



Sierra Leone

Country Strategy and Programme Evaluation

National Workshop

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Independent Office
of Evaluation



Investing in rural people

CSPE objectives and scope

■ First independent country strategy and programme evaluation in Sierra Leone

■ Objectives:

- To assess the results and performance of the Country Strategic Opportunity Programme (COSOP)
- To generate findings, conclusions and recommendations for new COSOP

■ Scope

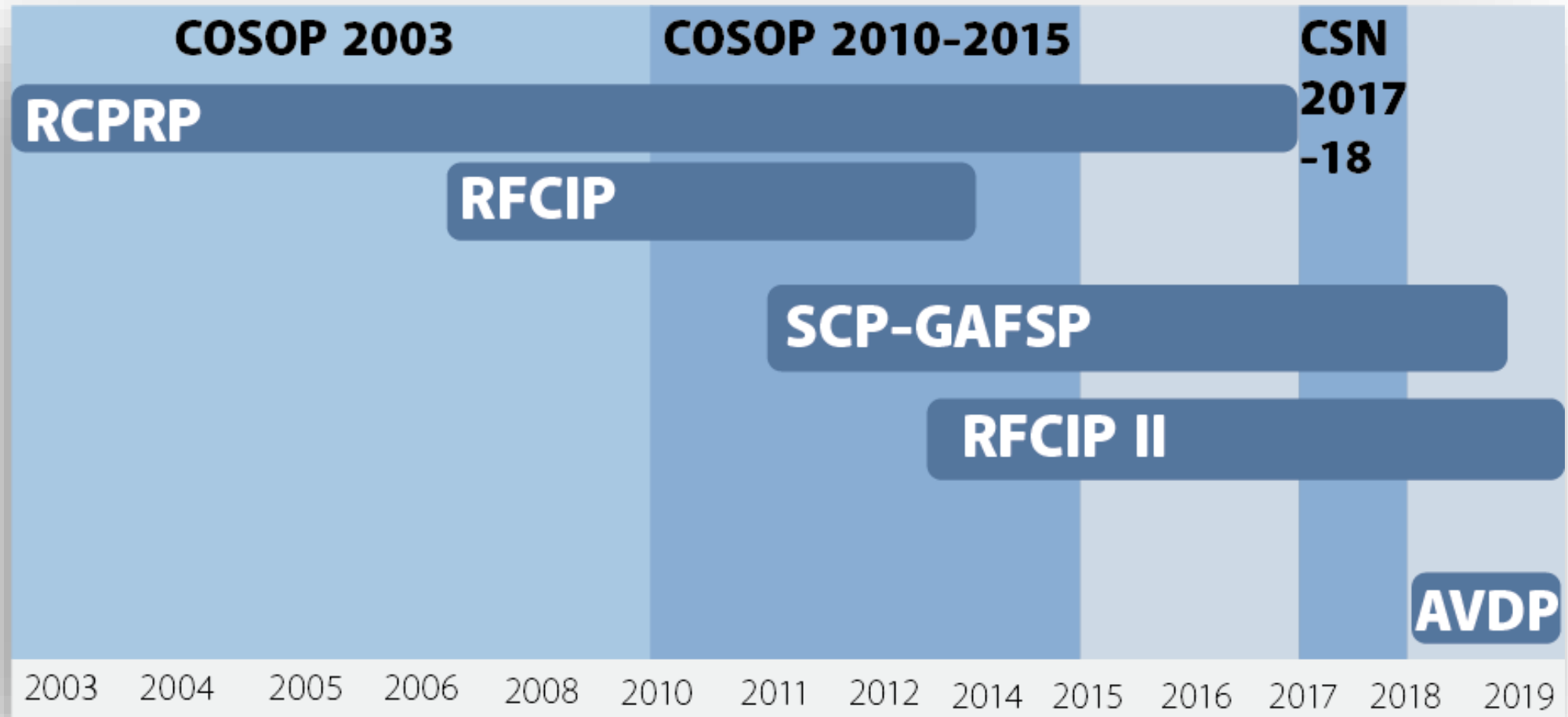
- IFAD-supported activities – loans and grants – from 2003 to 2019
- “Non-lending activities” : knowledge management, partnership building and policy engagement



