

Evaluation Synthesis Technical Innovations for Rural Poverty Reduction

Independent office
of evaluation



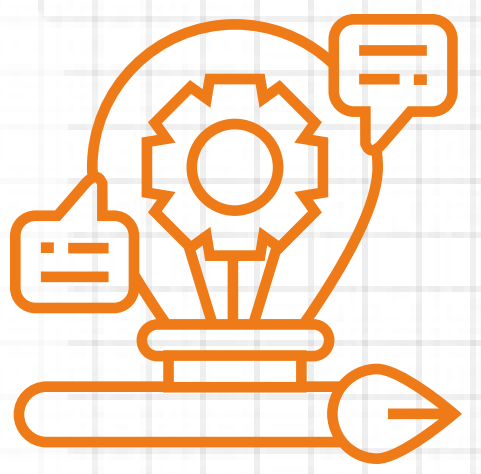
Innovation is a major source of improved productivity and economic growth

INNOVATION

Agenda 2030 recognizes innovation as a cross-cutting element directly relevant to SDG 1, 2 and contributing to others

Technical Innovation

Introduction of an idea, practice or object - perceived by an individual or other entity as new or improved



THE EVALUATION COVERS

A sample of

57

Evaluations

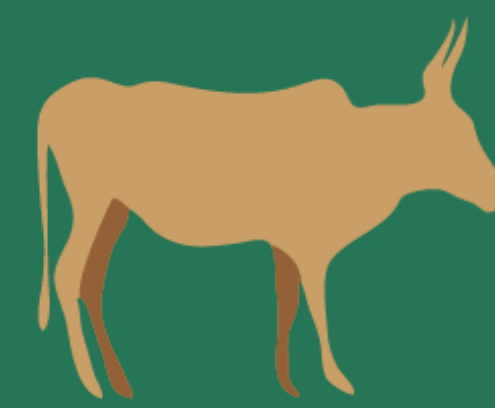
416

Innovative interventions identified by the synthesis in

Crop types

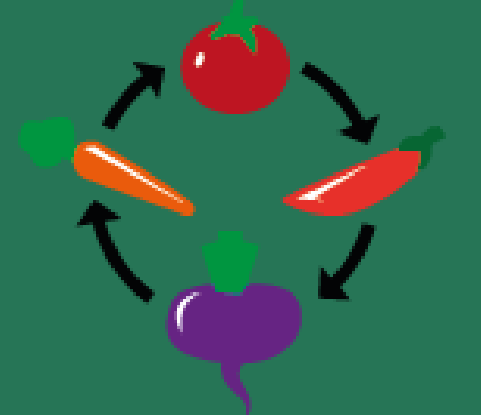


3 categories



Livestock management

Crop management

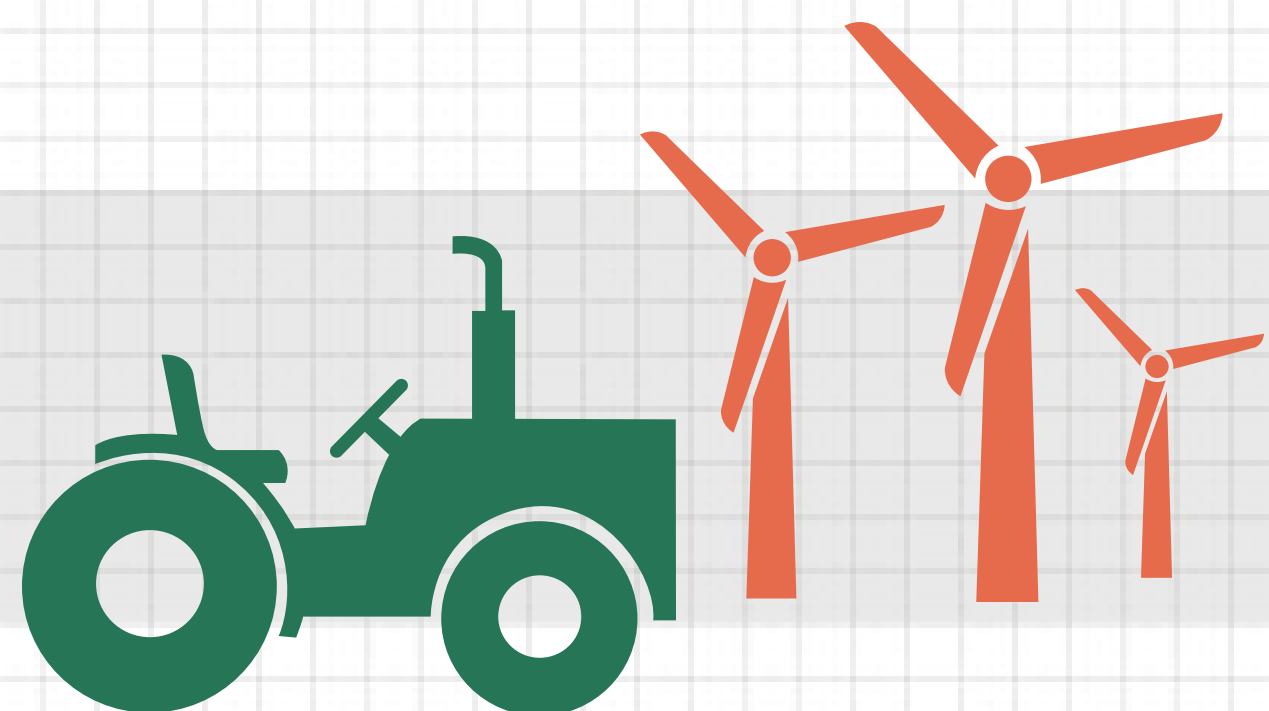


