Report Number: ICRR0024235

1. Project Data

Project ID	Project Name
P127743	BO Rural Alliances Project II
Country	**Practice Area(Lead)**
Bolivia	Agriculture and Food

L/C/TF Number(s)	Closing Date (Original)	Total Project Cost (USD)
IBRD-87350,IDA-51700	30-Nov-2017	145,290,448.60
Bank Approval Date	**Closing Date (Actual)**	
23-Oct-2012	31-Jul-2023	

	IBRD/IDA (USD)	Grants (USD)
Original Commitment	50,000,000.00	0.00
Revised Commitment	149,966,402.27	0.00
Actual	145,390,559.64	0.00

Prepared by	Reviewed by	ICR Review Coordinator	Group
Hassan Maher Amin Waly	Avjeet Singh	Avjeet Singh	IEGSD (Unit 4)

2. Project Objectives and Components

a. Objectives

This project is a follow-on operation to the Rural Alliances Project (PAR I), which tested the model for improving market access.

The Project Development Objective (PDO) of the Rural Alliances Project II (PAR II) as articulated in the Financing Agreement (FA, page 5) was identical to the one stated in the Project Appraisal Document (PAD, paragraph 14) and aimed to:

"Improve accessibility to markets* for small rural producers in the Selected Areas**."

*According to the ICR (footnote #4): ""accessibility to markets" is defined in transactional terms: improvements in product quantity and quality required to attract buyers and increase sales volumes and prices as well as sales venues open to producers. To achieve market access entails the convergence of a complex set of investments, methodologies, activities, services and supporting policies/strategies.

**Selected Areas were municipalities identified by the Ministry of Rural Development and Lands (MDRyT) based on potential to increase the productivity and market access of small-scale producers.

Parsing the PDO. The PDO will be parsed based on one Objective:

To improve accessibility to markets for small rural producers in the selected areas.

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

Yes

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

Yes

Date of Board Approval

24-Aug-2017

c. Will a split evaluation be undertaken?

No

d. Components

The PDO was supported by the following three components:

1. Institutional Strengthening (appraisal cost: US$3.79 million, actual cost: US$8.00 million-actual costs include PAR II-OP (International Development Association, IDA Credit) and PAR II-AF (World Bank Loan). This component financed the creation and strengthening of Rural Alliances (RA/subprojects) in the Selected Areas through four sub-components:

1.1. Communication and dissemination campaigns to inform local stakeholders of the Project's scope and rules.

1.2. Institutional capacity support to strengthen small rural Producer Organizations (POs) to form Rural Alliances and prepare investment plans, formalize their organizations, improve marketing and business skills, and prepare Rural Alliance Plans.

1.3. Capacity building of Technical Service Providers (TSP) and eligible Municipalities to support RAs, and creation of a TSP database at the Departmental Operating Unit (OUD) level of the Self-managed Productive Initiatives for Rural Development (EMPODERAR) with outreach to expand the number of available TSP.

1.4. Appraisal of Alliances via publication/dissemination of project activities including results of Calls-for-Proposals, the Rural Alliance Plans (RAP), and financial, social, technical and environmental evaluations. Most Alliances would focus on primary agricultural products. A Small Producer Organization (SPO) would comprise 25-40 production units, each producing a single product line.

2. Implementation of Rural Alliances (appraisal cost: US$52.05 million, actual cost: US$157.05 million-actual costs include PAR II-OP (International Development Association, IDA Credit) and PAR II-AF (World Bank Loan). This component financed: (a) Producer Organization sub-projects to implement the RAP via: (i) on-farm infrastructure (minor irrigation works, storage facilities, community centers for product processing, water harvesting structures); (ii) soil conservation measures (terracing, land leveling, watershed treatments); (iii) equipment, machinery, veterinary supplies, seeds and other agricultural inputs; and (iv) technical support for SPO's access to financial services, business management, markets and marketing, information technology, organic certification and other technical/productive services; and (b) Sub-projects supporting RA productive goals including: (i) Municipal sub-projects (rural road rehabilitation/improvement; small bridges; and works related to water, gas, electricity or other utility services), to be implemented by the Fondo Nacional de Inversión Productiva y Social (FPS); and (ii) support to Producer Organization Subprojects on procurement, financial and environmental aspects.

3. Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation (appraisal cost: US$8.70 million, actual cost: US$25.05 million-actual costs include PAR II-OP (International Development Association, IDA Credit) and PAR II-AF (World Bank Loan). This component financed EMPODERAR's preparation, implementation, supervision and auditing of the project, as well as implementation/supervision of the Environmental Management Framework (EMF) and Indigenous People's Framework (IPF); updating of the management information system (MIS) including design/implementation of a web-based system for tracking results indicators, and for surveys of citizen feedback; and technical studies on project-relevant themes (rural market opportunities and investment climate, and other studies as proposed by the client).

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

Project Cost. The estimated total cost for the project was US$64.54 million. The actual cost according to the ICR Data Sheet (page 2) was US$190.45 million. The difference between the appraisal cost and actual cost was due to an Additional Financing that the project received which was accompanied by an increase in counterpart funding (see below).

Financing. The project was financed through an IDA Credit worth US$50.00 million equivalent. The project also received Additional Financing (AF) in the amount of US$100.00 million. The total Bank financing was US$150.00 million. The actual amount disbursed was US$145.39 million, which included US$46.18 million of the original loan, and US$99.22 million of the AF (ICR Data Sheet, page 2).

Borrower Contribution. The borrower was expected to contribute US$14.54 million of counterpart funds. With the AF, this amount was revised upward to US$44.10 million. The actual amount was US$45.10 million (ICR Data Sheet, page 2).

Dates. The project was approved on October 23, 2012 and became effective six months later on May 9, 2013. the Mid-Term Review (MTR) was conducted on May 4, 2015, about two years after effectiveness which was in-line with PAD expectations (PAD, paragraph 37). The project was expected to close on November 30, 2017. The actual closing date was on July 31, 2023 or 5 years and eight months beyond the

original closing date. The project received four extensions to its project date in order to allow adequate time to complete all approved investments (ICR, paragraph 22). The project was restructured five times and received one additional financing as follows:

1. On August 24, 2017 (Level 1), when the amount disbursed was US$43.18 million. This restructuring was processed together with the approval of an Additional Financing (AF). According to the ICR (paragraph 17) "the AF sought to consolidate and scale up PAR II interventions, operational approach, and procedures. The Project's geographic area was expanded from 120 to all 339 municipalities nationwide in all nine departments, targeted an additional 30,030 rural households in around 768 new Rural Alliances, and intensified the investment focus on climate-resilient production systems." The restructuring included the application of new Safeguards policies: OP/BP 4.37 Safety of Dams and OP/BP 7.50 Projects on International Waterways, which were triggered due to the planned intensification of investment in modernized irrigation and water use efficiency which might potentially rely on storage capacity and efficient operation of existing dams and reservoirs for water supply. Changes also included revising the project's Results Framework (RF) to reflect the focus on climate resilience; and revised the institutional arrangements for municipal sub-projects.

