

1. Project Data:		Date Posted : 06/30/2016	
Country:	Guinea		
Project ID:	P081297	Appraisal	Actual
Project Name :	GEF Community-based Land Management Project	Project Costs (US\$M):	26.20 7.00
L/C Number:		Loan/Credit (US\$M):	7.00 7.00
Sector Board :	Agriculture and Rural Development	Cofinancing (US\$M):	
Cofinanciers :		Board Approval Date :	06/22/2006
		Closing Date :	06/30/2011 12/31/2014
Sector(s):	General agriculture; fishing and forestry sector (49%); Sub-national government administration (36%); General information and communications sector (9%); Central government administration (6%)		
Theme(s):	Land administration and management (40%); Biodiversity (20%); Participation and civic engagement (20%); Environmental policies and institutions (20%)		
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2. Project Objectives and Components:

a. Objectives:

This Community-based Land Management Project supported the second phase of the Adjustable Program Loan Village Communities Support Program (2007-2014) whose development objective was to enable local rural governments to fulfill their mandate by planning and implementing inclusive local development activities , and improving revenue performance to sustain recurrent costs .

The Project Appraisal Document (PAD, page 8) and the Grant Agreement (Schedule) state that the project development objective of the Community-based Land Management Project is:

"to reduce land degradation through the integration of sustainable land management (SLM) practices in the overall development planning process of communities and local governments in selected pilot sub-watersheds ."

The projects also had a Global Environment Objective , which was stated in PAD (page 8) but not in the Grant Agreement:

"to pilot sustainable and replicable approaches to the prevention and mitigation of the causes and negative impacts of land degradation on the structure and functional integrity of ecosystems ."

This Review uses the objectives described in the Grant Agreement .

Project objectives remained unchanged throughout the project although key outcome targets were revised .

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

Yes

If yes, did the Board approve the revised objectives /key associated outcome targets ?

No

c. Components:

There were three components. The ICR does not provide information on the total costs per component that would include all sources of financing; only GEF costs are reported.

1: Local Investment Fund (appraisal estimate US\$12.70 million of which GEF US\$3.40 million; actual GEF cost US\$3.99 million).

This component was to support the annual investment plans derived from local development plans developed by 13 Rural Development Communes (*CRD - Communauté Rurale de Développement*) located in five Prefectures in the Maritime and Middle Regions of Guinea. The CRDs were to execute micro-projects for Sustainable Land Management (SLM) covering about 25,000 ha in four watersheds through the provision of matching grants. Beneficiary contribution rates were to be minimized and were expected to 10-20 percent in-kind based on the type of investment. There were to be three sets of actions:

1. Promotion of SLM, such as improving soil fertility management, controlling soil erosion, protecting river banks, restoring degraded land, supporting conservation agriculture or tillage, introducing new and innovative agricultural technologies to farmers to reduce the risks associated with climate change, developing improved pastures to reduce bushfires and ensure sufficient animal fodder of acceptable quality, supporting forestry and agro-forestry investments to diversify beneficiaries' incomes, and protecting land to increase the supply of wood.
2. Implementation of demand-driven operational research and development activities related to on-farm and on-site testing and validation of new technologies as well as activities to improve land productivity.
3. Support for demonstrations of practices that would reduce land degradation.

2: Capacity Building for Decentralized Rural Development (appraisal estimate US\$ 9.40 million of which GEF US\$ 2.50 million; actual GEF cost was US\$ 1.65 million).

This component was to strengthen the capacity of local governments and local communities in selected pilot sites in the spatial planning of development activities, and in the planning, implementation, and coordination of development activities that include SLM practices. Seven sets of activities were to be planned:

1. Using geographic information systems (GIS) to support planning and investment decisions (such as maps reflecting natural resource and land quality data) as well as monitoring and evaluation such as a GIS-based database and sub-watershed master plans.
2. Establishing a multi-disciplinary technical and scientific task force to review proposed sub-watershed development plans for consistency with other sub-watershed activities.
3. Disseminating technical information and transfer knowledge relating to land degradation and control, including information on potentially profitable SLM activities and technologies that could mitigate the effects of land degradation, through training and demonstrations.
4. Undertaking participatory rural appraisals to adapt existing Local Development Plans to reflect SLM priorities.
5. Training to improve skills in land use planning among local government authorities and rural community leaders, and provide adaptable database management tools.
6. Training in organizational management and negotiation skills for SLM and prevention and control of land degradation.
7. Supporting implementation of mechanisms to resolve conflicts over natural resource use.

