

Project Completion Report Validation

Agricultural Value Chains Support Development Programme (PADEF)

Republic of Congo

Date of validation by IOE: February 2020

I. Basic project data

			Approval (US\$ m)		Actual (US\$ m)	
Region	West and Central Africa	Total programme costs	24.350		14.841	
Country	Congo	IFAD loan and percentage of total	9.805	40.3%	9.722	65.7%
Loan number	851-CG	Borrower (Government of Congo)	7.012	28.8%	2.636	17.7%
IFAD Programme ID	1100001583					
Type of programme (subsector)	Agricultural Development	OFID (OPEC Fund for Intl. Dev)	7.000	28.7%	2.483	16.6%
Financing type	Loan	Others	0.533	2.2%	0	
Lending terms	Highly Concessional	Private Sector				
Date of approval	08.December 2011	Beneficiaries				
Date of loan signature	21 February 2012					
Date of effectiveness	03 July 2013					
Loan amendments	None	Number of beneficiaries*	15 000 households, 55 000 indirect		8 513 households,	
Loan closure extensions	None					
Country programme managers	Hanafi Abdelhaq	Loan closing date			31 March 2019	
Regional director(s)	Martin Lisandro	Mid-term review			9 November 2015	
Programme completion report reviewer	Ernst Schaltegger	IFAD loan disbursement at programme completion (%)			99%	
PCRV quality control panel	Eoghan Molloy	Date of the programme completion report			05 June 2019	

*Number of beneficiaries at completion was not provided

Source: PADEF Programme Completion Report (PCR), 2019.

II. Programme outline

Country & Programme Name	Republic of Congo Agricultural Value Chains Support Development Programme (PADEF)
Programme duration	Total programme duration: five years; Date of effectiveness: 03 July 2013; Completion date: 30 September 2018; One-year suspension, no extension granted.
Programme goal, objectives and components	The programme goal was to sustainably improve the living conditions and incomes of small agricultural producers. The objective aimed at improving the production, processing and marketing capacities of selected value chains in ten departments. The programme consisted of four components: (i) support to agricultural production; (ii) support to agricultural processing and marketing; (iii) capacity building, and (iv) programme coordination and monitoring and evaluation.
Programme area and target group	The programme covered the entire country of ten rural departments, except the urban areas of Brazzaville and Pointe Noire. 15,000 direct and 55,000 indirect beneficiary households were targeted (PCR) while the logical framework of the programme design report mentions 9,000. ¹
Programme implementation	The implementation agency was the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (MAEF). As a matter of fact, PADEF overwhelmingly implemented activities of other IFAD-supported rural development projects: PRODER 1, PRODER SOUTH and PRODER 3, between 2013 and 2015. Moreover, programme funding was suspended for twelve during the last year of implementation.
Changes during implementation	The original and effective loan closure dates remained the same over programme life. The IFAD-supported Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Project has taken over the sub-component of inland fisheries from PADEF.
Financing	Table 1 below displays programme cost figures by funding source, totalling US\$25.35 million at appraisal, and US\$14.84 million at completion, i.e. 70 per cent of overall disbursement. Table 2, detailing component costs at appraisal and at completion, does not tally with Table 1. The OPEC Funds for international development (OFID) funds considered at appraisal are not accounted for in Table 17 of the PCR. According to the mid-term review (MTR), OFID funded rural roads under PRODER 2. Table 2 also displays the cost reallocation per component based on the MTR because these were substantial.

Table 1
Programme costs (US\$ '000)

<i>Funding source</i>	<i>Appraisal</i>	<i>% of appraisal costs</i>	<i>Actual</i>	<i>% of actual costs</i>	<i>% disbursed</i>
IFAD (loan)	9.805	40.3%	9.722	65.7%	99%
Government of the Republic of Congo	7.012	28.8%	2.636	17.7%	38%
OFID	7.000	28.7%	2.483	16.6%	35%
Other	0.533	2.2%	0	0%	0%
Total	24.350	100%	14.841	100%	61%

Source: PADEF Programme Completion Report, 2019, Table 16.

