

# PROJECT PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT REPORT

CÔTE D'IVOIRE

# Agriculture Sector Support Project

Report No. 178814

FEBRUARY 3, 2023



**IEG**  
INDEPENDENT  
EVALUATION GROUP

**WORLD BANK GROUP**  
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**Report No.: 178814**

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**Côte d'Ivoire**

**Agriculture Sector Support Project  
(IDA-52970; IDA-H8750)**

February 3, 2023

Finance, Private Sector, Infrastructure, and Sustainable Development

*Independent Evaluation Group*

# Abbreviations

AFD	French Development Agency
ANADER	National Rural Support Agency
CNRA	National Agricultural Research Center
DOPA	Department of Agricultural Professional Organizations
FIRCA	Interprofessional Fund for Agricultural Research and Advisory Services
FY	fiscal year
IPO	interprofessional organization
MINADER	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
NAIP	National Agricultural Investment Plan
PAD	Project Appraisal Document
PCU	Project Coordination Unit
PDO	project development objective
PPAR	Project Performance Assessment Report
PPP	public-private partnership
PSAC	Agriculture Sector Support Project

*All dollar amounts are US dollars unless otherwise indicated.*

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*Note:* IEG = Independent Evaluation Group; PPAR = Project Performance Assessment Report.

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## Data

This is a Project Performance Assessment Report by the Independent Evaluation Group of the World Bank Group on the Côte d'Ivoire Agriculture Sector Support Project (P119308). This instrument and the methodology for this evaluation are discussed in appendix C. Following standard Independent Evaluation Group procedure, copies of the draft Project Performance Assessment Report were shared with relevant government officials for their review and comment; no comments were received.

### Agriculture Sector Support Project (P119308)

#### Basic Data

Country	Côte d'Ivoire	World Bank financing commitment	US\$50.0 million
Global Practice	Agriculture and Food	Actual project cost	US\$50.0 million
Project name	Agriculture Sector Support Project	Expected project total cost	US\$65.8 million
Project ID	P119308	Actual amount disbursed	US\$49.8 million
Financing instrument	Investment project financing	Environmental assessment category	B
Financing source	International Development Association		

#### Dates

Event	Original Date	Actual Date
Approval	August 8, 2013	August 8, 2013
Effectiveness	November 1, 2013	May 5, 2014
Restructuring		October 24, 2017
Mid-Term Review		May 16, 2016
Closing	October 31, 2017	June 29, 2018

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# Summary

## Background and Description

Côte d’Ivoire has experienced strong economic growth since 2012, rebounding after three “lost decades” of political instability, armed conflicts, and below historical average export prices. Agriculture, particularly the value of cash crop exports, has strongly driven this economic growth. However, the cash crop sector continues to face constraints, including low productivity, weak value chain development, high dependence on cocoa exports, and degraded infrastructure.

The Agriculture Sector Support Project (PSAC) in Côte d’Ivoire was conceived in 2010–12 to support government reforms to achieve a more competitive, sustainable, and private sector–led cash crop sector and to ensure sustained increases in producers’ incomes. The PSAC focused on Côte d’Ivoire’s five key export commodities: cocoa, rubber, oil palm, cotton, and cashew nuts. It supported value chain development for these commodities through three strategic pathways: (i) improving production technologies and smallholder farmer access to them, (ii) improving smallholder farmer access to markets, and (iii) enhancing value chain governance. An integrated package of productivity, marketing, and institutional interventions was implemented for each commodity as a pilot in its most important or representative production region.

The PSAC fostered and took place in a public-private partnership, with implementation and co-financing responsibilities shared among central and regional governments, along with commodity-specific interprofessional organizations (IPOs) and state councils. These were further supported by parastatal research and extension structures.

## Design and Preparation

### What Worked

The PSAC’s design allowed it to increase the impact of relevant ongoing activities in Côte d’Ivoire and reinforced existing institutional mechanisms. The PSAC built on various past agricultural support projects in Côte d’Ivoire and the subregion, while aligning with the contemporary agricultural policy. It adequately combined public and private financing resources to multiply the impact of relevant ongoing activities on strengthening value chains. Furthermore, the project optimized involving public, private, and cooperative institutions by capitalizing on existing working modes and role distributions among them. It reinforced existing partnerships and social cohesion and helped clarify their respective operational and administrative roles.



The project used an integrated approach within a pilot. The PSAC concentrated its activities in space and time so it could provide all fundamentals for coherent value chain development—that is, productivity, marketing, and institutional support—and reinforce the capacity of all actors involved. In view of the limited financial resources and fragile postcrisis context at appraisal, this pilot provided an integrated intervention package in confined areas that was appropriate for identifying the most promising interventions and lessons for progressive expansion.

### **What Didn't Work**

The project was overly ambitious given its limited implementation period and budget, which was compounded by the lack of a rigorous and systematic strategy for capitalizing on achievements after project closure. The scope of three intervention pathways, applied to five of the largest agricultural subsectors in a fragile postcrisis context, constituted an unrealistic challenge for a project duration of only four to five years. Moreover, despite the PSAC being designed as a pilot, the Project Appraisal Document did not propose any strategies or mechanisms for integrating results into national structures or for extending and multiplying activities after project closure. It would eventually lead to very limited to no follow-up on successful activities.

The project was especially overambitious in the extent to which it could improve value chain governance for multiple reasons. First, the PSAC applied a reductionist approach to institutional development and good governance. It lacked a structured, multilayered, rigorous approach with detailed, systematic methods for institutional reinforcement across all stakeholders. In addition, the monitoring framework insufficiently specified desired, quantifiable, sector-specific outcomes. This resulted in ad hoc approaches for reinforcing IPOs and cooperatives during project implementation, with varying degrees of success and very limited insight on actual achievements. Second, the project underestimated the duration of support required to enhance IPO capacities, with only half of them being accredited by project closure. Third, limited government commitment and buy-in contrasted sharply with World Bank ambition on what could be achieved in terms of institutional development.

## **Implementation and Supervision**

### **What Worked**

The World Bank demonstrated flexible management and adequate responsiveness to project challenges. First, the Mid-Term Review considered the actual difficulties in the field and the successes of comparable operations to restructure the project in a realistic manner, abandoning unsuccessful subcomponents and reallocating funds to strengthen or expand healthy operations. This impacted very positively on project implementation,

disbursements, and achievements. Second, the PSAC also allowed for experimentation on new and effective technical innovations, methods, procedures, and tools, beyond what was foreseen at design.

### **What Didn't Work**

Project internalization at government level was weak. The envisaged technical focal point team within the government was never operational. The project steering committee was largely dysfunctional. Despite the Project Appraisal Document recognizing the government's limited capacities in terms of staffing and financial resources, PSAC support to public sector capacity building was relatively limited, which likely further contributed to weak government internalization.

Project implementation was severely delayed in the first two years, in turn leading to a hasty or incomplete implementation of some activities toward the end of the project. Slow implementation was a result of various factors: First, project internalization was weak at government level. Second, most of the Project Coordination Unit members had not participated in the project preparation and hence required time to understand and own the philosophy, objectives, and programming of the project. Third, the demarcation of the roles and powers of the different stakeholders was initially unclear.

## **Results**

### **What Worked**

The PSAC implemented highly relevant and effective activities on improving productivity and increasing market access. First, productivity enhancements took the demands of producers, the private agro-industrial and export sector, and the state into account. Productivity objectives were largely achieved, based on significant technology adoption rates by farmers for all commodities. This happened, most notably, through establishing or reinforcing the infrastructure, organizational arrangements, and capacity of implementing agencies for producing and disseminating improved planting material—a system that was generally still in place at the time of this assessment. Second, regarding increasing market access, the project exceeded targets for rural road maintenance and rehabilitation, while also laying a solid basis for developing a national strategy for road maintenance and rehabilitation.

The PSAC has significantly reinforced the capacity and functioning of IPOs (and state councils) across the agricultural commodity sectors. Two IPOs were officially accredited during project implementation, and two more after project closure. IPO and council management teams were professionalized by reinforcing their coordination, procurement, and technical capacities, with reinforced capacities largely still in place to

date. In turn, this induced a positive evolution in the perception of IPOs, which are becoming widely recognized as reliable development partners.

### **What Didn't Work**

The PSAC fell short in strengthening producer cooperatives. At the time of this assessment, cooperatives lacked professionalization and representativity, in turn leading to a persistent credibility crisis. Project shortcomings in strengthening cooperatives and compounding contextual factors included the following: (i) diagnostic studies of cooperatives were ad hoc and lacked the required follow-up for creating a strong and lasting impact; (ii) the project was overly focused on management training, often limited to accounting and administration, without addressing deeply rooted staff compensation problems; (iii) the type of cooperative to be promoted was insufficiently defined; (iv) loose criteria for cooperative certification led to frequent formation of illegitimate cooperatives; and (v) the national strategy and institutional responsibility for developing and supporting cooperatives was not very apparent or detailed.

