

SENEGAL COUNTRY PROGRAMME EVALUATION

Pastoral communities in Matam region

Income from livestock production makes a significant contribution to the economy in Senegal in terms of contributing to food security and enabling ecologically sustainable use of fragile semi-arid ecosystems unsuited to farming. It must be borne in mind that in order to facilitate work with livestock producers, lessons learned from the IFAD-supported Agricultural Development Project in Matam (PRODAM), phases I and II, are of particular interest and can strengthen the performance of similar other interventions. The Government has drawn on this project to create a development model for pastoral communities. While IFAD launches a similar programme in the Louga region, the West African Development Bank will complete the project for the Ferlo area in Matam region (north-eastern Senegal).

PRODAM worked with community organizations of nomadic herders, centralized at the regional level, to enhance training in literacy and management. This support led to a significant increase in participation by women and young people, which in turn brought a new vitality to their communities. Committees established and collected a tax on water, maintained firebreaks, ensured rotating access to grazing land and trained literacy teachers.

The objective was not settlement of livestock producers in itself so much as improvement of their livelihoods. Communities agreed to encourage producers to settle around wells, with the project providing shared facilities for animal health. Studies indicated that a well managed grazing rotation system would enable more cattle to be grazed in the Ferlo area, and tests showed that the wells in the area contained enough water of good quality. Water towers, which were preferred to the old ground-level reservoirs, facilitated the supply of water and made it possible to expand the irrigated areas for vegetable and poultry farming. This reduced conflicts between herders and farmers and increased milk and meat production.

The project systematically brought together groups of livestock producers and authorities to draw up annual action plans and seek solutions to problems.

This included the issue of permits limiting the construction of buildings and private wells to a 10 km radius around wells, which helped to protect wildlife and improve government services. Communities have opened health facilities and the first schools in the region.



Senegal - Agricultural Development Project in Matam, phase II (PRODAM II). Cattle graze near a watering spot in Lumbol Samba Abdoul village, Senegal.



Senegal - Agricultural Development Project in Matam, phase II (PRODAM II). People from surrounding villages store water in tanks and rubber inner tubes, transporting it on horse drawn carts in Lumbol Samba Abdoul village, Senegal.

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The success of the project can be attributed in part to plans for scaling up of success stories: 12 pastoral communities were organized to occupy 900,000 ha, and a follow-up phase is planned for the rest of the Ferlo area. These “pastoral units” encompass the traditional grazing lands of the targeted communities and are large enough to ensure that they are ecologically and economically sustainable and that they carry some weight with government services. Nevertheless, they are small enough to manage their infrastructure and grazing lands themselves and to ensure the transparency and accountability of local organizations and centralization at the regional level. Planning an appropriate division of grazing areas with adequate infrastructure and ensuring the cohesion of the community and its social organizations required the collaboration of communities and local authorities as well as sound technical expertise. The rise in productivity has been sufficient to persuade producers to safeguard this investment.

With regard to the proposal to extend support to livestock producers, two issues stand out in terms of sustainability. The first relates to the Government’s renewal of consultations with a view to developing a new land policy. If productivity gains are to be maintained, producers’ participation in the debate on this complex political issue must be ensured; indeed, experiences in the Sahel and elsewhere have shown that when it comes to land-use rights, livestock producers often find their interests overlooked or ignored in spite of the economic importance of their output.

The second issue is the need to focus on developing value chains for the animal products of these communities. The work to be undertaken in the Louga region should aim to improve market information and the quality of inputs such as veterinary medicines and to enhance linkages between buyers and sellers at all levels. Sharing market information and establishing closer ties between buyers and sellers helps farmers to obtain credit, improve their planning and supply products that meet buyers’ needs across the whole of Senegal. Updated price information is available by radio, telephone and websites. There is therefore every reason to believe that informed livestock producers will be able to adapt their output to demand and command higher prices for their animals.



Senegal - Agricultural Development Project in Matam, phase II (PRODAM II). Cattle drink at a watering spot in Lumbol Samba Abdoul village, Senegal.

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Further information:

Republic of Senegal, Country Programme Evaluation, Report No. 3317-SN, August 2014, ISBN 978-92-9072-463-6, Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD, Via Paolo di Dono, 44, 00142, Rome, Italy. The full report, Profile and Insights are available online at: www.ifad.org/evaluation; email: evaluation@ifad.org.