



Virtual national workshop

## Evaluation of IFAD Country Strategy and Programme in Eswatini 2000-2021

[28 January 2022]

## Agenda

Introduction

Main findings

Conclusions

Recommendations

## Country Strategy and Programme Evaluation (CSPE)

### Main objectives

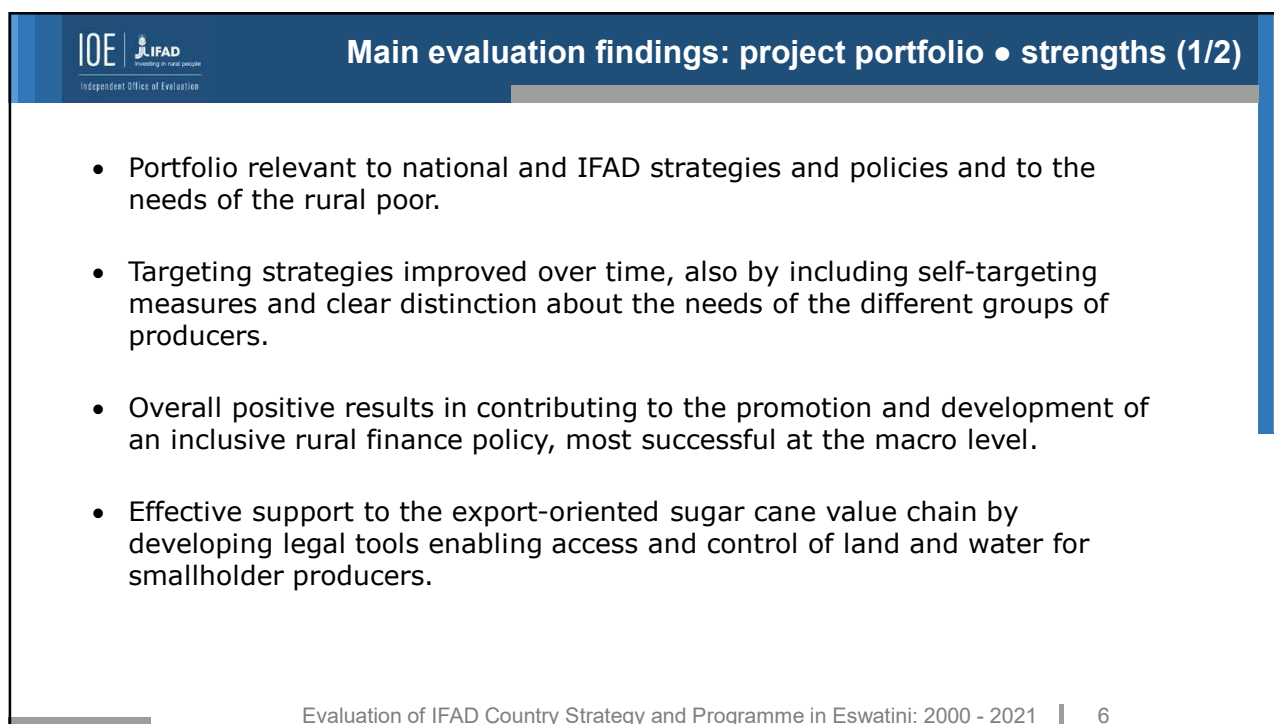
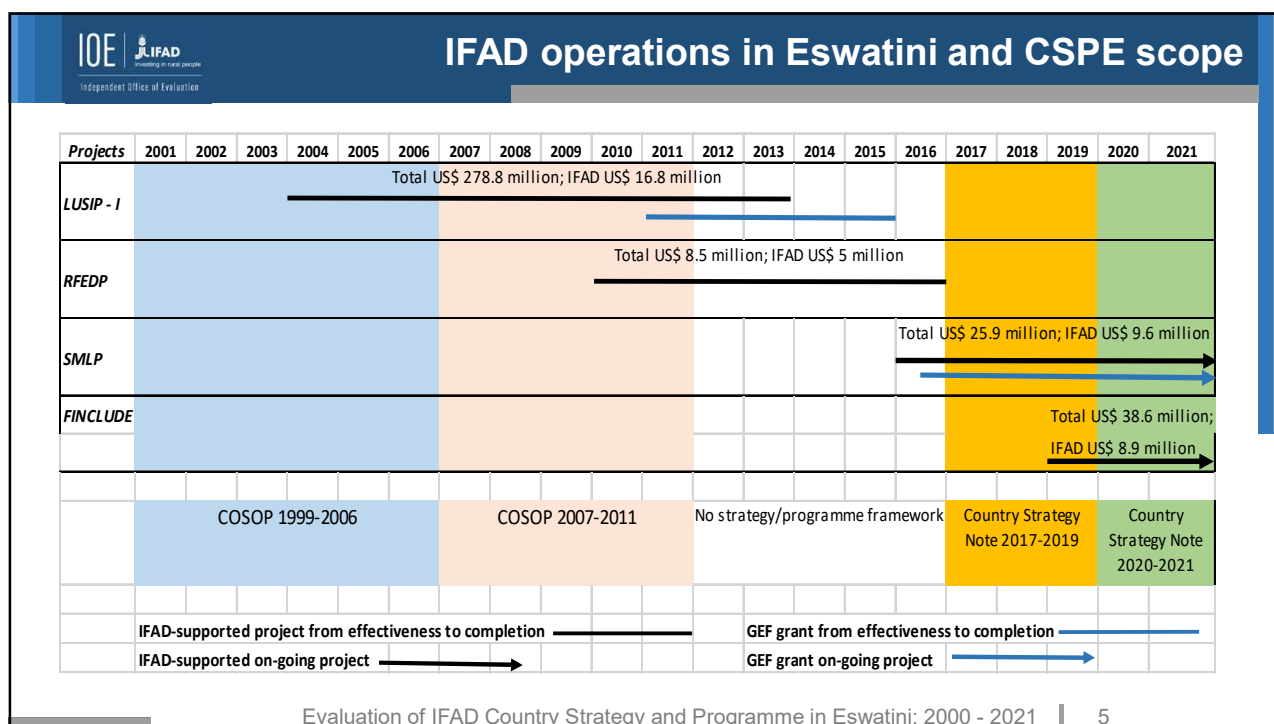
- a. Assess the results and performance of the IFAD-financed strategy and programme since 2000.
- b. Findings, lessons and recommendations to inform the next IFAD country strategy and the future partnership between IFAD and Government.