Although productivity and market objectives were achieved, quite a number of efforts have been downscaled or discontinued since project closure. The PSAC introduced a lasting cultural change among producers of becoming much more demanding in terms of plant and seed quality, but access to improved planting material became limited after project closure because of physical unavailability or financial constraints. Road maintenance efforts have steeply decreased since project closure, despite steadily increasing demand. The national strategy for road maintenance and rehabilitation is still not operational. Where achievements have been preserved or further expanded, this has been mainly thanks to additional donor funding and only for some of the commodities.

Limited sustainability has largely been caused by the government not capitalizing on the achievements of this pilot project. The government did not capitalize on the PSAC's most promising activities, methods, and tools by integrating them into national or regional programs. The Project Coordination Unit was completely dissolved instead of internalizing its structures and operation modes within the government. This was compounded by insufficiently clear communication toward stakeholders on the postproject phase, which gave rise to widespread expectations of PSAC continuation. In view of the PSAC's explicit design as a pilot project, many are still puzzled about why the experimental operations that had shown unquestionable success have nonetheless been discontinued.

This assessment concludes that the PSAC contributed substantially to efficiently achieving a more competitive, sustainable, and private sector-led cash crop sector and to ensuring increases in producers' incomes, but the sustainability of this result is in considerable

doubt. The overall outcome of this project is therefore rated moderately satisfactory. Various Independent Evaluation Group project ratings are described in appendix A. The evaluation methodology and evidence sources are described in appendix C.

## Lessons

This assessment offers the following lessons:

- Project relevance and efficacy are enhanced by aligning projects with national strategies, building on existing institutional mechanisms and stakeholder consensus and supporting ongoing activities.
- Project efficiency and sustainability are enhanced by ensuring continuity in coordination and management staffing from design to implementation to postproject internalization.
- Projects with short time frames need to set realistic goals on institutional development and governance improvement, while adapting to institutional and political risks, to be effective.
- Effective institutional development requires elaborate methodologies and monitoring frameworks, instead of merely end goals and flexible ad hoc approaches.
- Reinforcing the role of IPOs and producer cooperatives in agricultural value chains requires buy-in from both the state and the private sector on a well-defined and well-balanced demarcation of roles and powers, and a solid and loyal base of professionalized cooperatives ensuring true representativity.
- A diverse set of productivity enhancement interventions can support overcoming challenges of rural poverty, lack of competitiveness, demographic pressure, and land scarcity.
- Sustainability of project achievements can be compromised if contingencies among development pathways are not recognized or if they are not capitalized on by the government.
- Co-financing provides critical leverage and ownership; however, sustained effects require co-management and arrangements for postproject continuation.

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# 1. Background, Context, and Design

## Background and Context

1.1 Côte d'Ivoire has experienced strong economic growth since 2012, rebounding after three “lost decades” of political instability, armed conflicts, and deteriorated export prices. The remarkable postindependence economic growth of Côte d'Ivoire in the 1960s and 1970s heralded a promising economic future for the country. However, this optimistic outlook was compromised by export price deterioration in the 1980s and subsequently by political instability and armed conflict in the 1990s and 2000s, which negatively impacted the country's socioeconomic indicators. In turn, over the past decade, renewed political stability, appropriate structural reforms, sound government policies, and basic infrastructure improvements have enhanced the business investment climate and led to a strong economic recovery. From 2012 to 2019, the country recorded an average real growth rate of 8.2 percent per year, making Côte d'Ivoire one of the fastest growing economies in Sub-Saharan Africa according to the World Bank (World Bank 2021a). In parallel, poverty fell from 46.3 percent in 2015 to 39.4 percent in 2020, although this decrease was confined only to urban areas, with poverty remaining concentrated in rural areas (World Bank 2022b). More recently, the global crisis as a result of COVID-19 dampened the economic growth rate to 2 percent in 2020, although it had already rebounded in 2021 to 7 percent through a comprehensive government response program (World Bank 2021c).

1.2 Economic development in Côte d'Ivoire has been strongly driven by agriculture. The agriculture sector is a key engine of the country's economy, accounting for 21 percent of its gross domestic product and about 50–70 percent of its total export earnings, while employing 40–50 percent of the labor force—half of them women (World Bank 2021a, 2021b, 2022a). The sector has supported the country's strong economic growth recovery since 2012, although comparatively less than the services and industry sectors; agricultural production grew by 50 percent between 2012 and 2019, reflecting favorable weather, high prices, and an improved business environment (World Bank 2021a).

1.3 Cash crop value chains strongly drive economic growth in the agricultural sector but continue to face several constraints. The sector is quite diversified and includes both export-oriented cash crops and food crops for domestic consumption. Export-oriented cash crops (cocoa, coffee, rubber, oil palm, cotton, and cashew nuts) receive the bulk of agricultural investment and dominate in economic terms, especially cocoa (World Bank 2015b). They are cultivated by about 80 percent of farmers, although comparatively less by female-headed households because of land tenure insecurity (World Bank 2021a).

Cash crop value chains are comparatively well organized, but they still face significant constraints, including low productivity,<sup>1</sup> limited agribusiness and value chain development, high dependence on cocoa and on export prices, and poor sector governance (World Bank 2015b). The following gaps within the agricultural sector should be addressed to achieve inclusive growth, poverty reduction, and structural transformation in Côte d'Ivoire, according to the World Bank 2015 Systematic Country Diagnostic (World Bank 2015b) and 2021 Country Economic Memorandum (World Bank 2021a):

- **Technology and skills gap.** Agriculture is dominated by smallholder farmers (>90 percent) relying on traditional farming techniques. It is characterized by high labor and low capital intensity, with limited use of improved planting material, fertilizers, irrigation, and mechanization. Low rural literacy rates, weak extension services, and declining investment in agricultural research and development exacerbate the limited use of new agricultural technologies.
- **Rural and transport infrastructure gap.** Côte d'Ivoire's rural infrastructure has degraded. Approximately 40 percent of the road network is not, or is only partially, usable. This inflates transportation costs, produce spoilage, and price differentials, while decreasing private investment opportunities; access to inputs, markets, and finance; and, ultimately, farmer incomes. Furthermore, there is a need to develop storage and warehousing facilities to stimulate value-added processing in the agribusiness sector.
- **Governance gap.** Customary land tenure systems are poorly defined or inconsistently applied. The new Rural Land Law from 1998 has been slowly implemented and could benefit from targeted support for women's land rights and land dispute resolution. Furthermore, agricultural production is severely disadvantaged by a distorted policy framework, including high taxes on export commodities and low public investment in the agricultural sector.
- **Financing gap.** Few farming households or small rural firms have access to credit and other financial services, limiting their ability to make calculated decisions and long-term investments. Banks and other financial institutions have an aversion to lending to the agricultural sector because of high risks; corresponding high interest rates disincentivize farmers from entering into credit agreements.

1.4 Strengthening the agricultural sector and subsequent value-added industries and diversifying production and exports remain key for sustaining long-term growth and poverty reduction in Côte d'Ivoire, as articulated by the National Development Plan