2. On January 16, 2018 (Level 2), when the amount disbursed was US$46.12 million, in order to reallocate funds between disbursement categories, and extend the closing date from November 30, 2017, to March 31, 2018.

3. On March 28, 2018 (Level 2), when the amount disbursed was US$46.12 million, in order to extend the loan closing date from March 31, 2018, to June 30, 2018.

4. On September 27, 2021 (Level 2), when the amount disbursed was US$109.96 million, in order to extend the AF closing date from November 30, 2021, to November 30, 2022, and update the Loan disbursement estimates.

5. On November 19, 2022 (Level 2), when the amount disbursed was US$143.52 million, in order to reallocate funds between disbursement categories and extend the AF closing date from November 30, 2022, to July 31, 2023.

The AF increased the scope of the project as noted above and revised one PDO outcome target upwards, while reducing another PDO outcome target downwards. That said, the project exceeded its original and revised targets. Therefore, a split rating will not be applied to assess the overall project outcome.

3. Relevance of Objectives

Rationale

Context at Appraisal. Bolivia's total population at appraisal was 11.6 million, of which 33% were rural. About 28% of the total population were employed in agriculture, and among rural residents, 71%. Poverty and extreme poverty in rural areas reached 66.4% and 45.5% respectively, compared to 43.6% and 16.1% in urban areas and tended to affect men and women equally. Smallholder farmers experienced low productivity and high production costs. Factors contributing to low productivity included: unequal land distribution and extreme fragmentation of landholdings, restrictions on the sale and lease of

farmland, limited access to credit, soil erosion and low application of more advanced technologies and practices. The problem was further exacerbated by weak producer organizations which limited their power to negotiate input and output prices was limited, and the cost of providing them with technical assistance (TA) and market intelligence was high. This project sought to build on the successful experience of PAR I through reaching new producers and municipalities, and strengthen SPO's managerial capacity. Specifically, the project would support Productive Alliances to allow small farmer organizations and buyers to reduce risks and transaction costs by building trust between parties, increasing scale, reducing unit costs for commercial transactions, and implementing innovations.

Previous Bank Experience. The Bank supported the first phase of the Rural Alliance project in Bolivia. The experience and lessons learnt under the PAR I informed the design of PAR II. The project design also benefited from the experience of the Colombia Rural Productive Partnerships Project (P104567). Overall, the Bank was well positioned to design and support the implementation of PAR II.

Consistency with Bank Strategies. At appraisal, the PDO was in line with the World Bank Group's Country Partnership Strategy for Bolivia (CPS, FY2012-FY2015). The CPS was designed to respond to the Productive Bolivia pillar of the National Development Plan. PAR II was included under the Sustainable Productive Development results area of the CPS. It was expected to contribute significantly to meeting the goals of Sustainable Productive Development results area through promoting productive alliances and providing incentives to improve production in rural areas.

At completion, the PDO continued to be in line with the World Bank Group's Country Partnership Framework for Bolivia (CPF, FY2023-FY2026). Specifically, the project contributed to two of its three long-term, High-level Outcomes (HLO), namely: Increased Climate and Economic Resilience and Increased Income Earnings for Vulnerable Households. The CPF's Objective 1.1 aimed to improve management of climate-related risks, expanding engagement on climate change, and addressing its environmental, disaster risk, productive and infrastructure implications, all of which were important elements of PAR II design. Also Objective 2.1 sought to increase sustainable agricultural productivity, and Objective 2.2 sought improved connectivity which included connectivity to markets and other opportunities through transport and logistics infrastructure. In addition, the PDO was also in line with World Bank Group Climate Change Action Plan, 2021 to 2025 and was aligned with the findings and recommendations by the World Bank Group Country Private Sector Diagnostic (CPSD) for Bolivia. The project supported improved market access which was in line with the World Bank Group's climate change commitments and contributed to the WBG's Climate Change Action Plan goals: increasing the resilience of the food production system and supporting farmers with TA and fixed investments to increase their adaptive capacity and resilience to climate change impacts. The CPSD highlighted the importance of increased yields and crop intensity, and that low levels of collective action limit the market power and commercial potential of small farmers, which directly resonates with the project activities.

Consistency with the Government Strategies / Priorities. At appraisal, the PDO was in line with the Government's National Development Plan (NDP, 2006), where indigenous rights and development opportunities for the rural poor constituted fundamental elements of the plan. The NDP also emphasized the creation of greater productive opportunities through agricultural transformation, improved access to markets and better productive equipment and infrastructure. The PDO was also in line with the Government's sector plan for the Rural, Agrarian and Forestry Revolution which called for a move towards food security and sovereignty; deepening the contribution of agricultural and forestry production to

the livelihood of the population and the development of the country; and promoting the sustainable use of natural resources.

At completion, the PDO continued to be in line with Bolivia's General Economic and Social Development Plan (PGDES 2016-2020) and its related Integrated Development Plan for the Agro-livestock and Rural Sector (PSARDI, 2016-2020). PSARDI called for increasing agro-livestock and rural producers' incomes prioritizing the most vulnerable and providing them with the means and knowledge to enter markets sustainably and competitively. The project was aligned with PSARDI Policies 2, 3 and 5: agro-livestock technological innovation; sustainable management and use of soil, water, and vegetation for agro-livestock production; and agro-livestock production supporting food security and sovereignty. The PDO was also in line with Bolivia's Economic and Social Development Plan (PDES, 2021-2025) which sought national economic restoration by deepening the government's Economic and Social Community Productive model with growth driven by internal demand and public investment. The Plan included 10 strategic pillars linked to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). Specifically, the project contributed to Axis 3: Food Security and Sovereignty; Axis 5: Technology to Strengthen and Develop Productive Capacities and Potential; and Axis 8: Sustainable and Balanced Environment. The plan noted that Bolivia's smallholders, especially indigenous, continued to have limited access to local markets as a stable source of income, further emphasizing continued relevance of the PAR II PDO.

