Report Number : ICR00004441

1. Project Data

Project ID	Project Name
P119308	CI: Agriculture Sector Support Project
Country	**Practice Area(Lead)**
Cote d'Ivoire	Agriculture

L/C/TF Number(s)	Closing Date (Original)	Total Project Cost (USD)
IDA-52970,IDA-H8750	30-Oct-2017	47,144,520.35
Bank Approval Date	**Closing Date (Actual)**	
08-Aug-2013	29-Jun-2018	

	IBRD/IDA (USD)	Grants (USD)
Original Commitment	50,000,000.00	0.00
Revised Commitment	50,000,000.00	0.00
Actual	47,153,193.76	0.00

Prepared by	Reviewed by	ICR Review Coordinator	Group
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2. Project Objectives and Components

a. Objectives

As per the PAD (page 7), the project development objective (PDO) was to improve smallholder access to technologies and markets, and enhance governance of selected value chains supported under the project. The Financing Agreement had a minor difference and stated the PDO as follows: "The objectives of the Project are to improve access to technologies and markets for smallholder export crop farmers of the Recipient's territory and to enhance the governance of selected value chains supported under the Project". The key difference being the use of the term "export crop farmers" which exactly defines the target beneficiary group.

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

Yes

Did the Board approve the revised objectives/key associated outcome targets?

No

c. Will a split evaluation be undertaken?

No

d. Components

Component 1: Promotion of public-private partnership (PPP) for sustainable cocoa development in South-West Cote d'Ivoire (Appraisal Estimate US$ 10.0 million; Actual at Project Closing US$ 9.7 million)
The goals of this component was to support the 'Conseil du Café et du Cacao' (CCC) establish the coffee/cocoa PPP platform. The component had three subcomponents: (a) improving farmers' access to market through parallel co-financing of 130 subprojects, and rehabilitating and maintaining 960 km of feeder roads; (b) supporting sustainable cocoa productivity including training programs of about 13,000 farmers on good agricultural practices, enhancement of the cocoa disease control system, and increased access to improved planting materials; and (c) capacity building and institutional enhancement, including technical assistance to the CCC for the implementation of the PPP platform and restructuring of farmers' cooperatives.

Component 2: Support to smallholder rubber and palm oil extension in South-East Cote d'Ivoire (Appraisal Estimate US$ 16.0 million; Actual at Project Closing US$ 16.0 million)
The goal of this component was to support the 'Association des Professionnels du Caouthchouc Naturel de Côte d'Ivoire' - Rubber (APROMAC) and 'Association Interprofessionnelle de la Filière Palmier à Huile' - Palm Oil (AIPH) to implement their development programs. The subcomponents included: (a) improving access to markets based on parallel financing for rehabilitating and maintaining 1,800 km of feeder roads; (b) enhancing productivity through provision of matching grants to support establishment of individual and community nurseries; and (c) structuring farmers' organizations and supporting institutional development through (i) strengthening fiduciary and operational procedures of the rubber fund (Fonds de Développement de l'Hévéa, FDH) and capacity building of cooperatives smallholders, (ii) piloting market links between two cooperatives and one processing company, and (iii) supporting AIPH to improve its governance structure, operational and fiduciary procedures.

Component 3: Support to the cotton sector and promotion of cashew processing in Central and Northern Cote d'Ivoire (Appraisal Estimate US$ 16.0 million; Actual at Project Closing US$ 16.0 million)
The goal of this component was to strengthen the cotton sector development strategy established since 2008 and improve the overall performance of the cashew value chain. The subcomponents were (a) improving access to markets through parallel co-financing the rehabilitation and maintenance of 3,100 km

and 1,140 km of feeder roads in the cotton and cashew areas, respectively (ii) extension of market and price information for cashew via FIRCA (Fonds Interprofessionnel pour la Recherche et le Conseil Agricoles); (b) improving agricultural productivity in cotton-based production systems ; (c) Improving cashew productivity; (d) Supporting cashew nut domestic processing; (e) Institutional development of the cotton and cashew sectors by reinforcing the Interprofession du Coton (INTERCOTON) and by re-establishing the cashew professional association.

Component 4: Project Implementation and support to sector coordination (Appraisal Estimate US$ 8.0 million; Actual at Project Closing US$ 6.0 million)
The goal of this component was to facilitate and ensure proper coordination of activities including (a) project coordination, management, and monitoring and evaluation; (b) support to sector coordination for the development of strategies and policy framework to coordinate and implement the NAIP (National Agricultural Investment Program). Activities would include support to the design of national strategies for maintenance of rural roads, and support to the professional associations to comply with Ordinance 2011-473 and the new Organization for the Harmonization of Corporate Law in Africa (Organisation pour l'harmonisation en Afrique du droit des affaires, OHADA) rules. The term "inter-profession" used frequently in the PAD and the ICR is an adapted French term used for professional associations mentioned above. The task team clarified that the term was used interchangeably with the term IPO in the document as well.