Table 2
Component costs (US\$ '000)

<i>Component</i>	<i>Appraisal</i>	<i>MTR reallocation</i>	<i>Actual</i>	<i>% of actual costs</i>	<i>% disbursed</i>
Support to agricultural production	7.000	9.228	4.504	36.5%	49%
Support to agricultural processing and marketing	5.139	3.249	599	4.8%	18%
Capacity building	2.619	725	1.162	9.4%	160%
Programme coordination and monitoring and evaluation	2.591	4.148	6.090	49.3%	147%
Total	17.349	17.349	12.354	100%	71%

Source: PADEF Programme Completion Report, 2019, Table 17.

¹ FIDA. République du Congo, Programme d'appui au développement des filières agricoles (PADEF), Document de conception, 20 Janvier 2012.

III. Review of findings

<i>PCR finding</i>	<i>PCR Rating</i>
A. Core Criteria	
Relevance	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Project Completion Report (PCR) rightly notes that the objectives of PADEF were consistent with the National Development Plans 2012-2016 and 2018-2022. The PCR also affirms that PADEF was in line with the IFAD Country strategic opportunities programme, by adopting a national coverage on the intervention areas of the IFAD-funded projects PRODER 1, PRODER SOUTH and PRODER 3. In fact, PADEF was explicitly conceived as a framework programme, for the sake of a “unified governance framework”, partly taking over the mentioned PRODER operations that were still ongoing at the time of appraisal, as the Project Design Report² pointed out (see also Paragraphs 22-24 and 34). The underlying intention of bringing all IFAD operations under one programmatic umbrella was a worthy consideration. 2. Another key trait of PADEF was its distinct drive towards integrating primary producers into value chains, dedicating close to 30 per cent of the entire programme budget to the respective component at appraisal. This was consistent with the programme goal of improving the living conditions and incomes of small agricultural producers. 3. However, PADEF was meant to intervene in 13 different value chains. This proved to be a challenge given the lack of both commercial expertise and rural infrastructure. The PCR is critical about the national extent of programme area and unclear implementation arrangements. Together with the intricate organizational set-up on a national scale, using programme implementation units of three other IFAD operations (the mentioned PRODERS), the design was overly complex. Moreover, the Republic of Congo was hit by a serious economic crisis caused by the fall of crude oil prices in 2014. Although the design report of PADEF states that the country had overcome a post-conflict situation with the new millennium, it is not unreasonable to conclude that PADEF design and institutional set-up was not consistent with the postulate of simplicity. In a country with a fragility index of close to 100 (rank 32 in 2011 and rank 29 in 2019), this would have been an adequate choice.³ 4. During implementation, the dimension of value chain promotion was substantially neglected, despite the fact that investments into simple, but improved, retting techniques of cassava would have been an obvious choice (paragraphs 8 and 24). Instead, the PCR is explicit by stating that PADEF was mostly providing disease-free cassava cuttings, which was of course strategically important as well. This is mirroring the fact that the processing and marketing component had a disbursement rate of 18 per cent only, against a budget that was already substantially reduced after the MTR. Thus, PADEF, regarding design, resource reallocation and implementation, was not in a measure to make tangible inroads into value chain development 5. Based on the argument of consistency with the National Development Plans, the PCR proposes a relevance rating of highly satisfactory. However, the narrative and facts and figures of the PCR induce this PCRV to rate programme relevance as only <i>satisfactory</i> (5), one point lower than the PCR. 	5
Effectiveness	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. A clear logframe and a limited set of SMART⁴ indicators facilitate the assessment of effectiveness. In the case of PADEF, the initial logframe was relatively concise, 	

² FIDA. République du Congo, Programme d'appui au développement des filières agricoles (PADEF), Document de conception, 20 Janvier 2012.

³ <https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/>

⁴ Simple, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound.