Summary of Relevance of Objectives Assessment. The PDO statement was clear, focused, and pitched at an adequate level of ambition given the Bank's experience and the envisioned outcomes. The PDO expressed a single, pivotal idea "access to markets" whose attribution derived from a complex set of integrated activities and investments supported under PAR II including: support to infrastructure; quality improvement of produce, all through an inclusive approach to ensure improved market access for indigenous groups and women. At completion, the PDO continued to be in line with the Bank strategy and the Government priorities as noted above. Also, the AF responded to the Government's new focus on climate resilience through supporting modernized irrigation and more efficient water use. Therefore, Relevance of Objectives is rated High.

Rating
High

4. Achievement of Objectives (Efficacy)

OBJECTIVE 1
Objective
To improve accessibility to markets for small rural producers in the selected areas.

Rationale
Theory of Change (ToC). To achieve the stated objective, the project supported two sets of activities:

1. Institutional strengthening including support for the creation and strengthening of Rural Alliances* in the selected areas; and developing the institutional capacity of small producer organizations to negotiate and manage new marketing arrangements with private sector actors. This would be achieved through financing a communication and dissemination campaign to inform potential stakeholders about the scope and rules of the Project through local workshops and mass-media outlets; strengthening of the institutional capacity of eligible Producer Organizations to form Rural Alliances and prepare investment plans; formalize their organizations; and improve their marketing and business skills. In addition, the project would support financing strengthening of the capacity of technical service providers and eligible municipalities to support the Rural Alliances. The project also would ensure that alliance plans were adequately appraised for financing.

*A Rural Alliance was defined as an association of small rural producer organizations and purchasers eligible for participation under the project in accordance with the provisions of the Operational Manual (PAD, paragraph 10).

2. Support the implementation of the Rural Alliances plans. The project would help alliance members to fulfill the specific agreements established in their respective alliance plans. This was expected to help Alliances achieve their commercial targets agreed by producers and buyers in their alliance plans; introduce technological innovations and improved environmental management in the production process of SPO members (irrigation, storage, processing, water harvesting and soil conservation, seeds, equipment, and veterinary service); access to follow-up credit from formal financial institutions; and implement complementary public infrastructure (rural roads, bridges, large scale irrigation sub-projects, water and energy services). Investments in public infrastructure were expected to improve physical market access and the irrigation investments would improve water availability and irrigation efficiency.

The expected outputs included: creation and consolidation of Rural Productive Alliances, development of viable alliance and investment plans, alliances trained and benefitting from technical support, alliance plans implemented and commercial relationships established, productive process benefiting from using innovative technologies and practices, Alliances have access to credit from financial institutions, and public infrastructure including modernized irrigation implemented.

The expected outcomes of the above-mentioned activities and outputs included: Increased production, sales and incomes of organized SPOs through Rural Alliances, SPOs using modernized business practices and production technologies, the supported SPOs/Alliances are organizationally stable, commercially viable, environmentally sustainable and climate resilient. All these activities would contribute to achieving the PDO of improving market accessibility.

Anticipated long-term Outcomes included: sustainable rural poverty reduction in the smallholder farming sector, economic growth and empowerment of the smallholder farming sector, enhanced climate resilience, improved food security, and formalized economic participation of rural indigenous peoples and women.

The achievement of the PDO was underpinned by the following five critical assumptions: 1. Trained technical service providers (TSPs) prepare/support viable alliance plans and their field implementation, 2. Culturally appropriate techniques and inclusive design increase participation of indigenous people and women, 3. SPOs accept and adopt improved farm technologies and packages, 4. SPOs are able to establish/manage marketing arrangements with private sector, and 5. Alliance plans able to incorporate technologically sophisticated, modernized irrigation and related investments under the AF.

Overall, the ToC reflected plausible links between the supported activities, outputs and expected outcomes. The ToC was used as a basis for developing the operation's results framework and it reflected a good balance between the complexity and clarity of the causal links. However, the activities related to improving climate resilience lacked relevant indicators to measure their impact. The PDO was aligned with the higher level objective of Bolivia's National Development Plan of reducing rural poverty by supporting greater productive opportunities through agricultural transformation, and improved access to markets. Finally, the stated critical assumptions were clear and realistic.

Outputs/Intermediate Results

Institutional Strengthening

- A total of 646 events were organized to formalize and train Producer Organizations (POs) (no target provided).
- 24,854 beneficiaries of POs attended formalization events (no target provided).
- 2,164 Alliances were evaluated and approved for signature (no target provided).
- 69,737 beneficiaries of SPO training/support for organization strengthening (no target provided).
- A total of 235 information events were organized for women's groups (no target provided).
- 18 Trainings (average) per Facilitator and Acompañante were provided (no target provided).
- 1,282 Producer Organizations received assistance to be formalized exceeding the original target of 300 and the revised target of 1,1150 (both targets exceeded).
- 1,643 Alliances signed financial agreements for project support exceeding the original target of 645 and the revised target of 1,200 (both targets exceeded).
- 1,413 SPOs received training and support for organization strengthening exceeding the target of 1,290 (target exceeded).
- 991 service providers (exceeding the original target of 477 and the revised target of 514) to SPOs benefited from capacity building to improve their knowledge of which 256 were female service providers substantially achieving the target of 300 females (target substantially achieved for females and exceeded for overall target).

Implementation of Rural Alliances

- 1,735 Integrated Investments Business Plans were supported for implementation out of 4,720 proposals received (no target provided).
- 87% of beneficiaries were satisfied with their results based on expected commercial outcomes/arrangements in Business Plans (20.7% well above expectations and 66.4% achieved as expected with an aggregate of 87%).
- The overall production volume increased by 57% due to the project support ranging from 42% to 61% depending on the ecological region.
- The production with the project support reached 488,955 tons compared to 312,231 tons without the project-which represents an increase of about 57%.
- 95% (1,561 out of 1,644) of Alliances had their sales exceeding business plan expectations (no target provided).
- 86% of business plans of the supported Alliances were implemented slightly exceeding the target of 85% (target slightly exceeded).

