Report Number: ICRR0021669

1. Project Data

Project ID	Project Name
P102329	IN: Rajasthan Rural Livelihoods Project
Country	**Practice Area(Lead)**
India	Agriculture

L/C/TF Number(s)	Closing Date (Original)	Total Project Cost (USD)
IDA-48590	31-Oct-2016	109,905,124.70
Bank Approval Date	**Closing Date (Actual)**	
11-Jan-2011	15-Oct-2018	

	IBRD/IDA (USD)	Grants (USD)
Original Commitment	162,700,000.00	0.00
Revised Commitment	117,671,737.04	0.00
Actual	109,905,124.70	0.00

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2. Project Objectives and Components

a. Objectives

The Project Development Objective (PDO) as stated in the Financing Agreement (Schedule 1, page 4) and in the Project Appraisal Document (PAD, page 5):

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"To enhance the economic opportunities and empowerment of the rural poor, with a focus on women and marginalized groups, in selected districts of Rajasthan." The PDO in the PAD mentions 17 districts as the target area.

This assessment is based on the two objectives; (1) To enhance economic opportunities of the rural poor, with a focus on women and marginalized groups; and (2) To enhance empowerment of the rural poor, with a focus on women and marginalized groups.

b. Were the project objectives/key associated outcome targets revised during implementation?

No

c. Will a split evaluation be undertaken?

No

d. Components

There were four components (PAD, page vii and pages 6-7).

1. Institution Building and Social Empowerment. Appraisal estimate US$51.20 million. Actual cost US$21.70 million. This component aimed at helping mobilization of the poor into Self Help Groups (SHGs) and developing their capacity to initiate livelihood activities. (SHGs or affinity-based groups refers to groups with either common interests or located next to each other, formed voluntarily, for serving economic interests of members through inter-loaning savings and leveraging capital from financial institutions). There were four sub-components: (I) establishing project facilitation teams for implementing village level activities; (ii) mobilizing communities through participatory methods for identifying beneficiaries and helping them to organize into SHGs; (iii) facilitating community institutions for supporting formation of SHGs, cluster development organizations, producer organizations and area federations; and (iv) capacity building of community institutions.

2. Community Investment Support. Appraisal estimate US$100.80 million. Actual cost US$82.00 million. This component supported asset creation of SHGs. There were three sub-components: (i) funding community-based organizations for providing loans to members for undertaking livelihood enhancing initiatives and supporting federations to acquire facilities and other assets for leveraging additional resources from other sources; (ii) partnership development through engaging sector support organizations for facilitating linkages to commercial bank financing; and (iii) capacity building for activities that could be scaled-up.

3. Skills Development and Employment Promotion. Appraisal estimate US$6.30 million. Actual cost US$5.60 million. This component aimed at creating employment opportunities to the unemployed youth, through a structured mechanism for developing skills.

4. Climate change adaptation. Appraisal estimate US$10.60 million. Revised estimate US$1.00 million. Actual cost US$0.00 million. This component aimed at implementing drought adaptation mechanisms at the state, district and local levels, for delivering assistance to drought-affected communities through coordination with other government programs: There were two sub-components; (i) implementing pilot interventions on climate adaptation approaches at the field level for leveraging support from other government programs (such as under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act); (ii) capacity building for policy support on climate change. Given the limited implementation progress, the scope of this activity was narrowed considerably to supporting only research on climate change adaptation through the first project restructuring. Further, given no progress despite the narrowing of its scope, this activity was dropped through a Level 2 restructuring (discussed in section 2e).

5. Project implementation support. Appraisal estimate US$14.90 million. Actual cost US$13.30 million. This component provided implementation support in the areas of project management, governance management and monitoring and evaluation.

e. Comments on Project Cost, Financing, Borrower Contribution, and Dates

Project cost. The appraisal estimate was US$183.80 million. The revised estimate was US$133.47 million. The actual cost was US$122.60 million. The appraisal estimate was revised in January 2014 for two reasons: One, exchange rate savings since project effectiveness, due to the significant depreciation of the Indian Rupee (INR) (from INR 44 to the dollar at appraisal to INR 62) and two, implementation of the climate change activity had made no progress. As a result, this activity was eventually dropped through an amendment to the Financing Agreement in April 2016

Project financing. The project was financed by an IDA credit of US$162.70 million. US$40.00 million of the credit was cancelled. The revised estimate of the IDA credit US$117.67 million. Amount disbursed US$109.90 million.