Portfolio (2003–2019)

Evaluated portfolio	Total: USD 201 million
IFAD	USD 98 million
Government	USD 21 million
International co-financing	USD 63 million
Loan projects	2 closed, 2 ongoing/not closed, 1 recently started
Grants	18 regional/global grants
COSOPs	2003, 2010, Country Strategy Note 2017–18

Timeline of projects and COSOPs in the CSPE



Strategic Focus

Strategic objectives and focus over evaluation period	COSOP 2003	COSOP 2010
COSOP Strategic Objectives (SO)	<p>SO1: Community development</p> <p>SO2: Revitalization of the rural financial market to promote rural growth</p> <p>SO3: Crop diversification, income generating activities and promotion of small-scale rural enterprises.</p>	<p>SO1: Support to agriculture</p> <p>SO2: Support to rural finance</p> <p>SO3: Support to local development</p>

Findings

Major outputs achieved

- Over 800,000 people reached
- 20,000 hectares of rice and tree crop rehabilitated
- 76 functional CBs/FSAs
- 1300 kms of rural roads rehabilitated
- 52 Agri-Business Centres transformed



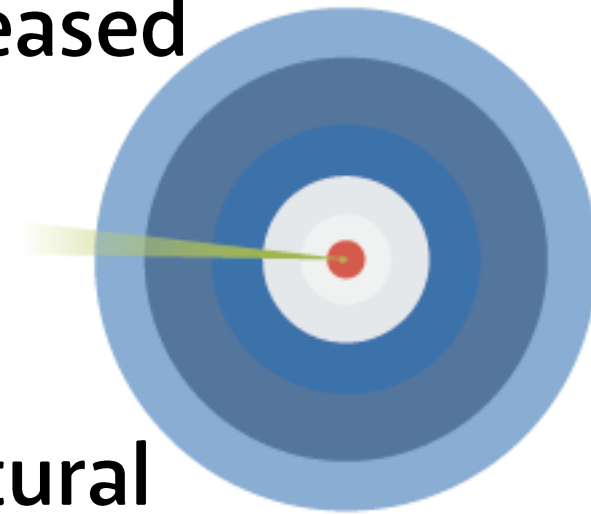
Relevance

- Portfolio well aligned with Government strategies
- Project designs simple and clear but somewhat ambitious
- Rehabilitation of roads an important component
- Targeting of different social groups but tailored activities lacking
- Needs assessment/value chain analysis lacking



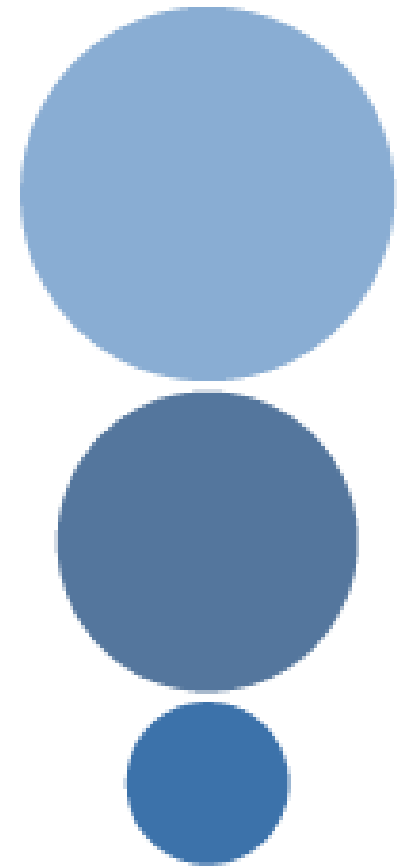
Effectiveness

- Outputs all delivered (despite Ebola)
- Production of rice and cocoa successfully increased
- Rehabilitation of roads improved connectivity
- Agro-processing and market linkages less successful
- RFIs successful in reaching people, but agricultural loans low
- Targeting of social groups less effective due to lack of tailored activities