3: Project Management, Monitoring, and Evaluation (appraisal estimate US\$4.10 million of which GEF was US\$1.10 million; actual GEF cost was US\$1.36 million).

The component was to support the project implementation unit to implement GEF financing for SLM activities and to monitor and evaluate the project's activities. To this end, the project was to provide funding to the technical ministries involved in implementing the project: the Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralization, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, and the Ministry of Environment, to support the incremental costs of project implementation and management. The project would also support the implementation of monitoring and evaluation activities by strengthening and adapting the capacities for monitoring, evaluation, and impact assessment under ongoing Bank-supported parallel Villages Communities Support Program (*PACV - Programme d'Appui aux Communautes Villageoises*). Specifically, the project would:

1. Support the use of remote sensing and GIS for managing vegetative cover, determining the extent to which the degradation of land and water resources was reversed, and measuring sediment loading into rivers.
2. Establish links with a specialized institution to measure the evolution of vegetative cover based on vegetation indices.

3. Aggregate and compare data under the GIS baseline database established for each pilot watershed in the participating CRDs.

d. Comments on Project Cost, Financing, Borrower Contribution, and Dates:

Project Cost :

According to the project appraisal document total project costs were anticipated to be US \$ 26.20 million. The ICR does not report on the final project costs from all financing sources , it only reports on GEF financing by component that totaled US\$7.00 million at project closure , and a community-in-kind contribution equivalent to US\$ 0.15 million. The increase in the GEF cost of component 1 was for more for micro-projects to reach more people . Financing for this enlargement was from component 2 following project reformulation in 2011 that dropped its GIS-based planning tools and dissemination of technical information /tools related to monitoring land degradation . GEF costs of component 3 increased because of the need to reconstitute the project team and repeat earlier SLM training and dissemination following the two-year hiatus in project activities 2008-2010.

Financing :

- A GEF Grant of US\$7.00 million was fully disbursed. A GEF-associated IDA fund of US\$11.70 million listed in the PAD was not established.
- The PAD also indicated that International Fund for Agricultural Development would provide cofinancing of US\$3.90 million as IFAD was financing the second phase of the Village Communities Support Program (PACV) in which the Community-based Land Management Project was nested . The 2015 ICR for the PACV-II (P065129) explains that after the World Bank suspension of disbursements in December 2009, IFAD terminated its “Cooperating Institution” agreement with the Bank . Thus it is not clear if (a) there was an IFAD cofinancing agreement and it did not disburse before the termination , or (b) there was no such agreement.

Borrower Contribution :

While the Borrower had agreed to contribute US\$1.10 million dollars no contribution was made . Local Communities were expected to contribute US\$2.20 million and actually contributed US\$0.15 million.

Dates:

The original closing date , of June 30, 2010, was extended twice for a total of 3.5 years. In December 2008 the President of the Republic died and the military took over government affairs . In line with the World Bank’s operational policy regarding *de facto* governments (OP 7.30), the Bank suspended disbursements . This suspension was in effect over two years until a democratically elected government was in place , and the first extension of the closing date was granted to December 31, 2013 to compensate for the freeze on disbursement . A second extension was granted until December 31,2014 to allow the government to reach the outcome targets and complete activities to strengthen local institutions required to sustain the project’s achievements .

The project was restructured three times , all at level-2, and none required Board approval .

- The first, in 2008, increased the financing percentages to 100% following the adoption of the “Country Financing Percentages” for Guinea.
- The second restructuring , in June 2011, followed the restoration of a more stable political environment in Guinea and the Bank’s re-engagement. Revisions included: (i) extension of the project’s closing date from June 30, 2010 to December 31, 2013 to compensate for the freeze on disbursements ; (ii) reformulation and revision of some indicators and targets in the results framework ; and (iii) an increase in the number of the beneficiary Rural Municipalities (*CRs - Communal Rurales*) from 13 to 26.
- The third, and final, restructuring extended the project closing date from December 31, 2013 to December 31, 2014, and reallocated grant proceeds.

3. Relevance of Objectives & Design:

a. Relevance of Objectives:

Substantial

The project’s objectives were and remain substantially relevant to Guinea 's country conditions and its development priorities as identified by the government and in World Bank country assistance strategies .