Borrower contribution. The appraisal estimate US$21.00 million. Revised estimate US$15.80 million. The actual contribution was US$12.67 million.

Dates. The project was approved on January 11, 2011, became effective on June 22,2011 and scheduled to close on October 31,2016. The project closed two years later on October 15, 2018.

Restructuring. There were three Level 2 restructurings. These changes were made through the first restructuring on January 27, 2014. (i) The scope of the climate change adaptation activity was narrowed due to the delays associated with implementing this activity; and (ii) US$40.00 million of the loan was formally cancelled.

Additional changes were made through the second restructuring on March 30, 2016: (i) Given the limited progress in the climate change activity, this activity was dropped; (ii) The allocation to Community Investment Support activities was increased to support scaling up livelihoods activities and pilot efforts on convergence with selected government programs; (iii) The results framework was revised to add a core results indicator focusing directly on the number of women benefitted, drop the intermediate indicator related to the climate change adaptation component and amend the annual implementation period due to the extension of the closing date: (iv) The closing date was extended by two years for completing ongoing activities, that had been subject to substantial implementation delays at the outset, along with continued slow implementation progress that would have made it impossible to achieve the expected outcomes by the initial project closing date.

The following changes were made through the third restructuring on March 6, 2018; (i) A number of existing PDO indicators were ambiguously worded, leaving room for different interpretations and making measurement of outcomes difficult. Hence, a number of existing PDO indicators were dropped, added or refined to remove the ambiguities and to better measure outcomes along the three PDO objectives of targeting poor and marginalized populations, enhancing their economic opportunities and aspects of their social empowerment; and (ii) There was reallocation of costs across three of the four project subcomponents; (a) institution building and social empowerment: (b) Community investment support: and (c) Skills development and empowerment promotion, based on the expenditures so far.

3. Relevance of Objectives

Rationale

Rajasthan in the north-western part of India, is a Low-Income state, with three quarters of its population in rural areas. The state has a high proportion of marginalized groups, with scheduled caste and scheduled tribe population accounting for 17% and 13% of the population (as compared to 16% and 8% at the national level). A key aspect of the state government strategy was to promote projects and programs for the rural poor, that focused on jobs, skills development and self-employment, through state and centrally sponsored schemes and donor financed initiatives. Many of these programs for the rural poor were implemented

through various community-based models. The geographical disparity of poverty in the state and the recognition that economic growth alone may not suffice for reducing poverty, highlighted the need for targeted interventions for reducing poverty. The project which focused on 17 districts in southern and eastern Rajasthan, with high incidence of poverty, are relevant to the government strategy.

The national government's 11th Five Year Plan for 2007-2012 articulated the need for promoting inclusive growth and specifically acknowledged the need for creating employment opportunities for individuals belonging to disadvantaged groups. The 12th Five Year Plan for 2012 to 2017, besides reiterating the need for providing economic opportunities for the rural poor, identified the need for their financial inclusion and skills development. The PDO is also aligned with the key focus areas of the "Strategy for New India @75"- which replaced the Five-Year Plans and is now the government's strategy for the period leading to 2022- “of socio-development of depriving social groups and promoting gender equity".

The PDOs are well-aligned with the Bank strategy. At appraisal, the PDOs were relevant to three pillars of the Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) for 2009-2012: (i) achieving inclusive growth; (ii) ensuring sustainable development; and (iii) enhancing service delivery to the poor. The CAS also highlighted the need for Bank's involvement in those states, where the incidence of poverty was higher, both in absolute numbers of people and as percentage of population. The Low-Income States in India were a specific focus of the Country Partnership Framework for 2012-2017. The PDO is relevant to the focus Area 1 of the Country Partnership Framework for 2018-2022: "Promoting more resource-efficient, inclusive and diversified growth in rural areas".

Although the PDO was relevant, it has already been noted that the project components were not well integrated to achieve the PDO. For instance, the climate change activity was not integrated with other component activities. Consequently, this activity's link to the PDO was tenuous. Given the weak capacity of the counterpart department, this activity was dropped during implementation. The second restructuring paper noted that “the Government of Rajasthan is moving towards consolidating its climate change adaptation work through a nodal department with the required technical capacity” (pages 7 and 8).

Rating

Substantial

4. Achievement of Objectives (Efficacy)

OBJECTIVE 1

Objective

To enhance economic opportunities of the rural poor, with a focus on women and marginalized groups;

Rationale

Theory of change. Activities such as establishing project facilitation teams aimed at implementing activities at the village level. Funding community- based organizations for providing loans to members and engaging sector support organizations for facilitating linkages to commercial bank financing and capacity building of village organizations, were aimed at ensuring that loans are invested for income-generating activities. These activities were expected to enhance the economic opportunities for women and other marginalized groups. The outcomes are relevant to the long-term development outcome of inclusive growth.