Efficiency

- Portfolio generally sufficiently swift in commencing operation
- Disbursement performance satisfactory (IFAD-99%)
- Project management costs (18%) higher than IFAD average
- Financial management an issue but improvement recorded
- Comparatively low unit costs for infrastructure (roads)
- Economic efficiency mostly sound – positive rate of return on investment

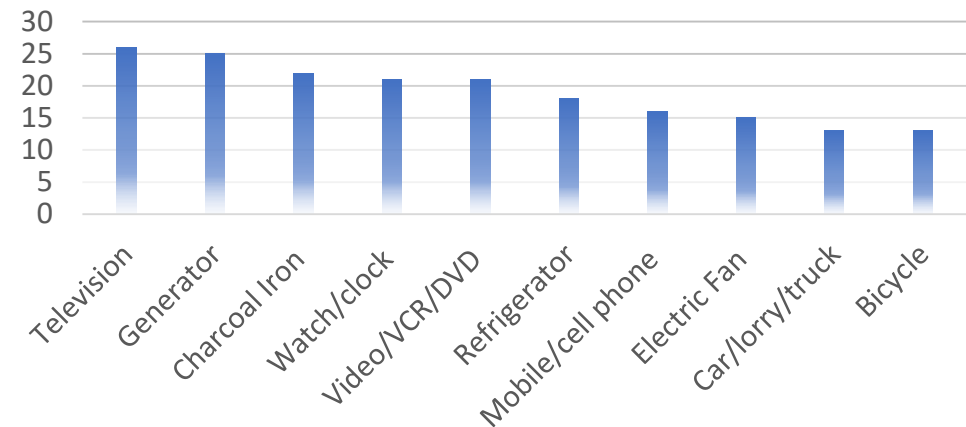


Rural poverty impact (1)

Improved agricultural productivity and access to finance contributed to household assets improvement and diversification of income, but full potential not attained

	Beneficiaries	Non-beneficiaries
Cocoa	818 kg/ha (+ 37%)	605 kg/ha (+ 12.8%)
Rice	3MT/ha	1 MT/ha

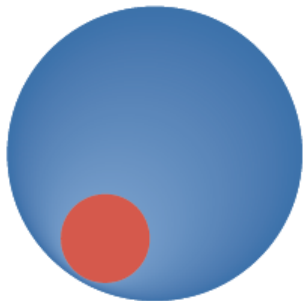
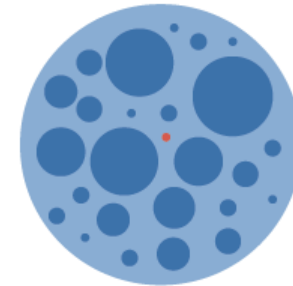
% DIFF. BETWEEN FINANCIAL SERVICES' BENEFICIARIES AND NON IN OWNERSHIP



Food security meant to improve directly through agricultural production and indirectly by income growth, but no hard evidence

Rural poverty impact (2)

■ Improved human and social capital (better skills, group formation)



■ Empowered community via improved economic opportunity, ownership of RFIs and community driven development.

■ Decentralised institutions strengthened; rural finance: higher impact at micro level (RFI), but lower at meso level (Apex Bank).



Gender equality & women's empowerment / Youth

- Quotas helped women's engagement, but size not representative of population
- Income increases for women; no specific activities for women headed HHs
- GALS brought acceptance of women as partners but not all take it sufficiently seriously yet.
- Youth engagement sought through quotas; youth-specific activities in agriculture lacking



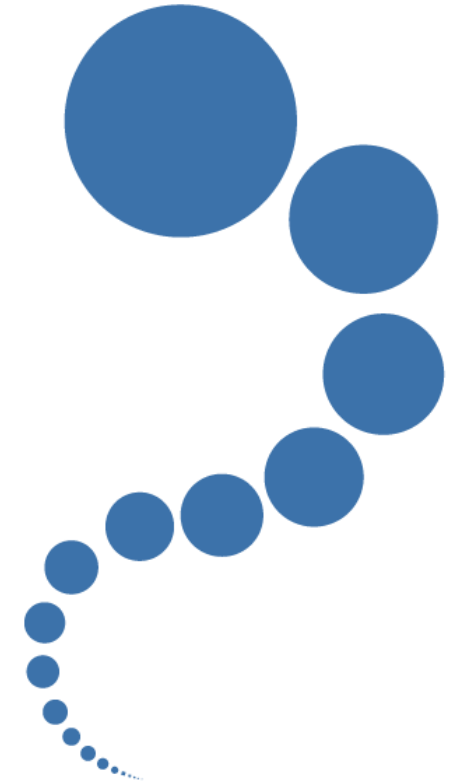
Natural resource management and climate change adaptation