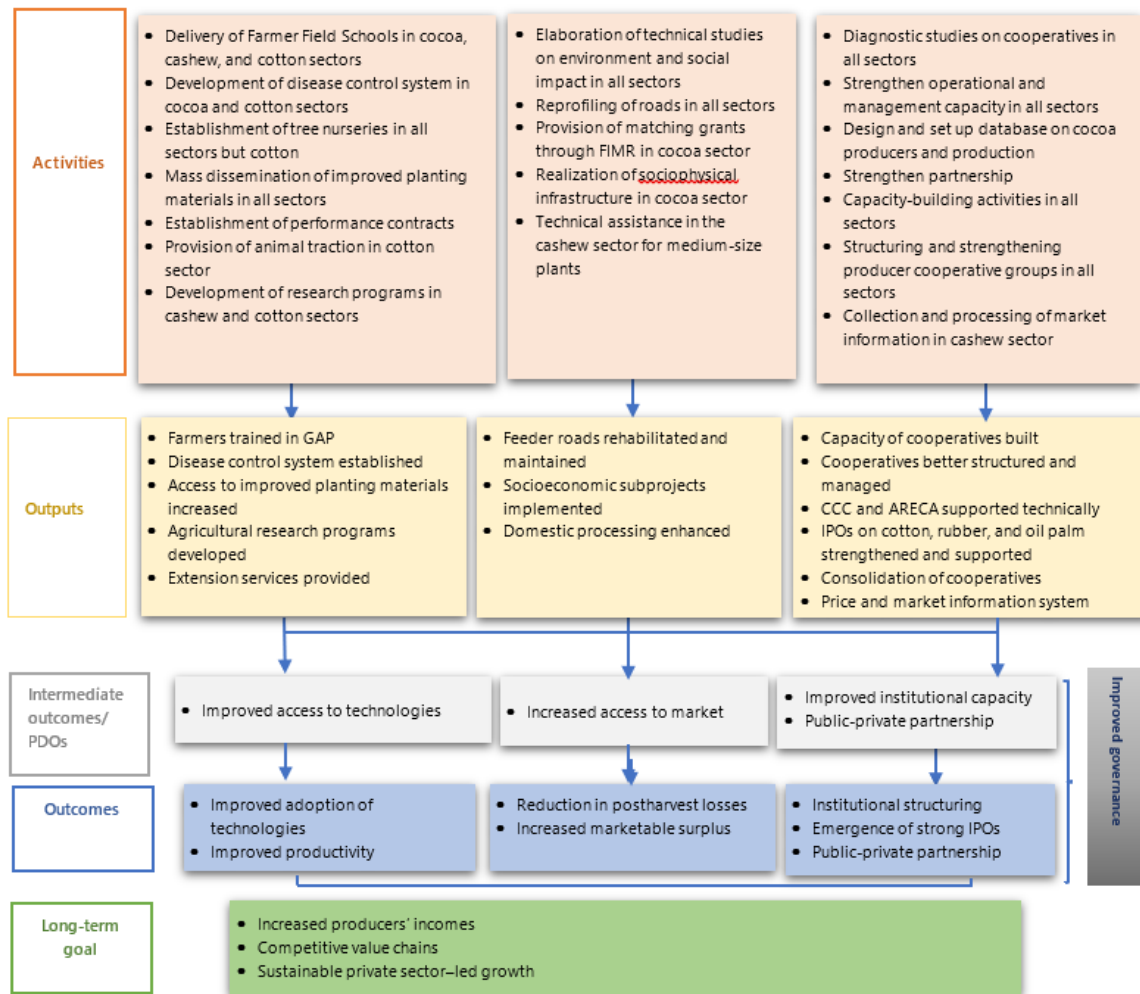
2016–20 (Côte d’Ivoire 2016), the National Agricultural Investment Plan (NAIP) 2018–25 (Côte d’Ivoire 2018), the 2015 Systematic Country Diagnostic (World Bank 2015b), and the 2021 Country Economic Memorandum (World Bank 2021a). The World Bank Country Partnership Framework for Côte d’Ivoire, fiscal years (FY)16–19 (later extended until FY21) took the above recommendations on board within its focus area on “accelerating sustainable private sector–led growth” (World Bank 2015a, 19). The preceding World Bank Country Partnership Strategy FY10–13 contained similar objectives, including (i) increased productivity, value addition, and rural incomes in the agricultural sector; (ii) increased transparency and efficiency in sectoral governance; and (iii) improved business environment and performance of small and medium enterprises (World Bank 2010). Correspondingly, the recent World Bank portfolio for Côte d’Ivoire contains multiple projects on reinforcing the agricultural sector and agribusinesses, including the Agriculture Sector Support Project (PSAC) implemented during FY14–18, which is the subject of this Project Performance Assessment Report (PPAR).

## **Objective, Design, and Financing**

1.5 The PSAC was aimed at supporting a government-envisaged transition toward a more competitive, sustainable, and private sector–led cash crop sector, in turn ensuring sustained increases in producers’ incomes (World Bank 2013). The PSAC was prepared in 2010–12, a period that would prove to be the turning point from instability and decline to strong economic growth in Côte d’Ivoire. The government targeted agricultural revival as a driver of postconflict economic growth and poverty reduction (Côte d’Ivoire 2012). It emphasized the key role of the main export commodities and committed to tackling various reforms within these subsectors (see constraints listed in paragraph 1.3), several of which were initiated at the time of the PSAC appraisal.

1.6 The PSAC’s support to these reforms focused on three elements of value chain development: production technologies, markets, and governance. This is apparent from the project development objective (PDO), as stated in the Financing Agreement: “to improve access to technologies and markets for smallholder export crop farmers of the Recipient’s territory and to enhance the governance of selected value chains supported under the Project” (IDA 2013, 6). The PSAC theory of change is organized along three corresponding pathways for value chain development (figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1. Simplified Theory of Change



Source: World Bank 2018.

Note: ARECA = Cotton and Cashew Regulatory Authority; CCC = Coffee and Cocoa Council; FIMR = Rural Investment Fund; GAP = good agricultural practices; IPO = interprofessional organization; PDO = project development objective.

1.7 The PSAC implemented an integrated package of interventions in pilot areas, tailored to the five cash crops it targeted, given differences in the levels of development across them. At project appraisal, the targeted cash crop value chains were at various levels of value chain and institutional development, hence requiring crop-specific approaches to strengthen value chain performance and governance (an overview of crop-specific production systems and value chains at project appraisal is provided in appendix D). Correspondingly, PSAC components were organized by cash crop value chain, with a dedicated component 1 on cocoa, plus the couplings of rubber and oil palm (component 2), and cotton and cashew (component 3). For each value chain, an integrated package of productivity, marketing, and governance interventions was implemented in a pilot area, corresponding to the most important or representative production region for the commodity in the country: the southwest Nawa region for



cocoa, the southeastern Sud-Comoé and La Mé regions for rubber and oil palm, the central and northern Hambol and Gontougo regions for cashew nuts, and the northern regions for cotton. A fourth project component dealt with project implementation and support. Detailed descriptions of the project components are provided in appendix A.

1.8 The PSAC fostered and worked in a public-private partnership (PPP) setup with co-financing, emphasizing clear responsibilities of the state, private actors, and interprofessional organizations (IPOs). The Ministry of Economy and Finance was the borrower for the investment project financing. The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MINADER) and commodity-specific IPOs and councils served as implementing agencies, further supported by parastatal research and extension structures.<sup>2</sup> The PSAC was implemented on a cost-sharing basis, using French Development Agency (AFD) financing, parallel IPO co-financing, matching grants from direct beneficiaries, and counterpart government funding.

1.9 **Dates and financing.** The PSAC was approved by the Board of Executive Directors on August 8, 2013, financed by an International Development Association credit (\$23.82 million equivalent) and an International Development Association grant (\$26.16 million equivalent). At project closure, 94.5 percent and 94.2 percent, respectively, of this financing had been disbursed. Project closure was extended from October 30, 2017, to June 29, 2018, because of slow initial implementation and minor restructuring changes. The latter included changes in the results framework, components and costs, and allocation among disbursement categories, but had no PDO revisions or additional financing.

## **2. What Worked, What Didn't Work, and Why?**

2.1 This PPAR examines the progress made under the PSAC and its sustainability. This section correspondingly explores what worked, what did not work, and why, with respect to (i) design and preparation, (ii) implementation and supervision, and (iii) results.

### **Design and Preparation**

#### **What Worked**

2.2 The PSAC supported relevant and ongoing activities and was well integrated within national strategies, thereby facilitating economic growth. The project opted to support the major agricultural export value chains in Côte d'Ivoire. These value chains received strong structuring support in the 1990s, and despite serious destabilization by sociopolitical events in the 2000s, they remain to date a central pillar of agricultural and

rural development and of the national economy. The PSAC built on various agricultural support projects in Côte d'Ivoire and the subregion implemented since the 1990s (both World Bank-financed projects and others) and especially on those projects focusing on the development of IPOs. The project was also based on the government's strategies, laws, and regulations guiding the contemporary agricultural policy, such as the 2011 ordinance on agricultural IPOs (No. 2011-473)<sup>3</sup> and the NAIP 2010–15. By topping up ongoing activities with significant financial resources through crop-specific approaches, the PSAC has stimulated economic growth.

2.3 The PSAC's participatory design successfully built on and further reinforced existing institutional mechanisms. Project activities were adequately anchored across national institutions, including the various central directorates of MINADER, councils, IPOs, and parastatal structures. The project optimized involving these public, private, and cooperative institutions by capitalizing on existing working modes and role distributions among them. The design of the PSAC, in the opinion of all those interviewed for the PPAR, was a model of inclusion and participation, involving representatives from all above-mentioned institutions and the private sector. Thus, it further reinforced existing partnerships and helped clarifying respective operational and administrative roles.

2.4 Co-financing by public and private partners substantially leveraged project impact, while providing appropriate flexibility and stimulating responsibility and professionalization. The PSAC combined public financial resources from several partners (World Bank, AFD, and government) with systematic financial contributions from the IPOs to multiply the project's impact.<sup>4</sup> Increased resources were used to enhance ongoing activities in various ways: rural road rehabilitation and maintenance operations were scaled up, improved plant material and producers' equipment were subsidized on better terms,<sup>5</sup> and research and training were additionally funded. Furthermore, the co-financing mechanism allowed for flexible IPO and council contributions, in line with their sectoral needs and funding capacity (which may vary with market variations and shocks), through a system of yearly renegotiations. Co-financing also empowered IPOs: because they had to commit own financial resources, IPOs were encouraged to enhance their capacity, defend their interests, and discuss their level and mode of participation. This aligned perfectly with the spirit of the 2011 IPO ordinance.