Outputs. (ICR pages 17- 21 and 43-39- 47).

These outputs were realized or exceeded their targets.

- Three levels of Community Based Organizations were created to provide services to members in response to their needs, by the project: SHGs; Village Organizations or Utthan Sansthan (referred to in the PAD as Community Development Organizations) and Community level federations (referred to in the PAD as Area Federations) (ICR, paragraph 39).
- 55,562 SHGs of rural poor women were established. Of this 50,167 SHGs were functioning when the project closed. This exceeded the target of 40,000. The SHGs were further divided into Village Organizations (VOs) and Community Level Federations (CLFs) at the cluster level.
- 4,884 VOs were functioning when the project closed, exceeding the target of 4,000. The VOs were responsible for providing services to the SHGs and their members (such as managing revolving funds for on-lending to SHGs, aiding in conflict resolution and highlighting the issues faced by the community in public and government forums).
- 208 CLFs were functioning when the project closed, exceeding the target of 120. The CLFs are formal institutions registered under the Rajasthan Cooperative Society Act, for providing core services to VOs and SHGs. The services, included facilitating members' access to financial services through rotation of on-lending funds across SHGs and VOs and loans from commercial banks, providing technical assistance to support members' livelihood investments and supporting them in accessing entitlements.
- 62% of SHGs obtained financial assistance/credit from banks. This exceeded the target of 50%.
- 80% of SHGs accessed credit support from Community Development Organizations, as targeted.
- 63% of Grade A SHG members obtained credit support for productive activity. This exceeded the target of 40%. (Grade A SHGs refers to the SHGs meeting all the assessment criteria such as, holding regular meetings, making regular payments on loans and maintaining updated financial records).
- About 11,273 youth (including over 33% women) from the project villages were placed in appropriate jobs as a result of project efforts. This was short of the target of 17,000 youth.
- 100 young professionals (fresh university graduates) on two-year contracts were recruited for coordinating and supporting the project facilitation team.

- The project also entered into a partnership with the United Nations Women on Gender Justice pilot. This pilot promoted a trained cadre of women to engage with women's SHGs on issues of gender rights, justice and access to entitlements.

The following activity was not realized.

- Producer organizations (POs) had not been established at project closure as targeted (target of ten producer organizations). As the ICR notes “The strategy of promoting POs was pursued by the project as a means of promoting households into a higher-level economic activity. However, of the 12 POs promoted in the agriculture and non-farm sector, none were financially viable as of project closing.” According to the ICR “These POs were initiated without adequate planning and needed dedicated technical expertise” to be sustained (paragraph 103).

Outcome

- According to the ICR (Table 4), 654,123 women from poor households across 18 districts, organized into SHG's, benefitted from project activities. This exceeded both the original and revised targets of 300,000 and 350,000. The beneficiaries included 65% of the marginalized group (including 48% scheduled tribes and 17% scheduled castes). This exceeded the target of 55%.
- According to the ICR (table 4), 40% of the SHG members developed additional productive assets at project closure. This was short of the target of 50%.

Rating
Substantial

OBJECTIVE 2
Objective

To enhance empowerment of the rural poor, with a focus on women and marginalized groups

Rationale

Theory of change. Mobilizing poor into SHGs for village-level activities, creating assets for SHGs and supporting federations to acquire facilities and assets for leveraging additional resources from the banking system, together with capacity building of community- based organizations, were relevant for empowering the rural poor (including women and marginalized groups). The outcomes of these activities were relevant to the long-term development objective of inclusive growth.

Outputs.

In addition to the outputs described above for Objective 1 which were also relevant to this objective, the following outputs were uniquely relevant to this objective.