Guinea has great natural resource potential , with forests, internationally renowned and protected sites and areas , springs and rivers that gives a diverse ecosystem with significant biodiversity . But most of these natural resources are currently threatened due to the lack of strategies and resource for their protection . Human impact on these resources is significant because of the extent of poverty , especially in rural areas, plus the accelerated development of mining and urbanization . Taking into account the human pressure on nature due especially to growing poverty and mining, there are multiple challenges to be faced , especially: the fight against soil degradation ; control of water

resources; better contribution of national resources to the national economy ; preservation of biological diversity on land and sea; and durable supply of energy. At the time that the project was prepared , land degradation was a major problem, exacerbated by weak institutional capacity as well as poor knowledge of sound environmental management practices at the national and local levels . The objective of reducing land degradation is relevant to three international conventions to which Guinea is a signatory : the UN Convention on Combat Desertification , the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the Convention on Biological Diversity .

Project objectives, however, were modestly relevant to the 2013-15 National Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper whose strategic priorities were (i) restoration of the Rule of Law and reform of the public administration ; (ii) acceleration and diversification of growth ; (iii) development of social sectors ; and (iv) reduction of regional disparities, promotion of fundamental development and decentralization. The National Agricultural Investment and Food Security Plan 2012-2016 places a premium on increasing agricultural productivity . Environmental protection and the promotion of a green economy were seen as relatively low priority areas for the government .

The project's objectives are relevant to the World Bank 's 2003 Country Assistance Strategy for Guinea's goal of supporting opportunities for employment and income-generating activities for the poor and increased food security by increasing productivity of rural assets (labor and land) through the conservation , regeneration, and sustainable use of natural resources. The 2003 CAS identifies the project as a means to improve the management of Guinea's environmental resources. The project's objectives remain modestly relevant to the strategic goals of the current Country Partnership Strategy (FY2014-17): (i) Improve governance, (ii) Stimulate growth and economic diversification, and (iii) Strengthen human capital. Reducing land degradation was secondary to improving agricultural productivity under the second goal . Finally, the project's objectives are also consistent with the Global Environment Facility's operational program on Land Degradation (Operational Program 15).

b. Relevance of Design:

Modest

Project activities formed a logical link that could deliver the intended outcome of reducing land degradation . A key feature of the design was that the project should be implemented only in Rural Municipalities where management and planning structures introduced by the parent Bank -financed Village Communities Support Program were already in place, including a Local Investment Fund for public socio-economic infrastructure and services identified by Rural Development Communes (CRDs) in their Local Development Plans (LDPs). These arrangements were relevant as they facilitated progress in implementation because no new implementing structures needed to be established . Thus the project's capacity building for local development was to focus only on strengthening the capacity of local government and rural communities to work together to identify causes and remedy land degradation within well-defined sub-watersheds.

At the community level a multi-disciplinary technical team was to work with communities interactively and iteratively to identify, categorize and integrate local development views on land conservation into LDPs to be approved by the CRD. Plan approval, however, was only to be given once all LDPs were mapped and integrated into a digitized development plan for the whole sub-watershed and reviewed by a project-supported technical/scientific team to ensure coherence, technical feasibility, and that it would address land degradation . Following local validation, the adapted LDP was to be included in the regional development plan approved by the Ministry of Interior and Decentralization in consultation with University of Conakry and other national research institutions . The approved LDP was to be the basis for Annual Investment Plans (AIPs). Given the complexity and iterative nature of plan and micro-project identification, allied with the many preliminary studies required before initiating investments at the community-level, the project was over-designed given the low-level of local capacity and a challenging environmental setting.

The Local Investment Fund managed under PACV-II was given a second financing windows through the GEF project to integrate activities aimed at ensuring sustainable management and protection of natural resources . This was a relevant project instrument as it enabled CRDs to award matching grants for micro -projects in the LDPs that focus on sustainable land management building on a well established matching grants mechanism and experienced staff to oversee its sound management.

Many of the environmental improvements expected and baselines were to be discerned through several research contracts to Guinean institutions . The envisaged studies were complex and unrealistic given the resources available in Guinea (for example sediment loading into rivers, evolution of vegetation indices; integration of data into a common GIS data base to enable comparison among other GEF -supported projects) and their institutionally demanding nature required coordination at a more detailed technical level than either the Program or its apex agency, the Ministry of Planning could provide. They also demanded high-level skills the micro-scale investment focus of the project could not provide .

While it was planned that routine process monitoring and evaluation would be completely integrated into the parent PACV Program, M&E of environmental and conservation and outcomes would be carried out independently by other

national institutions. While the incentive structure was oriented towards basic local capacity building and identification and implementation of micro-projects, there were few incentives that would ensure sustained attention to environmental M&E and tracking incremental environmental changes .

