

Revised Approach Paper
Smallholder Access to Markets (SAM)
Evaluation Synthesis

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Abbreviations and acronyms

AMIP	Agricultural Marketing Improvement Programme
CLP	Core learning partnership
CGAP	Consultative Group to Assist the Poorest, World Bank
CPE	Country programme evaluation
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IOE	Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD
LDC	Lesser developed country
MIC	Middle income country
PCR	Project Completion Report Validation
PMD	Programme Management Department
PPA	Project Performance Assessment
PTA	Policy and Technical Division
RUFIP	Rural Finance Intermediation Project
SAM	Smallholder Access to Markets
VC	Value Chain

Smallholder Access to Markets (SAM)

I. Introduction

1. As decided by the Executive Board of IFAD in its 113th session (December 2014), Independent Office of Evaluation (IOE) will undertake an Evaluation Synthesis on IFAD's interventions in Smallholder Access to Markets (SAM) looking at the past ten years 2005 to 2015 to identify progress and lessons learned.
2. The evaluation synthesis report (ESR) is a product introduced by IOE in 2012 and are also grounded in IFAD's Evaluation Policy "IOE shall also prepare evaluation synthesis to identify and capture evaluative knowledge and lessons learned on a certain topic from a variety of evaluations produced by IFAD and the evaluation units of other organisations".
3. Evaluation synthesis reports are knowledge products that aim to enhance the general understanding of a particular topic; the paper will bring together evidence-based observations from a variety of IOE documents highlighting significant and substantial findings, and in doing so, will identify and raise strategic issues for further consideration by IFAD Management and the Governing Bodies. In this way, they facilitate wider use of evaluation findings by identifying and capturing accumulated knowledge and good practices on common themes across a variety of situations and sources. Synthesizing existing evaluation evidence allows evaluation synthesis reports to contribute to decision-making processes in an effective way.
4. The SAM synthesis, as a result, will focus on highlighting the different contexts and approaches to SAM, the diversity of intervention experiences, lessons learnt and practical suggestions for future innovation. The synthesis will also endeavour to identify the contributions of SAM to reduced food insecurity, increase incomes/assets and rural poverty reduction.
5. This paper presents a conceptual framework for the exercise, including a general background on the topic (section II), overview of IFAD's support to SAM (section III), objectives, scope and methodology and limitations of the exercise (section IV), and finally the evaluation synthesis team composition and a tentative timeline (section V).

II. Background and context

6. Since the "Agreement Establishing IFAD" was adopted by the United Nations Conference on 13 June 1976 in Rome, Article 2 stated: "The objective of the Fund shall be to mobilize additional resources to be made available on concessional terms for agricultural development in developing Member States. In fulfilling this objective the Fund shall provide financing primarily for projects and programmes specifically designed to introduce, expand or improve food production systems and to strengthen related policies and institutions within the framework of national priorities and strategies, taking into consideration: the need to increase food production in the poorest food deficit countries; the potential for increasing food production in other developing countries; and the importance of improving the nutritional level of the poorest populations in developing countries and the conditions of their lives."
7. Since then, IFAD has made amendments to the Agreement Establishing IFAD as global trends in technology, finance, the environment and markets have rapidly and continuously altered the way food is produced, marketed and consumed. IFAD's adaptation to this constant change is reflected in evolving strategic frameworks which strive to address new challenges to and opportunities for meeting its institutional objective of bettering the life of the rural poor.

8. In 2001 Rural Poverty Report, IFAD identified four key factors for poor smallholders to be able to benefit from rural development including the need for assets, technology, institutional arrangements and access to markets. The report also found smallholders were inadequately equipped to manage the challenges of new technologies and markets.
9. In February 2003, Promoting Market Access for the Rural Poor in Order to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals: Discussion Paper for the 25th Session of IFAD's Governing Council noted IFAD's commitment to "the objective of improving the rural poor's access to markets, and in this context, is seeking ways to:
 - effectively increase the market share of the rural poor and improve the terms in which they participate in markets;
 - achieve greater market access and market development for the rural poor; and
 - effectively improve at national, regional and international levels the rules of trade in favour of the rural poor."
10. The discussion paper set the framework for engaging in smallholder access to markets within the context of IFAD's Strategic Framework for 2003 to 2006. This paper also reported that "the proportion of projects with a specific 'marketing' component fell from 30 per cent between 1981 and 1985 to only 12 per cent between 1991 and 1995." However, the proportion of projects with objectives or notable components relating to markets, increased from 18% between 1991-95 to 38% between 1999 and 2001. The paper identifies a still nascent but growing knowledge base on access to market issues from finance, information, infrastructure, and partnerships.
11. In 2014, the IFAD Rural Markets and Enterprises desk of the Policy and Technical Division (PTA), undertook a stocktaking to identify all projects approved between December 2011 and December 2014 which had value chain (VC) components, among which market access is a defining element. The result found that of the 86 projects approved during the period, 61 (or 71 per cent) included some form of VC activity.
12. The first issues paper prepared on market access by the IOE for the 2009 Annual Report on Results and Impact of IFAD Operations, identified five general priority areas: understanding value chains; diversify approaches to rural financial services; innovate (new products and approaches for IFAD); work on partnerships and policy; and share knowledge (and lessons learned).
13. An IFAD staff workshop on the paper's findings as well as the Rural Poverty Report of 2011 the six specific key market access messages were:
 - smallholders need the capacity to identify the costs and benefits of participating in modern and/or traditional, domestic and/or international markets;
 - reducing risk and transaction costs is critical for determining whether or not smallholders can engage profitably agricultural markets;
 - a robust public policy agenda is needed to improve the market environment and the ability of smallholders to engage in it; and
 - there is a need for stakeholders (e.g., policymakers, civil society organizations, NGOs, private sector and donors etc.) to work together for the development of innovative and sustainable contractual arrangements, through complementary and supportive institutions.
14. An increasing number of studies echo and support IFAD's findings that smallholders are critical to food production yet are largely denied access to the most lucrative market places on a "fair" basis. A European Union study found, for example, that an increasing proportion of food trade takes place through vertically organized cross-border chains to which smallholders have limited access. They also found 77 percent of smallholder food is even not traded, or is limited to within country

