

**PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT VALIDATION  
RURAL RECOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME  
BURUNDI**

**A. Basic Data**

Basic Project Data			Approval (US\$ m)		Actual (US\$ m) <sup>a)</sup>	
Region	Eastern and Southern Africa	Total project costs	34.2		35.0	
Country	Burundi	IFAD Loan and % of total	20.0	58.48%	20.0	57.14%
Loan Number	500	Borrower	3.54	10.35%	3.54	10.12%
Type of project (sub-sector)	Rural	Co-financier OFID	8.30	24.27%	8.30	23.71%
Financing Type	IFAD Loan + cofinanced	Co-financier WFP	1.16	3.39%	1.85	5.29%
Lending Terms <sup>1</sup>	HI					
Date of Approval	28/04/1999					
Date of Loan Signature	06/05/1999	From Beneficiaries	1.22	3.56%	1.22	3.49%
Date of Effectiveness	04/08/1999					
Loan Amendments	2	Number of beneficiaries (if appropriate, specify if direct or indirect)	60,000 direct beneficiaries			
Loan Closure Extensions	2	Cooperating Institution	UNOPS		UNOPS/IFAD	
Country Programme Managers	A. Benhammouche; C. Reiner; H. Haidara	Loan Closing Date	30 September 2006		30 June 2010	
Regional Director(s)	I. De Willebois	Mid-Term Review			1-19 October 2003	
PCR Reviewer	L. Kellens	IFAD Loan Disbursement at project completion (%)			99.16%	
PCR Quality Control Panel	F. Felloni A. Lambert					
<b>Remarks:</b>						

<sup>1</sup> According to IFAD's Lending Policies and Criteria, there are three types of lending terms: highly concessional (HI), intermediate (I) and ordinary (O). The conditions for these are as follows: (i) special loans on highly concessional terms shall be free of interest but bear a service charge of three fourths of one per cent (0.75%) per annum and have a maturity period of forty (40) years, including a grace period of ten (10) years; (ii) loans on intermediate terms shall have a rate of interest per annum equivalent to fifty per cent (50%) of the variable reference interest rate, and a maturity period of twenty (20) years, including a grace period of five (5) years; (iii) loans on ordinary terms shall have a rate of interest per annum equivalent to one hundred per cent (100%) of the variable reference interest rate, and a maturity period of fifteen (15) to eighteen (18) years, including a grace period of three (3) years.

a) PPMS does not make any reference to changes in the total project costs and its composition, while the PCR indicates that the contribution of WFP was higher than committed.

*Source: Report and recommendation of the President (1999), PPMS (2011)*

## **B. Project Outline**

1. With the exception of the social infrastructure component, which was designed to support activities as well in the provinces of Ruyigi and Bururi, the Rural Recovery and Development Programme (RRDP) was designed to cover four provinces: Cibitoke in the north-west, Gitega and Karuzi in the centre, and Kayanza in the north. Based on poverty prevalence data for 1990 and 1997, it was estimated that between 756,000 and 1,167,000 inhabitants out of a total population of 1.8 million were very poor and food insecure.

2. Poverty in Burundi relates directly to the very low productivity of labour, which is the result of the lack of capital, land that is prone to erosion and over-cultivation, poorly trained and badly supported farmers, and the low level of agricultural equipment and technology. Individual poverty is mainly caused by a lack of agricultural land per capita. Families with inadequate land resources also tend to lag in educational achievement and to have access to fewer on- and off-farm cash income-earning opportunities. The succession of crisis afflicting the country has tended to exacerbate the situation, mainly because large sections of the population have been displaced for some time and this has led to an almost total depletion of livestock resources through theft or distress sales. Many agricultural implements have also been lost in similar ways.

3. The programme was designed to contribute to establishing conditions for the rural poor and their communities to develop and implement sustainable individual and collective strategies for overcoming what they perceive as the main obstacles to improving household food security and income and reducing the pressure on livelihoods that has so persistently contributed to social tension. Therefore, the overall objectives of the programme – as confirmed and formulated by the mid-term review (MTR) – are to i) contribute to food security; ii) improve living conditions and increase income; and iii) improve and preserve land capital.

4. To achieve the above-mentioned objectives, the programme was designed around six components: i) community development (5% of total costs); ii) on-farm production support (32%); iii) natural resources development and conservation (13%); iv) socio-economic infrastructure development (30%); v) support to local initiatives (10%); and vi) programme coordination (10%). The overall strategy of the programme focused on structuring rural organisations, identifying needs through participatory community development, and supporting land fertility.