- 770 Bank Sakhis (a special community cadre in bank branches) were trained and deployed by the project to facilitate SHG member transactions and commercial loan applications. Another initiative supported by the project was promotion of Business Correspondents who facilitated doorstep transactions for SHG members. The ICR (paragraph 45) notes that the project entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with two banks, under which 203 Business Correspondents served 62,534 households.
- 285 Credit Risk and Banking Management Committees that monitored bank loan defaults, resolved operational issues and acted as a mediator between SHGs and banks, were functional at project closure. They leveraged an additional Indian Rupee 2,062.20 million (equivalent of US$29.00 million) as credit to SHGs from the formal financial sector (ICR, paragraph 45).
- 92% of VOs in the project villages managed project funds efficiently, exceeding the target of 80%.
- 93% of Community Development Organizations received financial services from their respective Community level federations, exceeding the target of 70%.
- US$58.00 million of funds were managed by functioning CLFs for on-ending to VOs at closure, exceeding the target of US$35.00 million. On average, each CLF was managing over US$279,000 through trained and empowered community members and leaders and on-lending that money to rural poor women Self Help Groups.

Outcomes.

- 85% of Grade A SHG members (including rural poor women and population from the marginalized groups) were provided with credit from inter-loaning within their groups. This exceeded the target of 70%. The ICR (paragraph 47) notes that according to the Monitoring Study conducted in June 2018, 63.3% of the households used the loan for financing household activities and the remainder for consumption purposes. 50% of those who obtained loans for livelihood activities did so for purchase of livestock, followed by 32% for agricultural investments and 16% for non-farm activities.
- 40% of project beneficiaries had other productive assets at project closure. This was short of the target of 50%. The ICR (paragraphs 19-20) notes that part of the credit was working capital loans that did not create assets and that the project interventions focusing on livelihood activities did not sufficiently stress on creating productive assets.
- 654,123 women project beneficiaries accessed credit under the project, exceeding both the original and revised targets of 300,000 and 350,000.
- 65% percent of the women project beneficiaries belonged to marginalized groups. This exceeded the target of 55%.

Rating

Substantial

Rationale

Given that expected outcomes of the two objectives were largely achieved, overall efficacy is rated as Substantial.

Overall Efficacy Rating

Substantial

5. Efficiency

An economic analysis was conducted for the ICR using the same methodology used in the PAD for livelihood interventions (such as for activities associated with purchase of livestock, agricultural investments and non-farm activities). These interventions accounted for 86% of the appraisal estimate and 89% of the actual cost but these percentages overstate considerably the relative importance of these aspects of the project. The economic project benefits were assumed to come from: (i) economic diversification and an increase in livelihood income; (ii) improved access to credit sources for SHG members due to the rotation of funds between the three tiers of community institutions created by the project: SHGs, VOs and CLFs; (iii) improved integration with markets and institutions for SHG members; and (iv) Community Driven Development through participatory management. The directly measurable improved economic returns were due to the increases in gross incomes realized by beneficiaries of improved livelihoods, but the actual number of beneficiaries was well short of the target. The ex post Economic Rate of Return (ERR) for the project was 25% as compared to the ex ante ERR of 22%.

Administrative efficiency. From the start there were substantial implementation delays, due to the state government's regulations relating to hiring of staff. More than a year was lost due to this reason. The delays were exacerbated during implementation due to factors, such as high attrition rates amongst senior technical staff. Some key activities, such as strengthening procurement and establishing producer organizations were not implemented. The crucial processes such as procurement associated with rolling out livelihood activities were delayed to the last two years of the project, with the result that the targets were not realized. The proposed activity to adapt to the impact of climate change was not integrated with other activities in this project. This was due to the weak implementation capacity which, as noted in Section 2e of this review) contributed to dropping this activity (even though its scope had been considerably narrowed). The cost of project implementation support increased from 8% at appraisal to 11% when the project closed.

Taking account of the relatively small importance and impact of the activities for which the economic rate of return at project completion was calculated and the considerable administrative shortcomings during implementation, this project's overall efficiency is rated modest.

Efficiency Rating

Modest

a. If available, enter the Economic Rate of Return (ERR) and/or Financial Rate of Return (FRR) at appraisal and the re-estimated value at evaluation:

	Rate Available?	Point value (%)	*Coverage/Scope (%)
Appraisal	✓	22.00	86.00 ☐ Not Applicable
ICR Estimate	✓	25.00	89.00 ☐ Not Applicable

* Refers to percent of total project cost for which ERR/FRR was calculated.

6. Outcome

Relevance of the PDO to the government and Bank strategy is rated as Substantial. Efficacy of the two objectives - to enhance economic opportunities and to enhance empowerment, of the rural poor (with a focus on women and marginalized groups) - is rated as Substantial, as the outcomes were realized for the most part. Efficiency is rated as Modest, mainly due to administrative shortcomings during implementation. Taking these ratings into account, overall outcome is rated as Moderately Satisfactory.

a. Outcome Rating

Moderately Satisfactory

7. Risk to Development Outcome

Financial risk. There is always a risk associated with financial sustainability of community organizations because of arrears in loan repayments or mis-management of community funds. The ICR (paragraph 99) notes that while the Cluster Level Federations can cover basic expenditures (staff salary, meetings and other office expenses) from their income, they are still dependent on funds from the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme.

