



Community-Based Range Management

In Morocco, IFAD pioneered Community-Based Range Management (CBRM), an innovative approach to managing rangeland in which local communities steer the process.

Contrary to previous rangeland improvement projects, the CBRM approach is an innovation based on five important guiding principles: 1) rural communes and tribal affiliation are the basis for the creation of cooperatives; 2) tribal institutions are reorganized into pastoral management cooperatives that are responsible for choosing technology options and managing their resources; 3) tribal members are required to purchase “social shares” in the cooperatives to become members and access cooperative services and improved pastures; 4) the project does not settle pastoralists but promotes their mobility according to new and flexible livestock management systems; and 5) the project promotes consensual decision-making processes with beneficiaries.

Country:

Morocco

Direct Beneficiaries:

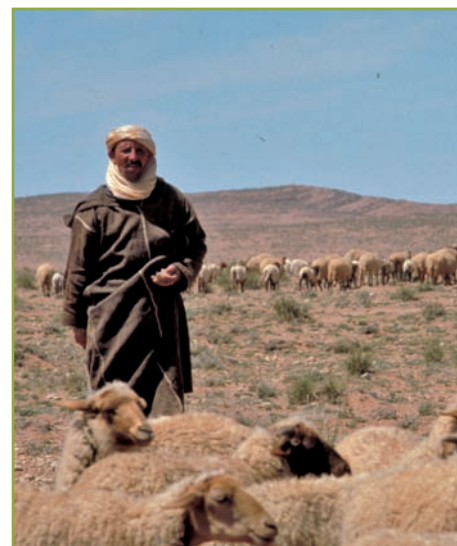
Small farmers, pastoralists and other poor rural people

Results:

- The project created 44 cooperatives (29 per cent above the target) involving 9,000 households in 15 rural communes.
- It had a positive impact on: the environment – by increasing dry matter from 150 kg per hectare to 800 kg per hectare; on the nomadic pastoral system – by reducing transhumance to shorter distances; and on animal health – by delivering health and veterinary services.
- Owing to the impressive results, all new range development efforts in Morocco are being implemented using the CBRM approach, which is also being adopted by other countries in the region.

Main Lessons:

- Tribal-based cooperatives have demonstrated that it is possible to build on exiting socio-institutional systems to foster collective action and sustainable resource management.
- Adopting appropriate technical options and creating the proper legal and institutional framework are critical elements for the success of innovative approaches.



BASIC INFO

Sources:

Scaling Up Innovative Small Stock Management Practices Developed by IFAD Projects (IFAD/IFPRI/ICARDA Final Report of the Preparatory Phase, 2004)

Project Name:

Livestock and Pasture Development Project in the Eastern Region

Project Starting Date:

1991

Contact:

Mr Mounif Nourallah, PN Division, IFAD (email: m.nourallah@ifad.org)

WEB PAGES

IFAD operations in NENA and CEN:

<http://www.ifad.org/operations/projects/regions/pn/index.htm>

IFAD learning notes:

<http://www.ifad.org/rural/learningnotes/index.htm>

IFAD case studies:

<http://rpr.ifad.org/node/20>
(username and password: “guest”)

Background

In the 1970s and 1980s, the Moroccan government introduced the pastoral improvement perimeters (PIPs), an institutional reform aimed to improve rangeland management. PIPs were based on ecological and technological approaches, with very little attention given to existing socio-cultural and institutional tribal management systems. Government technical institutions led the process, with no participation by the communities that would be affected.

In 1995, the World Bank estimated that 12.5 per cent of rangelands in Morocco were degraded. There was a general recognition that the PIP approach was not successful, and degradation trends on rangelands, if not addressed, would jeopardize the livelihood of millions of pastoral households that rely on livestock production as their main source of income and rangelands as their main source of feed. It is in this context that IFAD intervened to develop the CBRM approach in Eastern Morocco.

The objectives of the project were to:

- 1) improve rangeland productivity by strengthening existing range management practices, introducing alternative options and fostering greater involvement of beneficiaries in all activities;
- 2) improve livestock productivity through better health services and water availability; and
- 3) improve the livelihoods of the project participants by introducing new income-generating activities, especially for small producers and women.

The project covered four communes (Bouarfa, El Ateuf, Merija and Tendrara) with 3 million hectares and a population of about 58,000 people. Given the long-term nature of rangeland management activities, this pilot project was planned for ten years (between May 1991 and December 2001) and received an extension of two years.

The Ultimate Challenge: Accepting Changes in the Balance of Power

The risks and stakes were very high,

with three major challenges that could forfeit the whole process: 1) the extent to which government technical institutions would support a process that reduced their control over the development of rangelands; 2) communities' acceptance to reorganize into cooperatives and purchase "social shares" to become members; and 3) the respect that non-cooperative tribal members would have for the new status quo brought about by cooperatives. The later two challenges were particularly critical, given their equity implications, especially regarding the potential "elite capture" of project services and benefits and thus the marginalization of poor households in cooperative decision-making processes.

IFAD's Role

Together with the Moroccan government and the African Development Bank, IFAD funded the Livestock and Pasture Development Project in the Eastern Region for US\$45.2 million. IFAD played an important role during the project's conception, implementation and monitoring. The IFAD design team carried out an in-depth study of the communities and their systems.

Based on the study, the project team selected the following options for improving rangeland: deferred grazing, rotational grazing, shrub plantation, reseeding and scarifying. Each of these options was meant to improve range productivity and feed availability. To improve livestock, the project team opted for genetic improvement, better health services for local breeds, fattening, and flexible livestock management systems. And to improve the availability of water, the project opted for the construction or rehabilitation of watering points.

The different evaluation reports that IFAD prepared were critical in identifying project issues and providing recommendations on follow-up

activities. Without IFAD's commitment and teams of experts, who believed in the possible success of this approach, it is very unlikely that the CBRM would have succeeded. Thus, IFAD's guidance of the whole process was critical.

The Importance of Recognizing Tribal Collective Rights

Since 1919, Morocco has been the sole country among West Asian and North African countries to recognize tribal collective rights. The decentralization policies of the 1980s have reorganized rural areas into communes, which were defined according to tribal territories. These conditions facilitated the introduction of the CBRM innovation and were backed up by the local population, who viewed the project as a way of regaining full control over their resources.

Replication and Scaling Up

The CBRM innovation is now the mainstay of the Moroccan range development approach and is being replicated in Syria and Tunisia. The approach was also tested and refined as part of the action research programme in the Mashreq & Maghreb project funded by IFAD and implemented by the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA)/International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and the National Agricultural Research Systems of Algeria, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Syria and Tunisia.

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