5. The programme's target group included small farmers seeking to recover from the crisis and who are faced with problems of decreasing land availability and fertility. Direct beneficiaries comprised more than 40,000 hill farmers and about 20,000 farmers cultivating plots on marshes. Some 10,000 households were to benefit from livestock interventions and several thousand farmers from improved cropping conditions for tea, coffee, rice or cotton. More than 60,000 rural households will gain access to safe water at a reasonable distance. All beneficiaries belong to population groups of which 60% live below the official poverty line and most are unable to meet the basic food needs of the family. Beneficiary families specifically include women-headed households and doubly-orphaned households managed by children.

6. During implementation, the programme showed flexibility in responding to the implementation challenges faced and to the changing context. For example, to align with the Government's policy on free schooling, water activities were revised downwards in order to

increase the budget allocated to the construction of school buildings, hence increasing the number of schools constructed by the programme. During the MTR and in subsequent supervision missions, development targets were revised regularly to take into consideration the inflation, but also the delays encountered in receiving funds from the cofinanciers (see section C.7).

## **C. Main Assessment – Review of Findings by Criterion**

### **Project Performance**

#### **C.1 Relevance**

7. The overall objectives of RRDP were highly relevant to the development needs of the poor and vulnerable households faced with rehabilitation challenges and diminished economic resources, especially in terms of agricultural land and livestock. Furthermore, the objectives were consistent with the Burundian context and in line with the policies of the Government of Burundi. In particular, the programme aligned with the government's strategies promoting economic liberalisation, strengthening community participation in poverty reduction programmes, and improving agricultural support services. Emphasis on natural resources management and soil conservation was also central. Moreover, programme design was conform to IFAD's long-term strategy in Burundi focusing on improving food security through rational management of available agricultural resources and support for the introduction of improved technology. Programme design integrated lessons learned from previous IFAD-funded projects, of which two continued operations during and after the 1993-crisis. Based on these experiences, RRDP design has put emphasis on strong implementation structures and collaboration with established NGOs to ensure implementation in a crisis context

8. Given the complex causes of poverty and food insecurity in the country, the programme was designed to address different issues, going from agricultural production to livestock development and from infrastructure to community development. While each proposed component was relevant to the beneficiary needs and a holistic approach could be argued, the totality of interventions made the programme complex and scattered. Anticipated synergies between the components and activities did not fully materialise, missing out some changes to maximise development objectives. Although recognised as a constraint for development, addressing individual financial access was not identified at design, neither addressed explicitly during implementation. Programme design did provide for a log-frame which however did neither provide for clear objectives, nor for SMART indicators and targets. This made it difficult for the programme to set up a functional M&E system.

9. Overall, partnerships were weakly developed during programme design, both with national and international institutions. The institutional design of the programme, in which public services played a key role for the implementation, proved to be difficult to implement in a context where public services are strongly weakened and need to be strengthened through training and equipment. By the time of the MTR in 2003, those institutions were able to start taking up their roles as agreed by in the conventions. The involvement of cofinanciers (OFID and WFP) was well intentioned, but inadequately prepared and not secured by formal commitments. The late release of those funds (see paragraphs 43 and 44) led to the serious delays in implementation of the cofinanced activities and the weaker achievement of the specific objectives.

10. In short, while programme activities were aligned with Government and IFAD strategies, it is found that the intervention strategy did not take fully into account country context and that programme preparation did not give attention to formalising partnerships. Programme relevance is therefore rated by this validation as *moderately satisfactory* (4).

## C.2 Effectiveness

11. As mentioned in the previous section, a clear and concise log-frame with specific objectives was not established at appraisal. However, the MTR formulated following specific programme objectives, which will be used in assessing this section: i) strengthen community development capacities; ii) increase agricultural production; iii) strengthen rural support services; iv) improve sanitation and hygiene; and v) improve social status of women. These objectives correspond largely with four of the five technical programme components. The fifth component, “*natural resources development and conservation*”, contributes directly to the overall programme objective of developing and preserving natural resources. Since this latter relates directly to one of IFAD impact domains, it will be treated under section C.4.