borders. D'Odorico *et al* (2014) found an estimated 23 percent of food produced for human consumption in the world transits through global markets, yet very little to date has been from smallholders. Meanwhile a 2013 High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition Report and Committee on World Food Security policy roundtable (October 2010) conclusions highlighted that smallholders are the most important investors in agriculture and produce the majority of the world's food.

15. As the majority producers of the world's food access to finance is imperative. The Consultative Group to Assist the Poorest (CGAP) of the World Bank produced two recent reports (cofinanced by IFAD) found there has been relatively small progress in meeting the financial services needs of an estimated 500 million smallholder farmers in lessor developed countries and middle income countries, services which are in part, critical to facilitating market access.¹
16. Despite broad recognition that market access and the promise of improved livelihoods are linked, understanding the needs of smallholder has been impeded by their traditionally homogeneous characterization. Smallholder groups, argues Torero (2011), are highly heterogenic, and are best defined by a host of context shaping variables, in particular: location; access to (and productivity of) means of production (quality/amount of land, labour and capital); transaction costs; access to infrastructure for information / technology, transportation, storage/processing; small holder economic/social influence (as individuals or as farmer groups); and market/governmental institutional relationships. Torero also found the capacity of smallholders, particularly the poor and very poor, to understand and or influence contextual realities constraining their market access and livelihoods limited.
17. These constraints are further compounded by smallholders who are not well prepared to assess numerous risks (real or perceived) affecting both short- and long-term livelihood decisions and planning, including, for example: climate change, natural disasters, international market price volatility, and production quality innovations, etc.
18. Torero (2011) suggests that assessing smallholders within a framework of micro-regions, offers an opportunity to address the specific needs and risks facing more homogenous, albeit smaller groups constraining their market participation. Arias *et al* concur, finding smallholder economic decisions and resulting market access to be strongly influenced by the nature/character of geographic regions, and that intervention solutions by necessity must address the specificities limiting each group.²
19. The emerging understanding of smallholder heterogeneity greatly complicates smallholder access *policy development*, much of which is necessarily set at the national level and applies indifferently to the needs of specific groups. Research, however, continues to recognize that efficiently functioning markets (e.g., those that allow broad participation at a profit to producers) are vital if smallholders are to maximize whatever participation they can access, and, hence, the continued need for government(s) commitment to best practice public goods and policies, development and delivery.
20. Addressing heterogeneity from a *intervention* perspective is also challenging but more immediately instructive. Simply defining a project's target smallholder population and their unique access challenges, argues Amrouk *et al*³, will improve project outcome/impact performance. They also believe a solid understanding of specific physical access to markets and related risk management needs, is

¹ CGAP Focus Note (No. 85, April 2013) on Segmentation of Smallholder Households: Meeting the Range of Financial Needs in Agricultural Families; and CGAP Focus Note (No. 102, March 2015) Early Insights from Financial Diaries of Smallholder Household. These were cofinanced with the Rural Finance Desk in PTA.

² See: "Smallholder Integration in Changing Food Markets Report" (2013), FAO.

³ The Impact of Commodity Development Projects on Smallholders' Market Access in Developing Countries (Case studies of FAO/CFC Projects) 2013, FAO

fundamental to sound intervention. Embracing social and economic institutions accepted by smallholders is also deemed fundamental for critical information sharing and idea adoption, as is *beneficiary* based project activity sequencing. Not surprisingly, *Amrouk et al* argue poverty impact maximization requires all stakeholders -- but most critically the target smallholder group(s) -- must be deeply involved in and agree to project design.

21. Clearly, market access for poor rural smallholders presents a wide range of challenges, is complex and varies by geographic, economic and social context. The following section highlights key areas of learning from IFAD's experience to date.