In summary, while the development objective was clearly formulated and the project's components were clearly linked to it, the institutional complexity was over-ambitious, and there was insufficient knowledge of local environments and how to manage them sustainably on a watershed basis .

4. Achievement of Objectives (Efficacy):

“To reduce land degradation through the integration of sustainable land management (SLM) practices in the overall development planning process of communities and local governments in selected pilot sub -watersheds.”

Modest

Results and outcomes cannot be fully attributed to this GEF project because many of its inputs and outputs and its management were inextricably linked to the parent Bank -financed Village Communities Support Program (PACV-II) that was implemented over the same time period .

Outputs

The parent PACV-II project increased the capacity of rural communes to develop local development plans that increased from 159 in 2007 to 304 in 2014. Through training the project raised awareness of environmental issues and bolstered local capacity to embark on sustainable land management and related income -generating activities for 26 of these rural communes, twice the number planned at appraisal . The reason the number of communes was doubled at the time of the project restructuring in 2011 was to compensate for the earlier freeze on disbursement and increase the number of participating communities so that project grant financing could be fully utilized before closing

Specific GEF-financed capacity-building and training activities reached 2,062 people (there were no appraisal targets). How many of those trained were local government and other officials , sub-watershed committee members, or members of groups implementing micro-projects is not stated . The numbers and share of the total trained in specific areas was:

- 870 environmental and social safeguard policy (42%).
- 215 committee members trained in sub-watershed management (10%).
- 196 local actors/stakeholders in the concepts and approach to intercommunity natural resources including identification of shared water resources and their intercommunity management at sub -watershed level (10%).
- 189 Local Investment Fund beneficiaries in governance and monitoring of natural resources management and income-generating activities (9%).
- 182 local actors/stakeholders in negotiation techniques focusing on management of conflicts between farmers and livestock to prevent land degradation (9%).
- 159 beneficiaries trained in internalization of micro -project reference sheets (8%).
- 155 beneficiaries trained in participatory mapping and identification and validation of sustainable land management and watershed issues (8%).
- 96 beneficiaries trained to internalize the M&E manual (developed in 2012) and environmental and social safeguard policy (5%).

Two outputs to support the planning and monitoring processes were not achieved primarily because of their specialized nature required contacting them out at high cost . Dissemination of GIS-based planning tools and the dissemination of technical information and tools related to the monitoring of land degradation , were dropped when the work program was reformulated in 2011. Given the need to make up for lost time and to maximize impact at the local level, priority was placed on increasing the number of micro -projects, basic community-level training and operationalizing the sub-watershed management committees .

Five sub-watershed management committees were formed, one more than originally planned and meeting revised targets, but they only became operational just as the project was ending .

Using the second window of the Local Investment Fund provided by the GEF project , 26 LDPs were broadened to include planning guidelines covering 169 micro-project proposals for sustainable land management to be managed by 105 beneficiary groups created by the project . Subsequently, these micro-project proposals were included in 69 Annual Investment Plans developed by the Rural Communes . In total 169 micro-projects were approved and when broadly classified by number the distribution is :

- Intensive promotion of sustainable low lands primarily for market gardening - 29%
- Creation of community forests - 15%
- Fencing to control livestock - 14%
- Modern beekeeping - 13%

- Promotion of improved stoves -11%
- Reforestation - 8%
- Protection of water sources - 5%
- The remaining 5% of micro-projects covered a range of investments including “complex enrichment of pasture and pastoral ponds,” a warehouse and a drainage canal.

When the micro-projects are grouped into categories by size of investment the distribution is :

- Intensive promotion of sustainable low lands primarily for market gardening - 34%
- Creation of community forests and reforestation - 22%
- Fencing to control livestock - 14%
- The balance of 30% was spread over all the other activities .

In all, 105 beneficiary groups were created that had 2,625 group members of which 1,076 or 41% were women. By closing 52 beneficiary groups had properly executed their micro -projects (ICR page viii).

135 of the 169 micro-projects (80%, compared to the target of 60%) had been completed and correctly followed technical and procedural norms. These micro-projects covered 8,715 ha of which 3,570 ha (41%) was implemented in the last 15 months of the project.

Outcomes

It was intended that sustainable land management practices would be introduced into the overall development planning process of communities and local governments in selected pilot sub -watersheds.