12. In terms of the first objective, strengthening community development capacities, the programme contributed to the establishment of 799 *collines* (hill) development committees with 8,933 members and 33 communal committees for community development with 822 members. Women represent around 30% of the members of those committees. Through the participatory planning process based on good practice manuals, 33 communal plans for community development and four provincial community development plans were elaborated, representing the intervention priorities identified by the communes. Those plans contributed to the mobilisation of external financing from development partners and guaranteed coordination and equitable distribution. Extensive training on accounting, the role of the committee in the institutional context, conflict resolution, and targeting of beneficiaries, was provided to committee members. Irrigation and water user committees were established and strengthened in managing the infrastructures under their responsibility. Through the implementation of the participatory planning process and the mobilisation of associations and groups, the objective of developing capacity to select and undertake projects by communes has been achieved.

13. Regarding the second objective, increasing agricultural production, the programme put in place a whole range of activities contributing to this objective. Agricultural support kits were distributed among 33,000 vulnerable households of which 68% noted an increase in their agricultural production. Support to the development, multiplication and distribution of improved seed had good results in terms of increased availability of improved seeds (6 times more for corn and soja and 10 times more stems of cassava), but yield increases were rather weak, partly because of the weak performance of the multiplication farmers, partly because of insufficient use of manure and chemical fertilisers. The revolving fund for fertiliser installed by the programme at the level of the Provincial Directorate for Agriculture and Livestock (DPAE) did not substantially increase the availability and access to fertilisers due to managerial problems of the fund. Significant contributions were made by the programme in increasing livestock which in its turn contributed to increased production of cattle manured crops and milk products. Marshland development allowed, among others, for the intensification of rice cultivation with yield increases from 1.5 ton/ha in 2000 to 3 ton/ha in 2009. However, these results are limited in scope; many marshlands did not maximise their capacity due to lack of equipment or management problems. The pilot activity introducing the system of rice intensification showed that yields can reach 5 to 6 ton/ha, and is a promising option for future interventions. In short, the objective of increasing agricultural production was met but with a moderate effect on the seed multiplication and distribution of fertiliser.

14. Concerning the third objective, strengthening rural extension and support services, the programme improved access to extension services for agriculture and livestock development. Access to improved seeds was increased through the seed multiplication programme, and the use of fertilisers was promoted. However, both services did not reach their maximum capacity (see paragraph 13). Livestock support services were strengthened through the creation of 22 veterinary village pharmacies (68% of target) manned with agro-pastoralist trained in diagnosis, pastoral medicine, administration and basic accounting principles. In order to

stimulate the production of cash crops, RRDP supported specialised institutions in increasing their production capacity. Moreover, special support was provided by the programme to research and development centres, in particular the Burundi Agricultural Research Institute (ISABU) and the Agronomics Faculty of the University of Bujumbura (FACAGRO). Through the provision of training and equipment, ISABU developed improved seeds for food crops (potato, corn, cassava), introduced new composting techniques having a positive impact on soil fertility, and provided training for agro-pastoralists. Technical fiches were developed and distributed among beneficiaries, contributing to a shared knowledge of livestock and integrated farm management. Given the late introduction of those tools, the actual adoption of those new practices has not been confirmed by the RRDP documents<sup>2</sup>. Furthermore, training and institutional/ logistical support was provided for DPAAE and other departments of the Ministry of Agriculture.

15. As far as the fourth objective is concerned, improving sanitation and hygiene, the programme constructed piped water networks of 155 km (95% of the revised target) serving approximately 23,639 households. 108 latrines were constructed (against 150 targeted) and 4 new health centres were constructed (against the target of 17 to be rehabilitated). Moreover, the programme constructed 34 new schools each equipped with three blocs of four latrines and water tanks for rainwater harvesting. Although the targets related to those activities have been considerably revised due to the delays in mobilising the OFID funds, infrastructure works realised need to be acknowledged. However, these infrastructures are not 'owned' by the beneficiaries, the programme did not provide for sustainable O&M groups and reporting on sensitisation campaigns is weak, questioning the contribution to improved sanitation and hygiene.

16. In terms of the fifth objective, improving the social status of women, the programme ensured for an active involvement of women in all programme activities; for example, women participation in community development committees increased up to 35% and 845 women were selected as lead peasants. The programme constructed four family development centres, rehabilitated the multi-functional centre in Gitega, constructed 95 alphabetisation houses and established 294 alphabetisation centres. Those latter enabled the family development centres to provide training on cross-cutting themes, such as peaceful conflict resolution, family planning, hygiene and financial management of groups. Over 62,000 people, of whom 70% women, benefited from the literacy training. Those trainings led to the creation of community networks of female leaders working actively on conflict resolution and the role of women in relation to human rights. Through the provision of small equipment, the programme supported the creation of income generating activities for women, benefiting approximately 700 households. Programme interventions have contributed to the increased proportion of households where women wear regularly shoes; being 13% among non-beneficiary households and almost 18% among beneficiaries. Wearing shoes in rural areas is a manifestation of wealth. In short, programme activities did contribute successfully to the improved social status of women.