III. Smallholder Access to Markets in IFAD-supported Operations and Initiatives

22. A preliminary review conducted by IOE in the process of preparing this approach paper, 79 Project Performance Assessments (PPAs) and 71 Project Completion Report Validations (PCRVs) have been scanned of which 16 PPAs and 33 PCRVs have been selected for further assessment and inclusion to the sample of SAM initiatives. SAM experiences including numerous approaches conceptualizing, developing and implementing SAM in IFAD programmes. For example:
 - a. SAM initiatives are a main or substantive focus in some projects such as AMIP in Ethiopia.⁴ SAM is, however, more often a component part of a larger programme, such as the Rural Income Diversification Project in Tuyen Quang Province in Vietnam. In some projects, SAM has been integrated into overall programming in a strategic fashion, in others it has been treated more as an "add-on" component meant to address market access needs for increased yields anticipated from the main programme impacts.
 - b. The focus of SAM programming ranges across IFAD's portfolio from supporting new agricultural technologies (e.g., production, process, and on/off farm enterprise management), commodity market access, thematic areas (e.g. land, youth, water, rural finance), or other cross cutting approaches (e.g. gender mainstreaming of business development skills via services such as CARE in Rural Financial Intermediation Programme in Lesotho), again, integrated into programming in various different ways (including for example private sector partnership and policy dialogue).
 - c. SAM via value chain access development is an increasingly sophisticated thematic innovation complementing and or replacing a strictly brick and mortar approach (e.g., supporting warehouse building as in the case of Yarmouk Agricultural Resources Development Project in Jordan). Finally, new product development/diversification such as efforts to improve sustainable bamboo production and market access as supported by the Programme for Enhanced Bamboo-based Smallholder Livelihood Opportunities – Phase II.
 - d. **Market Knowledge Development.** A common SAM cross cutting practice is market knowledge development. Many programmes employ third-party market access knowledge brokering which connects producers with more direct market access (i.e., not through local or district level buyers). There are examples where private sector partners are intended to play the broker role, especially when value chains are targeted (e.g. institutional MOUs with consumer goods companies), while in other examples, including Agricultural Marketing Information Project (AMIP) in Ethiopia, there are more passive approaches through electronic information brokerage or the use of "market spies" to identify market prices and sales via cell phones as found in the Agricultural Marketing Services Development Programme in Tanzania. .

⁴ Note programmes noted in this section enjoyed various degrees of success and challenges and they are referred to for their programmatic characteristics and not necessarily performance.

- e. **Institutional Capacity Development.** Increasing institutional capacity development is a common tactical approach to improving SAM for the rural poor. Starting from critical pathway development such as the freeing up time and energy for individual empowerment and self-help financial services group formation as cited in the India Project Performance Assessment (PPA) for the Livelihoods Improvement Project in the Himalayas, 2015. Supporting the Guatemalan Exporters Association in Guatemala, who in turn support community farmer cooperatives, is an example of strengthening public or quasi-public sector knowledge of private sector market activities. Similarly in the Rural Development Project – Georgia, the capacity of food safety institutions was enhanced to better facilitate access to Russian and European agricultural markets.
 - f. **Pro-Rural Poor Policy Change.** Increasingly, SAM initiatives have been aimed at influencing pro-rural poor policy change. Some actions focus on a specific crops, or key elements within a supply chain, while others aim to better regulate market development. In the Arhangai Rural Poverty Alleviation Project (Mongolia), there was support for the removal of government controls on meat sales to redress deteriorating terms of trade and to broaden the market opportunities for poor households.
 - g. **Partnerships with Private Sector.** A range of implementing partnerships have been deployed, from entirely public sector to mostly private sector led. Grass roots and non-governmental organizations have been involved in numerous projects, for example: the community strengthening component in the Community-initiated Agriculture and Resource Management Project in Belize, the quasi-private sector state-owned microfinance banks in the RUFIP project in Ethiopia, or financial institutions involved in the Rural Financial Services Programme in Tanzania. Examples of successful partnerships with private sector in diary and fruit value chains have also been used in Sri Lanka in the Dr Zone Livelihood Support and Partnership Programme.
 - h. **Knowledge Generation and Sharing.** Some IFAD initiatives support SAM knowledge generation and sharing. Most such initiatives focuses on programme stakeholder knowledge and sharing, while a few others include regionally focused activities. SAM initiatives often employ exchange experience and study tours, for training purposes, technical exchanges, and producer trade fairs.
 - i. IFAD has financed a number of regional grants to support regional knowledge platforms and networks, or capacity building and networking of regional and national organizations (e.g. farmer organizations) each with various degrees of SAM development intentions. Examples of such networks include IFAD Africa Regional Knowledge Network, Network for Enhanced Market Access by Smallholders. Most of these initiatives are financed through IFAD's grants programme and some in collaboration with other institutions (e. International Labour Organisation, United Nations Capital Development Fun and IFAD work in micro-insurance in Ethiopia).
 - j. **Financing SAM** - IFAD has used a mix mechanisms and instruments in different combinations (e.g., grants, different investment projects, policy engagement, partnership building, etc.) for SAM initiatives.
23. **IFAD Policies and Strategies.** Over the years, IFAD has continued to evolve its policies and strategies to better serve its mandate, including a substantial effort to enhance smallholder access to markets in a fair and sustainable manner. The key policies include:
24. **2006, IFAD Targeting Policy.** The policy states "IFAD's mandate defines its "target group" as rural people living in poverty and experiencing food insecurity in

developing countries. Within this broad group, IFAD proactively strives to reach extremely poor people (as defined by MDG 1) who have the potential to take advantage of improved access to assets and opportunities for agricultural production and rural income-generating activities." Furthermore while not limited to this group the policy also recognises that "specific groups of people will take advantage of a development initiative ... and measures aim at preventing disproportionate benefit capture by other groups."

