPE will explore the contributory factors to the challenges and successes achieved in the MEF and assess how the lessons learned through the MEF have been considered in subsequent operations of IFAD and PFIs. Regarding matching grants, the PPE team will also assess how sound the design was, why they were scaled down during implementation, how effective it was to engage entrepreneurial poor, , and assess performances of different types of PFIs (e.g. rural leasing and commercial bank branches in rural areas).

35. Sustainability of service provided by the programme. The Project Development Objective emphasised the need to build competitive and market-based R&T commodity chains supported by relevant, effective and sustainable services that are easily accessible by the rural poor. The RTIMP activities have been extensive and have built on the previous RTIP activities. RTIMP PCR rated the project 4 (moderately satisfactory) for sustainability, despite a rating of 3 (moderately unsatisfactory) for both effectiveness and efficiency. The PPE will follow up on a sample of the sub-projects such as GPCs, technological improvements initiated by the project and other initiatives that were assessed as "successful", as well as examples where project activities are no longer operational to gain a deeper understanding of key factors influencing the likelihood of success and sustainability.
36. Synergies between grants provided and the programme objectives. As mentioned earlier, there were reportedly four grants that were or were expected to be linked to the programme. The PPE will examine the level of synergies realized and the performance of the grant activities, particularly the GEF grant for Promoting a Value Chain Approach to Climate Change Adaptation in Agriculture in Ghana. Currently, the GEF grant implementation was extended one year after transferred to the ongoing IFAD project GASIP<sup>15</sup> following the closure of RTIMP. The PCR rated the project with respect to adaptation to climate change as moderately unsatisfactory (3). The PPE will follow up on progress achieved in relation to project activities and likelihood of enhancing sustainability and resilience through climate change adaptation.
37. Programme efficiency:
  - i) According to the programme cost and finance table in PCR, 57.6 per cent of the IFAD loan was spent on programme coordination and M&E, which was 290 per cent of the amount allocated at appraisal (see Table 1)<sup>16</sup>. The PPE team will verify the costs, identify the costs breakdown, and seek justification of increased costs especially at the last implementation year: how these activities are relevant to project objectives and commodity chain development.
  - ii) Significant deficiencies in programme financial management were reported consistently in both supervision reports and PCR, including inaccurate and unreliable audited financial statements, ineligible expenditures (e.g. SOEs expenses), and procurement issues. The team will examine these issues and

<sup>15</sup> Ghana Agricultural Sector Investment Programme is an ongoing IFAD programme for a total finance package of US\$113.0 million (2014-2020)

<sup>16</sup> The last supervision report (Nov 2014) saw a surge of programme coordination costs from US\$3 million (Mar 2014) to US\$6.35 million for IFAD finance part. The total finance package also saw a significant increase from US\$3.65 million to US\$9.89 million from March 2014 to November 2014.

the reasons behind low financial performance (e.g. slow installation of national standard accounting system).

38. Evaluation criteria. In line with the IOE's Evaluation Manual (2015), the key evaluation criteria applied in PPEs in principle include the following:
- i) Rural poverty impact, which is defined as the changes that have occurred or are expected to occur in the lives of the rural poor (whether positive or negative, direct or indirect, intended or unintended) as a result of development interventions. Four impact domains are employed to generate a composite indication of rural poverty impact: (i) household income and assets; (ii) human and social capital and empowerment; (iii) food security and agricultural productivity; and (iv) institutions and policies. A composite rating will be provided for the criterion of "rural poverty impact" but not for each of the impact domains.
  - ii) Relevance,<sup>17</sup> which is assessed both in terms of alignment of project objectives with country and IFAD policies for agriculture and rural development and the needs of the rural poor, as well as project design features geared to the achievement of project objectives.
  - iii) Effectiveness, which measures the extent to which the project's immediate objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.
  - iv) Efficiency, which indicates how economically resources/inputs (e.g. funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted into results.
  - v) Sustainability of benefits, indicating the likely continuation of net benefits from a development intervention beyond the phase of external funding support. It also includes an assessment of the likelihood that actual and anticipated results will be resilient to risks beyond the project's life.
  - vi) Gender equality and women's empowerment, indicating the extent to which IFAD's 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 work loan balance and impact on women's incomes, nutrition and livelihoods.
  - vii) Innovation and scaling up, assessing the extent to which IFAD development interventions: (a) have introduced innovative approaches to rural poverty reduction; and (b) have been (or are likely to be) scaled up by government authorities, donor organizations, the private sector and other agencies. Separate ratings will be provided for innovation and scaling up.
  - viii) Environment and natural resource management, assessing the extent to which a project contributes to changes in the protection, rehabilitation or depletion of natural resource and the environment.
  - ix) Adaptation to climate change, assessing the contribution of the project to increase climate resilience and increase beneficiaries' capacity to manage short- and long-term climate risks.
  - x) Overall project achievement provides an overarching assessment of the intervention, drawing upon the analysis and ratings of all above-mentioned criteria.
  - xi) Performance of partners, including the performance of IFAD and the Government, will be assessed on an individual basis, with a view to the partners' expected role and responsibility in the project life cycle.