Sustainability risk. Given that the project started promoting dedicated livelihood activities only in the last two years of implementation, it is not clear if the outcomes could be sustained without continued support from the government.

8. Assessment of Bank Performance

a. Quality-at-Entry

This project was prepared based on the experiences from the first phase of this project (Rajasthan District Initiatives Project) and from other Bank-financed rural poverty reduction and livelihood projects in India (Andhra Pradesh Rural Poverty Livelihoods Project and the Bihar Rural Poverty Livelihood project (ICR, paragraphs 3 and 74). Lessons incorporated at design included: (i) Unlike in the first phase of the project, this project focused on promoting SHGs, as opposed to Common Interest Groups (CIGs). (According to the PAD (page 2), unlike the affinity based SHGs, CIGs refer to a group of households that come together to undertake a single economic activity). The SHG approach was used as the experience of the first phase of the project, had demonstrated that the CIG model fell short of truly empowering poor women, as it did not lead to the creation of sustainable institutions; (ii) SHGs provide a better targeting of the poorest beneficiaries and preclude the capture of benefits by the dominant rural elite; (iii) SHGs combine activities associated with providing assets with activities aimed at improving social welfare, rural development and rural employment; and (iv) in view of the lack of viable non-farm activities, a large proportion of the project promoted investment in livestock activities. Several risks were identified at appraisal, including high risk associated with reluctance on the part of banks to lend to SHGs. Mitigation measures were incorporated at design, included involvement of banks in grading SHGs. The implementation arrangements were appropriate, with the State Project Management Unit housed in the Department of Rural Development. The arrangements made at appraisal for safeguards and fiduciary compliance were appropriate (discussed in Section 10 of this review).

There were moderate shortcomings at Quality-at-Entry. As indicated in Section 3, the climate change adaptation activity was not integrated with other activities and its linkage with the PDO was weak. This activity was reduced in scope and eventually dropped due to the weak capacity of the counterpart department to implement this component (ICR, paragraph 75).

There were shortcomings in M&E design (discussed in section 9a).

Quality-at-Entry Rating

Moderately Satisfactory

b. Quality of supervision

According to the ICR supervision missions were conducted twice a year. The team included staff with the necessary skills in fiduciary management and environmental and social specialists. The team was proactive in responding to challenges during implementation (for instance, in responding to the delays associated with project staffing and weak procurement performance of activities associated with scaling up livelihoods support) (ICR, paragraph 95). Given the delays in the initial years, the team intensified support and fielded more than ten interim missions (in addition to formal implementation support missions) (ICR, paragraph 96) and this aided in accelerating the pace of implementation. The team also hired a resident consultant located in Rajasthan to provide additional support and modified the indicators, although this was done only six months before the project closed (ICR, paragraph 96).

The impact evaluation survey - focusing on the development of productive assets- was not complete when the project closed and not available when the ICR was prepared.

Quality of Supervision Rating
Satisfactory

Overall Bank Performance Rating
Moderately Satisfactory

9. M&E Design, Implementation, & Utilization

a. M&E Design

The original key outcome indicators for monitoring project performance - increase in sources of household income to beneficiaries, decrease in reliance on informal sources of credit and financial sustainability of SHGs - were not clearly defined and difficult to be measured. Given that the PDO aimed at enhancing economic opportunities and empowerment of the rural poor (mainly women and marginalized groups), there were no indicators specifically targeting of these groups. There were also no indicators specifically tracking activities associated with livelihoods.

The arrangements for M&E design envisaged at appraisal consisted of: (i) a baseline study; (ii) web-based online monitoring and Management Information System; (iii) regular process monitoring studies; (iv)

thematic studies; (v) a Mid-Term Review; and (vi) an impact evaluation. The M&E system aimed at monitoring performance at the village, district and state level.

b. M&E Implementation

The key outcome indicators were revised both during the second and third project restructurings to provide clarity. The final PDO indicators included indicators measuring the number of women beneficiaries and beneficiaries belonging to the marginalized groups, percentage of SHG members that had developed additional productive assets and total funds managed by functioning apex community federations at project closure. An online Management Information System was developed as envisioned for monitoring performance.