25. **2007, IFAD Innovation Strategy.** The goal of the strategy is: to ensure that innovation is systematically and effectively mainstreamed in IFAD processes and in its practice in country programmes. Its purpose is to enhance IFAD's capacity to work with partners to find new solutions as well as promoting new ways to enable the rural poor to overcome poverty.
26. **2009, IFAD Rural Finance Policy.** Access to finance is a critical aspect of developing SAM and is often a cornerstone element of SAM projects. Financial services are often key to improving productivity and securing the means to access markets. The corporate-level evaluation (CLE) of the IFAD Rural Finance Policy (September 2007), resulted in the decision by Management to "prepare an Update to the RFP". The policy reflects the changing global economy and takes account of the financial crisis, volatile food and agricultural commodity prices and the perils of climate change as well as the challenges in remote, marginal areas, the need to develop innovative products and delivery mechanisms is viewed as critical to meeting the needs of IFAD's target group. In doing so the new policy focussed on "... developing inclusive rural financial systems and fostering innovations to increase the access of poor and marginalized women and men to a wide range of financial services.
27. The policy outlines six guiding principles to enable this: "... (i) support access to a variety of financial services; (ii) promote a wide range of financial institutions, models and delivery channels; (iii) support demand-driven and innovative approaches; (iv) encourage – in collaboration with private-sector partners – market-based approaches that strengthen rural financial markets, avoid distortions in the financial sector and leverage IFAD's resources; (v) develop and support long-term strategies focusing on sustainability and poverty outreach; and (vi) participate in policy dialogues that promote an enabling environment for rural finance. These binding principles will be applied at the micro level, working with retail rural finance institutions and beneficiaries; at the meso level, focusing on financial infrastructure, such as second-tier institutions, and technical service providers; and at the macro level, assessing the policy, legislative, regulatory and supervisory framework.
28. **2011, IFAD Private Sector Strategy.** IFAD recognised (in the Strategic Framework 2011 – 2015) the need to engage more deeply with the private sector to enable a range of opportunities (additional financial resources, technology, and access to markets) that could potentially benefit IFAD's target group within the changing global context, noting though that the challenges were not insignificant. IFAD's role was identified as being the 'honest broker' between the private sector and rural entrepreneurs and smallholders as well as with Governments. The strategy developed to "catalyse additional investments, services and market access to the rural poor."(2011, Private Sector Strategy). This would also require IFAD to review its existing instruments.
29. **2012, IFAD Gender and Women's Empowerment Policy:** The goal of the Policy is: "To deepen impact and strengthen sustainability of IFAD supported development initiatives" as women are significant actors in the agriculture sector, as well as household food / nutrition security, and in natural resource management (World Bank, FAO and IFAD (2009), Gender in Agriculture Sourcebook). Women are active in their own enterprises, value chains, non-farm

and family activities. Through the strategic objectives of the policy one outcome targeted is to enhance the capacity of partners to address gender in agriculture and rural development.

30. **2012, IFAD Partnership Strategy:** The goal of the Strategy is "to enable more rural people to move out of poverty through the selective use and effective management, of partnerships". The intent of the strategy is to ensure the good intentions and appropriateness of the partnership that will assist in meeting IFAD's mandate in an equitable and productive manner for both all partners.
31. **2015, Public-Private-Producer Partnerships (4P's):** In order to understand the benefit of the public-private-producer partnerships to date IFAD requested the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) to undertake research (Thorpe and Maestre, 2015) to identify how the 4P's do / can contribute to successful smallholder access to agricultural value chains. The report notes that the 4P's "... involve cooperation between government and business agents, working together to reach a common goal or carry out a specific task, while jointly assuming risks and responsibilities, and sharing resources and competences. The research concluded with identifying eight enabling aspects for success in agricultural value chains. These are summarized as: i) Define the rationale and underlying assumptions; ii) Ensure a clear market pull; iii) Prioritise farmer ownership of the PPPPs; iv) Align incentives of partners and build trust; v) Manage risks through identification, distribution and mitigation; vi) Build the capacity to respond to changes in complex market systems; vii) Take a proactive approach to public accountability and transparency; and viii) Facilitate sustainable market systems.

IV. Objectives, Scope and Methodology

32. **Objectives:** The evaluation synthesis has the following two objectives:
 - (i) Review and analyse SAM experiences in relation to IFAD-supported projects and identify enabling factors for success, constraints and opportunities for future engagements; and
 - (ii) Identify lessons learnt including key successes and challenges and make recommendations for enhancing IFAD's approach to SAM.
33. **Scope.** While IFAD's SAM programming and thinking predates the 2001 Rural Poverty Report (the first to make explicit reference to markets), the last ten years have seen a significant growth in knowledge on the topic, as well as an increase in the number of projects addressing markets and value chains. In order to capture the evolution of its SAM thinking as well the most relevant experience, the proposed synthesis will focus primarily on input and output markets in IOE evaluations conducted between 2005 and 2015. This will include project performance assessments (PPAs) and project completion report validations (PCRVs) and to the extent possible and where necessary, country programme evaluations, corporate level evaluations, and evaluation syntheses. Relevant evaluations/literature (from other institutions) will be drawn on as appropriate.
34. Evaluations and literature reviewed to date show that no consistent approach to typologies has been developed, however the synthesis will also try and assess what has been applied to the heterogeneity of the target group and the vastly varying contexts. One such typology that was presented in IFAD in 2011 by Maximo Torero, takes the approach of micro-regions to define a typology.
35. **Methodology:** the evaluation synthesis will have the following steps:
 - (i) review literature to provide an overall context for the synthesis including corporate policy and guidance documents, as well as other technical reports by IFAD and development partners. Some attention will also be paid to IFAD's progress on new financing products to support SAM.

