



Report Number: ICRR0024951

1. Project Data

Project ID P161781	Project Name Great Lakes Regional Integ. Agric.Dvt-BI	
Country Burundi	Practice Area(Lead) Agriculture and Food	
L/C/TF Number(s) IDA-D1810	Closing Date (Original) 30-Nov-2022	Total Project Cost (USD) 63,731,676.27
Bank Approval Date 05-May-2017	Closing Date (Actual) 30-Jun-2025	
	IBRD/IDA (USD)	Grants (USD)
Original Commitment	75,000,000.00	0.00
Revised Commitment	67,598,278.97	0.00
Actual	61,580,840.55	0.00

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2. Project Objectives and Components

a. Objectives

The Project Development Objective (PDO) of Burundi's Great Lakes Regional Integrated Agriculture Development Project as articulated in the Financing Agreement (FA, page 5) was identical to the one stated in the Project Appraisal Document (PAD, paragraph 13) and aimed to:



"(i) to increase agricultural productivity and commercialization in Targeted Areas in the territory of the Recipient and improve agricultural regional integration; and (ii) to provide immediate and effective response in the event of an eligible crisis or emergency."

Parsing the PDO. The PDO will be parsed based on four Objectives:

1. To increase agricultural productivity in targeted areas in the territory of the Recipient.
2. To increase agricultural commercialization in targeted areas in the territory of the Recipient .
3. To improve agricultural regional integration.
4. To provide immediate and effective response in the event of an eligible crisis or emergency.

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?

Yes

d. Components

The PDO was supported by four main components:

1. Smallholders' Productivity and Production Enhancement (estimated cost at appraisal:US\$38.62 million, actual cost: US\$34.49 million). This component supported PDOs 1, 2, and 3 by laying the foundation for increased productivity of milk, rice, and maize, through three key activities:

1.1. Strengthening capacity of 250 producer organizations (POs) to improve their organizational capabilities, improve access to markets and increase profitability of their farming and processing activities.

1.2. Support for rice and maize production through expanding access to improved technologies and promoting sustainable agricultural practices, including the use of high-quality seeds, fertilizers, small-scale mechanization, and climate- and nutrition smart innovations. These activities covered 6,500 ha of rice and 6,150 ha of maize. The efforts were complemented by investments in irrigation infrastructure (3,000 ha) and watershed development (10,000 ha).

1.3. Support for dairy production through strengthening husbandry and feeding practices, advancing genetic improvements, enhancing product quality, and technical assistance for epidemiological surveillance and cattle vaccinations for diseases

2. Support to Investments in Agro-Processing and Market Linkages (estimated cost at appraisal: US\$23.74 million; actual cost: US\$14.23 million). This component aimed to boost productivity and profitability of smallholder farmers and agro-processors through three main activities:

2.1. Improving the agribusiness enabling environment and investment climate through (a) supporting



policies, strategies, and regulatory reforms to encourage private agro-processing investments and feasibility studies to identify sectoral opportunities and priorities; and (b) strengthening business development services to support value chains.

2.2. Support for value addition and market linkages through (a) establishing a network of rice and maize post-harvest units; (b) supporting special value adding agro-processing initiatives; and (c) supporting a youth agro-entrepreneurship program.

2.3. Improved rural road infrastructure for market access through rehabilitation of 100 km of rural roads.

3. Institutional Integration, Knowledge Acquisition, and Dissemination of Information at the Regional Level (estimated cost at appraisal: US\$10.37 million; actual cost: US\$7.45 million). This component was designed to foster regional cooperation and knowledge sharing to advance agricultural integration through three main activities:

3.1. Regional cooperation and capacity development included: (a) joint planning and investment with neighboring countries through CEPGL with a focus on natural resource management and climate change adaptation; (b) promotion of regional exchange of information and technologies via a web-based platform; (c) provision of specialized training and exchanges for researchers, particularly at Institut des Sciences Agronomiques du Burundi (ISABU) and the University of Burundi; and (d) supporting PhD and MSc training programs.

3.2. Development of profitable and sustainable technologies by promoting best agronomic practices, testing and introducing improved climate-smart rice and maize varieties and machinery, and sharing climate- and nutrient-smart options for diversifying rice and maize production systems.

3.3. Diagnostic services and support included upgrading laboratory facilities, developing operational procedures, and staff training. It also addressed aflatoxin control through Aflasafe diagnostics, farmer training, and establishment of a regional Aflasafe production facility in Burundi and in eastern DRC.

4. Project Management and Institutional Support (estimated cost at appraisal: US\$7.00 million; actual: US\$14.57 million). This component was designed to support:

4.1. Project management and coordination.

4.2. Institutional support, capacity building, advocacy, and communication.

4.3. Contingency emergency response.

Revised Components. The overall component structure and content remained unchanged. However, loan proceeds were reallocated and financing plans adjusted across components.

Component 1: Irrigation works were downscaled, while livestock activities increased due to CERC activation.

Component 2: Investments in agro-processing, market linkages, and rural roads were reduced, including cancellation of youth incubator program.

Component 3: Budget for knowledge sharing and institutional cooperation was increased.

Component 4: The CERC was activated in response to the Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR) outbreak that affected smallholder families for whom small ruminants are key for income and livelihoods, and also cross border trade in livestock.



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

Project Cost. The total cost estimate for the project at appraisal was US\$79.73 million. The actual cost according to the ICR Data Sheet (page ii) was US\$61.58 million (see below for the difference).

Financing. The project was financed through an Investment Project Financing (IPF) totaling US\$75.00 million; the IDA contribution was a grant of US\$75.00 million (US\$25 million national IDA and US\$50 million regional IDA). The actual amount disbursed was US\$61.58 million. The difference between the amounts was due to reducing the IDA allocation from US\$75.00 million to US\$67.69 million followed by a cancellation of US\$7.90 million.

Borrower Contribution. The Borrower was expected to contribute US\$4.73 million of counterpart funds. According to the ICR Data Sheet (page ii) the amount contributed was US\$0.00.

Dates. The project was approved on May 5, 2017, and became effective six months later on November 15, 2017. The Mid-Term Review (MTR) was conducted on December 4, 2020, which was about two months beyond the expected date in the PAD on September 30, 2020. The MTR was conducted timely (about three years after effectiveness) and in line with similar World Bank Group financed operations. The project closed on December 30, 2025, which was 37 months beyond the original closing date on November 30, 2022.