Through the training in program planning under both the PACV -II and the GEF project, the Rural Communes' capacity in development planning was significantly strengthened and all had new or updated Local Development Plans by 2014, and these plans are subject to annual reviews during the process of developing their AIPs . Sub-prefecture and prefecture staff also participated in planning and implementation of the local development activities. Their participation was measured as the percent of local development plans in which the sub -prefecture and prefecture sector staff have participated in the full project cycle (diagnosis, planning and implementation) (baseline-30%, target 60%, actual 100%). At the end of the project, all 100 sub-prefectures and prefectures - including those of the GEF project - participated in the planning of local development activities .

An end-of-project beneficiary survey was conducted to measure the project's outcomes and development impacts . CRDs were randomly selected from the prefectures where the GEF project was implemented and were representative of all participating CRDs. The sample for the survey included 15 of the 26 CRDs involved in the project, 44 of 105 beneficiary groups established, 175 household heads in the sampled beneficiary groups , and 176 individuals belonging to the sampled beneficiary groups .

In terms of communities working together on SLM practices the survey revealed that CRDs did the following :

- 71.3 % now hold meetings to discuss SLM practices with elected officials in neighboring CRs ;
- 67.3 % organize sensitization meetings to deepen the communities' understanding of SLM practices , and the same proportion have set up committees for sub -watershed management; and
- 62.5% made exchange visits enhance their knowledge by learning from others .
- When communities implement collective NRM activities , more than half (51.4%) of the CRDs reported holding three or more meetings with authorities of the CRDs ;
- 93% reported following technical procedures ;
- 87% performed regular maintenance of facilities ;
- 86% obtained support or advice from other local informal groups ;
- 76% attended practical training organized by agricultural extension officers ;
- 64% improved the level of mutual assistance among members of the group ;
- 64% engaged in business planning at meetings ;
- 59% took decisions by consensus ;
- 58% regularly informed members of the group's financial status ; and
- 20% regularly monitored implementation of decisions taken at meetings or assemblies .

However, only 35% of beneficiary CRDs in the GEF project have jointly and consensually identified , integrated into the LDP and financed transversal sub -watershed management activities. How far this was adversely affected by the dropping of the GIS database and information system designed to facilitate an integrated planning approach , and the delayed effectiveness of the Sub -watershed Committees, is unclear.

Area under land improved management increased

Prior to the project no land was regarded as being under sustainable land management . At the end of the project

achievements in land management according to the beneficiary survey were :

- a total area of 18,682 ha (original target 25,000 ha; revised 2011 target 10,000 ha) was brought under sustainable land management: 8,715 ha through micro-projects funded by GEF and 9,967 ha through the adoption of innovative technologies or activities promoted with the support of the project .
- The area not supported by micro-projects includes 331 ha directly managed by CRDs, 2,643 ha managed by beneficiary groups, 4,215 ha managed by household heads, and 2,778 hectares managed by individual beneficiaries.
- Survey information is only presented for the 2,643 ha managed by beneficiary groups who used their own initiative or funds in the following way:
 - prevention of grazing (59%), extension of hedges (56%), agroforestry (39%), crop rotations and rotations with fertility-enhancing crops (33%); use of Kenyan bee hives (29%); stone bunds (25%), composting (24%), improved stoves (16%), and improved fallow (6%).

Improved environmental practices

- Before the project, household heads reported exploiting 1,056 ha every year, an average of 3 ha per household. After the project, household heads reported that they currently exploited 713 ha, an average of 2 ha per household per year.
- Before the project 977 ha per year was burned, an average of 2 ha per household. At the end of the project much less was burned: an estimated 300 ha, for an average of 1 hectare per household per year.
- Before the project, 816 ha per year were cleared, an average of 2 ha per household per year; at the end of the project an estimated 368 ha was cleared, an average of 1 hectare per household per year.
- Overall, 78% percent of heads of household reported implemented new SLM activities or activities similar to those financed under the GEF project by the groups to which they belong .

While the project reports improved environmental practices, there is no objective baseline or routine monitoring to determine actual changes brought about by the project. Also it is very unclear over what time period the changes reported above refer; most of the capacity-building took place after 2011 and later, as did completion of micro-projects, and there is no evidence that changes reported in the less than three years prior to project closing are sustainable.

Finally, annual income is reported at project start and closure and increased significantly - 93% - after project interventions. Based on the results of the survey, the ICR states that the project helped households to identify new sources of income, including market gardening (67.8%), cultivation of tubers (64.7%), livestock production (57.8%), and rice cultivation (57.3%). Other activities included trading (32.5%), beekeeping, (15.7%), and crafts and artisanal products (2.5%). There is no counterfactual and much of the improved incomes may be the result of improved infrastructure, including improved market access, facilitated by the parent project PACV-II and other exogenous factors. While improved rural incomes may reduce the pressure on land resources, improved market access, particularly in Africa, is frequently associated with increased natural resources extraction.