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

Project Cost:

Total Appraisal Estimate: US$ 50.0 million
Actual Disbursement: US$ 49.8 million (ICR datasheet page 6 reports US$ 47.1 million, and there is discrepancy with disbursement figure reported in ICR Annex 3 - the task team clarified that the final figure of $ 49.8 million included additional final disbursements at project closing, including during the grace period ending on Oct 31, 2018, while the data sheet number was from the last project ISR supervision report).

Project Financing:

World Bank Financing:

- IDA Credit original estimate US$ 23,820,000; Actual Disbursement US$ 22,519,130
- IDA Grant original estimate US$ 26,180,000; Actual Disbursement US$ 24,634,063

Borrower contribution:

- Original Estimate US$ 15,750,000; Actual Disbursement US$ 0 (explanation not recorded in ICR)

Key Dates:

Approval: 8 August 2013
Effectiveness: 4 May 2014
Original Closing: 30 October 2017
Restructuring: 27 October 2017 (ICR page 13 states that the project’s closing date was extended from October 2017 to June 2018 to account for the project restructuring (level 2) during the midterm review and allow completion of the remaining activities, particularly maintenance of approximately 1,500 km of rural roads, originally scheduled to be rehabilitated)
Actual Closing: 29 June 2018

3. Relevance of Objectives

Rationale

At closing the stated project objectives were well aligned with the Côte d'Ivoire Country Partnership Framework (CPF) FY16-FY19 and specifically 'Objective 1: Improve Productivity in Agriculture/Agribusiness Value Chains' (CPF page 17). The PDO was also aligned with the national strategic priorities, as highlighted in the country's National Agriculture Investment Plan (ICR page 13). At project appraisal, Côte d’Ivoire was emerging from a decade of political instability, which undermined agricultural growth and exacerbated poverty. Thus, agriculture was expected to be the driver of post-conflict economic growth and poverty alleviation in the country, with the main export commodities - cocoa, rubber, palm oil, cotton, and cashew - expected to play a key role in agricultural growth (ICR page 9). Thus the Agriculture Sector Support Project (PSAC) aimed at supporting the country’s agricultural transition to becoming more competitive, sustainable, and private sector-led, and to ensure sustained increases in producers’ incomes. To achieve this goal, the project relied on three similar pathways across the commodity value chains aimed at (a) improving smallholder access to technologies; (b) increasing access to markets; and (c) enhancing governance for the five strategic commodities as stated in the PDO. However, the PDO did not include language around enhanced development outcomes for the beneficiary farmer groups. Thus, given the stated project objectives, the relevance is substantial, but given the focus on five agricultural commodity crop sectors in different regions across the country with variable value chain designs, it could have been more contained.

Rating

Substantial

4. Achievement of Objectives (Efficacy)

Objective 1

Objective

Objective 1: Improve access to technologies for smallholder farmers

Rationale

The ICR (page 14) reports that Objective 1 was surpassed. The total area planted or re-planted with improved material was estimated at 50,678 ha versus an expected target of 45,500 ha. This was achieved in the targeted value chains through the Project Implementation Agencies (CCC, APROMAC, AIPH and CCA), with the assistance of the technical executing agencies (CNRA, ANADER and FIRCA) involved in research, seed production and advisory services. The ICR does not provide a breakdown of how this hectarage was distributed across the five crops.

The ICR (Annex 1) does not provide a break down of the results by outputs and outcomes. The ICR (page 14) reports that informal interviews conducted with the project area cocoa farmers revealed that the cocoa hybrids disseminated produced 1.5T/ha of cocoa in 18 months against 500 kg/ha in 3 years for traditional varieties. For cotton, secondary data from INTERCOTON showed an increasing trend in cotton yields from the start of the project. Before the project (from 2005 to 2011) average yield was estimated at 937 kg/ha while during the project (from 2012 to 2017), it was 1037kg/ha. Concerning cashew nuts, an ex-post stakeholder survey revealed that farmers who adopted the new practices experienced a yield increase of 52 percent (from 325 kg/ha to 521 kg/ha) compared to the non-adopters. As for rubber and palm oil, since maturity is achieved after 7 years of plantation, increased agricultural productivity due to the project's intervention were not observed. Productivity indicators were not adequately parsed out by crop and technology, hence on the basis of results framework presented in Annex 1, the improved access to technologies is rated substantial.

