

Republic of Malawi

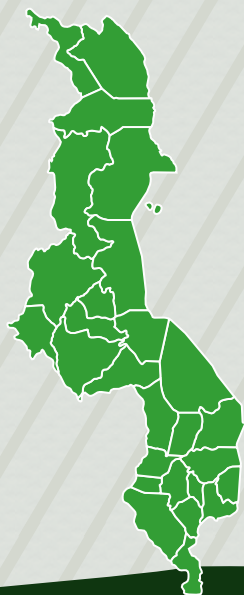
Country strategy and programme evaluation

Coverage: 2011-2021

IOE

IFAD
Investing in rural people

Independent Office of Evaluation



Population: 19 million (2020)

GDP per capita: US\$ 636.821 (2020)

Agricultural sector as proportion of GDP: 40% (2019)

National poverty rate: 51.5% (2016)

Gender Inequality Index: 0.565 - 142nd out of 162 countries (2019)

Child stunting rate: 37% (2020)

Sources: World Bank, UNDP, FAOSTAT

IFAD operations

IFAD-funded projects:
14
programmes
since 1981

US\$
652.4
million
total portfolio cost

US\$
350.5
million
Total amount of
IFAD lending

Areas covered by projects



Evaluation coverage

Years:
**2011
to 2021**

Projects
evaluated:

7

Total portfolio
financing:

**US\$
437.3
million**

IFAD financing:

**US\$
271.6
million**

Main evaluation findings

Areas of strength

IFAD's strategies were broadly aligned with the Government's major development policies and strategies focusing on rural poverty reduction and access to markets.

The country programme has been comprehensive and consistent in addressing key issues faced by smallholder farmers in Malawi, such as high vulnerability and food insecurity.

IFAD has promoted good agricultural practices for sustainable and land use and more diverse food production.

Partnerships and collaborations with like-minded institutions and service providers have been instrumental for IFAD for outreach to the poorest and most marginalised communities.

The country programme has systematically supported participation of women in all activities and promoting household methodologies to address root causes of inequalities and power imbalances.

Areas of improvement

The ambitious and complex nature of the recent programme designs remains a challenge for implementation, given the existing capacities at national and local levels.

Programme efficiency was generally low, due to long delays during start up, insufficient capacities for management and coordination, and low cost effectiveness, in particular of infrastructure investments.

The operationalization of M&E plans has been lagging due to high turnover of staff and weak coordination mechanisms, which made it difficult to systematize the information to enhance lesson learning.

Although projects managed to achieve significant increases in productivity through provision of technology and inputs, in most cases, these gains were short-lived and eroded soon after project completion.

Food security and climate change resilience are the paramount challenges that the country programme has to address more effectively. IFAD would have to further enhance its support to sustainable and diversified production systems, and irrigation infrastructure.

Recommendations

Adopt an explicit approach to addressing chronic food insecurity and malnutrition through diversified and sustainable production system as COSOP objective.

Develop a strategic approach for enhancing the impact and scale of successful practices and initiatives.

Address implementation bottlenecks through targeting specific capacity constraints at various levels of government.