

Project Completion Report Validation

Republic of Guinea

National Programme to Support Agricultural Value Chain Actors (PNAFA)

Date of validation by IOE: April 2019

I. Basic project data

			Approval (US\$m)		Actual (US\$ m)	
Region	West and Central Africa	Total project costs	45.7		34	
Country	Guinea	IFAD loan and percentage of total	11	24%	7.5	22%
Loan number	589-GN	IFAD grants	8,7 9	19% 20%	8.8 8.3	26% 24.4%
Grant number	DSF-8064 DSF-8091	Borrower	5	11%	0.2	0.6%
Type of project (subsector)	Agric. development – value chain	Cofinancier 1 OFID	10	22%	9	26.4%
Financing type	Loan and grants	Cofinancier 2				
Lending terms*	Highly concessional	Cofinancier 3				
Date of approval	09/2002 (original) 04/2009 (restructured as PNAFA)	Cofinancier 4				
Date of loan and grants signature	Loan 589: 01/2003 Grants 8064: 10/2010 8091: 12/2011	Beneficiaries	2	4%	0.36	1%
Date of effectiveness	08/2004 (589-GN)	Other sources				
Loan amendments	12/2009	Number of beneficiaries	75 000 beneficiaries (Direct)		53 000 beneficiaries (Direct)	
Loan closure extensions		Project completion date	03/2017		03/2017	
Country programme managers	G. Capaldo (current), V. Galastro, A. Barry (2013-15), S. Kouakou (2010-13) L. Kellens (1-5/2010) U. Demirag (2008-10)	Loan closing date Grant closing date (8064) (8091)	09/2012 06/2017 09/2017		09/2012 06/2017 09/2017	
Regional director(s)	Mr L. Martin (current) Mr. I.de Villebois Mr. M. Béavogui	Mid-term review			01/2016	
Project completion report reviewer	Diane Abi Khalil	IFAD loan and grant disbursement at project completion (%)			68% (loan) 96.6% (grant)	
Project completion report quality control panel	Maximin Kodjo Kouessi Fumiko Nakai	Date of the project completion report			10/2017	

Source: Appraisal Report, Project Completion Report, IFAD Oracle Business Intelligence.

II. Project outline

1. **Introduction.** The National Programme to Support Agricultural Value Chain Actors (PNAFA) in Guinea came into existence in 2009 as a result of restructuring of the Sustainable Agriculture Development Project-Forest Guinea (SADEP). The loan for SADEP was initially approved in January 2002 and became effective in August 2004. The SADEP's performance was below expectations and only 20 per cent of the loan had been disbursed by September 2008. Underlying problems were linked to: (i) the deterioration of the macroeconomic and socio-political country context; (ii) the weak performance of the coordination unit and the poor quality of the service providers; and (iii) the inadequacy of the project approach given the changing institutional context. Consequently, the project was restructured to improve its performance and sustainability and to align with the new strategies of the Government and the result-based country strategic opportunities programme.¹
2. The restructuring and the amendment to the loan agreement was approved in 2009, changing the overall objective² and the name of the project to "the National Programme to Support Agricultural Value Chain (PNAFA)" which became effective in November 2010. An extension to Upper Guinea was approved in December 2011 and became effective in 2012. The programme was completed in March 2017. The Project Completion Report (PCR) was cleared in October 2017 by the Programme Management Department (PMD).
3. The PCR being validated in this document therefore covers PNAFA as was restructured (designed) in 2009 and implemented thereon, and it does not discuss the original SADEP design and implementation up to 2009.
4. **Project area.** The PNAFA was conceived under the 2009-2014 Country Strategic Opportunities Paper. The programme initially covered the Forest Guinea and the Middle Guinea. The geographical coverage was expanded to Upper Guinea, which was considered the poorest region of the country with a poverty rate of 67.5 per cent. The programme was implemented in the administrative regions of Labé, Mamou, N'Zérékoré and Kankan. The priority commodity chains selected were: rice, potato, palm oil, maize, onions, yam and rubber trees.
5. **Project goal, objectives and components.** The overall objective of PNAFA was to sustainably improve the incomes and food security of the poor rural people in Guinea. The specific objective, as stated in the loan agreement of 2009, was to improve the productivity and competitiveness of the poor rural people by strengthening the capacity of organizations active in prospering agricultural value chains. The PCR indicated another specific objective related to the consolidation of Financial Service Associations (FSAs). The activities of the project were structured along three components:
 - a. *Support to farmers' organizations* (74 per cent of the total cost). It aimed at institutionally strengthening the Professional Agricultural Organizations (PAOs, federations and unions) and supporting their economic activities that contributed to the development of the targeted value chains;
 - b. *Institutional and financial support* (11 per cent of the total cost). It aimed at providing institutional support to the main technical services at the regional and national levels involved in the implementation of PNAFA. It also aimed at supporting the development of specific financial services and consolidating the FSAs;
 - c. *Programme coordination and knowledge management* (15 per cent of the total cost).

¹ EB 2009/96/R. 13 President's memorandum.

² The objective of the SADEP was to reduce the poverty by improving incomes and living conditions of the rural population in the Forest Guinea. Loan Agreement 589-GN, 2003.

