

Document of
The World Bank

Report No: ICR986

IMPLEMENTATION COMPLETION AND RESULTS REPORT
(TF92672, TF92804)

ON A GRANT

FROM THE

FOOD PRICE CRISIS RESPONSE TRUST FUND

IN THE AMOUNT OF US\$7 MILLION

TO THE

GOVERNMENT OF THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

FOR A

FOOD CRISIS RESPONSE PROJECT

December 27, 2012

Agriculture and Rural Development
Country Department AFCC1
Africa Region

CURRENCY EQUIVALENTS
(Exchange Rate Effective 06/30/2008)

Currency Unit = Franc CFA
US\$ 1.00 = CFAF 417

FISCAL YEAR
July 1 – June 30

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

| | |
|---------|---|
| ACDA | Central African Agriculture Development Agency (Agence Centrafricaine de Développement Agricole) |
| ANDE | National Livestock Development Agency (Agence Nationale du Développement de l'Elevage) |
| APRP | Agro-Pastoral Recovery Project |
| CAR | Central African Republic |
| COOPI | Cooperazione Internazionale |
| CRS | Catholic Relief Services |
| CPS | Country Partnership Strategy |
| CS-REF | Cellule Chargée du Suivi des Réformes Economiques et Financières |
| CTP/PAS | Comité Technique Permanent du Programme d'Ajustement Structurel |
| DPL | Development Policy Lending |
| EMP | Environmental Management Plan |
| EPP | Emergency Project Paper |
| EU | European Union |
| FCRP | Food Crisis Response Project |
| FIE | Field Implementing Entity |
| GFRP | Global Food Crisis Response Project |
| GoCAR | Government of Central African Republic |
| ICR | Implementation Completion and Results Report |
| ICRA | Central African Agricultural Research Institute (Institut Centrafricain de Recherche Agronomique) |
| IO | Intermediate Outcome |
| IPP | Indigenous Peoples Plan |
| ISR | Implementation Status Report |
| LICUS | Low Income Countries Under Stress |
| MADR | Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (Ministère de l'Agriculture et du Développement Rural) |
| MEPI | Ministry of Economy, Planning, and International Cooperation (Ministère de l'Economie, du Plan et de la Cooperation Internationale) |
| MoF | Ministry of Finance |
| M&E | Monitoring and evaluation |
| NGO | Non-governmental organization |
| PDO | Program Development Objectives |

PMP Pest Management Plan
PRSP Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
SILC Savings and Internal Lending Communities
TSC Technical Steering Committee
TTL Task Team Leader
WFP World Food Programme

| | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| Vice President: | Makhtar Diop |
| Country Director: | Gregory Binkert |
| Sector Manager: | Severin Kodderitzsch |
| Project Team Leader: | Amadou Alassane |
| ICR Team Leader: | Jane Hopkins |

THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC
Food Crisis Response Project

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| A. Basic Information | | | |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Country: | Central African Republic | Project Name: | CAR Food Response Project |
| Project ID: | P113221 | L/C/TF Number(s): | TF-92672,TF-92804 |
| ICR Date: | 12/21/2012 | ICR Type: | Core ICR |
| Lending Instrument: | ERL | Borrower: | CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC |
| Original Total Commitment: | US\$7.00 m | Disbursed Amount: | US\$6.45 m |
| Revised Amount: | US\$6.66 m | | |
| Environmental Category: B | | | |
| Implementing Agencies: Cooperazione Internazionale (COOPI), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), World Food Programme (WFP) | | | |
| Cofinanciers and Other External Partners: | | | |

| B. Key Dates | | | | |
|------------------------|------------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Process | Date | Process | Original Date | Revised / Actual Date(s) |
| Concept Review: | | Effectiveness: | 08/15/2008 | 09/10/2008 |
| Appraisal: | | Restructuring(s): | | |
| Approval: | 08/13/2008 | Mid-term Review: | | 07/10/2010 |
| | | Closing: | 10/17/2009 (Component 1) 08/17/2010 (Overall Project) | 02/17/2012 |

| C. Ratings Summary | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| C.1 Performance Rating by ICR | |
| Outcomes: | Moderately Satisfactory |
| Risk to Development Outcome: | High |
| Bank Performance: | Moderately Satisfactory |
| Borrower Performance: | Moderately Satisfactory |

| C.2 Detailed Ratings of Bank and Borrower Performance (by ICR) | | | |
|---|-------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Bank | Ratings | Borrower | Ratings |
| Quality at Entry: | Moderately Satisfactory | Government: | Moderately Unsatisfactory |

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Quality of Supervision: | Moderately Unsatisfactory | Implementing Agency/Agencies: | Moderately Satisfactory |
| Overall Bank Performance: | Moderately Satisfactory | Overall Borrower Performance: | Moderately Satisfactory |

| C.3 Quality at Entry and Implementation Performance Indicators | | | |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| Implementation Performance | Indicators | QAG Assessments (if any) | Rating |
| Potential Problem Project at any time (Yes/No): | Yes | Quality at Entry (QEA): | None |
| Problem Project at any time (Yes/No): | Yes | Quality of Supervision (QSA): | None |
| DO rating before Closing/Inactive status: | Moderately Unsatisfactory | | |

| D. Sector and Theme Codes | | |
|---|-----------------|---------------|
| | Original | Actual |
| Sector Code (as % of total Bank financing) | | |
| General agriculture, fishing, and forestry sector | 70 | 70 |
| Other social services | 10 | 10 |
| Primary education | 20 | 20 |
| Theme Code (as % of total Bank financing) | | |
| Global food crisis response | 100 | 100 |

| E. Bank Staff | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Positions | At ICR | At Approval |
| Vice President: | Makhtar Diop | Obiageli Katryn Ezekwesili |
| Country Director: | Gregor Binkert | Mary A. Barton-Dock |
| Sector Manager: | Severin Kodderitzsch | Karen McConnell Brooks |
| Project Team Leader: | Amadou Alassane | Renato Nardello |
| ICR Team Leader: | Jane C. Hopkins | |
| ICR Primary Author: | Rachel Wilder Bingham | |

F. Results Framework Analysis

Project Development Objectives (from Project Appraisal Document)

The Project's overall development objectives are to: (i) provide increased food access to primary and pre-school students in targeted areas and (ii) support farmers' capacity to ensure adequate supply response for medium-term improvement in food security.

Revised Project Development Objectives (as approved by original approving authority)

(a) PDO Indicator(s)

| Indicator | Baseline Value | Original Target Values (from approval documents) | Formally Revised Target Values | Actual Value Achieved at Completion or Target Years |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|--------------------------------|---|
| Indicator 1: | Number of primary and pre-school students in target areas receiving two meals daily | | | |
| Value (quantitative or qualitative) | 127,316 | 153,000 | | 120,177 |
| Date achieved | 09/10/2008 | 09/10/2008 | | 12/31/2009 |
| Comments (incl. % achievement) | The baseline represents the number of students benefitting from the WFP program during the 2007/08 school year, but given that WFP was planning to eliminate the program due to funding constraints, the baseline should have been zero. | | | |
| Indicator 2: | Percentage of targeted producers adopting at least one improved technology distributed by the Project (tools, inputs, animals, micro-processing) | | | |
| Value (quantitative or qualitative) | 0 | 70 | | 82 |
| Date achieved | 09/10/2008 | 09/10/2008 | | 03/17/2012 |
| Comments (incl. % achievement) | Adoption is defined as use in the current agricultural cycle of at least one new technology received from the Project. Based on a sample of beneficiaries, the target was exceeded. | | | |
| Indicator 3: | Number of direct Project beneficiaries | | | |
| Value (quantitative or qualitative) | | | 173,000 | 140,357 |
| Date achieved | | | 07/10/2012 | 03/17/2012 |
| Comments (incl. % achievement) | This core indicator was added during the Mid-term Review (MTR). | | | |
| Indicator 4: | Percent of direct Project beneficiaries who are female | | | |
| Value (quantitative or qualitative) | | | 50 | 45 |
| Date achieved | | | 07/10/2010 | 03/17/2012 |
| Comments (incl. % achievement) | This core indicator was added during the MTR. | | | |

(b) Intermediate Outcome Indicator(s)

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|------------|------------|------------|
| Indicator 1: | Number of training sessions provided to parent associations, teachers, and cooks | | | |
| Value (quantitative or qualitative) | 27/27/54 | 31/31/62 | | 31/31/31 |
| Date achieved | 09/10/2008 | 09/10/2008 | | 11/16/2012 |
| Comments (incl. % achievement) | The target was 81% achieved. All three groups of beneficiaries were trained together. | | | |
| Indicator 2: | Number of primary and pre-schools with functioning canteens | | | |
| Value (quantitative or qualitative) | 477 | 514 | | 397 |
| Date achieved | 09/10/2008 | 09/10/2008 | | 12/31/2009 |
| Comments (incl. % achievement) | The baseline represents the number of schools benefitting from the WFP program during the 2007/08 school year, but given that WFP was planning to eliminate the program due to funding constraints, the baseline should have been zero. | | | |
| Indicator 3: | Number of producers receiving improved inputs (seed and tools) | | | |
| Value (quantitative or qualitative) | 0 | 50,000 | | |
| Date achieved | 09/10/2008 | 09/10/2008 | | 03/17/2012 |
| Comments (incl. % achievement) | At the MTR, this indicator was sub-divided into (i) the number of producers receiving improved vegetal resources and (ii) the number receiving tools, and more realistic targets were defined for each (see indicators 6 and 7 below). | | | |
| Indicator 4: | Number of producers receiving technical training | | | |
| Value (quantitative or qualitative) | 0 | 2,000 | 4,000 | 12,025 |
| Date achieved | 09/10/2008 | 09/10/2008 | 07/10/2010 | 03/17/2012 |
| Comments (incl. % achievement) | The target for this indicator was doubled during the MTR due to the demand for training activities. Both the original and revised targets were far exceeded. | | | |
| Indicator 5: | Five technical studies defined and completed for the preparation of mid- to long-term development programs | | | |
| Value (quantitative or qualitative) | 0 | 5 | | 4 |
| Date achieved | 09/10/2008 | 09/10/2008 | | 07/05/2012 |
| Comments (incl. % achievement) | Five studies were financed but one was unsatisfactory. | | | |
| Indicator 6: | Number of producers receiving improved vegetal resources | | | |
| Value (quantitative or qualitative) | | | 14,000 | 18,595 |
| Date achieved | | | 07/10/2010 | 03/17/2012 |

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|------------|------------|
| Comments (incl. % achievement) | The third IO indicator (see above) above was subdivided at the time of the MTR, and more realistic individual targets were set. The MTR target for this indicator was exceeded. | | | |
| Indicator 7: | Number of producers receiving tools | | | |
| Value (quantitative or qualitative) | | | 8,000 | 14,633 |
| Date achieved | | | 07/10/2010 | 03/17/2012 |
| Comments (incl. % achievement) | The third IO indicator (see above) was subdivided at the time of the MTR, and more realistic individual targets were set. The MTR target for this indicator was exceeded. | | | |
| Indicator 8: | Number of producers receiving improved animal resources | | | |
| Value (quantitative or qualitative) | | | 8,000 | 9,288 |
| Date achieved | | | 07/10/2010 | 03/17/2012 |
| Comments (incl. % achievement) | This indicator was added at the MTR, as a more precise definition of IO indicator #9, for which no targets were provided in the Emergency Project Paper (EPP). The MTR target set for this indicator was exceeded. | | | |
| Indicator 9: | Number of producers acquiring small animal breeding units | | | |
| Value (quantitative or qualitative) | | | | |
| Date achieved | | | | |
| Comments (incl. % achievement) | No targets were provided in the Results Framework of the EPP for this indicator, and it was redefined at the MTR. | | | |

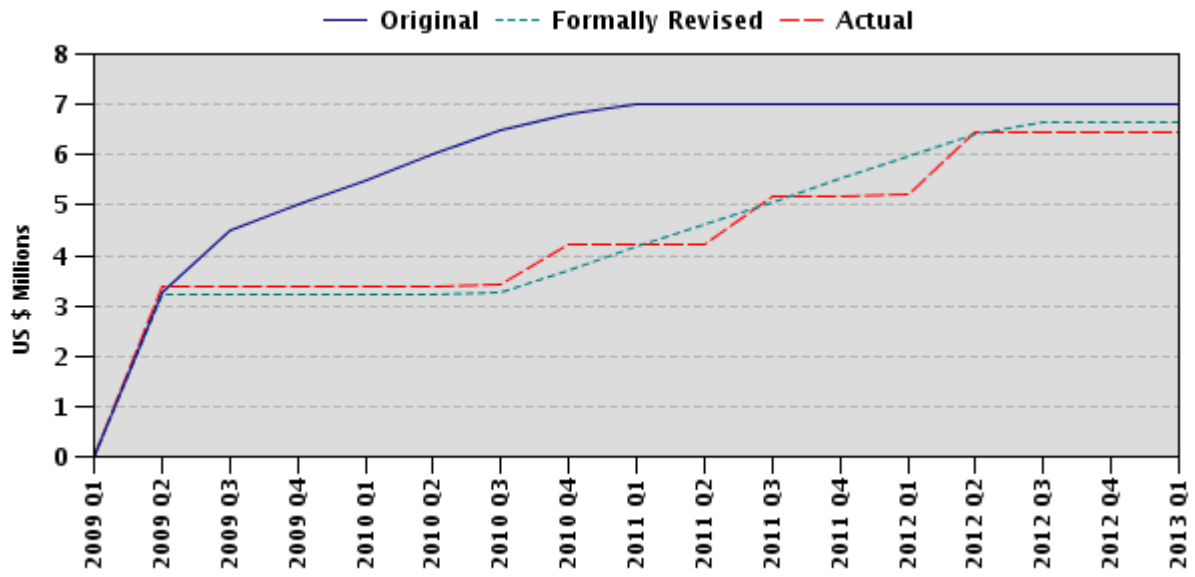
G. Ratings of Project Performance in ISRs

| No. | Date ISR Archived | DO | IP | Actual Disbursements (US\$ millions) |
|-----|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | 11/26/2008 | Satisfactory | Satisfactory | 3.25 |
| 2 | 05/29/2009 | Unsatisfactory | Moderately Unsatisfactory | 3.40 |
| 3 | 11/30/2009 | Unsatisfactory | Moderately Unsatisfactory | 3.40 |
| 4 | 03/03/2010 | Unsatisfactory | Moderately Unsatisfactory | 3.43 |
| 5 | 05/31/2010 | Moderately Satisfactory | Moderately Satisfactory | 3.72 |
| 6 | 10/19/2010 | Moderately Satisfactory | Moderately Satisfactory | 4.22 |
| 7 | 03/16/2011 | Moderately Satisfactory | Satisfactory | 5.16 |
| 8 | 07/12/2011 | Moderately Satisfactory | Satisfactory | 5.16 |
| 9 | 01/14/2012 | Moderately Unsatisfactory | Moderately Satisfactory | 6.43 |

H. Restructuring (if any)

Not Applicable

I. Disbursement Profile



1. Project Context, Development Objectives, and Design

1. The Food Crisis Response Project (the Project) was financed by a US\$ 7.0 million grant from the Global Food Crisis Response Program Trust Fund under the Global Food Crisis Response Program (GFRP), which was endorsed by the Board on May 29, 2008. The operation supported the strategy of the Government of the Central African Republic (GoCAR) to maintain and enhance food security in the face of steep increases in global food prices that began in 2008. The Project was designed both to mitigate the short-term impacts of the crisis as well as to address medium-term food supply constraints. It was fully consistent with the objectives of the GFRP, which were to: (i) reduce the negative impact of high and volatile food prices on the lives of the poor in a timely way; (ii) support governments in the design of sustainable policies that mitigate the adverse impacts of high and more volatile food prices on poverty while minimizing the creation of long-term market distortions; and (iii) support broad-based growth in productivity and market participation in agriculture to ensure an adequate and sustainable food supply response.

1.1 Context at Appraisal

2. **Country context.** In mid-2008 when the Project was appraised, CAR was one of the poorest and most underdeveloped countries in the world. Poverty and underdevelopment in CAR were the twin legacies of a prolonged history of conflict. Decades of civil strife had exacted a heavy toll on the national economy. Institutional capacity and human resources were severely weakened during the conflict, as many of the most educated and skilled people relocated to seek sanctuary from the fighting. Private capital had stayed away, discouraged by the challenging business climate and the unfavorable investment environment. Deprived of human talent and financial resources, the economy had chronically underperformed.

3. **Poverty in CAR.** At the time of appraisal, two-thirds of Central Africans lived below the poverty line. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations estimated that 44 percent of households were food insecure and that the country imported about 25 percent of its food consumption requirements. The humanitarian context was alarming; in the widely quoted Human Development Index, CAR ranked near the bottom of the global table for many important indicators. In a country where approximately 80 percent of the population depended on agriculture as the primary source of livelihood, the widespread poverty and extreme underdevelopment were attributable mainly to low agricultural productivity.

4. **Emerging food crisis.** Between January and April 2008, food prices in CAR rose 25 percent on average. The price increases were driven by increases in international food prices and were compounded by steep increases in global fuel prices, which particularly affected landlocked countries such as CAR. In four months, the price of imported rice rose by 30 percent and that of imported milk by 10 percent (WFP 2008). Increases in the prices of imported food spilled over to affect the prices of domestically produced food; for example, the price of cassava—the primary staple, a significant portion of which is imported from Cameroon—increased by 50 percent during the same period. These price increases threatened to undermine progress toward the Millennium Development Goals by reducing household and national food security and

threatening macroeconomic stability. CAR thus was extremely vulnerable to the consequences of high food price inflation, including a real risk of reversals in recent progress to restore peace, improve political stability, and otherwise support the nascent economic recovery.