Global Environment Objective

"To pilot sustainable and replicable approaches to the prevention and mitigation of the causes and negative impacts of land degradation on the structure and functional integrity of ecosystems ."

While the project introduced replicable and potentially sustainable approaches to better manage land and agriculture it had no means to determine the extent that the structure and functional integrity of ecosystems would be affected. All the relevant research, monitoring and evaluation activities were dropped when the project was restructured in 2011.

5. Efficiency:

Economic and Financial Efficiency

Economic or financial analyses were undertaken neither at appraisal nor on completion. The primary reason at appraisal was that, being community-driven, project benefits could not be predicted. Instead an incremental cost analysis following GEF methodology was made to demonstrate the value of GEF financing. Specific GEF incremental value was to be derived from adoption of sound SLM practices that would lead to better protection of river banks and water sources, decrease in bushfires, increased in rainfall, improved ecosystem and decrease in logging. It was also expected that GEF financing would enable project management to competently and effectively manage and monitor project impacts, including global benefits. At completion the GEF incremental analysis was repeated. With the dropping of most of the enhanced M&E for environmental processes and baselines none of the expected GEF benefits could be demonstrated in the short-term. Even then, no cost effectiveness or cost-benefit analysis of micro-projects was undertaken.

Operational and Administrative Efficiency

There were a number of implementation delays beyond the disruptions caused by Military take over and suspension of disbursements. The emphasis on completing a multitude of studies before proceeding with actual activities delayed start of micro-projects until 2008, and subsequently capacity-building in conservation techniques took far longer than planned. Even so, cost estimates and quotations for micro-projects were generally realistic and lower than planned expenditures - but there were no measures of actual efficiency gains .

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

	Rate Available?	Point Value	Coverage/Scope*
Appraisal	No		
ICR estimate	No		

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

6. Outcome:

Relevance of objectives was substantial but relevance of design is rated modest . Efficacy is rated modest because, while land management improved latterly and institutions were built , there was insufficient time before project closure to demonstrate reduced land degradation . Efficiency is rated modest for lack of evidence .

a. Outcome Rating : Moderately Unsatisfactory

7. Rationale for Risk to Development Outcome Rating:

The risks to development outcome are substantial :

- There are significant socio-political risks because of the volatile political atmosphere .
- Many micro-projects were implemented in the last 18 months of the project and disbursement pressure may have jeopardized adequate building of local and national capacity to sustain results .
- Uncertainty as to the level of resources available to continue surveillance and implementation of the sub-watershed management plans and hence ensure that mitigating actions are identified and implemented to ensure sustainability. In addition, sub-watershed Committees were not fully operational at project closing and *schema d'aménagement* is in question. Some Committee members did not demonstrate a mastery of the content of knowledge of their roles and responsibilities (ICR page 20).
- Many groups increased their production through market gardening and specialized agriculture (e.g. beehives) yet there may be challenges in the sustaining the value chain (e.g. storage and marketing), and in understanding local demand-supply constraints.
- The understanding of medium- to longer-term incentives for communities to sustain institutional improvements and changes brought about by micro-projects have not been addressed .
- While increased market access through the parent project PAVC -II may have enabled better market access , the same improved access may provide incentives for further exploitation of natural resources .

a. Risk to Development Outcome Rating : Significant

8. Assessment of Bank Performance:

a. Quality at entry:

The appraisal team carried out intensive consultations with country stakeholders and communities , which ensured that the project reflected their needs and concerns , but they underestimated country macro-level political risks. Environmental and social impact assessments were drawn on to identify areas where the project could operate. The project was designed to operate under the PACV-II in order to take advantage of the experience and capacity built to support decentralized rural development activities . Working in CRDs where PACV-II staff was based synergized project effectiveness . Local governments , while familiar with the fiduciary and procurement requirements of the Bank , had training provided to strengthened oversight of their financial management activities thus ensuring transparency and accountability at all levels of project management .

While findings and recommendations from detailed preparatory studies were reflected in the project's design , including results of the environmental and social impact assessment , there was a lack of practicality in many

details of project design because the local capacity constraints were inadequately appraised . This was particularly so in the design of the monitoring and evaluation system for the environment that was overly reliant on higher-level institutions and was too sophisticated for the resources available to the project . Finally, in addition to the GEF grant, the project was approved based on speculative financing that did not materialize .