Rating

Substantial

Objective 2

Objective

Objective 2: Improve smallholder farmers’ access to market

Rationale

Improved farmers’ access to market was facilitated by road rehabilitation and maintenance. Outputs under Objective 2 were exceeded and 6482 km roads were maintained or rehabilitated (111 percent of original target 5860 km) as reported in ICR Annex 1.

The ICR (Annex 1) does not provide a break down of the results by outputs and outcomes. The ICR (page 15) also reports that the after-project access to market considerably improved as the time to reach the main transportation road was reduced on average by 65 percent across the targeted value chains; as a result, farmers were able to easily transfer their commodities to the market; and the turnover rate to collect products from the farm and channel them to the main processing plants or markets was multiplied on average by a factor of seven; resulting in a reduction in post-harvest losses and an improvement in the quality of commodities marketed.

Improving product quality via certification was an additional important pathway to increasing farmers' access to market as per the document. However, the project fell short of making inroads into sustainable certification and traceability of value chains as highlighted in the ICR - some enhanced access for palm oil value chain but lack of implementation of cocoa certification initiatives. The ICR also reports that an activity relating to the cashew value chain was dropped from the results framework at the mid term review (page 16), however no explanation is provided. Overall, access to market indicators, other than road rehabilitation and maintenance were not clearly parsed out in the results framework, and hence are not given substantial weight in the rating. While significant opportunities were missed to improve market access via quality certification, a basic indicator of market access, timeliness of farm-to-market transportation, was substantially improved. Therefore, the efficacy of achieving this objective is rated substantial, although with shortcomings.

Rating
Substantial

Objective 3
Objective

Objective 3: Enhance governance of the selected value chains

Rationale

The ICR candidly reports that the process of organizing the professional associations/ cooperatives (also called inter-professions/ IPOs) and productive alliances in the target value chains as envisaged in the PDO did not made sufficient headways except in the cotton sector. The PDO indicator on total amount of funding from inter-professions investments funds established or strengthened with project support was not available in ICR Annex 1 Results framework.

The ICR reports that results achieved in terms of governance were substantial in the cotton value chain, but modest in the other value chains. In the cotton sector, INTERCOTON established performance contracts between producers and ginners for the delivery of extension services and the production of quality seeds, regulated by FIRCA and there was a formal recognition of INTERCOTON as an "IPO" - inter-professional association. In the cocoa sector, cleaning up of 'phony cooperatives' was initiated during last year of the project, and gains were not substantial. In the cashew sector, an inter-professional association/ IPO was not established. In the rubber sector, APROMAC did not get "IPO" accreditation. In the palm oil sector, AIPH secured accreditation.

Given the mixed outcomes across the five value chains, the overall rating is modest.

Rating
Modest

Rationale

Overall achievement of objectives is rated as weakly substantial owing to substantial achievement of two out of the three sub-objectives as described above and modest achievement of the third.

However, it is important to note that the formation of inter-professional associations and their criticality for the governance aspect was an important element of the project, and the absence of its achievement would pose a substantial risk to the sustainability of project outcomes. The task team reiterated that all outcomes and objectives were given equal importance, without a stated hierarchy. Without the effective governance of commodity value chains, the gains in technology adoption and market access are not likely to be sustained. Hence, in the absence of relative importance of objectives, the average rating assigned by the ICR is substantial.

Overall Efficacy Rating
Substantial

5. Efficiency

Economic Analysis: An economic analysis was carried out as part of the project preparation. The analysis compared the quantifiable benefits (incremental production, reduction in transport costs and losses) with the project costs. Production price and costs were valued at prevailing levels (second quarter of 2012). Economic costs and prices were assumed to be equal to financial costs and prices, in the absence of tax and distortions, except for cocoa and cashew, which were subject to export taxes. Activities related to capacity strengthening of value chain organizations, to sector coordination and to cashew nuts processing were not subject to a cost/benefit analysis, as the benefits generated, although important, could not be quantified. The cost of these activities was however taken into account in the calculation of the overall rate of return. The economic rate of return (ERR) for the whole project was calculated to be 27% ex-ante, and the ex-post ERR calculated was 29%.

Financial Analysis: The financial internal rate of return (FIRR) for the average production models per value chains ranged from 16 percent for oil palm to 113 percent for cashew. The ICR reports (page 17) that subsidy was necessary to support the uptake of technology. In the absence of funding from financial or other partners in the value chains, the small farmers would have found it difficult to cover their early negative cash flows without the subsidy.