- 1,176 supported Alliances fulfilled their commercial aims in the framework of agreed arrangements exceeding the original target of 85 and the revised target of 661 (target exceeded).
- 86% of producer organizations obtained positive net incremental income from Alliance products exceeding the target of 80% (target exceeded).
- 91% of producer organizations whose leaders were periodically accountable to their members exceeding the target of 80% (target exceeded).
- 84 public investment sub-projects were executed exceeding the original target of 19 and the revised target of 52 (both targets exceeded). Seven local roads directly benefited 21 Alliances, which allowed producers to transport their products all year-round to the main urban centers, generating cost and time savings (ICR, paragraph 32). Improving local roads increased the quantities marketed compared to the without project situation, ranging from 420.5% for Llama meat to 478.6% for Quinoa (ICR, Table 5). Also, investments in 54 bridges benefited 125 Alliances and improved local marketing chains by permitting producers year-round access to passable roads even in the rainy season. According to the ICR (Table 6) the bridges supported by the project resulted in increasing the quantities of horticultural products (carrot, onion, potato, banana, tomato, plantain and peach) marketed compared to the without project situation, ranging from 156% for bananas to 498% for carrots, and bovine meat increased by 353%.
- 100% of Alliances applied environmental measures satisfactorily exceeding the target of 80% (target exceeded).
- 15,845 hectares (ha) were provided with improved irrigation investments (target achieved). The ICR (paragraph 40) reported that 820 Alliance sub-projects with on-farm irrigation used diverse water sources such as rivers, wells, slopes, dams, and reservoirs. By implementing more technically advanced irrigation (drip and sprinkler) on the plots of producer families and training producers how to manage these systems within the framework of their Alliance, irrigation water use efficiency improved on a total 10,821 ha for crops and livestock (forage production), increasing resilience to climate change. Beneficiary producers in areas adjacent to municipal off-farm irrigation schemes increased their production of selected crops - compared to a without-project situation - by an average of 177% for Corn, 628% for Tomato, 487% for potato, and 136% for dairy milk (ICR, table 7).

Notable achievements not directly captured by the Results Framework included:

- Annual average gross income of the production unit increased by US$2,139, or 40%, associated directly with improved conditions of production and commercialization.
- Average annual net income of the productive unit increased 59%.
- Labor income of primary occupation under PAR II-AF participants increased 53%, reflecting an average increase of US$1,179/year.
- Food security was increased: the impact evaluation showed that the treatment group’s value of own consumption increased 33% from an annual average of US$146 to US$179.
- The project significantly increased gross income from the main agricultural products supported: Potato (31%), Peach (31%), Grapes (138%), Coffee (44%) and Orange (137%) (ICR, paragraph 34).

Outcomes

By project completion, the following outcomes were achieved:

- Direct project beneficiaries of which female (households) reached 50,989 of which 17,846 were female-led (35%) exceeding the target of 46,434 (PDO Indicator # 1). Also, 21,010 households were beneficiaries of the 84 public investment sub-projects (ICR, paragraph 30).
- The average volume of sales of the products involved in the Alliances increased by 64% significantly exceeding the target of 35% (PDO Outcome Indicator # 2). According to the ICR (paragraph 30) the aggregate volume of sales per Alliance before their participation in PAR II was 279,370 tons, and with PAR II support it reached 459,002 tons. Also, the average increase in regional net income reached 137% of the amount programmed in the Alliance plans. Also, producers supported by the project averaged an annual income of US$3,418 compared to the control group's US$2,239 (ICR, paragraph 32).
- 97% of the producer organizations maintained or improved their commercial relations (Alliances) for at least two productive cycles exceeding the target of 85% (PDO Outcome Indicator # 3). The ICR reported that "improved product quality and timeliness, increased productivity and burgeoning organizational strength and professionalism as causal factors" that contributed to achieving this outcome. The ICR also reported that Alliances with the project support managed to reduce the production costs by an average of 20% (ICR, table 9).
- 91% of the members of beneficiary SPOs applied improved technologies/practices as defined in the business plans exceeding the target of 70% (PDO Outcome Indicator # 4). At the farm level, typical technology packages included: (a) Dairy: sprinkler irrigation, balanced rations, forage seeds, brush-cutters, cow stalls, pumps, and TA; (b) Peaches: anti-hail mesh, fumigation equipment, TA in peach management/production; (c) Potato: sprinkler irrigation, fumigation equipment, water tanks, motorized plows/attachments, productive TA and integrated pest management (MIP); (d) Flowers: greenhouses, water management, TA for flower production and marketing; (e) Onion: irrigation, fumigators, TA; (f) Coffee: plantation expansion, cultivation equipment, coffee drying equipment/infrastructure and TA; and (g) Grapes: intercropping of grapevines/organic vegetables, preparation of own bio-pesticides, drip irrigation, best practices TA (ICR. paragraph 39).

Summary of Efficacy Assessment. To achieve the PDO, the project supported the creation and strengthening of Rural Alliances. The project also provided technical support to the Alliances to increase their production and improve quality. In addition, the project supported infrastructure investments mainly roads and bridges, and financed improvements in irrigation systems and production technologies. The project exceeded its targets for the four PDO outcome indicators as noted above, and all targets for the intermediate results indicators were either achieved or exceeded. Based on the evidence provided in the ICR, it is clear that the project succeeded in improving market access (measured by production, sales, and income results) compared to non-beneficiaries, and that these results were statistically significant. Also, surveyed beneficiaries reported high levels of satisfaction with the support provided by the project through the alliances. The project also contributed to enhancing environmental sustainability of productive practices through supporting irrigation improvements and promoting improved production technologies. Therefore, the Efficacy with which the objective was achieved is rated High.

Rating
High

OVERALL EFFICACY

Rationale

Overall efficacy is rated High. The project exceeded its targets all of its four outcome targets, and met or exceeded all its targets for its intermediate results indicators. The impact evaluations for project and the additional financing further supported the results achieved and demonstrated that beneficiary POs increased their access to markets compared to non-beneficiaries, and that these results were statistically significant. This was measured by production volume, sales, and income across a wide range of products. Surveyed beneficiaries also reported high levels of satisfaction on set of 30 perception variables. The project also contributed to enhancing environmental sustainability of productive practices through supporting irrigation improvements and promoting improved production technologies.