6. **Target group.** The programme targeted primarily smallholders and other stakeholders active in the selected value chains who were organized into professional organizations. These actors were characterized by: (i) low yields and productivity due to lack of access to modern inputs; (ii) weak water management; (iii) little access to post harvest infrastructure and equipment; and (iv) food insecurity during "hunger season". Special attention would be given to women headed-households and young people. The PNAafa used the PAOs and the members of the National Confederation of Farmers' Organizations of Guinea as an entry point.
7. **Financing.** The total cost of the programme at design (or restructuring) in 2009 was estimated at US\$31.9 million. The IFAD contribution initially amounted to US\$20 million, of which US\$11.16 million were from the 589-GN loan of the SADEP³ and US\$8.7 million were as grant under the debt sustainability framework (DSF). PNAafa was also co-financed by the OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID), with a contribution of US\$7 million. The estimated contribution of the Government was US\$3.5 million in counterpart funds. The contribution of the beneficiaries was estimated at US\$1.53 million.
8. The extension of the interventions of PNAafa to Upper Guinea in 2011 increased the cost of the programme to US\$45.897 million.⁴ IFAD contributed through an additional DSF grant of US\$9.1 million. The supplementary fund of OFID amounted for US\$3 million, to cover the rural infrastructure work in Forest Guinea and Middle Guinea. The estimated contribution of the Government was estimated at US\$1.5 million and the one of the beneficiaries was estimated at US\$0.4 million. The tables below show the total cost of PNAafa (Middle, Forest and Upper).⁵

Table 1

Planned and actual project costs (US\$)

<i>Funding source</i>	<i>Planned expenditure (as per latest revision)</i>	<i>Actual expenditure</i>	<i>% Disbursed</i>
IFAD (loan)	11 166 600	7 571 201	68
IFAD (grant)	8 700 000	8 861 544	102
	9 100 000	8 329 804	92
OFID	10 000 000	9 028 818	90
Government	4 992 700	190 158	4
Beneficiaries	1 938 100	368 195	19
Total	45 897 400	34 349 720	75

Source: PCR.

Table 2

Component costs⁶ (US\$)

<i>Component</i>	<i>Allocation at appraisal</i>	<i>Allocation with Upper Guinea</i>	<i>Total expenditure</i>	<i>% Disbursed</i>
Support to farmers' organizations	23 467 000	31 582 500	20 823 554	66
Support to public services and rural finance	3 181 000	4 889 500	1 717 486	35
Programme coordination and knowledge management	5 261 000	6 423 400	11 825 879	184
Total	31 909 000	42 895 400⁷	34 349 720	80

Source: Design report, PCR.

³ The loan agreement was initially signed in 2002 for the SADEP for an amount of approximately US\$15.5 million.

⁴ The total cost of PNAafa in Upper Guinea was estimated at US\$10.99 million over a five-year period.

⁵ Data shown in the tables is related only to PNAafa and not to SADEP.

⁶ The total expenditure is estimated by the PCR, based on the disbursements of each funding source.

⁷ An amount of US\$2.15 million was included in the PNAafa costing as component (d) SADEP-GF (2002-2008), presumably for the expenditure incurred under SADEP by the time of restructuring. This explains the difference in the total cost with table 1 which presented the figures including the SADEP expenditures.

9. **Intervention logic.** The PNAAFA was designed to improve incomes and food security of the rural poor in the Upper, Forest and Middle Guinea. This would be achieved through the development of profitable value chains, development of infrastructures and reinforcement of PAOs. The support offered to PAOs would thereby lead to ownership, and economic and institutional autonomy. In other words, PAOs would be able, in the absence of a strong and competent government, to develop commercial activities and widen the range of services they can provide to their members. Other stakeholders, upstream and downstream along the value chains, would be also supported through their partnerships with PAOs (unions and federations of farmers). The responsibilities for managing the activities supported by the programme were expected to be progressively transferred to the PAOs according to their capacity level.
10. External factors that would impact the results of the programme were: (i) political instability; and (ii) low capacity of the technical partners.
11. **Changes in the context and development during implementation.** During its implementation, and mainly prior to the Mid-term Review (MTR), PNAAFA went through contextual constraints, namely: the turbulent socio-political situation and the emergence of Ebola; the country witnessed continuous social unrest as a result of demonstrations against the lack of electricity, water, roads, the outcomes of the parliamentary elections, and the Ebola crisis resulted in a slow implementation of the programme.
12. In view of the available resources and in light of the programme results achieved during the first five years,⁸ the following adjustments were made after the MTR: (i) focus on productive investments and post-harvest activities; (ii) modification in the programme coordination arrangements by reducing the size of the National Coordination Unit (NCU) in favour of Regional Coordination Units (RCU) that were closer to the target populations; (iii) reduction in the number of the supported value chains; and (iv) reduction in the targets of the infrastructure activities.
13. **Project implementation.** The PNAAFA was under the aegis of the Ministry of Agriculture that also chaired the steering committee.⁹ It was coordinated by an NCU and three RCUs. The first component was to be implemented entirely by local, regional and national PAOs (unions, federations and the confederation) that may have had previous experiences with value chain development projects and implementation of activities funded by other donors. The programme hence relied on pre-existing federations with minimal level of maturity.¹⁰ The implementation was divided into two phases, A and B. During phase A, the programme was expected to pilot partnerships with PAOs, focusing mainly on activities with immediate impact on productivity such as agricultural inputs. Phase B was projected to start at midterm review in order to readjust the objectives and to transfer more responsibilities to PAOs based on the maturity level achieved in phase A.
14. **Delivery of outputs.** Rather than providing the details of delivered outputs, the PCR only listed the average implementation rate per component including a global achievement rate (see annex III), but it is not clear how such percentage was calculated. On the other hand, the following data were found in the different sections of the PCR: (i) almost 1.4 per cent of the supported groups, compared to a target of 15 per cent, were trained in post-production, processing and marketing;