2.5 The project used an appropriate integrated and flexible approach within a pilot setup. Productivity growth, increased market access, and institutional reforms were considered as three complementary pathways toward achieving the long-term objectives of increasing revenues and reinforcing international competitiveness. The PSAC concentrated its activities in space and time so it could provide all fundamentals for

coherent value chain development and reinforce all actors involved. In view of the limited financial resources and fragile postcrisis context at appraisal, this pilot setup of concentrating an integrated intervention package in confined areas was appropriate to identify the most promising interventions and lessons for progressive expansion.<sup>6</sup> In addition, flexibility was foreseen for ad hoc support at the request of beneficiary communities. Community projects, such as rehabilitation of social structures (education, health) or subsidies for income-generating activities, were explicitly foreseen for the cocoa sector within the PSAC, although significantly downscaled at the Mid-Term Review. For the other sectors, such support was largely provided through own funding of the IPOs and councils.

2.6 In terms of co-benefits, these combined design factors also enhanced social cohesion and sociopolitical stability in a challenging postcrisis context. By working with a wide range of stakeholders in a co-financing setup, the PSAC stimulated reflection, information sharing, planning, and negotiations across stakeholders and sectors to move jointly on common problems. The project did not include an explicit objective on social cohesion, but it proposed inclusive strategies and participatory tools that were well suited to the fragile situation just after the crisis. As such, PPAR interviewees reported that the PSAC had facilitated a dynamic of “returning to work together” and contributed to sociopolitical stability within a challenging national and subregional context.

### **What Didn't Work**

2.7 The project was overly ambitious given its limited implementation period and budget, entailing critical risks for the envisaged institutional development, governance improvement, productivity improvements, and overall project scope. These are separately discussed below:

- The project overestimated the speed at which IPO capacities could be enhanced and underestimated the duration of essential support. The objective of finalizing the formation of all IPOs within the project duration was based on a general overestimation of the IPOs' institutional development levels and the capacity of their members in the nascent postcrisis context, while also disregarding the wide differentiation that existed across sectors. It also took limited account of the lessons learned from similar preceding operations in Côte d'Ivoire and the subregion, such as the World Bank's National Agricultural Services Support Project and Agricultural Services and Producer Organizations Project. Building or strengthening an IPO into an effective operational tool capable of self-development is a long process exceeding a period of four to five years. Indeed, the rubber and cashew IPOs were accredited 20 months and 52 months, respectively, after project closure.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, the official constitution of an IPO is

only the first step in a trajectory requiring extended support to guarantee the effectiveness and sustainability of the structure formed. This has been demonstrated by the many unsuccessful attempts to create sustainable IPOs in the subregion.<sup>8</sup> The established and emerging IPOs of the PSAC also reported a lack of continued support after project closure.

- The objective of improved value chain governance was overambitious given the reductionist approach applied. Good governance is a complex concept, conditional on several fundamental elements that require adequate support programs. Examples of such elements are (i) a balance of powers across shareholder groups that are truly representative for their members; (ii) transparency of administrative, financial, programmatic, and strategic decision-making processes; and (iii) sharing of evaluation results (Dasgupta and Roy 2011; World Bank 2007). Correspondingly, working toward improved governance requires a comprehensive and participatory institutional assessment, intensive co-management during implementation, and an adequate performance monitoring framework. In contrast, the justified will of the PSAC to move toward good governance was not translated into such rigorous programming with corresponding indicators. With limited time and budget, the PSAC's focus was restricted to repeating traditional training programs for cooperatives and to administrative and technical capacity building of IPOs—an approach applied for decades in the subregion with limited instances of effective governance improvement.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, its results framework completely lacked governance indicators—a failure in the design of the project's monitoring and evaluation.
- Extensive crop maturation periods inherently implied uncertainties for continued support and productivity outcomes. Producers typically benefited from project support for only one to three years, while for these perennial crops, support is inherently required beyond the project implementation period. Examples mentioned by interviewed beneficiaries included continued need for fertilizers for cocoa and trainings on rubber tapping and marketing support at rubber maturation. Moreover, information on productivity outcomes would inevitably be available only after project closure for those crops with extensive maturation periods.
- The budget and implementation period were insufficient to adequately cover the extensive project scope. The scope of three intervention pathways, applied to five of the largest national sectors in a fragile postcrisis context, constituted an unrealistic challenge for a project duration of only four to five years. In turn, it entailed major risks for postproject discontinuation from the outset, regardless of the level of achievement.

2.8 The methodology and results framework for institutional development was moreover insufficiently developed. The Project Appraisal Document (PAD) specified activities on institutional development in a general way and contained only a binary indicator on IPO compliance with the 2011 IPO ordinance. It lacked a structured, multilayered approach with detailed, systematic methods for institutional reinforcement across all stakeholders—in particular, producers and cooperatives. The monitoring framework insufficiently specified desired, quantifiable, sector-specific outcomes and looked only at the achievement of an end goal rather than also monitoring the progress toward it. This resulted in ad hoc approaches for reinforcing IPOs and cooperatives during project implementation, with varying degrees of success (see paragraphs 2.311 and 2.333) and very limited insight on actual achievements in institutional development at project closure. Insufficient elaboration of the methodology during project preparation may relate to the absence of an institutional specialist in the World Bank team or to the incomplete preliminary institutional and organizational analyses. The latter would have allowed for the preparation and implementation of more differentiated activities for the different sectors, based on an in-depth understanding of their actual situation and challenges.

2.9 Institutional and political risks were insufficiently recognized or underestimated. Two principal examples are discussed as follows:

- The PSAC strategy on institutional development did not match government commitment, compounding the above-mentioned constraints for institutional development. The PSAC strategy for fundamentally reforming the distribution of roles and powers across value chain actors was conceived in the wake of the crisis exit and championed by a few key government officials. However, many central government officials perceived it as too ambitious, and the level of commitment to reform soon dwindled. Although the revival of production and productivity were indeed core policy commitments at the time (as, for example, reflected in the NAIP 2010–15), this was not the case for the fundamental institutional reforms proposed by the PSAC. The delegation of management powers to IPOs within these agricultural sectors, constituting major pillars of the national economy, was still perceived by many members of the state structures as an experiment to be conducted with caution. Caught up in the urgency of the crisis exit, there was insufficient time to acquire widespread buy-in and approval during project preparation, hence the impression by several government officials that some of the PSAC's institutional reforms were imposed on them. Because government commitment and buy-in was limited, the World Bank's goals for institutional development were rendered overambitious.

- There was a lack of strategic reflection on how training activities could be integrated into a national framework. The PSAC planned to train tens of thousands of producers within its pilot approach but did not consider how this support could be integrated and scaled up within a structured national framework for rural training. During PPAR interviews, various stakeholders recognized the long-standing problem in Côte d'Ivoire of rural training being highly fragmented and lacking strategic coordination. In consequence, the absence of a strategy for firmly embedding PSAC trainings implied substantial risks for the sustainability of the project's good practices after closure. The PSAC could have given impetus to an indispensable and urgent reflection on a national agricultural training strategy, avoiding great waste of financial resources and considerable losses of efficiency. However, the Interprofessional Fund for Agricultural Research and Advisory Services (FIRCA) and the National Rural Support Agency (ANADER) were able to capitalize on and integrate many good practices supported by the PSAC on an ad hoc basis.

2.10 The market access objective, as formulated in the PDO, would have implied much broader operations than those foreseen and implemented in the PSAC. Within the market access pathway, the PSAC focused almost exclusively on rural road rehabilitation and maintenance, apart from a market information service for cashew. Correspondingly, the results framework contains only an indicator on road maintenance and rehabilitation, while not providing information on actual market access outcomes. Although road rehabilitation and maintenance are critical conditions, facilitating market access and reducing postharvest losses include several additional components,<sup>10</sup> such as product selection and preparation criteria; establishment and control of quality standards; adequate storage, transport, and processing capacity; and market and price information systems. PPAR interviewees also noted that the PSAC did not capitalize on the opportunity to include stakeholders involved in product transformation, commercialization, and promotion in project design and implementation, to improve downstream value chain impacts. Although the exclusive focus on roads was justified given budget limitations and although this component proved highly relevant and successful, confusion and unrealistic expectations could have been simply overcome by more precision in the PDO specification.

2.11 Weaknesses in preparing the complex fiduciary procedures, which were needed to accommodate co-financing by public, private, and cooperative actors, contributed to initial implementation delays. The PSAC's co-financing setup, involving a range of public, private, and cooperative actors, was highly innovative. However, the partners involved each had their own procedures for collecting, allocating, and controlling financial resources. The complexity of ensuring that these financial flows could be

combined and disbursed in correspondence with agricultural calendars was insufficiently considered during project preparation and appraisal. The need to remediate this lack of thorough preparation was one of the causes of the slow implementation of project operations during the first two years.

2.12 There was no rigorous and systematic strategy for capitalizing on achievements and ensuring sustainability after project closure. The PSAC was widely considered among interviewed stakeholders as an innovative and experimental pilot project; however, no strategies and mechanisms were proposed in the PAD for integrating results into national structures and for extending and multiplying activities after project closure. This left ample space for various interpretations of, and expectations for, the institutional responsibilities and financial resource channels for continuation of project activities after closure. It would eventually lead to very limited to no follow-up on activities, such as the co-financing process, training on good agricultural practices, practices for strengthening cooperatives, and so on. The substantial loss of impact will be further elaborated in the results section.