PCR finding	PCR Rating
<p>relying on 24 indicators, three of them without quantified magnitudes. The MTR⁵ increased the number of indicators to 50, of which about half were not quantified. Appendix 1 of the PCR considers 83 indicators (excluding figures on programme outreach: 76 indicators). Out of the latter, 12 indicators had no target and 32 were not measured at completion. The assessment of effectiveness must therefore be taken with some caution.</p> <p>7. Effectiveness and output delivery under the first component are assessed as satisfactory for the distribution of disease-free cassava cuttings (73 per cent of the target), but for the supply of yam seeds, no targets had been set. The support of plantain and banana growing has only reached 45 per cent of the target. The supply of poultry is deemed satisfactory by the PCR (90 per cent of the target) while an analogous action for small ruminants appears to be variable, with no target set nor measured.</p> <p>8. On the second component relative to processing and marketing of agricultural products, the PCR is particularly clear on the remaining bottlenecks, at programme completion, regarding the retting of cassava. This is a process requiring important amounts of clean water to remove the cyanogenic glucosides. The increased cassava productivity, due to the supply of disease-free cuttings, has thus not been accompanied by the required value addition. The PCR estimates an overall output delivery of about 30 per cent of component 2, with possible partial results in the range of 40 per cent. The support to the processing of inland fishery products has remained inconclusive as the IFAD-co-financed Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Project has taken over this sub-component, with just one community fishery centre set-up by the programme.</p> <p>9. The capacity building component of PADEF had a five-year target of training 300 public service agents. At completion, the PCR relates that 56 agricultural sector heads and other cadres had been trained. More important, PADEF intended to strengthen 195 "economic and community interest groups" (GIECs) and to coach 445 existing GIEC, 70 GIEC unions and 100 inland fishery groups. None of these targets were achieved, the lowest performance rate was 15 per cent with the fishery groups. The PCR also notes that PADEF was not in a position to make the GIECs evolve into unions in a meaningful way.</p> <p>10. The PCR highlights the fact that the number of beneficiary households was higher at completion (21,521) than the appraisal target of 15,000. However, this is in contradiction with Appendix 1 of the PCR where the number of effective beneficiary households is indicated as 8,513. Outreach in terms of participating households was therefore lower than anticipated, and the declared programme objective of "improving the production, processing and marketing capacities of selected value chains" was only partially met. The PCR rates programme effectiveness as moderately satisfactory. Given the above, the PCRV adopts a rating of effectiveness of <i>moderately unsatisfactory (3)</i>, one point lower than the PCR.</p>	3
Efficiency	
<p>11. The PCR goes some lengths in assessing programme efficiency. It indicates an effectiveness lag of 19 months, substantially higher than the IFAD average of 12.4 months in 2011. The PCR also looks into the internal return rates of the project, both at appraisal and at completion. With 17 and 16 per cent, respectively, the PCR concludes that this was highly satisfactory. Conventional wisdom, however, suggests that agricultural investment projects should have internal rate of returns of around 30 per cent to compensate for the inherent risks. These were considerable in the case of PADEF.</p> <p>12. With 15,000 beneficiary households estimated at appraisal, the per beneficiary household cost would have been US\$1,623, using the figures of Table 1. With an effective disbursement of US\$14,841 million and only 8,513 beneficiary</p>	2

⁵ FIDA. République du Congo, Programme d'appui au développement des filières agricoles (PADEF), Rapport de revue à mi-parcours, 14/02/2016.

