

Project Completion Report Validation

Livestock and Horticulture Development Project

The Republic of The Gambia

Date of validation by IOE: December 2018

I. Basic project data

			Approval (US\$ m)		Actual (US\$ m)	
Region	West and Central Africa	Total project costs	15.943		15.543	
Country	The Republic of The Gambia	IFAD grant and percentage of total	8.005	50.2%	7.614	49.0%
Grant number	DSF-8046-GM	Gambian Government	0.813	5.1%	0.628	4.0%
Type of project (subsector)	Agriculture Development	Cofinancier 1 (AfDB)	4.947	31.0%	6.000	38.6%
Financing type	DSF grant	-----				
Lending terms	N/A	-----				
Date of approval	17/12/2009	-----				
Date of financing signature	03/03/2010	Beneficiaries	2.178	13.7%	1.300	8.4%
Date of effectiveness	03/03/2010	Other sources (N/A)				
Financial agreement amendments	N/A	Number of beneficiaries *	10 390 individuals (7 570 women; 2 820 youths)		9 386 individuals (7 516 women; 1 870 youths)	
Financial agreement closure extensions	1 extension for a period of 6 months	Project completion date	31/03/2015		30/09/2015	
Country programme managers	N'Simpasi Loko	Financing closing date	30/09/2015		31/03/2016	
Regional director(s)	Ides de Willebois Mohammed Beavogui	Mid-term review	31/10/2013			
Project completion report reviewer	Nuri Niyazi	IFAD funds disbursement at project completion (%)	95.1%			
Project completion report quality control panel	Hansdeep Khaira Fumiko Nakai	Date of the project completion report	08/12/2017			

Source: Project Completion Report (2017).

* It should be noted that gaping discrepancies existed in the PCR between the numbers of beneficiaries reported in the "LHDP At a Glance" table at the beginning of the report and the figures stated in the narrative: total numbers of beneficiaries thus ranged from 9,386 (narrative) to 52,792 (table) and women beneficiaries from 7,516 (narrative) to 38,791 (table). For the purposes of this PCR, the narrative figures are used, as these were internally consistent (between different sections of the narrative).

II. Project outline

1. **Introduction.** A loan for the Livestock and Horticulture Development Project (LHDP) in The Gambia was approved by the IFAD Executive Board on 17 December 2009 and became effective on 3 March 2010, with an expected duration of five years. The project was extended by a period of six months, its completion and loan closure occurring on 30 September 2015. Notwithstanding that the draft Project Completion Report (PCR) was prepared in December 2015, its finalization was delayed until December 2017. Although an explanation for this delay is not provided in the PCR, it is understood from other IFAD-financed projects in the country finalising their PCRs during the same time period that the deteriorating political climate in the country may have been the main factor for the delayed report finalisation. It should also be noted that an IFAD Country Programme Evaluation (CPE) was conducted in 2015-2016, which rated LHDP performance as part of the country portfolio. The main in-country mission was conducted in April 2015 and the report finalized in 2016. CPE ratings are provided and relevant findings referred to in the corresponding sections in this Project Completion Report Validation (PCRV).
2. **Project area.** LHDP was initiated by the African Development Bank (AfDB) and IFAD's co-financing enabled its expansion to the national level, by incorporating a focus on rural areas across all of The Gambia's regions, in addition to the peri-urban areas initially targeted by AfDB. According to the Project Design Report (2009), LHDP thus targeted 100-120 rural communities throughout the entire country at design stage, while the PCR did not refer to any appraisal targets with regard to the number of communities that were to be reached and noted that the Greater Banjul Area was not covered by the project.
3. **Project context.** At the time of project appraisal (2009), the country was considered among the poorest countries in the world, with a ranking of 160 out of 179 countries according to the Human Development Index 2008 published by the United Nations Development Programme. In 2005, 57.6 per cent of the population lived below the national poverty line and at the time of project formulation, 63.3 per cent of the population in the rural areas were considered poor. Amongst the different socioeconomic groups, poverty was highest among those whose livelihood depended on farming and fisheries. Poverty was also characterized along gender dimensions, with 63 per cent of female-headed households classified as poor, compared to 48 per cent of male-headed households. With regard to a sectorial context, the precarious and erratic nature of rainfall coupled with concomitant crop failures observed in the years prior to project design forced farmers to rely increasingly on small ruminants and poultry to meet the nutritional and livelihood needs of rural households. Given their prolific nature and short generational intervals, these livestock types were identified to contribute significantly to the enhancement of food security and poverty alleviation in the rural communities. The horticulture sub-sector had been assigned high priority by the Government of The Gambia particularly in its export-oriented diversification policy, its strategy for growth of the productive sector and overall socio-economic development efforts of the country. Notwithstanding, horticultural production faced major constraints, including limited access to markets, frequent pest and disease problems, inadequate knowledge on the use of pesticides and fertilizers, high cost of inputs and limited extension support.
4. **Project goal, objectives and components.** The goal of LHDP was to reduce rural poverty by raising rural incomes through improved production and marketability of livestock and horticultural products. The objectives were to: (i) improve returns to group-organized horticulture and livestock production; (ii) build up capacities at the grass-roots level; and (iii) strengthen monitoring and evaluation (M&E).

5. The project had three main components: **Component 1 – Production, processing and marketing of livestock and horticultural products (US\$12.048 million, 75.6 per cent of total project cost)**: the objective of this component and its two sub-components (Horticulture and Livestock, respectively) was to rehabilitate and modernize gardens operated by women’s *kafos* (traditional village groups), create gardens for youths and support improved animal husbandry and fattening for small ruminants and poultry. **Component 2 – Capacity-building (US\$1.993 million, 12.5 per cent of total project cost)**: the objective of this component was to strengthen the focus on cross-cutting issues, such as good local governance and leadership skills of *kafo* members and community leaders, as well as awareness of gender and equity issues, health and improved water management. It was comprised of two sub-components: (i) Capacity building for extension staff of the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) in improved animal husbandry, crop, soil and water management practices, as well as market-oriented production; and (ii) Training and capacity building for *kafo* members in good agricultural practices (GAP), entrepreneurship development, health awareness and good local governance. **Component 3 – Project coordination and M&E (US\$1.901 million, 11.9 per cent of total project cost)**: the portion of the IFAD grant allocated to this component was specifically intended to strengthen LHDP’s M&E capacity, to design and conduct Results and Impact Management System surveys, fund an information-education-communications campaign, conduct annual financial audits and fund participatory self-evaluations and annual consultations.
6. **Target group.** LHDP was to target resource-poor smallholder farmers in rural areas, with special focus on women and youth, in particular the more vulnerable among them. The project used a set of eligibility criteria¹ to identify candidate villages, *kafos* and individuals for participation. Priority was given to consolidating achievements in communities reached by previous IFAD-funded projects, as well as selecting villages not covered by other development projects, so as to avoid duplication of efforts. Other strategic approaches included land advocacy to afford women and youth access to land, and mentoring of more vulnerable villagers, incentivising the latter to participate in project interventions by providing them with assets, such as livestock. Relationships within the community were leveraged to encourage the most risk-averse among the vulnerable categories to participate in project-supported activities.
7. **Financing.** The total project disbursement was US\$15.541 million, accounting for 97.5 per cent of the total project budget. IFAD grant disbursement was US\$7.614 million, corresponding to 49 per cent of the actual total cost. Financier contributions are shown in Table 1 and planned (approved) *versus* actual (disbursed) costs per component with disbursement rates in Table 2.²
8. **Implementation arrangements.** The MOA was the lead implementing agency for the project through its Central Project Coordination Unit, a dedicated Project Coordination Unit (PCU) for LHDP and the Regional Agricultural Directorates. The LHDP Project Steering Committee provided overall policy guidance, review of quarterly and annual progress reports, as well as review and approval of procurement plans and annual work plans and budgets.
9. **Changes and developments during implementation.** The political context in The Gambia during the implementation of LHDP resulted in frequent staffing changes and thus severely impacted project delivery across the country portfolio,

¹ The project’s eligibility criteria are described in detail and at length in the Project Design Report (2009).