THEORY OF CHANGE

IFAD's theory of change for technical innovation initially reflected a model that envisaged a problem-solving cycle of interaction between farmers' needs and new technical solutions.



The change process involves a complex interaction of feedback loops, associated with adjustment of the technical innovation during piloting, adaptation and learning.



Actual practice is more complicated, with three cycles to identify the scope, plan the innovations and their dissemination, and provide supportive framework.



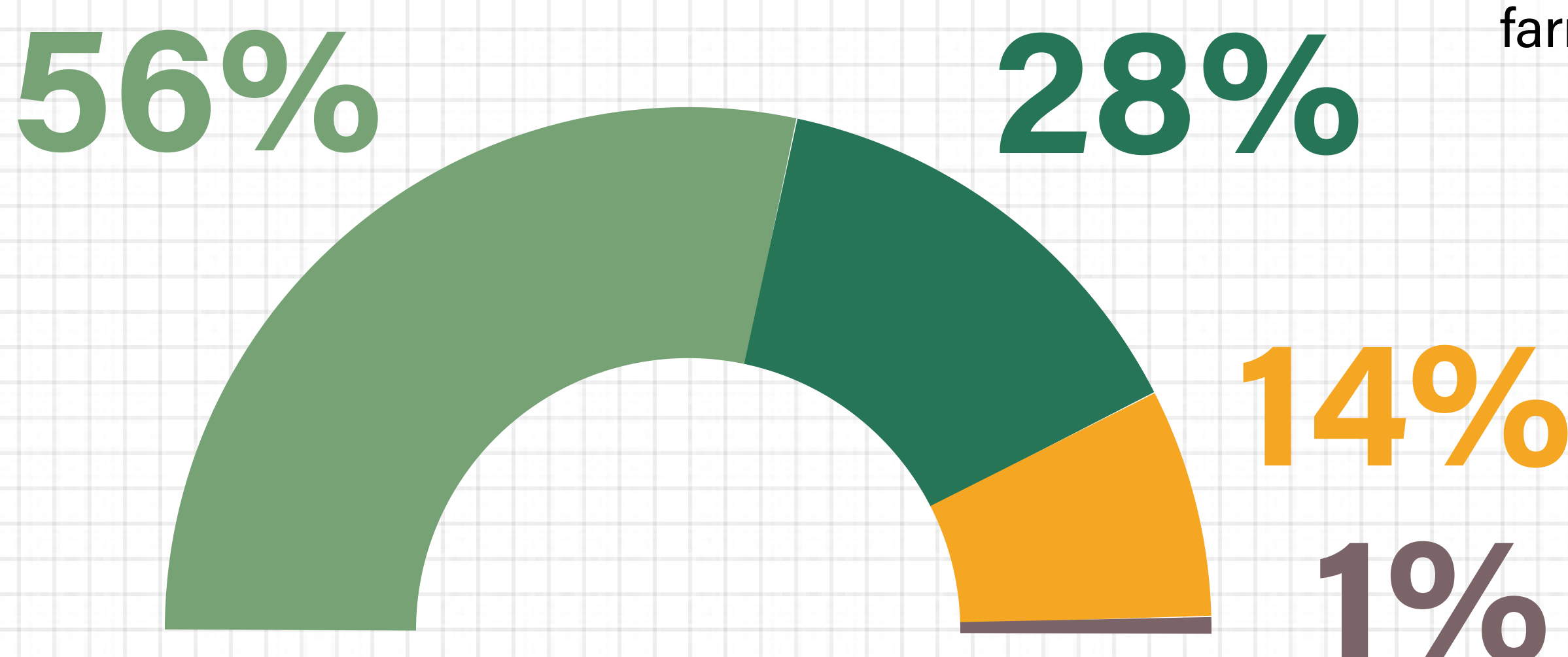
TYPES OF INNOVATION

Productivity-enhancing innovations

They improve returns to land, labour and capital by means of incremental changes to farm business, including forestry and fisheries.