5. ***Institutional and capacity issues.*** At the time of appraisal, the modalities for donor assistance to CAR were evolving. The earlier emphasis on post-conflict relief was giving way to approaches in which national ownership, institutional development, and sustainability were increasingly prominent. Despite noticeable progress in promoting government leadership on the policy and strategy side through Low Income Countries under Stress (LICUS) Grants and budget support by multiple donors, local capacity to manage resources and to implement development programs remained weak. A decade had passed since rural development projects had been supported by major donors (the European Union, World Bank, and Agence Française de Développement), and given GoCAR's resource constraints, little had been invested in the rural sector. School feeding programs were also in jeopardy, as the World Food Programme (WFP) faced significant financing gaps that jeopardized its ability to continue its development project (Education for All and Health).

6. ***Alignment with GoCAR and World Bank strategies.*** The strategy adopted under the Project to provide emergency support to address the urgent food security needs of vulnerable populations in targeted areas was well aligned with the macroeconomic measures put in place by GoCAR to mitigate the impact of food price increases (in the short run), as well as with the actions proposed under the draft rural development strategy to improve food security (in the medium to long run). The interventions were appropriate with respect to the coordinated response agreed among the leading development partners, as articulated in the joint United Nations response. Finally, the Project fell squarely under the seventh outcome of the Country Partnership Strategy (CPS), Improved Agriculture and Livestock Productivity.

1.2 Original Project Development Objective (PDO) and Key Indicators

7. The Project Development Objective (PDO) was to: (i) provide increased food access to primary and pre-school students in targeted areas and (ii) support farmers' capacity to ensure adequate supply response for medium-term improvement in food security.

8. Key Project Outcome Indicators selected for measuring and monitoring progress toward achieving the PDO included:

- Number of students in targeted schools receiving two meals daily.
- Percentage of targeted producers adopting at least one improved technology (specifically, improved seed or planting materials, improved animal breeds, tools, and training).

1.3 Revised PDO and Key Indicators, and reasons/justification

9. Neither the PDO nor key indicators were formally revised.

1.4 Main Beneficiaries

10. The principal beneficiaries targeted by the Project and the nature of the benefits they were meant to receive included:

- Component 1. School Feeding Program: Children of primary and pre-school age, their teachers, and canteen cooks were expected to benefit from meals and training;
- Component 2. Agricultural Supply Response: Male and female agricultural producers, their organizations, and their families were expected to benefit from increased agricultural production made possible through inputs and training.
- Component 3. Program Management, Monitoring, and Evaluation: The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MADR) was expected to benefit from studies to inform sector development and prepare follow-up programs.

11. Secondary beneficiaries included: (i) families of students receiving school meals, through reduced pressure on household food resources; (ii) rural civil servants in MADR, the Central African Agriculture Development Agency (ACDA), the National Livestock Development Agency (ANDE), and the Central African Agricultural Research Institute (ICRA), through technical and managerial training provided by the Field Implementing Entities (FIEs); (iii) national consultants, primarily civil servants, through on-the-job-training provided by international consultants hired under Component 3; and (iv) staff of the Cellule Chargée du Suivi des Réformes Economiques et Financières (CS-REF), the Technical Steering Committee, and the Focal Point for the World Bank in MADR, through intensive supervision and on-the-ground support provided by World Bank staff and consultants.

12. Eleven of seventeen prefectures in CAR received support from the Project: Lobaye, Sangha-Mbaéré, Mambéré-Kadeï, Basse Kotto, and Mbomou (in the forest region) and Ouham, Ombella-M'Poko, Nana-Mambere, Kémo, Nana Gribizi, and Ouaka (in the savannah regions).

1.5 Original Components (as approved)

13. **Component 1. School Feeding Program (US\$3.25 million)**. Component 1 was designed to support school feeding for primary-level and pre-school students in targeted regions, within the framework of the WFP's Support to Education for All and Health Project. Component 1 was to provide two meals per day to 145,000 primary school children and 8,000 pre-school children. The food basket was to contain cereals, blended foods such as maize-soya blend, maize meal, pulses, vitamin A-enriched vegetable oil, sugar, and iodized salt. The two daily meals (consisting of porridge in the morning and a hot meal at noon) were to be served in the schools and kindergartens benefiting from WFP assistance. Apart from its nutritional benefits, this effort was expected to have a significant impact on the school performance and attendance of beneficiary students. The program targeted six prefectures: Ouaka, Basse Kotto, Kémo, Nana-Gribizi, Ouham, and Nana-Mambéré. Component 1 was intended fill a WFP financing gap, supporting the implementation of the fourth year of the WFP program as originally designed, while also allowing an increase in the number of children reached.

14. **Component 2. Agricultural Supply Response (US\$3.25 million)**. Component 2 was designed to support producers, producer organizations, and rural communities to strengthen the agricultural supply response by providing improved planting material and inputs to farmers, supporting technical training to improve productivity on a sustainable basis, and providing post-harvest infrastructure to reduce post-harvest losses and/or improve the quality and market value

of produce. Production support to farmers would concentrate on maximizing impact during the 2009 and 2010 planting seasons. These activities were entrusted to FIEs, international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that were to work in partnership with national NGOs and to collaborate with public institutions instrumental to the sustainable support of the sector, such as MADR, ACDA, ANDE, and ICRA. The purpose of this collaboration was to enable the public institutions to assist producers and producer organizations, as well as to define a medium-term framework of interventions.

15. Component 2 was designed to deliver immediate benefits to food-insecure rural communities while preparing the groundwork for longer-term support to the sector. Twelve out of seventeen prefectures were eligible for support: Lobaye, Sangha-Mbaéré, Mambéré-Kadeï, Basse Kotto, and Mbomou (in the forest region) and Ombella-M'Poko, Nana-Mambéré, Ouham, Ouham-Pendé, Kémo, Nana Gribizi, and Ouaka (in the savannah regions). Component 2 was expected to reach about 50,000 producers. The menu of activities developed during implementation took into account women's roles in agricultural and livestock production, processing, and marketing. Efforts that supported activities traditionally carried out by women (for example, milk marketing) were to be specifically targeted. Results indicators were disaggregated by gender so that the benefits to women would be well documented.

16. **Component 3: Project Management, Monitoring, and Evaluation (US\$0.5 million).** Component 3 was designed to support: (i) the fiduciary and coordination functions of the Comité Technique Permanent du Programme d'Ajustement Structurel (CTP/PAS)¹; (ii) the creation and functioning of a Technical Steering Committee (TSC) responsible for the technical content as well as for overall technical guidance and monitoring of activities supported under Component 2; (iii) strengthening the capacity of MADR to monitor food security and agricultural activities; and (iv) analytical work and technical assistance for the agricultural sector.

Relationship of the Project Components to the PDO

17. The Project used a two-pronged approach to achieve the two-part PDO, focusing both on short-run and longer term objectives.. Component 1 was designed to respond immediately to food shortages in rural households by providing food for the targeted school children. Component 2 aimed to stimulate a rapid supply response while building capacity among rural households to increase production and improve food security in the medium to long run. Component 3 was designed to help fill an important knowledge gap by generating information and analysis that could support future food security interventions.

1.6 Revised Components

18. The components were not revised during implementation.

¹ In 2012, CTP/PAS became CS-REF (Cellule Chargée du Suivi des Réformes Economiques et Financières) to reflect its key role in managing economic and financial reforms.

1.7 Other Significant Changes

19. On February 4, 2010, GoCAR requested an 18-month extension in the Project closing date to compensate for delays in the implementation of Component 2. The delay arose from confusion over the contracting procedures for engaging the FIEs, which took the Bank nearly a year to sort out. The Vice President for Africa Region approved the extension request on April 20, 2010, thereby extending the Project and the Trust Fund grant until February 17, 2012.

2. Key Factors Affecting Implementation and Outcomes

2.1 Project Preparations, Design, and Quality at Entry

Soundness of background analysis

20. The Emergency Project Paper (EPP) adequately described the country context and GoCAR's recovery strategy by emphasizing the negative impact that rising food prices, if not addressed rapidly, could have on the precarious peace process and macroeconomic stability in CAR. The EPP presented a sound and compelling justification for an emergency operation, highlighting the steep price increases in imported foods, the parallel and equally steep increases in domestic prices of petroleum products on which food distribution to isolated rural areas and marketing depended, and the sharp decline in food production in the northern regions—the agricultural hub of the country—owing to the tenuous peace accords in place at that time.

21. In 2008, as the global food price crisis gathered momentum and fuel prices continued to rise, the World Bank was under great pressure to respond rapidly. To allow a rapid response to the emerging crisis, the Project was developed under OP/BP 8.0. As recorded in the Minutes of the Rapid Response Committee Meeting and confirmed by SAP milestones, preparation was completed in less than one month without the benefit of an in-country identification or preparation mission and with relatively little input from the government. Despite the accelerated preparation timeline, the team took into consideration a number of lessons that had emerged during the first two years of the Bank's reengagement in CAR beginning in 2006, as well as some of the lessons learned from Bank projects implemented in CAR during the 1980s and 1990s. In particular, the team correctly identified institutional and capacity weaknesses in the areas of governance, public financial management, and project coordination and management. The implementation arrangements proposed for the Project—particularly the reliance on WFP and international NGOs as primary actors—reflected the team's awareness of these local capacity constraints.

Assessment of Project design

22. Although Project preparation and appraisal took place under challenging conditions, the design was substantially sound. It was (i) relevant to CAR's priorities for the agricultural sector and to its economic realities and (ii) aligned with the CPS. The Project also had (i) clear components and (ii) appropriate implementation arrangements.

23. *Relevance to CAR's agricultural sector priorities and economic realities.* The PDO responded adequately to the country circumstances and GoCAR's development priorities. Component 1 addressed an immediate financing need and allowed the critical School Feeding Program being implemented by WFP to continue through the worst of the food price increases.

Component 2 attacked the main agricultural supply constraints outlined in sector strategy documents by injecting urgently needed production inputs and effectively filling a technology void that severely constrains food production in CAR. Component 3 confronted the serious knowledge gap faced by agricultural policy makers and donors.

24. *Alignment with the CPS.* The activities to be supported under the Project were well aligned with the 2009-12 CPS, which was prepared jointly with the African Development Bank. The CPS identified as a key outcome “improving agriculture and livestock productivity.”

25. *Clear components.* The focus of the Project components was clear and reflected a set of distinct and urgently needed activities that were in keeping with the GFRP Trust Fund mandate to mitigate short- and medium-term impacts of the food crisis. School feeding (Component 1) addressed immediate food shortages, and agricultural supply response (Component 2) and technical studies (Component 3) addressed medium-term capacity to respond to food price shocks.

26. *Appropriate implementation arrangements.* The implementation arrangements proposed were appropriate and innovative. In general, the outsourcing of implementation activities to WFP and FIEs, while maintaining a coordination unit within the Ministry of Finance (MoF), acknowledged the government’s implementation capacity constraints but also the need for GoCAR ownership of its rural development investments. With respect to the School Feeding Program, direct contracting with WFP was based on earlier experiences in Liberia, where similar grants to WFP had been implemented successfully, and it gave this experienced organization the autonomy to carry on its successful School Feeding Program without unnecessary complications. With respect to the agricultural supply response component, FIEs were to be linked to GoCAR via subsidiary agreements, placing GoCAR in a management role but ensuring a minimum of implementation autonomy for the FIEs. With respect to the technical studies, these were designed to be carried out using consultancy contracts to be negotiated between CS-REF and individual consultants, an arrangement with which CS-REF was already familiar.

27. The weaknesses in the Project design stem directly from the accelerated preparation timeline and include:

(i) Limited analysis underpinning the safety-net approach(Component 1)

- *Lack of specialist support for design.* The Bank team included neither a social protection specialist nor a nutrition specialist, who would have been able to assess the targeting and the safety-net approach promoted by WFP
- *School feeding was not appropriate to reach the most vulnerable.* The targeting mechanism supported by the Project (school canteens) did not provide direct nutritional support to the “1,000 days” population—pregnant and lactating mothers and children under two years of age, who are the most vulnerable to nutritional deficiencies.

(ii) Unrealistic targets (Component 2)

- *Excessive number of beneficiaries.* The objectives set for Component 2—particularly the target of 50,000 beneficiaries indicated in the EPP—were unrealistic, given the severe challenges associated with operating in rural CAR, the limited timeframe, and

the modest implementation budget.

- *Extensive geographic scope.* Travel in the interior of CAR is extremely difficult because of the poorly developed national road network (many rural roads are impassable during the rainy season) and the lack of security, especially in the northern districts. The difficulty of accessing many of the Project sites constitutes a major obstacle when it comes to agricultural interventions, which require a significant presence and continuing oversight.
- *Inaccurate costing.* Because of the tight preparation timeline and limited budget, as well as the lack of agricultural operations that could have served as a source of cost data, the costing of many Project-supported interventions was inaccurate.

(iii) Unrealistic expectations vis à vis management capacity of CS-REF (Component 3)

- Project coordination and management were assigned to CS-REF, given weak management capacity in MADR. At the time of appraisal, this semi-autonomous agency housed within MoF was one of the few GoCAR agencies with demonstrated capacity to implement donor-funded projects. Under the extremely tight preparation timelines, the team had little choice but to assign management responsibility to this agency. The arrangement proved sub-optimal, however. Unlike previous projects that had been managed by CS-REF, the Project was outside their area of technical expertise and involved management of two large rural development contracts (each worth more than US\$ 1.5 million) as well as many smaller consultancy contracts. The CS-REF also faced competing demands within MoF and struggled to fulfil its role throughout the duration of the Project.

Assessment of risks during design and their mitigation

28. Major risks were for the most part correctly identified during Project preparation. They included risks related to: (i) political instability; (ii) deterioration of the regional situation in Chad or Sudan; (iii) weak financial controls; (iv) a sense of exclusion on the part of non-targeted groups; (v) elite capture; (vi) limited implementation capacity within the government; and (vii) lack of fiscal sustainability in the School Feeding Program.

29. Two operational risks were not well identified during Project preparation: (i) the risk that logistical bottlenecks would disrupt timely delivery of food for the School Feeding Program and (ii) the risk that sufficient quantities of critical agricultural production inputs would not be available when needed. These risks were well known to GoCAR, to WFP, and to the FIEs, but they were not discussed in detail as part of the risk assessment.

30. Proposed risk mitigation measures were in general appropriate and adequate. The one notable exception concerned the risk posed by weak implementation capacity within GoCAR. This risk was clearly underestimated, particularly with respect to the ability of CS-REF and MADR to respond to the administrative and technical challenges of implementation. Annex 8 indicates the risks identified during Project design, the mitigation measures implemented to address those risks, whether those measures were adequate, and if not, what additional measures were taken to rectify the situation.

31. The Quality Assurance Group did not assess Quality at Entry.

2.2 Implementation

Component 1: School Feeding Program (US\$3.25 million)

32. Component 1 was implemented according to schedule. Six weeks after effectiveness, the funds earmarked for school feeding activities were transferred to WFP, so the component was fully disbursed. School feeding began on schedule in early 2009 and lasted through the end of the calendar year.

33. Because WFP had extensive experience implementing school feeding programs in CAR and was able to draw upon an existing food distribution network and well-established policies and procedures, the logistical challenges of transporting thousands of tons of food across bad roads and into insecure areas were in general well handled. This is not to say that logistical problems were completely avoided. For example, during preparation it was known that food rations ordered with Project funds would arrive in the port of Douala only six months after effectiveness. Anticipating this delay, WFP made arrangements to “borrow” food rations from another on-going project. An insufficient amount of food rations was secured through this arrangement, however, and in some cases delivery took longer than expected, causing some delays in distribution and minor shortfalls.

34. Minor shortages in rations also stemmed from the lack of standardized class sizes, schedules, and serving sizes across schools. The WFP estimates ration quantities based on:

- Prior end-of-year class size, which can change dramatically between one year and the next.
- A five-day school week, when in reality many schools have classes six days a week to accommodate the lack of teachers.
- A standard serving size that is difficult to maintain if students share vessels.

35. Throughout implementation, WFP placed heavy emphasis on building local ownership of the School Feeding Program. With the help of Project funds, WFP teams trained local staff of the Ministry of Education and members of Parent-Teacher Associations in the management of food stocks, coordination and distribution of meals, and monitoring of results. Strong local ownership improved the quality of oversight on the ground and ensured appropriate use of Project resources. In communities where local management capacity was weak or community engagement was modest, field partners (international and national NGOs) were enlisted to support the school feeding activities, which noticeably improved performance.

36. In late 2009, when the School Feeding Program was entering its second year, rising insecurity in several of the targeted regions prevented food rations from being delivered there and made it impossible to monitor feeding activities. The number of schools served was reduced from the targeted amount. The savings from reducing the number of schools served was used to extend the number of student feeding days in the remaining schools from 175 to 276, which was equal to the number anticipated at the design stage.

Component 2: Agricultural Supply Response (US\$3.75 million)

37. Component 2 experienced early implementation delays. Lack of management capacity within CS-REF and confusion regarding the procurement method to be used to recruit the FIEs (consultancy services versus subsidiary agreement) delayed recruitment of the FIEs for nearly 15 months. Delays in the initial transfers of funds to the FIEs further slowed implementation, and as a result few activities were completed during the primary 2010 cropping season (April-October). Implementation of the activities supported under Component 2 began in earnest during the final months of 2010 and continued through early 2012.

38. In the months leading up to and immediately following Board approval, the government team responsible for preparing the Project missed a series of deadlines for submitting key documents (such as environmental studies, the operational manual for the Project, and subsidiary agreements). World Bank management took steps to strengthen implementation support to CS-REF. Task management of the Project was reassigned to a field-based Task Team Leader (TTL), and an international consultant was hired to provide support to CS-REF. These measures clearly helped to improve the performance of CS-REF throughout the remaining life of the Project.