² This PCRV noted that discrepancies existed in the PCR between certain budget figures presented in the report, namely total planned project costs, which are stated to be US\$16.996 million in most instances and US\$15.943 million in a supporting budget table (showing actual expenditure by component against planned amounts). For the purposes of this PCRV the latter figure, US\$15.943 million, is used, as this is in agreement with the total project costs appearing in the Project Design Report; sub-totals (by component and financier) are thus based on the latter for consistency.

as outlined in the PCR and CPE report (see section "Government"). This issue must be borne in mind when assessing project performance in the subsequent sections.

10. Several adjustments to the project's targets and intervention design were made during implementation, including an increase in the number of *kafo* members per scheme, a lowering of target numbers for all production schemes and the introduction of poultry-aquaculture and pig breeding schemes.³

Table 1
Project costs (in US\$ million)

	Approval (1)	% of total	Actual (2)	% of total	Disbursement rate (2/1)
IFAD grant	8.005	50.2%	7.614	49.0%	95.1%
AfDB	4.947	31.0%	6.000	38.6%	121.3%
Government	0.813	5.1%	0.627	4.0%	77.2%
Beneficiaries	2.178	13.7%	1.300	8.4%	59.7%
Total	15.943		15.541		97.5%

Sources: PCR, Project Design Report.

Table 2
Component costs (in US\$ million)

	Approval (1)	% of total	Actual (2)	% of total	Disbursement rate (2/1)
Component 1	12.048	75.6%	9.411	60.6%	78.1%
Component 2	1.993	12.5%	1.515	9.7%	76.0%
Component 3	1.901	11.9%	4.615	29.7%	242.8%
Total	15.943		15.541		97.5%

Sources: PCR, Project Design Report.

11. As noted in the above section titled "Introduction", the project had to be extended by six months, so as to allow for completion of delayed infrastructure works.
12. **Intervention logic.** The goal of LHDP was to reduce rural poverty by raising the incomes of rural producers through improved production and marketability of livestock and horticultural products. Poverty reduction was to be measured using the indicators of decreased child malnutrition prevalence and increase in households with improved household assets. The project goal was to be reached through the specific objectives of improving returns to *kafo*-run horticultural and livestock production, developing capacities at the grass-roots level and strengthening M&E. LHDP was designed such that these objectives were to be engendered by the specific outputs of the three project components. Component 1

³ The specific adjustments made to the project's targets and intervention design were as follows:

a) The number of beneficiaries for the community-based small ruminant and poultry interventions was increased: while 10 beneficiaries per scheme had been envisaged at design stage, this number was far exceeded and beneficiary numbers thus adjusted upwards in order to cater for more *kafo* members (the PCR did not state new target figures, however);

b) Following the mid-term review (MTR), targets for (i) vegetable schemes and (ii) small ruminants and poultry schemes were lowered (from 40 to 31, and from 80 to 30 schemes, respectively) owing to higher-than-foreseen infrastructure investment costs; by the same token, targets for the pig schemes were adjusted from 5 to 3, as a result of a disease outbreak, unsuitable housing units selected and provision for feeding proving inadequate;

c) Integrated aquaculture-poultry schemes were introduced after the MTR as pilots in five sites as an alternative, cost-effective technology option to the original, higher-cost design;

d) Pig-breeding schemes were introduced in three sites, as well as breeding rams and bucks that were to be managed by the Department of Livestock Services in breeding stations.

targeted the rehabilitation and modernization of gardens operated by women's *kafos*, the creation of gardens for youths and the support of improved animal husbandry and fattening of small ruminants and poultry. Component 2 was to develop community-level capacities to implement GAP, entrepreneurship best practices and principles of good governance; it also set out to ensure competent and efficient extension service delivery. Component 3 intended to put in place a strong M&E system and undertake an information-education-communications campaign targeted at *kafo* members.

13. The logical framework for LHDP made the following assumptions: the world food crisis would make domestic production competitive; strong markets existed for the supported foods; domestic producers were able to access these markets; government import policies took account of both domestic production and World Trade Organization guidelines; extension and animal health support services would be delivered efficiently;⁴ non-governmental organizations with the required expertise existed in-country; and advantages of M&E would be recognized by all stakeholders.
14. **Delivery of outputs.** A detailed table summarising LHDP's output delivery by component is presented in Annex III. The outputs enumerated in the PCR were achieved to completion rates ranging from 31 to 140 per cent of their respective appraisal targets. For the livestock segment of Component 1, most of the output achievements were well below appraisal targets, with completion rates averaging around 44 per cent. The main reason for this low achievement was the eventual cancellation of the poultry and small ruminant houses following concerns about their design (see above section "Changes and developments during implementation" and below section "Effectiveness"). Furthermore, livestock-related activities only commenced 3.5 years after project effectiveness according to the PCR, while a reason for this delay is not provided. Following the Mid-term Review (MTR), the targets for livestock were down-scaled by around 20 per cent (see section "Changes and developments during implementation") in view of concerns about sustainability and cost-effectiveness, yet delivery rates for the according outputs still remained only at around 50 per cent of MTR-revised targets, on average. Completion rates for the outputs of the horticulture segment of Component 1, on the other hand, were much higher, averaging around 83 per cent of appraisal targets. Similarly, output delivery rates for Component 2, as stated in the PCR, appeared satisfactory on the whole, with an average of 88 per cent against appraisal targets. The main training activities were reported to have reached 95 per cent of the total target for beneficiaries trained (2,240). While the CPE confirmed that the delivery rate for the horticulture sub-component was higher than in other project elements (four of five horticulture activities had been implemented), its findings that only five out of nine activities were undertaken in Components 2 and 3 (with key capacity building activities not materializing) appear at odds with the aforementioned information obtained from the PCR.

III. Review of findings

A. Core criteria

Relevance

15. **Relevance of objectives.** The goal and objectives of LHDP were aligned with the development objectives of the Government of The Gambia, as outlined in three policy frameworks applicable during project implementation: the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper II (2007-11), the Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment (2012-15) and the Gambia National Agricultural Investment Plan (2011-15). The strategies outlined in these documents revolved around the goals

⁴ This PCR notes that this assumption is at the same time the corresponding output target in the logical framework, denoting a conceptual weakness in project design.

of poverty reduction and economic growth, rural and agricultural development, employment creation and the empowerment of women and youth, clearly articulating the needs of the rural poor. The project was also consistent with the Agriculture and Natural Resources Sector Policy (2009-15), envisioning a modernized agricultural sector contributing substantively to poverty reduction through employment creation and adequate support for the vulnerable cohort of society (specifically women and youth). The LHDP objectives were further in line with the government's priorities of reducing poverty and ensuring food and nutrition security for urban and rural populations. Relevance of the project design vis-à-vis IFAD's development objectives was ensured by its alignment with IFAD's 2003-12 Country Strategic Opportunities Programme, with specific reference to pro-poor initiatives that promote the development of essential infrastructure, the enhancement of value chains and the implementation of GAP.

