

Morocco

Livestock and Rangelands Development Project in the Eastern Region - Phase II

Project Completion Report Digest

Morocco - Livestock and Rangelands Development Project in the Eastern Region - Phase II

Item	Assessment Remarks	Rating
Country & Project Name	Morocco - Livestock and Rangelands Development Project in the Eastern Region - Phase II	PMD
Loan No.:	615-MA	
Project Id.	1230	
Board Date	11 September 2003	
Effectiveness Date	08 November 2004	
Original Closing Date	30 June 2011	
Final Closing Date	30 June 2011	
Total Project Cost USD(M)	9 238.00	
IFAD loan US\$(M)	6 361.00	
Cofinanciers (if any)	beneficiaries US\$171 000; Government US\$2374	
Implementing Agency	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	
Principal Components	To achieve these objectives, activities grouped into the following three components will be implemented over a period of six years: (i) consolidation of institutional assets and acquired knowledge; (ii) partnership-building; and (iii) increased value added to production in the Eastern Region.	
Project Performance		
Relevance	The project, which is a follow-up to loan PDPEO I, was fully aligned with relevant national policies and strategies, in particular those related to NRM and conservation (National Environmental Action Plan, National Rangeland Development Strategy, National Action Plan to Combat Desertification, National Initiative for Human Development and <i>Plan Maroc Vert 2nd pillar</i>). Its main objective to improve the socio-economic conditions of the populations while contributing to NRM and conservation were found highly relevant in an area where some of the poorest populations of Morocco can be found and where rangeland resources are increasingly being threatened by land degradation and desertification. The project's strategy of intervention, based on the consolidation of the institutional achievements of the first phase, in particular the creation of pastoral cooperatives, combined with the development of specific value-chains and IGAs was found highly relevant. Project components effectively responded to the needs of the populations, but design was altogether too ambitious. The absence of an appropriate legal framework and of adequate human resources (private partners and public services), combined with the lack of coordination between partners have affected the smooth implementation of the project's strategy and approaches, thus reducing its effectiveness and impact (see effectiveness). The approach was participatory and aligned with the National Initiative for Human Development, based itself on concertation, partnership and sub-contracting.	5
Effectiveness	The project has achieved some good results, but implementation was affected by weak coordination and communication between partners and an understaffed PCU. These two factors have had a negative impact on project management, AWP&B implementation, financial management and M&E. Areas which have been particularly affected include the valorisation of regional products, support to partnerships and consolidation of achievements of the first phase. The project reached out to some 4133 herders, which is higher than the estimated 3000 at appraisal. The effective implementation of a rangeland master plan together with the development strategy for the Eastern Region has helped the project meet most of its objectives, but to a lesser degree than initially foreseen, due to the aforementioned weaknesses. In terms of reaching PDOs, the PCR states that: (i) institutional and financial capacities of pastoral cooperatives could be strengthened and access to microfinance could be improved; (ii) adapted and improved rangeland management practices were implemented and effectively used for crop and livestock production; (iii) the third objective to increase and diversify agricultural and non-agricultural incomes could only partly be met, since the project did not succeed in valorising the production in the Eastern Region development of the sheep value chain and of markets in general). Physical achievement rates strongly varied (between 35% and 154%). The highest achievement rates were reached for the development of technical, socio-economic and institutional guidelines for cooperatives, implementation of rangeland development and management, local capacity strengthening and mobilization of the populations through better use of rangeland resources (forage plantations and access to water). By contrast, achievement rates were low with regard to the promotion of local products (35%), cooperative development plans (42%), bio monitoring and drought control (50%).	4
Efficiency	The project gives a mixed picture with regard to its efficiency. The IFAD loan disbursement rate stood at 50% only at completion, mainly due to the very slow and inadequate implementation of Component 3 "Increasing the value-added to the production in the Eastern Region" (only 15% disbursed, see effectiveness). Project efficiency was further affected by the slow processing of	3