The project was restructured five times, all of which were Level 2 restructuring as follows:

1. On September 26, 2018, when the amount disbursed was US\$12.60 million, in order to activate CERC to respond to PPR outbreak with respective allocation of US\$2.8M for emergency response.
2. On January 25, 2022, when the amount disbursed was US\$43.79 million, in order to extend the closing date by 24 months from November 30, 2022, to November 29, 2024, revise the project components and results, and reallocate funds between disbursement categories.
3. On November 30, 2022, when the amount disbursed was US\$34.74 million, to revise the project components; results; disbursements estimates and the implementation schedule, and reallocate funds between disbursement categories.
4. On November 27, 2024, when the amount disbursed was US\$51.21 million, in order to reduce IDA allocation from US\$75.00 million to US\$67.69 million, extend the closing date by 7 months from November 29, 2024 to June 30, 2025, revise the project components; results; disbursements estimates and the implementation schedule, and reallocate funds between disbursement categories.
5. On June 27, 2025, when the amount disbursed was US\$58.72 million, in order to process a loan cancellation in the amount of US\$7.90 million, and revise results.

The outcome of this project will be assessed based on a split rating methodology because key activities and PDO outcome targets were downscaled. These revisions of targets reduced the scope and narrowed the ambition and potential impact of project intervention. Specifically, the target for the farmers reached with agricultural assets or services (PDO outcome indicator 1.a) was reduced from 55,000 to 45,000, and the percentage of female farmers reached with agricultural assets or services (PDO outcome indicator 1.b) was reduced from 40% to 35%. Also, targets for the average annual yields of targeted commodities (PDO



outcome indicator 1.2) (milk-rice-maize) were reduced. Lastly, the target for agro-processing enterprises rehabilitated or established with project support (PDO outcome indicator 2) was reduced from an original target of 100 to 43 then reduced again to 12.

The split rating will factor in two restructurings (January 2022 and November 2022) only, which involved changes to the targets of PDO outcome indicators 1.a and 1. b. Changes in the targets for PDO outcome indicator 2 were done later as part of November 2024 and June 2025 restructurings. These will not be part of the split rating because by project completion achievement against the revised target of this PDO outcome was zero.

3. Relevance of Objectives

Rationale

Context at Appraisal. At the time of appraisal, Burundi and the broader Great Lakes region faced acute challenges in agricultural productivity, food security, and rural poverty. Agriculture formed the backbone of the economy and employed about 85% of the population, yet productivity remained low due to limited access to quality inputs, inadequate infrastructure, and weak market linkages. This project aimed to enhance smallholder productivity, strengthen value chains, promoting regional integration, and create jobs for youth and women, the project also contributed to higher-level goals of reducing poverty, improving food security, and fostering regional stability. This project and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC-Great Lakes Integrated Agriculture Development Project- PICAGL, P143307) were designed as complementary regional operations.

Previous World Bank Group (WBG) Experience. The WBG has had extensive experience in agricultural investment projects in Burundi and other countries in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). Specifically, this project benefited from lessons and experience under Burundi's Agro-Pastoral Productivity and Markets Development Project (PRODEMA) and the Agriculture Rehabilitation and Support and Sustainable Land Management Project for Burundi (PRASAB), and regional agricultural project including the West Africa Agriculture Productivity Program (WAAPP) and Eastern Africa Agriculture Productivity Program (EAAPP). Overall, the WBG was on a solid foundation to design and oversee the implementation of this project.

Consistency with the WBG Strategies. At appraisal, the PDO was in line with the WBG's approach to Fragile and Conflict Affected States (FCS), and with Burundi's Country Assistance Strategy (CAS, FY2013–FY2016) and related Performance and Learning Review (PLR, 2015). The project reflected the WBG's approach to FCS and the recommendations of the Burundi Risk and Resilience Assessment. The project also contributed to the CAS pillar of improving competitiveness by strengthening the country's largest sector. It was also consistent with the PLR which extended the CAS for two years and proposed a greater focus of the WBG support on increasing broad-based economic opportunities for average Burundians, as the engine of poverty reduction and an important basis for peace and stability. Lastly, the project contributed to the World Bank Group's twin goals (poverty reduction and shared prosperity) and key priority areas of the World Bank's Agriculture Global Practice (inclusive value chains, job creation, links with the private sector, and economic resilience).

At completion, the PDO continued to be in line with the WBG's Country Partnership Framework for Burundi (FY2019–FY2024). The PDO was also in line with key constraints identified in the 2018 Systematic Country



Diagnostic (SCD), including economic vulnerability, reliance on subsistence agriculture, and low productivity. The project's focus on increasing productivity and commercialization in rice, maize, and dairy/livestock value chains directly targeted these challenges. Also, the regional integration was highly relevant, as the CPF prioritized regional integration to foster cross-border collaboration, harmonize interventions, and promote sustainable development. The project contributed to these aims through knowledge sharing and joint activities with the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries (CEPGL) and coordination with the parallel World Bank-financed PICAGL in DRC. Lastly, the inclusion of the CERC enabled rapid crisis response, which was essential given frequent shocks such as disease outbreaks.

Consistency with the Government Strategies/Priorities. At appraisal, the PDO was in line with Burundi's National Agricultural Investment Plan (NAIP, 2012–17) which aimed to mobilize agricultural potential by raising crop and animal productivity, strengthening human and institutional capacities, and developing agribusiness. By facilitating a transformation of Burundian agriculture, the project was expected to have significant multiplier effects: to generate demand for agricultural products and associated inputs and services, create on- and off-farm employment, enhance incomes, and contribute to value addition and increased public sector revenues.

At completion, the PDO continued to be in line with Burundi's National Agricultural Strategy (SAN), the National Agricultural Investment Plan (2018–2022), and the National Development Plan (2018–2027), all of which emphasized regional integration as a pillar for agricultural modernization, value addition, and trade. Lastly, the project complemented CEPGL's strategy for cross-border agricultural collaboration and harmonized approaches with PICAGL in the DRC, facilitating knowledge sharing across borders.

Summary of Relevance of Objectives Assessment. The PDO statement was clear, focused, but had ambitious targets relative to the country's capacity. At completion, the PDO continued to be in line with the WBG's most recent CPF and with the Government's national priorities as noted above.

Therefore, Relevance of Objectives is rated High.

Rating

High

4. Achievement of Objectives (Efficacy)

OBJECTIVE 1

Objective

To increase agricultural productivity in targeted areas in the territory of the Recipient.

Rationale



Theory of Change (ToC). To achieve the outcome of increasing agricultural productivity, the project supported strengthening Producer Organizations (POs)/Water User Associations (WUAs), training farmers, improving access to irrigation water, and improving access to agricultural inputs via matching grants (MGs). These activities were expected to result in the following outputs: improved management capacity for POS/WUA, application of climate smart and improved crop nutrition practices, improved new irrigation services, and improved access to assets and services. The successful implementation of the project activities and realization of the afore-mentioned outputs was expected to contribute to two main outcomes: increased yields, and improved outcomes. Anticipated long-term impacts included: improved livelihoods and food security, enhanced economic development, and improved regional integration and safety.