16. The CPE noted that the provision of support for commercializing vegetable and small livestock value-chains, *inter alia*, was found relevant to poor farmers and women, who faced various constraints in marketing. Livestock rearing, in particular, is an important component of the mixed farming system practiced in The Gambia and is relevant to poor farmers in terms of self-consumption in the lean period. Intensification of animal production on a group basis was a relevant introduction where animal safety was an issue and availability of feed a constraint. Further, since rural poor women traditionally held at least a few small ruminants or poultry for self-consumption, insurance and small earnings/savings, they were deemed rightly targeted in activities enhancing livestock performance.
17. **Adequacy of project design.** Notwithstanding that the PCR noted LHDP's alignment with IFAD's targeting and outreach strategy, the CPE assessed that the targeting was not undertaken in accordance with IFAD strategies; rather than targeting specifically for poverty (such as structured geographical targeting based on poverty data or poverty-related mapping), a process was followed, as per common practice in the country, that was designed for decentralization purposes and not poverty targeting. This PCR notes that mention is not made in the PCR as to the poverty characteristics of the actual communities and beneficiaries selected for the project through the targeting mechanism employed by LHDP.
18. The project was generally found relevant in its design, as also noted by the CPE. Notwithstanding, several design weaknesses for LHDP became apparent in the CPE report: (i) the semi-intensive model of pig rearing that was introduced as a pilot to draw lessons learned appeared overly ambitious in overcoming feed constraints and was deemed unsuited or insufficiently guided by technical training to farmers, leading to a lowering of the initial output target; (ii) infrastructure investment costs for the horticulture, small ruminants and poultry schemes were underestimated at design stage, again requiring appraisal targets to be downsized (see section "Changes and developments during implementation" for details on the lowered targets); and (iii) the technical, financial and human resource capacities of government extension services, specifically the Department of Livestock Services (DLS), were either overestimated or their support of LHDP interventions not considered (see section "Effectiveness").
19. LHDP's goals and objectives were well-aligned with IFAD and government development objectives, while poverty-targeting was deemed sub-optimal and certain design weaknesses were noted with regard to the suitability and cost-efficiency of livestock interventions and the capacity of public extension services. *This PCR therefore rates the relevance of LHDP as moderately satisfactory (rating 4), in agreement with the rating provided by the Programme Management Department (PMD).*

Effectiveness

20. The total number of beneficiaries reported in the PCR to have been reached during LHDP implementation was 9,386, composed of 7,516 women and 1,870 youths.⁵ Against an appraisal target of 10,390 individuals (7,570 women and 2,820 youths), this represents a success rate of 90.3 per cent, constituting a considerable achievement on the part of the project.
21. **Objective 1: Improve returns to group-organized horticulture and livestock production.** This PRCV considers that an assessment of the achievement of the project objective of improving returns to *kafo* agricultural production based on the information provided in the PCR is proving rather difficult. Economic outcome and impact data were scattered, were not collected systematically and at times a lack of clarity was noted as to what precisely the figures presented were attempting to capture. These factors render interpretation of the results problematic (see section "Household incomes and assets"). Further, the PCR did not make an overarching assessment of the degree to which LHDP succeeded in attaining the intended economic outcomes.
22. The CPE evaluated the objective of improved production returns as partially achieved, noting that very few groups gained increased returns particularly from market access (see section "Household incomes and assets").
23. With reference to physical output target achievements, the PCR and CPE concurred that not all activities were fully implemented as per planning. Overall project delivery against stated output targets was arguably mixed, with the livestock subcomponent delivering low rates of completion, while the horticulture (as well as capacity-building) activities scored relatively high delivery rates (see section "Delivery of outputs"). The shortfalls may be attributed in part to the external, political factors affecting continuity of project management (see section "Government"). Further, the re-allocation of funds for project management (Component 3) meant a budget reduction for the horticulture/livestock production and capacity building components (see section "Efficiency").
24. During field visits, the CPE found that small ruminant husbandry groups and poultry businesses had successfully started production, the latter being run mainly by young women. However, several issues were found to compound the intervention's effectiveness. For instance, improved rams were sold by farmers, on occasion, owing to their display of aggression, and controlled breeding was not realized in the absence of male-female separation. Similarly, improvement of local poultry flocks through introduction of improved cockerels was ongoing at the time of the field visits, but complete replacement of local breeds was rarely achieved.
25. It was noted that progress with the small ruminants and poultry interventions was marginal since the MTR, with half of the formed groups awaiting infrastructure construction that remained delayed by over a year and were eventually cancelled (see section "Efficiency"). With regard to infrastructure quality, the livestock houses under LHDP had a number of shortcomings in their design and construction.⁶ Further, the housing was of a similar design for poultry, sheep, goats and pigs, proving sub-optimal for any of these animals under the local conditions.⁷
26. With regard to the horticulture sub-component, the PCR indicated that LHDP had succeeded in addressing in an effective way the major constraints to the productivity of vegetable gardens, by precluding animal intrusion and ensuring a reliable water source. This, however, is at odds with the CPE finding that efficiency

⁵ See the annotation to the table in section "I. Basic project data" for discrepancies noted in the numbers of beneficiaries stated in different portions of the PCR.

⁶ Design inadequacies included inadequate airflow, wanting durability of doors, poorly designed water troughs and ineffective hand pumps.

⁷ It should be noted that the findings and assessments in this paragraph originated from the CPE report and were reproduced *verbatim* in the PCR while stating the information source to be the PCR mission (rather than the CPE).

in the cultivation of vegetable gardens was low, as a result of partial cultivation of the areas assigned in the ten gardens and because of limited water availability.

27. **Objective 2: Capacity-building.** The PCR appeared to have overstated the degree of LHDP's achievements for the second project objective of building grass-roots capacities, as outlined in the below section titled "Human and social capital". While the PCR pointed to increased levels of knowledge and skills for cooperative agricultural production and marketing in its "Project outcomes and impacts" section, elsewhere in the PCR weaknesses were noted in the farmers' implementation of the training contents. The PCR further stated that linkage to markets, value addition and processing was limited, especially for livestock, and promotion of a business-oriented mind-set with linkages to the private sector was lacking (indicating a gap in the quality and/or effectiveness of the training provided for this purpose).
28. The CPE's assessments of the achievement of the capacity building targets and their effectiveness were rather critical, noting that success and usage of knowledge was found to vary greatly, with the implementation of GAP, for instance, posing a particular challenge to beneficiaries. This was also affirmed in the PCR, with specific reference to the horticulture schemes. The CPE noted that many capacity-building activities had not taken place, including farmer training, extension training and village auxiliary trainings, reportedly due to government constraints (see section "Government"). This appears to somewhat contrast the information on training delivery rates provided in the PCR (see section "Delivery of outputs").
29. The CPE further assessed that specifically village veterinary auxiliaries, in spite of the training received, were not operational within most of the visited *kafos*.⁸ The PCR stated high mortality rates for small ruminants and poultry, disease outbreaks that affected pig production, the lack of a comprehensive flock health programme and delivery of veterinary care. In this context, the CPE assessed that livestock outcomes were negatively influenced by inadequate veterinary extension services provided by the DLS, which led to inappropriate prophylactic measures (i.e., vaccinations), irregular treatments against parasites, poor feeding management and inadequate breeding strategies.
30. Considerable shortfalls were noted in achieving the intended economic and capacity-building objectives to a substantive extent. However, these may be partly attributed to external factors, and some successes were achieved in the horticulture subcomponent. *This PCRV therefore rates the effectiveness of LHDP as moderately unsatisfactory (rating 3), in agreement with the PMD rating.*

Efficiency

31. Delay and budget issues severely hampered the rate of progress envisioned at design (as assessed by the CPE). These issues led to a reduction of targets following the MTR (see section "Changes and developments during implementation"), yet, notwithstanding, only half of the adjusted targets had been achieved at the time of project extension.⁹
32. **Project management costs.** The project management costs proved to be much higher than budgeted, with actual disbursements for Component 3 (Project management and M&E) reaching 242.8 per cent of the budgeted amount (see section "Financing"). The CPE found the high turnover of project staff to be a key factor for the dramatic increase in actual operating costs *versus* budgeted ones. Other causes were explained to be the required intensive field presence of staff, which had been considerably underestimated at design stage, as well as the high cost of external service providers in response to a lack of availability of skilled

⁸ This finding appeared in the PCR *verbatim* without providing the information source.

⁹ It should be noted that the PCR reproduced the entire section in the CPE report outlining the findings on LHDP efficiency *verbatim*, without providing any reference to the source of this information.

project staff; this had also not been anticipated in the project planning. The PCR stated that the Project Management Unit attributed a large portion of the management expenditure to the high operating cost of machinery¹⁰ in addition to the above-mentioned factors.