⁸ In 2016, the MTR reported that the global implementation rate between 2011 and 2015 was merely 59 per cent

⁹ The steering committee included various Ministries (Agriculture, Economy and Finance, Planning, Decentralization and Local Development, Livestock and Commerce) and the NCUs and RCUs, and representatives from the PAOs. Design report p. 26.

¹⁰ Five maturity levels are conventionally defined, ranging from 0 to 4, with the lowest level (level 0)- emerging groups, without clearly defined objectives and without a real relevant and coherent action plan, and the highest level (level 4),- groups that have made it through all levels. PCR p. 18 (Guide to support the emergence of farmers' organizations in Guinea).

(ii) merely 14 per cent of rice farmers had access to irrigation schemes and 20.7 per cent of targeted PAOs were subsidized for buying equipment; (iii) in terms of the irrigated schemes, 34 per cent of the initial target was rehabilitated and 46 per cent was newly developed; and (iv) 67 per cent of warehouses were built and 112 per cent of building and rehabilitating PAOs offices and regional technical units was reached, hence exceeding the initial set target. According to the PCR, the number of beneficiaries reached 70 per cent of the initial target (almost 53,000 households compared to initial target of 75,000 households) out of which 53 per cent were women.

III. Review of findings

A. Core criteria

Relevance

15. **Relevance of the programme objectives.** The PNAFA was in line with the objectives of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper-2 and the National Agricultural Investment Programme. It was equally aligned with the National Agricultural Development Policy – Vision 2015, namely in terms of: (i) supporting the organization of professional agricultural groups to facilitate participation, ownership and sustainability of development activities; (ii) improving farmers’ access to agricultural inputs; (iii) facilitating farmers’ access to financial services; and (iv) promoting the development of commodity chains selected on their regional comparative advantages. The PNAFA was in line with the 2009-2014 Guinea Country Strategic Opportunities Paper, which focused on improving access of the small-scale producers to production and marketing services (under a value chain approach), as well as access of the vulnerable groups to financial services.
16. **Relevance of design.** The PNAFA design can be considered to have been relevant given the programme context characterized by weak governance, corruption, fragile institutions and inadequate legal and regulatory frameworks as mentioned under *Project area* (paragraph 2). The emphasis on strengthening PAOs and their direct involvement in the planning and implementation of activities, together with the support of public institutions, is therefore considered relevant. They were at the same time the target group and partners in implementation. Moreover, the choice of commodity chains, which were considered to have high impact on the target groups and the proposed financial mechanisms whilst addressing specific financial needs, were indeed relevant to local needs.
17. Despite the positive aspects mentioned above the design underestimated a set of significant issues that had a negative impact on the programme: the political and social unrest; the low capacity of public institutions to ensure programme oversight; the weak capacity of PAOs to implement the programme, the complexities of the institutional set up and the implementation modalities; and the weak capacity of the FSAs. Merely 11 per cent of the total estimated cost of the programme was allocated to the component on *Access to financial services* which is critical for the development of value chains. In view of all these constraints, the project seemed to have been over ambitious in terms of the outcomes and impact.
18. In conclusion, the programme was overall aligned with the national policies, IFAD’s strategies and the needs of the rural poor population. The main areas of intervention were relevant in light of the socio-economic context. The design was, however, over ambitious and intricate compared to the local implementation capacities. The PCR rating for relevance is **moderately satisfactory (4)**, same as the PCR rating.

Effectiveness

19. This section assesses the extent to which immediate objectives and related component results were attained. The assessment in this section is based on the two objectives: one stated as specific objective in the loan agreement of 2009

related to PAOs and the other related to FSAs as noted in the PCR (see paragraph 5). The PCR and other PNAFA reports mainly reported on programme outputs based on partial and limited qualitative data. Hence, it should be noted that the assessment of effectiveness is constrained by the limitation of reliable quantitative and qualitative data.