The achievement of the PDO was underpinned by the following three critical assumptions: 1. Farmers willing to adopt new practices, 2. Political and security stability allows for the implementation of project activities, and 3. Stakeholders remain committed to policy and trade reforms.

Overall, the ToC reflected relevant activities that were directly connected to the stated outputs and outcomes in plausible causal chains. The critical assumptions were logical and realistic.

Outputs/Intermediate Results

- 200 hectares (Ha) were provided with new/improved irrigation or drainage services which was below the original end target of 3,000 ha (target partially achieved).

Outcomes

- 39,589 farmers were reached with agricultural assets or services which was below the original target of 55,000 (target partially achieved).
- 35.5% of female farmers were reached with agricultural assets or service which was below the original target of 40% (target partially achieved).
- The average annual yield of milk reached 1,237.02 Liters of milk per cow per year, which was an improvement from the baseline of 1,050 Liters of milk per cow per year, but below the original target of 1,800 Liters of milk per cow per year (target partially achieved)
- The average annual yield of rice reached 4.84 Metric ton per ha, which was a significant improvement from the baseline of 3 Metric ton per ha, but was below the original target of 5.5 Metric ton per ha (target substantially achieved).
- The average annual yield of maize reached 3.00 Metric ton per ha, which was a significant improvement from the baseline of 1.5 Metric ton per ha, but was below the original target of 4.5 Metric ton per ha (target partially achieved).

Summary of Efficacy Assessment. The project achieved productivity gains in rice through introducing integrated support packages specifically tailored for project locations, strengthening extension services, and adoption of System of Rice Intensification (SRI) and Alternate Wetting and Drying (AWD) techniques. For maize, yield improvements were driven by the introduction of drought-resilient, high-yielding seeds and comprehensive support packages. Milk productivity gains were attributable to improved breeds, enhanced animal health and nutrition practices, and adoption of drought-resilient fodder crops. However, the project fell short of achieving all of its PDO outcome indicator targets as noted above. A notable shortcoming also was the very limited achievement of only 200 ha provided with new/improved irrigation or drainage services. Lastly, the ICR (paragraph 25) noted that project lacked a final impact assessment survey and relied



on a rapid phone-based survey of a relatively small size, as only beneficiaries and control group members with phone numbers were interviewed. This raises concerns on the reliability and accuracy of the reported data. Also, the inclusion of a dedicated control group or a difference-in-difference approach would have strengthened the attribution of the reported achievements to the project activities.

Therefore, the efficacy of achieving this Objective is rated Modest.

Rating

Modest

OBJECTIVE 1 REVISION 1

Revised Objective

To increase agricultural productivity in targeted areas in the territory of the Recipient.

Revised Rationale

Theory of Change (ToC). The PDO and activities remained the same, but as part of the January 2022 restructuring, the PDO outcome target for the percentage of female farmers reached with agricultural assets or services was reduced from 40 to 35%, the target for the average annual yield of milk was reduced from 1,800 to 1,500 Liters of milk per cow per year, the target for the average annual rice yield was reduced from 5.5 to 5 Metric ton per ha, and the target for the average annual maize yield was reduced from 4.5 to 4 Metric ton per ha.

Outputs/Intermediate Results (Only new indicators and ones with a revised target are reflected)

- 200 hectares (Ha) were provided with new/improved irrigation or drainage services which was below the revised target of 2,550 ha (target partially achieved).
- 98% of farmers adopted at least two improved agricultural practices (of which climate-smart technologies) exceeding the original end target of 75% (target exceeded).
- 84% of farmers adopted climate-smart technologies exceeding the end target of 30% (target exceeded).
- 11,370 farmers adopted nutrition smart practices exceeding the end target of 7,500 (target exceeded).

Outcomes

- 39,589 farmers were reached with agricultural assets or services which was below the original target of 55,000 (target partially achieved).
- 35.5% of female farmers were reached with agricultural assets or service which slightly exceeded the revised target of 35% (target partially achieved).
- The average annual yield of milk reached 1,237.02 Liters of milk per cow per year, which was an improvement from the baseline of 1,050 Liters of milk per cow per year, but below the revised target of 1,500 Liters of milk per cow per year (target partially achieved)
- The average annual yield of rice reached 4.84 Metric ton per ha, which was a significant improvement from the baseline of 3.00 Metric ton per ha, and substantially achieved the revised target of 5.00 Metric ton per ha (target substantially achieved).



- The average annual yield of maize reached 3.00 Metric ton per ha, which was a significant improvement from the baseline of 1.5 Metric ton per ha, and partially achieved the revised target of 4.00 Metric ton per ha (target partially achieved).

Summary of Efficacy Assessment. The project achieved productivity gains in rice through introducing integrated support packages specifically tailored for project locations, strengthening extension services, and adoption of SRI and AWD techniques. For maize, yield improvements were driven by the introduction of drought-resilient, high-yielding seeds and comprehensive support packages. Milk productivity gains were attributable to improved breeds, enhanced animal health and nutrition practices, and adoption of drought-resilient fodder crops. However, the project fell short of achieving all of its PDO outcome indicator targets as noted above. A notable shortcoming also was the very limited achievement of only 200 ha provided with new/improved irrigation or drainage services. Lastly, the ICR (paragraph 25) noted that project lacked a final impact assessment survey and relied on a rapid phone-based survey of a relatively small size, as only beneficiaries and control group members with phone numbers were interviewed. This raises concerns on the reliability and accuracy of the reported data. Also, the inclusion of a dedicated control group or a difference-in-difference approach would have strengthened the attribution of the reported achievements to the project activities.

Therefore, the efficacy of achieving this Objective is rated Modest.

Revised Rating

Modest

OBJECTIVE 1 REVISION 2

Revised Objective

To increase agricultural productivity in targeted areas in the territory of the Recipient.

Revised Rationale

Theory of Change (ToC). The PDO and activities remained the same, but as part of the November 2022 restructuring, the PDO outcome target for farmers reached with agricultural assets or services was reduced from 55,000 to 45,000.

Outputs/Intermediate Results

The same under Objective 1 revision 1.

Outcomes

- 39,589 farmers were reached with agricultural assets or services substantially achieving the revised target of 45,000 (target substantially achieved).
- 35.5% of female farmers were reached with agricultural assets or service which slightly exceeded the revised target of 35% (target partially achieved).



- The average annual yield of milk reached 1,237.02 Liters of milk per cow per year, which was an improvement from the baseline of 1,050 Liters of milk per cow per year, but below the revised target of 1,500 Liters of milk per cow per year (target partially achieved)
- The average annual yield of rice reached 4.84 Metric ton per ha, which was a significant improvement from the baseline of 3.00 Metric ton per ha, and substantially achieved the revised target of 5.00 Metric ton per ha (target substantially achieved).
- The average annual yield of maize reached 3.00 Metric ton per ha, which was a significant improvement from the baseline of 1.5 Metric ton per ha, and partially achieved the revised target of 4.00 Metric ton per ha (target partially achieved).