- (ii) review and summarize objectives and implementation elements of programmes via PPAs and PCRVs, as well as CPEs and relevant CLEs after 2005;⁵
 - (iii) finalize programme sample selection based on:
 - a. degree to which SAM was to have a substantive role in programme implementation (considering both qualitative analysis of SAM's role and quantitative assessment of commitment of programme resources to SAM activities);
 - b. degree to which information in evaluation documents supports in-depth understanding of SAM intervention;
 - (iv) based on information derived in sampling exercise, refine synthesis analytical framework based on key guiding questions including the following steps:
 - a. finalize identification of SAM related evaluations;
 - b. define major SAM interventions/approaches;
 - c. define what constitutes a substantial SAM intervention;
 - d. determine evaluation sample;
 - e. refine/reduce supporting key sub-questions.
 - f. Detailed analysis of evaluation documents to be included in the synthesis, including cross referencing approaches to strategic themes; and
 - g. Synthesis will also employ limited stakeholder interviews by skype or telephone.
36. Analysis will be led by one overarching question, and a key question related to each strategic theme, identifying and exploring challenges and successes of SAM interventions.
37. **Overarching Key Question:** To what extent have IFAD financed interventions in market access met the institutional objectives of IFAD?
38. **Key Questions**
- (i) **Targeting Key Question:** For whom has market access been achieved and what has been the nature of smallholder market interaction?
 - (ii) **Partnerships/Institutions/Policy Issues Key Question:** How have partnership strategies, capacity building of institutions, and development of government policies affected access to markets?⁶
 - (iii) **Infrastructure Key Question:** How does infrastructure impact access to markets?
 - (iv) **Finance Key Question:** How has the financial sector (e.g., formal and informal banking, leasing, insurance, private investment, input supplier credit etc.) responded to meet the financial demands and needs of the target group for production and market access?
 - (v) **Production, Food Security and Nutrition Key Question:** How does the nature and type of product/production and income potential affect SAM and does SAM translate into greater food security and nutrition for the rural poor (e.g., choice of production, commercial versus subsistence production etc.)?

⁵ In the development of the Approach Paper all PPAs and PCRVs evaluations since 2005 were assessed for possible inclusion to the sample. Programmes were included on the basis of having any element of SAM during implementation. A total of 79 PPAs and 71 PCRVs have been scanned of which 16 PPAs and 33 PCRVs have been selected for further assessment and inclusion to the sample.

⁶ This question bundles institutional and organizational considerations, with policy being considered an outcome of government management/prerogative.

39. Key questions are drawn from the field's current experience and understanding of SAM, and each will include sub-questions for greater analytical precision.
40. Two cross cutting themes of gender equity and the environment will be monitored across the questions (as appropriate) to identify good practices.
41. **Approach:** Analysis will examine SAM interventions as they relate to each of the following five themes emerging from IFAD's Strategic Objectives, as stated in the Agreement Establishing IFAD:
 - (i) **Targeting:** IFAD strives to primarily target the poorest rural populations in developing countries, including particularly women, youth, smallholders including the vulnerable and marginalised;
 - (ii) **Production, food security and nutrition:** A primary goal of IFAD is to improve poor rural households' access to sustainable sources of healthy food, including for example farm extension services, input and output markets, harvest, technologies, innovations, climate change, resilience, and sustainable farming practices;
 - (iii) **Partnerships/Private Sector/Institutions/Policy Issues:** IFAD works with numerous types of partners (e.g., beneficiaries/government/ the private sector, civil society etc.) in various ways to pursue its goals, from improving farmer skills, business development services, contracts, direct sales, market knowledge and information dialogue, influence, changes in the sector etc.;
 - (iv) **Finance:** Access to sustainable and appropriate pro-rural poor finance services via formal and informal financial institutions, through value chain financing arrangements etc. is a vital element in sustainable rural development and market access; and
 - (v) **Infrastructure:** Access to adequate infrastructure remains a vital part of rural development including direct market sales, packaging, grading, quality, and storage infrastructure (e.g., warehousing, market structures), roads, communications, transportation, knowledge/ information services.
42. **Theory of Change (ToC) Hypothesis:** That providing poor rural smallholders with access to markets will positively impact food security, nutrition, and/or household income and assets leading to rural poverty reduction.
43. Annex 1 provides a graphic representation of the ToC outlining a framework however is not exhaustive in the issues of inputs and outputs but representative of how it might look. Of note for the synthesis it identifies key inputs such as smallholder engagement, gender equity, empowerment, partnerships and infrastructure. The key outputs are noted include: business development; partnerships and farmer organisations; technology and innovation; market information; access to finance; and the policy and advocacy environments. The ToC also identifies assumed outcomes and impacts.
44. **Process and Core Learning Partnership** The main stakeholders for this evaluation synthesis is the Programme Management Department (PMD). The overall research process will be supported by a small group of IFAD staff members (the core learning partnership, CLP) that will provide inputs -- exchange of experiences, knowledge, lessons learned etc. (other technical experts maybe invited to join as the work moves forward).
45. Four key inputs are required from the CLP: comments on the synthesis Approach Paper, reviewing initial findings, participating in a learning workshop, and comments on synthesis report drafts as required.
46. A written Management Response by IFAD will be provided on the final report. IOE will also identify two external peer reviewers and seek their feedback on the report from other evaluation offices / expert institutions.

47. Following the first draft of the synthesis, an in-house workshop will be held with IFAD staff as a means to discuss and validate information/findings, and issues for future investments upon which recommendations will be formed. A written Management Response by IFAD will be provided on the final report.

SAM Synthesis Core Learning Partnership

<i>Department/Division</i>	<i>Representative</i>
PRM	Widad Batnini
SKD	Kris Hamel
ESA	Geoffrey Livingston (supported by Bernadette)
PTA	Marco Camagni
NEN	Dina Saleh
WCA	Vincenzo Galastro
LAC	Cintia Guzman
APR	Ron Hartman

48. **Limitations.** As noted, evaluation syntheses are conducted based on evaluative evidence, with limited budget, based on a desk study in a shorter time period compared to CPEs or CLEs. The synthesis is tailored within this operating context which could constrain depth of analysis. .