20. ***(i) Improve the productivity and competitiveness of the poor rural people by strengthening the capacity of organizations active in prospering agricultural value chain.*** The expected results of this objective were partially achieved. With the support of the programme, the National Confederation of Farmers' Organisations provided institutional support that contributed to the formation of 1,299 grassroots organizations; that is, 62 per cent compared to the initial target of 2,100. The membership of producers in their organizations experienced an increase of 27 per cent during the implementation period. Women represented 48 per cent of this increase. The support by PNAFA contributed partially to autonomous PAOs. According to the PCR, a study carried out by the National Confederation of Farmers' Organizations showed that four out of the seven targeted PAOs (six federations and one union) reached the level of maturity 4, two PAOs showed a slight progress and one PAO witnessed a regression in the level of maturity.¹¹ But the PCR did not provide details of the study, and therefore, it is difficult to understand or interpret these data reported. In general, the PCR highlighted that the PAOs experienced management and governance issues that limited their autonomy. They did not have any strategy to mobilise their own financial resources, a vital condition for their autonomy and for the internalization of services to their members. Moreover, there is no evidence that they were able to develop effective marketing strategies for their commodities.¹²
21. The PCR reported that PNAFA contributed to an increase in cultivated lands (an average of 57 per cent compared to baseline) and an increase in yields (an average of 76 per cent compared to baseline)¹³ exceeding the target for some crops and allowing a surplus in production and an improvement in productivity.¹⁴ Services provided by PAOs such as farm advisory and the purchase and distribution of inputs, including seeds and agricultural equipment might have contributed to this increase.¹⁵
22. The support of PNAFA to assist federations and unions in the planning and implementation of economic activities for the development of the value chain contributed to very limited outcomes. Only 22.5 per cent of the beneficiaries thought that marketing their products has improved due to PNAFA support.¹⁶ Issues such as trainings and strategies for improved market linkages were marginally considered and slightly provided by PAOs to their members.¹⁷ While the development of infrastructures might have contributed to better access to water and to opening up villages, implementation was largely delayed and some operations were not achieved. This is mainly due to the lack of the technical capacities of the various partners, namely the PAOs.¹⁸ According to the PCR, warehouses built by the programme have facilitated the storage of the extra production and contributed to better prices,¹⁹ but the PCR does not present enough evidence to substantiate such outcome. Moreover, the PCR stated that the

¹¹ The level of maturity is detailed in Footnote 10.

¹² PCR, p. 60-61.

¹³ The increase varied between 38 per cent and 112 per cent).

¹⁴ PCR p. 31, and Annex 5 (updated logical framework).

¹⁵ PCR p. 145.

¹⁶ PCR, cost benefit analysis, p.155.

¹⁷ Nearly 1.4 per cent newly structured groups were trained in post-production, processing and marketing.

¹⁸ The delivery of output under component A in relation to infrastructure was delayed due to several reasons such as: (i) the drastic increase in the unit cost of the infrastructure in each location reaching up to three times the initial cost; (ii) the delay in the procurement process; (iii) the delay already experienced in developing and validating the Annual Work Plan and Budget, thus leading to a suspension in the development and validation of the agreements and payments; (iv) the seasonal nature of the work, which can only be carried out in dry seasons.

¹⁹ PCR, p.23.

functioning of these warehouses was hampered by weak managerial and organizational capacities as necessary and adequate trainings were not provided.²⁰

23. Partnerships with the State Technical Services (STS) to support the PAOs in the implementation of the activities achieved limited results. Twenty-six per cent of the planned service contracts between the PAOs and the STS were signed and one targeted value chain analysis report was published out of the six planned reports. Moreover, the process of the multiplication of the seeds was developed without the engagement of Research institutes and without the Division of "Seeds and Certification" (under the National Directorate of Agriculture).
24. **(ii) Reinforce the access of marginalized groups to the microcredits and develop links between FSAs and the various stakeholders of the value chains.** This objective was not achieved. Various financial mechanisms proposed by the design report were not implemented;²¹ an issue raised by the PCR. An input supply system was established and entrusted to the PAOs whereby the replenishment of the fund would continue financing the purchase and supplies of inputs.²² But the recovery rate was low with an average of 51 per cent, placing the sustainability of the inputs supply system at risk and making it unlikely, in the long run, for PAOs to satisfy the needs of producers in terms of inputs.^{23 24}
25. The consolidation of the 55 FSAs planned at appraisal was not achieved because of the lack of capacities and of the absence of a clear strategy to reactivate them. Only 38 per cent of the 55 FSAs were functional at completion. There was no data showing that the FSAs were able to finance any of the needs of the PAOs.
26. **Factors in programme implementation that affected the results.** As mentioned under *Relevance*, the public institutions, namely the NCU and the RCU that were supposed to ensure project oversight, were unable to fulfill their role because of the lack of capacities and expertise. (See section *Performance of partners*). The MTR report highlighted other two institutional constraints that further affected the performance of the programme: (i) frequent changes in IFAD's Country Programme Manager and Financial Officer positions, resulting in irregular supervisions of the programme; and (ii) lack of monitoring of the programme implementation by the public administration and the steering committee. In addition, the involvement of the STS expected to support the implementation varied from a full engagement to a total absence in some cases, specifically at the regional level, thus resulting in poor support to beneficiaries and PAOs.
27. The PNAAFA was to be implemented in two phases, A and B (*Project implementation section* paragraph 7). However, only phase A was implemented because of the late adjustments introduced after the MTR, a year before the completion date.²⁵ The transfer of the responsibilities to the PAOs was not guided by the PAOs' maturity level, as was initially intended and this issue was also raised by the PCR. It was likely that responsibilities were equally entrusted to all PAOs, without taking into account the adaptation period that was needed by those who were not previously involved in similar activities.²⁶ Such move has negatively impacted the management of the resources by the PAOs and jeopardized the prospect of their autonomy.