Summary of Efficacy Assessment. The project achieved productivity gains in rice through introducing integrated support packages specifically tailored for project locations, strengthening extension services, and adoption of SRI and AWD techniques. For maize, yield improvements were driven by the introduction of drought-resilient, high-yielding seeds and comprehensive support packages. Milk productivity gains were attributable to improved breeds, enhanced animal health and nutrition practices, and adoption of drought-resilient fodder crops. However, the project fell short of achieving all of its PDO outcome indicator targets as noted above. A notable shortcoming also was the very limited achievement of only 200 ha provided with new/improved irrigation or drainage services. Lastly, the ICR (paragraph 25) noted that project lacked a final impact assessment survey and relied on a rapid phone-based survey of a relatively small size, as only beneficiaries and control group members with phone numbers were interviewed. This raises concerns on the reliability and accuracy of the reported data. Also, the inclusion of a dedicated control group or a difference-in-difference approach would have strengthened the attribution of the reported achievements to the project activities.

Therefore, the efficacy of achieving this Objective is rated Modest.

Revised Rating

Modest

OBJECTIVE 2

Objective

To increase agricultural commercialization in targeted areas in the territory of the Recipient .

Rationale

Theory of Change (ToC). To achieve the outcome of increasing agricultural commercialization, the project supported policy reforms; investment studies; and value chain services, support for value addition and market linkages, and support the improvement of feeder roads. These activities were expected to result in the following outputs: improved investment and private sector engagement, enhanced value addition, and improved access to markets. The successful implementation of the project activities and realization of the afore-mentioned outputs was expected to contribute to two main outcomes: reduced post-harvest losses, increased value addition, and strengthened market linkages. Anticipated long-term impacts included: improved livelihoods and food security, and enhanced economic development.



The same critical assumptions under objective 1 applied. Overall, the ToC reflected relevant activities that were directly connected to the stated outputs and outcomes in plausible causal chains. The critical assumptions were logical and realistic. However, the RF lacked measurement for decreased post harvests loses.

Outputs/Intermediate Results

- 63.7% of producer groups/associations' production sold to aggregators and/or processing units exceeding the original target of 60% and revised target of 50% (both targets exceeded).
- The average annual sales from production marketed at the farm/cooperative level for targeted commodities (Rice, maize, milk and other produced nutritious commodities) increased from a baseline of BIF8,000.00 million to BIF9,017.00 million which was below the end target of BIF15,200.00 million (target partially achieved).
- 18.67 km of roads were constructed or rehabilitated, falling short of achieving the original end target of 100 km, the revised target of 74 km and the revised target of 34.55 km (all targets fell short).

Outcomes

- By project completion no agro-processing enterprises were rehabilitated or established with project support compared to an original end target of 100, a revised target of 74, and a revised target of 12 (all targets not achieved).

Summary of Efficacy Assessment. At project completion, none of the agro-processing enterprises were fully rehabilitated or established (PDO outcome indicator). Also, the project achieved about 19% of its original target on roads constructed or rehabilitated, and about 58% of its target for annual sales from production marketed at the farm/cooperative level for targeted commodities.

Therefore, the efficacy of the project in achieving this objective is rated negligible.

Rating

Negligible

OBJECTIVE 2 REVISION 1

Revised Objective

To increase agricultural commercialization in Targeted Areas in the territory of the Recipient.

Revised Rationale

Theory of Change (ToC). The PDO and activities remained the same, but as part of the November 2024 restructuring, the PDO outcome target for agro-processing enterprises were rehabilitated or established with project support was reduced from 100 to 43.

All information under Original Objective 2 applies.



Revised Rating

Negligible

OBJECTIVE 2 REVISION 2

Revised Objective

To increase agricultural commercialization in Targeted Areas in the territory of the Recipient.

Revised Rationale

Theory of Change (ToC). The PDO and activities remained the same, but as part of the June 2025 restructuring, the PDO outcome target for agro-processing enterprises were rehabilitated or established with project support was reduced from 43 to 12 .

All information under Original Objective 2 applies.

Revised Rating

Negligible

OBJECTIVE 3

Objective

To improve agricultural regional integration.

Rationale

Theory of Change (ToC). To achieve the outcome of improving agricultural regional integration, the project supported regional coordination and capacity development, financing and regional training, and improved diagnostic services. These activities were expected to result in the following outputs: joint planning and monitoring established, research and knowledge development and sharing, and operational Aflosafe facility. The successful implementation of the project activities and realization of the afore-mentioned outputs was expected to contribute to two main outcomes: increased adoption of improved technologies, and reduced aflatoxin levels. Anticipated long-term impacts included: improved livelihoods and food security, enhanced economic development, and improved regional integration and safety.

The same critical assumptions under objective 1 applied. Overall, the ToC reflected relevant activities that were directly connected to the stated outputs and outcomes in plausible causal chains. The critical assumptions were logical and realistic.

Outputs/Intermediate Results

- 496 agricultural researchers/technicians were trained, exceeding the original target of 300 (target exceeded).
- 12 technologies were shared at the regional level fully achieving the original target of 12 (target fully achieved). These included improved rice and maize varieties, rice-based crop rotation and disease management, post-harvest rice management, mechanization in rice production, forage preservation,



diagnostic techniques for animal diseases, artificial insemination (AI), new fodder crops, aflatoxin management, fall armyworm control, and plant and soil analysis techniques (ICR, paragraph 37).

- Notable achievements not directly captured by the Results Framework (RF) included signing a Memorandum of Understanding between Burundi, DRC, and CEPGL on regional collaboration on agricultural research, and strengthening animal health diagnostic capacity was strengthened through upgrading laboratory facilities, procurement of essential vaccines, and training.

Outcomes

- 7 programs were established to improve agricultural regional integration, exceeding the target of 5 (target exceeded). These programs focused on rice varietal improvement, development of regionally adapted rice farming practices, control of transboundary animal diseases such as bovine brucellosis and Rift Valley fever, breeding, improvement of animal feed and nutrition, aflatoxin control, and management of fall armyworm.

Summary of Efficacy Assessment. The project aimed at strengthening regional knowledge sharing and collaboration in areas of agricultural research and joint coordination and management of natural resources with the parallel PICAGL in DRC. The project established a foundation for regional integration through joint research programs, technology transfer, and capacity building, and exceeded its PDO outcome target as well as several key output targets. However, the regional knowledge platform under CEPGL was not operationalized. Lastly, the achievement of deeper and more sustainable regional integration outcomes was undermined by pandemic-related restrictions, high-level leadership turnover, political dependencies, the early closure of the DRC project, and limited CEPGL engagement (ICR, paragraph 38).