39. Successes in implementing Component 2 were attributable in large part to the efforts of the two FIEs—Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and Cooperazione Internazionale (COOPI). These two well-known international NGOs brought a great deal of technical and management expertise as well as significant logistical capacity within CAR. Faced with considerable challenges—especially the shortage of high-quality seed and planting materials scheduled for distribution to beneficiaries—both FIEs demonstrated great creativity in improvising solutions.

40. CRS organized 24 regional seed fairs in central and southeastern CAR. Seed fairs have demonstrated their effectiveness in other post-conflict contexts, but they have been present in CAR for only a few years. They bring the best local seed producers together with buyers who need seed, whose purchases are subsidized with the help of Project funds. The seed fairs organized by CRS enabled the distribution of maize, peanut, and rice seed to 9,515 beneficiaries, more than double the targeted number. Seed producers who participated in the fairs sold 195,000 kilograms of seed, 140 percent more than anticipated. This amount of seed was sufficient to plant 8,500 hectares compared to the target of 6,000 hectares.²

41. COOPI financed seed multiplication at two public agricultural research stations, which produced 250 kilograms of rice foundation seed. Recognizing that seed multiplication capacity in the public sector is extremely limited, COOPI also trained 60 farmer groups in on-farm seed multiplication.³ Members of these farmer groups are continuing to multiply seed for local distribution.

² Catholic Relief Services, “CAR, Rapport Narratif Final d’Activités d’Operateur (RAO) Période: du 25 mars 2010 au 17 février 2012,” p. 15.

³ “Rapport Narratif d’Achèvement Final, Réponse à la Crise Alimentaire (Accord de Don: TF:092672), Mars 2012, Cooperazione Internazionale – COOPI, RCA,” p. 7.

42. The FIEs drew on experience from other countries in introducing innovations that improved the effectiveness and/or lowered the cost of Project-supported activities. For example, CRS provided their field staff with iPods equipped with barcode scanners, which were used to process data relating to seed fair operations (for example, monitoring inventory, recording vendor payments, and carrying out beneficiary satisfaction surveys). The use of iPods to carry out operations that otherwise would have been done manually enabled a significant reduction in the number of staff needed to manage the seed fairs.

43. On the other hand, CRS' unfamiliarity with Bank procurement procedures in an emergency context resulted in implementation delays and cost inefficiencies. Only 1 of 10 planned warehouses and 10 of 50 planned drying areas were completed.⁴ In addition, the lack of sector-specific knowledge caused some inappropriate choices of activity and inadequate risk analysis. For example, the limited market for improved animal breeds in CAR, coupled with a lack of knowledge of Central African animal husbandry norms and high disease pressure, resulted in the distribution of fewer animals than planned, the death of "numerous animals in all Project zones," as well as the distribution of local breeds rather than the planned improved breeds.⁵

Component 3: Program Management, Monitoring, and Evaluation (US\$0.5 million)

44. Component 3 supported two main sets of activities: (i) management by CS-REF of Component 2 and (ii) the commissioning of five technical studies designed to strengthen the capacity of public institutions, especially MADR, to design and successfully implement agricultural policies and programs.

45. Management by CS-REF of Component 2. CS-REF faced a number of challenges in meeting its responsibilities under the Project, notably weak fiduciary management capacity, lack of familiarity with the agricultural sector, and lack of procedures for communicating with the technical ministry (MADR). These challenges were compounded by what can only be described as an apparent lack of interest on the part of CS-REF in accordng a high level of priority to the Project as compared to other commitments (for example, to Treasury).⁶

46. The challenges and lack of motivation created significant stress during Project implementation. CS-REF never demonstrated a strong sense of ownership of the Project and was consistently slow in meeting its responsibilities as the primary management entity. For example, after the subsidiary agreements with the FIEs were finally signed in March 2010, the initial transfers of funds to the FIEs experienced long delays due to a lack of follow-up by CS-REF staff and a disregard for financial system processing standards. The FIEs responded by advancing the funds needed to jump-start critical activities, but even so purchases of some needed equipment and vehicles were delayed; only one FIE caught the 2010 agriculture season. Delayed processing of payments by CS-REF was the norm throughout the duration of the Project, but thanks to the willingness of the FIEs to pre-finance, as well as the patience of many

⁴ "Rapport Narratif Final d'Activités d'Operateur (RAO) Période: du 25 mars 2010 au 17 février 2012, " p. 10.

⁵ "Rapport Narratif Final d'Activités d'Operateur (RAO) Période: du 25 mars 2010 au 17 février 2012, " pp. 11-12.

⁶ CS-REF was also responsible for implementing the LICUS grants and acted as the secretary for the national budget.

service providers, Project-supported activities were not severely affected.⁷ Furthermore, quarterly financial and narrative reports prepared by CS-REF were also frequently submitted late, further illustrating the lack of capacity within CS-REF and an apparent lack of motivation.

47. One unexpected success emerging from the implementation of Component 2 was the marked improvement over time in the frequency and the quality of communications between CS-REF (attached to MoF) and MADR. Following the signature of the subsidiary agreements between CS-REF and the FIEs, MADR designated a Focal Point for the Project. The Focal Point (a civil servant) took ownership of many of the technical aspects of the Project, proactively facilitated coordination between MADR and other related ministries (such as the Ministry of Environment and Ecology), provided technical supervision during implementation support missions to the field, and ensured active engagement by the TSC. The Focal Point thus played an important role in streamlining communication between ministries, bringing together relevant stakeholders, and improving the technical quality of Project-supported interventions.

48. Technical studies. The second main activity supported under Component 3—preparation of five technical studies—was plagued by implementation delays and low-quality deliverables. An initial problem was the difficulty encountered in identifying qualified international consultants willing to take on assignments in CAR. Once international consultants had been identified, they were paired with national consultants whose primary role was to facilitate contacts and access locally available information, but the national consultants were often lacking in technical knowledge, and their research and writing skills were generally weak. Four of the five teams of consultants engaged to prepare technical studies produced reports with major shortcomings (poor quality and failure to comply with the terms of reference). Most of the reports were delivered late.

Project restructuring

49. In April 2010, 19 months after effectiveness, the Project underwent a Level II restructuring to extend the closing date. In light of the delays that had been experienced in putting subsidiary agreements in place with the FIEs, it was recognized that additional time would be needed to successfully implement all of the activities planned under Component 2. The Project closing date was therefore extended by 18 months, from August 17, 2010 to February 17, 2012.

Mid-term Review

50. In June 2010, the Government and the World Bank carried out a Mid-term Review (MTR) of the Project. At the time of the MTR, the activities supported under Component 1 had been completed, and the component had been formally closed. The activities supported under Component 2 and Component 3 were still under implementation.

51. The timing of the MTR coincided with the end of the first quarter of implementation of Component 2. This timing allowed the Government and the World Bank to address a number of

⁷ Stakeholder Interviews, February 2012.

issues that had emerged during early implementation of Component 2. The most significant of these issues included the weak management of the Project and the lack of realism in some of the performance targets for Component 2. The MTR generated recommendations to address both of these issues.

52. *Weak management:* After determining that the early implementation delays were attributable in large part to the weak performance of CS-REF, the team that carried out the MTR made a series of recommendations designed to strengthen the Project management arrangements. These included putting in place a time-bound action plan, scheduling regular field supervision missions, scheduling quarterly meetings between CS-REF and the FIEs to improve internal communication, reviving the TSC, preparing detailed budgets and implementation timelines for the technical studies, and scheduling training in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) methods and procedures for CS-REF staff.

53. *Lack of realism in some performance targets:* Shortly after the Project got underway, it became apparent that the Results Framework was flawed. Some of the performance indicators were imprecisely worded, and several of the targets established during preparation were unrealistic, given the realities on the ground. During the MTR, an international M&E consultant was engaged to revisit the Results Framework and its associated management systems. Working closely with the FIEs, who were able to provide updated costings for many of the activities being supported under Component 2, the consultant proposed revisions to several of the Intermediate Outcome Indicators to facilitate measurement, as well as adjustments to some of the targets to bring them in line with the updated cost estimates. The most significant revisions are summarized in the table below. Since the revisions made to the Results Framework did not constitute a significant change in Project scope or design, formal Board approval was not sought. In retrospect, it could be argued that the team should have prepared a brief memorandum to the Country Director providing background information, describing the changes, and setting forth the justification (this would have been consistent with the procedure described in BP13.05 for minor changes in Project outputs that have no significant impact on the PDO). The consultant also created a simplified M&E tool to be used by the FIEs and CS-REF when reporting results for Component 2.

Summary of Revisions Made to the Results Framework at the Time of the MTR

| Original Intermediate Outcome (IO) Indicator | Original Target | Revised IO Indicator | Revised Target |
|--|------------------------|--|-----------------------|
| Number of producers receiving improved inputs (seed and tools) | 50,000 | Number of producers receiving improved vegetal resources | 14,000 |
| | | Number of producers receiving tools | 8,000 |
| Number of producers receiving technical training | 2,000 | Number of producers receiving technical training | 4,000 |
| Number of producers acquiring small animal breeding units | Not provided | Number of producers receiving improved animal resources | 8,000 |

2.3 Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Design, Implementation, and Utilization

M&E system design

54. In keeping with the emergency nature of the Project, the design of the M&E system was kept simple. The Results Framework included a limited number of performance indicators, which were intended to be relevant, quantifiable, and easily measurable. The M&E plan took into consideration the weak capacity within MADR to collect, process, and report M&E data, and it assigned responsibility for M&E activities to the implementing entities (WFP and FIEs). Oversight responsibility for the M&E function was assigned to the TSC and CS-REF, which supervised the M&E activities carried out by WFP and the FIEs and compiled the M&E data provided by WFP and the FIEs for transmission to the Bank in the form of quarterly narrative reports. In addition, the TSC and CS-REF commissioned a final evaluation, which was prepared by an international consultant.

55. While the simplicity of the M&E system was a decided virtue, the design of the M&E system nevertheless suffered from several flaws. As described below, these were not very consequential for Component 1; they affected mainly Component 2.

56. The M&E system for Component 1 identified appropriate indicators but baseline values were incorrectly defined based on the coverage of the WFP School Feeding Program during the year prior to the Project, rather than the coverage without the Project. Performance indicators were selected in collaboration with WFP and provided a good basis for assessing important development outcomes. The design, however, confused the Project approach (which was to ensure the continuation and some limited expansion of the School Feeding Program) with the approach reflected in M&E systems (expanding the ongoing School Feeding Program). There was also a failure to revise the targets for Component 1 (the numbers of schools and beneficiaries) in light of the limitations that emerged in reaching target populations.

57. The M&E system for Components 2 and 3 was less satisfactory, for two reasons. First, it lacked appropriate indicators needed to assess several key aspects of the PDO, especially (i) an indicator to show whether increases in food production attributable to the Project were leading to an improvement in medium-term food security and (ii) an indicator to show whether the Project was having any success in strengthening the capacity of the government implementing agencies.

58. Second, a key performance indicator for Component 2 (*Percent of producers adopting at least one improved technology*) was ambiguously defined in the EPP and seems in conflict with the emergency nature of the Project. Technology adoption is conventionally understood to involve a sustained behavioral change resulting from an external intervention. Given the short life of the Project and the focus on achieving rapid results, the term “adoption” as used in the performance indicator is defined as “use in the current agricultural cycle of the technologies introduced by the Project” (improved seed or improved animal breed or tools).

M&E implementation

59. Progress against the performance indicators was measured using the M&E systems of the implementing agencies (WFP and FIEs). In the case of WFP, the performance of the M&E

systems was generally speaking satisfactory; M&E data were collected systematically throughout implementation and reported in the annual reports prepared by WFP. In the case of the FIEs, performance of the M&E systems was more variable, as evidenced by the fact that by the final Implementation Status Report (ISR), the M&E function was rated *Moderately Unsatisfactory*.

Baseline studies

60. Baseline studies were carried out by all three of the implementing agencies (WFP, CRS, and COOPI). The baseline studies established starting values for all of the main performance indicators, as well as for a number of additional indicators not included in the Results Framework. As highlighted earlier, the baselines established for the School Feeding Program were mis-defined, though actual field progress achieved under Component 1 was well monitored and evaluated. For example, WFP monitored attendance rates and absolute enrolment levels disaggregated by gender to assess the impact of school feeding on school attendance and achievement. Progress achieved under Component 2 also was well monitored and evaluated. CRS and COOPI collected data on agricultural productivity, agricultural production, and household food security. The FIEs also conducted final impact evaluations at closing.

Data collection and reporting

61. Collection and reporting of M&E data continued throughout Project implementation. In the case of Component 1, relatively few difficulties were encountered, which was not surprising because the indicators were easy to measure. WFP collected all relevant M&E data, which were reported through the annual reports provided to the Bank. Upon request, WFP also provided Bank supervision teams with intermediate updates needed for ISRs. Although WFP reporting was consistently clear and timely, the WFP coordinator indicated that data collection posed consistent challenges because of the weak capacity of WFP's implementing partners, particularly the decentralized Ministry of Education structures and the Parent-Teacher Associations.

62. In the case of Component 2, collection and reporting of M&E data were more problematic. Although the FIEs had an obligation to report on their own activities, overall responsibility for compiling the FIE data for transmission to the Bank lay with the TSC and CS-REF. The system did not work as well as envisioned; throughout the life of the Project, there were recurring issues with the collection of data by the FIEs, the transmission of the data to the TSC and CS-REF, and the reporting of results to the Bank. For example:

- Quarterly narrative reports prepared by CS-REF were consistently submitted one to six months late, with only minor improvements in the timeliness of submission during periods of intense Bank supervision. The fact that the quarterly narrative reports were chronically late meant that the Bank and the implementing agencies lacked the real-time data needed to address implementation issues in a timely manner.
- The Excel-based tool used by CS-REF to manage M&E data contained a number of functional errors, which caused the summary tables to show incorrect totals, particularly for Component 2. These errors were corrected as soon as they were noted, and the revisions were explained to the FIEs and CS-REF, but CS-REF never fully adopted this tool.

- Because CRS and COOPI were using their own systems to collect and record M&E data, indicators were not always measured in exactly the same way. Although an attempt was made at the time of the MTR to harmonize definitions and measurement procedures, discrepancies remained until the end of the Project. The most significant discrepancy related to the method used to estimate the total number of beneficiaries. CRS defined beneficiaries as those who had received one or more improved inputs distributed by the Project or had benefited from technical training (individuals who received more than one input were not double counted). In contrast, COOPI defined beneficiaries as those who had received one or more improved inputs distributed by the Project or had benefited from technical training as well as their families (assumed to number five people).⁸

M&E utilization

63. Even though the M&E system suffered from a number of shortcomings that reduced its value as a real-time management tool, it generated results that provided important insights that have since proved useful in improving the design of follow-up activities. In the case of Component 1, M&E data have been used by WFP to reevaluate the design of their school feeding programs in CAR and have led to some design modifications in more recent programs. In addition, after having confronted the enormous logistical challenge of moving large quantities of food around CAR, WFP has started to source food rations locally. In the case of Component 2, M&E data have been used by CRS and COOPI to inform subsequent proposals for agriculture projects. They were also used by the World Bank to inform the design and ground-truth the costing for the recently approved IDA-financed APRP.

2.4 Safeguard and Fiduciary Compliance

Safeguards Compliance

64. No safeguards policies were triggered for Component 1. Four safeguards policies were triggered for Component 2: OP 4.01 (Environmental Assessment), OP 4.04 (Natural Habitats), OP 4.09 (Pest Management), and OP 4.10 (Indigenous Peoples). Since the Project was prepared as an emergency operation using the expedited procedures allowed under OP 8.00, preparation and public disclosure of safeguards instruments were not required until 120 days after effectiveness. An Environmental Assessment, an Environmental Management Plan (EMP), a Pest Management Plan (PMP), and an Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP) were prepared and disclosed, with some delays.

65. Safeguards compliance was assessed at the time of the MTR. The assessment found that the majority of the measures called for under the EMPs had been included in the technical proposals submitted the FIEs. The assessment also determined that the technical proposals did not call for the purchase or use of pesticides, so the measures called for under the PMP were not applicable. Several relatively minor compliance issues were flagged, however: (i) the EMP requirement to develop a Manual on Good Environmental Practices was still unfulfilled and (ii)

⁸ COOPI's implementation strategy included distribution of seed and tools to farmer group members in a quantity sufficient to be shared with family members; farmers were also expected to relay technical training information to family members.

implementation of the IPP was behind schedule. Project management responded to these findings and organized the preparation of the Manual on Good Environmental Practices in Agro-Pastoral Activities (this was designed to be relevant for the follow-on APRP). The FIE responsible for implementation of the IPP, constrained by limited budget resources (IPP action plan activities were not originally planned in the technical proposal), was slow to take action, but by Project closing all activities planned under the IPP action plan had been implemented.⁹

Financial management

66. The Financial Management function of the Project is rated *Moderately Satisfactory*. Three audits were carried out during the life of the Project. Although they were submitted to the Bank with considerable delays, all confirmed that the fiduciary management of the Project was adequate. One audit flagged a number of ineligible expenditures, which the government reimbursed in full with some delay.

Procurement

67. The Procurement function of the Project is rated *Moderately Satisfactory*. Ex ante and ex post procurement reviews turned up no major shortcomings. Even so, ISRs and aide-mémoires filed by the Bank's supervision teams noted persistent weaknesses in contract management, most notably a lack of respect for required contract payment methods. Payments to the FIEs and to consultants were consistently late, and payments were not always well documented, particularly in the case of individual consultants.

2.5 Post-completion Operation/Next Phase

68. The Project has been succeeded by a new five-year operation, the emergency APRP. Approved by the World Bank Board of Executive Directors on June 2, 2011, APRP was declared effective on March 31, 2012 and has started to disburse. APRP was designed to build upon the accomplishments of the Project and to learn from its failures. APRP is seeking to strengthen the foundation for agricultural growth established under the Project in southwestern CAR by supporting training and capacity building for farmers, financing the multiplication and distribution of improved seed and planting materials, and promoting improvements in animal health and animal husbandry practices. The design of APRP reflects lessons from the Project. Institutional continuity between the two operations is being provided by the World Bank Focal Point in MADR, who is a member of the TSC for APRP. Although some of the zones covered by the Project are not being targeted under APRP, the government is seeking to mobilize funding for those zones from other development partners, as farmer groups there continue to need support.

