



1. Project Data:		Date Posted : 08/21/2000	
PROJ ID: P000818		Appraisal	Actual
Project Name: Agricultural Services	Project Costs (US\$M)	17.2	18.9
Country: Gambia	Loan/Credit (US\$M)	12.3	12.3
Sector(s): Agricultural Extension	Cofinancing (US\$M)		3.6
L/C Number: C2453			
	Board Approval (FY)		93
Partners involved :	Closing Date	06/30/1999	03/01/1999
Prepared by :	Reviewed by :	Group Manager :	Group:

2. Project Objectives and Components

a. Objectives

The overall objective was to generate increased agricultural productivity and sustained growth in the incomes of small holder families through the strengthening of support services in agricultural extension, research and training, and the promotion of self-reliance and farmer empowerment.

b. Components

(i) Strengthening natural resources/agricultural sector capacity for policy analysis and planning : to improve the limited policy-making, investment-screening and performance monitoring capacity of the planning units in the Departments of State for Agriculture and Natural Resources and Environment (DOSA and DOSE); (ii) strengthening of extension services covering crops and livestock production and natural resources management, and the expansion of functional literacy programs for rural dwellers; (iii) improving and strengthening of the Gambian agricultural research system and modest support to the Agricultural School of Gambia College; (iv) promoting self-reliance/farmer empowerment through pilot activities in one (of six) administrative regions to test approaches in farmer participation and self-management in the areas of: irrigation water management, rural savings and loans, training of rural entrepreneurs, and rural social infrastructure .

c. Comments on Project Cost, Financing and Dates

Co-financing was provided by IFAD in the amount originally planned . IDA share of the costs was also as planned . The increase in total project costs was due to increased spending on operating expenditures using local shopping methods and training. The cost-overruns were not due to increased field costs, but due to increased use of project funds by DOSA to finance budgetary shortfalls in its central operating budgets . The significant deviations in the external training costs was a result of poor management and lack of adequate supervision, despite the observations noted by the independent auditor. The increased costs in these categories was made up through less than expected expenditures on consulting services and cutting back substantially on field activities .

3. Achievement of Relevant Objectives:

The project failed to make any significant progress towards its overall objective of improving agricultural productivity or increasing small holder incomes. It should be noted, however, that the project was implemented under very difficult country circumstances, with project activities suspended for six months following the coup of July, 1994. The project strengthened the technical capacity of DOSA and helped establish an autonomous National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI). However, failure to secure sustainable funding has reduced NARI's ability to execute research programs. Outcomes by individual components: The project made only marginal impact on the capacity of DOSA or DOSE for sector analysis. The linkage with an external institution for technical support was never established and the staff trained abroad for this purpose were reassigned to other departments upon their return . DOSA failed to establish priority funding for DOSE, leaving environmental aspects unattended to . The achievement of the objective of the extension component was unsatisfactory . The crop and livestock services are still not integrated and field services have not been effective, with low levels of awareness and adoption of new technologies. Extension training and field activities were significantly curtailed for lack of funds, and soil and water conservation activities were not undertaken . The research component partially achieved its objectives . NARI was established and a minimal research program executed . Funding shortage, however, has significantly affected NARI activities. The Gambian Agriculture Research Fund was not established . The Agricultural School of Gambia College

was supported and the quality and relevance of its programs improved . Finally, the component to promote the self-reliance and empowerment of farmers was successful in meeting its objectives . The functional literacy program helped 3500 farmers become functionally literate, and many others have reached intermediary levels . Water user associations (120 for 2790 farmers) were established and training provided, although management control is yet to be transferred to them. The credit component was implemented successfully with good repayment rates . The training program was poorly designed and implemented, with significant cost overruns and significant deviation from the original plans for training.

4. Significant Outcomes/Impacts:

The component design to help empower farmers and make them self-reliant appears to have been successful in meeting its objectives as noted above . The only other significant achievement is the establishment of NARI and the development of a medium-term research master plan . An emerging problem is the lack of funding which is affecting NARI's research activities.

5. Significant Shortcomings (including non-compliance with safeguard policies):

The significant deviation of the training activities from the original plans went virtually unnoticed, including by Bank supervision missions, despite observations in the annual independent audit reports . Despite the significant expenditure for training abroad, the staff trained abroad for the specific purpose of improving sectoral analytical capacity were reassigned to other departments, limiting the impact of the training . Similarly, lack of adequate attention during project design and appraisal also adversely affected the implementation and impact of two other major project components: extension and research. Extension was to be integrated although project design maintained parallel bureaucratic apparatus and lines of command for the two services expected to be unified at the field level. Funding constraints also significantly curtailed field activities . In research, a new organization was established without adequate planning for sustained funding, which has increasingly affected research output and effectiveness.

6. Ratings :	ICR	OED Review	Reason for Disagreement /Comments
Outcome :	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	
Institutional Dev .:	Modest	Modest	Institutional development impact is rated modest only on the basis of the outcomes for the self-reliance and farmer empowerment component. Otherwise, the institutional development impact has been negligible.
Sustainability :	Unlikely	Unlikely	
Bank Performance :	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	
Borrower Perf .:	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	
Quality of ICR :		Satisfactory	

NOTE: ICR rating values flagged with '*' don't comply with OP/BP 13.55, but are listed for completeness.

7. Lessons of Broad Applicability:

1. The project points out (by now) an old lesson that a thorough institutional analysis, especially of the financial sustainability aspects, is necessary prior to establishing a new institution .
2. Another familiar lesson is the need for adequately staffed supervision missions, with proper skills mix, especially when government capacity to implement and monitor is weak .
3. As part of supervision, Bank missions need to systematically monitor expenditures and pay particular attention to observations and qualifications made by independent auditors . Supervision missions also need to diligently follow up previous recommendations and agreed upon actions to ensure satisfactory implementation progress .

8. Assessment Recommended? ☐ Yes ☒ No

9. Comments on Quality of ICR:

The ICR provides a candid assessment of the design and implementation problems, with appropriate focus on development impact and results.