V. Evaluation synthesis team and proposed timetable

49. Evaluation synthesis team: The evaluation synthesis will be undertaken by a team comprised of: Louise McDonald, IOE Evaluation Officer and lead evaluator; Mr. Marc de Sousa a senior consultant and Mr. Prashanth Kotturi an evaluation research analyst (IOE consultants). Ms. Loulia Kayali, IOE Evaluation Assistant, will provide research and administrative support.

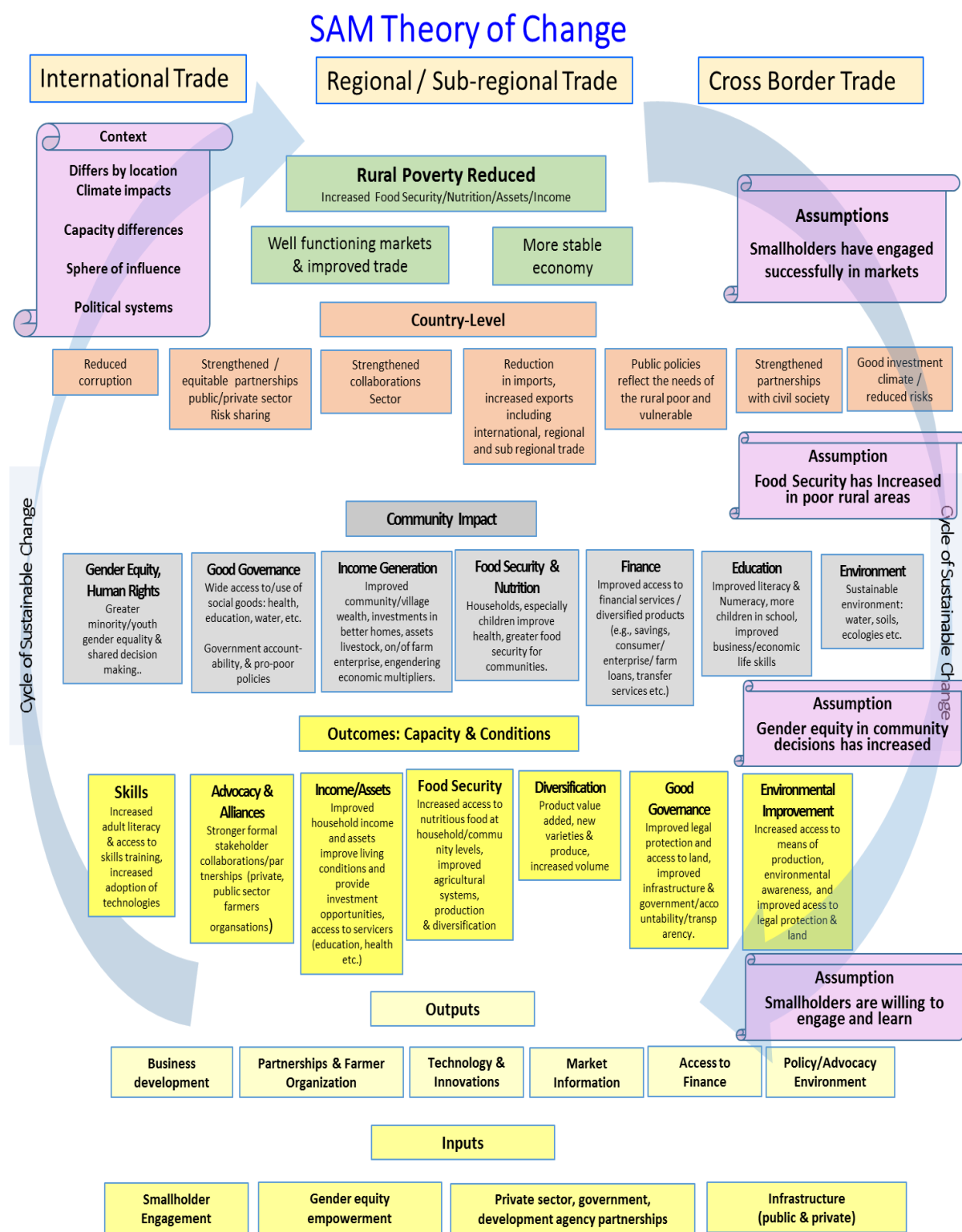
Proposed timetable. The indicative timeframe is provided in the below:

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Proposed deadline</i>
Draft Approach Paper	End 2 nd week July
Draft AP shared with IOE peer review	Week 3 in July
Draft AP shared with CLP and IFAD Mgt	19 September
AP finalised	4 th week September
Literature review (started)	2 nd week-September
First draft of report for IOE Peer review	3 rd week October
Power-point presentation to CLP on key findings	4 th week October
Share emerging findings in Rome	4 th week October
Final draft report	Mid December
Learning Event and publication	Week 3 January 2016

Theory of Change for SAM

The following figure provides a framework however is not exhaustive in the issues of inputs and outputs but representative of key issues.

Figure 1: A graphic representation of the theory of change for SAM.



Definitions in reference documents

IFAD Rural Poverty Report, 2001

Assets: definition; ownership, control and benefit; gain and loss; and outcomes for the rural and the poor

Definition: An asset (also called 'capital', 'stock', or 'endowment') is anything that can be used, without being used up, to increase regular returns above receipts from labour, whether hired or self-employed, and thus enhance producers' income or consumers' welfare. Typical assets are land, wells, cattle, tools, houses, shares, skills, health and roads.

Access, ownership, benefit: Assets can be owned individually, by a group (such as the common grazing land of a village), by the state, or on an open-access basis where there are institutional understandings governing use but no one institution has control over access. People can control assets (by rent, hire, or influence in family, village or polity) without ownership, and can benefit even from assets controlled by others (when using a road, or earning at a sugar-mill).