⁹ See Annexes 5 and 6 of COOPI's final narrative report. CRS completed a "Rapport des Mesures d'Attenuation Environnementale."

3. Assessment of Outcomes

3.1 Relevance of Objectives, Design, and Implementation

69. The Project's objectives, design, and implementation for mitigating high food prices in CAR are as relevant today as they were in 2008. The food price index continues to rise faster than the overall consumer price index, and the value-added tax on food items, which was decreased to 5 percent in response to the 2008 crisis, was not fiscally sustainable and has returned to its original level of 19 percent. On the whole, food insecurity continues to rise in rural areas, increasing 21 percent since 2004; currently 30.2 percent of the population is food insecure. Current data on agricultural production are unavailable, but national strategy documents indicate that growth in production and yields has stagnated since the 1980s, primarily due to a lack of inputs, outdated production techniques, and limited access to markets.¹⁰

70. Component 1's objectives and design directly support pillar four of CAR's first-generation Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) 2008-2010 ("Develop Human Capital"), the third strategic direction of the second-generation PRSP 2011-2015 ("Human Capital and Essential Human Services"), and WFP's fourth strategic objective to "support increased enrolment, attendance, and retention in primary schools as well as to reduce gender inequalities" through school feeding. The provision of two meals daily in school canteens created a safety net for many households whose persistently weak production and yields continue to restrict food intake to less than three meals per day.¹¹ School canteens did not provide direct nutritional support to the "1,000 days," who are most vulnerable to nutritional deficiencies, which indicates a lack of relevance to both health and food security priorities in the design. Even so, national statistics indicating severe malnutrition rates among this group in CAR are very recent; the first were available through WFP Vulnerability Assessment mapping, completed in December 2009 when Component 1 closed.

71. Component 2's objectives and design are fully consistent with the National Agriculture and Food Security Strategy (a streamlined version of the previous rural development strategy), adopted by GoCAR in 2010 with a focus on: (i) ensuring sustainable agricultural and non-agricultural production; (ii) improving the quality of rural life; (iii) promoting the rural financial sector and producer support services; and (iv) strengthening rural institutions and sector actors.

72. The Project was also consistent with the broader objectives of the Bank's GFRP, which were to: (i) reduce the negative impact of high and volatile food prices on the poor in a timely way; (ii) support governments in the design of sustainable policies that mitigate the impact of high and volatile food prices on poverty while minimizing the creation of long-term distortions in the market; and (iii) support broad-based growth in productivity and market participation in agriculture to ensure an adequate and sustainable food supply response.

73. The technical studies carried out under Component 3 were intended to fill an important knowledge gap evoked in the 2011-2015 PRSP, the National Agriculture and Food Security

¹⁰ CAR Agricultural Brief, 2012, World Bank.

¹¹ CAR Agricultural Briefer, 2012, World Bank.

Strategy Document for 2011-2015, and the National Investment Program for Food Security and Agriculture of 2012. The lack of statistical and sector data poses a significant problem for the design, implementation, and assessment of development activities. For example, the two primary strategy documents used to guide agricultural investments in CAR report significantly inconsistent yield rates for principal food crops, as a baseline from which to evaluate impact.¹²

3.2 Achievement of Project Development Objectives

74. Overall the Project was moderately successful in achieving its two-pronged development objective, as measured by the key performance indicators and the core indicators¹³ added during the MTR. Given the challenging post-conflict and low-capacity context of CAR, this achievement is considerable.

75. The first part of the development objective focused on a short-term response to the food crisis: “provide increased food access to primary and pre-school students in targeted areas” through a program of school canteens. The key performance indicator—the number of primary and pre-school students in target areas receiving two meals daily—measured achievement of this objective.

76. At the time of closing, the number of primary and pre-school students receiving two meals daily was 120,177 against a target of 153,000 students (79 percent achieved). Project design had aimed at expanding the reach of this program, but given that certain schools were inaccessible because of insecurity and road degradation, 397 schools were reached in the 2008/09 school year and 374 in 2009/10 as compared to the target of 514, resulting in fewer beneficiary students.

77. At the accessible schools, all attending students received two meals daily, and to compensate for the reduced geographical scope of the feeding program, the school canteens were kept open for 101 feeding days more than originally planned, allowing these 120,177 students to receive meals for a total of 276 beneficiary days of access to nutritious food. Indeed it is likely that the guarantee of two daily meals contributed to the 12 percent growth in enrolment (against a target of 5 percent) and the 10 percent reduction in dropout rate (100 percent of the target) between the two school years—two significant achievements in the fight against poverty in CAR.

78. Without the Project, WFP would not have been able to continue this program due to financing shortfalls, and many of these students would not have had adequate food, as their families tried to stretch already thin food stores farther. The effects of the food crisis would, in fact, have been exacerbated. Although the number of students reached was lower than the baseline provided, it was higher than it would have been without the Project, and the incremental value of Component 1 achievements is clear.

¹² CAR Agricultural Briefer, 2012, World Bank.

¹³ Core indicators include: (i) overall number of direct Project beneficiaries and (ii) percentage of female beneficiaries.

79. The second part of the development objective sought to mitigate the effects of the food crisis in the medium term: “support farmers’ capacity to ensure adequate supply response for medium-term improvements in food security” through the distribution of inputs and post-harvest processing technology, training, and advisory services. The achievement of this PDO is evaluated in terms of the original key performance indicator—the percentage of targeted producers adopting at least one improved technology. Given the methodological difficulties in measuring technology adoption rates within the relatively short timeframe of this emergency operation, however, relevant intermediate outcome indicators and additional impact data collected by the FIEs are also presented as a means of assessing achievement. Annex 2 presents a detailed review of the Project’s outputs by component.

80. The percentage of producers adopting at least one improved technology was estimated to be 82 percent (against a target of 70 percent) based on data from field visits and a sample of 12 percent of all beneficiaries.¹⁴ As mentioned, technology adoption is conventionally understood to involve a sustained behavioral change resulting from an external intervention. Considering the Project’s short life and its focus on achieving rapid results, the term “adoption” in the Project scenario means the use in the current agricultural cycle of the technologies introduced by the Project. In beneficiary surveys, technology was defined as both the soft skills (such as group organization, financial management, warehouse management, networking, and marketing) and hard skills (such as planting in a line, companion planting, integrated pest management, and variety selection) required to increase production.

81. The Project was the first to diffuse agricultural technology to such a large number of beneficiaries since the close of most donor-funded agricultural projects in the late 1990s, and the only one of its scope in CAR for the three years of implementation. For this reason, producers and extension agents were very receptive to training and other types of capacity building financed by the Project; even the most basic improved agricultural practices were appreciated and employed.¹⁵ A further consideration is that input markets remain weak. For the majority of producers, inputs are inaccessible (outlets are located at some distance), and their cost is prohibitive. The provision of basic inputs in conjunction with training and capacity building for producers creates the foundation for a medium-term supply response. The FIEs and GoCAR¹⁶ unanimously agreed that increased producer capacity—demonstrated by an increase in producers’ knowledge and resource base—was a key achievement of the Project. By the end of the Project:

- 12,025 beneficiaries had received technical training (against an initial target of 2,000 and a revised MTR target of 4,000), for an achievement rate of 300 percent.
- 18,595 beneficiaries received improved vegetal resources (against a target set at the MTR

¹⁴ Both FIEs carried out final evaluation surveys. COOPI interviewed 8 percent of beneficiaries (750 of 9,680 individuals) in the zones where it operated on behalf of the Project. CRS interviewed 3 percent of beneficiaries (387 of 10,500 individuals) in their zone for a total of 11 percent (see “Rapport Narratif d’Achèvement Final, Mars 2012,” COOPI-RCA, p. 16 and “Rapport narratif final CRS,” p. 61).

¹⁵ For example, farmers in both the CRS and COOPI zones under the Project were eager to understand and apply techniques as simple as line planting rather than the traditional method of broadcasting seed.

¹⁶ “Evaluation final du Projet,” p. 27.

of 14,000), for an achievement rate of 133 percent.

- 14,633 beneficiaries received tools (against a target set at the MTR of 8,000), for an achievement rate of 183 percent.
- 9,388 beneficiaries (against a target set at the MTR of 8,000) received improved animal resources, for an achievement rate of 117 percent.¹⁷

82. In sum, 82 percent of the targeted beneficiaries received technology packages that gave them new skills and resources that had immediate impacts on their ability to increase food production. Measurement indicators to determine the impact of Component 2 activities on a medium-term supply response, as targeted by the PDO, were lacking from the M&E system, however. Nevertheless, the FIES recorded some direct impacts on food supply in their final reports. These impacts include:

- A 78.9 metric ton increase in production among COOPI beneficiary producer groups between the 2010 and 2011 agricultural seasons covered by the Project. Given that the majority of these groups were not functional prior to implementation, this increase represents a significant increase in supply.
- Among beneficiaries, 42 percent returned to agricultural activities they had abandoned for gold mining or because they lacked production inputs.
- Compared to only one two years ago, 46 percent of beneficiaries now eat three meals a day.
- An additional 27 percent of households (for a total of 54 percent) grow sufficient food to supply their family needs for the year due to larger harvests.¹⁸

83. Despite the challenges faced during implementation, as a whole the Project was still able to reach 81 percent of the beneficiaries targeted at appraisal. Nearly 45 percent of these beneficiaries were women.

3.3 Efficiency

84. No analysis of efficiency was estimated at the time of appraisal or collected as part of the M&E system during implementation. Benchmarking to regional or other national projects is imperfect given the post-conflict, transitional reality of CAR, and the efficiency differences between humanitarian and development projects carried out in the same geographical zones. Nevertheless, other measures of efficiency were estimated, such as the ratio of indirect to direct costs for school feeding programs, efficiency of production contracts with ICRA, costs per beneficiary of a sample of micro-projects in CAR, and analysis of implementation overhead costs as a percentage of total contract cost. In addition, the Borrower's final Project evaluation found that the best quality for cost items and services was acquired for implementation of Project

¹⁷ Unfortunately many of the animals distributed to beneficiaries by CRS were killed by disease ("Rapport narratif final CRS," section 2.4, p. 32).

¹⁸ "Rapport Narratif d'Achèvement Final, Mars 2012," COOPI-RCA, p. 15, and extrapolated to whole-project scenario from "Rapport narratif final CRS," pp. 66-68.

activities, although overhead costs were high for Component 2.¹⁹ Component 1 overhead was lower than average for similar school feeding programs. Annex 3 lays out these calculations in detail.

3.4 Justification of Overall Outcome Rating

85. The overall outcome rating is *Moderately Satisfactory* based on the substantial relevance of the development objectives and design, the moderately satisfactory achievement of the development objectives and the moderately efficiency implementation. More detail on the factors considered in the overall outcome rating are summarized below.

86. ***Relevance of Project objectives, design, and implementation.*** The PDO remained highly relevant to CAR's development priorities as outlined in the 2008-2010 and 2011-2015 PRSPs, the National Agriculture and Food Security Strategy Document 2011-2015, National Investment Program for Food Security and Agriculture of 2012, and the Bank's CPS through appraisal and implementation. The Project design was also highly relevant. Component 1 was designed to disburse quickly and have an immediate impact (which it did, even though the targeted number of schools and/or children was not reached due to deterioration in the country's security situation). The second component was designed to "kick-start" a supply response by providing producers with training and factors of production. The design took into account the government's limited institutional capacity and rightly contracted with WFP for the school feeding component and with two NGOs for the supply response component. The design also appropriately implicated the government in the implementation of Component 2 by assigning overall coordination functions to "the only game in town"—a technical committee within MoF. Delays in implementing Component 2 were largely a function of insufficient preparation time to sort out procurement issues (in terms of NGO contracting) in advance and insufficient implementation support on the part of the Bank during the Project's start-up phase.

87. ***Achievement of the development objectives.*** Achievement of the PDO is *Moderately Satisfactory*. The Project increased food access for students in targeted areas in 2009 through WFP's Education for All Program, and it supported farmer's capacity to ensure an adequate supply response to food insecurity through COOPI's and CRS' field activities. In particular, the highly satisfactory achievement of training and input provision objectives as well as the Project's focus on female beneficiaries will ensure progressive improvements in food security for rural, food-insecure farming households over time. End of project beneficiary surveys show that the incremental impact of the Project was considerable, as food supply increased for a non-negligible portion of beneficiaries.

88. ***Efficiency of the operation.*** Efficiency analysis was difficult given the emergency nature of the operation and the overlapping development and humanitarian activities in CAR. Based on the data available, however, cost comparisons show that the Project used its resources in a moderately efficient manner appropriate to this context.

¹⁹ "Evaluation finale du projet réponse à la crise alimentaire," Dr. Aimé Gnimadi, April 2012.

3.5 Overarching Themes, Other Outcomes, and Impacts

Poverty Impacts, Gender Aspects, and Social Development

89. Increases in enrolment and attendance, as well as a decrease in pupil dropout rates in 2009, reveal the poverty impact of school meals in WFP-assisted schools. While the ratio of girls to boys fell, this can be explained by the inclusion of new prefectures into the School Feeding Program; girls were less represented in new schools. Furthermore, Component 2 impact evaluations show an increase in agricultural activities and household food security. Annex 2 describes these poverty impacts in detail.

90. As intended by the EPP, activities under both components specifically targeted women. At schools supported by WFP, men and women were equally represented in management committees and even in positions of leadership, and girls' schools were also specifically targeted for Project support. Furthermore, two sub-components of the WFP program are highly focused on gender. One sub-component works with mothers of malnourished children by providing training in food preparation and take-home rations for their children, and the other targets malnourished pregnant/lactating women by providing family take-home rations. Component 2 targeted women's traditional activities, namely: training and distribution of tools and seed for market gardening; distribution of and training for women on peanut shellers, motorized mills, and presses for processing; and money management training and the creation of Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILCs).

Institutional Change/Strengthening

91. *Increased country ownership over School Feeding Program.* During this program, WFP strengthened the advocacy efforts vis-à-vis local communities to encourage their contributions. WFP and the Ministry of Education have resumed their dialogue over the eventual withdrawal of WFP and subsequent national ownership of the School Feeding Program. The WFP staff notes the government's clear willingness to assume ownership of the canteens, as seen in GoCAR's development of a National Policy document on School Feeding Programs. By encouraging the efforts of autonomous communities, the Project has created a very good starting point for local ownership of the school meals program. Communities were also very willing to take ownership of the program, particularly during breaks in the supply of rations.²⁰

92. *Improved farmer organizational capacity.* An unintended impact of Component 2 was the creation of many new farmer groups and the strengthening of many others. As waves of political conflict have hit CAR during each decade since independence, farmer groups have dissolved or fallen inactive. With the arrival of the Project, hundreds of new farmer groups were created and/or revived and strengthened by the two implementing agencies. Of the 242 farmer groups with which COOPI worked, 60 were trained as seed producers, rare in CAR and non-existent in the Southwest. In addition, 33 percent of the groups were started because of the Project, and COOPI also helped to create two agricultural cooperatives, bringing together many farmer

²⁰ WFP Staff Contribution, January 2011.

groups, the first of their kind in the region in decades.²¹ Much remains to be done, however, as 71 percent of these groups are not legally recognized.

93. In the central and southern areas of CAR in which CRS worked, farmer groups exist but have weak entrepreneurial and organizational skills. CRS not only conducted technical training for farmer groups but introduced the globally successful SILC method of internal financing (similar to *tontines*). The 56 SILC groups (1,054 members, 561 women and 493 men) worked together to save US\$ 11,230 and loan out US\$ 7,213. These groups provide sustainable savings and loan services unavailable in rural CAR.²²

Other Unintended Outcomes and Impacts

94. A very successful environmental and social campaign, carried out under the EMP, significantly reduced slash-and burn cultivation and increased women's participation in entrepreneurial activities.²³

3.6 Summary of Findings of Beneficiary Survey and/or Stakeholder Workshops

95. Data collection for the ICR started at the end of Component 1 in December 2009. The ICR mission conducted interviews (by email and phone) with the three TTLs, team specialists, the client, and FIEs. These interviews helped develop the Project context, clarify relationships between stakeholders, and tease out impacts not otherwise documented. Informal interviews with direct beneficiaries were carried out during missions to the Project zone. No stakeholder workshop was conducted.

96. Overall, stakeholders and beneficiaries expressed their satisfaction with the Project. The School Feeding Program helped vulnerable rural families at the height of the food price crisis. Despite the challenging context, Project impacts were substantial, particularly for Component 2, which successfully increased access to critical basic production inputs (seed, tools, and training) that had been unavailable locally. Component 2 sparked enthusiasm for agriculture among MoF staff managing the component. It provided these same officials the occasion to travel to rural areas and see for themselves the poverty in their country. Given the post-conflict nature of CAR and the lack of government presence in the field, this opportunity was rare and powerful. Finally, development partners, particularly FAO and MADR, appreciated the technical study completed by the Project (“Actualisation de la méthodologie de recensement de l'élevage en RCA”),²⁴ which coincided with GoCAR's development of its new Agricultural Strategy. Aspects of this study may be used in programming and planning for a future agricultural census.

97. Stakeholders were frustrated, however, by GoCAR's reactive and defensive attitude to challenges in implementation, CS-REFs inaction in response to procedural clarifications needed by the FIEs, CS-REF's consistent lack of effort in narrative reporting, and the poor quality of

²¹ Interview Chef de Projet, February 2012, and “Rapport Narratif d’Achèvement Final,” COOPI, March 2012.

²² “Rapport Narratif Final d’Activités d’Opérateur (RAO),” CRS, p. 21.