²⁰ PCR, cost-benefit analysis, p. 155.

²¹ Mechanism such as a credit line for the federation, warrantage (inventory credit) and an agro leasing to finance farming equipment, , PCR p. 22.

²² The programme provided PAOs with agricultural inputs that they would give to their members in the form of credit. The recovered fund would then allow the financing of the next agricultural season.

²³ The PCR could not collect data directly from PAOs as they were reluctant to share the related information. The PCR relied instead on the financial reports of the PNAAFA.

²⁴ MTR, p. 38.

²⁵ PCR p. 47.

²⁶ PCR, p. 60.

28. In conclusion, PNAFA assigned the PAOs the responsibility of their own development, but it did not facilitate an empowering environment to help them become agents of change. The lack of PAOs expertise in particular areas of the programme has hindered them from being in full charge of their expected mandate and has negatively impacted the outcomes of the supported activities. Increase in yields and production was registered, but strategies for improved market connections and access to finance were limited. The PCRV rating for effectiveness is **moderately unsatisfactory (3)**, same as the PCR rating.

Efficiency

29. The efficiency of PNAFA in the first five years of implementation was negatively impacted by several factors such as: the high inflation rate, the intermittent supervision missions, the Ebola crisis which in general affected programme activities and service deliveries and also constrained the conduct of supervision and other missions by IFAD, and notably the poor capacities of the implementing partners (PAOs and NCU) and their disregard of set procedures. Therefore, implementation was rather slow, showing a cumulative financial disbursement of 51 per cent at the time of the MTR in January 2016 (about one year before the scheduled completion) and 75 per cent at completion.
30. IFAD loan **disbursement** was 68 per cent, whereas the grants disbursement was 96.6 per cent. The Government provided merely 4 per cent of its estimated contribution on infrastructures and economic activities of the PAOs while beneficiaries allocated 19 per cent. No further explanation was given by the PCR regarding these low rates. The **management and coordination cost** was 34 per cent of the total actual cost, much higher than the estimation of 14 per cent at the time of restructuring. According to the reviewed documents, a number of factors contributed to significantly higher management cost compared to the estimate such as: insufficient resource allocation for the functioning of the NCU/RCUs;²⁷ unplanned and unjustified expenditures by PAOs; and the increase in the expenditures related to monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and Knowledge management.
31. The PCR **cost-benefit** analysis of different economic models, "with and without" the programme showed that the investments made in rice, maize, potatoes, yam, oil palm production, and rice processing were financially and economically justified.
32. In conclusion, the efficiency was impacted by the context in Guinea and by issues of disbursement and poor management thus resulting in high management cost. The PCRV rate for efficiency is **unsatisfactory (2)**, same as the rating of the PCR.

Rural poverty impact

33. The Results and Impact Management System (RIMS) did not provide third-level data (impact). In assessing the impacts, the PCR relied on data taken from the final impact study carried out by the National Institute of Statistics in June 2017. It also relied on a report produced by the National Agency for Agricultural and food statistics (ANASA) in May 2017 and on the final stakeholder workshop.²⁸ A final financial analysis carried out by the programme had estimated the impact of the interventions on different productive initiatives by assessing the cost-benefit ratio "with and without" the programme. It did not, however, provide data on household incomes.
34. **Household incomes and assets.** Incongruous information was evident in the report in terms of household incomes. The ANASA report taken up by the PCR indicated an increase in the income of the beneficiaries but the PCR refrained from

²⁷ To this effect, three reallocations were made: one reallocation for grant 8064 in March 2013 and two reallocations for grant 8091 in October 2015 and June 2016. Those reallocations were related to salary/allowances, technical assistance and management.

²⁸ The results of these studies cannot be only attributed to the PNAFA, as both studies did not include control groups.

supporting the findings with qualitative data. Nonetheless, the executive summary of the PCR clearly stated that an increase in income, expected due to the capacity reinforcement of the producers in terms of post-production, transformation and marketing was not registered by the programme.