On balance, the efficacy of the project in achieving this objective is rated Substantial with moderate shortcomings.

Rating

Substantial

OBJECTIVE 3 REVISION 1

Revised Objective

No change

Revised Rationale

No Change.

Revised Rating

Substantial

OBJECTIVE 3 REVISION 2

Revised Objective



No change.

Revised Rationale

No change.

Revised Rating

Substantial

OBJECTIVE 4

Objective

To provide immediate and effective response in the event of an eligible crisis or emergency.

Rationale

Theory of Change (ToC). The CERC was activated in early 2018 in response to the Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR) outbreak that affected smallholder families for whom small ruminants are key for income and livelihoods, and also cross border trade in livestock. To achieve the outcome of immediate and effective response, the project swiftly mobilized resources to vaccinate small ruminants. To strengthen epidemic control, the project piloted participatory, farmer-led disease surveillance, which was later institutionalized.

Outputs/Intermediate Results

- Seven million small ruminants were vaccinated exceeding the target of One million (target exceeded).

Outcomes

- Immediate response was measured by the time between request from government to making funds available to respond to an eligible crisis. This took one week, which was significantly ahead of the four weeks estimate (target exceeded).
- Effective response. While there was no direct outcome indicator to assess this outcome, the ICR (paragraph 40) reported that the project vaccinated nearly 7 million small ruminants exceeding the initial target of about one million. Also, the project supported the replacement of animals for 4,182 affected households.
- Beneficiary satisfaction rate with quality of services provided by the project reached 87.90% exceeding the target of 80% and Female beneficiary satisfaction rate with quality of services provided by the project reached 88.30% exceeding the target of 80% (both targets exceeded).

Summary of Efficacy Assessment. The ICR (paragraph 41) reported that the project interventions not only contained the outbreak but also maintained Burundi's PPR-free status since 2018, while neighboring countries continued to report cases. The project successfully provided an immediate and effective response in the event of an eligible crisis or emergency. The PDO outcome target was exceeded and the target on vaccinated animals was also exceeded. The ICR (paragraph 41) reported that "Burundi's response has been highlighted in FAO technical updates and PPR-GEP global meetings as a success story for rapid emergency vaccination and innovative participatory surveillance, which achieved high coverage and effective



epidemic control." Lastly, beneficiary feedback to the PPR response by the project revealed a 87% overall satisfaction rate, and 88% satisfaction among female beneficiaries.

Therefore, the efficacy of the project in achieving this objective is rated High.

Rating

High

OBJECTIVE 4 REVISION 1

Revised Objective

No change

Revised Rationale

No change

Revised Rating

High

OBJECTIVE 4 REVISION 2

Revised Objective

No change.

Revised Rationale

No change.

Revised Rating

High

OVERALL EFFICACY

Rationale

Overall Efficacy against the original targets is rated Modest. While the project achieved strong results in crisis response and regional integration, progress in productivity was modest, and achievement in commercialization was negligible.



Overall Efficacy Rating

Modest

Primary Reason

Low achievement

OVERALL EFFICACY REVISION 1

Overall Efficacy Revision 1 Rationale

Overall Efficacy is rated Modest against revised targets. While the project achieved strong results in crisis response and regional integration, progress in productivity was modest, and achievement in commercialization was negligible.

Overall Efficacy Revision 1 Rating

Modest

Primary Reason

Low achievement

OVERALL EFFICACY REVISION 2

Overall Efficacy Revision 2 Rationale

Overall Efficacy is rated Modest against revised targets. While the project achieved strong results in crisis response and regional integration, progress in productivity was modest, and achievement in commercialization was negligible.

Overall Efficacy Revision 2 Rating

Modest

Primary Reason

Low achievement

5. Efficiency

Economic and Financial Analysis (EFA)

Ex-ante

- The Economic Internal Rate of Return (EIRR) for the entire project was estimated at 19.80% with a Net present Value (NPV) US\$39.80 million under a 15-year time frame. A discount rate of 6% was used to compute the NPV in economic terms. The analysis compared with and without the project, quantified benefits accruing from the project’s support for private investments in production, processing, and marketing in the rice, maize, and dairy value chains.
- The financial analysis considered seven typical farm/enterprise models: rice production (irrigated rice), maize production (upland maize), milk production (one cow over 248 days of production per year), small-scale rice processing (0.5 t/h), medium-scale rice processing (2.0 t/h), small-scale maize processing (0.5 t/h), and milk collection. The Internal Rate of Return (IRR) ranged between 40.10% to 82.10% were well above the discount rate of 6%.
- Environmental benefits. According to EX-ACT estimates the project was expected to generate a net carbon sink of about 1.7 million tCO₂e over 20 years (approximately 85,000 tCO₂e per year) through reforestation, agroforestry, and improved land and water management on hillsides. These interventions were also expected to enhance soil fertility, reduce erosion, and strengthen the resilience of production systems to climatic shock.



- Overall, the PAD (Annex 4) reflected a detailed EFA that provided adequate justification of the project investments.

Ex-Post

- The EFA at completion largely followed the same approach at appraisal to ensure consistency and comparability. The economic internal rate of return (EIRR) was estimated at 16.9% with an economic net present value (ENPV) of US\$17.98M over 30 years at a 6% discount rate, and a Benefit-Cost Ratio (BCR) of 1.56. While the *ex-post* ERR was moderately below the *ex-ante* estimate (16.9% vs. 19.8%), it was still above the discount rate of 6%. The lower EIRR at completion stemmed from reduced investment scope, delays and incomplete infrastructure and commercialization activities.
- A cash flow model was used to assess the *ex-post* efficiency of Project investments. Annual cash flows were estimated as the difference between without-project (WOP) and with-project (WP) net benefits for direct beneficiaries of the Project. Financial models were developed over a 10-year period for all supported activities, namely rice, maize, and dairy (5-year in this case), reflecting the typical lifetime of these investments.
- The economic results did not capture the potential post-harvest and value-addition benefits expected from the Project's processing and marketing infrastructure. At the time of project closure, most milk collection centers, rice and maize mills, and storage facilities were completed or near completion but had not yet entered operation.
- Sensitivity analysis showed that the Project's economic outcome was robust to adverse changes in key parameters. The ENPV turns zero only if total benefits declined by approximately 36% or if overall costs increase by about 56%.

Implementation/Administrative Efficiency. The project closed on December 30, 2025, which was 37 months beyond the original closing date on November 30, 2022. The project was constrained by underestimated infrastructure costs, persistent procurement and regulatory delays. Also, macroeconomic shocks—such as inflation and fuel shortages combined with COVID-19 restrictions exacerbated implementation challenges and resulted in unfinished works and reduced scope. While adaptive measures to address disbursement bottlenecks were eventually adopted, these were applied late just three months before project closure. These implementation delays significantly affected infrastructure and agro-processing investments, resulting in incomplete activities. Lastly, the project cancelled US\$7.90 million from the original IDA allocation. Overall, implementation/administrative efficiency was modest, with operational challenges and external shocks affecting timely and cost-effective delivery of project investments.

