

Sudan

South Kordofan Rural Development Programme Project Completion Report Digest

Sudan - South Kordofan Rural Development Programme

Item	Assessment Remarks	
Country & Project Name	Sudan - South Kordofan Rural Development Programme	Ratings
Loan No.:	544-SD	
Project Id.	1140	
Board Date	14 September 2000	
Entry into Force	12 February 2001	
Original Closing Date	02 May 2001	
Final Closing Date	30 June 2014	
Total Project Cost US\$(M)	39.14	
IFAD loan& Grant US\$(M)	17.87	
Cofinanciers (if any)	External Cofinancing Total: 11.74 Netherlands: 9.64; Swedish Complementary: 2.10) Domestic total: 9.38 (Government Non-fiscal: 3.91; Government (National): 4.19; Domestic Financial Institutions: 0.41; Beneficiaries: 0.87)	
Implementing Agency	State Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources as the lead agency, with field activities undertaken by specialized cadres in agricultural extension, pest management, rural development and women in development, as well as specialists in livestock production and veterinary services in the RAUs to be directly supervised by the PMU. Additional supervisory entities included the federal programme Interministerial Steering Committee, programme executive board (PEB) and central coordination unit (CCU).	
Principal Components	The programme was to be implemented with five components: a) Agricultural extension and smallholder services b) Livestock production and range management c) Community support services d) Rural financial services e) Institutional strengthening	
Project Performance		
Relevance	The programme was designed between 1996 and 1999, i.e. before the introduction of the COSOP. Its overall goal was consistent and in line with the 3 strategic objectives of the country at that time: (i) support the livelihood strategies of target groups; (ii) empower both men and women to fully participate in the development process; and (iii) promote good local governance. The choice of the area of intervention was based on the fact that despite widespread poverty, the selected regions (Southern zone of central Sudan with the population of South Kordofan being the most destitute) held inherent potential for productivity enhancement and consequently for improving the livelihoods of local communities. The experience of the SKRDP showed that the activities and approaches adopted under each of the five components were relevant to the needs of the rural populations and remained valid throughout implementation. These included essentially: (a) development of a performing extension service within the Rural Administrative Units as the engine of rural transformation; (b) implementation of animal health services on a cost-recovery basis; (c) rehabilitation and construction of community stock water facilities; (d) development of an equitable range management strategy to minimize the impact of migratory livestock on the environment; (e) community development initiatives to implement essential socio-economic infrastructure; and (d) development of sustainable financial services based on existing and well-understood traditional systems. The gender-integrated approach adopted by the programme was relevant to the project area and the country as a whole. At MTR, the target area was revised to take into account the administrative restructuring of the country. Also, the number of target communities was lifted to increase the outreach and efficiency of the programme.	5
Effectiveness	The programme succeeded in meeting the global objectives of increased households incomes, improved food security and better living conditions of the rural populations. The wealth indicators show that programme interventions have led to a significant decrease in the percentage share of very poor and poor households while the share of less poor and wealthy households has increased. Particularly noteworthy is the reduction of very poor households from 24% in 2004 to 9% in 2012. Strong increases could be noted in the food intake of four important commodities: fresh milk, milk products, meat and vegetables. This has contributed to improving food security, nutrition and bridging the food shortage of the most vulnerable. Besides, the programme has established an effective community-based extension network, which contributed significantly to the achievements of improved agricultural and livestock production. It has significantly strengthened the role of women within the community and improved access to basic socio-economic services (agricultural extension, veterinary services, education, health, water, rural financial services, etc.). It has also instilled a collective development culture within the communities, through the establishment of Community Development Committees. Implementation difficulties were however encountered in establishing effective animal health and veterinary services and in enabling the construction/rehabilitation of <i>hafirs</i> (water collection points). Until MTR, the programme benefited from an international management adviser who was largely responsible for its satisfactory implementation performance. Financial management showed important weaknesses, however, which could never be overcome, in particular the practice of mixing different sources of funding.	5