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<sup>17</sup> An average of the ratings for relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of benefits will be the project performance rating.

39. An evaluation framework will be developed with guiding evaluation questions according to the evaluation criteria described above. The evaluation questions contained in the framework reflect the guidance in the IOE Evaluation Manual as well as key issues identified (in the next section).
40. Rating system. In line with the practice adopted in many other international financial institutions and UN organizations, IOE uses a six-point rating system, where 6 is the highest score (highly satisfactory) and 1 being the lowest score (highly unsatisfactory).

#### D. Evaluation methodology

41. The PPE will build on a desk review of PCR and other key project documents and available data (including participatory impact assessments carried out at project completion) while taking into account the contexts and information from interviews at the IFAD headquarters. During the main PPE mission, additional evidence and data will be collected to verify available evidence and to reach an independent assessment of performance and results. The PPE will use a theory of change for an examination of assumed causal linkages and whether there is sufficient evidence to support these linkages, while also examining to what extent key assumptions were realistic.
42. Data collection. Careful review, analysis, and triangulation of reported project achievements will be key. Validation of project results will be done through bringing in and cross-checking information and evidence from multiple sources and stakeholder perspectives.
43. Prior to the PPE mission. In the preparatory stage, relevant documents and data are gathered and reviewed to guide the evaluation design and planning and conduct of the PPE mission. Main project-related documents and data for a desk review include the following: (i) project design documents; (ii) project implementation manual; (iii) financing agreements, amendments and background documents; (iv) supervision and implementation support mission reports; (v) mid-term review report; (vi) PCR; (vii) IFAD periodical project status reports with self-assessment ratings; (viii) IFAD financial and disbursement data; (ix) baseline and end-line household survey reports in line with the IFAD's results and impact management system (RIMS) if available; and (x) participatory impact assessment learning approach (PIALA) carried out by the IFAD Policy and Technical Advisory Division<sup>18</sup>.
44. Additional data, information, and documents will be collected as much as possible before the mission - through email correspondence with the project stakeholders. These may include project monitoring and evaluation data and reports or some technical reports produced by the project.
45. Interviews will be conducted with IFAD staff, in-country stakeholders through audio or video conferences (with a limited number of people who were involved in the project management), and possibly also main consultants who were involved in supervision and implementation support. Interactions with stakeholders would help the PPE team identify additional relevant data and reports and key issues for attention before mission
46. Given that the PIALA was conducted with household survey, the PPE team will also seek to access data files to better understand the methodology, analysis, and findings presented. The available data and evidence are reviewed to examine the extent of consistencies or inconsistencies while reflecting the plausible causal links and assumptions in the theory of change and to identify gaps to refine the tools and questions to guide the field work.

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<sup>18</sup> The PIALA evaluation of RTIMP includes an assessment of three programme components and multiple mechanisms in 30 districts across the entire country, as well as a statistical survey in 900 households and a participatory inquiry with over 1300 participants

47. Data collection during the mission. The PPE mission will be conducted for about two weeks, including visits to the project sites over 6-7 days. During the in-country work, additional primary and secondary data will be collected. Data collection methods will mostly include qualitative techniques. The methods deployed will consist of individual and group interviews, focus group discussions with project stakeholders, beneficiaries and other key informants and resource persons, and direct observations.
48. Field visit site selection. The PPE mission will conduct field visits in three different agro-ecological zones. Site selection for field visits will be guided by the following consideration as may be relevant: (i) coverage of areas with different characteristics (e.g. agro-ecological conditions and farming systems, poverty status, road connection, and access to markets and services); (ii) districts with varied performance under different programme activities (e.g. capacity of district staff); and (v) locations of the GPCs, DSFs, FFFs and PFIs. Balancing the consideration to these criteria with the distance and the time constraint of the PPE would be important.
49. Key stakeholders to be met in Accra and in the zonal offices (Kumasi and Tamale) include the following: (i) MOFA and former project staff to the extent traceable; (ii) Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning; (iii) Ministry of Trade and Industry; (iv) regional and district-level agriculture staff (i.e. Regional Agricultural Development Unit, District Agricultural Development Unit and District Stakeholder For a); (v) representatives from Business Advisory Centre, District Stakeholder Fora and Farmer Field Fora; (vi) representatives from Agricultural Development Bank and Participating Financing Institutions<sup>19</sup>; (vii) management and members of farmer-based organizations; (viii) farmers who grow roots and tuber; (ix) main in-country partners and service providers involved in the project<sup>20</sup>; and (x) other key informants.
50. Stakeholders' participation. In compliance with the IOE Evaluation Policy, the main project stakeholders will be involved throughout the PPE. This will ensure that the key concerns of the stakeholders are taken into account, that the evaluators fully understand the context in which the programme was implemented, and that opportunities and constraints faced by the implementing institutions are identified. Regular interaction and communication will be established with the Western and Central Africa of IFAD and with the Government. Formal and informal opportunities will be explored during the process for the purpose of discussing findings, lessons, and recommendations.