Overall Efficacy Rating

High

5. Efficiency

Economic and Financial Analysis (EFA)

Ex-ante

- The overall project Financial and Economic Internal Rates of Return (IRR) were estimated at 32% and 38%, respectively. The financial and economic NPV would be US$51.8 million and US$61.2 million, respectively, at a 12% annual discount rate.
- The appraisal EFA was based on the assessment of financial and economic results of 140 alliances financed under PAR I.

Ex-post

- For the original project, the average economic internal rate of return (EIRR) was estimated at 24.9% which was lower than the 38% estimated at appraisal and for the AF the EIRR was estimated at 40.7% compared to 32% (AF Project Paper). For the original project, the average financial internal rate of return (FIRR) was estimated at 44% compared to 32% at appraisal and for the AF the FIRR was estimated at 63% compared to 29% (AF Project Paper). The EFA used a 12% discount rate.
- For the original project, the ex-post EIRR was lower than the ex-ante EIRR because the ex-post analysis only included the benefits of the Productive Alliances and the costs of the municipal sub-projects, but not their benefits due to the absence of information. While in the ex-ante EFA, the incremental benefits of the Productive Alliances and the Municipal sub-projects were considered (ICR, Annex 4).
- The economic analysis took all project costs into account and applied factors to convert financial prices to economic prices and the value of project-promoted emissions reductions and carbon sequestration. The financial analysis considered the incremental benefits generated by the increased production, diversification and commercialization of agricultural systems promoted by both stages.

- The economic value of emissions reduction and carbon sequestration was estimated at 5,292,665 tCO2eq over a 20-year period due to the implementation of project activities, which significantly exceeded the PAR II-AF appraisal estimate of 237,549 tCO2eq over 20 years.
- Implementation efficiency. The project closed 5 years and eight months beyond the original closing date to allow enough time to complete activities under the AF. The original project allocated about 19% of the resources received from the World Bank to finance the project Management (component 3). Despite scaling up activities nationwide and financing a significant number of much more complex investments in modern irrigation systems, the AF allocated only 12% to project management. According to the ICR (Annex 4) the amount allocated from component 3 to each sub-project under the original project was US$13,987 per sub-project, while under the AF this amount was reduced by 27% to US$10,222 per sub-project. However, the overall aggregate cost (original project + AF) of component 3 was 25% higher than the envisioned cost.

Summary of Efficiency Assessment. While the ex-post EIRR for the original project was lower than the ex-ante, it was still higher than the discount rate. The ex-post EIRR for the AF was higher than estimate reported in the AF project paper. The ICR provided a plausible reason for the lower ex-post EIRR for the original project. Overall, the EFA in the ICR was detailed enough and provided an adequate justification for the project investments. Therefore, Efficiency is rated Substantial.

Efficiency Rating

Substantial

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

	Rate Available?	Point value (%)	*Coverage/Scope (%)
Appraisal	✓	38.00	0 ☑ Not Applicable
ICR Estimate		0	0 ☐ Not Applicable

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

6. Outcome

Relevance of Objectives was rated High. Over Efficacy was rated High. The project exceeded its targets for all four PDO outcome indicators, and met or exceeded all its targets for the 14 intermediate results indicators. The evidence reported in the ICR including from impact evaluation studies for the original project and the additional financing demonstrated that beneficiary POs increased their access to markets (measured by production, sales, and income results) compared to non-beneficiaries, and that these results were statistically significant. Surveyed beneficiaries also reported high levels of satisfaction with the support provided by the project through the alliances. Efficiency was rated Substantial. The ex-post EIRR for the original project was lower than the ex-ante (24.9% vs 38%), but was still higher than the discount rate (12%). The ex-post EIRR for

the AF was higher than estimate reported in the AF project paper (40.7% vs 32%). The ICR provided a plausible reason for the lower ex-post EIRR for the original project.

Based on the assigned ratings for the three outcome criteria, the project Outcome is rated Highly Satisfactory.

a. Outcome Rating
Highly Satisfactory

7. Risk to Development Outcome

The following risks could potentially impact the Development Outcome:

1. Stakeholder commitment risk. Producer organizations are not guaranteed to continue working with the original buyers nor within original Alliances, but this could be a positive development. A study by IEG (Project Performance Assessment Report: Bolivia Rural Alliances Project, 2018) after the closure of PAR I found that the collapse of Alliances was mainly because the SPO partnered with a new buyer or reverted to the free market in lieu of forming a new Alliance. Sellers' price dissatisfaction was the main catalyst: higher spot market prices; climate-related commodity price shocks; and/or an SPO's inability to meet volume targets, either because the buyer was unable to afford the seller's total offering, or the seller could not meet quality standards. Alliance age was also a factor: SPOs with older Alliances were more likely to switch buyers. Alliance survival also depended on the trust between seller and buyer rather than signed agreements, which are generally not legally enforceable. Finally, the Alliance was never intended as an end, per se: If the knowledge, skills, and experience created by the Alliance lead to a sustained improvement in producer incomes due to improved market access, these outcome could outlive the demise of the Alliance. SPOs showed strong awareness that the Alliances lead to higher incomes, and point to improved product quality, and increased productivity and organizational strength as causal factors. Further research into market dynamics on SPO longevity and commercial arrangement is warranted (ICR, paragraph 84).

2. Institutional risk. The SPO's sustainability depends on its capability to increase its membership post-project. IEG found that this can vary regionally, and by crop and livestock activity/focus. Producers during the COVID-19 period had difficulty coming up with their counterpart contribution to the Alliance while the severe drought of 2016 disrupted production and the time producers could devote to their Alliance subproject. These factors, along with lack of experience, weakened some Alliances' viability and sustainability and were largely beyond the Project's control. SPO sustainability is also responsive to producers' perception that working collectively, acquiring new skills and knowledge, and exploiting cost savings on group purchase of inputs including TA, have proven, tangible, material advantages (ICR, paragraph 84).

3. Financial risk. The cessation of project funding and absence of funding from other sources post-project is a perennial risk. The much larger follow-on PAR III (US$300 million) finances similar investments nationwide using a two-tiered approach: productive alliances and community alliances. PAR III is designed to continue and expand the benefits of PAR I and II. In terms of other sources, the PAR II Credit pilot was intended to test and facilitate SPO access to formal commercial bank financing. Despite 47 SPO-based PAR II investments in the Model II credit scheme, overall demand was low and results inconclusive; PAR III is not financing its scale-up. Some producers organize their own internal credit arrangements and SPO loan facilitation for members seems to be prevalent. IEG (2018) also reported that in some regions, banks reach out to SPOs, trusting their creditworthiness and capacity to supervise/ensure repayment. Overall, SPOs still

face constraints in accessing financing for basic or complementary, expansion-related activities and the credit pilot did not achieve the envisioned results.