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	WAs and payment requests. The project also experienced an effectiveness lag of 13.9 months, which is slightly higher than the regional average. The picture is still mixed with regard to unit costs. For rangeland rehabilitation, unit costs were in line or slightly higher (20-50%) than appraisal estimates. For water infrastructure works, actual unit costs strongly varied compared to appraisal estimates, but were on average higher than anticipated and almost double of similar infrastructure works in the region. The main reasons mentioned are the remoteness of some of the areas of intervention, the limited access to construction material and the depth of some of the works. Costs for the equipment of water points was much higher than estimated at appraisal (5 million DH against an estimate of 1.5 million DH per water point). However, the costs for boreholes were lower while costs for water tanks were in line with the norms. The costs for the preparation of CDPs (Cooperative Development Plans) was in line with appraisal estimates. Training activities were considered efficient. Finally, profitability of the project was not very high, but acceptable. The IERR (based on 2012 data) was of 9.6%, which is slightly lower than the expected 11.2%. The NPV was positive.	
Project Performance		4
Partner Performance		
IFAD	IFAD performance was appropriate. IFAD has provided adequate support and guidance, especially since it has taken over the direct supervision of the project in 2009. Implementation issues were correctly identified and the recommendations given were found appropriate. However, IFAD can be deemed responsible for an overambitious design.	5
Cooperating Institution	Until the end of 2008, the project was supervised by UNOPS, but its performance is not assessed in the PCR.	n.a
Government	Government's supervision and oversight role cannot be deemed appropriate, since the national and regional steering committees created for the purpose of the project have only existed on paper and have never held meetings to discuss project progress. Instead the central ministry has occasionally interfered by cancelling some of the activities foreseen in the AWP&B (i.e. studies on market development and sheep value chain, vaccination programme). The PCU was insufficiently staffed which negatively impacted on project performance. Despite being repeatedly pointed out by the various supervision missions, the situation was not corrected. To some extent, this was due to the public sector reform of 2005, which has led to important cuts, and to the restructuring of the MAPM. Finally, financial management has generally been slow and inefficient, due to the various levels and structures involved. On positive side, it appears that local authorities have always been very supportive. Performance of the other two public sector partners (Ministry of Interior and High Commissioner for Forest and Water) and of technical services was satisfactory.	3
NGO/Other	The project's main partners, the cooperatives, have performed satisfactorily. Support provided by the microcredit institution AMC was satisfactory and has been instrumental to improve access to microfinance in the project area. Partnership with the local research institution started late, but was effective in implementing a drought monitoring system and bio monitoring. Other partners from the private sector have performed satisfactorily.	5
Cofinancier(s)		n.a
Combined Partner Performance	According to the PCR, coordination and communication between partners was weak.	
Rural Poverty Impact		
Household Income and Net Assets	The programme's impact on incomes and assets has been satisfactory. Access to water for domestic and animal use could be dramatically improved from 5% of the households at mid-term to 65% at completion. This has helped improving hygiene, reducing diseases and saving time. At completion, the average distance for fetching water was 5-6 km compared to 15-20 km at mid-term. Rainwater is now mainly used for agricultural purposes, improving thus the productivity of land. Incomes from agricultural production (mainly livestock but also cereals and traditional products) and IGAs could be increased, enabling livestock farmers to purchase vehicles for the transportation of fodder and animals. As a result, the number of vehicles in the project area has doubled. Livestock ownership has improved too. The average size of a goat herds has increased from 22 to 32 and of sheep herds from 94 to 145. The absolute number of sheep farmers in the project area has increased too, showing that the activity has become more profitable. Other assets could be improved as well. This includes means of communication (GSM) and housing. Many livestock farmers now live in brick houses compared to simple huts at the beginning of the project (increase from 5% to 33%). By contrast, the living conditions in rangeland areas could not be improved, mainly due to the fact that the populations have maintained their nomadic lifestyle: housing conditions have remained the same (tents). The use	4