PCR finding	PCR Rating
<p>households, the effective per beneficiary household cost was US\$1,743. Compared to the precursor projects PRODER 1, PRODER 2 and PRODER SOUTH,⁶ the PADEF per household cost is substantially higher.</p> <p>13. Another indicator of programme efficiency is the ratio of programme management to total costs. PADEF comes close to 50 per cent. It is difficult to justify such a proportion, although one of the precursor projects in the Republic of Congo, PRODER 1, displayed 56 per cent of project management to total costs, with government funding devoting a proportion of 81 per cent to project administration.⁷</p> <p>14. The PCR carefully weighs the efficiency criteria and concludes that programme efficiency of PADEF was unsatisfactory. This PCRV concurs and proposes a rating of <i>unsatisfactory (2)</i> as well.</p>	
Rural poverty impact	
<p>15. The PCR displays income figures that appear to document the profound impacts of the falling crude oil prices from 2014 onwards. Aggregate incomes of programme households fell by 40 per cent between 2015 and 2018, livestock incomes by 83 per cent and fish farming incomes by 25 per cent. According to the comparisons of the PCR, aggregate incomes of PADEF beneficiary households fell 13 less than the national averages. It is not clear, however, whether these figures refer to nominal or real prices. The household property indices also fell between 2015 and 2018, with the exception of e.g. cell phones and televisions sets.</p> <p>16. The PCR infers that PADEF households had more and better market access and were more likely to be clients of a microfinance institution and of agricultural extension services, compared to control households. An analogous trend is documented for members of GIECs. On the other hand, the 30 loan and credit groups supported by the project, despite their contribution to the formation of human and social capital, were not in a position to make inroads as recognized players for agricultural and value chain relevant credit.</p> <p>17. In terms of food security, PADEF survey data suggest that chronic and acute child malnutrition did not improve over programme life. The PCR plausibly points to the deterioration of incomes as mentioned in Paragraph 14 above. On the other hand, agricultural productivity over time improved for cassava in the PADEF area, visibly more than in comparable areas of Cameroon and West Africa. The PCR notes typical cassava yields of 30-40 tons/ha under PADEF against 25 tons/ha in in the cited comparison cases. For yam, maize and soybeans, such positive differences are not on record.</p> <p>18. The PCR makes the case that PRODEV has positive impacts with regards to the preparation of disease-free cassava cuttings, thanks to conventions with the National Institute for Agricultural Research. It is acknowledged that these contributions were possible also thanks to the activities of the PRODER precursor projects. The PCR also infers that the GIECs and the loan and credit associations may play a stronger role in future rural development strategies of the government, albeit without precise references.</p> <p>19. Drawing on the above highlights, this PCRV proposes a rating of <i>moderately satisfactory (4)</i> with regards to rural development impacts, in line with the assessment of the PCR.</p>	4
Sustainability of benefits	
<p>20. The PCR perceives a number of factors that foster prospects for sustainability, such as the political will of the government and the parliament to diversify the economy of the Congo. The ratification of the National Development Plan 2018-</p>	

⁶ IFAD. Republic of Congo, Rural Development Project in the Departments of Niari, Bouenza and Lékoumou, PRODER-SUD, Project Completion Report Validation, December 2016.

⁷ IFAD. République du Congo, Projet de Développement Rural dans les Départements des Plateaux, de la Cuvette et de la Cuvette Ouest (PRODER I), PCR, March 2013.

PCR finding	PCR Rating
<p>2022 is a move seen as relevant for the accountability of the government. The GIECs are apparently also recognized as relatively autonomous actors playing a role in the supply of adequate planting material.</p> <p>21. However, the PCR also remarks that the intuitional set-up of the public sector and the limited capacities of the human resources continue to be significant obstacles against sustainability. This is underlined by the statement that only one hundred GIECs and ten loan and credit groups were deemed viable at programme completion.</p> <p>22. Another factor depressing sustainability is, as the PCR notes, the failure of the set-up of community development and management committees, inter alia responsible for the maintenance of roads and other infrastructure. The result was that most rehabilitated roads were in an advanced state of degradation at programme completion. Given the above, both the PCR and the PCRV rate the sustainability of benefits as <i>moderately unsatisfactory (3)</i>.</p>	3
B. Other performance criteria	
Innovation	
<p>23. The programme design report of PADEF explicitly coined PADEF as innovative because it intended to implement a framework programme together with the three PRODER projects that were all due for completion between 2012 and 2015. In this way, PADEF was designed to use remaining funds of these precursor projects and to "scale-up" their effects. The underlying intention, according to the design report, was to accompany the national and departmental authorities in their agendas of agricultural and rural development at macro and meso level.</p> <p>24. The PCR perceives the major innovative thrust of PADEF in the fact that it intended to foster a value chain approach in 13 such value chains. The same PCR recognizes that this main innovative element did not materialize. The most striking omission is that PADEF failed to invest into simple techniques for cassava retting, an obvious opportunity to add value to a key staple crop of the country. Not surprisingly, the benefit-cost ratio of retted cassava only reached 1.04 while the benefit-cost ratio of bananas was at 1.83. As a matter of fact, the MTR reduced the budget allocation of respective component 2 from US\$5.1 million to US\$3.2 million, of which only US\$0.6 million were used at the end. This reduction was mirrored by a substantial increase of funds for Component 1, thus back to primary agricultural production and away from value addition (Table 1). In its conclusions, the MTR justified this move with the fact that PADEF was a "programme at risk".</p> <p>25. While framework programmes may be adequate in environments of proven implementation capacities, this was apparently not the case with PADEF. There is similar evidence on a framework programme in Benin, PADER, implemented between 2007 and 2012.⁸ As the reallocation of resources after MTR made the support of even short value chains close to impossible, the innovative dimension of PADEF is doubtful. While the PCR proposes a rating of moderately satisfactory, this PCRV assigns a rating of <i>moderately unsatisfactory (3)</i>.</p>	3
Scaling up	
<p>26. As mentioned in Paragraph 22, the PADEF design inferred an upscaling dimension of the three PRODER projects. This is not implausible and might also have been adequate with a number of precursor projects mostly geared towards the supply side of smallholder agriculture, despite the respective caveat in Paragraph 24. According to the PCR, it is likely that the transfer of input supply functions to GIECs, a PADEF feature, will become a government strategy. In its intentions and design, the upscaling dimension of PADEF was visible. The PCR and this PCRV therefore propose a rating of <i>moderately satisfactory (4)</i>.</p>	4