4. Environmental risk. Climate change continues to an intensifying risk. Bolivia is already experiencing the effects of greater climate variability and more extreme climate events. The Global Climate Risk Index ranks Bolivia number 10 of 178 countries in terms of impacts of climate-related hazards. With just 11% of cultivated land under irrigation, droughts pose a significant threat to the livelihoods of vulnerable farmers practicing rainfed agriculture (ICR, paragraph 84). While the project supported modernized irrigation on 15,845 ha, more needs to be done and the costs are comparatively high.

5. Technical risk. The risk that the larger municipal systems will not be adequately maintained is mitigated by the two-pronged TA delivered by the Acompañantes covering the infrastructure itself and the productive side. Technical Service Providers prepared a maintenance manual for each system which entailed collecting a management fee from the SPO, and designating persons responsible for the system. PAR III will invest significantly more resources in public infrastructure (US$113 million) including investments promoting adaptation to climate change through climate-resilient, resource-efficient, and energy-efficient infrastructure including irrigation.

8. Assessment of Bank Performance

a. Quality-at-Entry

- **Strategic Relevance and Approach.** The project was strategically relevant and in line with the Government priorities. The PDO was also in line with the Bank strategies (see Section 3 for details). The project was expected to help Bolivia support Productive Alliances to improve market access for small farmer organizations. This was in line with Government's aim to increase agro-livestock and rural producers' incomes and provide them with the means and knowledge to enter markets sustainably and competitively. PAR II also complemented the Community Investment in Rural Areas Project (PICAR, P107137) serving the very poorest rural communities and municipalities with investments in basic infrastructure and services and using a classic Community Driven Development approach.
- **Technical, Financial and Economic Aspects.** The project was the second phase of three projects to support rural alliances in Bolivia. Project preparation was managed by the PAR I Task Team Leader ensuring a smooth transition into the follow-on operation. The project design featured a clear PDO that was based on a a single, pivotal idea "access to markets" whose attribution was derived from a complex set of integrated activities and investments supported under PAR II. The project followed the same template and implementation approach of its successful predecessor project, PAR I. While the project design was complex, it reflected clearly structured components with reasonable implementation sequencing and timing. The PAD reflected an adequate targeting criteria that was further refined under the AF to combine poverty and territoriality. Finally, the economic and financial analysis in the PAD was detailed enough and provided adequate justification for the project investments.

- **Poverty, Gender, and Social Development Aspects.** The project aimed to help small farmers and those residing in poor indigenous communities. The project activities were expected to reduce rural poverty. The project design featured a wide range of targeted activities to women, including radio messages in indigenous languages at adequate times, separate workshops for women and women's groups, more intensive technical assistance during the whole alliance cycle, and targeting women in leadership training activities. The project design also used a social screening process to ensure indigenous beneficiaries receive targeted support as needed and were accounted for
properly. In addition, project deign featured activities specifically targeting indigenous peoples.
- **Environmental and Fiduciary Aspects.** Relevant environmental and social safeguards were identified at appraisal. The environmental aspects reflected the experience gained and lessons learned under PAR I. The PAD(Annex 3) included detailed information on the environmental management of the project. Fiduciary was under the responsibility of EMPODERAR which gained sound operational experience under PAR I. The PAD reflected an adequate analysis of the financial and procurement capacity of EMPODERAR.
- **Implementation Arrangements.** The Project was implemented by the Ministry of Rural Development and Land through EMPODERAR, a deconcentrated unit with operational autonomy that has been built around PAR I. EMPODERAR has a National Coordinating Unit (NCU) and dedicated Regional Operational Units (ROUs) which were strengthened in order to manage both PAR I and other projects financed by different sources. EMPODERAR implemented PAR
I successfully and demonstrated adequate fiduciary and operating capacity, which put it on a strong foundation to implement PAR II.
- **Risk Assessment.** Six main risk areas were identified at appraisal with the overall risk rated Moderate. The risk related to the project was rated Substantial. This reflected national political, governance and institutional concerns, combined with a fiduciary risk that stemmed from the decentralized procurement approach-where the project relied on the transfer of funds to producer organizations with usually weak or no capacity for fund and sub-project administration. This would be mitigated through the use of Government disbursement systems in combination with a solid Management Information System to permit an agile and smooth flow of funds to beneficiaries. Also, capacity building at all levels was expected to improve performance of producer organizations.
- **M&E Arrangements.** EMPODERAR had a comprehensive and functioning M&E system that was used throughout the implementation of the project. The M&E system was based on a Georeferenced Management Information System (GMIS) which was used to plan, monitor and control
implementation during the alliance cycle. Also, M&E included an adequately designed Results Framework that reflected a set of indicators of adequate relevance, coverage, and measurability to track the project activities and assess the achievement of its PDO.

Summary of Quality-at-Entry (QAE) Assessment. The project was strategically relevant. Design included a clear PDO that was supported by relevant activities. Environmental and fiduciary aspects were adequate. Implementation arrangements relied on established institutions under PAR I. Risk identification was thorough and reflected relevant mitigation measures. M&E arrangements were adequate. Overall, Quality at Entry is rated Satisfactory.