Quality-at-Entry Rating : Moderately Unsatisfactory

b. Quality of supervision:

Supervision was fraught with difficulty and delays and this was exacerbated by a high turnover of Task team leaders (there were four) over the life of the project . Effectiveness was delayed by over a year and then socio-political instability affected the country for a further two years . During this time, Bank supervision, noting that there was negligible progress because of the emphasis placed on studies rather than action , started to simplify project design. Unfortunately just as the more streamlined approach was gaining traction , the President of Guinea died in December 2008 and a military government took over. This action led to the Bank suspending disbursements in line with OP 7.30 regarding operations under *de facto* governments, and this was only lifted in January 2011 when the country returned to democratic governance . To increase the rate of disbursement and redress these delays the project was restructured : its scope was enlarged to include more CRDs and some of the more research-oriented activities and detailed monitoring of the environment were dropped . To overcome the constraints of the once-a-year GEF supervision budget, extra supervision missions were facilitated . Even with accelerated disbursement the Bank had to be proactive in processing two time extensions that gave the project an extra 3.5 years to enable project activities to be completed .

Quality of Supervision Rating : Moderately Satisfactory

Overall Bank Performance Rating : Moderately Unsatisfactory

9. Assessment of Borrower Performance:

a. Government Performance:

While the government was committed to achieving the project objectives , and was proactive with the Bank in project facilitated preparation and design, government's inability to maintain a stable socio-political atmosphere significantly affected implementation . Thus the project effectively started five years after approval in 2006, initially by a year because effectiveness was delayed because of government's failure to appoint a focal point for the project, and subsequently because of the military de facto government and suspension of Bank disbursement . After the resumption of activities in 2011, the government showed a high level of commitment to implementation by intensifying communication with the World Bank and providing strong support at the regional , prefecture, and CRD levels. Latterly, however, the government was very slow in approving the establishment and operationalization of the Sub-watershed Management Committees that were only created in the last year of the project.

Government Performance Rating Moderately Unsatisfactory

b. Implementing Agency Performance:

The National Coordination Unit (CNC, *Cellule Nationale de la Coordination*) was charged with project implementation as it was already managing the PACV Program . CNC staff was very familiar with World Bank operations and instruments, including safeguards. Even during the difficult period when project activities were suspended, the CNC staff maintained contact with the regional governors , prefects, subprojects, and local government authorities in the CRDs and maintained a skeleton staff to safeguard the project's assets . They were proactive also in keeping contact with the Bank when supervision was suspended , communicating through video and audio conferences . After project activities resumed in 2011 there some delays on capacity building activities but generally CNC's good management enabled delivery of outputs , albeit delayed.

Implementing Agency Performance Rating : Moderately Satisfactory

Overall Borrower Performance Rating : Moderately Unsatisfactory

10. M&E Design, Implementation, & Utilization:

a. M&E Design:

The M&E system was based on the PACV-II system and planned to adapt it to monitor and evaluate natural resources management interventions. The key performance indicators at appraisal included outcome level indicators to demonstrate changes on land base and included 75 indicators linked to tracking environmental and ecosystem sustainability (e.g. sediment loading into rivers). A baseline, mid-term evaluation and final evaluation at project closure were planned. A GIS with geo-referenced maps was expected to be an integral part of the M & E design. Remote sensing techniques were to be used to measure vegetation coverage and the extent of land and water degradation/restoration.

b. M&E Implementation:

Delay in project implementation constrained development of the M & E as planned and subsequently it was found that the scope of the M&E system for natural resources management was beyond the ability of the project to finance and manage as it lacked the specialist knowledge needed. Given this level of complexity, key indicators were revised during implementation but none of the revised indicators were at the outcome level. Thereafter, the M&E focus turned to monitoring inputs and outputs with negligible attention to environmental outcomes. Although some special studies were conducted on topics such as the dynamics of bush fires; alternative techniques for sustainable soil fertility management; and an analysis of conflicts between farmers and herders, it is not clear if the information in these studies assessed project impacts. The ICR (page 9) also noted that the project also carried out "surveys in four CRs to establish a baseline for measuring impacts" but it is not clear what impacts the baseline measured and when the follow-up surveys to measure changes in the indicators were expected to be carried out. The baseline was only established at the end of the project. An end of project survey was conducted to measure the project indicators and impacts of project activities on beneficiaries.

c. M&E Utilization:

The use of M&E is unclear. Supervision reports were the main instruments used in decision-making, but these focused on implementation of agreed actions and disbursement.