## **Implementation and Supervision**

### **What Worked**

2.13 The World Bank demonstrated flexible management and adequate responsiveness. First, a well-conducted Mid-Term Review very positively impacted project implementation, disbursements, and achievements. As noted already, the project start-up was difficult and much slower than planned in the PAD. The Mid-Term Review considered the actual difficulties in the field and the successes of comparable operations to restructure the project in a realistic manner, abandoning unsuccessful subcomponents and reallocating funds to strengthen or expand healthy operations. The Mid-Term Review demonstrated a great deal of analytical rigor, candor, and adaptive capacity, while also involving the future World Bank task team leader, which contributed very strongly to the achievements by project closure. Second, the Project Coordination Unit (PCU) and field actors were allowed to experiment with new and effective methods, procedures, and tools. Such a “research-based” approach led to tools for awarding contracts (such as those for animal traction in the cotton zone and those for trail maintenance) and implementation procedures (such as those for co-financing, for targeted subsidies for producers’ equipment, and for improved seedlings) that were context specific, reproducible on a larger scale, and positively perceived by all stakeholders.

2.14 The PSAC enabled consolidation of partnerships and stimulated participatory management. The sociopolitical crisis preceding the PSAC had led to a scarcity in

financial resources, in turn stimulating competition rather than collaboration among partners. As intended in the project design, through providing financial resources and proposing a common operating framework, the PSAC induced implementing partners to negotiate, find better ways of complementing one another, and collaborate more effectively. Although this was challenging at first (see paragraphs 2.18 and 2.20), respective roles were eventually clarified and partnerships were consolidated. As a specific example, the PSAC has clarified to some extent the participation modalities of the partners involved in research and extension (ANADER, FIRCA, and the National Agricultural Research Center [CNRA]).

2.15 The PSAC provided support for developing efficient and sustainable technical innovations, beyond what was foreseen at design. To increase productivity and intensification, the PSAC allowed for experimentation on activities, such as (i) mechanization, collective seed production, and soil analysis in the cotton sector; and (ii) the experimental and participatory center on training and mechanization for the cashew sector. Unfortunately, not all experimentations were equally well documented and disseminated within national structures.

2.16 The co-financing system for implementing the PSAC generally materialized well, although it was challenging to reach a fully operational and universally accepted dynamic. After initial delays in setting up the co-financing system (see paragraph 2.11), it functioned generally smoothly, especially for the productivity component (animal traction, mechanization, seedling provisioning, and so on). In contrast, the co-financing of road rehabilitation and maintenance was more challenging (see paragraph 2.30). Co-financing requires frequent negotiations among the various co-financiers to agree on the choice of operations and respective allocation amounts, as clarified by PPAR interviewees. It is a complex process, involving not only financial administration but also the construction and distribution of powers among different groups. It is a demonstration that an innovative strategy that brings into play and transforms financial and managerial powers may require a long calibration period before becoming fully operational. Building new and adequate procedures that can translate sharing and complementarities into an equitable and accepted co-management dynamic will often exceed the short duration of a project.

### **What Didn't Work**

2.17 Flaws in the PCU installment process led to implementation delays, a rupture in the participatory dynamic, and a lack of project internalization at government level. Even though the members of the PCU were recruited by a panel comprising MINADER, councils, and IPOs (and approved by the World Bank), most of them had not participated in project preparation. Correspondingly, the PCU needed time to



understand and own the philosophy, objectives, and programming of the project, which substantially slowed down the start of operations. Furthermore, while the PAD specified that a technical team of focal points would be appointed in the central and regional directorates of MINADER to periodically review project implementation and recommend corrective measures to the PCU (World Bank 2013, 47, 79), evaluation reports and PPAR interviews indicated that this focal point team was never operational. Even though MINADER was involved through transversal coordinators and participated in World Bank supervision missions, the monitoring of implementation by its technical staff fell short of expectations. The reasons why the World Bank project team was unsuccessful in pushing MINADER to establish this technical team are undocumented. In combination, the transfer in project ownership to the (until then) largely unimplicated PCU and limited MINADER involvement in this PCU led to a rupture in the participatory dynamic found at design (see paragraph 2.3) and to weak project internalization by the government at implementation. PPAR interviewees indicated additional reasons for this lack of internalization, including difficulties in mobilizing government resources (see paragraph 2.20), inadequate articulation of expectations, and relational problems.

2.18 Unclear demarcation of roles and powers between the state and the private sector periodically led to tensions, competition, adversity, and conflict. The PSAC's massive support for IPO development, including delegating to them the responsibility for coordinating and managing the financial aspects of their operations, significantly empowered them. In contrast, PPAR interviews showed that the central administration felt to some extent dispossessed of its regulatory role of defining and controlling sectoral policies, and several officials expressed concerns over transferring regulatory powers to essentially profit-maximizing actors. In this respect, the PSAC provided insufficient support to clarify respective roles across all stakeholders. Through its limited public sector support (see paragraph 2.20), the PSAC's operations were also perceived as unbalanced, favoring the IPOs and weakening the power of MINADER. These factors occasionally created a dynamic of competition, adversity, and conflict between the state and the private sector.

2.19 Lack of internalization, participation, and partnership was also characterized by a dysfunctional project steering committee for this particularly complex project. Given the complexity of the PSAC—five commodity chains; three strategic theory of change pathways; and a multitude of financiers, implementers, and operations—effective functioning of the steering committee was critical to the success of the project. However, PPAR interviewees indicated that the steering committee only began to function after the Mid-Term Review, that it coordinated only to a limited extent across the different

institutions involved in the project and that certain members disassociated themselves from the committee.

2.20 Insufficient PSAC support to public sector capacity building also likely contributed to government internalization issues and ambiguity on roles. First, PPAR interviews indicated that the project strengthened MINADER's capacity only to a limited extent, despite the PAD recognizing MINADER's limited capacities in terms of staffing and financial resources (World Bank 2013, 47), and its intent to strengthen concerned MINADER directorates (World Bank 2013, 48). The PSAC focused on supporting the existing system through providing some equipment, tools, and training—all highly necessary—rather than on an institutional and organizational reform. PSAC interventions were not invariably successful or efficient either. A case in point was the attempt to strengthen the Department of Agricultural Professional Organizations (DOPA), in which much time was lost with an exorbitantly costly proposal by a private consulting firm that was eventually rejected. The World Bank project team should be commended on its reactivity in replacing it by giving support to DOPA's existing Logiscoop software, although it was unable to fully operationalize it by project closure. Weak monitoring and evaluation capacity is another example of a persistent MINADER gap at central and regional levels. Second, siloed institutional analyses of the research and extension agencies (ANADER, CNRA, and FIRCA) were conducted at the start of the project without analyzing mutual complementarities. Moreover, there was no comprehensive follow-up during project implementation: capacity-building support to these agencies consisted of organization-specific activities that were not necessarily informed by the prior analyses, without bringing out complementarities, specifying respective roles and conflicts of interest, and fundamentally impacting the national institutional rationalization. Correspondingly, to date, there remains ambiguity on the respective roles and optimal financing system of these agencies.

2.21 These combined factors led to significant delays during the first two years of implementation and in turn to a hasty or incomplete implementation of some activities toward the end of the project. A concrete example of the latter was the reinforcement of cooperatives in the cocoa sector. This process was initiated only toward the very end of the PSAC, allowing for the first phase of cooperative structuring but not for the second phase of cooperative professionalization. The impact and sustainability of this activity was herewith strongly compromised.

## **Results**

2.22 Results will be separately discussed for the PSAC's three strategic pathways (improved productivity, increased market access, and institutional development) and

for other outcomes. The overall sustainability of achievements will be discussed in a separate section.

## Improved Productivity

### What Worked

2.23 The PSAC's activities on improving productivity were highly relevant. Productivity interventions were designed based on three sources: MINADER's agricultural policy, the IPOs and councils relaying their members' requests, and proposals by the research and extension agencies (ANADER, CNRA, and FIRCA). Activities thus took into account the demands of producers, the private agro-industrial and export sector, and the state. Furthermore, the remarkable intensification of production systems facilitated by the PSAC was critical in the face of the country's rapid population growth and agricultural land constraints.

2.24 Productivity objectives were largely achieved, with significant improvements in production and productivity in all sectors. The PSAC transmitted trainings on good practices and improved technologies to up to 200,000 farmers. A total area of 50,678 hectares was planted or replanted with improved material (against the target of 45,500 hectares). The Implementation Completion and Results Report indicated notable yield increases for cocoa, cotton, cashew, and rubber already during project implementation (details on these and other indicators are presented in appendix D).<sup>11</sup> Additional data on longer-term yield outcomes could not be acquired in the context of the PPAR. Nevertheless, the various evaluations have shown significant technology adoption rates, and the PSAC methods and tools have undeniably positively influenced the prospects for productivity increases in the targeted commodities.

