

# **Republic of Burundi**

## **Rural Recovery and Development Programme Project Performance Assessment**

### **Executive Summary**

1. The Peer Review of IFAD's Independent Office of Evaluation and Evaluation Function, conducted in 2010 by the Evaluation Cooperation Group, recommended that the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD (IOE) modify its approach to project evaluation by moving to validations of project completion reports and a limited number of project performance assessments (PPAs). The Rural Recovery and Development Programme (PRDMR) in Burundi was selected for a PPA. As is the practice for all PPAs, this assessment covered the evaluation criteria set forth in the IOE Evaluation Manual and included an extensive review of documentation and a mission to the field.
2. The programme successfully achieved its objectives vis-a-vis the main target populations, in particular the most vulnerable households which have lost their means of production. The PRDMR provides an important reference point for Burundi, for IFAD, and also for the international community active in the sector. At the time of programme start-up, the country's major challenge was to reactivate the economy in the wake of the crisis by restoring the production base and addressing the structural problems affecting production. The programme response was to improve food security and living standards, increase rural incomes and improve land conservation in four of the country's poorest provinces. The programme closed in February 2012.
3. The relevance of PRDMR is deemed satisfactory in relation to Burundi's economic and social indicators at the time, IFAD's strategy for economic recovery, and the needs of vulnerable poor people living in rural areas. But the programme was designed to address a complex set of root causes of poverty and insecurity, and although each of the programme components was relevant to the needs of beneficiaries, the interventions as a whole made the programme complex and difficult to manage. The programme's effectiveness and efficiency are considered satisfactory based on the level of achievement of both objectives and budget despite the delays incurred; the sound choice of partners, particularly NGOs; and the innovative community-driven approach.
4. Rural poverty impact is also rated satisfactory in view of the benefits seen among the target groups in terms of income and assets, food security and agricultural productivity, human and social capital, and empowerment. The assessment notes weaknesses in the conservation of agricultural land and environmental resources but underscores the programme's strong influence on government policies and institutions.
5. Sustainability is rated moderately satisfactory. The programme interventions show good signs of sustainability, specifically the high degree of ownership by local populations and good financial returns on several activities. Nevertheless, challenges remain – particularly in consolidating infrastructure management committees. The programme's greatest success lies in its innovations and their scaling up throughout the country: government organization of communities and livestock development by other partners through their support to the cattle solidarity chain. The assessment rates this aspect as highly satisfactory. Based on the programme's positive impact on women overall, gender equality and women's empowerment are judged satisfactory.

6. Finally, the performance of IFAD and the Government is considered satisfactory. The Government and partners have commended the coordination unit for sound programme management, the technical quality of the team and its flexibility in providing implementation support when needed. The Government committed to PRDMR design and operationalization, and the programme has revitalized local administrations, which lead to strong support for implementation and monitoring. It is, however, crucial that both IFAD and the Government continue to protect the impressive achievement by PRDMR.