- All projects activities environmentally safe.
- No formal environmental impact assessment carried out.
- Use of improved crop varieties and improved agronomic practices led to improvement of degraded soils; reduced reliance on slash and burn.
- Positive impact on water conservation of water management of Inland Valley Swamps.
- Quality and efficiency of water management structures have serious inadequacies.
- Lack of improved certified seeds is an impediment to environmentally friendly practices and technologies.



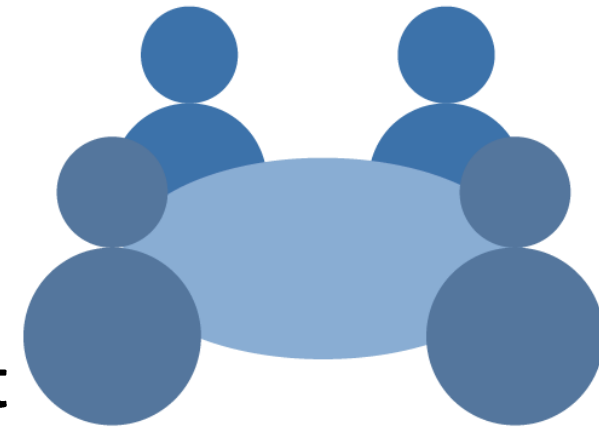
Sustainability of benefits

- Most FSAs and CBs viable and operate in a sustainable manner; the APEX Bank operates below agreed sustainability targets
- Farmers may face issues with availability of seed, fertiliser and extension services
- Some grassroot institutions are able to act independently
- Marketability is less than optimal since many farmers sell individually and trained farmers are not linked to ABCs (yet)
- Sustainability in government institutions is threatened by lack of capacity and funding



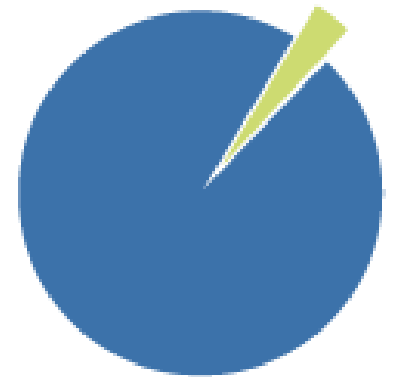
“Non-lending activities”

- Focus of Knowledge Management more on enhancing project implementation and less on programme development or policy dialogue.
- Partnerships limited; principal partner - Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
- Policy engagement weak; ICO capacity not sufficient
- Grants not used to support knowledge management or policy engagement in the lending portfolio



Conclusions

- IFAD's portfolio managed to keep its relevance strong
- Portfolio successful in taking financial services to large parts of rural areas; true financial inclusion was missed
- Notable efforts to include youth, but a more strategic approach required
- Lack of strong market linkages impaired realization of full potential.
- Primary focus on production at the cost of diversification and nutrition.
- The effectiveness of the lending portfolio constrained by capacity to undertake "non-lending activities"



Recommendations

- 1 Deepen the developmental impact of agricultural growth through a sharper focus on strengthening linkages along the value chain.

Pursue diversification more vigorously as a strategy to improve nutrition and build economic resilience.
- 2 Elevate the engagement in rural finance by building on the existing structures and the increased awareness of rural finance in the country.

Re-balance the focus from an almost exclusive focus on development and over-sight of individual projects to management of the country programme.
- 3 Strengthen the targeting focus by mainstreaming youth in the country portfolio through a country-specific youth strategy.
- 4

Thanks for your attention

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