2.25 Some notable examples of technologies to improve productivity included the following:

- Infrastructure and organizational arrangements for producing and disseminating improved planting material were established or reinforced for the five supported commodities, and PPAR field visits showed that they are generally still in place. PPAR interviews and field observations proved that a systematic approach was used, involving research and development on improved seeds and seedlings; establishment of nurseries and corresponding trainings; targeted subsidies to greatly facilitate purchases; provisioning of input packages (complementing seedlings with fertilizers, pesticides, protection fences, and so on); extension agents accompanying producers to establish plantations and instruct on best practices; and intercropping to raise income during maturation. This systematic approach was facilitated by a proper distribution of roles and adequate

coordination among ANADER, CNRA, and the IPOs and councils. Cashew may be the most advanced and exemplary among the commodities also because of the continued support in the follow-up World Bank–financed Cashew Value Chain Competitiveness Project.

- Capacity to produce coated cocoa seeds was increased. By installing a second CNRA production center and irrigation facility, the PSAC substantially increased CNRA’s capacity to produce coated seeds.<sup>12</sup> These coated seeds replaced traditional seed pods as planting material, with CNRA data demonstrating that they improve on transport efficiency (5 kilograms of coated seeds equal 25 kilograms of seed pods); seed viability (substantial deterioration after 10 days for coated seeds compared with 4 days for seed pods); and quality assurance (coated seeds are distributed in labelled biodegradable bags that cannot be reused).
- For cotton, PPAR interviews and field observations demonstrated that the support for animal traction was effective in increasing productivity and production. Subsidies allowed farmers to reaccess oxen, which had largely disappeared during the political crisis, and thereby considerably expand cultivation areas; respond faster to rain occurrences, which are becoming more erratic; reduce time-consuming arduous work, especially for women and children; and increase overall farm productivity. Interviewed producers further emphasized that their increased resources allowed animal and equipment renewal without subsidy after about two to three years. Quantified results on the effect of oxen use on yield, area under cultivation, and intrahousehold labor allocation are provided in the detailed study of the Gender Innovation Lab (Brudevold-Newman, Donald, and Rouanet, forthcoming).
- There was successful experimentation with promoting mechanization in the cotton sector. PPAR interviews revealed that mechanization induces similar benefits to animal traction and thereby serves as a multiplication factor; hence, there was considerable demand. Construction and support for the operation of the first mechanization center was a success. The mechanization experiment also dealt adequately with the challenges of allocating a limited amount of equipment to an enormous demand, by defining purely technical criteria in a completely participatory and transparent way. This well-conducted experiment served as a model for at least three new centers supported by the Cotton Interprofessional Organization, MINADER, and international donors, such as AFD.
- Productivity enhancements were also achieved through the soil analysis initiative. This initiative enabled the identification of optimal crop-specific

fertilizer inputs and the training of students, extension agents, and other stakeholders. The initiative has been further supported by other projects, extending the number of soil analysis applications processed from 5,000 to 10,000 per year (data from the Cotton and Cashew Council and the Faculty of Agronomy).

- Collective production of improved cotton seeds led to better quality, higher yields, and generation of specialized jobs. Low cotton quality can severely decrease producer incomes (up to 30 percent) while depriving factories of a substantial part of their raw inputs (Cotton Interprofessional Organization data). The PSAC facilitated the establishment of a system for collectivizing improved seed production along with training and monitoring of seed growers. This system has become sustainable, and to date, it is still supported by the IPOs and new projects.

2.26 The PSAC strengthened the capacity of national development partners in various ways and in a sustainable manner, at least in the pilot areas. This was not so much because of the institutional study of ANADER, CNRA, and FIRCA at project start; rather, partners improved their capacity through benefiting from the PSAC's technical and financial support more broadly. PSAC interviewees indicated, for example, that (i) ANADER extended its operations thanks to various contracts for advice and training on cultivation practices and for support to cooperatives; (ii) CNRA expanded its scientific knowledge base through various research contracts (such as on coated cocoa seeds, improved cotton seeds, and an experimental center on cashew); (iii) FIRCA expanded and improved the efficiency and speed of its fiduciary management tools, which were key in its coordination across various support institutions; and (iv) the technical competencies of IPOs and councils, among others, were strengthened through the recruitment of adequate staff, trainings, and equipment acquisitions.

### What Didn't Work

2.27 Farmer access to certain production inputs has not proven entirely sustainable. Although the PSAC introduced a lasting cultural change among producers in becoming much more demanding in terms of plant and seed quality, access to improved planting material became limited after project closure. Despite many producers expressing the intent to adopt improved planting material, they lacked access to it because of either physical unavailability (such as for cocoa; see paragraph 2.28) or financial constraints (less favorable subsidy terms). Another example is the provisioning of fertilizers in the cocoa sector, in which a subsidized fertilizer package was provided only for the first planting year, while continued application in subsequent years would have been beneficial for improving productivity. Similarly, the continued strong demand for

animal traction and mechanization in the cotton sector after project closure could be addressed only four years later with a new AFD-financed project. In general, these sustainability issues have been largely caused by the withdrawal of World Bank support for technology adoption at project closure without relevant government institutions taking over support services (see paragraph 2.41).

2.28 A notable example is found in the cocoa sector, in which the production and dissemination of improved seeds have been abruptly halted by law since 2018. The PSAC invested significantly in CNRA centers that produced and disseminated seeds of high-yielding, disease-resistant cocoa cultivars, coupled to a system for uprooting diseased or aged plantations. To date, the need for rejuvenating plantations remains, and the CNRA centers are still in prime condition and fully operational (see photos in appendix D). However, for more than four years, the centers have not disseminated any improved seeds, forcing producers who had uprooted their plantations to replant with low-quality seeds (or shift to other crops), therefore annulling their productivity gains and perpetuating the risk of further disease spread and deforestation. The law was officially justified by insufficient insight on the size of the production base and the corresponding risk of global overproduction and price collapses.<sup>13</sup> It raises the question of why the PSAC had not pursued a strategy based on first quantifying the production base and the needs for selective intensification, before substantially investing in the CNRA centers. This question equally applies to the follow-up World Bank-financed Cocoa Integrated Value Chain Development Project, which is in the pipeline at the time of this report.

## **Increased Market Access**

### **What Worked**

2.29 Project objectives on increasing market access were largely met:

- The quantitative targets for rural road maintenance and rehabilitation were exceeded (6,482 kilometers achieved against 5,908 kilometers targeted), as a result of very strong acceleration of the operations near the end of the project. Market access was further facilitated by opening up production zones, reducing transport time and costs, and reducing product storage time and deterioration (Côte d'Ivoire MINADER 2018). PPAR interviews with PSAC beneficiaries demonstrated that this pathway of improving roads and market access was widely considered the most prominent and impactful PSAC intervention.
- The PSAC successfully initiated the development of a national strategy for road maintenance and rehabilitation. The development of this national strategy could benefit from the experience with methods, experiments, and procedures applied

in the PSAC, such as (i) participatory management across stakeholders, including IPOs and councils and the agro-industry, government transport agencies, and private service providers; (ii) a co-financing setup with assimilation of stakeholders' different financing and disbursement procedures; and (iii) identification of reliable contractors and suitable procurement procedures. By project closure, a solid basis for the national strategy for road maintenance and rehabilitation was developed, including the technical instruments to ensure its implementation.

## What Didn't Work

2.30 Although the PSAC largely met its market access interventions, their sustainability is rather limited:

- Road maintenance efforts steeply decreased after project closure.<sup>14</sup> Once co-financing by the World Bank and AFD was terminated, limited government and IPO resources inevitably led to a slowdown in maintenance operations. This decrease in effective maintenance starkly contrasts with the steadily growing maintenance demand, the latter being propelled by—among other factors—dissemination of the PSAC's results on improving market access.
- To date, the national strategy for road maintenance and rehabilitation is still not operational. PPAR interviewees noted that after project closure, the finalization of negotiations among the Ministry of Transport, MINADER, and IPOs proved difficult. The fact that co-financing would not necessarily be accompanied by co-management proved to be the principal dealbreaker. The IPOs understandably demand that their financial contributions be traceable in the national system and their priorities on geographical allocation of resources be considered. The institutional and organizational analysis of the structure in charge of implementing the strategy should therefore be further deepened—a need that may have been severely underestimated by the PSAC.

## Institutional Development

### What Worked

2.31 The PSAC has significantly reinforced the capacity and functioning of IPOs and councils across the commodity sectors. This was demonstrated by the following:

- In compliance with the 2011 IPO ordinance, two IPOs were officially accredited during project implementation, and two more in the years after project closure.<sup>15</sup> To date, only the cocoa sector lacks an IPO. The fact that cocoa was missing from

the corresponding results framework indicator shows that the project has foreseen the particular complexities of establishing an IPO in this sector.