17. Overall, the programme made significant contributions to improving the living conditions of the beneficiaries, and improved in particular the capacities of the population to organise themselves. However, the contributions to increased agriculture and improved rural support systems were less significant than could be expected. Based on the considerations above in terms of realisations and outreach, and taking into consideration the extremely difficult context, the IOE rating for effectiveness is *satisfactory* (5).

---

<sup>2</sup> According to PMD, those practices are being picked up by the beneficiaries of RRDP and other projects. Moreover, PAIVA-B and PRODEFI will scale-up the practices.

### C.3 Efficiency

18. The assessment of efficiency is particularly challenging because of the scarcity of statistics and comparative data in the consulted documents. In this context, it makes little sense to attempt economic or financial efficiency calculations. However, efficiency was addressed in terms of timeliness of programme implementation and the allocation of funds.

19. The time-lag between Board approval and loan effectiveness – three months – was exemplary. However, actual start-up of the programme activities was delayed due to the institutional complexity of the programme, the novelty of the community development approach requesting time to incorporate the method, and the late signature (in 2001) of the agreements with the implementation partners. In the early stages, implementation was further challenged by the portfolio suspension of four months in 2002 due to non payment of arrears and the instable security situation in 2003. As a result, the MTR recommended a first extension of 15 months. Funds from WFP and OFID were released respectively in 2006 and August 2007 (see paragraphs 43 and 44). In order to support the consolidation of the activities implemented under the socio-economic infrastructure development component, the programme implementation period was extended for a second time with the final completion date being 30 June 2010 (instead of 30 September 2006) and closing date 31 December 2010 (instead of 31 March 2007). In total, programme implementation was extended with almost four years, bringing total programme implementation at 10.9 years with a time overrun of 52%.

20. In order to reflect the implementation changes in the budget, two reallocations have been undertaken, in 2004 after the MTR and in 2009 after the release of the OFID funds. The funds allocated for irrigation increased from 6.85% to 12.75% because works were conducted with stronger material leading to the rehabilitation of irrigation schemes previously built and other provinces were included in the activities. Concerning the category for technical assistance and training, an increase of funds was noted due to the non-planned recruitment of four provincial NGOs supporting the participatory community development process and the studies undertaken by individual consultants to strengthen capacities. The programme completion report (PCR) underlines as well that the COSTAB estimates did not provide for training of partners in community development. The budget category for wages has increased significantly because of the revisions of the salary level (contrary to the steady wage calculated in the COSTAB), the recruitment of key staff on a contractual basis (contrary to the planned secondment of staff from public institutions), and the M&E team which was not included in the COSTAB estimates. In the absence of the loan amendments, it can be said based on the disbursements that 34% of the total disbursements went to salaries and recurrent operational costs, while the initial provision was about 28%.

21. Considering that the implementation period was extended at no cost to reach its development effectiveness, but taking into account the significant increase in certain categories, especially for administration, project efficiency is rated *moderately satisfactory* (4).

### **Rural Poverty Impact**

#### C.4 Impact

22. Household income and net assets. Household income increased and was more diversified as farmers increased agricultural production, both for cash and food crops, and livestock. The development of income generating activities, such as selling animal related products, proved to be successful. The increase in household income led to improved living conditions: housing conditions improved, means of communication improved and more families had bikes. Moreover, it is reasonable to assume that better access to water (46% of households in

the programme area have access to drinking water within 10 minutes walking), improved education and infrastructure (construction of schools equipped with latrines), improved hygiene and sanitation, and better access to food, are factors increasing the probability of higher incomes and net household assets. According to the PCR, the proportion of households whose annual income exceeded 240,000 FBU increased from 8.4% in 2000 to 19.7% in 2009. However, the impact evaluation conducted by the programme shortly before programme completion underlines that the level of income increase experienced by the beneficiaries varies significantly among beneficiaries and is depending on the timing and the type of support received. Moreover, similar income increases have been observed in the control group, although with lower improvements, implying other factors (such as the restoration of peace) to be crucial for the income increase. Based on above, the IOE rating for impact on household income and net assets is rated *moderately satisfactory* (4).