Quality-at-Entry Rating
Satisfactory

b. Quality of supervision

- The Bank conducted 21 implementation support missions over the duration of the project implementation. Bank supervision missions were conducted every six months. However from 2020 to 2022, all Bank supervision was virtual due to COVID-19 lockdowns and travel restrictions.
- The project experienced a moderate turnover of Bank Task Team Leadership (TTL). The TTL who prepared and supervised PAR I prepared and launched supervision of PAR II. From 2014 to closing July 31, 2023, the Project had three TTLs, the third of which also prepared the follow-on PAR III. PAR II implementation benefited from a solid Bank team combined with continuity of project leadership in EMPODERAR. This supported the project technically, operationally, and institutionally. The Bank team in co-operation with FAO provided high-quality technical inputs to support modernized irrigation activities under the AF.
- The Bank supervision focused on development impact and compliance. The Bank ensured consolidation and continuity of PAR I's established M&E model, and adjusted RF Indicators as deemed necessary. However, modifying the PDO was not possible due to the borrower's resistance.
- The MTR (2015) revealed that the average cost of sub-projects was higher than anticipated and emphasized the need for additional financing. the Bank responded to the priorities of a new Bolivian Government including expanded national coverage of PAR II and acute, demonstrated climate vulnerability following the drought in 2016, which impacted 177,000 families.
- With the political transition on 2019, the new Government interfered in the staffing and operations of the project. According to the ICR (paragraph 63) the "new administration moved to replace experienced, trained project staff from both the national and regional offices, including the Project's National Coordinator." In response, the Bank adopted a strong fiduciary position stressing the Legal Agreement and Operational Manual requirements for the hiring and replacement of project staff. To ensure fiduciary clarity as the project transitioned to new management, the Bank requested IFRs through the date of the project coordinator's resignation, and intensified support to ensure the rapid execution of the external audit and ex-post procurement review.
- In response to the COVID-19 pandemic conditions, a survey in 2020 of beneficiaries with approved Alliances revealed that 15% of SPOs would be unable to fulfill their cash counterpart obligations due to COVID-related setbacks. The Bank worked with EMPODERAR to find solutions which included drawing on an extended portfolio of approved subprojects and in some cases substituting investments likely to implement rapidly.

Summary of Quality of Supervision Assessment. The Bank task team successfully guided the implementation of the project against political and environmental challenges, including the COVID pandemic. The Bank team also oversaw the government's request for additional financing and successfully expanded the project scope. Overall, the Quality of Supervision is rated Satisfactory.

Based on the assigned ratings to QAE and Quality of Supervision, the Overall Bank Performance is rated Satisfactory.

Quality of Supervision Rating
Satisfactory

Overall Bank Performance Rating
Satisfactory

9. M&E Design, Implementation, & Utilization

a. M&E Design

- M&E design included a concise PDO that indicated the primary targeted group and the change expected from the project interventions, and focused on an outcome achievable within the project lifetime.
- The success in achieving the PDO was measured through three PDO outcome indicators: 1. Percentage increase in the average volume of sales of the product(s) involved in the alliances; 2. Proportion of producer organizations that register income and costs, and are accountable to their members; and 3. Proportion of producer organizations that maintain or improve their commercial relations (in alliances) for at least two productive cycles. Indicators 1 and 3 were directly connected to the PDO, measurable and reflected reasonable targets. Indicator 2 was dropped as part of the AF because it was redundant with an intermediate results indicator.
- The AF added three new PDO Indicators: (a) Members of beneficiary SPOs that apply improved technologies/practices as defined in the Business Plans; (b) Direct project beneficiaries" of which "Female beneficiaries"; and (c) Beneficiaries of public investment sub-projects" (households/not disaggregated). The new indicators reflected contextual and implementation realities, and improved indicator coverage of key new investment activities supported under the AF.
- The original RF included 15 intermediate results indicators (IRIs) to track the progress of the different project activities. The IRIs were measurable, reflected reasonable targets, and were connected to the project activities. The AF added five new IRIs to reflect increased investment in climate resilience and adoption of climate-smart practices and technologies: (i) Alliances that apply environmental measures satisfactorily; (ii) Area provided with improved irrigation investments; (iii) Service providers to SPOs that benefit from capacity building to improve their knowledge; (iv) Business Plans of supported Alliances that are duly implemented; and (v) Management Geo-referencing Information System improved and operating.
- Overall, M&E design benefited from established arrangements under PAR I. It also included a detailed Results Framework that comprised indicators of sufficient relevance, coverage, and measurability to track the project activities and gauge the achievement of its PDO. While the design changes introduced under the AF were relevant and adequately tracked/measured most of the new activities, the RF could have benefited from the inclusion of relevant indicators to better assess the benefits of Climate-Smart Agriculture. For example: the improvement in water-use efficiency; the increase in agricultural productivity for targeted crops; and farmers' adoption of improved agricultural technology and repeat application of those technologies (source: direct communication with the project team).

b. M&E Implementation

- M&E implementation under PAR II benefited from a comprehensive, well-functioning and consolidated monitoring system from its predecessor project (PAR I). Monitoring was based on the Geo-referenced Management Information System (SIGG) for planning, monitoring, and controlling implementation of the Alliance preparation and investment cycle, including SPO procurement plans, and for reporting on process and Results Framework Indicators.
- By the time of the AF, the PAR I system was gradually substituted by a new information system linked to a process of decentralization and automation of monitoring, with almost immediate data input. This enabled the Project to gauge implementation status in real time.
- As noted above, the AF adjusted the RF substantively and quantitatively. These adjustments enhanced the RF by improving relevance, measurability, and realism.
- Mid-Term and IE studies (for the OP and AF) were delivered on time. Studies benefited from a large sample of treatment and well-selected control groups consolidating and further validating the body of sound evidence for project achievement now available on the Bolivian Rural Alliance operations.
- Several rounds of beneficiary assessments closed the loop on citizen engagement, addressing the corporate commitment.
- Overall, M&E implementation was sound and enough data was collected to allow an adequate assessment of the PDO.

c. M&E Utilization

- M&E utilization was evident in the effective use of Monitoring data and evaluation products to inform knowledge-based decision-making by the project management. The MTR of the original project provided relevant information that informed the management decision to pursue additional financing.
- M&E data also enabled the project to plan, monitor and control project implementation, to support preparation of the AF and project restructurings. Furthermore, M&E data provided the basis for the preparation of the Bank’s ICR, the Borrower’s IE studies, the Borrower Completion Report (BRCR), and the follow -on operation (PAR III).

Summary of M&E Quality. M&E design benefited from established arrangements under PAR I. It also included a detailed Results Framework that comprised indicators of sufficient relevance, coverage, and measurability to gauge project achievement of its PDO. While the RF was further refined under the AF to reflect new activities and increased coverage, it could have benefited from better assessment of the benefits of Climate-Smart Agriculture. M&E implementation was effective and collected enough data to allow an adequate assessment of the PDO. Finally, M&E utilization was evident in management decisions, informing project restructurings and AF, and preparation of the Bank's ICR and the follow-on operation. Finally, the ICR (paragraph 72) noted that the M&E system established under PAR II "enabled a virtually seamless transition of M&E into the follow-on PAR III, under implementation since 2022." Therefore, M&E Quality is rated Substantial due to moderate shortcomings pertaining to the design of M&E under the AF.