- IPO and council management teams were professionalized by reinforcing their coordination, procurement, and technical capacities. Reinforcement was achieved by recruiting diverse sets of specialized technicians of a good academic level, specific trainings, and equipment provisioning. This initiated real professionalization of IPO management teams—a process that was continued after project closure (for example, through widely internalizing procedures), with reinforced capacities largely still in place to date.
- In turn, this induced a positive evolution in the perception of IPOs, which are becoming widely recognized as development partners. The Cotton Interprofessional Organization, progressively followed by the other IPOs, acquired great visibility and credibility among public and private partners. PPAR interviews indicated that the IPOs had proved themselves as reliable structures able to defend their members' requests technically and rigorously and to (co-)manage operations in their interests.
- The PSAC stimulated the IPOs' innovative capacity. This may be best illustrated by the coping strategies they adopted when the PSAC co-financing disappeared at project closure. Using their own limited funds, they managed to maintain for several years many operations they considered useful for their members.

2.32 The PSAC initiated a critical strengthening of DOPA through the installation of Logiscoop. Logiscoop enables identification of all producers within a commodity sector and analysis of the status of their organizational structures through multiple indicators. Thus, it addresses DOPA's systematic capacity gap in analyzing the existing situations of farmer cooperatives, identifying their difficulties, and determining solutions. As such, Logiscoop can fundamentally support the development and implementation of a rigorous national strategy for strengthening cooperatives. Although to date it is still not fully operational—although full operation is expected under the continued support of the World Bank-financed Cashew Value Chain Competitiveness Project—the PSAC should be commended for initiating the process.

### What Didn't Work

2.33 The PSAC fell short in strengthening producer cooperatives, leading to low performance and a persistent credibility crisis. The PSAC results framework focused on IPO accreditation, and its implementation team clearly considered that this required strengthening IPO leadership and technical advisors. This top-down support strategy to achieve an essentially administrative goal focused insufficiently on consolidating a solid



and loyal base of grassroots cooperators. As a result, PPAR interviews and field observations demonstrate that the current situation of cooperatives is concerning: they lack professionalization (requiring specialists and facing high staff turnover) and representativity (with respect to both producers in cooperatives and cooperatives in IPOs), in turn leading to a persistent credibility crisis. In this respect, the Implementation Completion and Results Report's and PCU's evaluations of results (World Bank 2018; appendix D) were found by this PPAR to be overly positive (table 2.1).

**Table 2.1. Achievements for Cooperatives: End-of-Project Evaluations Compared with Current Observations**

Sector	Achievements for Cooperatives According to ICR and PCU End-of-Project Evaluations	Current Observations on the Field
Cotton	<p>Consolidation of cooperatives and producers' unions: 15 new cooperatives created from 240 informal organizations; 67 cooperatives consolidated from 294 existing organizations.</p> <p>Development of performance contracts between producers and ginners.</p> <p>The number of farmers who are members of a farmer association increased from 43% to 91%.</p>	<p>A new project with French Development Agency support has started with a similar approach. Cooperative leaders are highlighting that this retake of support came late and that the support is not really suitable.</p> <p>No performance contracts between producers and ginners exist—traditional mechanisms are still used. The government sets the selling price, whereas ginners determine the different categories of cotton quality. Even though this involves negotiations with farmer cooperatives, cooperative leaders still complain about their weak position in these negotiations.</p> <p>The number of multiservice cooperatives is increasing.</p>
Cocoa	<p>Cleaning up of illegitimate cooperatives.</p> <p>Diagnostics applied to 230 cooperatives, and 80 of them strengthened; one representative producer union established.</p> <p>Establishment of legitimate producer colleges problematic.</p>	<p>Illegitimate cooperatives are still profusely forming and dissolving. The majority of cooperatives are poorly performing according to diagnostics.</p> <p>This union is still the only one in the country and contains about 110–140 cooperatives. It was formed top-down rather than bottom-up and is only minorly functional: no strategy, limited representativity of and for cooperatives.</p> <p>No producer colleges were established. Cooperatives and producers generally have direct marketing agreements with processors and exporters. There is little interest in colleges and interprofessional organizations throughout the sector.</p> <p>It is to be determined how the World Bank can capitalize on the cocoa cooperative strengthening activities of the International Finance Corporation with Cargill.</p>
Oil palm	<p>Capacity building to 11 farmer organizations.</p> <p>Piloting of contractual arrangements between a processing company and two cooperatives.</p> <p>The number of farmers belonging to a professional organization tripled.</p>	<p>Contractual arrangements among processors and cooperatives were discontinued.</p>
Rubber	<p>Management strengthening of cooperatives.</p>	<p>Legitimate producer colleges.</p>

Sector	Achievements for Cooperatives According to ICR and PCU End-of-Project Evaluations	Current Observations on the Field
	Establishment of legitimate producer colleges problematic.	Very few cooperatives with very limited power within the producer college; instead, there are many informal producer groups, which have direct marketing agreements with processing factories.
Cashew	Cleaning up of illegitimate cooperatives. A total of 60 cooperatives trained, and six unions of producer cooperatives and buyers formed. Establishment of legitimate producer colleges problematic.	The National Federation of Cashew Producers in Côte d'Ivoire counts 352 cooperatives and 28 unions. Negative impact of COVID-19 for two years. Cooperative strengthening support by the German Agency for International Cooperation, the World Bank, the COVID-19 mitigation program, and so on, which continue to improve cooperative efficiency.

Source: Independent Evaluation Group.

Note: ICR = Implementation Completion and Results Report; PCU = Project Coordination Unit.

### 2.34 Project shortcomings in strengthening cooperatives and compounding contextual factors included the following:

- Diagnostic studies of cooperatives were ad hoc and lacked the required follow-up for creating a strong and lasting impact. In the postcrisis context of PSAC design, there was little insight on the status and limitations of producer cooperatives. With an insufficiently developed methodology (see paragraph 2.8) and Logiscoop not yet operational (see paragraph 2.32), the PSAC applied ad hoc diagnostics of cooperatives, with varying methods, tools, and evaluation criteria, and in some sectors only toward the end of the project. In turn, these diagnostics did not lead to massive, coordinated trainings of cooperatives with rigorous follow-up monitoring.<sup>16</sup> As a result, while the PSAC supported to some extent the structuring of cooperatives, the stage of cooperative professionalization was not attained.
- The project overly focused on management training—often limited to accounting and administration—without addressing deep-rooted staff compensation problems. The PSAC supported the interventions of ANADER, FIRCA, and consultancy firms in the continuity of tools used for about 30 years on a large scale throughout West and Central Africa, with generally very poor results.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, the sustainability of such interventions is very precarious because of high staff turnover and deep-rooted staff compensation problems. For example, PPAR interviews revealed that during a training seminar for cooperative advisors, none of the 30 trainees expressed the intent to effectively make a career in the field for which they had just been trained, because the positions are severely underpaid (120,000 francs per month) for their qualifications. Similarly, it is unclear how managers of cooperative sections can be expected to be strongly engaged and rigorous if they essentially serve as volunteers or are paid a mere 20,000 francs at the time of the annual cotton harvest.

- The type of cooperative to be promoted was insufficiently defined. Cooperatives can range from a simple structure for collecting produce to facilitate coordination with factories and exporters, to multifunctional structures providing a wealth of services to its members (access to water, education, transportation, credit, equipment, and so on). PPAR interviews with producers in the field unanimously pointed to a desire for multifunctional, multiservice cooperatives, which increase producer membership and loyalty. Although these seemed to be the primary orientation of the PSAC—for example, with the support to socioeconomic projects in the cocoa sector (World Bank 2013, 9) and to sizeable service-providing cooperatives in the cotton sector (World Bank 2013, 41–42)—the PAD did not make an explicit, unanimous choice on the type of cooperative to be promoted. In turn, support to socioeconomic projects dwindled after project restructuring, whereas in the cotton sector, many cooperatives have remained too small, and for the regrouped ones, the services have often fallen short of members’ expectations. The difficulties in building loyalty among simple cooperatives, as opposed to the successes of multiservice cooperatives, would have merited further study to capitalize on the experience and facilitate future strategies. Moreover, the PSAC shed little light on the widespread problems of financing cooperatives and their services.<sup>18</sup>
- Loose criteria for cooperative certification led to frequent formation of illegitimate cooperatives. Responsibility for certification was transferred away from MINADER in 2013, and criteria and oversight are loose. This allows cooperatives to be born from one or a few leaders who, through their charisma or their sociocultural weight in their communities, gather cooperative members around them without necessarily training or empowering them, but rather aiming to enhance their own personal social, political, or financial status. This ignores the key principles of a democratic cooperative construction process and an inclusive system of representation. PPAR interviewees mentioned that this situation has been known for a long time and is the first thing that needs to be addressed to enable effective and efficient cooperative strengthening interventions.
- The national strategy and institutional responsibility for developing and supporting cooperatives were not very apparent or detailed. Admittedly, some specific operations have been innovative and have yielded interesting lessons, but even to date, these have not been capitalized on to feed a national strategy. The institutional responsibilities of DOPA, the IPOs and councils, and others for developing and supporting cooperatives are also unclearly defined and differ across the different sectors. The PSAC has contributed little in elaborating on

these strategies and responsibilities; for instance, it has not synthesized and disseminated its lessons learned on strengthening cooperatives.