Summary of Efficiency Assessment. The *ex-post* EIRR was moderately below the *ex-ante* estimate (16.9% vs. 19.8%), but still above the discount rate of 6%. However, the project experienced M&E implementation challenges and there are concerns on the quality of the data collected and used in the *ex-post* EFA. Lastly, the project's implementation/administrative efficiency experienced notable operational challenges which in combination with external shocks affected timely and cost-effective delivery of project investments as noted above.

Therefore, Efficiency is rated Modest.

Efficiency Rating

Modest



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	✓	19.80	80.00 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
ICR Estimate	✓	16.90	80.00 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable

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

6. Outcome

Original targets

Relevance of Objectives was rated High. Overall Efficacy was rated Modest. While the project achieved commendable results in crisis response and regional integration, progress in productivity was modest, and achievement in commercialization was negligible. Efficiency was rated Modest because the *ex-post* EIRR was moderately below the *ex-ante* estimate (16.9% vs.19.8%) and implementation/administrative efficiency experienced significant challenges that affected timely and cost-effective delivery of project investments.

Based on the assigned ratings for the three Outcome criteria (i.e. Relevance of Objectives, Efficacy, and Efficiency), the Outcome of this project is rated Moderately Unsatisfactory.

Revised targets (January 2022)

Relevance of Objectives was rated High. Overall Efficacy was rated Modest. Overall Efficacy was rated Modest. While the project achieved commendable results in crisis response and regional integration, progress in productivity was modest, and achievement in commercialization was negligible. Efficiency was rated Modest because the *ex-post* EIRR was moderately below the *ex-ante* estimate (16.9% vs.19.8%) and implementation/administrative efficiency experienced significant challenges that affected timely and cost-effective delivery of project investments.

Based on the assigned ratings for the three Outcome criteria (i.e. Relevance of Objectives, Efficacy, and Efficiency), the Outcome of this project is rated Moderately Unsatisfactory.

Revised targets (November 2022)

Relevance of Objectives was rated High. Overall Efficacy was rated Modest. Overall Efficacy was rated Modest. While the project achieved commendable results in crisis response and regional integration, progress in productivity was modest, and achievement in commercialization was negligible. Efficiency was rated Modest because the *ex-post* EIRR was moderately below the *ex-ante* estimate (16.9%



vs.19.8%) and implementation/administrative efficiency experienced significant challenges that affected timely and cost-effective delivery of project investments.

Based on the assigned ratings for the three Outcome criteria (i.e. Relevance of Objectives, Efficacy, and Efficiency), the Outcome of this project is rated Moderately Unsatisfactory.

	Original targets	Revised targets (January 2022)	Revised targets (November 2022)
Relevance of Objectives	High	High	High
Overall Efficacy	Modest	Modest	Modest
Efficiency	Modest	Modest	Modest
Outcome	Moderately Unsatisfactory	Moderately Unsatisfactory	Moderately Unsatisfactory
Numerical value of the outcome ratings	3	3	3
Disbursement (US\$, millions)	34.74	9.05	17.79
Share of disbursement	0.56	0.14	0.28
Weighted value of the outcome ratings	$0.56 \times 3 = 1.68$	$0.14 \times 3 = 0.42$	$0.28 \times 3 = 0.84$
Final outcome rating	$1.68 + 0.42 + 0.84 = 2.94$	on a scale of 1 to 6, 2.94 rounds up to 3 which corresponds to	Moderately Unsatisfactory

Based on the split rating methodology outlined above, the outcome rating is Moderately Unsatisfactory.

- a. **Outcome Rating**
Moderately Unsatisfactory

7. Risk to Development Outcome

The following risks could potentially impact the Development Outcome:

1. Institutional risk. This risk relates to the absence of capable institutions to oversee the project achievements. Persistent institutional weaknesses will continue to challenge sustainability and the durability of project benefits. Without additional robust institutional support, future efforts may face overruns and fragility.

2. Environmental risk. This relates to environmental impacts of climate change and outbreak of disease. The project could potentially face severe climate related events that might negatively impact productivity. Also, the sudden outbreak of disease could have severe negative effects on livestock in the project areas.



3. Financial risk. This risk relates to availability of funds to carry out operation and maintenance of assets. Without additional financial support, future efforts may face overruns and fragility. Persistent macroeconomic weaknesses will continue to challenge sustainability and the durability of project benefits.

8. Assessment of Bank Performance

a. Quality-at-Entry

- **Strategic Relevance and Approach.** The PDO was in line with the Government priorities and the WBG strategies (see section 3). By increasing food security, expanding and diversifying the rural economy, and improving employment and income, this project was expected to have a sustainable and positive overall impact on livelihoods and conflict in the Great Lakes Region.
- **Technical and Financial Aspects.** The project design reflected a clear and focused PDO that was pitched at a higher level of ambition with regards to the local capacity. Design leveraged regional opportunities through collaboration with the DRC to foster cross-border value chains and knowledge exchange, reinforcing strategic fit. While design reflected relevant activities that were directly connected to the PDO, it could have benefited from further assessment of the local implementation capacity. Also, a notable design weakness was the underestimation of infrastructure costs as feasibility studies for bridges, roads, irrigation, and agribusiness were scheduled post-effectiveness rather than before (ICR, paragraph 55). The limited implementation capacity combined with underestimated costs led to prolonged preparation, delayed start of critical activities, and incomplete works at closing. Overall, the project design was complex as it included largescale infrastructure, multi-sectoral coordination, and ambitious timelines against limited institutional capacity, procurement bottlenecks, and high staff turnover.
- **Social and Gender Aspects.** The project contributed to poverty reduction mainly through improved agricultural productivity and nutrition-sensitive interventions. Women benefited from project activities as the design prioritized gender inclusion, integrating gender-responsive approaches throughout its activities.
- **Environmental and Fiduciary aspects.** Environmental compliance experienced challenges as persistent vacancies in E&S specialist roles led to insufficient monitoring, with responsibilities often assigned to non-specialists. Also, the project faced procurement and financial management challenges during implementation. This indicates that more attention should be given to these aspects at design stage.
- **Implementation Arrangements.** The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MINAGRIE) was the executing agency for the project. While the weak capacity of MINAGRIE, and the coordination deficiencies were flagged in the PAD, those issues were not adequately addressed.
- **Risk Assessment.** The overall risk rating of the project was rated High because of the political and governance risks, and macroeconomic risks. In total nine risk areas were identified in the PAD including institutional capacity for implementation and sustainability, and fiduciary risks. Those two areas proved more challenging than anticipated, and mitigation measures did not adequately address various challenges as risks materialized during implementation. Also, macroeconomic volatility and fuel shortages were not fully anticipated and contingency planning was limited. Overall, risk assessment was deficient with gaps in risk mitigation.