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	of gas and electricity is low and unchanged. Health and sanitation are poor (latrines are used by only 10%). Access to microcredit has allowed beneficiaries to run more profitable activities. A large number of IGAs were initiated in the area of livestock fattening, handicraft and services. Livestock fattening activities have allowed an additional 9 million DH to be generated in the area between 2006 and 2012. Finally, the cooperatives and associations have been able to generate additional incomes through the collection of grazing fees. Despite these good results, project impact on household incomes and assets could have been higher, had the project reached a high cruise speed. Also, important activities such as the valorisation of local products which could have greatly contributed to increasing beneficiaries' incomes, did not materialize.	
Food Security	Food security could be improved with a sharp reduction of the percentage of households facing a food shortage period from 66% at mid-term to 4% at the end of the project. 42% of the children still suffer acute malnutrition. However, only 15% suffer chronic malnutrition (compared to 32% at mid-term) and 6% are underweight (compared to 25% at mid-term). Chronic malnutrition affects mainly girls, acute malnutrition mainly boys.	5
Ag. Productivity	Agricultural productivity has mainly been targeted through rangeland development and improved rangeland management. These rehabilitation and conservation measures have been quite successful. Most targeted achievement rates were met or surpassed. Their impact on agricultural production (cereals, aromatic herbs) is not assessed in the PCR but can be assumed as positive. Measures aiming at livestock development have been less successful. Most planned interventions were cancelled, due to the limited and reduced capacities of the technical services. This concerns <i>i.e.</i> the marking of animals (sheep, goats) which needs follow-up by the technical services. Achievements include: (i) implementation of water points; (ii) studies on the development of fodder production and goat rearing, (iii) organization of a livestock show; and (iv) training of young people on livestock production. It can be assumed that these activities have positively contributed to developing livestock production and productivity. Impact in this area is not properly assessed in the PCR.	4
Agricultural Productivity and Food Security		5
Natural Resources and Environment	NRM and conservation were at the core of the project's interventions. 95% of the project area consists of rangeland and forests. The project has contributed to improving NRM and reducing land degradation through direct interventions identified in the CDP (regeneration of local species, forage species, improved water access and management of water resources, etc.) and training of beneficiaries and cooperatives. Training activities have greatly contributed to improving the knowledge and capacities of the populations with regard to livestock rearing and pastoral conservation (grazing on idle land, land resting, seed plots, tillage techniques, etc.). The PCR points out that at the end of the project, clear changes in attitudes and agricultural practices could be observed. Livestock farmers are now requesting, through their cooperatives, support for the implementation of conservation measures and practices. More importantly, NRM has become a collective concern and is now handled at the level of unions of cooperatives. Most striking benefits include: improved biomass, regeneration of traditional species adapted to the local conditions, improved vegetative coverage, improved soil protection and conservation of habitats. Access to water could be improved and thus, water consumption has increased (from 8l/hh before the project to 18l/hh after the project). This has had a positive effect on both, human and animal health, and agricultural productivity. Its environmental impact has not been assessed. Nevertheless and despite all efforts, the PCR points out that rangeland resources are still threatened by overexploitation and animal pressure. This seems to indicate that efforts to diversify incomes away from livestock production have been insufficient so far.	5
Human, Social Capital and Empowerment	One of the project's main outcomes has been its support to the development of the human and social capital in the project area through various forms of training, knowledge exchange and through the interventions itself. Figures are scarce. Given the slow implementation pace of the project, only 25 CDPs were approved compared to a target of 60. Nevertheless, the PCR concludes that the participation of the populations in the design and implementation of the CDPs combined with the training of public support services has led to a new development concept for the region. It is now well understood that livestock farmers are responsible for the sustainable management of rangeland resources. Sustainability and conservation concepts have been well internalized, which is demonstrated by the adoption of sustainable production techniques and by the increasing demand for good NRM practices. Also, while waiting for adequate support by technical services, some farmers have started developing their own practices for rainwater collection and planting of traditional species. Some have shifted away from cereal production towards production of fodder species, better suited to the environment.	5

