Over the past decade, the Kingdom of Cambodia has made considerable progress in poverty reduction and economic growth.

Source: United Nations Development Programme; World Bank.

IFAD OPERATIONS

- **IFAD supported projects since 1996**: 9
- **Total cost of portfolio**: $354 million US$
- **Ongoing IFAD-supported projects**: 4
- **Total cost for 4 ongoing projects**: $251 million US$
- **IFAD financing for 4 ongoing projects**: $129 million US$

MAIN INTERVENTION AREAS

- **Agriculture and extension services**
- **Support to decentralisation and local governance**
- **Market access**
- **Group revolving fund, micro/rural finance**
- **Rural infrastructure**
- **Climate change adaptation**

Cambodia Country Strategy Timeline

- **COSOP 1**: 1998
- **COSOP 2**: 2008
- **COSOP 3**: 2013

COSOP = Country Strategic Opportunities Programme
EVALUATION STORYLINE

The IFAD-supported programme has been aligned with government policies and strategies, for example, support to agriculture and decentralization processes. In the last two decades, the role of IFAD shifted from co-financing of other aid agencies' initiatives to being a leading financier whose experience in pro-poor agriculture and rural development is valued by other development partners.

Support in recent projects to market-oriented agriculture with relatively advanced smallholder farmers is relevant, also to encourage the younger generation to stay in agriculture. At the same time, it is important to bolster the coping strategies of poorer households.

KEY FINDINGS

Areas of strength

- Contribution to increased agricultural productivity and diversification of poor rural households
- Access by rural women to better and broadened economic opportunities and their increased participation and roles in public spheres
- Effective support to the Government’s “D&D policy" by channelling investments through decentralized structures and providing opportunities for “learning by doing"
- Partnerships with farmer organizations and indigenous people’s organizations as a unique feature of IFAD

Areas for improvement

- More focused and concerted efforts to empower beneficiaries and their organizations, on the basis of the main purposes of different types of organizations
- Strengthening agricultural extension and training approaches to be responsive and relevant to farmers’ demand as well as capacity and conditions
- Reflection on labor shortages for rural households in project strategy and designs
- Upgrading monitoring and evaluation and knowledge management for policy engagement and scaling-up
- Better coordination and synergies between grants and investment projects

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Develop a two-pronged strategy supporting agricultural commercialization for advanced smallholders and coping strategies for poor households.
   - Develop and operationalize tailored strategies for the target group and specific contexts.

2. Balance investment in human capital and rural organizations supported by strategic partners with tangible items that enable beneficiaries to put the skills and knowledge acquired into practice.

3. Strategic use of grants and investment financing to deepen partnerships with farmer organizations and associations.
   - Sustainable agriculture and commercialisation requires effective regulatory services (e.g. phytosanitary & veterinary control).

4. Explore options for supporting regulatory services in agriculture in future pipeline development.

5. Facilitate mobilization of other partners to invest in smallholder agriculture.
   - Ongoing ASPIRE and AIMS could serve as a platform to bring in other partners for two agricultural extension and pro-poor agricultural value chain development.