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Efficiency	Programme efficiency was measured against the benefits achieved as a result of implementation, the number of beneficiaries having received benefits and in terms of whether the programme funds were used efficiently for the intended purposes. The PCR concluded that programme objectives by component were largely met and exceeded expectation in many cases. The programme was implemented over 10 years, in 2 phases under the FLM. Implementation of the first phase was satisfactory enabling a smooth transition into the second phase. The programme was extended by 15 months. Also, additional funding from the Netherlands was approved in 2010 allowing programme activities to be expanded to war affected areas. The programme disbursed 99 % of the IFAD loan. Funds were reallocated twice among categories to make needed adjustments i.e. following the administrative restructuring and to ensure their efficient use. By contrast, only 35% of the Dutch grant was disbursed during the period January 2011-March 2012, due to conflict and violence in the targeted RAUs. At completion, the programme showed an EIRR of 22%, which was higher than the 19%, expected at appraisal. In addition, the results of the financial analysis conducted for 3 farm models were positive and considered attractive enough for farm households to adopt the new technical packages.	5
Project Performance		5
Partner Performance		
IFAD	IFAD provided close support throughout implementation. During the conflict period of 2003-06, IFAD was unable to visit the project offices, but held regular meetings with its staff in the Eastern part of the project area. In 2006, the programme came under the direct supervision of IFAD, which further enhanced programme implementation. Supervision missions provided constructive suggestions for overcoming implementation constraints. IFAD in turn closely followed-up on the proper implementation of these recommendations. Finally, IFAD was very supportive and flexible in approving the borrower's request for reallocation of project funds and extension of the loan closing date.	6
Cooperating Institution	Until 2006, the programme was supervised by UNOPS. Technical supervision was satisfactory. UNOPS performance was not further assessed in the PCR.	n.a
Government	The State Ministry of Agricultural and Natural Resources acted as lead agency. Other supervisory entities included the Interministerial Steering Committee (responsible for policy guidance and oversight of all of IFAD projects in Sudan), the Programme Executive Board (PEB – responsible for key policymaking and problem-solving body at the state level), the Central Coordination Unit (responsible for programme implementation and for organizing administrative processes) and the PMU (responsible for AWP&B and daily implementation). Project management was mostly satisfactory. Until 2005, it benefited from the support of an international management adviser. It did however not always follow-up on supervision mission recommendations, due also to the security situation. Important partnerships were established with other organizations, such as NGOs and UN agencies. The PEB held 29 meetings, which corresponds to 4 per year. Nevertheless, it failed to provide appropriate guidance on some important aspects such as the use of the revolving funds for veterinary services, the mobile clinics, and construction/rehabilitation & management of the <i>hafirs</i> (water collection points). Programme implementation was sometimes delayed by the late release of counterpart funds. Procurement was transparent and in accordance with IFAD guidelines. Procurement procedures were however cumbersome and delayed project implementation.	4
NGO/Other	Not assessed in the PCR.	n.a
Cofinancier(s)	The Embassy of the Netherlands provided supplementary financing in the amount of US\$9 million for the period 2010-13 to enable the project to expand its activities to war-affected areas formerly controlled by the SPLM, replicating successful extension activities in those areas to increase agricultural productivity. Supplementary financing targeted 341 communities with a total population of 66 000. However, only 35% of this grant could be disbursed, due to conflict and violence in the RAU concerned. In December 2010 a Swedish grant of US\$2.1 was approved to scale up Bara'ah to further 10,000 members. Bara'ah, which until then was a traditional savings and credit group, received an additional US\$0.25 million from the Bank of Sudan, which has recognized it as a rural microfinance institution	5
Combined Partner Performance	No issues were mentioned	
Rural Poverty Impact		
Household Income and Net Assets	Farming is the main source of income of the population in the programme area. Survey results revealed that between 2004 and 2012, average household incomes increased by more than 200% for all segments of the population in the programme area. In addition, the average annual income of beneficiaries is significantly higher than the average income of non-beneficiaries in the programme area. This is attributed to a steep increase in households relying on sales from farming and livestock from 58% in 2004 to 81% in 2012. The percentage of active savers also increased considerably from 13% in 2004 to 23% in 2010. Men were able to increase their saving significantly more than women (42% against 19% between 2004 and 2012), due to the sale of livestock. Beneficiaries have gained access to small loans through the Bara'ah system which was very well received by the beneficiaries. Loans were essentially used to develop small agricultural projects, livestock, small businesses and other income-generating activities. They were also used for post-harvest consumption or storage. Access to land could be improved. The average percentage of land cultivated to	5