M&E Quality Rating
Substantial

10. Other Issues

a. Safeguards

- **Environmental Category and Safeguards.** This project was classified as Category B since no large-scale impacts were expected given the limited, community-based nature of the project activities. The original project triggered five Environmental Safeguards policies: Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01, Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04, Forests OP/BP 4.36, Pest Management OP 4.09, and Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11; and two Social Safeguards policies: Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10, and Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12. The AF added two policies: Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50, and Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37. According to the ICR (paragraph 21) the afore-mentioned safeguards under the AF were triggered because of "the planned intensification of investment in modernized irrigation and water use efficiency which might potentially rely on storage capacity and efficient operation of existing dams and reservoirs for water supply."
- **Compliance with Environmental and Social Safeguards.** The ICR did not provide an explicit statement on the compliance of the project with the triggered safeguard policies. The ICR (paragraph 74) reported that environmental safeguards compliance ratings were uniformly Satisfactory until 2019 when downgraded to Moderately Satisfactory (MS) for Environmental Assessment (OP/BP 4.01), Forests (OP/BP 4.36) and Pest Management (OP 4.09). After the successful implementation of an Action Plan, ratings were restored to Satisfactory in June 2020. However, in 2023 the project's compliance for OP 4.01 (Environmental Assessment), OP 4.36 (Forests) was downgraded again in relation to an exclusion list in six municipal bridge construction and road improvement sub-projects (ICR, paragraph 77). The project had a Satisfactory compliance record for implementation of Social Safeguards policies, except in 2023 where the compliance rating for Indigenous Peoples (OP/BP 4.10) was downgraded due to inadequate consultations with minority IP in one area (ICR, paragraph 77).

b. Fiduciary Compliance

- **Financial Management (FM).** FM performance benefited from sound arrangements by EMPODERAR. The ICR (paragraph 79) reported that Interim Financial Reports (IFR) were submitted on time and without qualifications, and external audits were timely and Unqualified. In June 2020 transfer of resources from the Ministry of Economy and Public Finance (MEFP) to Alliances/beneficiary SPO were delayed. This resulted in low disbursements and a significant backlog of unfinished Alliance sub-projects. The disbursement lag and associated delays in physical implementation were further impacted due to disruption of technical staffing and overall project coordination challenges. FM performance was rated Satisfactory in the final ISR.
- **Procurement.** The Bank fiduciary staff trained 40 EMPODERAR staff in the Bank's procurement guidelines. Procurement activities experienced challenges due to the geographic dispersion of POs in rural areas which impacted the availability/supply of goods and technical services with the

specifications required by Alliances. Also, the migration of the PAR II Procurement Plan into STEP (Systematic Tracking of Exchanges in Procurement) under the AF experienced delays. The ICR (paragraph 78) reported that there was no evidence of mis-procurement. Procurement performance was rated Satisfactory in the final ISR.

c. Unintended impacts (Positive or Negative)

None.

d. Other

None.

11. Ratings

Ratings	ICR	IEG	Reason for Disagreements/Comment
Outcome	Highly Satisfactory	Highly Satisfactory	
Bank Performance	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	
Quality of M&E	High	Substantial	The AF M&E design had moderate shortcomings.
Quality of ICR	---	High	

12. Lessons

The ICR included eight lessons. The following three lessons are emphasized:

1. Adequate funding sources need to be identified to fund complementary municipal public infrastructure investments in roads, bridges, and irrigation systems, which are crucial to improve small producers' production and sales. PAR III accordingly includes municipal investments focused on climate resilient, resource-efficient, and energy-efficient infrastructure. However, given the varying levels of municipal fiscal capacity in Bolivia, –the requirement for municipal cash counterpart contribution can severely limit participation in more vulnerable areas of the country. Alternative funding sources are needed for municipalities with pressing need for such infrastructure to enable their participation. Options might include up-front O&M agreements in lieu of cash contributions, a sliding scale of contributions or, in the neediest cases, the Project's payment of 100% of infrastructure cost bearing in mind potential sustainability issues. While tangible contributions in cash are consistent with the principle of subsidiarity, thus avoiding potential distortions in a grant-based approach, solutions are needed to include poorer municipalities.

2. An institutionalized, well-designed, and well-executed M&E allows timely, informed decision-making. The project's Geo-referenced Management Information System (SIGG), used to plan, monitor, report and control project implementation permitted timely, informed decision-making, and resulted in a large pool of good quality data invaluable for the BCR, ICR and design/preparation of the follow-on PAR III. The Acompañantes played a crucial role in data collection and field input. Similarly, EMPODERAR has embraced high-quality, well-planned, and systematic IE with baselines, enabling repeat validation of the project methodology and approach over time and the confidence to innovate within an established and successful framework of support to SPO. The project's approach to M&E demonstrates that establishing and sustaining sound M&E practices and systems, and working with proven M&E professionals, pays off and merits continued advocacy to sector teams and project leadership.

3. The Alliance model can generate a "triple win" by increasing production, decreasing the carbon footprint, and building resilience. The project's experience demonstrated that the combination of TA to adopt climate-smart agricultural technologies and practices, fixed investments to increase producers' adaptive capacity, and ample resources for larger-scale municipal infrastructure explicitly designed to combat/mitigate climate events, created a more resilient food production system with transformative and sustainable social and economic benefits. For future projects, climate resilience objectives could be considered to be explicitly stated in project PDOs and supported by activities capable of maximizing such impacts.

13. Assessment Recommended?

No

14. Comments on Quality of ICR

- Quality of Evidence. The ICR reflected a strong evidence base to assess the project outcomes.
- Results Orientation. The ICR used the available M&E data and supplemental evidence from impact evaluation studies to justify the achievement of the PDO.
- Quality of Analysis. The ICR assessment of outcomes reflected a good balance between achievements on the ground and achieving outcome targets. The ICR also included a detailed EFA that justified the project investments.
- 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 justify the assigned ratings. However, the section on environmental and social compliance lacked an explicit statement on the compliance of the project with World Bank Safeguard policies.
- Conciseness. Overall, the ICR provided a concise coverage of project activities, and candidly reported on most shortcomings.

Summary of the Quality of ICR Assessment. The ICR was well-written, as it provided a concise yet thorough coverage of different aspects of the project. It adequately used the evidence base to assess the achievement of the PDO. The lessons drawn by the ICR were relevant. Overall, the Quality of the ICR is rated High.

a. Quality of ICR Rating
High