33. The CPE compared operating costs across five IFAD-funded projects in The Gambia and found that the budgeted management costs in LHDP (11.9 per cent of total cost) were at the lower end of the range (between 8.3 and 38.7 per cent across the project portfolio). At completion, actual operational costs versus total project costs varied from 25.0 to 52.3 per cent, with LHDP disbursing 29.7 per cent for management (see section "Financing"). LHDP was in the middle of the range of actual vis-à-vis projected management cost percentages (242.8 per cent of the budgeted amount) in comparison with the other projects in the country portfolio (where these percentages ranged from 76.9 to 315.5 per cent).
34. **Economic rate of return.** The economic rate of return (ERR) at completion was calculated in the PCR to be 22 per cent against the appraisal target of 27.5 per cent, at a discount rate of 12 per cent. The PCR interprets that the project remained financially and economically viable and attractive to beneficiaries, despite the disbursement and implementation delays and issues with poor infrastructure quality, and that LHDP had created wealth and income-generating opportunities. This PCRV considers that the aforementioned high management costs imply an effective reduction in the project investment and, consequently, the ERR and, further, questions the consistency of the calculated ERR with the limited degree to which the project objectives and economic and productivity impacts were in fact achieved (see section "Quantitative and qualitative attainment of project objectives", as well as the relevant sections under "Rural poverty impact").
35. **Time lapse between approval and effectiveness.** In the CPE comparison across the five IFAD-funded projects in The Gambia, LHDP had one of the shortest time lapses between the project's approval and effectiveness dates, i.e., three months or 4.6 per cent of total project duration. The average gap for all five projects stood at 11 months between approval and effectiveness, constituting an average of 12.5 per cent of the respective total project duration.
36. In view of the significant implementation delays, budget and costing issues (which led to the halving of output targets for many of the production schemes), as well as the high and unforeseen management expenditures, *this PCRV rates the efficiency of LHDP as moderately unsatisfactory (rating 3)*, in agreement with the PMD rating.

Rural poverty impact

37. Data showcased in the PCR in support of the project's claims of rural poverty impact was derived from a variety of sources, namely projects records, progress reports, discussions with beneficiaries and records kept by beneficiaries, as well as a supplementary final impact evaluation survey (conducted in 2016). A number of quality issues were noted in connection with these outcome and impact data, impinging on the level, strength and robustness of the evidence provided. These issues included the following: (i) productivity and economic impact data were found to be rather scattered, lacking systematic and consistent collection and reporting across project sites and intervention types; (ii) a lack of distinction was noted in several instances between outcomes for *kafo* groups and those for individual households; (iii) the reliability of presented data for vegetable yields appeared questionable given the overly uniform results; and (iv) the 2016 impact survey had design weaknesses, rendering result interpretation challenging. The latter design issues included: (a) a highly skewed sampling split between "treatment" and "control" groups (900 versus 60 respondents, respectively); (b) inclusion of non-beneficiaries along with LHDP beneficiaries in the sample interviewed in

¹⁰ It is not clear what type of machinery is referred to in this context.

intervention sites (i.e. the "treatment" group); (c) lack of description of the criteria for selecting the "control" communities, rendering the attribution of impacts to LHDP interventions more difficult.

38. **Food security and agricultural productivity.** The PCR noted that livestock productivity, including lambing and kidding rates,¹¹ was found to be considerably low, owing to flock size increments falling short of anticipated levels.¹² Low reproduction was compounded by relatively high mortality.¹³ The low livestock longevity was a consequence of disease prevalence, in part attributed to poor hygiene in animal pens and the absence of appropriate biosecurity practices. While satisfactory reproduction rates were achieved in the piggery intervention (in the order of six to eight piglets per sow), the PCR concluded that LHDP was unable to revitalize the pig industry or increase meat availability in the market due to recurrent outbreaks of African Swine Fever.
39. Productivity of the backyard poultry schemes (as well as the integrated poultry-aquaculture schemes) could not be assessed, as relevant data were not kept, according to the PCR. Project records on hybrid hatching rates appeared to have been scant, with data for only one target location mentioned in the PCR. Beneficiaries in selected sites reported high mortalities of the exotic cockerels, indigenous hens and their offspring confined in the chicken houses, owing to disease outbreaks. On the other hand, an assessment of the intervention showed that the distribution of improved cockerels to *kafo* members contributed to the production of higher body-weight chickens, while project data on actual numbers of improved poultry were not available. The PCR noted that improved nutrition, housing and disease control were required for poultry survival in villages.
40. With regard to the horticulture component, the PCR presented yield data sourced from project records and discussions with beneficiaries, indicating yield increases for vegetables between 30 and 70 per cent, based on "with" and "without intervention" comparisons. This PCRV considers that information on the methodology employed in collecting and collating these data would have aided in assessing the robustness of the impacts showcased and notes that yield boosts of precisely 30 per cent were indicated for no less than 11 out of 14 vegetable types, which brings into the question the reliability of the data presented. Total vegetable production by the *kafos* supported under LHDP in 2015 was reported to be 32 metric tonnes, with 23 per cent consumed by farmers and 77 per cent sold in the local market. An impact study conducted in 2016 estimated the self-consumption of produced vegetables at 35 per cent and sale at 61 per cent (with post-harvest losses accounting for the remainder). The PCR inferred that household food security and dietary diversity had increased as a result of boosted vegetable production, but this PCRV considers that such an assumption best be supported by factual evidence.
41. In the context of food security, the PCR notes that proceeds from the sale of livestock (and horticulture) products were used, *inter alia*, to purchase food, including fish as a source of protein, and eggs from poultry schemes supplemented the farmers' diet. While the 2016 impact study did not reveal any statistical difference in the occurrence of food shortage periods between intervention and "control" sites, it did indicate a shorter duration of these periods (two months in intervention sites vis-à-vis four months in "control" sites).

¹¹ Defined as the number of lambs/kids born per ewe/doe available for mating (often expressed as a percentage).

¹² Estimated lambing and kidding rates in the intervention areas, using data obtained from project progress reports, averaged 39.4 and 17.4 per cent, respectively, per scheme, and 45 and 52 per cent, respectively, per household.

¹³ While the average mortality rate for all small ruminant species overall was estimated at only six per cent, mortality rate estimates derived from records kept by beneficiaries at selected sites were rather high: sheep and goat mortalities during the pre-weaning period (from birth to weaning at four months) were thus estimated at 83 and 55 per cent, respectively; pre- and post-weaning mortality rates in sheep averaged 37.0 per cent; and mortality rates of sheep and goats under village conditions amounted to 31 and 52 per cent, respectively.

42. The CPE report does not refer to food security and agricultural productivity impacts for LHDP specifically, but describes anecdotal evidence of nutrition and health impacts on women (see section "Women's health, skills, income and nutritional levels").
43. **Household incomes and assets.** Economic impact data presented in the PCR for the horticulture sub-component indicated the total income generated from the sale of vegetables (amounting to US\$17,400); while two examples were given of incomes derived from gardens in two locations, the total figure was not broken down or averages provided for regions, schemes, or beneficiaries, rendering interpretation of these data difficult. The CPE assessed partial achievement of the main LHDP project objective of sustainable rural poverty reduction by increasing rural incomes through improved production and marketability of livestock and horticultural products. Improved returns to group horticultural enterprises were constrained, since only a limited proportion of the area in the group gardens supported was cultivated. Women reported, on the other hand, that the smaller vegetable gardens established or rehabilitated under the project had helped them in securing their livelihoods.
44. According to the CPE, beneficiaries reported satisfactory income from poultry enterprises when considering the time and labour invested, while business profitability was found to depend on the women's business skills (see section "Women's health, skills, income and nutritional levels"). Further, it indicated that project data from supervision missions and M&E activities showed increasing incomes not only from poultry, but also fattened rams, organic manure and multi-nutrient licks and mineral blocks. These data, *inter alia*, are presented in the PCR, including total income figures obtained for some of the livestock activities, as well as for selected locations. As with the data for horticulture, interpretation of the figures is difficult in the absence of break-downs, averages, or corresponding appraisal levels. Average overall incomes (across all production sub-components) were, however, showcased in the PCR, as revealed by the aforementioned 2016 impact study. Notwithstanding, these lacked clarity, as two sets of seemingly similar information were provided, namely "average income generated by farmers" and "average total income for households"; in intervention sites, these amounted to US\$286 and US\$531, respectively, compared to US\$84 and US\$43 in "control" sites. These gaping differences between the two datasets are difficult to understand, assess or interpret in view of the lack of clarity as to the sameness or difference of what the two sets of figures attempted to capture, as well as of the general design issues observed with the impact study (see introductory paragraph of the above section "Rural poverty impacts").
45. With relevance to economic impacts of LHDP, the CPE found that the lack of a structured value chain approach hampered the beneficiaries' enjoyment of the full profit of their improved production, with very few groups gaining increased returns from market access. With specific reference to piggery schemes, the PCR concluded that this activity did not generate the anticipated youth and women employment (as a result of recurrent disease outbreaks).
46. **Human and social capital and empowerment.** The PCR stated that LHDP brought about the transformation of agricultural producer associations into producer cooperatives and that the training programmes of LHDP increased levels of knowledge and skills in GAP, meat processing, entrepreneurship, good governance and leadership. This statement appears to be inconsistent with the mention elsewhere in the PCR narrative that the implementation of GAP remained a particular challenge to beneficiaries, as well as the CPE assessments regarding the degree of knowledge application by beneficiaries, the under-achievement of training targets and the ineffectiveness of trained village auxiliaries (see section "Effectiveness"). The CPE further argued that: (i) the main partnership of LHDP with the public sector provided support and some degree of inbuilt continuity, but