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	land owned increased from 66% in 2004 to 78% in 2012 for jubrakas (homegarden used for mixed cultivation). A significant improvement could be noted in the average farm size cultivated by women, which increased from 1.3 feddans in 2004 to 7.0 feddans in 2012. Beneficiaries experienced a significant increase in the number of livestock owned, in particularly cattle, sheep and goat. The percentage of households owning cattle increased from 23% in 2004 to 36% in 2008, with the most significant increase in the percentage of households owning goats from 52% in 2004 to 68% in 2008. This result was mainly attributed to improved access to veterinary services and credit for the purchase of animals. In 2012, household ownership of farm implements and hand tools was as high as 74% while heavy machinery was owned by only 13% of them. 41% owned a bicycle, 26% a donkey cart, 7% a motorbike, 67% a radio and 65% a mobile phone. However, there are no reference data to compare these figures with. Housing improved (more brick houses with an annexed room), but it is not clear to what extent this is attributable to the programme.	
Food Security	Higher incomes have enabled beneficiary households to increase their overall food intake as reflected in their yearly consumption of food. Between 2004 and 2006, the annual consumption of fresh milk has increased from 384 litres to 683 litres, milk products from 470 litres to 4230 litres, meat products from 181 kg to 382 kg and vegetables from 79 kg to 185 kg. This is mainly due to higher agricultural production and higher incomes from sales, such as livestock and production surpluses. The relative increase in meat production reflects a strong improvement in household diets and can be considered as a proxy indicator for improved household food security. It can be assumed that improved capacities to store food and therefore to mitigate shocks such as drought and diseases have also contributed to improving household food security. Household expenditures on food as a percentage of total household expenditures increased only slightly. This seems to indicate that income increases are directly translated into higher expenditures for food to meet basic nutritional needs.	5
Ag. Productivity	The percentage of households depending on farming has steadily increased from 60% in 2004 to 77% in 2008, which seems to indicate that more households are settling in the programme area. The programme supported the establishment of a community-based extension agent network in all targeted RAUs, which has significantly contributed to improving agricultural and livestock production. A total of 285 Village Extension Agents (VEAs) were trained (of 185 planned) and back-stopped to provide multi-disciplinary extension services to 39 000 smallholders (twice the target). These VEAs were considered as the primary sources of advice by 73% of the farming households. Also, 91% of the farming households surveyed knew their extension agent. The training of more than 300 contact famers (IFAD loan and Dutch Grant) in various fields has helped disseminate new technologies and practices. The programme also established seed banks, but problems were encountered with the repayment. Only 35% of the farmers paid back their loan with quality seeds. The programme also helped establish 1092 demonstration fields. Field demonstrations were however not always successful, but affected by droughts, pest infestation and the general conflict situation. Survey results of 2010 showed that 87% of small farmers in the programme area had adopted the recommended farming practices and seeds compared to 36% in 2008. This has resulted in increased crop productivity for the main crops (sorghum, millet, sesame, groundnut, cotton). However, yields remained generally low and below the average realized in research results and demonstration plots. The training of paravets has made veterinary services available not only within the communities concerned but also in neighbouring communities. Vaccination and treatment of diseases have reduced mortality rates, and guidance on supplementary feeding has led to an increase in the number of livestock. The proper use of the revolving fund for vet services by the Animal Health Authority remained, however, unresolved (misuse), threatening the sustainability of the mechanism. The programme also provided support to 64 000 households classified as very poor through the distribution of starter-packs. This was twice the targeted number at appraisal (226% outreach).	4
Agricultural Productivity and Food Security		5
Natural Resources and Environment	No environmental impact study was conducted.	n.a
Human, Social Capital and Empowerment	The social capital was improved through the construction of 54 schools, 16 youth/community development centers and 10 health centers. As a result, school enrolment rates rose, family nutrition improved and young people were given skills to start small activities. An important training activity was the training of midwives, which has greatly contributed to reducing mortality rates at birth. The programme also improved access to safe water for both human and animal consumption through the rehabilitation of 25 and the construction of 2 new <i>hafirs</i> , which was, however, well below the target of 80 and 20 respectively. Problems were encountered with the supervision of the works and the management and legal ownership of the <i>hafirs</i> . Nevertheless, this activity has contributed to the reduction of diseases and to the increase of incomes from the sale of livestock. The Community Development Committees (CDCs), which the programme has helped establish, have become an effective and efficient community development tool and have played a significant role in mobilizing resources and empowering communities. A survey conducted in 2010 showed that 94% of the respondents were members of a CDC, interacting with the programme and participating actively in the development process of their communities. Farmer community groups were identified as the most	5