⁸ IFAD. Republic of Benin, Rural Development Support Programme (PADER), PCR, October 2016.

PCR finding	PCR Rating
Gender equality and women's empowerment	
<p>27. PADEF had an explicit targeting strategy for women and youths as evidenced in the programme design report. The target of having 50 per cent of female beneficiaries was overshoot, in aggregate terms of receiving programme services (52 per cent women). Appendix 1 of the PCR displays the related figures. They suggest that women were frequently more often trained than men. This is the case regarding crops and small farm animals.</p> <p>28. The PCR mentions cases of GIECs that are led by women. Women are represented in the governing bodies of all 30 loans and savings groups. There are however portions of Appendix 1 of the PCR where the reader may wonder whether all figures reflect reality, though. This is the case with figures presented about access to rural financial services where reported numbers of male beneficiaries are equal, of both savings and credit services, while the number of male members is shown to be over 10,000 against less than 400 female members.</p> <p>29. Weighing the above, this PCR rates gender equality and women's empowerment as <i>moderately satisfactory (4)</i>. This is one point below the PCR rating.</p>	4
Environment and natural resources management	
<p>30. PADEF was deemed as relatively environment-neutral at design. The PCR does not expand much on this issue but makes the case that the preparation of disease-free cassava cuttings, banana shoots and yam seeds did not involve the use of mineral fertilizers and pesticides. The introduction of Mucuna (<i>Mucuna pruriens</i>) may have improved soil fertility as the plant fixes atmospheric nitrogen.</p> <p>31. A testimonial in the PCR of a female GIEC president suggests that Mucuna may have contributed to make agriculture more sedentary, as opposed to the prevailing slash-and-burn techniques. The same resource person also plausibly remarks that, by becoming more sedentary, it was making more sense to invest into cassava retting basins.</p> <p>32. The PCR rates this evaluation criterion as moderately satisfactory. Based on the presented evidence, this PCR concurs and aligns its rating to <i>moderately satisfactory (4)</i>.</p>	4
Adaptation to Climate Change	
<p>33. The PADEF design considered the adaption to climate change only in generic terms and under capacity building of communities. The PCR notes that PADEF was a net emitter of carbon dioxide equivalents, which was possible to ascertain thanks to the ex-post use of the FAO carbon balance tool EXACT.⁹ The PCR took into account the land use change (intensification) over five years, a capitalization period of 15 years and the greenhouse gas emissions caused by poultry dejections.</p> <p>34. It would have been possible to compensate the net emissions by including a reforestation component, which was not the case. The PCR therefore rated the adaptation to climate change as moderately unsatisfactory. The arguments presented are concise, but credible. The PCR also proposes a rating of <i>moderately unsatisfactory (3)</i>.</p>	3
C. Overall Programme Achievement	
<p>35. PADEF was explicitly designed as a framework programme, partly taking over objectives and components – as well as residual financial resources – from three precursor projects, PRODER 1, PRODER SOUTH and PRODER 3. The design report does not mention that such an approach was not new: the PADER framework programme in Benin as mentioned in Paragraph 24. The 2016 PCR of PADER assessed this approach as inconclusive, lacking clear attributions between resources and results to obtain, and devoid of adequate resources. In a way, PADEF was obliged to take over also conceptual and managerial liabilities from</p>	