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	Others are asking for the implementation of an appropriate legal environment, ensuring sustainable use of their natural resource base. Even though still emergent, these are clear signs of improved awareness. The project, through its interventions, has greatly contributed to the consolidation of the 63 pastoral cooperatives, which have become the engine of growth in the project area. Their technical capacities could be strengthened. They are now in a position to manage their activities independently and in a profitable way, initiate new partnerships for the further development of their activities, and provide support to the emergence of economic interest groups (EIG) among their members. One of the main outcomes has been their support to the creation of 60 youth cooperatives. Finally, thanks to the way they have been set up these cooperatives have contributed to enhancing the social capital in the project area by improving social cohesion beyond ethnic and tribal linkages.	
Inst. & Policies	The project's impact in this area has been partly satisfactory. Its main achievement has been the definition and implementation of a rangeland development master plan which will guide the socio-economic development of the area, starting from the CDPs. However, this master plan was approved in 2010 only, which means that its actual benefits are yet to come. The master plan will be instrumental for the implementation of the decentralization process at community level, since the CDPs are used for the development of communal development plans. Another important result has been the tripartite agreement signed between the 3 ministries involved in rangeland management (Agriculture & Fisheries, Interior and High Commissioner for forest and Water Resources), which ensures effective support by the public administration and technical services.	4
Markets	Support to market development was mainly to take place via the valorisation of products of the Eastern region. Interventions in this area were however limited to the development of IGAs. The intended support to the development of markets and of the sheep value-chain did not materialize. The same applies to microenterprise development. Access to markets was facilitated indirectly through the expansion of the microcredit network. The creation of ten new branches by AMC has given a strong boost to the development of IGAs. Nevertheless, based on the project's interventions at institutional and policy level, a PPP was established for the industrial development of red meat production (fattening units, modern slaughter house, sale points, training programme, etc.). While the activity has not yet started, all details have been worked out and a regional cooperative was created encompassing all key actors in the development of lamb meat production (COPACO). In addition, a local lamb race was given the geographical protection label. Finally, a partnership was established between the provincial agricultural services and USAID for the implementation of fattening units and to facilitate the marketing of lamb meat.	4
Project Impact	Despite some lower than anticipated physical achievements rates, the project's rural poverty impact has been partly satisfactory. Assessment of the project's impact was however strongly affected by the absence of a proper M&E mechanism.	4
Overarching Factors		
Innovation	The project has brought about a series of technical, social and institutional innovations. These include: (i) its strategy of intervention; (ii) creation of unions of cooperatives; (iii) implementation of a drought monitoring system; (iv) implementation of a documentation and information centre on the Eastern Region; and (v) the creation of seed reserves.	4
Replicability and Scaling-up	Given that most of the activities have been implemented rather recently (due to the late effective start-up of the project and its slow implementation pace), efforts for replication and scaling-up have been very limited. The PCR however mentions that the project has brought about a number of good practices worth being replicated and scaled up and that the studies conducted under the programme provide useful information for future interventions. Some have already been used for the preparation of complementary interventions, such as the GEF grant project, implemented through PDPEO II, and the Agricultural Sector Policy Support Programme financed by the EU (PAPSA). Both contribute to the reinforcement of the activities initiated under PDPEO I and II. Finally, the institutional and strategic framework created with the support of the programme (rangeland development master plan, development strategy for the Eastern Region) represents a useful asset for the planning of future interventions in the region.	4
Innovation, Replicability and Scaling-up		4
Sustainability and Ownership	The cooperatives established with the support of the programme are likely to continue to be operational beyond the life of the project. They have acquired the necessary knowledge and skills to ensure sustainability and expansion of the protection measures initiated under the programme. However, they will need the political and financial support by Government and	4

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	other partners to maintain and further expand their activities, mainly because the area will remain socially, economically and environmentally fragile. Political sustainability is ensured by Government's high interest in the development of the region. Different PPPs have been established, in particular for lamb meat production and for the Sahelian truffle. Social sustainability is ensured by the way the cooperatives have been set up, taking into account ethnic and tribal specificities. Finally, chances for economic and financial sustainability are high. The different pastoral, livestock and IGAs initiated by the cooperatives and their members seem sustainable and will be further enhanced by improved access to microfinance (expansion of AMC network). Sustainability of the results of the project is mainly threatened by the fact that despite being a second phase programme, many achievements are still recent and could not grow and consolidate over an extended period of time.	
Targeting	The target group was well-defined in the appraisal report: small livestock farmers (with less than 100 animals), women and young jobless which are the main users of rangeland resources. Project activities were designed to the benefit of these groups in particular. Targeting is not further analysed in the PCR.	5
Gender	The youth's benefit from project's interventions is undeniable. Training activities have helped them (re-) discover livestock rearing as a source of livelihood. The number of them involved in livestock rearing has increased. They have acquired good professional knowledge which enables them to keep their herds healthy and to further develop their activities by establishing partnerships with others and seeking access to microcredit. Their self-confidence has improved. The combination of all of these factors has enabled some of them to become rural leaders. As a result, rural outmigration towards the urban centers could be reduced and in some cases even reversed, with the benefit of having linkages to the cities, which facilitates access to socio-economic infrastructure. The project's impact on women is not explicitly assessed. It appears, however, that they have greatly benefited from the development of IGAs. 70% of IGAs were to be led by women or young women.	5
Overall Performance	Despite the positive achievements reached, overall performance of the project was affected by lack of staff and weak coordination and communication between partners which has had a negative impact on project management, disbursement and project implementation altogether (AWP&B, M&E, etc.). Consequently, the project could not reach all of the targets set.	4
Estimated number of beneficiaries		
PCR Quality		
Scope	In line with the guidelines. All annexes included.	6
Quality	The report is very well written and provides a fair amount of data (considering that the M&E system was used mainly for monitoring and not for impact measurement). However, it does not always provide the expected information. The quality of the report suffers in particular from confusion between specific objectives and components. As a result, it assesses the extent to which project components have been implemented instead of going a step higher and assessing the extent to which the specific objectives of the project have been met. Some essential information is therefore missing. Good impact analysis despite the lack of data.	5
Lessons	The project's shortcomings are well analysed. The PCR also draws useful lessons and makes comprehensive recommendations for the way ahead.	6
Candour	The assessment is sometimes overly positive, not in line with the PSR and with the fact that only 50% of the IFAD loan has been disbursed.	4