led to little participatory learning within communities; (ii) *kafo* support was insufficient to transform the associations into formalized producer cooperatives (see section "Community engagement, participation and ownership").

47. **Institutions and policies.** The PCR describes how LHDP served to strengthen the capacity of the Regional Agricultural Directorates for outreach services to communities, by way of providing vehicles for transportation, communication equipment, capacity building and knowledge products. This assessment appears to contradict CPE findings, however, in that the veterinary extension services provided by the DLS were deemed inadequate (see section "Effectiveness").
48. The PCR further outlined that the LHDP experience was reflected in the National Horticultural Sector Master Plan (led by the Food and Agriculture Organization), and that the Government of The Gambia capitalized on the LHDP poultry activities, which established out-grower schemes with a poultry processing company, as a basis to meet the national needs for poultry products and by-products.
49. In view of: (i) the low levels of production impacts achieved for the livestock interventions; (ii) the scattered and unclear survey evidence provided for productivity and economic impacts for the horticulture schemes (which, on the other hand, did indicate that results were in the positive direction); and (iii) the wanting effectiveness of training activities in demonstrably imparting enhanced knowledge and skills and strengthening *kafos*, *this PCR rates the overall rural poverty impact of LHDP as moderately unsatisfactory (rating 3)*. This is below the moderately satisfactory (4) rating provided by PMD.

Sustainability of benefits

50. The CPE assessed that, as with all evaluated IFAD interventions in The Gambia, sustainability mechanisms were not sufficiently incorporated in the design of LHDP. Indeed, the PCR notes that a coherent exit and sustainability-enhancing strategy was effectively absent. Notably, for instance, the value chain activities introduced by the project would have required a much more structured approach to enhance sustainability prospects, as beneficiaries were unable to reap full profit from their improved production (see also section "Household incomes and assets"). The CPE cautioned that value chain support needed to be adapted to the local context, based on a thorough analysis of market potential, production situation and village needs. This assessment was also reiterated in the PCR, almost *verbatim* (without specifying the information source).
51. CPE field visits revealed inappropriate infrastructure for the environment at places (see section "Effectiveness"), owing to a lack of design-stage environmental considerations (see section "Environmental risk assessment and management"). The PCR confirmed that, specifically in the context of the poultry schemes, housing as well as nutrition ought to be improved for the survival of the improved chickens in the village environment and that the long-term sustainability of the livestock schemes could not be assured in the absence of good biosecurity practices. Further, LHDP was given a low rating by the CPE for its exit strategy, simply stating that a more recent IFAD-financed project¹⁴ would complete unfinished (infrastructure) works. This CPE assessment was acknowledged in the PCR.
52. **Community engagement, participation and ownership.** LHDP gained strong social acceptance, and the sense of ownership among beneficiaries and the wider community was high, according to the PCR, further capacity building of beneficiaries and partner institutions was needed to ensure sustainability of investments. The CPE cautioned that improved food production and associated income from sale of produce and by-products would only be sustainable as benefits if *kafo* members could allocate resources to maintain the provided infrastructure,

¹⁴ National Agricultural Land and Water Management Development Project.

combined with finding ongoing access to markets and value adding opportunities. Although the process was initiated, *kafos* were not supported sufficiently to evolve into legally-recognized producer cooperatives, and they were not linked to the national farmers' apex.

53. **Partner commitment toward sustainability.** The CPE determined that the capacity and to some extent the political will of the government in promoting the sustainability of benefits were limited, lacking financial and human resources and sometimes also technical capacity. Support beyond the end of the project was left contingent on individual officers' commitment in the absence of any funding or cost recovery system. No indication was observed that these tasks would be subsumed in the respective government departments' budgets. These findings were also cited in the PCR, where, however, it was also noted that the new government was committed to maintaining a conducive environment for an enhanced value chain approach, with active public-private-producer partnerships. The CPE warned that the continuous high turnover of public extension workers was a key threat to sustainability.
54. While, on the one hand, the sustainability drivers of community ownership and participation were found to be high, on the other, the sustainability mechanisms and exit strategy of LHDP were largely wanting, the environmental sustainability of the livestock schemes was compromised and public human and financial resources to sustain project benefits were lacking. *Therefore, this PCR rates the sustainability of the benefits of LHDP as moderately unsatisfactory (3), in contrast with the moderately satisfactory (4) PMD rating.*

B. Other performance criteria

Innovation

55. The integrated aquaculture-poultry scheme, i.e., poultry-keeping above a fishpond, was started as a pilot activity in 2014. Although well-known in other countries, this was a new enterprise for The Gambia. The poultry were kept as layers and were reported to produce eggs well. The owners recounted a reduction in required feed for the fish with addition of the poultry manure. The low-cost nature of the poultry housing, made from locally available wood-slat materials, made this activity more cost-efficient than the enterprises using concrete housing and also enhanced sustainability. These findings were noted both in the CPE report and the PCR.
56. The CPE assessed the collection and sale of manure from both small ruminant and poultry enterprises to be an innovation initiated by LHDP. The practice was found widespread during field visits, making a close link between the animal husbandry groups and vegetable producers. While this is a common practice worldwide, in The Gambia it was possible only with the introduction of improved housing, which allows for the efficient collection of manure. The PCR reported that this innovation resulted in significant yield increases in the gardens scheme.
57. The PCR also described the following project aspects in the context of innovation, while this PCR does not consider these to be innovations in the absence of an adequate explanation: ownership and entitlement to land and assets, public-private-producer partnerships; women and youth participation; the IFAD Country Programme Approach (CPA).¹⁵
58. *This PCR rates LHDP innovation as moderately satisfactory (rating 4), in agreement with the rating provided by PMD.*

Scaling up

59. As stated in the PCR, LHDP did not plan or pursue any scaling-up of its innovative interventions. The PMD rating for "Potential of scaling-up", however, is indicated as

¹⁵ In March 2010, IFAD formally introduced the Country Programme Approach (CPA) in the Gambia as a structure to enhance coordination, learning and sharing among the IFAD-financed projects.

moderately satisfactory (rating 4), notwithstanding that no discussion of the scaling-up potential occurred in the PCR. In contrast, *this PCR rates the scaling-up criterion for LHDP as unsatisfactory (rating 2)*, in the absence of any scaling-up efforts or considerations.