35. The PCR did not report on the number of beneficiaries who increased their assets. However, it indicated that 62 per cent of the beneficiaries had access to sanitary facilities compared to 68 per cent at baseline; 15 per cent had access to electricity compared to 4 per cent at baseline; 87 per cent owned phones compared to 40 per cent at baseline, and 30 per cent owned motorbikes compared to 3 per cent at baseline. It is not clear how these data should be interpreted or to what extent these changes were related to the programme.
36. **Food security and agricultural productivity.** The PCR observed a slight decrease in chronic malnutrition with a rate of 31 per cent compared to 35 per cent at baseline and to 30 per cent as targeted at appraisal. Producers who participated to the final stakeholder workshop stated that the food scarcity period decreased from five to two months since the beginning of the programme. Neither the PCR nor other reports provided further data that would quantify the magnitude of impact on this domain and it is also not possible to confirm whether this slight improvement can be attributed to the programme.
37. The supported activities contributed to the increase in household agricultural yields and production. The total annual increase in production was estimated at 156 per cent²⁹ and the increase in productivity between 2012 and 2017 was 76 per cent on average for different crops. The increase in production can be attributed to the increase in cultivated lands (varying between 20 per cent and 148 per cent,³⁰ depending on the commodity), coupled with improved access to water and irrigation and the quality of inputs. The rehabilitation of feeder roads has also contributed to connecting the producers with the market.
38. **Human and social capital and empowerment.** The programme beneficiaries benefited from the functional literacy training, which enhanced the presence of the most vulnerable groups, mainly women, in PAOs and allowed them to take up leadership positions. The participation of women to this training constituted 92 per cent of the initial target (3,672 of 4,000). The PCR provided some data with regard to the adoption of new agricultural techniques, but these data are inconsistent in different parts of the report.³¹ While producers received technical training, evidence on improved marketing capacities and farm management were not reported and it is unlikely that it had strong impact given that nearly 1.4 per cent were trained in post-production, processing and marketing.
39. In terms of social capital and empowerment, the capacity enhancement of PAOs constituted a major element in the programme. The results were very modest as shown under *Effectiveness* (paragraph 20).
40. **Institutions and policies.** The impact of the PNAFA on institutions was limited. This was illustrated by the low performance of the PAOs who were the main implementing partner for the supported activities. It is also illustrated in the low capacities of the NCU to assist the PAOs. Only 26 per cent of the planned agreements for training and reinforcing the public technical services were signed and implemented. As for the FSAs, only 38 per cent were functional as was mentioned under the *Effectiveness* section at the end of the programme. The impact of the programme on policies is not assessed in the PCR and in general, there is no reference to any policy dialogue in the report. Nonetheless, PNAFA

²⁹ PCR p. 47.

³⁰ An increase of 20 per cent for the maize in Middle Guinea and 148 per cent for the yams in Upper Guinea.

³¹ The PCR indicated different rates under different sections (60 per cent para. 43 and 70 per cent para. 171), and the logical framework indicated a rate of 15 per cent out of the initial target of 30,000 producers.

contributed to the amendment of the PAOs' by-laws, ensuring a minimum of 30 per cent of women representation in leadership and management positions.

41. In conclusion, the interventions of the programme contributed to the increase in agricultural production and productivity. It cannot be confirmed whether the modest improvement in food security for the targeted population can be attributed to the programme. Impact on institutions was limited while the impact on incomes, assets and human capital remain unclear due to data quality issues. Given the lack of evidence and analysis available in programme documents, it is challenging to fully assess the programme's rural poverty impact. The PCRV rates rural poverty impact as **moderately unsatisfactory (3)**, same as the PCR rating.

Sustainability of benefits

42. The technical package proposed by PNAFA has a potential for sustainability, given the increase in cultivated lands, production and agricultural productivity. The sustainability of infrastructures, specifically warehouses, may be at risk because of the poor management capacities of the committees in charge. The PCR noted that other infrastructures, such as irrigation schemes, that were not fully completed at the time of the programme completion may as well be at risk without the Government involvement. Institutional sustainability can only be guaranteed in case the PAOs were made autonomous and able to provide services to their members, which was not the case in PNAFA. The outcomes of the activities discussed under *Effectiveness* showed the shortcomings of the PAOs in terms of organizational and marketing capacities. The economic sustainability of activities was restricted by the lack of relevant capacity building and strategies for market linkages.
43. The sustainability of the input supply mechanism (including the internal system for the multiplication and distribution of improved seeds) was compromised by the low repayment rates and the limited involvement of the relevant governmental and research institutions for the seeds certification. Access to financial services also represented an important challenge for the sustainability of the benefits. There was no evidence that FSAs were able to provide services for producers. Partnerships with the private sector fostering this component were extremely limited coupled with the fact that the PAOs did not have any future strategy to mobilize their own financial resources, neither externally nor internally. This has hence limited their financial autonomy.
44. In conclusion, there are still some substantial risks related to the management of infrastructures, the access to financial services and the autonomy of the PAOs. It is unlikely that PAOs would be able to operate without the support of the programme. The PCRV rating for sustainability is **moderately unsatisfactory (3)**, same as the PCR rating.

B. Other performance criteria

45. **Innovation.** The major innovation of this programme was related to the fact that the PAOs were the main entry point and the direct implementing body of activities. The programme, however, was hampered by their lack of experience.
46. Technical innovation such as the use of solar pumping in irrigation schemes had a positive impact in reducing drudgery. It also reduced pollution by offering alternatives to motor pumps. The input supply mechanism, including the distribution of improved seeds, was another innovation that allowed each PAO to set up a system that would help identify the needs in inputs of individual producers. However, the terms and conditions for granting these inputs were apparently not well clarified to producers,³² reason that led to low reimbursements with an average of 51 per cent only.

³² (reimbursable credit in kind, in cash, in subsidy...), MTR, p.89.