⁹ <http://www.fao.org/tc/exact/carbon-balance-tool-ex-act/en/>

PCR finding	PCR Rating
<p>its precursors, e.g. from PRODER 1, which displayed 56 per cent of programme management to total costs (Paragraph 13).</p> <p>36. A second challenge of PADEF was that it could not substantiate its drive towards value addition. Addressing 13 value chains at once, in a fragile context marred by food insecurity, it was less than realistic to venture in a thematic area that was relatively new and required commercial clout. When the first years of programme life were that of a “programme at risk” the MTR drastically cut the resources for the value chain strengthening component. As a consequence, PADEF significantly fell short of its own ambitions.</p> <p>37. Effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability are rated in the unsatisfactory range. In view of the above, this PCR rates overall programme achievement as <i>moderately unsatisfactory (3)</i>, one point below the PCR rating.</p>	3
D. Performance of Partners	
IFAD	
<p>38. The programme design report suggests that IFAD was strongly banking on the Republic of Congo after the return to peace and the recovering gross domestic product growth rates due to the promising trends of crude oil prices. PADEF was meant to remediate implementation problems of its three precursor projects, and was thus conceived as a framework programme. The resulting programme design was not realistic, lacked simplicity and should have learned from the PADER experience in Benin from 2007 and 2012.</p> <p>39. The MTR of November 2015 responded to the symptoms of a programme at risk by shifting resources from value chain development and capacity building to the support of primary agricultural production and – in a significant way – to programme coordination. This might be explained by a reaction not unusual in stress situations: shifting back to known territories (production) instead of venturing into novel areas (value chains). In any case, it appears that the number of supervision and implementation support missions was sufficient. There were four supervision, one MTR and seven implementation support missions in a time lapse of only four and a half years.</p> <p>40. The consulted supervision mission reports display a considerable wealth of pertinent information on the framework programme and the related precursor projects. For instance, the June 2014 supervision report¹⁰ gave instructions to repair water supplies built with PRODER SOUTH that were non-functional to the extent of 70 per cent. The June 2015 supervision report¹¹ expressed alarm over the accumulation of management and completion problems of the precursor projects, including audit reports with substantial reserves. As for PADEF, the low IFAD loan disbursement of 18 per cent mirrored unsatisfactory ratings for programme management and compliance with procurement and compliance covenants. The supervision mission recommended a three-month emergency plan until the MTR.</p> <p>41. As highlighted in Paragraph 38, IFAD deployed a substantial number of supervision and implementation support missions and tried hard to improve programme performance. The real causes for the less than satisfactory programme achievements may need to be looked for in the design of PRODEV, partly also in its ambition to straighten out problems of precursor projects as a framework programme. However, this does not explain why IFAD did not vigorously respond to the fact that the proportion of programme administration to total cost of PADEF itself was persistently high, close to 50 per cent at completion and as high as 66 per cent according to the cited supervision report dated April 2015. The recommendation given to the government at that time was</p>	3

¹⁰ FIDA. République du Congo, Programme d'appui au développement des filières agricoles (PADEF), Rapport de supervision, juin 2014.

¹¹ FIDA. République du Congo, Programme d'appui au développement des filières agricoles (PADEF), Rapport de supervision, juin 2015.

PCR finding	PCR Rating
to revise cost tables more carefully. Given the above, this PCR rates IFAD performance as <i>moderately unsatisfactory (3)</i> . This is one point below the PCR rating.	
Government	
42. The PCR notes that government performance was compromised by the less than 40 per cent transfer of counterpart funds, the lack of supporting MAEF agencies at departmental level and insufficient anchoring of the precursor programme family under PADEF. The consulted IFAD supervision reports are much more outspoken about the management and coordination problems. To be fair, the managerial complexities of a framework programme may have made programme coordination more difficult.	3
43. On a technical and administrative level, the supervision reports reflect multiple concerns over the lack of technical and administrative skills needed for the management of a programme cluster. The programme management unit worked in isolation and did not enjoy the full support of MAEF. The suspension of funding by IFAD in the last year of programme implementation is indicative of the size of problems prevailing also at the end of programme life.	
44. Consequently, this PCR rates this criterion as <i>moderately unsatisfactory (3)</i> , one point lower than PMD.	

