



# Impact evaluation of the Facility for Sustainable Entrepreneurship and Food Security (FDOV)

## Declaration of the external member of the Steering Committee overseeing the evaluation

### Introduction

The Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) implemented the Facility for Sustainable Entrepreneurship and Food Security (FDOV). 2 Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) departments funded FVO: Inclusive Green Growth (IGG) and Sustainable Economic Development (DDE). Between 2012 and 2023, 46 projects were implemented. RVO commissioned PwC-AIGHD to carry out an independent impact assessment. This started during the FDOV programme in 2017, allowing baseline data to be collected while projects were started. A Steering Committee (SC) was set up to oversee the evaluation. This declaration by the external member clarifies the SC's role and its assessment of the quality and independence of the evaluation.

### Steering Committee's composition and role

The SC consisted of staff from the M&E team, RVO's operational management, and MFA's IGG, DDE and IOB (Policy and Operations Evaluation department). The SC advised RVO on framing the Terms of Reference (ToR), selecting the evaluation team (PwC, SEO and AIGHD), reviewing the inception report, and assessing the 5 evaluation and overarching lessons report.

### Steering Committee's role during the evaluation process

While discussing the inception report, it became clear that it was unfeasible to conduct a rigorous quantitative impact evaluation of 6 projects, with a lighter evaluation of 3 extra projects initially specified in the ToR. First, some projects were not on track for evaluation. Second, it would not fit in the budget of €675,000. The SC agreed to conduct 5 project evaluations in total. Only one project underwent a rigorous quantitative evaluation. The remaining 4 were subject to a more qualitative, mixed methods approach.

Because of the conflict in Ethiopia, the SC agreed with the evaluators' proposal to replace 2 projects in Ethiopia with 2 projects in Malawi.

The SC has reviewed and discussed all draft evaluation reports. Comments from the SC were considered and incorporated in the final report or accompanied by a justification.

### Quality assessment and independence of the evaluation

The evaluation produced 5 project evaluations:

- Flying food and Food for All in Kenya
- Pro Poor Potato in Vietnam
- Going Nuts, and
- PPP Macadamia Value Chain Enhancement in Malawi.

A summary report 'Impact studies FDOV' with overarching lessons, was also written. In general, the quality of the impact evaluations is generally good. As expected, the rigorous quantitative evaluation (Food for All) was of the highest quality. The theory-based evaluations also provided credible information about the results and the reasons why the results were or were not fully achieved. Several project evaluations were constrained by limitations in the available project baseline and monitoring data. The project was not in an advanced enough phase to evaluate its impact.

During a separate learning session, RVO and MFA evaluators discussed these common problems in Monitoring and Evaluating programmes such as FDOV. The evaluators remained independent, reflecting critically on the FDOV programme and its 5 projects.

### Ferko Bodnar, IOB, member of the Steering Committee from 2017 to 2023