Gender equality and women's empowerment

60. **Women's access to resources, assets and services.** The PCR notes that the project promoted short-cycle livestock and vegetable production, which were the domain of women (see section "Relevance of project objectives") and could quickly generate significant revenue. The project succeeded in addressing key constraints of women (and youth) in agricultural production, including access to productive land (see section "Target group") and housing and water for livestock. To this end, the project required that land on which infrastructure was to be constructed belonged to the group; ownership certificates and title deeds were available to all the groups and could even be used as collateral to acquire loans.
61. **Workload distribution among household members.** LHDP effectively reduced women's drudgery by installing water lifting and distribution systems in small vegetable gardens. The PCR notes, however, that impacts on drudgery and workloads of women would have been greater, had the infrastructure been completed earlier and the watering system addressed more adequately.
62. **Women's health, skills, income and nutritional levels.** The PCR describes how large numbers of women and youth were trained in different areas, including GAP, business management, entrepreneurship and novel husbandry skills, such as preparation of multi-nutrient blocks. The enhanced knowledge and skills were described to have impacted positively on the women's levels of production and productivity. Data obtained from the Results and Impact Management System showed the average incremental increase in women's incomes from horticulture to be 114 per cent. Vegetable garden schemes thus proved to be profitable, although challenges related to water supply and marketing still remained, as noted in the PCR. During CPE field visits, women confirmed that the smaller vegetable gardens improved their livelihoods, while it was found, however, that only part of the businesses were profitable, depending on the level of business skills of the women.
63. With regard to nutrition impacts, during the CPE field visits women reported being able to provide nutrient-dense vegetables to their children as a result of the horticulture intervention, which they thought had improved their health.
64. **Other aspects.** With regard to sex-disaggregated project results monitoring, the project gathered data specifically on women by default, as these were the main beneficiaries of LHDP's interventions (along with youth). Indeed, at the level of outputs, the regular M&E data collected by the project included sex-disaggregation for outreach figures (men and women receiving project services), information on production groups (male and female groups), as well as statistics on their participation in training activities. By the same token, LHDP financial resources invested in activities to promote this cross-cutting issue can be understood to have been very substantive, although not made explicit in the PCR. No information was provided in the PCR on the aspects of women's influence in decision-making and gender relations within households, groups and communities in the project area.
65. *This PCR rates LHDP performance with regard to gender equality and women's empowerment as satisfactory (rating 5)*, in agreement with the rating assigned by PMD.

Environment and natural resources management

66. **Measures for sustainable natural resource management (NRM).** As noted by the CPE, improved natural resource management was promoted by LHDP through the use of compost and manure from the livestock schemes (thus enhancing soil fertility while limiting chemical fertilizer use), use of organic pesticides, solar-

powering of pumping systems in the vegetable gardens and the planting of fodder trees. The PCR further noted that the introduction of chain-link fences and concrete posts by the project helped to minimize the destruction of trees for fence-post use. It further considered that the use of drip irrigation reduced water consumption.

67. **Environmental risk assessment and management.** LHDP infrastructure visited by the CPE mission proved inappropriate for the environment in certain places, which may be linked to the omission of an environmental impact assessment and an environmental and social management plan in the design (and the implementation) of the project. Indeed, no information appeared in the PCR in the context of assessing environmental risks or building local capacities to avoid, manage, or mitigate them.
68. *This PCRV rates LHDP performance with regard to the environment and NRM criterion as moderately successful (rating 4), in agreement with the rating assigned by PMD.*

Adaptation to climate change

69. The PCR notes that awareness of climate change grew rapidly over the short life of the project and that appropriate responses were developed in both water conservation and animal husbandry. The climate-smart farming practices promoted included drip irrigation, multi-purpose trees (for food and fodder) and the use of indigenous small ruminant and poultry breeds adapted to the environment.¹⁶ The PCR further highlighted that the use of practical and affordable methods of raising soil nutrient levels and water holding capacity through the promotion of composting made the schemes more resilient to climate change. Lastly, the project also provided solid shelter for small ruminants and poultry, which would enhance resilience to climate events, such as floods and storms. However, in the event of extreme heat, the PCR notes that the structures could be unsuitable, particularly for poultry and pigs.
70. Although LHDP did not have an explicit climate change-related strategy, the project introduced practices and technologies that were conducive to the communities' development of climate change resilience. *This PCRV thus rates LHDP performance with regard to adaptation to climate change as moderately successful (rating 4), in agreement with the PMD rating.*

C. Overall project achievement

71. The goal and objectives of LHDP were relevant and aligned with government and IFAD strategic priorities, yet project design and implementation showed certain weaknesses, in that infrastructure costs were underestimated, input constraints were insufficiently considered in some schemes, government extension services proved inadequate to support the interventions, and an unsuitable livestock housing design was used. Consequently certain appraisal targets were lowered.
72. Delays and budget issues severely hampered the rate of progress and unbudgeted high management costs and frequent staffing changes impacted efficient project delivery. Only half of the adjusted targets were achieved in many instances. Livestock productivity was found to be considerably wanting, owing to low reproductive rates and high mortality in the absence of appropriate biosecurity practices. A lack of records did not allow the assessment of poultry schemes, which also suffered disease outbreaks, while the production of higher body-weight chickens was documented. Higher vegetable yields were achieved and household food and nutrition security increased. The main project objective of rural poverty reduction was partially achieved, with household incomes increasing mostly from the sale horticulture products (and less from livestock products in view of the

¹⁶ This PCRV considers that the mention of using indigenous breeds as a climate change adaptation strategy is inconsistent with the description of LHDP's livestock interventions in the remainder of the PCRV (and indeed the Design Report), where the focus is on the introduction of exotic livestock breeds, and indigenous breeds are not referred to.

limited success of the animal production schemes). The effectiveness of training activities was found to vary, with the implementation of GAP posing a particular challenge to beneficiaries and trained veterinary auxiliaries remaining inactive.

73. Sustainability mechanisms were not sufficiently considered in the design or implementation of the project. Innovations included cost-effective, integrated aquaculture-poultry schemes and manure production and sale to vegetable growers, who enjoyed increased yields. Scaling-up was not considered or pursued. The project afforded women (and youth) access to productive land and infrastructure, water distribution systems reduced drudgery, and incomes increased as a result of the enhanced knowledge and skills. Improved NRM and climate-smart practices were promoted to a limited extent, while some of the infrastructure was found to be inappropriate for the environment.
74. *This PCR rates the overall project achievement of LHDP as moderately satisfactory (4), in agreement with the rating provided by PMD.*

D. Performance of partners

IFAD

75. The PCR notes that IFAD responded promptly to project requests, including no-objection for bidding and tender documents, requests for direct payments and withdrawal applications. On the other hand, disbursement delays are also mentioned in the PCR (although it is not clear whether these related specifically to IFAD procedures or performance), as well as delays in annual work plan and budget approval and cancellation by IFAD of outstanding infrastructure installation during the extension period, despite expectations by already-formed livestock groups. Further, as indicated in the PCR, supervision missions did not report the high expenditure rate for project management (in part because of unavailability of financial data) and no actions were attempted to reduce the operating costs.
76. The CPE report stated that IFAD notably did not have a strategy to address the major issue of staff harassment and high staff turnover across projects, including LHDP. Notwithstanding that this turnover was a threat to the efficiency, effectiveness and impact of the interventions, as well as the integrity of project staff, IFAD's response was not found to be coherent or consistent and lacked a firm standpoint on support that should have been afforded to project staff.
77. **Supervision and implementation support.** Between 2011 until project completion, IFAD fielded eight supervision missions, three implementation support missions and a MTR at the project mid-point (2013). The supervision missions and MTR were sufficiently detailed and informative, and included challenges, weaknesses and recommendations. The PCR noted that the supervision missions and MTR were not instrumental in addressing the critical matter of developing an exit and sustainability-enhancing strategy. However, the PCR found the CPA introduced in 2010 to have enhanced coordination and sharing across IFAD-financed projects. In contrast, the CPE assessed that any linkage between the various projects was virtually absent, indicating a lack of internalization or implementation of the CPA.
78. While IFAD's administrative support to LHDP was largely satisfactory, an inadequate response by IFAD was noted to the severe and disruptive issues of LHDP staff harassment and turnover, as well as shortfalls in addressing management spending and developing sustainability provisions. *This PCR therefore rates IFAD's performance on LHDP as moderately unsatisfactory (rating 3), in contrast with the moderately satisfactory rating (4) assigned by PMD.*

Government

79. The political context in The Gambia during the implementation of LHDP severely hampered project delivery. Discontinuity of leadership at the level of permanent secretary of MOA resulted in inconsistencies in policy dialogue and key decisions

affecting project implementation. The rapid turnover and even detention of senior project staff severely hampered the continuity, effectiveness and efficiency of project delivery.