Gain, loss: People gain assets by: diverting income from buying food to saving for a plough; diverting effort, for example, from growing rice to digging wells or attending school; theft or fraud; or luck – often inheritance, or an appreciation in the value of what one already owns. One loses assets by physical depreciation (through non-maintenance of assets), environmental depletion or pollution; obsolescence; theft or fraud; or sale or mortgage.

The poor's assets: (a) The poor are hard pressed to gain assets. Much income and work are committed to basic consumer needs (and social obligations). Inheritances are small and rare. (b) The poor readily lose assets. In hard times they must often sell or mortgage them, to avoid even deeper transient poverty. (c) Indeed, if the poor do save, their vulnerability often leads them to put their savings into assets that, though low-yielding, are readily sold in crisis; or into other safe but low-yielding production assets; or even into zero-yielding stocks of food grains against a shortage.

Rural people's assets: Rural people have more 'rural-specific' assets (farmland, livestock, irrigation) per person than urban people, but fewer human, infrastructural or total land assets, and fewer assets overall. Often the consumption-poorest urban quintile is healthier and better educated than the middle rural quintile. Further, the agriculture-based rural poor are especially vulnerable to climatic stress and hence make forced sales of land or animals; they concentrate where land and water are environmentally vulnerable.

Upshot for the rural poor: Characteristics of the rural poor include low levels of assets, especially land, labour and human assets such as health, education and nutrition. Though countries differ greatly, urban-rural disparities in asset and consumption ownership and poverty globally have not shrunk since the 1970s. For the rural poor, consumption poverty and asset poverty help to cause and perpetuate each other.

Sources: Haddad *et al.* 2000; World Bank 2000a; Eastwood and Lipton 2000.

The 2009 Annual Report On Results And Impact Of IFAD Operations (ARRI): Issues Paper on Market Access, Definitions and Context

Facilitating access to markets is one of IFAD's strategic objectives. Specifically IFAD aims to ensure that the rural poor have better and sustainable access to: "transparent and competitive agricultural input and produce markets, with which they profitably engage"; "a broad range of financial services, which they use for productive and household needs"; and "opportunities for rural off-farm employment and enterprise development, which they profitably exploit"². The main focus of this paper is on agricultural output markets, although it recognises that access to these depends upon access to input markets and rural finance, and it acknowledges that in more urbanised economies where the potential for rural manufacturing is greater, other markets are also important.

Markets exist at many different levels (village, small urban, major urban, regional, international). In terms of distance, cost, competitiveness, and the ability to meet the necessary quality standards, local markets (village or small urban) are clearly more accessible than larger more distant urban or regional and international markets. However, access to larger markets offers potentially greater rewards and can act as a driver of growth in the local economy through multiplier effects.

The existing and potential access of the rural poor to markets depends upon the context: specifically on the areas in which the poor live and how these areas relate economically and geographically to the wider economy. It also depends upon the wider economy itself – the level of national income, the degree of urbanisation and rural infrastructure development, literacy rates, links with the global economy, the government's role in the economy, and the extent to which formal and informal institutions create an enabling environment for private sector investment. Spatial integration through improved communications and institutional infrastructure is also fundamental, as is highlighted in the World Bank's 2009 World Development Report (Reshaping Economic Geography). The places in which IFAD's target beneficiaries live vary enormously in relation to all of the above criteria.

Reference to SAM in key IFAD corporate documents

Reference to SAM in Strategic Framework documents

<i>Strategic Frameworks</i>	<i>Reference to SAM (implicit or explicit)</i>
SF 2003 -2006	<p>IFAD will concentrate its investments, research and knowledge management efforts, policy dialogue and advocacy on the attainment of three Strategic objectives: strengthening the capacity of the rural poor and their organizations; improving equitable access to productive natural resources and technology; and increasing access to financial services and markets.</p> <p>In their efforts to raise agricultural productivity or to diversify incomes, the poor often need investment and working capital. Yet rural financial markets remain underdeveloped. Because the amounts involved are small and the poor lack collateral, banks are usually not interested in lending to them. Assistance needs to focus on developing professional and responsive rural finance institutions, with a strong emphasis not just on providing credit but also on encouraging savings.</p> <p>Efforts to increase agricultural productivity can only be effective if they are linked to an appreciation of market potential. Too many agricultural investments have failed because they only concentrated on increasing production while neglecting development of market links. Integrated approaches along the full continuum of production, processing and marketing are needed to raise rural incomes and significantly contribute to economic growth and poverty reduction. Transport infrastructure is also critical for developing links to the outside world.</p>
SF 2007-2010	<p>One of the six strategic objectives defined in the framework is 'Transparent and competitive agricultural input and produce markets'. The emergence of global, consumer- and corporate-driven food systems and of new regional and local markets has resulted in new opportunities for some, but has created new difficulties for many others: particularly the poorest and most marginalized.</p> <p>The terms and conditions on which poor rural people are able to purchase inputs and sell their produce are critical determinants both of the viability of farm enterprises, and of the very composition of farm production systems. The governments of many developing countries withdrew from direct intervention in such markets more than a decade ago. While private-sector-led markets – local, national, regional and global – are gradually emerging to take their place, at the level of the farmer, they are often non-transparent and uncompetitive, or at worst exploitative. Many poor rural people, and particularly those in the most remote, most marginal areas, are poorly served by these markets. Strengthened farmer organization is critical for improved access to markets, for negotiating more favourable terms of engagement, and for improving information flows. Efforts to improve the market access of poor rural people must be based around specific products, and driven by an analysis of the value chain from producer to consumer. Often, the best way to secure better terms for poor farmers will be to support the market intermediaries with whom they have to deal. Physical infrastructure is also critical for developing links to the outside world, reducing transaction costs and improving the competitiveness of poor rural producers. New types of market information systems are emerging, and in many countries mobile telephony is having an extraordinary impact in terms of reducing the information asymmetries that small farmers face. (Pg.11)</p>

