

Country Strategy and Programme evaluation of the Republic of Argentina

Virtual workshop

Introductory Statement by Mr Indran Naidoo, Director of the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD

10 September 2024

Distinguished representatives of the Government of the Argentine Republic, representatives of IFAD, partner institutions and international organizations,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to be part of this Country Strategy and Programme Evaluation workshop, organized by the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD in collaboration with the Government of Argentina and the Regional Division of IFAD for Latin America and the Caribbean. This workshop follows the finalization of the Argentina country strategy and programme evaluation and provides an opportunity to share and discuss the main findings and recommendations with the Government, IFAD and other stakeholders and partners.

I would like to start by expressing my appreciation to the National Directorate of Sectoral and Special Programs and Projects (DIPROSE) for the collaboration on this evaluation. We also thank the staff of the provincial teams in Catamarca, Chaco, Córdoba, Jujuy, Neuquén, Santiago del Estero, Salta and Tucumán, as well as the technical teams of the executing organizations and the family farmers and producers for supporting field visits, sharing insights, and patiently responding to questions from the evaluation team.

I would also recognize the support of the IFAD Programme Management Department, in particular: Mr Juan Diego Ruiz Cumplido, Andean and Southern Cone Hub Head and country director, and other IFAD colleagues that have collaborated with this evaluation.

Finally, I thank the evaluation team, led by Dr Mónica Lomeña-Gelis Senior Evaluator Officer, IOE, with the support of Massiel Jiménez and a team of international and national consultants, some of them are with us today. Ms Antonella Sisti and Ms Lucia Bacconi provided efficient administrative support to the team and to organizing today's event.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Let me first highlight the importance of the independent evaluation function. The Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD undertakes impartial and evidence-based evaluations of projects, country programmes and corporate policies, to assess the results achieved and to generate lessons to enhance the impact of IFAD-supported development interventions on people's lives.

More specifically, this country strategy and programme evaluation has covered the period 2011–2023, and included six loans (with a cost of USD 323.6 million, USD 97.8 million funded by IFAD), seven grants and non-lending activities supported by IFAD.

The evaluation found that the country program was well aligned with the priorities of the Government of Argentina and was appropriate for the family farming producers strongly affected by the deterioration of the country's economic situation. The programs reached or exceeded the expected number of households and supported empowerment processes of some groups of rural women.

However, the lack of strategic approach to targeting was among the challenges encountered. Moreover, IFAD's interventions in Argentina were mainly based on the single instrument of business plans funded with matching grants for all types of organizations of family farming producers. In most cases, the beneficiaries needed more investments

to be able to achieve their productive objectives, and were unable to change their way of marketing or to improve their access to markets.

The main recommendations that emerge from the evaluative analysis suggest rethinking IFAD's support strategy in Argentina. This includes considering the strategic aspects of targeting, the selection of support instruments for different subgroups of the target population, preparing IFAD interventions for the country volatility and strengthening the monitoring and evaluation system.

I hope that this evaluation will help IFAD and the Government of Argentina to improve their partnership in contributing to eliminate rural poverty in the country.

I thank you for your attention and wish you a productive event.