80. **Baseline survey and M&E systems.** Although not referred to in the narrative of the PCR, information in its annexes indicate that a baseline survey was undertaken by LHDP in the first year of the project (2011). Notwithstanding that participatory monitoring was conducted through quarterly and annual reviews, the quality of the M&E system remained insufficient to be used as a management tool to inform planning and guiding interventions for project management and the Project Steering Committee, as noted in the CPE in the context of an LHDP self-assessment. Data collection and analysis were largely confined to outputs, and – although their quality improved over the evaluation period – were not strong enough to monitor actual *versus* planned costs and expenditures. The assessment of project outcomes and rural poverty impact was constrained by the weak project M&E system, which was unable to provide sufficient data, particularly on impacts. These findings were also confirmed and highlighted in the PCR.
81. **Progress reports and PCR.** LHDP produced five annual and 19 quarterly progress reports. The CPE noted that the quality of reporting by the government was not always optimal. No information was available in the project documentation regarding the utility of the progress reports. Although the initial PCR draft was developed in a timely manner in December 2015, it was only finalized in December 2017 (see section “Introduction”). The PCR was found to be sufficiently detailed and informative and of adequate quality.
82. **Counterpart resources.** The Government contributed counterpart funding at a somewhat lower level than was agreed (US\$0.627 million, or 77.2 per cent of the planned commitment; see section “Financing”). The Government also provided counterpart staff and office space.
83. **Audit reports.** The project submitted independent auditors’ reports on the annual project financial statements for five out of six years, thus respecting the signed financial agreement.
84. **Funding flow and procurement procedures.** The CPE noted that considerable time and energy was spent in preparing annual procurement plans and executing them through the Procurement Committee of MOA, following guidelines of the Gambia Public Procurement Authority and the IFAD procurement guidelines. With regard to procurement efficiency, the PCR appears to contain discrepant information: while in one instance the PCU is stated to have ensured timely procurement of goods and services, in another part of the narrative delays in the execution of major procurement activities for works, goods, and services were described, leading to overburdened contractors, late commencement of works and compromised infrastructure quality. The PCR further noted a smooth flow of funds that was more enhanced toward project closure. In contrast, the CPE found that counterpart contributions for LHDP took up to two years to be included in sectorial budget.
85. **Project implementation capacity.** MOA was the lead implementing agency for the IFAD country programme, including LHDP. The CPE noted that the capacity of MOA staff was often limited, and the number of staff and resources available were often too low to ascertain quality implementation. Further, the implementation of capacity building activities was noted to have been hampered by constraints within official systems. Project activities were stated in the PCR to have commenced late.
86. *This PCR rates government performance on LHDP as moderately unsatisfactory (rating 3), in agreement with the PMD ratings.*

IV. Assessment of PCR quality

Scope

87. The PCR contained all chapters, sections, and annexes as per the Guidelines for Project Completion Review (2015) and provided substantive and relevant content. *This PCRV rates the scope of the PCR as satisfactory (rating 5).*

Quality

88. **Inclusiveness of PCR process.** The PCR process was inclusive of a variety of stakeholder groups, in that a stakeholders' workshop was held in March 2016 to take stock of the views and concerns of participants regarding the implementation and results of LHDP, as well as garner their feedback and recommendations and draw up lessons learned in the process.
89. **Data robustness, reliability and adequacy.** As outlined in the above section "Baseline survey and M&E systems", regular and systematic data collection was largely limited to tracking the delivery of physical outputs and were inadequate for consistent measuring of outcome and impact indicators. Such data were thus arguably wanting, with an inadequate level of rigour in data collection and analysis, and could largely not be considered robust or reliable; the impact evidence presented in the PCR contained much anecdotal or circumstantial information. The supplementary final impact evaluation survey of 2016 notably exhibited certain weaknesses in its design when reviewing the information provided in the PCR (see above section "Rural poverty impact" for more information). Therefore, the results of the impact evaluation survey as presented may not meet requirements for data robustness and rigour of analysis (as also no reference to statistical testing of many of the survey results is made), in effect limiting the usability of the results. Lastly, this PCRV considers that no outcomes, results or impacts were presented in the PCR in relation to youth, notwithstanding that they constituted one of the two principal beneficiary groups of the project.
90. *This PCRV rates the quality criterion for the PCR as moderately unsatisfactory (rating 3).*

Lessons

91. Out of the eight lessons drawn in the PCR, three were considered rather obvious and essential elements of project design, implementation, knowledge management and provisions for scaling up, and they were thus not viewed as true lessons to be learnt from the performance of LHDP. The remaining five lessons (see section "Lessons learned") drew, in part, on explicit evaluation findings and appeared to have been derived from a combination of project design and implementation, in that issues in implementing the project revealed shortcomings that should have been addressed already at design stage.
92. *This PCRV rates the lessons criterion for the PCR as satisfactory (rating 5).*

Candour

93. **Narrative objectivity.** The PCR narrative was perceived by this PCRV to be generally objective, with the exception of a small number of instances where claims appeared somewhat improbable. For instance, the data presented for horticulture productivity seemed to be overly uniform, thus rendering them rather questionable, particularly in the absence of a mention or discussion of the similarity of the results (see section "Food security and agricultural productivity").
94. **Candour of results reporting.** This PCRV found the PCR to have largely struck an appropriate balance between showcasing achievements and describing shortfalls. Some results, however, were presented in a seemingly self-contradictory manner; examples include the outcomes of capacity building for service delivery of government extension offices (see section "Institutions and policies"), the timeliness of LHDP's procurement of goods and services (see section "Funding flow

and procurement procedures”) and the type of livestock breeds promoted by the project (see section “Climate risk awareness and analysis”).

95. *This PCRV rates the candour criterion for the PCR as moderately satisfactory (rating 4).*

V. Final remarks and lessons learned

Final remarks

96. The development of the PCR for LHDP benefited from the conduct of the IOE’s CPE and the availability of its report and findings well in advance of PCR finalization. While it is commendable that the CPE’s findings relevant to the performance of LHDP were largely incorporated into the PCR findings and narrative, this PCRV considers that the PCR could have indicated the sources of the information cited or referred to more clearly.

Lessons learned

97. Key lessons extracted from the PCR comprise the following:
- a) While the *kafo* model offers the opportunity for joint ownership of infrastructure and assets, skills and knowledge exchange and social interactions, individual entitlements to production units (e.g., allocations of vegetable beds) proved to offer greater economic gains for beneficiaries and to be more sustainable. There is a need to identify interventions that can be effectively managed by a group or farmer organization and those that are more effectively managed by individuals, so as to maximize their profitability.
 - b) To maintain youth interest in the rural areas, projects targeting them must not be labour-intensive but innovative in terms of production technology; they must also be viable and result in quick income generation. Individual enterprises such as livestock with short production cycles and horticulture utilizing modern technologies should thus be promoted among youths.
 - c) In the design and implementation of community-based small ruminant breeding and fattening programmes, breeding animals have to be carefully selected and provisions made for effective supervision and veterinary extension services (to avoid high mortalities and low reproductive rates and hence intervention failure). Furthermore, the market supply has to be considered to ensure sufficient availability of improved livestock.
 - d) Capacity of service providers must be ensured to effectively deliver on the supervision and capacity-building that is required for the beneficiaries’ management of production schemes.
 - e) Technical capacities of contractors and procurement processes must be taken into account when designing projects with infrastructure components, including realistic consideration of timing and sequencing. Strong supervision and effective monitoring are important in ensuring timeliness and quality of the works. To this end, outsourced management or the inclusion in the PCU of an experienced engineer should be considered.