- **M&E Arrangements.** The PCU/PIUs were responsible for data consolidation, quality control, analysis, and reporting. However, M&E arrangements lacked a clear implementation strategy and was undermined by limited capacity. The Results framework (RF) reflected adequate indicators, but some activities such as commercialization, regional integration, and technology transfer were difficult to measure or attribute to project interventions.

Summary of Quality at Entry (QAE) Assessment. While the PDO was in line with the Government priorities and the WBG strategies, it was pitched at higher level of ambition with regards to the local capacity. The project design was complex as it included largescale infrastructure, multi-sectoral coordination, and ambitious timelines against limited institutional capacity, procurement bottlenecks, and high staff turnover. While social and gender aspects were adequate, environmental and fiduciary aspects could have benefited from more attention. The implementing agency suffered from weak capacity coordination deficiencies. Risk assessment was deficient with gaps in risk mitigation. Also, macroeconomic volatility and fuel shortages were not fully anticipated and contingency planning was limited. M&E arrangements lacked a clear implementation strategy and was undermined by limited capacity. Lastly, the RF had some weaknesses as some project activities were difficult to measure as noted above.

Therefore, QAE is rated Moderately Unsatisfactory.

Quality-at-Entry Rating Moderately Unsatisfactory

b. Quality of supervision

- The project experienced a challenging implementation environment. This included macroeconomic shocks—such as inflation and fuel shortages, COVID-19 restrictions, combined with limited implementation capacity, all of which exacerbated implementation challenges.
- The World Bank conducted 15 implementation support missions over the implementation duration period. The Bank provided an efficient crisis response during the PPR outbreak with a swift activation of the CERC, and coordinated with FAO to mobilize experts to address the emergency situation. The Bank promoted advancing regional integration through support for cross-border agricultural research partnerships. Lastly, the Bank prioritized gender and social inclusion, engaging women, female-headed households, and indigenous communities in project activities and emergency responses.
- However, Bank supervision could have improved in several areas. For example, the Bank could have been proactive to address QAE weaknesses. Also, action on evolving risks was limited, leaving many infrastructures and Micro, small, and medium enterprise (MSME) activities incomplete. Further, implementation suffered from procurement delays, restructuring bottlenecks, and technical support gaps, especially in commercial agriculture. This affected timely delivery of investments. Also, the problem of staff retention persisted due to compensation issues, and the response to mitigate macroeconomic shocks was slow. The Bank could have provided more support to M&E to ensure more effective implementation of M&E activities. Lastly, the project could have benefited from a more structured exit strategy for unfinished contracts and incomplete sites.



Summary of Quality of Supervision Assessment. Bank supervision was mixed. The Bank provided proactive support in some areas such as CERC activation and regional coordination. However, other areas could have benefited from more attention including addressing QAE weaknesses, addressing evolving risks, procurement challenges, M&E weaknesses, and technical support gaps.

Therefore, Quality of Supervision is rated Moderately Unsatisfactory due to significant shortcomings in supervision performance.

Based on the ratings assigned for QAE and Quality of Bank supervision, the Overall Bank Performance is rated Moderately Unsatisfactory.

Quality of Supervision Rating

Moderately Unsatisfactory

Overall Bank Performance Rating

Moderately Unsatisfactory

9. M&E Design, Implementation, & Utilization

a. M&E Design

- The PAD did not include a ToC since it was not yet required by the Bank at appraisal. Nonetheless, the ICR (Annex 6) included a ToC that outlined the connections between project activities, outputs, intermediate outcomes and outcomes in plausible causal chains. This Review outlined a ToC for each objective based on the detailed project description in the PAD and the ToC reported in the ICR.
- The PDO was measured through four PDO outcome indicators: (i) farmers reached with agricultural assets or services (gender disaggregated - percentage); (ii) average annual yields of targeted commodities (metric tons per hectare or liters per cow per year, respectively); (iii) number of agro-processing enterprises rehabilitated or established with project support; and (iv) number of programs established to improve agricultural regional integration. These outcome indicators were relevant, measurable and connected to the PDO. However, appraisal targets proved to be ambitious.
- The RF included 15 intermediate results indicators (IRIs) to track the progress of the project activities towards achieving the PDO. Most IRIs were relevant, measurable and connected to the stated activities. However, the ICR (paragraph 75) noted that "the indicators for commercialization, regional integration, and technology transfer were difficult to measure or attribute to project interventions." Also, the RF lacked indicators to measure reduction in post-harvest losses and aflatoxin levels.
- The M&E design reflected a structured monitoring process that included baseline, mid-term, and endline surveys, complemented by routine PIU reporting and complementary evaluation of productivity results by implementing partners. Also, the design lacked a clear strategy with timelines for data collection, verification, and reporting for systematic tracking of data. Lastly, some project areas were not covered as the RF lacked relevant indicators as noted above.



b. M&E Implementation

- Implementation experienced delays in operationalizing the digital MIS platform which reduced the system's ability to provide robust evidence of progress and results. The MIS platform was finalized near project closing and only contained a list of beneficiaries. Also, tracking outputs and outcomes remained challenging due to the absence of a clear implementation strategy and limited capacity (ICR, paragraph 76).
- While project supervision reports flagged weaknesses in methodology and data reliability, no guidance was provided on conducting an impact assessment survey (ICR, paragraph 76). Also, evaluations by implementing partners to supplement M&E data were not carried out.
- An impact evaluation and two beneficiary satisfaction surveys were conducted, but the quality and reliability of data in those reports was not clear.
- During implementation, and as part of the project restructuring, targets for two PDO outcome indicators were revised down, five new IRIs were added with a focus on nutrition-smart practices and gender inclusion, three were removed due to dropped activities and/or difficulty of measurement, and three had their targets revised down due to reduced targets for irrigation, roads, and commercialization. These revisions of targets reduced the scope and narrowed the ambition and potential impact of project intervention. While these changes reflected changes on the ground, M&E weaknesses persisted.
- Overall, the M&E implementation was modest and experienced significant shortcomings. This negatively impacted the quality and reliability of M&E data produced.

c. M&E Utilization

- The late operationalization and limited functionality of the MIS significantly reduced its utility for adaptive management and learning during implementation. The ICR (paragraph 62) reported that "M&E lacked results orientation focusing on data availability rather than methodologies or outcome measurement."
- The M&E system supported the preparation of timely progress reports, which helped track basic indicators and compliance requirements. The ICR (paragraph 77) concluded that "these reports did not appear to translate into actionable insights for adaptive management or strategic decision-making."