As noted already, the independent impact evaluation for monitoring creation of productive assets was subject to procurement delays and not complete when the project closed.

c. M&E Utilization

The M&E data were used to inform project management and guide decision making. However, the ICR (paragraph 83) notes that the project did not regularly track and report on the velocity with which Community Investment Funds revolved nor delays in repayments by borrowers, that were crucial for sustaining the Community Based Organizations.

M&E Quality Rating

Modest

10. Other Issues

a. Safeguards

The project was classified as a Category B project. Four safeguard policies were triggered; Environmental Assessment (OP 4.01); Forests (OP 4.36); Natural Habitats (OP 4.04); and Indigenous Peoples (OP/BP 4.10) (PAD, page vii).

Environmental Assessment, Natural Habitats and Forests. The PAD (paragraph 56) notes that an environmental assessment study was undertaken by the Government of Rajasthan at appraisal to identify the environmental issues. An Environmental Management Framework to address issues pertaining to

environment, natural habitats and forests, was prepared and publicly-disclosed at appraisal (PAD, paragraph 57). The ICR (paragraphs 85 and 86) notes that there were no environmental issues and no anticipated adverse impacts form the project on natural habitats and forests, during implementation. However, issues of limited pesticide use, including the use of non-permissible ones, was observed in agriculture clusters. The ICR notes that remedial actions were taken (including, training on the use of pesticides and circulation of a list of non-permissible pesticides).

Indigenous Peoples. The PAD (paragraph 49) noted that nearly all the project districts included tribal population. A tribal development framework was therefore developed. This framework collected information on tribal populations in project districts and included a range of provisions pertaining to inclusion of the tribal communities through the project cycle in project activities. The ICR (paragraph 87) notes that the project tracked data disaggregated by social groups (including scheduled caste and scheduled tribes). The project established socially inclusive leadership among the SHGs, Village Organizations and Cluster Level Federations, with about 58%, 57% and 68% of the office bearers of these institutions from scheduled caste and scheduled tribes.

b. Fiduciary Compliance

Financial management. A newly formed society called the Rajasthan Gramin Ajeevika Vikas Society in the state government, was responsible for the project's financial management. An assessment conducted at appraisal concluded that financial management arrangements were satisfactory (PAD, page 43). The ICR (paragraph 91) notes, however, that the financial management function was subject to delays, due to the high attrition rates at both state and district levels. According to the information provided by the team, there were no financial issues during implementation.

Procurement. An assessment was conducted to judge the implementing agency's ability to address procurement issues. Consequently, the procurement risk was rated as Moderate. The implementing team was familiar with the Bank's procurement regulations and procedures, due to their experience with an earlier Bank-financed project in the state (PAD, page 48). The ICR (paragraph 31) notes that there were significant procurement delays during implementation in connection with livelihoods support activities. On the other hand, the ICR does not report any case of mis procurement.

c. Unintended impacts (Positive or Negative)

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d. Other

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11. Ratings

Ratings	ICR	IEG	Reason for Disagreements/Comment
Outcome	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	
Bank Performance	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	
Quality of M&E	Modest	Modest	
Quality of ICR	---	Substantial	

12. Lessons

The ICR draws the following main lessons from the experience of implementing this project, with some modification of language.

(**1) Using community para-professionals can be a cost-effective way for providing technical services in targeted communities**. In this project, the hiring of young professionals (young graduates) proved very useful in training village level workers.

(**2) A structured approach to training is necessary for a project with extensive geographical coverage and capacity building needs**, The capacity building efforts that were effective in this project included, creation of dedicated units (resource cells), standardized modules for all types of training and ensuring enabling environments for trainees such as residential facilities and counselling family members to support women's participation in such program.

(3) Providing capital for the poor needs to be complemented by technical support for the design of livelihood programs to ensure sustainability. As this project showed, for market-oriented livelihood activities, the technical support provided by the project benefited from an engagement with private sector operators in the value chain.

13. Assessment Recommended?

No

14. Comments on Quality of ICR

The ICR is clear and candidly acknowledges the issues that arose during implementation (such as the issues associated with delays in implementation). It also candidly discusses the issues of limited integration of climate change adaptation activity with other activities and the issues with the lack of clarity of the original outcome indicators.

The ICR could have provided more details on the issues during implementation, such as those pertaining to the establishment of the Producer Organizations. One shortcoming of the ICR is its excessive length; the main text of the ICR is 36 pages which is more than twice the recommended length of 15 pages.

a. Quality of ICR Rating

Substantial