### Evaluation findings based on:

- Desk review: project documents, other secondary sources;
- Semi-structured interviews through videoconference and face-to-face;
- Key informant interviews
- Field visits by a team of national consultants to project infrastructures and communities in several Chiefdoms in Lubombo and Shiselweni regions (early October 2021) followed by phone interviews with participants in project-supported initiatives.

## IFAD operations in Eswatini and CSPE scope

- IFAD operational in Eswatini since 1983, 6 projects in total, costing \$368.4, IFAD funding \$54.5 million.
- Country director based at the sub-regional hub in Johannesburg since 2018.
- CSPE scope: 2000 – 2021.
- Project lending portfolio: 4 investment projects, two of which completed, one past MTR and one on-going; total cost \$351.8 million, IFAD funding \$41.35 million.
- Non-lending activities: Knowledge management, partnership building, policy engagement, grants.
- Assessment of COSOP 1999-2006; COSOP 2007-2011; Country Strategy Note 2017-2019; Country Strategy Note 2020-2021.



## Main evaluation findings: project portfolio • strengths (2/2)

- Chiefdom Development Plans and Community Development Committees promote inclusiveness; with Farmer Companies, all contribute to strengthening social and human capital.
- Highly innovative portfolio: rural finance sector concept and practices; participatory approaches; new crop varieties and new livestock production models; adequate level of scaling-up by Government.
- Engagement with women producers through all interventions, but initially mostly by default; over time, focus has improved.
- Dedicated support to Environment and natural resources management and Adaptation to climate change at programme level.

## Main evaluation findings: project portfolio • challenges (1/2)

- Project designs and implementation arrangements highly complex and not always fully cognizant of the national and local context.
- Uneven progress in local value chains development; Innovation Platforms ineffective in ensuring fair distribution of benefits along the value chain; limited net returns to honey and pig producers.
- Weak results in establishing institutions responsible for irrigation scheme and water management.
- Progress in support of small-scale water management infrastructures slow and limited.

## Main evaluation findings: project portfolio • challenges (2/2)

- Inclusion of more vulnerable people and households difficult in the context of IFAD interventions that are production-oriented.
- Complexity and lack of clarity in the execution arrangements with Service Providers and other executing partners.
- Risks of increasingly diminishing returns for smallholder farmers engaged in the sugar cane value chain and threats to the sustainability of the sugar-producing Farmer Companies.

## Main evaluation findings: Coherence

### Strengths

- Grants: good level of integration and coherence of regional grants with the lending portfolio, resulting in both planned and unplanned synergies.
- Knowledge Management: good level of lessons learning at the strategic level from and across the portfolio; some interesting initiatives on rural finance and environmental sustainability and through South South Cooperation.
- Policy engagement: achievements notable in the rural finance sector, and limited in the areas of land and water management and nutrition.

### Challenges

- Partnerships solid and constructive with the Government but limited in numbers and characterized by contractual features with other categories of partners.

- Collaboration between IFAD and the Government of Eswatini over twenty years has been constructive and fruitful and has produced tangible positive results and impacts, albeit not always as expected and desirable.
- IFAD's strategies for Eswatini focused on some of the key challenges that rural poor smallholder producers face, but fundamental constraints that prevent achieving sustainable livelihoods and significantly reducing rural poverty were not explicitly addressed.

- The sustainability of major investments in irrigation infrastructure and in support of smallholder producers engagement in the industrial, export-oriented sugar value chain is at risk.
- Complex implementation arrangements have affected the efficiency and effectiveness of the country programmes and raise questions about the most effective approach to pursue in future.
- At the level of project implementation, the CSPE identified M&E and procurement as major weaknesses that affected the performance of the country programme.

- **Recommendation 1.** IFAD should address through its strategy and programme in Eswatini the fundamental constraints that prevent rural smallholder producers, women and youth, from achieving more sustainable livelihoods.
- **Recommendation 2.** IFAD should further engage, at a minimum in an advocacy and advisory role, in addressing the emerging threats to the livelihoods of smallholder producers who have their holdings in the LUSIP I PDA.
- **Recommendation 3.** IFAD and the Government of Eswatini, drawing on the rich lessons learned over time, should define which are the most efficient and effective implementation arrangements for their joint initiatives, that will also allow smallholder producers to benefit the most.
- **Recommendation 4.** Project monitoring and evaluation systems and procurement units should be considered fundamental pillars of project management and be adequately staffed and capacitated to perform in an effective and efficient manner.

# Thank you!