Cost-effectiveness: The cost-effectiveness analysis showed that the project costs compared favorably with standard for extension services, road rehabilitation and social infrastructure.

Administrative efficiency: At the start, the project experienced administrative difficulties leading to delays in kicking off the project activities, delayed effectiveness and disbursement, and weak pro-activity on the part of the PCU in anticipating and resolving problems. After the midterm review, there was improved project management and coordination as per the ICR (page 18).

On the basis of the above, overall efficiency rating is Substantial.

Efficiency Rating
Substantial

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

	Rate Available?	Point value (%)	*Coverage/Scope (%)
Appraisal	✓	27.00	0 ☑Not Applicable
ICR Estimate	✓	29.00	0 ☑Not Applicable

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

6. Outcome

The overall project outcome is rated as moderately satisfactory. The relevance of objectives was substantial, efficacy was substantial, but there were important shortcomings in terms of objective 3 that ultimately limited the project's overall impact. Efficiency was Substantial. Thus, the project's outcome is rated Moderately Satisfactory.

a. Outcome Rating
Moderately Satisfactory

7. Risk to Development Outcome

As noted earlier, in the absence of effective governance of the commodity value chains, the gains in technology adoption and market access will not be sustained.

Regarding access to technology, the ICR (page 24) notes that sustainability of rubber technologies could be limited if the heavy subsidy of planting material is discontinued progressively. Developing other segments of the selected value chains such processing is of paramount importance to sustain productivity and economic gains. These issues are being considered in the new IBRD enclave cocoa project which is currently in preparation and a cashew project that encourages processing innovations, under implementation. The ICR also confirms (page 24) the substantial risk entailed by the project’s partial failure to build strong producer associations and "IPOs" as key elements in effective value chain governance.

8. Assessment of Bank Performance

a. Quality-at-Entry

The ICR presents a candid assessment of Bank Performance. As background, the project was strategically relevant for the country and was presented at the Board of IDA as the ‘laboratory of Côte d’Ivoire’s new 21st century agriculture’ because of the original design components with private sector led development activities on a contractual basis with other public and private actors. It affirms that there was less consistency between the substance of the PAD, which stressed PPP and institutional development as the drivers of market and technology access, and the PDO statement, which focused on the three areas of productivity enhancement, access to markets, and institutional governance on an equal footing. This led to some ambiguities in implementation pathways and what the project would be held accountable for in terms of the hierarchy of the PDOs. The Results Framework did not have well-defined outcome indicators. M&E arrangements were an additional weak point. Therefore Quality-at-Entry is rated as moderately unsatisfactory.

Quality-at-Entry Rating
Moderately Unsatisfactory

b. Quality of supervision

The ICR highlights that the World Bank supervision team faced difficulties in clearly identifying the priority areas of focus. Emphasis was placed on implementation progress characterized by the achievement of outputs not linked to development outcomes. After the Midterm Review (MTR May 16, 2016), the World Bank was more proactively involved in closely monitoring the project implementation. The project had three different task team leaders during its duration, but this did not have a negative impact on ensuring the activities moved along and key achievements were recorded.

Quality of Supervision Rating

Moderately Satisfactory

Overall Bank Performance Rating

Moderately Satisfactory

9. M&E Design, Implementation, & Utilization

a. M&E Design

The project design included a Results framework with outputs indicators along with some outcome measures, which, however, were not well defined. To provide rigorous evidence about the project impact, three impact evaluation studies had been initially planned to span all three main project components and regions and led by the Gender Innovation Lab (GIL) of the World Bank. However, the scope of the studies was limited to only two value chains (rubber and cotton), leaving out the other three value chains.

b. M&E Implementation

In the initial stage of the project, some weaknesses were observed in M&E because of the project coordination unit's poor ability to perform regular monitoring and inform progress on some outputs as well as limited supervision support from the Ministry of Agriculture. Later, a web-based software for M&E was developed and used to monitor output and outcome indicators as well as procurement and financial activities. To provide information on project impact, several surveys and evaluation studies were conducted. The first was a baseline survey carried out by the National Institute for Statistics and Applied Economics (CIRES). This was followed by the World Bank study that focused on the impact of subsidized rubber seedlings and the impact of cotton animal traction kit on several outcome variables. However, the scope of the studies was limited to only two value chains (rubber and cotton), leaving out the other three value chains.

c. M&E Utilization

The ICR reports (page 21) that given the limitation of the M&E framework to track outcomes or development objectives, secondary information had to be used to inform the Implementation Completion and Results Report, beyond the findings of the impact assessment study from the GIL and the CIRES Final Project Evaluation commissioned by the project coordination unit.