Definition and rating of the evaluation criteria used by IOE

Criteria	Definition *	Mandatory	To be rated
Rural poverty impact	Impact is defined as the changes that have occurred or are expected to occur in the lives of the rural poor (whether positive or negative, direct or indirect, intended or unintended) as a result of development interventions.	X	Yes
	<i>Four impact domains</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Household income and net assets: Household income provides a means of assessing the flow of economic benefits accruing to an individual or group, whereas assets relate to a stock of accumulated items of economic value. The analysis must include an assessment of trends in equality over time. 		No
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human and social capital and empowerment: Human and social capital and empowerment include an assessment of the changes that have occurred in the empowerment of individuals, the quality of grass-roots organizations and institutions, the poor's individual and collective capacity, and in particular, the extent to which specific groups such as youth are included or excluded from the development process. 		No
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food security and agricultural productivity: Changes in food security relate to availability, stability, affordability and access to food and stability of access, whereas changes in agricultural productivity are measured in terms of yields; nutrition relates to the nutritional value of food and child malnutrition. 		No
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutions and policies: The criterion relating to institutions and policies is designed to assess changes in the quality and performance of institutions, policies and the regulatory framework that influence the lives of the poor. 		No
Project performance	Project performance is an average of the ratings for relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of benefits.	X	Yes
Relevance	The extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, institutional priorities and partner and donor policies. It also entails an assessment of project design and coherence in achieving its objectives. An assessment should also be made of whether objectives and design address inequality, for example, by assessing the relevance of targeting strategies adopted.	X	Yes
Effectiveness	The extent to which the development intervention's objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.	X	Yes
Efficiency	A measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted into results.	X	Yes
Sustainability of benefits	The likely continuation of net benefits from a development intervention beyond the phase of external funding support. It also includes an assessment of the likelihood that actual and anticipated results will be resilient to risks beyond the project's life.	X	Yes
Other performance criteria			
Gender equality and women's empowerment	The extent to which IFAD interventions have contributed to better gender equality and women's empowerment, for example, in terms of women's access to and ownership of assets, resources and services; participation in decision making; work load balance and impact on women's incomes, nutrition and livelihoods.	X	Yes
Innovation	The extent to which IFAD development interventions have introduced innovative approaches to rural poverty reduction.	X	Yes
Scaling up	The extent to which IFAD development interventions have been (or are likely to be) scaled up by government authorities, donor organizations, the private sector and others agencies.	X	Yes
Environment and natural resources management	The extent to which IFAD development interventions contribute to resilient livelihoods and ecosystems. The focus is on the use and management of the natural environment, including natural resources defined as raw materials used for socio-economic and cultural purposes, and ecosystems and biodiversity - with the goods and services they provide.	X	Yes
Adaptation to climate change	The contribution of the project to reducing the negative impacts of climate change through dedicated adaptation or risk reduction measures.	X	Yes

<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Definition</i> *	<i>Mandatory</i>	<i>To be rated</i>
Overall project achievement	This provides an overarching assessment of the intervention, drawing upon the analysis and ratings for rural poverty impact, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability of benefits, gender equality and women's empowerment, innovation, scaling up, as well as environment and natural resources management, and adaptation to climate change.	X	Yes
Performance of partners			
• IFAD	This criterion assesses the contribution of partners to project design, execution, monitoring and reporting, supervision and implementation support, and evaluation. The performance of each partner will be assessed on an individual basis with a view to the partner's expected role and responsibility in the project life cycle.	X	Yes
• Government		X	Yes

* These definitions build on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results-Based Management; the Methodological Framework for Project Evaluation agreed with the Evaluation Committee in September 2003; the first edition of the Evaluation Manual discussed with the Evaluation Committee in December 2008; and further discussions with the Evaluation Committee in November 2010 on IOE's evaluation criteria and key questions.

Rating comparison^a

<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Programme Management Department (PMD) rating</i>	<i>IOE Project Completion Report Validation (PCRVR) rating</i>	<i>Net rating disconnect (PCRVR-PMD)</i>
Rural poverty impact	4	3	-1
Project performance			
Relevance	4	4	0
Effectiveness	3	4	+1
Efficiency	3	3	0
Sustainability of benefits	4	3	-1
Project performance^b	3.5 ¹	3.5	0
Other performance criteria			
Gender equality and women's empowerment	5	5	0
Innovation	4	4	0
Scaling up ²	4	2	-2
Environment and natural resources management	4	4	0
Adaptation to climate change	4	4	0
Overall project achievement^c	4	4	0
Performance of partners^d			
IFAD	4	3	-1
Government	3	3	0
Average net disconnect			-0.33

^a 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.

^b Arithmetic average of ratings for relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of benefits.

^c This is not an average of ratings of individual evaluation criteria but an overarching assessment of the project, drawing upon the rating for relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability of benefits, rural poverty impact, gender, innovation, scaling up, environment and natural resources management, and adaptation to climate change.

^d The rating for partners' performance is not a component of the overall project achievement rating.

¹ An overall project performance rating was not provided by the PMD; the arithmetic average across the four components was computed by the PCRVR evaluator.

² This criterion read as "Potential for scaling up" in the PMD rating matrix.

Ratings of the project completion report quality

	<i>PMD rating</i>	<i>IOE PCRVR rating</i>	<i>Net disconnect</i>
Candour		4	
Lessons		5	
Quality (methods, data, participatory process)		3	
Scope		5	
Overall rating of the project completion report		4.25	

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.

Output Delivery

Output	Unit	Target	Actual	% Delivery
Component 1: Production, processing and marketing of livestock and horticultural products				
<i>Livestock sub-component</i>				
Small ruminant buildings constructed, equipped, provided with breeding stock and starter kits	Number	40	15	38%
Small ruminant scheme provided with concrete line wells fitted with hand pump and drinking trough	Number	40	15	38%
Pig houses constructed, equipped, provided with breeding stock and starter kits	Number	5	3	60%
Piggeries provided with concrete line wells fitted with hand pump	Number	5	3	60%
Fodder plantation sites established	Number	40	15	38%
Poultry buildings constructed, equipped, provided with cockerels and starter kits	Number	40	15	38%
Poultry production complexes provided with concrete line wells fitted with hand pump	Number	40	15	38%
Integrated poultry/aquaculture schemes	Number	Not planned ¹	5	Not applicable
<i>Horticulture sub-component</i>				
Gardens (5 hectares) established, provided with nursery shed and borehole equipped with solar pumping unit and overhead tank	Number	12	10	83%
In-field reservoirs provided at strategic locations	Number	576	480	83%
Equipment, materials and initial production inputs provided	Number	12	10	83%
<i>Kafo</i> gardens rehabilitated/established, including fencing and construction of new wells	Number	31	21	68%
On-farm trials conducted	Number	6	6	100%
Component 2: Capacity-building				
Farmers trained in good agricultural practices (GAP)	Number	820	1 144	140%
Extension workers trained in livestock and horticultural production	Number	250	227	91%
Farmers trained in gender mainstreaming	Number	120	134	120%
<i>Kafo</i> members trained in business management and entrepreneurship skills	Number	200	212	106%
Village auxiliaries trained	Number	200	103	52%
Pig butchers and farmers trained in meat hygiene and pork processing techniques	Number	160	99	62%
Fruit and vegetable processors trained in processing and preservation techniques	Number	400	125	31%
Farmers trained in leadership and good governance	Number	90	92	102%
Component 3: Project Coordination and M&E				
Project Steering Committee review meetings	Number	20	7	35%
Annual consultative workshops conducted	Number	5	3	60%
Consultative visits to IFAD	Number	4	0	0%
Country Programme Approach (CPA)	Number	16	9	56%

Annex III

Output	Unit	Target	Actual	% Delivery
meetings/activities				
Staff members trained	Number	15	13	87%
Monthly physical and beneficiary contact monitoring and verification exercises on project implemented activities conducted	Number	43	40	93%
Different communication tools used for increased project visibility	Number	7	5	71%

¹ The integrated poultry/aquaculture schemes were innovations introduced after the MTR.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AfDB	African Development Bank
CPA	Country Programme Approach
CPE	Country Programme Evaluation
ERR	Economic rate of return
DLS	Department of Livestock Services
GAP	Good agricultural practices
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
LHDP	Livestock and Horticulture Development Project
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
MTR	Mid-term review
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
NRM	Natural resource management
PCR	Project Completion Report
PCRv	Project Completion Report Validation
PCU	Project Coordination Unit
PMD	Programme Management Department

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