## E. Evaluation Process

51. The PPE will involve following key steps:
  - Preparatory phase. The preparatory phase will include the following activities: (i) desk review of PCR and main project design and implementation documents (e.g. supervision mission reports, mid-term review report, design document); (ii) collection and review of data and information (e.g. participatory impact assessment, project monitoring data on locations and types of project investments, IFAD loan disbursement records); (iii) preparation of the PPE approach paper.
  - In-country work. The PPE mission is scheduled for 4-15 September 2017. It will interact with representatives from the government and other institutions,

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<sup>19</sup> There are different types of PFIs or rural financial institutions involved, ten in total, including rural and community banks, rural branches of commercial banks, and leasing companies. M&E data regarding PFIs are under request. PPE team plan to select a sub-set of PFIs according to their performance level and type of business, taking into consideration of their availability and connection.

<sup>20</sup> Namely, World Bank, Ghana Regional Appropriate Technology Industrial Service, and Food and Agriculture Organization. The other partners will be identified in the preparation stage.

beneficiaries and key informants, in Accra in the field. At the end of the mission, a wrap-up meeting will be held in Accra to summarize the preliminary findings and discuss emerging issues. The IFAD country programme manager, country programme officer, junior programme officer for Ghana are expected to participate in the wrap-up meeting, which is tentatively scheduled for 15 September 2017.

- Report drafting and peer review. After the field visit, a draft PPE report will be prepared and submitted to IOE internal peer review for quality assurance.
- Comments by WCA and the Government. The draft PPE report will be shared simultaneously with WCA and the Government for review and comment. IOE will finalize the report following receipt of comments by WCA and the Government and prepare the audit trail.
- Management response by WCA. A written management response on the final PPE report will be prepared by the Programme Management Department. This will be included in the PPE report when published.
- Communication and dissemination. The final report will be disseminated to key stakeholders and the evaluation report published by IOE, both online and in print.

52. Tentative timetable for the PPE process is as follows:

Date	Activities
July – August 2017	Preparation and desk review
4–15 September 2017	Mission to Ghana
September–October 2017	Preparation of draft report
Late October 2017	IOE internal peer review
Mid-November 2017	Draft PPE report sent to Western and Central Africa region and Government for comments
December 2017	Finalisation of the report
January 2018	Publication and dissemination

#### F. Evaluation Team

53. Ms. Shijie Yang, IOE Evaluation Analyst, has been designated as lead evaluator for this PPE and will be responsible for delivering the final report under the supervision of Ms. Fumiko Nakai. She will be assisted by Ms. Dorothy Lucks (rural development and micro-enterprises specialist, IOE consultant). Ms Delphine Bureau, IOE Evaluation Assistant, will provide research and administrative support.

#### G. Background Documents

54. The key background documents for the exercise will include the following:

##### RTIMP project specific documents

- Appraisal report (2006)
- IFAD President's Report (2005)
- Mid-term review report (2010)
- Financing Agreement (2006) and amendments
- Supervision mission aide memoir and reports (2008-2014)
- Project status reports (2008-2014)
- Project completion report (2015)
- GEF grants document (2011-2016)
- Results and impact management system: end-line survey (2015), together with the PIALA (data files to be requested)

##### General and others

- Country Programme Evaluation by Independent Office of Evaluation (2012)
- IFAD (2015). Evaluation Manual – Second Edition

- IOE (2012). Guidelines for the Project Completion Report Validation (PCR) and Project Performance Assessment
- IFAD (2011). IFAD Evaluation Policy
- Various IFAD policies and strategies, in particular, Strategic Framework (2007-2012), Targeting, Gender Equity and Women's Empowerment, Rural Finance

Annex 1. Theory of Change