Transformative innovations

They bring major change to farming system structures and functions by introducing new enterprises or radically different ways of farming and post-harvest technologies.



Asset strengthening

Beneficiary health enhancing

KEY LESSONS

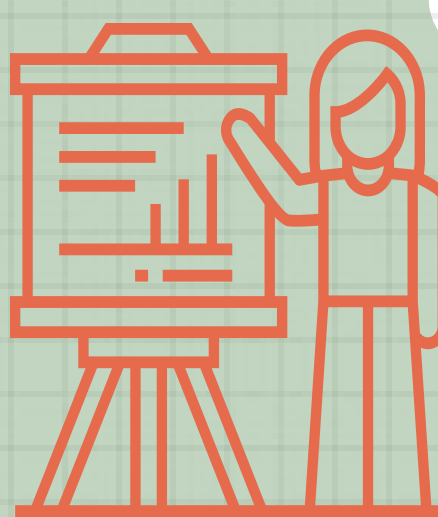
The simpler the innovation the greater the chance of it being sustained



Managing successful innovation demands transdisciplinary skills



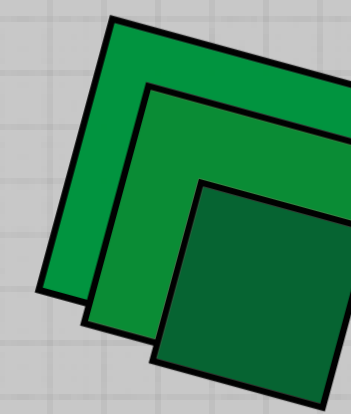
A set of technical innovations, such as System of Rice Improvement, provides a simple focus for project design



Technical innovations to promote value chain development require careful preparation



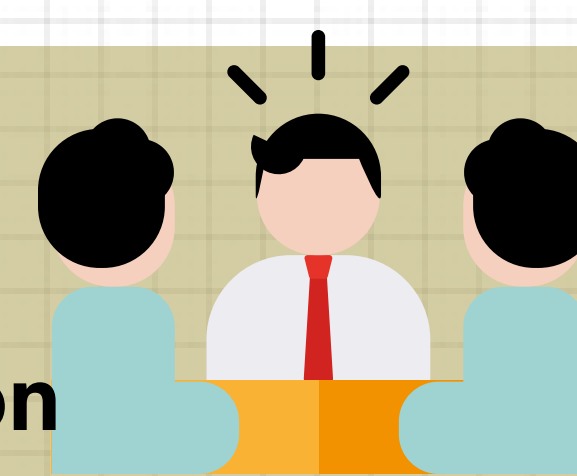
Some innovations only show their benefits when implemented at scale



Environmental damage may arise from innovation supporting both diversification and asset growth as well as productivity



Effective partnerships are essential for input supply, technical advice, group development, dissemination and marketing



CONCLUSIONS

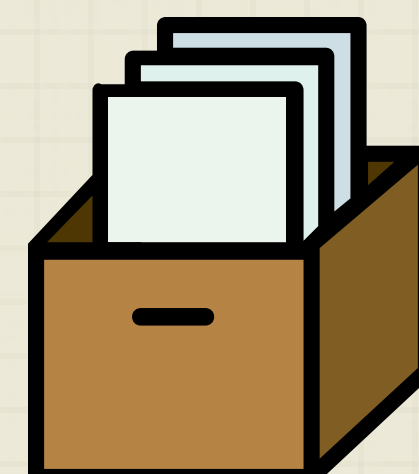
Most technical innovations enhance productivity. They are low risk and well suited to the needs of many farmers



A smaller number of innovations are transformative as they are more risky and require higher investments in resources and knowledge



Impact tends to come from a package of innovation measures, not a single element



IFAD's portfolio is very diverse with innovations responding to local context and needs – a challenge for scaling up



RECOMMENDATIONS

1.

Enhance focus on transformative practices within IFAD's approach to technical innovation while continuing to promote low risk improvements to productivity for the majority of poor smallholder farmers

2.

Systematically monitor, evaluate and learn from innovations

3.

Use the forthcoming Corporate-Level Evaluation to explore IFAD's readiness to promote transformative innovations