Summary of M&E Quality. M&E design lacked a clear strategy with timelines for data collection, verification, and reporting for systematic tracking of data. Also, the RF lacked indicators to measure reduction in post-harvest losses and aflatoxin levels. M&E implementation was modest and experienced significant shortcomings due to the absence of a clear implementation strategy and limited capacity. This negatively impacted the quality and reliability of M&E data produced. Utilization was limited as project data and reports did not translate into actionable insights for adaptive management or strategic decision-making.

Therefore, the Quality of M&E is rated Modest.



M&E Quality Rating

Modest

10. Other Issues

a. Safeguards

- **Environmental Category and Safeguards.** The Project was classified as an environmental Category B (Partial assessment) as the environmental impacts of the project activities were likely to be moderate, site specific, reversible, and manageable to an acceptable level. The project triggered seven environmental and two social safeguard policies: Environmental Assessment (OP/BP 4.01), Natural Habitats (OP/BP 4.04), Forests (OP/BP 4.36), Pest Management (OP 4.09), Physical Cultural Resources (OP/BP 4.11), Safety of Dams (OP/BP 4.37), Projects on International Waterways (OP/BP 7.50), Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP (4.12), and Indigenous Peoples (OP/BP 4.10). A Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF), Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework (IPPF), Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) and Integrated Pest Management Plan (IPMP) were prepared, consulted upon in-country, and published in Burundi and on the World Bank's external website on February 9, 2017.
- **Compliance with the World Bank's safeguard policies.** A Grievance Redress Mechanism was implemented, but its rollout was delayed and most complaints related to grant eligibility and payment delays rather than compensation. Compliance was undermined by insufficient monitoring due to persistent vacancies in E&S specialist roles, and monitoring was absent for several months during major works, including the Kavimvira bridge and road rehabilitation. The WUAs were not created and strengthened. The AFLASAFE plant was built without prior ES studies, and audit recommendations remain unimplemented (ICR, paragraph 80). Lastly, the E&S roadmap was not followed, and the grace period budget for follow-up work was not granted. Overall, E&S compliance suffered from significant shortcomings.

b. Fiduciary Compliance

- **Financial Management (FM).** The ICR (paragraph 81) reported that "core fiduciary requirements were met, with external audits confirming adequate controls." Quarterly IFRs were submitted as required, and the project maintained a functioning FM system. However, funds flow and disbursements were significantly constrained late in implementation. The project closed with US\$64.15M disbursed (95%). US\$7.9M was cancelled, with remaining eligible expenditures planned for settlement during the grace period (July–October 2025). The FY2018/19 audit issued unqualified opinions on project financial statements, the DA, and Statements of Expenditure, and subsequent audits were completed and disclosed on time. FM performance was rated Satisfactory in the final ISR.
- **Procurement.** The project experienced persistent procurement challenges over the project implementation duration. Procurement weaknesses became more acute towards the project end. With the approach of project closure, there were no structured procurement plans or contingency measures for unfinished contracts or securing partially completed sites, contributing to unresolved risks and affecting outcome. According to the ICR (paragraph 82) "high staff turnover,



delays in hiring technical personnel, and weak planning consistently undermined effectiveness." This situation was exacerbated by Government-mandated salary reductions for technical staff, which resulted in repeated recruitment failures and vacancies. Consequently, this resulted in slow bid evaluations, contract management lapses, and incomplete documentation. Further, major infrastructure investments suffered from both external shocks and internal capacity gaps, including delayed approvals and Bank clearances, causing stalled works and, in some cases, abandonment of sites and materials. Procurement performance was rated Moderately Satisfactory in the final ISR, a rating that is questioned by this Review given the above-mentioned significant shortcomings.

c. Unintended impacts (Positive or Negative)

None were reported in the ICR.

d. Other

None were reported in the ICR.

11. Ratings

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

12. Lessons

The ICR included three lessons which are emphasized with some adaptation of language:

1. To ensure a successful outcome, projects in FCV environments require strong readiness, agile design, realistic cost estimates, prompt technical support, and clear exit strategies.

When infrastructure, markets, and enabling conditions are uncertain at appraisal, projects should have stronger readiness or embed adaptive mechanisms like contingency financing and criteria for fund reallocation. This project faced major underestimation of infrastructure (road, irrigation, bridge) costs, leading to multiple restructurings and budget shifts from commercialization to infrastructure. Exit strategies are equally critical; by arranging timely transfer of incomplete activities to other projects and ensuring payment of ESS compensation, helping sustain confidence, continuity, and trust.



2. Successful commercialization and agribusiness development in FCV contexts require addressing fragility through technical and institutional support, policy reforms, and infrastructure readiness before market interventions. This project fell short by not accounting for these gaps. Weak capacity, delays in infrastructure, and lack of enabling policies (e.g., clear regulations, incentives, and grant mechanisms) limited commercialization dropping of the youth-specific window. Many agribusinesses remain non-operational partly because of missing essentials like power and water, underscoring the need for greater responsiveness to FCV constraints.

3. Successful regional integration in FCV context requires strong institutional commitment, practical and flexible coordination, systematic monitoring, and effective technology and information exchange. The project's regional integration agenda through its sister project (P143307) demonstrated notable achievements, particularly in promoting regional collaboration in agricultural research, which accelerated technology transfer and reduced time and costs. However, advancing joint investment planning and regional trade was limited due to weak regional platforms, low ministerial engagement, and early project closure of DRC project.

13. Assessment Recommended?

No

14. Comments on Quality of ICR

- **Quality of Evidence.** The evidence base in the ICR was barely adequate to assess the project outcomes. The M&E implementation was challenging and there were concerns on the quality and reliability of the M&E data produced under the project.
- **Quality of Analysis.** The analysis of the project achievements was undermined by modest quality of M&E data.
- **Internal Consistency.** Various parts of the ICR were internally consistent and logically linked and integrated.
- **Lessons.** Lessons reflected the project experience and were based on evidence and analysis.
- **Consistency with guidelines.** The ICR used the standard structure defined in the Guidelines and used available evidence to the extent possible to justify the assigned ratings. A split rating was required to assess the outcome. While a split rating was not applied in the ICR, logical reasons were provided to justify this choice.
- **Conciseness.** Overall, the ICR was well written, concise yet thorough.

Summary of Quality of ICR Assessment. Overall, the ICR was well written. It candidly reported on most project shortcomings and noted key events that impacted implementation. The assessment of project outcomes was undermined by M&E limitations, which was beyond the control of the ICR team. The ICR reflected relevant lessons, and most sections were concise and reflected relevant information.

Therefore, the Quality of the ICR is rated Substantial.



a. Quality of ICR Rating
Substantial