M&E Quality Rating
Modest

10. Other Issues

a. Safeguards

At appraisal, the project was classified as environmental category B in the PAD. An Environmental and Social Management Framework (OP/BP 4.01), a Pest Management Plan (OP/BP 4.09) and Resettlement Policy Framework (OP/BP 4.12) were prepared and disclosed in-country and on the World Bank's website. OP 4.04 - Natural Habitats and OP 4.11 - Physical Cultural Resources were marked as triggered in the PAD and mentioned in the Basic Integrated Safeguard Data Sheet (ISDS), but not mentioned explicitly in the ICR. As per the ICR, during the execution of activities, there were minor cases of road encroachment into crop plantations established in the road right-of-way, and partial crop damages that were promptly addressed.

Concerning social safeguards, at the beginning of the project, there were some shortcomings in implementing the social safeguards in the cocoa sector as per the ICR (page 22). For instance, voluntary land donation for physical or social infrastructure was supported only by individual commitment forms, instead of a comprehensive resettlement plan. These issues were addressed by the project's social specialist and the focal points in the implementing agencies.

b. Fiduciary Compliance

Financial Management arrangements of the project, including the funds flows and financial reporting, was designed based on the implementation modalities described in the PAD. Most of the FM teams of the implementing agencies faced some challenges over the project implementation period, including delays in the recruitment of the dedicated accountants of the project implementation agencies, technical capacity constraints of these accountants on the Bank procedures, and delayed establishment of the project steering committees. To address this issue, some training on World Bank FM procedures and capacity development initiatives (installation of computerized accounting system, manual of procedures, and so on) were provided.

In the first phase of the project, knowledge and ownership of procurement procedures were not optimal as none of the implementing agencies had experience with the World Bank's procurement procedures, as per the ICR (page 22). Setbacks were sometimes encountered with regard to the procurement of goods and services. Overall, after undertaking the corrective measures during the project reviews, procurement performance improved markedly.

c. Unintended impacts (Positive or Negative)

N/A

d. Other

Gender: The PAD had a PDO indicator 'number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender' and achieved results below target (12 percent versus 17 percent target for women). As part of these efforts, a comprehensive social inclusion study was conducted with the recommendations integrated into the project implementation manual to better target women and other vulnerable groups in the selected value chains. Moreover, under the project-sponsored gender action plan, a gender focal point was hired in each of the five value chains and a gender platform was established to exchange and define gender actions.

11. Ratings

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

12. Lessons

A few lessons, adapted from the ICR are below:

Longer term governance goals are often lost in the context of project implementation in fragile and/or post-conflict situations, whereby focusing on short to medium term objectives of building infrastructure and capacities appear to produce immediate results - The project was successful in building the productive infrastructure and assets but fell short in enhancing institutional organization, decision making, and strategic stakeholder alliances / IPOs.

It is important to choose an appropriate financing instrument to achieve the goal of institutional transformation - for example would the use of Program-for-Results (PforR) financing be more effective than Investment Project financing (IPF) for the stated goal - The two IPOs that secured accreditation (INTERCOTON and AIPH) from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MINADER) had the advantage to be institutionally advanced compared to the other value chains. To have a full impact, specific institutional changes needs to be conceived and imbedded as part as country reform programs with a longer-term horizon, and hence a PfoR type of financing instrument may be more appropriate.

It is important to have clear delegation from the Government for institutional strengthening of the "inter-professional" organizations or IPOs - Strong involvement of the Government in development operations limits the ability of IPOs to flourish and also limits the agricultural sector's efforts towards private sector led growth. This lesson seems to be relevant to the country context as per the task team.

A sole focus solely on achievements that can be easily measured is likely to ignore monitoring of the extent to which the project is achieving its development outcomes - When implementing a project, the final development outcomes to be achieved should always be kept in mind as well as the process to achieve the required changes.

13. Assessment Recommended?

No

14. Comments on Quality of ICR

This is a comprehensive, well-written ICR with good quality of evidence and analysis, as well as useful lessons. There are however some gaps in the narrative around why the PDO and Results Framework were not revised during the mid term review if the governance aspect was important to the achievement of the overall development outcome. Also, some clarification on the definition of "inter-profession" upfront would be useful to a non- Francophone/ West-African audience. During the course of the preparation of this review, the task team provided prompt clarifications.

a. Quality of ICR Rating
Substantial