



Adaptation for
Smallholder
Agriculture
Programme
ASAP



ASAP Innovations, Policy and Scaling

SUDAN

- The major breakthrough has been the establishment of the Natural Resources Governance Framework that plays a crucial role in enabling communities to manage their natural resources and reduce conflicts among settled farmers and transhumant pastoralists.
- The project's influence is felt far beyond quantitative gains. BIRDIP has empowered marginalized groups, including women, youth, and agro-pastoralists, fostering autonomy and self-confidence.

The challenge:

Climate change adds challenges to poverty and resource management

In 2004, the Government of Sudan and the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement agreed on a joint concept note outlining the National Poverty Eradication Strategy (PES) with two main goals: achieving peace and reducing the risk of future conflicts while making a lasting impact on poverty and other development goals. As part of the Agricultural Revival Programme launched in 2006, the Government prioritized financing for the water sector and natural resources management. During this period, the BIRDIP project was designed to support small-scale farmers in transitioning from subsistence agriculture to market-oriented practices.

Before implementing the project, a thorough rural poverty profiling revealed the key challenges faced by the local communities. These challenges included low agricultural production due to reduced rainfall and pests, low prices for agricultural produce, decreased livestock numbers, deterioration of the rangeland, and increased prices of consumer goods and inputs, especially water and fertilizer. The breakdown of the old resource management system and the lack of an effective substitute contributed to the impoverishment process.



Butana Integrated Rural Development Project (BIRDIP)

2009-2016

Project Financing

Total project cost: US\$ 46.69 million
IFAD financing: US\$ 38.1 million
ASAP grant: US\$ 3 million

Outreach

- The total number of direct and indirect households' members reached during project life is estimated at 436,648 persons (equivalent to 63,043 direct and indirect households), representing 81% and 70% respectively of the end target
- Ten localities in the five states of Khartoum, Gedaref, River Nile, Gezira and Kassala

Target group

- Smallholder agro-pastoralists in the sand dune zone and clay plains, the smallholders in irrigated sector, and the smallholder transhumant households, all including rural women and youth

Programme objective

Improve in a sustainable manner the livelihoods and resilience to drought of the poor rural households living in Butana area

The innovation: Establishing the Natural Resources Governance Framework

In the context of BIRD, the major breakthrough has been the establishment of the **Natural Resources Governance Framework**. This framework plays a crucial role in enabling communities to manage their natural resources sustainably and reduce conflicts among settled farmers and transhumant pastoralists in the Butana area.

The open process of stakeholder consultation on issues related to land tenure and natural resource governance aims to foster a common understanding of the root causes of rangeland degradation, the threats posed to livelihoods and local development and ultimately seeks to build a consensus for positive change. All relevant stakeholders, including federal and state governments, traders, pastoralists and farmers unions, and the state legislature, have been actively involved from the design stage through implementation. This ensures buy-in and support for the regulated access to range and water resources, leading to more sustainable practices.

Another notable local innovation is the use of Guar, a drought-tolerant fodder plant. When green, animals reject it, which in turn helps in limiting overgrazing. However, when dried, Guar becomes highly rich in protein and gum, making it an excellent source of nourishment for livestock. The introduction of Guar has resulted in a remarkable **increase in milk production by an average of 1.3 liters per small ruminant and an impressive weight gain of 3 kg for lambs every 15 days.**

Another celebrated project innovation is the implementation of solar systems to operate water stations in women's group farms. This smart move has garnered praise from the communities and authorities alike for its positive impact. Not only does it enhance access to water for farming activities, but it also demonstrates a commitment to sustainable and eco-friendly practices.



Results and impacts

The project has substantially improved nutrition, particularly for vulnerable children and women. It bolstered food availability through self-production and purchases, ensuring households maintain a necessary intake.

The BIRDP's pivotal role in addressing the critical water challenge in Butana has received widespread recognition. Stakeholders, communities, and authorities have praised the project's achievements in water resources development and management. This provision of water has ushered in transformative impacts across all aspects of life in Butana, improving the relationship between pastoralists and farmers, reducing conflict over water sources, diversifying agricultural production, enhancing nutrition and health, and even boosting education enrollment by reducing water-fetching time.

In the realm of institutions and policies, the project's establishment of the Natural Resources Governance Framework has ignited a breakthrough in natural resource management within the country. Localities and states are responding positively to proposed policies, actions, and regulations to improve resource management.

Amidst the growing challenges posed by climate change, the project has adeptly enhanced population adaptation. Leveraging indigenous knowledge and cultural heritage, the engagement of communities in climate-resilient interventions has significantly reduced vulnerabilities, particularly to drought. The focus on water harvesting for crops and fodder, capacity building, and awareness campaigns have been instrumental in this endeavor.

The project's influence is felt far beyond quantitative gains. BIRDP has empowered marginalized groups, including women, youth, and agro-pastoralists, fostering autonomy and self-confidence. These empowered individuals drive positive social change, manage natural resources collectively, mitigate conflicts, and undertake initiatives to safeguard rangelands and establish youth-led enterprises. The participatory formulation of a natural resource framework is an emblem of this empowering process.

Lessons Learned:

- Establishment of Community Procurement Committees which played an active role in processing procurement plans within their Community Action Plans. Their heavy involvement contributed to better transparency and local ownership of project approach and investment activities
- BIRDP training activities in favour of the beneficiaries conducted at village level encouraged rural women and men to benefit from such training without jeopardising their daily works
- The YPs programme was based on the idea that the YPs (new graduates) are likely to stay with their communities to support them while enhancing their own experience and capacities to join the labor market. The proximity dimension and community trust in the YPs (Being from the villages themselves) contributed to better and sustainable delivery of the services to the communities.

BIRDP Footprint



92.3% of the heads of household reported an increase in their household's income, with income surged by an **average of 40%**.



Crop and small ruminant productivity witnessed an impressive average increase of **90%**



Reduction in the percentage of poor and very poor individuals from **50.4% to 11.8%**



379 Climate Resilient Community Village Plans were implemented



524 000 hectares of land are under improved management and climate-resilient practices



Establishment of **community forests** reached **41 570 hectares**

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Investing in rural people

International Fund for Agricultural Development

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