23. Human and social capital and empowerment. Central to the programme was the community development approach, which has significantly contributed to the organisation of communities (see paragraph 12) and the empowerment of their members. Community structures have promoted a spirit of entrepreneurship and accountability, contributing to the creation of farmers groups and associations for seed multiplication, nurseries, beekeeping, restocking of livestock through the community solidarity chain, etc. Moreover, their empowerment allowed for the emergence of female peasant leaders who can lead and support community development. The share of peasant leaders in conflict management alongside community leaders and heads of local authorities is a significant social impact of the programme in strengthening the accountability process and institutional organization at the community level. Female participation in community development has been significant and women feel empowered to start small business, to deal with the community or to take care of their family (see paragraph 16). In view of these qualifications, the project's impact on human and social capital is rated as *satisfactory* (5).

24. Food security and agricultural productivity. According to the programme impact evaluation, the number of households having access to two meals a day increased from 13% to 70% in 2000 and 2009 respectively. Quality of food improved due to the availability of livestock, providing meat and milk. Moreover, livestock provided farmers with improved access to organic manure contributing to improved soil fertility, and thus better yields. Moreover, almost 28% of the households considered by the programme are using improved seeds (see paragraph 13) against only 6.6% in non beneficiary households. As a consequence, yield increases for potato and cassava were noted, although rather on a small scale. Moreover, the programme impact evaluation underlines that some of the activities, such as the distribution of the agricultural kits, had only a temporary impact on improved security of the vulnerable households. Recognising the problems faced in setting up agricultural support services that would have supported significantly the productivity, impacts are still significant given the context. Based on this trade-off, the IOE rating is *satisfactory* (5).

25. Natural resources and environment. One of the specific objectives of the programme was to develop and preserve natural resources. Given the increasing fragmentation of land holdings and the severe soil erosion, mitigation measures are crucial for agricultural development. Through the introduction of marshland development, hillside bunding, and soil conservation techniques, land productivity increased significantly more for the beneficiary households (45%) than for the non-beneficiary households (30%). About 80% of the beneficiary households are using organic manure, coming from the livestock, while the use of chemical fertiliser is said to have decreased (households report to have spent on average 59% less on buying fertiliser). The programme supported groups of individual nurseries in the production of over 13 million agro-forestry plants by providing them the basic planting material for multiplication. Training and awareness raising contributed to the adoption of biological conservation measures and the reforestation of over 1,000 ha. For example, about 39% of beneficiary farms have planted permanent fodder or agro-forestry species along

contour lines against 25% of non-beneficiary farms. However, the introduction of the experimental programme of radical bench terracing did not achieve the expected results (see paragraph 34) due to labour burden for the involved populations. Impact in this domain is rated as *satisfactory* (5).

26. Institutions and policies. The programme introduced the community development approach, which initially was met with some resistance but evolved to a nationwide accepted approach. In 2007, the Government issued a decree in which the community development committees at all levels were legally recognised. Moreover, in collaboration with other donors, such as ACORD, Action Aid, GTZ, the programme contributed significantly to the formulation of a national guide for community planning. Through the provision of training and equipment, local government capacities were strengthened, especially regarding the conduct of the community development approach. Institutional support was given to the departments of the partner ministries putting them back on track after the crisis and enabling them to fully take on their responsibilities for development. Therefore, the IOE rating for impact on institutions and policies is *satisfactory* (5).

27. Summing up the assessment of the various dimensions of rural poverty reduction, overall rural poverty impact is rated *satisfactory* (5).

### **Other Performance Criteria**

#### **C.5 Sustainability**

28. By focusing its approach on participatory community development, the programme contributed significantly to addressing the issues of ownership and local capacity building – being crucial conditions for sustainability. The programme has put in place several management units at the local level who can continue with the participatory planning, provided they continue receiving the support from the decentralised governmental structures, which is likely given the legal recognition of the community development approach. Although the PCR is positive about the sustainability of community development committees, previous supervision missions have highlighted the challenge of keeping the process ongoing given the changed composition of the committees bringing in new members who benefited less from the programme support provided. Moreover, training, as was provided by the programme, was often seen by the committee members as a motivation, putting at risk their motivation after the programme support resigns. Although the PCR argues that training of female lead farmers has continued by the beneficiaries, in general, it did considerably slow down once financing was withdrawn.