M&E Quality Rating : Modest

11. Other Issues

a. Safeguards:

The project was classified as category 'B' under OP 4.01 Environmental Assessment (OP 4.01) and the Involuntary Resettlement (OP 4.12) safeguard policy was invoked. An Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) and a Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF) were prepared at the project's inception to mitigate issues that might arise related to the acquisition of land or loss of economic activity to individuals or groups in project intervention areas. An independent environmental assessment was not conducted for this project because the nature and size of infrastructure projects implemented did not indicate that one should be done. Environmental and Social Safeguard Committees (consisting of members of civil society and locally elected officials) were established for all micro-projects funded by the project. Each committee received training in environmental safeguards. The ICR (page 10) reports that according to safeguards reports prepared on the implementation of the ESMF and RPF no negative environmental or social issues were detected in relation to the implementation of the micro-projects and sub-projects.

b. Fiduciary Compliance:

The ICR (page 10) reports that the project operated a sound financial management system and complied fully with the World Bank's operational policies on financial management (OP/BP 10.02). Some Financial Management issues were identified during the Mid-Term Review that led to a moderately satisfactory rating. Recommendations for improvement were implemented diligently and financial management performance improved thereafter. Subsequent supervision missions rated financial management performance as satisfactory. At the time of the ICR, all Interim Financial Reports had been submitted on time, and the previous year's audit reports were unqualified and had been received on time.

There were some procurement delays due to the disbursement freeze associated with OP 7.3. Solar panels and computer equipment were not procured in time leading to delays in putting the decentralized M & E system in place.

c. Unintended Impacts (positive or negative):

d. Other:

12. Ratings:	ICR	IEG Review	Reason for Disagreement /Comments
Outcome:	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Unsatisfactory	There is no evidence that sustainable land management was achieved.
Risk to Development Outcome:	Significant	Significant	
Bank Performance:	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Unsatisfactory	Project design was unrealistic given local capacity and unresolved financing; quality-at-entry is rated moderately unsatisfactory. Quality of supervision is rated moderately satisfactory. In these circumstances according to the harmonized evaluation criteria the overall rating is determined by the outcome rating.
Borrower Performance:	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Unsatisfactory	Government performance is rated moderately unsatisfactory and Implementation Agency performance moderately satisfactory. In these circumstances according to the harmonized evaluation criteria the overall rating is determined by the outcome rating.
Quality of ICR:		Satisfactory	

NOTES:

- When insufficient information is provided by the Bank for IEG to arrive at a clear rating, IEG will downgrade the relevant ratings as warranted beginning July 1, 2006.
- The "Reason for Disagreement/Comments" column could cross-reference other sections of the ICR Review, as appropriate.

13. Lessons:

The ICR put forward six lessons. The most useful (after IEG editing) is:

Sustainable land management can be achieved through relocation of agriculture following an inclusive participatory approach with all stakeholders. To enhance SLM practices and protect the watersheds, the project encouraged farmers to move their farming activities from eroded hillsides (where rock bunds were established to stabilize the soil) to more productive bottom lands where they could farm collectively. This approach not only helped improved farmer's incomes but it also protected the watersheds from land degradation.

IEG draws a lesson:

If a project outcome has to be sustainable according to its objective, then the means to demonstrate sustainability must be retained when a restructuring takes place unless the objective is changed. In the case of this project, disbursement of the GEF grant took precedence after restructuring and M & E arrangements to demonstrate sustainability were dropped.

14. Assessment Recommended? Yes No

15. Comments on Quality of ICR:

The discussion is comprehensive and gives a coherent account of the project experience and results . However, its discussion of the results chain and what was actually achieved is overly focused on achieving disbursement targets and outputs with only modest attention to environmental outcomes agreed for this GEF project . Despite the findings of the ICR it is difficult to unequivocally attribute the few environmental benefits garnered from an end -of-project survey to project activities . This is because of the lack of a systemic M&E system, lack of baselines and lack of regular monitoring, issues that are soft-peddled in the ICR. More could have been said about resettlement/relocation activities given that this was highlighted in the ICRs lessons section . The ICR does not account for project costs from all financing sources and there are inconsistencies between the PAD and the ICR regarding the costs per component. In some respects these shortcomings are mitigated in a candid discussion of the risks to development outcome facing the project.

a.Quality of ICR Rating : Satisfactory