²³ “Rapport sur les mesures d’impact environnemental des activités du PRCA sur les zones d’intervention;” CRS, January 2012.

²⁴ In English, CAR Livestock Census Methodology Update.

technical input from the TSC. Formal collaboration with ACDA, the extension agency, was particularly challenging, as general management insisted on the use of headquarters-based staff despite the availability of local staff, which increased the overall cost of this collaboration without a corresponding increase in quality.

4. Assessment of Risk to Development

98. The Risk to Development Outcome is rated *High*. The key risks that threaten a sustained impact on food security are noted below.

99. ***Political risk to development outcome is High.*** The macroeconomic environment in CAR is very challenging; the private sector is nearly non-existent and public financial management extremely weak. Critical budget support from donors (which goes primarily to pay civil servants) is tied to the International Monetary Fund programs, which were suspended in early 2012. Although reinstated in June 2012, continued support remains contingent upon progress toward major financial reforms. CAR is still considered a post-conflict country, yet its progress toward peace is inconsistent, and its political will for positive change unstable. Peace is largely dependent on civil servants continuing to receive salaries.

100. ***Government ownership/commitment risk to development outcome is Moderate.*** Nationally, GoCAR's current commitment to addressing food security issues is high, thanks to significant support from the New Partnership for Africa's Development and associated donors. In 2012, a new National Agriculture and Food Security strategy—the first of its kind in CAR—was drafted and ratified. A National Investment Plan for Agriculture and Food Security exists in draft form, and a number of large agricultural development projects are underway. Yet GoCAR's commitment to agriculture and food security traditionally has fluctuated with donor support and seems likely to continue to do so. MADR's budget and related investments in agriculture remain stagnant at approximately 3 percent of the national budget, far from the 10 percent engagement made in national strategy documents.²⁵ Furthermore, the lack of GoCAR commitment to the Project throughout implementation is a reminder that even donor financing cannot guarantee government commitment.

101. ***Institutional risk to development outcome is High.*** The FIEs made a conscious effort to promote sustainability within the emergency context of Project-supported activities by: (i) training staff of decentralized government agencies in agricultural development methods; (ii) providing officials in MADR with impromptu, on-the-job training in operational policies and procedures (for example, activity planning, budget administration, and preparation of training manuals); (iii) involving staff of decentralized government agencies such as ACDA, ANDE, and ICRA in supervision missions; and (iv) working with local civil society organizations that may be willing to adopt and scale up successful interventions (one example is CARITAS RCA). Public sector capacity remains weak, however, particularly among institutions that influence agricultural growth. MADR agencies are officially present in the field, but they lack operational budgets, equipment, transportation, renewal training, and adequate personnel. Nearly all operations are financed by donors, except for special projects championed by high-level officials

²⁵ CAR Agricultural Briefer. March 2012, p. 25.

such as cotton and the restructuring of cattle sales in Bangui. ACDA has only 34 active village technicians (10 in Bangui), whereas 176 are needed nationally. ICRA's seed multiplication stations were destroyed in the 2003 events and have been only partially restored. The enabling legal context is outdated, incoherent, and increasingly monopolistic. For example, the Land Code dates from 1899, ANDE's legislation has not been revised since 1986 (prior to decentralization), the Fishing Code is outdated, private veterinary medicine is illegal, micro-finance laws do not exist, and recent decrees provide monopolies to GoCAR institutions for seed production and cattle marketing and transport in Bangui.

102. ***Financial risk to development outcome is Significant.*** As known from the outset, WFP faces significant funding challenges as aid for emergency operations in CAR dries up and development aid does not increase. WFP is attempting to mitigate this funding shortfall by introducing local food purchasing, but this approach has its own risks, most notably the challenge of ensuring consistent quantity and quality of production. Financial risks to a sustained supply response (of which there are many, as inputs are extremely expensive and credit services do not exist), will be mitigated in the medium term by the follow-on Bank operation, the APRP. This new operation builds on the experiences of the Project and will continue to support some of the same beneficiaries. Studies carried out under Component 3 of the Project will inform APRP implementation. In particular, APRP will benefit from the Updated Livestock Census Methodology, the Manual of Good Environmental Practices in Agro-Pastoral Projects, and the APRP's own Implementation Manual.

103. ***Social risk to development outcome is High.*** Recurring conflicts in CAR have destroyed the social fabric that often acts as a safety net for rural, isolated, and agriculturally dependent communities. Group cohesion in CAR is tenuous at best. Accusations of witchcraft against those who produce more or earn more from agricultural products than their neighbors are common; punishments range from exile to death. This lack of social cohesion threatens the positive outcomes achieved by the Project, particularly with respect to the development of farmer organizations.

104. ***Technical risk to development outcome is Significant.*** The sustainability of Project-supported activities is expected to vary by component. For future school feeding programs, cooks and canteen management committees who received training under the Project can be expected to continue to bring their new knowledge to bear in a useful way. With respect to Component 2, however, the lack of improved inputs (seed, tools, breeding stock) in CAR jeopardizes current production rates and certainly threatens any future growth in production. These threats to sustainability and development outcomes will likely differ in magnitude across intervention areas owing to the different approaches taken by the FIEs. COOPI took a "development approach," targeting fewer beneficiaries but providing each one with a complete technical package of seed, tools, and training (even linking the distribution of animal resources to feed crop production). CRS took a more "humanitarian approach," seeking to reach as many beneficiaries as possible with one-time distributions of seed, tools, training, and/or animal resources. The training consisted of one-off events, and advisory services were limited.

5. Assessment of Bank and Borrower Performance

5.1 Bank Performance

(a) Bank Performance in Ensuring Quality at Entry

Rating: *Moderately Satisfactory*

105. The design of the Project was fundamentally sound. The main Project-supported interventions addressed the urgent needs of vulnerable groups in the population and struck an appropriate balance between providing emergency relief in the short run and building the foundation for a sustained agricultural supply response over the medium to long run. A number of important lessons learned from earlier projects were captured and reflected in the Project design. In particular, the implementation arrangements deliberately sought to compensate for the known weakness in local capacity by delegating responsibility for implementation to WFP, CRS, and COOPI—organizations with demonstrated capacity to implement development programs successfully in CAR. Oversight Responsibility for Components 2 and 3 was lodged with the most capable entity known at the time, CS-REF, and sound fiduciary management arrangements were put in place.

106. There were, however, shortcomings that detracted from quality at entry. Management's emphasis on exceptionally rapid preparation (a two-week deadline was imposed on the preparation team) exacerbated known weaknesses of emergency preparation procedures and put development objectives at risk. Most of the design weaknesses stem directly from this accelerated preparation timeline. Current knowledge of CAR's agricultural realities was lacking, as a decade had passed since the previous IDA agricultural intervention, and no time or resources were available to establish a Project Preparation Committee or lead an identification or preparation mission. Subsequently, GoCAR ownership over the Project was weak, and the severity of local capacity and motivational constraints (specifically in CS-REF, ICRA, and ACDA) was underestimated. Costing for a number of activities was inaccurate, and related targets unrealistic. Rapid preparation also led to contradictions in the EPP itself, resulting in confusion over the procurement method for FIEs and a subsequent 18-month delay in implementation of Component 2.

(b) Quality of Supervision

Rating: *Moderately Unsatisfactory*

107. The intensity of World Bank supervision varied during the life of the Project. At start-up, the full extent of CS-REF's capacity and motivational challenges was not known, and the team's first mission to CAR was very productive, resulting in full disbursement of Component 1, establishment of the TSC, launch of the NGO procurement process, a draft operational manual, and preparations for the selection of consultants for the safeguard studies for Component 2. Perhaps because of this optimistic beginning, Bank supervision was minimal over the course of the next six months. Weeks passed between exchanges with CS-REF, despite strikingly apparent delays and poor quality deliverables. Clarification on appropriate procurement procedures for FIEs was not sought until after management of the Project was transferred to a TTL based in Bangui in July 2009, 10 months after effectiveness. During this critical start-up phase, the World Bank team also could have been more proactive in addressing the obvious shortcomings in the

Results Framework and the M&E plan. Early on the FIEs pointed out the lack of realism in some end-of-Project targets, yet adjustments to the Results Framework and indicators were not proposed until after the MTR and were never formally recorded. This lack of responsiveness by the World Bank team resulted in nearly a year's delay in submitting Component 2 safeguard studies and contracting FIEs.²⁶

108. It should be noted, however, that a short time after management of the Project was transferred to a Bangui-based TTL, supervision improved significantly, despite a lack of local administrative or fiduciary support staff. The procurement process was clarified with the support of a new Procurement Specialist based in Bangui and LEGAF support from another project team. A detailed action plan was agreed with GoCAR, and preparations began for a project extension. An international consultant was engaged for a few months per year to provide intensive implementation support. This start-up support—so desperately needed by CS-REF—was long overdue.

109. For the remainder of the Project, only minor shortcomings in supervision were evident: (i) a lack of consistently documented project actions owing to each TTL's varying emphasis on archiving files and (ii) the absence of critical impact analysis during supervision missions, resulting in the lack of reliable information on the supply response for medium-term food security. Understandably, the Bank team's ability to focus on development impact was significantly hindered by the amount of time needed simply to keep the fiduciary and procurement functions of the Project running, given the lack of ACS and technical staff support. Supervision missions continued to be carried out regularly. They were appropriately staffed, included full complements of technical and fiduciary expertise, and reviewed all major aspects of the Project, including technical interventions, social and environmental safeguards, procurement, financial management, and administration. ISRs and aide-mémoires remained candid in their assessments of progress made and challenges faced.

(c) Justification of Rating for Overall Bank Performance

Rating: *Moderately Satisfactory*

Although unsatisfactory World Bank supervision at start-up got the Project off to a slow start, the high-quality supervision that followed belatedly built the foundation needed for moderately satisfactory implementation. On the whole, the supervision effort reflects an appropriate level of responsiveness from the Bank team and is well in line with prescribed World Bank practice, particularly given the context in which the Project was prepared.

²⁶ Safeguard studies were expected 120 days after effectiveness, January 2009; final versions were received and approved in December 2009. Signature of FIE contacts was originally expected by March/April 2009, but subsidiary agreements were finally signed in March 2010.

5.2 Borrower Performance

(a) Government Performance

Rating: *Moderately Unsatisfactory*

110. The government performance rating is based on three considerations: the performance of (i) the Ministry of Economy, Planning, and International Cooperation (MEPI), MoF, and MADR as the main agencies representing GoCAR in its interactions with the World Bank regarding the Project; (ii) the TSC, charged with oversight responsibility for the Project; and (iii) CS-REF and the MADR agencies involved in supervision and implementation.

111. Both MoF and MADR met the legal obligations of GoCAR, as these were recorded in the Grant Agreement. MEPI was responsive in negotiating, signing, and ratifying the Grant Agreement. Throughout the life of the Project, MADR provided political support for the Project and on occasion mobilized to advance the Project's agenda. For example, in late 2011 legislative changes were introduced that restricted the free importation of improved seed and planting materials. When advised that this legislation threatened to disrupt the activities of the Project (and activities of projects supported by other development partners), senior officials in MADR convened a national workshop during which alternative legislation was agreed to resolve the problem.

112. The TSC, which included representatives from 12 line ministries, was created in a timely fashion, but during the first year of implementation, the TSC had difficulty engaging effectively with the Project's many stakeholders and partners, and it struggled to perform its coordination function. During the second year of implementation, the TSC assumed a more active role, thanks to more proactive involvement on the part of the chair and with the support of the Project Focal Point designated within MADR. Some critical functions of the TSC, however, such as technical reviews and dissemination of technical studies carried out under Component 3, remained weak.

113. CS-REF was given the responsibility for managing the Project because of its history of successfully implementing donor-funded projects in CAR, including several World Bank projects, and the lack of alternative management entities. Unfortunately, in this case CS-REF did not live up to expectations. The disappointing performance of CS-REF seems to have resulted from two main factors: First, CS-REF lacked the capacity to handle large implementation contracts; second, it did not make a priority of delivering on the PDOs. Throughout the life of the Project, CS-REF had difficulty carrying out routine management activities, such as processing procurement requests, making timely payments to service providers, filing financial reports, organizing supervision missions, and performing routine M&E functions. World Bank supervision teams repeatedly flagged these problems, with little apparent effect. The performance of CS-REF improved marginally whenever World Bank staff members were present to provide hands-on support, but the problems reappeared as soon as World Bank on-the-ground support relaxed.

114. MADR extension agencies (ACDA, ANDE, and ICRA) participated directly in the implementation of Project activities, specifically by providing services in support of the FIEs. Although headquarters-based staff of these agencies had minimal involvement with the Project,

decentralized staff based in regional offices collaborated actively and effectively with the FIEs. Albeit minimal, the involvement of headquarters-based staff caused some problems, particularly with respect to negotiating and respecting agreements signed with FIEs. For example, ICRA was contracted by COOPI to produce between 7,500 and 9,000 kilograms of rice seed and 4,000 bales of cassava cuttings for distribution to beneficiaries, but because ICRA management was slow to organize the activity and did not properly manage production (laborers went unpaid for months), only 250 kilograms of rice seed and 3,000 bales of cassava were eventually produced. Similarly, ACDA was approached and requested to provide field agents for the Project, but negotiations stalled for a year regarding the use of and compensation for headquarters-based staff in addition to field agents. In the end, COOPI agreed to use field agents for regular monitoring of farmer groups and Bangui-based agents for any technical training at high cost, rather than hiring capable local trainers who would have been much less expensive. CRS preferred to conduct training with its own staff and never signed a formal agreement with ACDA, although ACDA's field agents were still paid to monitor farmer groups and participate in training.

(b) Implementing Agency or Agencies Performance

Rating: *Moderately Satisfactory*

115. The Implementing Agencies performance rating is based on the performance of: (i) WFP, the agency responsible for day-to-day management and implementation of Component 1, and (ii) COOPI and CRS, the NGOs directly responsible for implementing activities supported through Component 2.

116. Overall, WFP's performance was satisfactory due to its readiness for implementation (Component 1 was 100 percent disbursed six weeks after effectiveness), its effort to adequately consult with and involve beneficiaries through training, timely resolution of implementation issues such as pipeline and logistical delays, and coordination and collaboration with other donors and stakeholders. Only minor shortcomings in fiduciary management (financial reporting delays and minor administrative compliance) existed, and unlike other Bank investments in WFP programs, no major implementation challenges arose.

117. Under Component 2, COOPI's performance was satisfactory across all categories. Its commitment to achieving the development objectives was clearly demonstrated during design, negotiation, and implementation of the Project. Although COOPI reached fewer beneficiaries than CRS, its development approach provided a complete technology kit to each farmer group as well as training and support over two growing seasons. CRS' performance was somewhat less satisfactory, as there were some shortcomings in its readiness for implementation and in timely resolution of implementation issues. In addition, the humanitarian focus of CRS (which emphasized the distribution of a large number of technology kits over training) leaves questions about the sustainability of the interventions.

(c) Justification of Rating for Overall Borrower Performance

Rating: *Moderately Satisfactory*

118. GoCAR performed poorly in meeting its minimal obligations to the Project, especially considering the intense supervision support provided. CS-REF lacked the capacity to carry out

all of the functions to which it was committed and showed little improvement in motivation to deliver on the development objectives. In the case of the MADR extension agencies (ACDA, ANDE, and ICRA), lack of capacity at the central level and rent-seeking behavior on the part of a small number of officials unfortunately detracted from the strong contributions of the many decentralized staff members who supported the FIEs with enthusiasm. Despite this poor performance, Project design was such that GoCAR's weaknesses did not significantly hinder Project operations, and the strong performance of WFP, CRS, and COOPI as implementers is the principal reason why PDO achievements are satisfactory.

6. Lessons Learned

119. *For emergency operations prepared under OP8.0, intense implementation support will often be needed immediately following effectiveness to rapidly close any "readiness gaps" and ensure successful outcomes.* The flexibility allowed under OP 8.0 in preparing emergency operations facilitates rapid approval, effectiveness, and initial disbursement, but the quality of implementation and achievement of results may be seriously compromised if adequate resources are not provided during the start-up phase to close readiness gaps

120. *While OP 8.0 does provide increased flexibility in preparing emergency operations, for small operations of this nature, Bank procedures may still be too onerous.* In the case of this Project, a large amount of management attention had to be devoted to complying with Bank requirements that seemed to add little value to the Project, at the expense of attention being devoted to the emergency relief activities that were the main focus of the operation.

121. *Outsourcing implementation to non-governmental partners can be an effective strategy in fragile states.* The design of Component 2 called for a unique implementation relationship that put GoCAR in the driver's seat as the project coordinator and chair of the TSC but lowered the risks and increased the quality of implementation through subsidiary agreements with NGOs. The strength of this design is that it ensures ownership on the part of the government while taking advantage of existing implementation capacity of non-governmental partners that can be mobilized quickly. The major shortcoming of this design is the high overhead cost associated with engaging non-traditional partners.

122. *Weak institutional capacity within key ministries hinders development impact from Bank investments, but cannot be adequately addressed through emergency operations.* Institutional capacity in CAR remains extremely weak. Technical, managerial, administrative, and policy-making skills are lacking at all levels, and state budgets or incentives to improve are absent. These issues cannot be adequately addressed within the context of an emergency operation, yet are critical to outcomes and sustainability.

123. *The GFRP Trust Fund facilitated the Bank's reengagement in agriculture in CAR.* As the first agricultural operation in CAR since 1997, the Project not only responded to an urgent need but reintroduced the Bank team to the reality of operations in CAR, provided a stepping-stone on which to rebuild IDA agricultural investment, and provided valuable lessons for the follow-on IDA project, the APRP.