29. Operations and management groups have been formed for the maintenance and repair of infrastructure (schools, water points) and irrigation schemes. The functioning of those groups is determined by legal conventions and contributions of local users provide for the financing for its maintenance. The PCR affirms the viability of those groups, although the latest supervision missions were recommending increasing programme attention to strengthening the capacities of those O&M groups.

30. Concerning the support provided by the programme in delivering agricultural inputs (seed and fertiliser) to improve productivity, sustainability is highly at risk. As highlighted in section C.2, the seed multiplication did not fully take off. Although the availability of improved seed increased, farmers did not develop the necessary dynamic to develop the value chain and assure the autonomy of the seed multiplication associations. They remain dependent from initial seeds delivered by the programme or by DPAAE. However, the supervision mission of 2008 highlighted that this situation was not only for the programme area but for the whole country. Given the new context in which the market for agricultural inputs is liberalised, the PCR highlights the innovations introduced by the programme (see



section C.6) but underlines that the sustainability is to be awaited given the fairly new approach. It has been highlighted that those set-ups will be further strengthened as part of the new IFAD programme.

31. In short, although the programme contributed to some positive changes, such as the enhanced capacity of local communities to manage their development, there are a few non-negligible sustainability risks linked to the activities supported by the programme. Sustainability is therefore rated by the validation as *moderately unsatisfactory* (3).

### **C.6 Pro-Poor Innovation, Replication and Scaling-Up**

32. Considering the context, the main innovation the programme intended to implement was the systematic application of community development methodologies (and the promotion of women's capacity) over a vast geographical area. Undoubtedly, the participatory approach and the implemented target methods led to the inclusion of the most vulnerable in decision-making, and women have been successfully involved at all levels (especially with the introduction of the female lead peasants, see paragraph 16). Although participatory community-development has been implemented before by NGOs, the large scale and systematic approach was new and led to the nation-wide acceptance of the involvement of communities in their development. The programme contributed significantly to the elaboration of the national guidelines on community planning and played an important role in bringing the process further.

33. The programme intended to promote certain production methods and technologies deemed to be more effective and capable of gaining acceptance by the target population. In this respect, the programme introduced successfully the animal-based community solidarity chain, kitchen gardens, *cultures en sac*, and the system of rice intensification (see paragraph 13).

34. A final innovation identified at design implied the establishment of bench terraces for annual cultivation. This new technique has been introduced on a pilot basis, but proved to be too labour demanding from the beneficiaries and the restoration of the selected fields requested a lot of fertiliser. From a technical point of view, this process could be seen as successful but the efforts required are not in relation to the added value.

35. Besides those planned innovations, the PCR underlined the innovative aspect of the village veterinary pharmacies, the shops for agricultural inputs and the introduction of a value chain in seeds. However, the latter did not succeed due to the legal framework and the prevailing insecurity in the country.

36. Balancing between the overall institutional innovation and the rather small-scale practical innovations benefiting directly the farmers and livestock holders, the present validation assesses innovation and replication as *satisfactory* (5).

### **C.7 Gender equality and women's empowerment**

37. Gender equality and women's empowerment was an explicit objective of the programme, with a component explicitly addressing women's development needs. Based on the different assessment made above (see paragraph 16), it is evident that women's empowerment has been strengthened. Therefore, the IOE rating for gender equality and women's empowerment is *satisfactory* (5).

## C.7 Performance of Partners

38. IFAD. The PCR applauds IFAD for the qualitative and relevant design, although it does not point out the shortcomings found in other documents (see section C.1). During implementation, IFAD was guardian for a high degree of alignment with other donors and did not hesitate to reorient activities in order to strengthen that alignment (for example, the shifting focus from cash crops to food crops given the former were significantly supported by other interventions). Although supervision responsibilities were assigned to UNOPS until the end of 2008, IFAD ensured necessary follow-up missions and conducted the mid-term review in 2003. Technical assistance was provided by IFAD to develop the M&E system and to ensure its alignment with the RIMS. Moreover, the capacities of the management were strengthened via the annual regional workshops organized by IFAD for the IFAD financed projects and programmes. However, based on the supervision mission of 2005, it appears that the processing of the request for the loan amendment has been cumbersome and reduced temporarily the availability of operational funds for the programme.

