

## Country context

**Population:** 1.426 billion (2023)

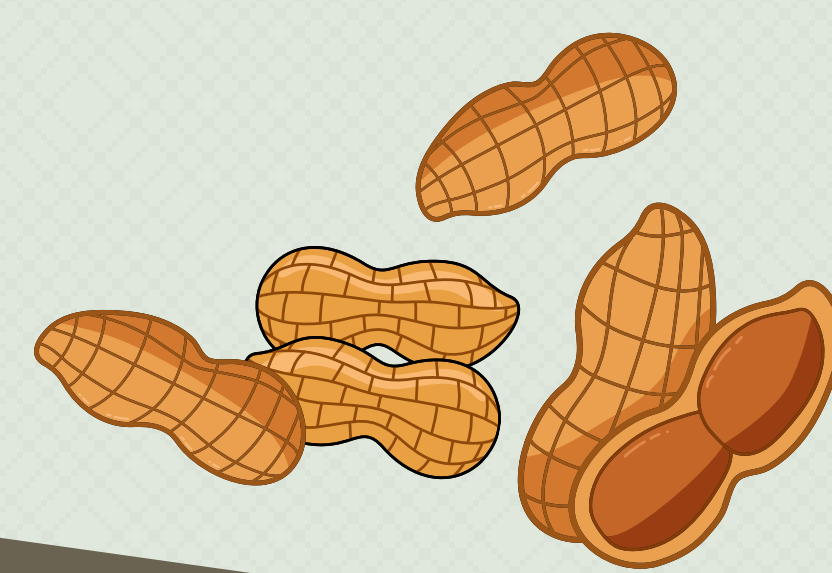
**Population living in rural areas:** 64% (2023)