124. *Project-specific technical lessons were numerous and diverse.* One of the most positive lessons learned is that non-traditional partners can introduce new and innovative ways of doing things. For example, the Seed Fairs introduced by CRS allowed rapid distribution of inputs and led to the creation of sustainable market linkages between producers and consumers. An example of a negative lesson is the difficulty of introducing small-scale livestock production activities under an emergency operation due to the time required for beneficiaries to acquire the management skills needed to ensure their sustainability.

7. Comments on Issues Raised by Borrower/Implementing Agencies/Partners

(a) Borrower/implementing agencies

125. See annex 6 for a summary of GoCAR's final evaluation report.

(b) Co financiers

(c) Other partners and stakeholders

Annex 1: Project Cost and Financing

(a) Project Cost by Component (in US\$ million equivalent)

| Components | Appraisal Estimate (US\$ millions) | Revised Commitment Amount (US\$ millions) | Actual/Latest Estimate (US\$ millions) | Percentage of Appraisal Estimate | Percentage of Revised Commitment Amount |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------------|---|
| 1. School Feeding Program | 3.250 | 2.913 | 2.913 | 89.63 | 100.00 |
| 2. Agricultural Supply Response | 3.250 | 3.250 | 3.107 | 95.60 | 95.60 |
| 3. Coordination and M&E | 0.500 | 0.500 | 0.429 | 85.80 | 85.80 |
| Total Project Costs | 7.000 | 6.660 | 6.449 | 92.13 | 96.83 |

(b) Financing

| Source of Funds | Appraisal Estimate (US\$ millions) | Revised Commitment Amount (US\$ millions) | Actual/Latest Estimate (US\$ millions) | Percentage of Appraisal Estimate | Percentage of Revised Commitment Amount |
|--|------------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------------|---|
| 1. Borrower | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2. Global Food Crisis Response Fund (TF 92804 - WFP) | 3.250 | 2.913 | 2.913 | 89.63 | 100.00 |
| 3. Global Food Crisis Response Fund (TF 92672 - IDA) | 3.750 | 3.750 | 3.536 | 94.29 | 94.29 |
| Total | 7.000 | 6.660 | 6.449 | 92.13 | 96.83 |

Note: USD 337,097 was cancelled from TF 92804-WFP (School Feeding Program component) in April 2010. The revised total commitment amount is USD 6.660.

Annex 2: Detailed Achievement of Outcomes

Component 1: School Feeding Program

1. This component financed the provision of two meals per day to 107,436 primary and pre-school children during the last half of the 2008/09 school year (January-May 2009) and 120,177 children during the first half of the 2009/10 school year (August-December 2009). The component also financed training sessions for parent associations, teachers, and cooks. Table 2.1 shows key performance and intermediate outcome indicators.

Table 2.1: Key Performance and Intermediate Output Indicators for Component 1

| No | Indicator | Targets in EPP | 2008/2009 School Year | | 2009/2010 School Year | |
|--|---|----------------|-----------------------|----------|-----------------------|----------|
| | | | Actual | Achieved | Actual | Achieved |
| PDO indicators | | | | | | |
| 1. | Number of primary and pre-school students in target areas receiving two meals daily | 153,000 | 107,436 | 70% | 120,177 | 79% |
| 2. | Female beneficiaries | 63,000 | 32,231 | 30% | 48,660 | 77% |
| Intermediate outcome indicators | | | | | | |
| 1. | Number of training sessions for parent associations | 31 | 31 | 100% | 25 | 80% |
| 2. | Number of training sessions for teachers | 31 | 31 | 100% | 25 | 80% |
| 3. | Number of training sessions for cooks | 62 | 31 | 50% | 25 | 40% |
| 4. | Number of schools with functioning canteens | 514 | 397 | 77% | 374 | 73% |
| Impact indicators | | | | | | |
| 1. | Growth in enrolment | 5% | 9% | 180% | 12% | 240% |
| 2. | Attendance rate increase of enrolled students | 15% | n/a | n/a | 3% | 23% |
| 3. | Reduction in dropout rate | 10% | 10% | 100% | 10% | 100% |

Component 2: Agricultural Supply Response

2. Component 2 was designed to support producers, producer organizations, and rural communities to strengthen the agricultural supply response by providing improved planting material and inputs to farmers, supporting technical training to improve productivity, and providing post-harvest infrastructure to reduce post-harvest losses.

3. Intermediate outcome indicators for this component were clarified during the MTR, and more realistic targets were set. The difference between the figures reported in the final ISR and the actual end-of-Project figures provided in table 2.2 arises because the final ISR data were from October 2011, whereas Project activities continued until February 2012. All targets for this component, as set at the MTR, were met or exceeded.

Table 2.2: Key Performance and Intermediate Output Indicators for Component 2

| No | Indicator | Targets | | Final ISR | Actual | Achieved | Comments |
|--|--|--------------------|--------|--------------|--------|----------|--|
| | | EPP | MTR | | | | |
| PDO indicators | | | | | | | |
| 1. | Percent of targeted producers adopting at least one improved technology distributed by the Project | 70% | 70% | Not reported | 82% | 117% | Adoption is defined as use of technologies in the current cycle. |
| 2. | Number of direct beneficiaries for Component 2 | - | 20,000 | Not reported | 20,180 | 101% | These core indicators were added during the MTR. |
| 3. | Percent of female beneficiaries for Component 2 | - | 50% | Not reported | 45% | 89% | |
| Intermediate outcome indicators | | | | | | | |
| 1. | Number of producers receiving improved inputs (seed and tools) | 50,000 | -- | -- | -- | -- | At the MTR, this first indicator was split into two components for monitoring purposes, and more realistic targets were set. |
| 1.1 | Number of producers receiving improved vegetal resources | -- | 14,000 | 13,475 | 18,595 | 133% | |
| 1.2 | Number of producers receiving tools | -- | 8,000 | 4,000 | 14,633 | 183% | |
| 2. | Number of producers acquiring small animal breeding units | no target provided | -- | -- | -- | -- | No target was provided for this indicator in the EPP. At the MTR, this indicator was clarified and a target was set. |
| 2.1 | Number of producers receiving improved animal resources | -- | 8,000 | 2,171 | 9,288 | 116% | |
| 3. | Number of producers receiving technical training | 2,000 | 4,000 | 7,608 | 12,025 | 300% | Targets revised at MTR to reflect the demand for training. |

4. GoCAR extension services are still recovering from the political turmoil of 2003 and provide very limited support to farmers. All markets remain underdeveloped, but input markets are particularly weak, as tools, seed, and equipment cannot be produced locally and imports depend on large commercial actors who are not attracted to isolated rural areas unless given the incentive through donor or GoCAR financing. For those reasons, the distribution of inputs and parallel technical training were critical to

increasing the food supply and were readily adopted, with an immediate impact on production levels.

Technical Training

5. COOPI took a “training of trainers” approach to capacity building and offered technical training packages on egg production, vegetable and/or staple crop production, post-harvest processing and storage, and seed multiplication. Trainers were then responsible for training one to two groups of 15-20 beneficiaries in their area. COOPI staff assisted in all training sessions carried out by these new trainers. In total, across 10 different training modules, COOPI trained 1,163 trainers, who then trained 5,395 producers, as indicated in table 2.3. These producers also received regular advisory services from COOPI’s technical staff regarding basic production practices, such as land preparation, soil fertility, seeding techniques, weeding, and harvesting. COOPI’s trained village liaisons visited each farmer group at least once a month and more often during critical periods of the season. In addition to producer training, training on participatory methods was provided to 750 extension agents. Training documents and manuals were made available to the ICR team upon request and demonstrate high quality in their technical information and planning.

6. CRS trained approximately 475 farmer groups to prepare them to receive new technology distributed by the Project. In the first year of the Project, 95 percent of the proposed training program was completed. In total, CRS provided at least one training opportunity to 3,848 men and 2,782 women during its 20 months of implementation. The training methodology used Farmer Field Schools to bring together theory and practice, share successes, and demonstrate new techniques. Training topics included animal husbandry, social organization, the system of rice intensification, techniques for organizing Seed Voucher Fairs, income-generating activities, and environmental protection. Trainers also introduced producers to the idea of agro-enterprises, in which the choice of crop is guided by market opportunities. Project advisory services were minimal outside of training: Only 56 percent of beneficiaries received five or more visits from Project staff during the Project.

7. CRS training tools (manuals or visual aids) were not developed for all training events, and supervision visits indicate that the quality of technical advice provided by CRS or its collaborating partners (ANDE, ACDA, and ICRA) was inconsistent, in some cases requiring retraining or renovation of small-scale infrastructure such as animal housing. In addition, training critical to the sustainability of animal husbandry activities was not carried out before the end of the Project. While CRS advised its local partners to carry out the training, there is no evidence that the activities were completed. On the other hand, CRS’ environmental awareness training module was very well received in communities, and the visual aids were so successful that they have been adopted by the Ministry of the Environment and Ecology for future training efforts.

Table 2.3 Detailed Capacity Building Results for COOPI

| Training | Participants | Date | Days | Hours | Direct Beneficiaries | Indirect Beneficiaries |
|---|------------------------|----------------------|-------------|--------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Refresher training on income-generating activities | Aka pygmies in Lobaye | November 23-26, 2010 | 4 | 28 | 65 | 650 |
| Rearing laying hens | Trainers | December 8-18, 2010 | 6 | 42 | 65 | 165 |
| Seed production | Trainers | February 17-22, 2011 | 4 | 28 | 90 | 225 |
| Training and communication for rural populations | Trainers | April 18-29, 2011 | 6 | 48 | 14 | 350 |
| Basic agronomy and production and processing techniques for cassava | Trainers and producers | September 2-10, 2011 | 10 | 70 | 293 | 675 |
| Laying hen production unit management techniques | Trainers and producers | November 3-9, 2011 | 6 | 42 | 123 | 600 |
| Institutional governance | Trainers and producers | November 24-26, 2011 | 2 | 14 | 109 | 450 |
| Post-harvest processing techniques and community management of processing equipment | Trainers and producers | December 14-17, 2012 | 8 | 56 | 157 | 780 |
| Environmental protection | Trainers and producers | January 9-13, 2012 | 4 | 28 | 216 | 1500 |
| Total | | | 54 | 384 | 1,163 | 5,395 |

Source: “Rapport Final d’Achèvement du Projet,” COOPI, March 2012.

Input Distribution

8. As stated, training was accompanied by the distribution of seed, cassava cuttings, hand tools, and post-harvest equipment. In CAR, these resources are extremely hard to come by, and nearly all must be imported to ensure high quality. As shown in table 2.4, the Project distributed nearly 200 tons of seed and 14,015 bales of cassava cuttings to over 18,000 producers cultivating about 8,500 hectares.

Table 2.4: Planting Material Distributed by FIEs and Hectares Planted

| | Quantity Distributed (kg) | | | Hectares Planted | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|--------|---------|------------------|-------|-------|
| | CRS | COOPI | TOTAL | CRS | COOPI | Total |
| Peanuts | 87,636 | 17,500 | 105,136 | 3,124 | 287 | 6,920 |
| Beans | - | 3,700 | 3,700 | - | | |
| Maize | 14,785 | 9,400 | 24,185 | 2,934 | | |
| Sesame | 16,871 | 1,000 | 17,871 | 575 | | |
| Rice | 44,866 | 2,500 | 47,366 | 1,197 | 27 | 1,224 |
| Other | 764 | - | 764 | na | - | na |
| Vegetables | - | 467 | 467 | - | 12 | 12 |
| Total (kg) | 164,922 | 48,667 | | 7,830 | 326 | 8,156 |
| Cassava^a | 9,515 | 4,500 | 14,015 | 242 | 81 | 323 |

^a Represents the number of bales of cassava distributed, not kilograms.

9. Differences in the quantities distributed and hectares planted, even though the FIEs targeted the same number of beneficiaries, are related to: (i) the distribution approach used (humanitarian or development); (ii) the manner in which the number of hectares were calculated; (iii) the differences between the two agro-climatic zones where Project interventions were made; and (iv) the source of the planting material:

- CRS distributed planting material directly to producers twice and also held 24 Seed Voucher Fairs. The Seed Voucher Fair concept was introduced for the first time in CAR by the Project. Each participant received the same number of kilograms of seed, independent of need or available land; 67 percent of beneficiaries received seed of one type of crop, 29 percent received seed of two types, and only 4 percent received more than two types. COOPI, on the other hand, distributed planting material directly to the 242 farmer groups with which it worked. The quantity and kind of seed distributed was based on the cleared land available per group as well as the season (given that different crop species are planted during the first and second seasons); each group received at least three types of crop seed.
- In terms of hectares planted, COOPI staff measured the number of hectares planted by each farmer group, while CRS relied on verbal estimates from producers to determine the number of hectares planted.
- The level of agricultural development is significantly different between the two Project zones (the forest and savanna zones). This difference partly explains the vast difference in quantities of seed and planting material distributed and hectares planted.
- CRS planting material was purchased locally from producer-vendors, while COOPI's planting materials were either imported or produced by ICRA, which explains why roughly the same budget purchased such vastly different quantities of seed.

10. Table 2.5 shows the quantity of animal resources distributed. As with the distribution of planting material, a difference in approach and geographic location

explains much of the difference between CRS' and COOPI's distribution of animal resources. CRS' planned distribution of improved breeding stock was not possible because no improved animals were available locally; instead they distributed generic local breeds, an unfortunate compromise in quality for quantity. COOPI's chickens were imported day-old chicks from France.

Table 2.5: Animal Resources Distributed by FIEs and Losses by End of Project

| Type | CRS | | COOPI | |
|--------------------------|----------|--------|----------|--------|
| | Quantity | Losses | Quantity | Losses |
| Number of animals | | | | |
| Goats | 1,000 | 2% | - | - |
| Pigs | 1,000 | 16% | - | - |
| Chickens | 6,000 | 2% | 1,446 | 31% |
| Oxen | 200 | 3% | - | - |
| Total | 8,200 | 5% | 1,446 | 31% |
| Kilograms of feed | | | | |
| Chicken feed | - | - | 18,000 | n/a |

11. Animals distributed by both FIEs suffered losses from disease, including Newcastle disease, rinderpest, swine fever, and salmonella. COOPI's imported day-old-chicks were the most vulnerable to disease; approximately 30 percent were lost in the first six months prior to distribution to beneficiaries. COOPI also suffered an unfortunate theft of 160 pullets from their coops in Bangui prior to distribution. CRS' losses, though fewer in quantity, are of greater concern regarding quality: The animals were not vaccinated when they were purchased but rather after distribution to beneficiaries, resulting not only in preventable losses but the possible spread of infectious diseases.

12. A variety of farm equipment, the bulk consisting of hoes (8,359) and machetes (6,846), was distributed to farmer groups to bolster land tillage and crop productivity (see table 2.6).

Table 2.6: Tools and Equipment Distributed by FIEs

| | CRS | COOPI | Total |
|------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Crop production equipment | | | |
| Plow | 100 | - | 100 |
| Hoe | 5,659 | 2,700 | 8,359 |
| Machete | 4,146 | 2,700 | 6,846 |
| Shovel | 107 | - | 107 |
| Digging bar | 19 | - | 19 |
| Weeder | 20 | - | 20 |
| Hand cart | 100 | 24 | 124 |
| Post-harvest equipment | | | |
| Drying tarp | 322 | 300 | 622 |
| Cassava mill | 15 | 48 | 63 |
| Peanut press | 25 | 48 | 73 |
| Sheller | 30 | 26 | 56 |
| Oil press | - | 24 | 24 |
| Animal production equipment | | | |
| Feed troughs | - | 143 | 143 |
| Laying boxes | - | 40 | 40 |
| Drinking troughs | - | 132 | 132 |

13. No targets were originally set for the specific distribution of tools, equipment, and machinery, aside from the plows distributed by CRS. Each FIE budgeted for tool distribution, however, and chose the type of tools based on the activities it was introducing and the needs expressed by beneficiaries during preliminary baseline studies. Aside from hoes and machetes, tarps for drying cassava (the principal food source) were in high demand, and both FIEs responded by carrying out large distributions. In addition, post-harvest processing equipment—15 cassava mills, 25 peanut presses, and 30 shellers—was distributed to women’s groups to improve value-added production.

14. Table 2.7 provides information on the infrastructure built by the Project. Both FIEs provided training in storage techniques, infrastructure maintenance, and administrative and financial management to beneficiaries. COOPI required communities to establish a management committee and supply 40-90 percent of the raw materials to benefit from technical and financial infrastructure support, and it equipped each warehouse with a post-harvest processing center (a mill for cassava or maize, a maize sheller, an oil press, a peanut-butter press, and a cart). The dimensions of the warehouses corresponded to the number of farmer groups associated with each warehouse and their related capacity to produce. The size of the CRS warehouse is unknown, as are the sizes of the drying areas.

Table 2.7: Post-harvest Infrastructure Built by FIEs

| | CRS | | COOPI | | Achievement | |
|---------------|---------|--------|---------|--------|-------------|-------|
| | Planned | Actual | Planned | Actual | CRS | COOPI |
| Warehouses | 50 | 1 | 24 | 24 | 20% | 100% |
| Drying areas | 10 | 10 | - | - | 10% | - |
| Chicken coops | - | - | 40 | 40 | - | 100% |

Annex 3: Economic and Financial Analysis

Component 1. The School Feeding Program

1. Component 1 of the Project compares very favorably in cost to similar WFP programs in other countries. The challenges of implementation in CAR are clear from three basic facts: Both external and internal transportation are so expensive that the quantity of commodities purchased is proportionately reduced. WFP's direct operational costs and overhead, which include all in-country program costs, salaries, benefits, housing, insurance, and community costs, are reasonable if not low compared to other, similar programs.²⁷ In addition, the Component 1 unit cost of US\$ 24 per student per year also falls well within the industry standard of US\$ 34 per student per year, given 200 feeding days and 700 calories per daily ration.