IV. Assessment of PCR Quality

PCR finding	Rating
Scope	
45. The PCR contains all chapters, sections, and annexes as per the Guidelines for Programme Completion Review (2015) and provides substantive and relevant content. <i>This PCR rates the scope of the PCR as satisfactory (5).</i>	5
Quality	
46. The PCR process was inclusive of a variety of stakeholders, as evidenced by Appendix 9 on the restitution meeting. Other points enhancing PCR quality are the due consideration of benefits and costs at programme completion, the use of the FAO tool on carbon balances EXACT, and the occasional comparison with control groups related to some programme impacts.	4
47. On the other hand, the PCR presents conflicting quantitative data. One example is the attended target population, which oscillates between 21,521 and 8,513 beneficiary households. The differences evident in Table 1 and 2 in terms of effective disbursements, between financiers and components, also make a sound assessment of programme effectiveness and efficiency difficult	
48. In light of these shortcomings, <i>the PCR rates the quality of the PCR as moderately satisfactory (4).</i>	
Lessons	
49. The PCR contains relevant lessons on the project. While recognizing that a framework programme might have been useful for the capitalization of assets from the precursor projects, the PCR is critical on several points. It clearly finds the inclusion of 13 value chains as excessive and advocates more thematic and geographical focus. Moreover, it finds that the approach of fostering value chains was not professional enough because it did not reflect the value-addition nature of functioning value chains. It also deplores the absence of professional actors from existing value chains.	5
50. These lessons are found to be relevant and this PCR rates the lessons of the PCR <i>as satisfactory (5).</i>	

PCR finding	Rating
Candour	
51. Narrative objectivity and candour of results reporting. The PCR narrative is relatively critical, but the ratings given by the PCR do not always reflect the narrative. A good example is the rating of relevance, where the PCR exclusively seems to consider the consistency of the programme objectives with national policies, without taking into account design deficiencies, which are on the other hand clearly pointed to under lessons.	4
52. Consequently, this PCRV rates the candour of the PCR <i>as moderately satisfactory (4)</i> .	

V. Final Remarks

Issues for IOE follow up (if any)
53. No issues have been identified for follow up by IOE.

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. 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. 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. 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	4	0
Project performance			
Relevance	6	5	-1
Effectiveness	4	3	-1
Efficiency	2	2	0
Sustainability of benefits	3	3	0
Project performance^b	3.75	3.25	-0.5
Other performance criteria			
Gender equality and women's empowerment	5	4	-1
Innovation	4	3	-1
Scaling up	4	4	0
Environment and natural resources management	4	4	0
Adaptation to climate change	3	3	0
Overall project achievement^c	4	3	-1

Performance of partners^d			
IFAD	4	3	-1
Government	4	3	-1
Average net disconnect			-0.5

^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.

Ratings of the project completion report quality

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

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.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

GIEC	Group of economic and communitarian interest
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IOE	IFAD Independent Office of Evaluation
MAEF	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries
MTR	Mid-term review
OFID	OPEC Funds for International Development
PADEF	Agricultural Value Chains Support Development Programme
PCR	Project Completion Report
PCRv	Project Completion Report Validation
PRODER	Rural development projects (precursor project Funded by IFAD9)

Bibliography

- FIDA. 2012. République du Congo, Programme d'appui au développement des filières agricoles (PADEF), Document de conception, 20 janvier 2012.
- _____. 2013. République du Congo, Projet de Développement Rural dans les Départements des Plateaux, de la Cuvette et de la Cuvette Ouest (PRODER I), PCR/V, March 2013.
- _____. 2014. République du Congo, Programme d'appui au développement des filières agricoles (PADEF), Rapport de supervision, juin 2014.
- _____. 2015. République du Congo, Programme d'appui au développement des filières agricoles (PADEF), Rapport de supervision, juin 2015.
- _____. 2016. République du Congo, Programme d'appui au développement des filières agricoles (PADEF), Rapport de revue à mi-parcours, 14 février 2016.
- _____. 2016. Republic of Congo, Rural Development Project in the Departments of Niari, Bouenza and Lékoumou, PRODER-SUD, Project Completion Report Validation, December 2016.
- _____. 2016. Republic of Benin, Rural Development Support Programme (PADER), PCR/V, October 2016.

<http://www.fao.org/tc/exact/carbon-balance-tool-ex-act/en/>

<https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/>