47. The PCRV rating for innovation is **moderately unsatisfactory (3)**, same as the PCR rating.
48. **Scaling up.** The PCR does not provide evidence on successful innovations that are scaled up in wider Government policies or programmes. It only mentions a potential of scaling up.³³ The PCRV rating for scaling up is **moderately unsatisfactory (3)**, same as the PCR rating.

Gender equality and women's empowerment

49. Fifty-five per cent of PNAFA beneficiaries were women, thus exceeding the initial target of 40 per cent. The supported interventions have fostered their presence in PAOs to 50 per cent. PNAFA contributed to the amendment of the PAOs by-laws, ensuring a minimum of 30 per cent of women representation in leadership and management positions. Data showed that the women representation in leadership positions increased from 14 per cent in 2011 to 29 per cent in 2015. The presence of three gender focal points within the regional technical cell has contributed to the emergence of a women's union in Forest Guinea. The increase in representation coupled with the functional literacy training, would have contributed to the social empowerment of women. It is likely that the programme has contributed to modest economic empowerment through the kitchen garden and the rice steaming activities, which were mainly headed by women. This, however, cannot be confirmed because of the lack of relevant quantitative data.
50. Moreover, the PNAFA contributed to the involvement of youth in agricultural activities, namely through the value chain of potatoes. This initiative allowed young people to engage in farming in their own agricultural fields while improving agricultural techniques and using water rationally.
51. In light of the above, the PCRV rating for gender equality and women's empowerment is **moderately satisfactory (4)**, same as the PCR rating.

Environment and natural resources management

52. At the design stage, the PNAFA was classified as category B in the environmental and social assessment. Activities such as development of lowland, preparation of drying fields, hydro-agricultural infrastructures, distribution of fertilizers and crop protection products, and rehabilitation of roads had positive socio-economic impacts and contributed to the improvement of production systems (increase of cultivated lands and yields thanks to the management of water, creation of additional jobs thanks to the work construction).
53. These activities presented also issues namely in terms of the use of pesticide and the weak management of solid waste. These aspects could have been identified at the onset of the programme and accordingly awareness measures could have been included.
54. The PCRV rating for environment and natural resource management is **moderately unsatisfactory (3)**, same as the PCR rating.

Adaptation to climate change

55. Adaptation to climate change was not explicitly considered as part of the programme, but there were two activities that were related to this issue: (i) supporting access to short-cycle crop varieties which are better adapted to low rainfall; and (ii) improving palm and rubber value chains that were expected in the long term to sustainably contribute to carbon sequestration. The outcome of the latter will take place after the programme's lifecycle. Lowland development and improved water management practices were likely to have reduced the vulnerability of the producers to increased climatic uncertainty.

³³ PCR, Annexe 4.

56. The PCRV rating for adaptation to climate change is **moderately satisfactory (4)**, one rating above the PCR rating.

C. Overall project achievement

57. The overall objective of the PNAFA was to sustainably improve the incomes and food security of the poor rural people in Guinea. The results achieved at the end of its implementation contributed slightly to this objective, although the PCRV cannot confirm that the modest changes in food security were to be attributed only to the programme.
58. In general, the PNAFA was well aligned with the Government and IFAD strategies, and responding to the needs of the targeted groups. Access to productive resources, inputs and equipment has led to increased agricultural production and several innovative initiatives were introduced.
59. Despite some positive aspects, the performance and the results of the programme were almost entirely dependent on the performance of partners that did not have the required experience in managing development projects. Therefore, and given the complexities of the institutional set-up and the implementation modalities, the success of PNAFA was limited by the low capacity of public institutions to ensure programme oversight and by the weak capacity of PAOs to implement the programme. Development of value chains requires supporting value chain stakeholders at upstream (e.g. supply of inputs and extension services) and downstream (e.g. processing). The PNAFA failed to do so as the supply system that was put in place was not sustainable and access to financial services was not provided. Moreover, the approach of the programme was not market oriented and little attention was given to marketing and processing. Transferring the responsibilities to PAOs did not take into consideration their maturity level and readiness. Their poor management and planning capacities affected negatively the achievement of the objectives and the expected results. Efficiency was negatively impacted by a high management costs. The IFAD's loan disbursement was 68 per cent, the grants disbursement 96.6 per cent and the total disbursements reached 75 per cent.
60. The PCRV rates overall programme achievement as **moderately unsatisfactory (3)**, same as the PCR rating.

D. Performance of partners

61. **IFAD.** The PCR does not discuss much about the IFAD performance. The Ebola crisis and the turnover of four country programme managers and financial officers disrupted the supervision of the activities and impeded the timely adjustments and follow-ups. The MTR that was planned to take place in 2014 was carried out in 2016 after Guinea was declared Ebola-free and 12 months before the completion of the programme. The projected recommendations to improve on the performance and achievement of the programme were therefore introduced a year before its completion.
62. The PCRV rating of the IFAD performance is **moderately unsatisfactory (3)**, same as the PCR rating.
63. **Government.** PNAFA was heavily affected by the weak performance of its partners in terms of implementation and coordination. The NCU/RCUs, that were supposed to play a key role in supporting and supervising PAOs, suffered from the lack of expertise in major aspects of the programme such as rural finance and infrastructures. These gaps clearly affected the supervision of and follow-up on the activities, mainly access to rural finance services (such as the establishment of a sustainable mechanism to finance the inputs and the recovery of funds). Following the MTR recommendations, the Government assumed ownership and replaced the non-performing PNAFA staff, including the coordinator.