Table 3.1: Breakdown of School Feeding Costs

| | CAR (FCRP) | Kenya | Lesotho | Malawi | Gambia |
|---|------------|-------|---------|--------|--------|
| Commodities | 36% | 57% | 74% | 54% | 51% |
| Transport | 46% | 17% | 5% | 18% | 27% |
| Direct operational costs and WFP overhead | 18% | 26% | 22% | 28% | 22% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Component 2. The Agricultural Supply Response

2. Two measures of efficiency were calculated for Component 2: (i) ICRA's economic efficiency in producing foundation seed and (ii) the cost per beneficiary of a sample of micro-projects.

3. *Production contracts with ICRA are currently economically inefficient.* COOPI signed a contract with ICRA to produce cassava cuttings and rice seed destined for the Project, simulate ICRA's official mission as a seed producer, and evaluate ICRA's capacity to carry out that mission. COOPI played the role of GoCAR, subsidizing ICRA and ensuring supervision of activities, and it expected profit levels that would encourage further investment in the institution.

4. Under contract with COOPI, ICRA produced 250 kilograms of NERICA rice seed (of an expected 7,500 kilograms) and 3,000 bales of 50 cassava cuttings each.²⁸ Market prices at the time of harvest were CFAF 600 for 1 kilogram of NERICA rice seed and

²⁷ Galloway, R., E. Kristjansson, A. Gelli, U. Meir, F. Espejo, and D. Bundy (2009), "School Feeding: Outcomes and Costs." *Food and Nutrition Bulletin* 30(2): 171-82.

²⁸ Given delays in ICRA's production of cassava cuttings, the final amount of cassava produced was not known at the time of writing. It is estimated to be 75 percent of the contracted quantity.

CFAF 500 for 1 bale of 50, 10-month cassava cuttings. Sale of these products on the market would have earned CFAF 1,650,000 for ICRA (CFAF 150,000 for the rice seed and CFAF 1,500,000 for the cuttings). Under the COOPI contract, ICRA was paid CFAF 3,600,000, roughly 220 percent more than market value of the product.²⁹ It would have been more economically efficient for COOPI to buy this seed on the market instead of contracting through ICRA.

5. The many management and production challenges faced by ICRA significantly decrease the economic efficiency of this activity, and it is clear that small, market-based subsidies (specifically, subsidies determined based on potential market sales given average yields) would not be sufficient for ICRA to carry out its role properly. These results indicate that the economic efficiency of hiring ICRA to produce these items is low and unsustainable for both donor and GoCAR budgets to support.

6. *Economic efficiency of Component 2 micro-projects as compared to other development projects in CAR is satisfactory.* These micro-projects were either less expensive or comparable to similar micro-projects funded by other donors. The cost per beneficiary was assessed for two technical “kits” distributed to Project beneficiaries. The number of beneficiaries varies significantly, because data provided to the ICR team were sometimes received as an already calculated average per famer group (usually 10-15 people), and in some cases as the total project cost. The distribution of vegetable seed and tools has the lowest cost per beneficiary in the sample, and for food crop seeds and tools the cost is nearly the lowest (see table 3.2)

Table 3.2: Economic Efficiency of FCRP Micro-projects

| | # of Beneficiaries | Total Cost (FCFA) | Cost per Beneficiary (FCFA) |
|---|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Kit #1 - vegetable seeds and basic tools | | | |
| World Bank (COOPI) | 15 | 200,000 | 13,333 |
| FAO | 21,645 | 327,805,721 | 15,145 |
| EU (Danish Refugee Council) | 10 | 650,000 | 65,000 |
| Kit #2 - food crop seeds and basic tool | | | |
| EU/Department for International Development (UK) (Mercy Corps) | 3,145 | 18,232,500 | 5,797 |
| World Bank (COOPI) | 3,630 | 21,780,000 | 6,000 |
| FAO | 21,645 | 327,805,721 | 15,145 |
| EU (Danish Refugee Council) | 10 | 300,000 | 30,000 |

²⁹ “Rapport Narratif Final,” COOPI, p. 7.

Component 3. Program management, monitoring, and evaluation

7. Overhead costs were estimated for each of the implementing entities and found to be quite high. This finding can be explained in part by experience in CAR that shows that additional human resources are needed at every level of supervision, particularly for procurement and financial controls, and for implementation in zones of the country where population density is low and roads are bad (57 percent of CAR's 22,000 kilometers of roads is in bad condition and 38 percent unusable). These realities lead to larger-than-average supervision budgets within implementing entity contracts, as is the case for the Project.

Table 3.3: Overhead Costs of FIE Implementation as a Percentage of Contract Costs

| Overhead Costs for Component 2 | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| | Actual Budget (US\$) | % of Contract Cost |
| COOPI | | |
| Equipment, materials, vehicles | \$146,749 | |
| Consultancy services | \$85,795 | |
| Operational costs | \$534,892 | |
| Administrative costs | \$133,541 | |
| Total | \$900,977 | 60.5% |
| CRS | | |
| Staff | \$292,309 | |
| Operational fees | \$133,072 | |
| Equipment, materials, vehicles | | |
| Vehicles | \$56,784 | |
| Computer equipment | \$12,938 | |
| Communication | \$1,198 | |
| Transport | \$109,762 | |
| Administrative costs | \$146,267 | |
| Total | \$752,330 | 49.9% |

8. For field activities at the village level, such as those carried out under Component 2, individual field agents are able to cover only a radius of a few kilometers given the condition of the roads and distances between villages. One supervisor is often needed per prefecture, and these supervisors spend the majority of their time on the road, increasing all costs associated with field missions (per diem, vehicle maintenance, and fuel, to name a few). Even at the ministry level, nearly all Bank projects currently underway provide intensive supervision, which translates into additional consultants and additional missions (more than the normal two per year).

9. Given these constraints, it falls to the implementing organizations to be creative and resourceful in providing increased supervision while at the same time ensuring results on the ground. This same reality poses an enormous challenge for the extension of government services to rural areas.

Annex 4: Bank Lending and Implementation Support/Supervision Process

(a) Task team members

| Names | Title | Unit | Responsibility/ Specialty |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|------------------------------|
| Lending | | | |
| Renato Nardello | Rural Development Officer | AFTAR | TTL |
| Sarah Anthony | Consultant | LCSUW | |
| Eric Bell | Lead Economist | AFTP3 | |
| Aissatou Diallo | Finance Officer | LOAFC | |
| Charles Donang Ningayo | Procurement Specialist | AFTPC | |
| Janet Dooley | Sr. Country Officer | AFCCM | |
| Emeran Serge M. Menang Evouna | Forestry Specialist | AFTEN | |
| Kossi Eguida | Resident Economist | AFTP3 | |
| Daria Goldstein | Sr. Counsel | LEGAF | |
| Germaine Mafougong | Program Assistant | AFTAR | |
| Lucienne M. M'Baipor | Sr. Social Specialist | AFTCS | |
| Dan Murphy | Sr. Country Officer | AFCC1 | |
| Etienne N'Koa | Sr. Financial Management Specialist | AFTFM | |
| Jelena Pantelic | Country Manager | AFMCF | |
| Supervision / ICR | | | |
| Emeran Serge M. Menang Evouna | Forestry Specialist | AFTEN | |
| Ah-Kee Pin Foon | Procurement Analyst | AFTAR | |
| François Le Gall | Adviser | ARD | |
| Amadou Alassane | Sr. Agricultural Specialist | AFTAR | |
| Michael Morris | Program Coordinator | AFTAR | |
| Renato Nardello | Sr. Rural Development Officer | LCSAR | TTL |
| Meike Van Ginneken | Sector Leader | AFTU1 | TTL |
| Rachel Wilde Bingham | Consultant | AFTAR | |
| Filippo Fossi | Consultant | AFTAR | |
| Amadou Alassane | Sr. Agricultural Specialist | AFTAR | TTL |
| Lucienne M. M'Baipor | Sr. Social Specialist | AFTCS | |
| Emeran Serge M. Menang Evouna | Forestry Specialist | AFTEN | |
| Etienne N'Koa | Sr. Financial Management Specialist | AFTFM | |

(b) Staff time and cost

| Stage of Project Cycle | Staff Time and Cost (Bank Budget Only) | |
|------------------------|--|--|
| | No. of staff weeks | US\$ Thousands (including travel and consultant costs) |
| Lending | | |
| FY09 | 5.77 | 40.13 |
| Total | 5.77 | 40.13 |
| Supervision/ICR | | |
| FY10 | 9.70 | 108.06 |
| FY11 | 13.30 | 80.74 |
| FY12 | - | 7.17 |
| Total | 23.00 | 195.97 |

Annex 5: Summary of Borrower's ICR and Comments from partners

RESUME EXECUTIF, LEÇONS APPRISES ET RECOMMANDATIONS

Evaluation Finale du Projet de Réponse à la Crise Alimentaire en République Centrafricaine, Ministère des Finances et du Budget, Cellule chargée de Suivi des Réformes Economiques et Financières, Rapport Finale, Juillet 2012

Introduction

1. Le Projet de réponse à la crise alimentaire, exécuté entre septembre 2008 et février 2012 est un projet d'urgence qui, dans ses composantes 2 et 3, a fait l'objet d'une évaluation professionnelle indépendante en avril-mai 2012, soit deux mois après sa clôture. Les composantes évaluées visaient à aider les agriculteurs à produire des ressources alimentaires suffisantes pour faire face à la demande, et ce, à des fins d'amélioration à moyen terme de la sécurité alimentaire en RCA.

2. Le PRCA, financé par une subvention de la Banque mondiale, a été mis en œuvre dans un cadre partenarial basé sur la stratégie du faire faire. En effet, le Gouvernement de la RCA a mis en place un dispositif institutionnel d'exécution des activités comprenant plusieurs niveaux et acteurs avec des responsabilités partagées, le tout basé sur schéma institutionnel comprenant : i) la tutelle du projet ; ii) le Comité de pilotage technique (CPT); iii) la Coordination du projet ; iv) les Opérateurs de terrain (OT) chargés de la mise en œuvre de la Composante 2 du projet qui constitue en réalité le cœur et la raison d'être de tout le dispositif institutionnel.

Méthodologie

3. L'étude a été réalisée à partir d'un cadre d'évaluation comprenant les critères d'évaluation et les questions évaluatives / indicateurs. Les critères d'évaluation sont ceux retenus dans les termes de référence à savoir : pertinence, efficacité, efficience, durabilité. A ces critères classiques, la mission a ajouté la description succincte de l'évolution entre 2008 et 2012 du contexte de la République Centrafricaine par rapport à l'objectif de développement du PRCA, notamment en ses composantes 2 et 3. Les questions évaluatives ont pris en compte l'analyse des options stratégiques du projet et pour chacun des critères d'évaluation, l'objectif de développement du projet de même que les résultats finaux et les résultats intermédiaires et toutes les activités à réaliser pour parvenir à ces résultats.

4. La mission s'est déroulée de la mi avril à la mi mai 2012. Elle s'est déroulée au niveau central à Bangui et sur le terrain, auprès des groupements bénéficiaires et des agents du MADR ou des OT.

Pertinence

5. L'objectif de développement du PRCA est cohérent avec le contexte politique et économique du pays lors de l'élaboration du projet. Cet objectif est resté pertinent tout au long de la vie du projet et reste d'actualité, notamment vis-à-vis de la Stratégie de Développement Rural, de l'Agriculture et de la Sécurité Alimentaire (SDRASA) et du Document de Stratégie de Réduction de la Pauvreté (DSRP2) de la RCA, tous deux été adoptés en 2011, au moment où le PRCA était en pleine exécution. Malgré sa pertinence quant au contenu, cet objectif a manqué de précision dans sa formulation et les efforts faits par la suite pour rattraper cette lacune en proposant des "objectifs spécifiques" dans certains des documents de mise en œuvre du projet sont très peu satisfaisants.

6. En revanche, s'ils ont le mérite de la simplicité, le cadre des résultats et le cadre de suivi du projet sont peu pertinents pour mesurer les résultats effectifs obtenus par le projet. En tant qu'indicateurs d'activité ou de performance, les indicateurs intermédiaires permettent de connaître le nombre de bénéficiaires d'intrants ou de formation mais ils n'ont aucun lien avec l'indicateur de référence du projet. Pour ce dernier indicateur, il est peu pertinent d'envisager que des innovations pourraient être adoptées par les producteurs, au sens agronomique de ce concept, en moins de deux campagnes agricoles, l'adoption véritable supposant un changement durable de comportement.

Efficacité

7. L'analyse des réalisations et des actions menées par les différents acteurs, en particulier les deux Opérateurs de terrain COOPI et CRS mais également toutes les autres structures qui les ont accompagnés, indique qu'un nombre élevé d'activités (formation, acquisition et distribution d'intrants de toutes sortes et de moyens de travail, réalisation d'infrastructures, appui à la production) a été réalisé en très peu de temps. La mission d'évaluation estime que, de façon globale, l'efficacité de la plupart de ces interventions, à part le paquet technique poules pondeuses de COOPI, est pleinement satisfaisante dans leur conception mais modérément satisfaisante dans leur exécution.

8. Les indicateurs produits par les OT montrent à l'évidence un très bon niveau de réalisation et d'atteinte des objectifs spécifiques et des résultats intermédiaires du projet. On peut déduire de ce constat que les OT ont fait preuve de performance et que le projet a été une réussite. Toutefois, ces résultats, analysés à la lumière des échanges et observations de terrain, appellent des réserves de la mission d'évaluation quant à la qualité des résultats obtenus. La mission d'évaluation estime en effet qu'en termes de résultats qualitatifs, l'augmentation de la productivité des agriculteurs et l'amélioration des capacités institutionnelles pour le secteur agricole n'ont pas au rendez-vous même si la production a augmenté en volume dans les zones d'intervention du projet.

9. L'une des limites observées par la mission d'évaluation dans le dispositif de suivi se situe dans l'impossibilité où l'on se trouve de vérifier les statistiques fournies par les OT et d'en faire une comparaison avec des données d'avant projet ou de producteurs non bénéficiaires du projet, ceci en raison de l'absence d'un système statistique national

agricole. En effet, les services techniques déconcentrés du secteur agricole ne sont pas en mesure de fournir des données (superficies emblavées par culture, rendement et production) par commune, sous-préfecture, préfecture et région permettant d'apprécier la progression relative des bénéficiaires du projet (amélioration de la productivité, amélioration de l'accès à l'alimentation, etc.) par rapport à la situation de départ et par rapport aux non bénéficiaires du projet. Finalement, les OT ont été juges et parties. Les services techniques du ministère n'ont pu réaliser aucun des contrôles relevant de leurs responsabilités d'institutions publiques du secteur.

10. La mission d'évaluation a noté dans les rapports des OT et dans les propos entendus au cours des enquêtes qu'il y a une tendance générale à accorder foi aux déclarations des bénéficiaires sans faire les vérifications nécessaires. L'adoption d'une technologie par un producteur s'observe dans son champ individuel et non dans le champ communautaire servant de champ école où, sous la vigilance des animateurs du projet et pour avoir l'assurance de recevoir les intrants et outils promis, les membres du groupement respectent et appliquent scrupuleusement les consignes. Or, les OT ne se sont pas préoccupés de ce qui se passait dans les champs individuels des membres des groupements. Les vérifications faites par la mission indiquent que peu de producteurs répliquaient dans leurs champs personnels les techniques qui leur sont enseignées par les formateurs et animateurs des OT même si la plupart reconnaissent que ces techniques sont performantes. La principale raison qu'ils évoquent pour justifier cette attitude est que l'application de ces techniques demande souvent plus de temps que la poursuite des pratiques traditionnelles.

Efficienc

11. En termes d'analyse d'efficienc, la mission d'évaluation estime que l'option faite lors de l'élaboration du document de projet de ne faire d'évaluation économique quantitative pouvait se comprendre en raison de l'urgence des décisions et actions à prendre en réponse à la crise alimentaire. Elle a par conséquent jugée pertinente une telle option. D'ailleurs, les actes qui ont suivi au niveau de la Banque mondiale ont confirmé le souci d'aller très vite qui a présidé dans la gestion de ce dossier. Toutefois, le manque d'évaluation économique quantitative dans le document de projet n'a pas aidé l'équipe qui a élaboré les termes de référence des Opérateurs techniques. Les résultats attendus inscrits dans ces TDR ont été jugés par la mission d'évaluation trop ambitieux et en totale incohérence avec la durée d'exécution du projet (22 mois), irréalistes pour certains d'entre eux et sans aucun rapport avec les ressources financières allouées au projet.

12. L'autre aspect de l'efficienc de la mise en œuvre du projet examiné par la mission d'évaluation porte sur le coût et l'utilité réelle des résultats présentés. A ce propos, la mission estime que le rapport coût / bénéfice des investissements, équipements et actions de développement du projet est élevé. Toutefois, il n'est guère possible, en l'absence d'une étude agro-économique solide, de quantifier un tel rapport. Par ailleurs, la mission estime qu'il n'est pas possible à l'étape actuelle et à partir des documents produits par les OT, d'apprécier l'utilité réelle de la majorité des efforts d'animation et de formation consentis au bénéfice des groupes cibles. En effet, le

réinvestissement des acquis dans leurs champs individuels par les producteurs et les productrices, gage de l'adoption des technologies enseignées, n'a pas pu être observé.

13. Enfin, sur le critère d'efficience, si la décision d'accorder la subvention, la préparation et la signature de l'Accord de don ont été très rapides, il n'en a pas été de même pour l'exécution du projet, surtout au démarrage où l'important retard accusé a conduit à un report de la date de clôture du projet qui, initialement prévue au 17 août 2010, a fait l'objet d'une prolongation de 18 mois, jusqu'au 17 février 2012.