SF 2011-2015	<p>One of the five strategic objectives defined in the framework is ‘A natural resource and economic asset base for poor rural women and men that is more resilient to climate change, environmental degradation and market transformation’. The Strategic Framework 2011-15 recognizes insufficient integration into agricultural markets and value chains as one of the reasons for poverty among smallholder households.(Pg.5) For many small farmers and livestock producers, agriculture can provide a robust pathway out of poverty today and in the future. For this to happen, small-scale agriculture must be market-oriented to capture the opportunities afforded by growing demand for agricultural products. (Pg.6)</p> <p>Growing demand and higher prices for food, biofuels and other agricultural products have led to increased engagement in agriculture by private-sector actors – from small producers to large-scale corporations. These can offer new business opportunities for market-oriented small agricultural producers.(Pg.16). Participation in markets for agricultural goods, services and wage labour (both in agriculture and in related non-farm activities in rural areas, but also in areas of outmigration) is essential for the livelihoods of poor rural people. Indeed, effective integration in regional and national economies through exchanges in various markets – for goods, labour and services – is one key precondition for sustained income growth and rural poverty reduction. This is provided that poor rural people are supported in becoming competitive market actors, and that markets offer opportunities for their participation on fair terms (including decent work opportunities).(Pg.19)</p> <p>IFAD has long recognized the importance of empowerment, particularly through organization, for enabling poor rural women and men to become more effective market actors and for promoting better governance and more effective policies and institutions affecting agriculture and rural development. To foster the development of profitable, market-integrated, and sustainable farm and non-farm enterprises in today’s environment, it is all the more important for IFAD to adhere to the principle of strengthening the capabilities of its target group in all its activities. (Pg.39). IFAD recognizes that rural young people are key actors in meeting the challenge of feeding a growing global population through sustainable and resilient small-scale agriculture that is market-oriented and market-integrated. (Pg.41)</p>
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Reference to SAM in documents in replenishment consultations

<i>Replenishment consultation</i>	<i>Reference to SAM</i>
8th consultation (2008) (GC 32/L.5, January 2009)	<p>Recognizing the spike in food prices and the inherent volatility therein the report identified structural factors and their impacts and stated that ‘Continued distortions and speculation in international grain markets and in markets for farm inputs will continue to contribute to volatility of agricultural prices and farm incomes in the future.’(Pg.3).</p> <p>A strong and diverse private sector, providing agricultural inputs, production and financial services and markets, which poor rural producers are able to access and use, is critical for increasing their agricultural production and incomes. (Pg.16).</p> <p>The report also elaborates indicators towards the achievement of the six strategic objectives one of which is agricultural marketing. The two indicators for the achievement under agricultural marketing are a.) Roads constructed/rehabilitated (km), b.) Marketing groups formed and strengthened.</p>
9th consultation (2012) (GC 35/L.4)	<p>The IFAD9 Consultation agreed on a series of operational, institutional and financial commitments to strengthen the Fund’s contribution to achieving the first Millennium Development Goal of eradicating poverty and hunger and to deepen its focus on gender equality and women’s empowerment, thereby enhancing its</p>

value-for money in the IFAD9 period (2013-2015).

One of the key areas for reform in the IFAD9 period is the private sector and IFAD committed to 'Increase engagement in policy dialogue for more conducive rural business environments that enable smallholders and the rural poor to gain better access to markets and value chains.'

10th consultation (2014)
GC38/L.4/Rev.1

Under IFAD10, IFAD will expand private-sector participation in the projects it supports through value chain financing and the 4P (public-private-producer partnership) mechanism, and assess the viability and effectiveness of this approach to sustainably increase private-sector investment in the smallholder agricultural sector while also increasing the access of small farmers to markets and improving their livelihoods. It will also seek unrestricted complementary contributions from its Members in order to enable it to scale up the 4P agenda. In addition, IFAD has recently signed partnership agreements with Unilever and Intel; during IFAD10 other such agreements with the corporate private sector will be drawn up where they can contribute to the achievement of IFAD's mandate and they do not incur any reputational risk for the organization.

Extract from "IFAD's engagement with middle-income countries" (2011)

Differentiated services: Enhancing IFAD's knowledge products and services

IFAD already has some knowledge products of importance to MICs, which will be developed further:

- **Policy, "convening" and advocacy platforms.** IFAD supports its Members by sponsoring dialogue and brokering partnerships between diverse rural stakeholders and constituencies, both within and between countries. This can contribute to governments' own policy definition and investment of public resources in rural development and poverty reduction. Examples include (i) in LAC, the Central America Free Trade Agreement and the Common Market of the South's Commission on Family Farming and its Confederation of Family Farmer Producer Organizations; and (ii) in Africa, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme. For non-borrowing MICs, these services will be provided for a fee.
- **Support to developing national agricultural/rural development strategies.** MICs are increasingly requesting sustained analytical support in sub-sectoral or thematic areas (targeting, gender, rural financing, etc.). Support is delivered by IFAD on the basis of flexible, demand-driven programmes that focus on results.

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