39. As of 2009, IFAD took over direct supervision which contributed to the increased communication between the programme and IFAD (as underlined by the PCR) and allowed for the timely implementation of the activities set forward. Based on the strengths and weaknesses (particularly in the design) substantiated above, the overall rating assigned to the performance of IFAD is *moderately satisfactory* (4).

40. Government of Burundi. Regarding the performance of the Government, the PCR acknowledges the negative impact of the outstanding arrears on programme implementation. Not only did it lead to a suspension of four months of the IFAD portfolio and its corresponding financing, but also to the delayed release of the OFID funds. However, the Government did provide for all preparatory works and facilitated the start-up of the programme. Moreover, representatives of the partner ministries did join the supervision missions and support was provided to the management unit in terms of personnel. Overall, counterpart funds were released timely and in line with the AWPB. However, due to the changed legal context for programmes to be exempted from taxes, the programme did not yet benefit from the full contribution committed.

41. The programme unit showed creativity and flexibility to implement programme, proved to be very dynamic and established excellent relations with partners, and took the lead in driving the programme approach for participatory planning. However, the M&E unit was only established in 2002 and full M&E system was not developed on time. The baseline was conducted in 2007 based on historical data. Taking into account the difficult post-crisis situation, the PCR rates the performance of the government in the positive zone, rating it as *moderately satisfactory* (4).

42. United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). The PCR notes that UNOPS has successfully complied with its functions of supervision the programme and managing the loan. In particular, it was stated that the implementation of the recommendations made by the different annual supervision missions, allowed the programme to improve their activities, to integrate innovative features in the AWPB and to improve programme management. The multidisciplinary composition of the supervision missions contributed to the improved understanding of technical issues in the programme. Some concerns can be found regarding the time consuming treatment of withdrawal applications, putting the special account under pressures. However, the PCR underlines the flexibility of IFAD and UNOPS in the matter to address the tensions. The PCR rating for UNOPS performance is *satisfactory* (5).

43. OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID). OFID provided financing to the programme for the socio-economic development infrastructure component. Due to the outstanding arrears of the Government to OFID, the allocated funds could only be released by

mid-2007, being 8 years after project effectiveness. However, the PCR notes that both OFID and IFAD have put in place effective systems to disburse as fast as possible (77.8% disbursed in 2 years) and to implement planned activities. Although the delay in the release of funds impacted negatively the implementation progress of the programme, OFID cannot be held responsible for this. Therefore, given the flexible and pro-active approach to disbursing as fast as possible, OFID performance is *satisfactory* (5).

44. World Food Programme (WFP). Cofinancing from WFP was identified for some activities in the framework of food for work and cash for work, which was not in line with the participatory approach of the programme. Hence, WFP cancelled initially its contribution. However, in 2007, WFP contacted the programme and provided financing of US\$1.6 million (against the initial engagement of US\$1.2 million) for the marshland development sub-component. In the absence of further qualifications, no rating is assigned to the performance of WFP.

### **C.8 Overall Assessment of Project Performance**

45. In general terms, the RRDP has contributed in attaining its development objectives of improving food security, increasing household incomes and preserving land capital. The programme was relevant in that it addressed multidisciplinary causes of poverty but the design had flaws concerning the institutional set-up of certain components and in ensuring the synergy between different activities. Despite the flaws mentioned above, the programme was implemented with satisfactory effectiveness, although with important delays during the first half. Those delays impacted the implementation period, and therefore efficiency. Overall poverty reduction impact was satisfactory, notably in terms of social capital and empowerment, agricultural productivity and food security, and natural resources and environment. However, a number of factors limit sustainability of programme impacts, such as the continued dependency on distribution of seed and fertilisers, the weak capacity of O&M users groups, and the viability of community groups. Taking into account the assessment of all evaluation criteria, the overall rating for the project is *satisfactory* (5).

### **D. Assessment of the PCR Quality**

46. The scope of the completion report extends to all criteria adopted by PMD and IOE, except for the overall programme assessment. The report provides for a fair amount of information on the programme design and implementation. The scope is rated as *satisfactory* (5) by this validation.

47. The quality of the completion report is rated as *moderately unsatisfactory* (3) because of the incorrect use of certain criteria. For example, efficiency was measured to be effective because of the positive balance between realised outputs and disbursement. In the context of revised costs and targets, this can not be the only way to measure effectiveness. Moreover, the PCR based all of its findings on the impact evaluation conducted by the programme during the last year of implementation, which is of dubious quality from a methodological point of view. The study is based on interviews with beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries.