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	important and useful community institution that helps identify and streamline community needs. Also, 88% of the respondents stated that they benefited from direct involvement in programme activities. Finally, the results showed that collective action and cooperation to the benefit of the community had become part of the new culture instilled to the communities. These developments have had a strong mobilizing effect on the beneficiaries and have inspired them to start their own development activities. 89% of the beneficiaries have rate very positively the community activities undertaken by the CDCs.	
Inst. & Policies	No intended impact on institutions and policies	n.a
Markets	Access to markets was improved through the upgrading of the Kadugli-Talodi dust road into an asphalted higher-grade road (118 km) and the rehabilitation of 566 km of gravel feeder roads. This has had a significant impact on the entire area by improving the marketability of agricultural produce and reducing travel costs and time. According to the PCR this also led to an increase in cropped area and investment in irrigated agriculture. Figures are, however, not provided. With the help of the Dutch grant, the programme has further provided support to the construction of the honey marketplace in Kadugli, which has contributed to boosting the honey trade (and hence the production) in the area	4
Project Impact	Impact was assessed based on 4 beneficiary impact assessment studies conducted in 2006, 2008, 2010 and 2012 respectively, using the 2004 household survey as benchmark. Between 2004 and 2012, the percentage share of very poor and poor households decreased from 24% and 42% in 2004 to 9% and 40% in 2012 while the percentage of less poor and wealthy households increased from 25% and 9% to 37% and 14% respectively. It can be concluded that the programme has had a very positive impact on reducing the share of very poor households	5
Overarching Factors		
Innovation	The programme showed several innovative features of which the most significant are: (i) transforming the traditional <i>Sandug</i> rural financial system into a modern <i>Bara'ah</i> , (ii) working with new and inexperienced state structures, and (iii) decentralization of extension services while making services payable. As such and given the difficulty of the context, the programme can be considered innovative.	5
Replicability and Scaling-up	Many of the achievements of the programme became models for replication and scaling up elsewhere in the country, such as: (i) implementation of a payable extension system that has become a model for other states in Sudan; (ii) establishing a tripartite agreement between hafi user associations, the programme and the Rural Administrative Units for the management of the hafirs (iii) implementation of social services interventions via community development initiatives, a community action model that has raised interest among NGOs operating in similar fields; (iv) the Bara'ah system which could be scaled up to a state-level institution; beneficiaries in other RAUs have already expressed their interest in a similar institution	5
Innovation, Replicability and Scaling-up		5
Sustainability and Ownership	Sustainability and ownership are only weakly analysed in the PCR. It states that after more than 10 years of programme implementation, the target population has benefited from substantial training in various areas, which has enhanced their sense of ownership and is an important prerequisite towards sustainability of programme achievements. Moreover, the programme has prepared an exit strategy which is based on 3 pillars: (a) the development of the consolidated community development plan for the coming five years; (b) the link of the extension team and Bara'ah whereby, the extension teams will enter into a formal contract with Bara'ah; and (c) the third pillar is to continue working with other donors in areas where there are externally funded project. This exist strategy includes a 5-year plan for the period following its closure. The financing of these activities is being budgeted for in the Agricultural Revival Programme Budget. However, continuation of programme activities is greatly threatened by the security situation, which is continuously deteriorating.	4
Targeting	The programme targeted traditional smallholders, who account for 60% of the population in the region and generally represent the poorest and most disadvantaged people in the community. The programme also targeted transhumant pastoralists who have settled, at least temporarily. The targeting mechanism was village-based, using specific poverty-linked criteria: (i) extent of rural poverty; (ii) degree of civil-strife-inflicted damage; and (iii) potential for demonstrating positive economic results from agricultural production. The programme applied strict procedures for the selection of communities and beneficiaries. The extension teams in collaboration with the local administration start with the selection of poorer villages from among the targeted six Rural Administrative Units and then select in a very transparent manner the lower scoring villages. Within the villages, traditional smallholders and women were the primary target group. The 2010 beneficiary impact assessment showed that the activities of the programme were inclusive and covered all ethnic groups residing in the project area	5
Gender	Women were included in all SKRDP activities. In some cases, they were well ahead of men, especially in income generating activities. They accounted for 38 % of the decentralized extension team and 33 % of community representatives in CDCs. In addition, 195 women's groups were formed across CDCs to address their specific interests. 265 women received a 12 months training as midwives. A further 42,000 women were trained in mother and child care, 298 women were trained in social skills and 198 in microenterprise. Access to land, livestock and financial services could only timidly be improved. A significant improvement	4

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	could be noted in the average farm size cultivated by women, which increased from 1.3 feddans in 2004 to 7.0 feddans in 2012. By contrast, the proportion of land cultivated to land owned only slightly increased between 2004 and 2008 which seems to indicate that while overall access to land by women could be improved, this has not had a significant impact on landownership. Programme activities have led to increased awareness among beneficiaries about the important role of women in the development of their communities and in agricultural production. 95% of women participated actively in all programme activities. CDCs however account for only 33% of women.	
Overall Performance		5
Estimated number of beneficiaries	The programme reached out to some 195 communities covering around 39,000 households.	
PCR Quality		
Scope	Some annexes are missing, but overall the PCR had a good scope.	5
Quality	Very good report, very analytical and detailed. Results from the impact surveys and studies of 2004, 2006, 2008 and 2012 have been well integrated to make it a very informative report.	6
Lessons	The PCR depicts some useful lessons for the design and implementation of future projects. They are, however, more of administrative and organizational nature.	4
Candour	The report is well written and objective.	6