14. Ce retard et la prolongation subséquente ont eu la conséquence notable suivante : le caractère urgent du projet n'a plus vraiment été respecté. Il fallait en effet apporter diligemment des moyens et des ressources aux producteurs pour améliorer l'offre de produits alimentaires afin de briser la spirale des prix alimentaires pour réduire l'insécurité alimentaire. Les retards dans la sélection des OT et dans la signature des accords subsidiaires ont fait reculer de près de deux campagnes agricoles le démarrage du projet. Ainsi, au lieu d'avoir les premières récoltes de produits vivriers vers juin 2009, c'est en 2011 que les groupements ont véritablement réalisé le gros de leur production avec l'accompagnement des OT. C'est par conséquent trois années après la crise des prix alimentaires (janvier – avril 2008) et deux années et demi après l'entrée en vigueur du financement que la production attendue a été véritablement fournie par les producteurs. La mission d'évaluation estime qu'en termes de délai d'exécution, le niveau d'efficience a été peu satisfaisant.

Performance des partenaires

15. Le cadre partenarial de mise en œuvre du PRCA a fonctionné de façon modérément satisfaisante, tous les partenaires n'ayant pas toujours joué leur rôle avec la régularité et le niveau de performance souhaités.

16. Le Comité de Pilotage Technique n'a pu fonctionner comme l'a prévu l'arrêté ministériel qui l'a créé. Sa première réunion ne s'est tenue que le 06 décembre 2010, soit plus de deux années après sa création. Sa non opérationnalité au cours des années 2009 et 2010 ne lui a pas permis d'adopter le budget du projet de 2010. C'est au cours de sa réunion de décembre 2010 que le CPT a validé le budget de l'année 2011 pour l'exécution des activités prévues pour cette année-là. Les risques d'une telle léthargie ont été les suivants : i) manque de suivi et du contrôle des activités du projet ; ii) un mauvais pilotage des activités du projet ; iii) des dépenses non budgétisées pouvant entraîner leur inéligibilité.

17. Toutefois, le CPT s'est quelque peu rattrapé en 2011 en se réunissant et surtout en organisant sur le terrain des missions de supervision dans les zones d'intervention des deux OT. Ainsi les recommandations que le CPT a faites au CRS au terme de sa mission de suivi du 04 au 10 août 2011 dans la zone d'intervention de cet Opérateur démontrent toute l'utilité de son rôle qu'il a pris à cœur avec quelque retard.

18. La mission d'évaluation estime que les performances du Comité technique de pilotage ont été faiblement satisfaisantes. Cette faible performance du CPT a probablement eu un impact négatif sur l'exécution et surtout sur le suivi évaluation des activités des OT. Les résultats fournis par les OT en matière de superficies emblavées par les organisations paysannes, les productions et les rendements inscrits dans les rapports n'ont fait l'objet d'aucun contrôle technique de la part du CPT. Les recommandations qu'a faites le CPT au CRS au terme de sa mission de supervision d'août 2011 montrent à souhait qu'un meilleur fonctionnement du CPT et une présence plus précoce de cet organe sur le terrain auraient contribué à limiter les réalisations ne respectant pas les normes (habitats des animaux par exemple, etc.) ou encore certaines actions trop tardives comme la distribution des ressources animales aux bénéficiaires la veille de la clôture du projet.

19. La mission d'évaluation a pu noter qu'en matière de gestion financière, de passation des marchés, de gestion des relations avec les autres partenaires du projet, en particulier les OT, les instances gouvernementales et le bailleur de fonds, le CTP/PAS a convenablement assumé son rôle de coordination du projet. En revanche, en tant que Secrétariat assurant entre autres tâches le rapportage des réunions du Comité de pilotage technique, le Secrétariat permanent du CTP/PAS a été moins performant puisque le fonctionnement du CPT n'a pas été régulier. Par ailleurs, le Secrétariat permanent du CTP/PAS a souffert de n'avoir pas eu en son sein ni un ingénieur agronome, ni un spécialiste du suivi évaluation capable de décrypter le contenu et d'analyser techniquement les rapports envoyés par les OT avant de les transmettre au bénéficiaire du don et au bailleur de fonds puis de produire ses propres rapports. Cette fonction a, semble-t-il, été assumée au sein du Secrétariat permanent du CTP/PAS par le spécialiste en passation des marchés dont le profil n'est sans doute pas approprié pour l'exercer. Au total, la mission d'évaluation estime que la performance du Secrétariat permanent du CTP/PAS a été modérément satisfaisante.

20. Dans la perspective du renforcement des structures de l'Etat et de la pérennisation des actions engagées dans le cadre du projet, il a été prévu que les deux OT travailleraient étroitement avec des ONG nationales et en collaboration avec les institutions publiques essentielles au soutien viable du secteur, tel que le Ministère de l'Agriculture et du Développement Rural, en particulier avec ses agences spécialisées que sont l'ACDA, l'ANDE et l'ICRA au niveau national et régional. Cela leur permettrait d'assister les producteurs et leurs organisations et de définir un cadre d'intervention à moyen terme afin de procurer des bénéfices immédiats tout en préparant le terrain pour un soutien à plus long terme au secteur agricole.

21. Dans ce cadre, COOPI a signé des protocoles d'accord avec les trois Agences tandis que CRS a signé le même type d'accord avec l'ANDE et l'ICRA mais pas avec l'ACDA.

22. Par ailleurs, CRS a pour l'essentiel fait exécuter le projet sur le terrain par les Caritas Diocésaines de Kaga-Bandoro, Bambari, Alindao et Bangassou avec qui il a

signé des accords de partenariat. Les Caritas Diocésaines ont recruté du personnel pour l'exécution du projet dans leur zone respective.

23. Dans la plupart des cas, les protocoles d'accord OT – Agences du MADR ont été mis en œuvre suivant les clauses définies. Les OT entrent souvent directement en discussion avec les cadres et agents des directions régionales des Agences du MADR pour signer des contrats avec eux dans l'esprit des protocoles d'accord. Parfois, les directions nationales et régionales de ces agences ne sont informées de ces contrats qu'au dernier moment ou pas du tout. Généralement, ces activités ne sont pas suivies au plan institutionnel par la direction nationale ou régionale de l'agence. Des cas de conflits ouverts entre agents ayant signé des contrats avec les OT et leurs directeurs régionaux ont été signalés à la mission d'évaluation.

24. La mission d'évaluation estime que dans sa conception et sa mise en œuvre, le partenariat entre les OT et les agences du MADR n'a pas été satisfaisant.

25. En effet, dans le document de projet, il est clairement indiqué que la collaboration entre les OT et "les institutions publiques essentielles au soutien viable du secteur" permettrait aux partenaires (agences du MADR et OT) d'assister les producteurs et leurs organisations, ainsi que de définir un cadre d'intervention à moyen terme. Le contenu de cette collaboration a été ensuite traduit en responsabilités respectives des OT et des agences du MADR à travers les protocoles d'accord.

26. Mais pour exercer ces responsabilités, les agences du MADR, en tant qu'institutions, n'ont bénéficié d'aucune ressource sur le projet. Le projet n'a pas prévu de renforcement institutionnel lié aux responsabilités assignées aux agences gouvernementales dans la perspective de la relève après la fin de l'intervention des OT auprès des bénéficiaires. Sachant l'important dénuement dans lequel se trouvent les agences du MADR au niveau central et surtout au niveau déconcentré et local où les agents n'ont pas toujours les moyens de déplacement et où les directions régionales et les secteurs ne reçoivent pas généralement de moyens de fonctionnement, leur participation au suivi des activités du projet sur le terrain était compromise dès le départ.

27. Au plan institutionnel, la démarche qui a consisté pour les OT, organisations non gouvernementales, à recruter des agents publics comme consultants privés n'est pas satisfaisante même si cela a été couvert par les protocoles d'accord. Au demeurant, il faudrait vérifier la légalité de ces protocoles d'accord au regard des textes régissant la gestion des personnels de la fonction publique centrafricaine et des conditions de recrutement des fonctionnaires publics comme consultants nationaux par les projets financés sur ressources extérieures.

28. Concernant la Banque mondiale, la mission estime très satisfaisant le délai de préparation, d'approbation et de signature du projet.

29. Le plan de supervision de la Banque mondiale prévoyait que cette supervision serait "aussi intense que possible pendant la phase de mise en œuvre du projet, afin de s'assurer que les subventions sont utilisées aux fins prévues, et également de fournir une assistance si nécessaire. Pour cette raison, des missions de supervision trimestrielles auront lieu au cours du premier exercice afin de faciliter la mise en œuvre du projet, après quoi deux missions de supervision auront lieu annuellement si approprié".

30. La mission d'évaluation n'a pu obtenir d'information sur la mise en œuvre de ce plan de supervision de la Banque mondiale. Sur la base des aides mémoires de missions de supervision de la Banque qui lui ont été transmis par le Secrétariat permanent du CTP/PAS lors de la collecte des données documentaires, la mission estime que le nombre de missions de supervision de la Banque est largement en deçà du nombre prévu dans le plan de supervision. Ce faible rythme de supervision de la part de la Banque mondiale n'a-t-il pas contribué au retard connu par le projet à son démarrage, quand le CTP/PAS a procédé, au cours du premier trimestre 2009, à la sélection des OT par le biais de méthodes de passation de marchés suivi d'une non-objection de la Banque mondiale sur ce choix sans se rendre compte que le document de projet précisait un engagement des OT basé sur les Accords subsidiaires ?

31. La mission d'évaluation estime que la supervision du projet par la Banque mondiale a été modérément satisfaisante.

Durabilité

32. S'agissant de la durabilité de l'impact des actions menées, la mission d'évaluation a noté que dans les documents de conception du projet, la stratégie de pérennisation des résultats n'a pas fait l'objet d'une formulation et d'une description claire assortie d'un objectif affirmé mais qu'elle était implicite. Cette stratégie de pérennisation prend deux formes : une stratégie au plan institutionnel et une stratégie en direction des bénéficiaires des actions du projet.

33. La stratégie assise sur le renforcement des institutions nationales stratégiques et des ONG nationales du secteur, séduisante dans son énoncé, n'a pas véritablement été mise en œuvre, les trois agences du MADR n'ayant pas été institutionnellement impliquées de façon active dans la mise en œuvre du projet mais ont plutôt dû laisser leurs cadres et agents signer des contrats à titre individuel avec les OT en qualité de prestataires.

34. La stratégie de pérennisation qui comprenait aussi bien la formation des bénéficiaires que le renforcement des capacités des agents de terrain des agences du MADR, les animateurs des ONG nationales impliquées et les délégués techniques des groupements de producteurs et des productrices, est satisfaisante dans sa conception. L'a-t-elle été dans sa mise en œuvre ? La question reste posée vu la vitesse à laquelle tout cela s'est déroulé.

35. Eu égard à la brièveté du délai de réalisation des actions par les deux OT et de la concentration de ces actions sur les derniers mois précédant la clôture du projet, la mission d'évaluation estime qu'il n'y a pas eu suffisamment de recul par rapport aux actions engagées pour observer un changement de comportement de la part des producteurs. Rappelons que le projet portait sur 22 mois soit deux campagnes agricoles et que pour des raisons de procédures de signature de l'accord subsidiaire avec les opérateurs, la mise en œuvre des actions de terrain a démarré en pleine campagne agricole, amenant les OT soit à faire essentiellement des formations la première année, soit à n'accompagner les producteurs qu'au cours de la saison B de la première campagne. C'est par conséquent au cours de la seconde année que les OT ont eu l'opportunité de faire une campagne complète avec les producteurs mais on s'acheminait déjà vers la clôture du projet. Il n'y a donc pas eu le recul qui aurait permis aux opérateurs d'observer le comportement des producteurs suite à leur intervention.

36. La mission estime que les résultats obtenus, nombreux et variés, ne sont pas encore suffisamment solides pour induire une quelconque durabilité, à moins que des actions urgentes soient entreprises par le MADR, à travers ses structures appropriées (ACDA et ANDE surtout) pour conforter ces résultats auprès des populations bénéficiaires.

Recommandations

37. Banque mondiale. En tant que partenaire du Gouvernement centrafricain dans le secteur de l'agriculture et du développement rural, la Banque mondiale devrait : i) autant que possible, suivre les plans de supervision des projets en cours d'exécution pour un accompagnement régulier et rapproché des structures nationales en charge de l'exécution des projets relevant de son portefeuille ; ii) prévoir dans les prochains projets et même dans ceux qui démarrent si ce n'est fait, d'accompagner le Gouvernement dans le renforcement des capacités des institutions publiques du secteur, en particulier les 3 agences du MADR (ACDA, ANDE et ICRA) afin qu'elles soient en mesure, non seulement d'accomplir leur mission auprès des producteurs et des productrices et de leurs organisations mais aussi leur mission de conception, de suivi et de contrôle des interventions dans le secteur ; iii) éviter de faciliter un type de partenariat qui affaiblisse l'autorité des institutions du secteurs sur leurs agents postés sur le terrain.

38. Gouvernement centrafricain. Les autorités gouvernementales devraient : i) dans l'immédiat, mettre en place une stratégie d'urgence pour permettre aux agences et autres structures compétentes du secteur de prendre sans délai le relai des OT auprès des groupements bénéficiaires des actions du PRCA pour consolider les résultats obtenus en vue de leur pérennisation ; ii) veiller à ce que les organes mis en place pour piloter les projets dans le secteur agricole et rural exécutent effectivement et convenablement le mandat qui leur est assigné ; iii) prévoir au budget de l'Etat les ressources nécessaires aux investissements dont ont besoin les institutions du secteur et à leur fonctionnement, en particulier les agences du secteur aussi bien au niveau central et au niveau déconcentré ; iv) veiller à ce que les ressources prévues soient effectivement mises en place et exécutées dans le cadre, au besoin, de contrats cadres avec ces agences assortis

de résultats clairs, mesurables dans le temps ; v) poursuivre la recherche et la mobilisation des ressources nécessaires à la mise en œuvre de la Stratégie de Développement Rural, de l'Agriculture et de la Sécurité Alimentaire.

Annex 6: Comments of Cofinanciers and Other Partners/Stakeholders

There were no cofinanciers; input from NGOs was taken into account in drafting the ICR.

Annex 7: List of Supporting Documents

1. WB Docs Project File
2. Implementation Status Reports 1-9
3. Aide-mémoires and BTORs (all available, 2008-2012)
4. Project Concept Note
5. Project Appraisal Document
6. FIE Terms of Reference
7. FIE and CS-REF Quarterly Narrative and Financial Reports (all, 2008-2012)
8. Rapport Narratif Final d'Activités d'Operateur (RAO), Catholic Relief Services – CAR, Période: du 25 mars 2010 au 17 février 2012
9. Rapport Narratif d'Achèvement Final, Mars 2012, COOPI-RCA
10. Evaluation finale du projet réponse á la crise alimentaire, Dr. Aimé Gnimadi, April 2012
11. Procurement Reviews
12. AFTOS Assessment of the Likelihood of Projects Closing in FY12 Achieving Stated Objectives (December 2011)
13. Implementation Completion and Results Report Guidelines, OCPS, August 2006 (last updated 10/05/2011)
14. ICR and IEG Evaluations – Lessons and Guidance for AFR
15. Project Extension Package
16. Stakeholder Interviews and Field Visits (FIEs, PIU, TTLs, beneficiaries, 2009-2012)
17. Grant Reporting and Monitoring Reports and GFRP Project Status Reports
18. Project Completion Report, National Livestock Project, Report No. 13219, June 27, 1994
19. Implementation Completion Report, Credit 26620, 03400, Livestock Development and Rangeland Management Project, March 29, 2000, Report No. 20228
20. Project Completion Report, Central African Republic, Livestock Development Project, Credit 894-CA, March 2, 1988, Report No. 7147
21. Etude Economique des Micro Projets du PRCA, CRS, Janvier 2012
22. Standard Project Report, WFP, 2009
23. Rapport sur les mesures d'impact environnemental des activités du PRCA sur les zones d'intervention; Catholic Relief Services, janvier 2012
24. Galloway, R., E. Kristjansson, A. Gelli, U. Meir, F. Espejo, and D. Bundy (2009), "School Feeding: Outcomes and Costs." *Food and Nutrition Bulletin* 30(2): 171-82.
25. Bingham, R., CAR Agricultural Briefer, March 2012, World Bank.

Annex 8. Risks Identified During Design and Mitigation Measures

| Risk Identified During Design | Mitigation Measure | Adequate or Inadequate | Revised Mitigation Measure |
|---|---|---|--|
| Component 1: School Feeding Program | | | |
| Financially unsustainable activities | None | ADEQUATE. It was known that school feeding programs are often financially unsustainable activities, but it was determined that the food price crisis merited these emergency measures. | NA |
| Component 2: Agricultural Supply Response | | | |
| GoCAR implementation capacity | CS-REF to manage Project given satisfactory management of prior Bank projects. | INADEQUATE. Coordination between CS-REF and MADR was difficult. Recruitment procedures for consultants and field implementing agencies were slow. Minimal communication between TTL (based in Washington) and CS-REF caused confusion on implementation arrangements at start-up. | Need for closer Bank supervision of CS-REF led to field-based TTL taking over the Project 10 months after effectiveness, but TTL was transferred at the end of 2010 and the new TTL was not based in Bangui. The absence of a TTL on the ground was, in part, mitigated by an international consultant. However, adequate Project management remained difficult for CS-REF. International consultant was based in Bangui for a few months each year from 2009 to 2012. |
| Risk of slow implementation | OP/BP 8.0 streamlined procedures should have allowed for faster implementation. | INADEQUATE. Complicated procurement procedures, as well as a lack of focus on the Project, caused major delays in implementation: Safeguard studies submitted 15 months after effectiveness; FIE contract signatures 18 months after effectiveness. | LEGAF advice in September 2009 on appropriate procurement procedures was followed quickly by signing of subsidiary agreements in March 2010. Increased supervision by Bank team (see above). |
| Moderate financial risk | Reputable financial institutions will manage the Project (i.e., CS-REF) | ADEQUATE. While the first audit reports showed some ineligible expenses, GoCAR reimbursed the Bank appropriately. | NA |

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