48. Lessons learned are clearly formulated, focusing mainly on the operational issues (highlights are presented below). Given the absence of the strategic lessons learned, and in particular the ones related to the specific country context, this validation rates the lessons learned as *moderately satisfactory* (4).

49. The PCR is overall transparent in its assessments and is self-critical for the role of the Government and the programme management unit. Candour is consequently rated as *satisfactory* (5).

## **E. Final Remarks**

### **E. 1 Lessons Learned<sup>3</sup>**

50. Following lessons can be extracted from the PCR and the validation exercise:

- Impact indicators should be carefully identified at design stage, making sure that reliable information resources are available.
- Delays and setbacks in selecting and contracting implementation partners or cofinanciers should be taken into consideration when defining the implementation schedule of the programme.
- In order to maximise results and impact and to provide for synergies, programme activities need to be limited in terms of scope and number.
- Recruiting the necessary M&E team should receive full priority during start-up of the programme.
- A clear exit strategy should be formulated timely preventing the conduct of activities which can not receive the necessary support to ensure their sustainability.

---

<sup>3</sup> PMD highlighted that those lessons learned have been taken into account during the design of the last two programmes for Burundi (PAIVA-B and PRODEFI). It was highlighted by PMD that three key activities, introduced by RRDP, are being consolidated and up-scaled by the new programmes to address rural poverty: (i) marshland development for rice production; (ii) animal solidarity chains to increase food intake, incomes and produce manure for soil fertility improvement; and (iii) watershed protection and management.

## G. Rating Comparisons

<b>Project ratings</b>			
<b>Criterion</b>	<b>PMD Rating<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>IOE Rating</b>	<b>Net Rating Disconnect (IOE PCRV - PMD)</b>
Relevance	6	4	-2
Effectiveness	5	5	0
Efficiency	5	4	-1
<b>Project Performance<sup>5</sup></b>	n.p.	<b>4.3</b>	n.a.
<b>Rural Poverty Impact</b>			
(a) HH Income and Net Assets	6	4	-2
(b) Human and Social Capital Empowerment	5	5	0
(c) Food Security and Agricultural Productivity	6	5	-1
(d) Natural Resources and Environment	5	5	0
(e) Institutions and Policies	5	5	0
<b>Overall rural poverty impact<sup>6</sup></b>		<b>5</b>	
Sustainability	5	3	-2
Pro-poor Innovation, Replication and Scaling Up	6	5	-1
Gender equality and women's empowerment	5	5	0
<b>Performance of partners</b>			
(a) IFAD	5	4	-1
(b) Government	5	4	-1
(c) UNOPS	5	5	0
(d) OFID	5	n.a.	n.a.
(e) WFP	5	n.a.	n.a.
<b>Overall Assessment<sup>7</sup></b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>AVERAGE Net disconnect</b>			<b>-0.786</b>
<b>Ratings of the PCR document quality</b>	<b>PMD rating</b>	<b>IOE PCRV rating</b>	<b>Net disconnect</b>
(a) Scope	5	5	0
(b) Quality	5	3	-2
(c) Lessons	5	4	-1
(d) Candour	6	5	-1
<b>Overall rating PCR document</b>	n.p.	<b>4</b>	n.a.

<sup>4</sup> Rating scale: 1 = highly unsatisfactory; 2 = unsatisfactory; 3 = moderately unsatisfactory; 4 = moderately satisfactory; 5 = satisfactory; 6 = highly satisfactory; n.p. = not provided; n.a. = not applicable.

<sup>5</sup> Arithmetic average of ratings for relevance, effectiveness and efficiency.

<sup>6</sup> This is not an average of ratings of individual impact domains.

<sup>7</sup> This is an average of ratings of individual evaluation criteria.

## **H. List of sources used for PCRV**

IFAD (2010), Rapport d'achèvement

IFAD (2010), Mission préparatoire de Rapport d'achèvement

IFAD (2009), Aide-memoire Mission de supervision

IFAD (2003), Revue à mi-parcours

IFAD (1999), Accord de prêt

IFAD (1999), Report and recommendation of the President

IFAD (1999), Mission de pré-évaluation

RRDP (2010), Evaluation globale des effets et impact des actions du PRDMR

RRDP (2007), Situation de référence

UNOPS (2008), Rapport de supervision

UNOPS (2007), Rapport de supervision