**GDP per capita:** US\$ 2,484.8 (2023)

**Agricultural sector as proportion of GDP:** 16.8% (2021)

**Human Development Index** 0.633 – 132nd out of 191 countries (2021)

Sources: UN, UNDP, World Bank

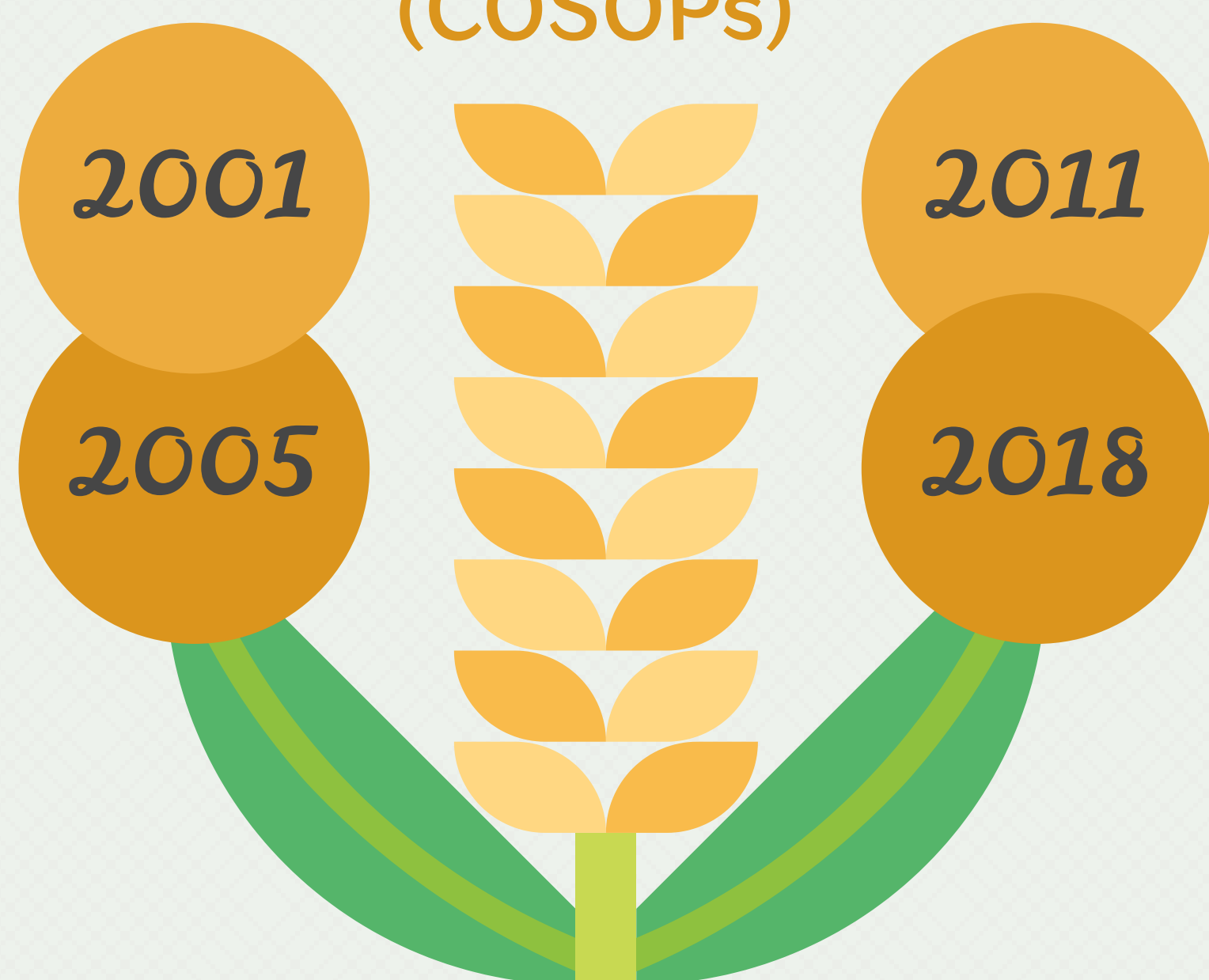


IFAD operations since 1979	
IFAD-approved investment projects	32
Total portfolio cost	US\$ 3.87 billion
IFAD financing	US\$ 1.22 billion

Evaluation coverage (2016-2022)	
Projects evaluated	13
Total portfolio cost	US\$ 2.46 billion
IFAD financing	US\$ 737 million

## Country strategies

Country Strategic Opportunities Programmes (COSOPs)

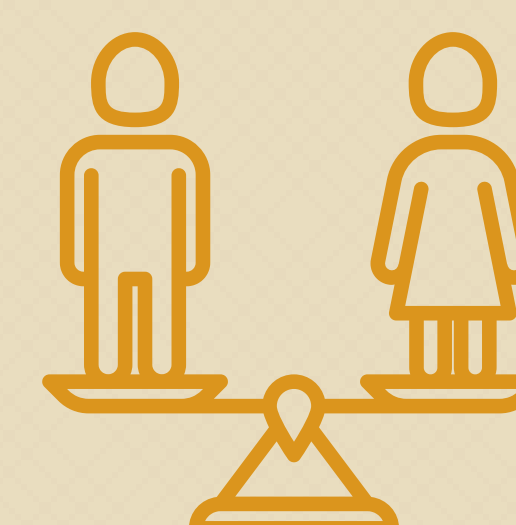


## Main areas covered by projects

Sustainable agriculture



Gender equality and women's empowerment



Natural resource management and climate change adaptation



Financial inclusion

Access to markets



Social empowerment







# Main evaluation findings

## Strengths

1. IFAD-funded activities were well aligned with key government policies and strategies, particularly with reference to the focus on making small-scale farming more remunerative, and linking to rural livelihoods development, microfinance and women's empowerment.
2. IFAD's comparative advantage was recognized by the Government and other partners, particularly in relation to its work in support of disadvantaged areas and groups, such as smallholders, tribal groups and women.
3. IFAD-supported projects contributed to improved and sustainable agricultural production systems and livelihoods, and increased access to financial services. Interventions made a strong contribution to social and human capital, and strengthened institutions of and for the rural poor.
4. Women's participation was significant in all IFAD-supported projects, which clearly increased their opportunities and access to resources, improved their confidence and made efforts to alleviate their workload.
5. While at the state level leadership, ownership and sustained support for projects were mixed, at the central level, the Government's Department of Economic Affairs was highly collaborative and supportive.



## Areas for improvement

1. The programme strengths, innovations and achievements did not significantly progress with respect to the previous country programme evaluation. For instance, progress in connecting small-scale producers to remunerative markets was not consistent.
2. The portfolio lacked an integrated approach to natural resource management and climate change adaptation, focusing more on infrastructure sub-projects and natural resource utilization, rather than sustainable management of natural resources with attention to broader ecosystems.
3. Several factors limited the scope for the country programme to inform policy issues and other interventions. For instance, while clear efforts were made to better document and disseminate experiences and stories from the field, more solid data and analysis would have been required to ensure the quality and utility of knowledge.
4. While recently developed partnerships with international organizations have been positive, insufficient progress was made in partnership building with research institutions, private sector or other non-governmental actors, as part of strategic and programmatic collaboration.
5. At least half of the ongoing projects have suffered from serious implementation delays, leading to a risk of non-achievement of objectives as well as sustainability concerns.

## Recommendations

### # 1

The next COSOP should clearly establish IFAD's added value, to be supported by multi-pronged strategies based on the profiles of target groups, partners' capacities, and types of development challenges to be addressed.

### # 2

Emphasise the promotion of effective monitoring, feeding into knowledge management and innovation for scaling up in all aspects of the country strategy and programme.

### # 3

Ensure adequate attention, investment and capacities in social capital enhancement for strengthening grassroots organizations.

### # 4

Strengthen market and business orientation in interventions aimed at improving small-scale producers' access to markets.

### # 6

Attention and measures to improve efficiency are needed.

### # 5

Strengthen the care and considerations for the environment, natural resource management and climate resilience in a more integrated manner.