64. Given that the implementation of the activities was entrusted to the PAOs, the latter also coordinated financial resources, a measure that was considered to constitute a risk at the appraisal phase. This concern was voiced by the supervision missions, which pointed out a number of fiduciary issues such as ineligibility of expenditures, inadequacy of supporting documents, weak procurement performance and audit management.
65. The PCRV rating of the Government performance is **unsatisfactory (2)**, one point below the PCR rating.

IV. Assessment of PCR quality

66. **Scope.** The PCR covered most evaluation criteria but some basic standard IFAD project information were missing (e.g. number of beneficiaries, output delivered, and RIMS data). Scaling up was rated without being assessed by the report. The PCR rating for scope is rated **moderately satisfactory (4)**.
67. **Quality.** The PCR process was inclusive and a final workshop was organized with beneficiaries and various partners in order to discuss the performance and impact of the programme. The section on *Efficiency* was comprehensive and analytical. The sections on *Effectiveness* and *Impact on rural poverty* could have benefitted from more in-depth analysis. Quantitative evidence provided in support of statements made was quite limited and did not always seem reliable due to a number of inconsistencies noted in the data. The report in general was more focused on the outputs and less on the analysis of outcomes. The narrative did not reflect the low ratings given by PMD except for the executive summary that gave an idea of what went wrong, thus justifying the ratings. The PCR rating for quality is **moderately unsatisfactory (3)**.
68. **Lessons.** The PCR identified a number of relevant and systematic lessons learnt, congruent with the main conclusions. However, many items under these lessons did not emerge as clear findings and could have hence benefited from further elaboration and analysis. The PCR's lessons are rated **satisfactory (5)**.
69. **Candour.** While the PCRV agreed with most of the ratings of the PCR, the latter tended to over-emphasize the output and elaborate less on the major shortcomings. The PCRV rating for Candour is **moderately satisfactory (4)**.
70. **Overall.** Overall PCR quality is rated as **moderately satisfactory (4)**.

V. Lessons learned

71. Useful lessons drawn from the PCR are as follows:
 - a. Given the importance of the PAOs role, the programme should make sure that capacity building and structuring is systematically undertaken and the transfer of responsibilities to the PAOs should be done gradually and in line with their capacities. Support and capacity building should be adapted to the specific needs and characteristics of the various PAOs, avoiding a standard support.
 - b. The lack of expertise within the coordination unit hampered the implementation of the programme, hence the importance of having a strong and multidisciplinary coordination team at the onset of the programme.
 - c. The development of the value chains requires capacity building and support designed according to the various value chain stakeholders in both upstream (e.g. suppliers of inputs and extension services) and downstream (e.g. processing, marketing). Sustainable access to rural financial services is a requirement and should be given great importance in terms of capacity enhancement of stakeholders and links with financial institutions.

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 and 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	3	3	0
Project performance			
Relevance	4	4	0
Effectiveness	3	3	0
Efficiency	2	2	0
Sustainability of benefits	3	3	0
Project performance^b	3	3	0
Other performance criteria			
Gender equality and women's empowerment	4	4	0
Innovation	3	3	0
Scaling up	3	3	0
Environment and natural resources management	3	3	0
Adaptation to climate change	3	4	+1
Overall project achievement^c	3	3	0
Performance of partners^d			
IFAD	3	3	0
Government	3	2	-1
Average net disconnect			0/12=0

^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 and 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.

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		4	
Overall rating of the project completion report		4	

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.

Delivery of outputs

<i>Activities</i>	<i>per cent achieved</i>
Component A : Support to PAOs	
Sub-component A1 : Institutional support to PAOs	70.56
Sub-component A2 : Economic support to PAOs	77.45
<i>Average of implementation - Component A : Support to PAOs</i>	74.00
Component B : Support to public services and to rural finance	
Sub-component B1 : Institutional support to public services	91.49
Sub-component B2 : Support to rural finance	90.00
<i>Average of implementation - Component B : Support to public services and to rural finance</i>	90.75
Component C : Coordination, M&E and Knowledge management	
Sub-component C1 : Coordination	94.48
Sub-component C2 : Communication	87.11
Sub-component C3 : Admin. Fin. And Accounting management	97.22
Sub-component C4 : M&E	98.25
<i>Average of implementation - Component C : Coordination, M&E and Knowledge management</i>	94.27
<i>Average of global achievement</i>	86.34

Source: PNAFA PCR.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

ANASA	National Agency for Agricultural and food statistics
DSF	Debt Sustainability Framework
FSA	Financial services association
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MTR	Mid-term Review
NCU	National coordination unit
OFID	OPEC Fund for International Development
PAO	Professional agricultural organisation
PCR	Project Completion Report
PMD	Programme Management Department
RCU	Regional coordination unit
RIMS	Results and Impact Management System
SADEP	Sustainable Agriculture Development Project-Forest Guinea
STS	State Technical Services

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