2.35 At IPO level, the PSAC provided little reflection on issues of power imbalances and lack of transparency within the value chains. The 2011 IPO ordinance left a lot of maneuvering room on IPO structure and dynamics, but the PSAC did not consider the theoretical and technical deepening of the IPO concept as a priority. Although the PSAC strengthened IPO capacities (see paragraph 2.31), the following issues for a more equitable and inclusive value chain remain. First, only two groups of actors are explicitly represented in the IPO (namely, producers and agro-industries and exporters), whereas representatives of other actors essential to the proper functioning of the sector (for example, research, extension, and trade) are absent. Second, total transparency among different actor groups is required for achieving the IPOs' ultimate goal of equitable revenue sharing. However, although the price and cost structures of producers are public knowledge, those of agro-industries and exporters remain a black box. This inevitably implies unequal powers during price agreement negotiations, suspicions and dysfunctions, and a weakening of the IPOs' power and sustainability. The PSAC scarcely emphasized and addressed these transparency issues.<sup>19</sup> It could have better explored ideas proposed by producers and drawn lessons from (i) past failed experiments in the cotton and oil palm sectors on producers constructing their own processing plants to obtain reference data,<sup>20</sup> (ii) experiences in other countries where large cooperatives are shareholders in processing plants, and (iii) observations that informal prices remained widely enforced on producers in the field, despite selling prices being agreed on within the IPO.

2.36 Ultimately, the shortcomings in cooperative strengthening and related institutional disadvantages for producers compromised other project achievements and the project's long-term goal of increasing producer incomes.<sup>21</sup> The limited emphasis of the PSAC on removing these constraints demonstrates that it insufficiently recognized that sustainably improving productivity and market access is contingent on institutional development and improved value chain governance.<sup>22</sup>

2.37 The exact distribution of roles, responsibilities, and powers among MINADER, commodity councils, IPOs, and PPP platforms became increasingly, but still insufficiently, clear. Better clarification and dissemination of these roles required more systematic reflection, experimentation, and action from the PSAC. The most prominent example concerns the commodity councils, for which current roles strongly differ by sector, in line with the current capacities of the corresponding IPOs. With regard to their eventual fate, some interviewed high-level officials expressed the view that these councils are provisional only, until the IPOs are fully operational, whereas others stated that they are permanent in their critical regulatory function regardless of the IPO status.

The interrelationships between councils and IPOs may be insufficiently defined in legal terms, including how setups can be adapted as a function of value chain characteristics. Another example is the coffee-cocoa PPP platform, to which the PSAC eventually provided only limited logistical and technical support, according to PSAC interviewees. Although this PPP platform installed interesting thematic groups that had begun producing technical guides, PPAR interviews indicated that it had become entirely nonoperational since 2018, with diverging opinions on the underlying reasons (for example, lack of financing or lack of interest by leadership).

## **Other Outcomes**

### **What Worked**

2.38 PSAC activities led to several social and environmental co-benefits, as demonstrated by PPAR interviews and field observations. First, road maintenance and rehabilitation entailed a multitude of benefits for local communities, including access to education, access to health care, and time savings. Similar benefits were created by the project's support to community projects (see photos in appendix D), although their continuity after handover to other structures (such as the Rural Investment Fund) proved problematic. Second, higher labor productivity was achieved through planting material improvements, animal traction, and mechanization. In turn, this decreased the amount of arduous labor and reliance on child labor. Third, women's empowerment was stimulated through their representation as members in cooperatives. Employment opportunities were created for women, including as pollinators in the CNRA cocoa research centers, as researchers and technical specialists in various organizations, and by appointing a female manager for the center on training and mechanization in the cashew sector. Fourth, planting material improvements focused not only on higher yields but also on increased disease resistance, in turn reducing the need for phytosanitary treatment. Finally, the Implementation Completion and Results Report indicated that environmental and social safeguards had been mainstreamed in the implementation procedures of the IPOs and councils. This mainstreaming remains in place to date.

## **Overall Sustainability**

### **What Worked**

2.39 Achievements have been preserved or further expanded in specific sectors because of additional donor funding. The most prominent example is the fluid transition from the PSAC to the World Bank-financed Cashew Value Chain Competitiveness Project, the latter capitalizing on and further expanding achievements in the cashew sector. Activities in the cotton sector were continued after a four-year lag through AFD

funding. The same is expected for the cocoa sector if the World Bank–financed Cocoa Integrated Value Chain Development Project is approved.

### What Didn't Work

2.40 The results section has illustrated that while the PSAC has been largely effective in achieving its objectives, evidence on the sustainability of its results is more mixed. The trends for the productivity and market access pathways are highly similar: while project objectives were largely met, the structures put in place have not all persisted, and quite some efforts have been downscaled or discontinued after project closure (see paragraphs 2.27, 2.28, and 2.30). For the institutional development pathways, IPO activities were both effective and sustainable, whereas the project was ineffective in reinforcing cooperatives, with many problems persisting to date.

2.41 Limited sustainability has largely been caused by the achievements of this pilot project not being capitalized on by the government. The government did not capitalize on the PSAC's most promising activities, methods, and tools by integrating them into national or regional programs, be it the NAIP 2018–25 or the new Agropolis strategy. The PCU was completely dissolved instead of internalizing its structures and operation modes. Moreover, the co-financing system was abruptly terminated at project closure, which was very badly received by some implementing development partners, who even termed it a unilateral breach of contract. Even though the IPOs continued to finance operations with their own financial resources, the scale inevitably had to be significantly decreased. PPAR interviewees mentioned several major causes for this lack of capitalization. They indicated that the World Bank insufficiently prepared modalities ensuring project sustainability (see paragraph 2.12), too ambitiously assuming the private sector would be ready to take over project ownership and continuation without government involvement after closure. With regard to the government, the interviewees mentioned that there was weak government internalization during project implementation (see paragraphs 2.17, 2.19, and 2.20), along with lack of financial resources and disagreements on their use, lack of internal specialists, decreased relevance as a result of changes in the agricultural policy direction, and limited commitment to reform (see paragraph 2.9).

2.42 Lack of capitalization on achievements was compounded by insufficiently clear communication on the postproject phase, which gave rise to widespread expectations on PSAC continuation. The PAD stated that “the project is designed as the first phase of a national development program for selected value chains.... The project will support activities and institutional arrangement that, if successful, can be scaled up nation-wide” (World Bank 2013, 8). This conflicts with statements from officials during PPAR interviews that the PSAC was a project with a limited duration and that there had never

been any question of a second phase. Inconsistent communication led to diverging expectations on project continuation across implementing partners and beneficiaries. In view of the PSAC's explicit setup as a pilot project and the promising results it obtained, many expected to find continued support to generalize them and are to date still puzzled about why the experimental operations that showed unquestionable success have nevertheless been discontinued.

### **3. Lessons**

3.1 Project relevance and efficacy are enhanced by aligning projects with national strategies, building on existing institutional mechanisms and stakeholder consensus, and supporting ongoing activities. The PSAC adequately built on past and contemporary agricultural strategies, policies, and projects in Côte d'Ivoire. Its financial leverage enabled the scaling up and reinforcement of ongoing activities and working modes of the public, private, and cooperative institutions operating within the sector. This alignment ensured that the PSAC addressed relevant challenges on productivity, market access, and sectoral governance and realized a substantial impact despite its short time span. Comparatively limited achievements on improving governance underlined the importance of widespread buy-in and consensus across all stakeholders on the extent of institutional reforms during project appraisal.

3.2 Project efficiency and sustainability are enhanced by ensuring continuity in coordination and management staffing from design through implementation to postproject internalization. Limited involvement of PCU staff during PSAC design implied a transfer in ownership at the project's start and consequent implementation delays. Conversely, the government's involvement during PSAC implementation was more limited than foreseen, with regard to both senior leadership in the steering committee and technical focal points across departments. After closure, the PCU was completely dissolved instead of integrated within government structures. Ultimately, this led to weak capitalization on achievements after project closure.

3.3 Projects with short time frames need to set realistic goals on institutional development and governance improvement, while adapting to institutional and political risks, to be effective. The PSAC underestimated the complexity of, and the time required for, enhancing sectoral organizations and governance. Professionalizing cooperatives and IPOs into sustainable structures, while cementing good governance principles within the sector, is known to be a long-term process requiring elaborate support programs. Moreover, project implementation showed that institutional development critically depends on contextual factors, such as broad government buy-in and commitment to reform, and the government's human and financial resource capacity.

The project duration needs to be correspondingly adapted and its objectives calibrated to realistically achievable goals along an institutional development pathway.

3.4 Effective institutional development requires elaborate methodologies and monitoring frameworks, instead of merely end goals and flexible ad hoc approaches. The PSAC's methodology for enhancing sectoral organizations and governance was only approximately specified and was frequently implemented through ad hoc approaches for selected stakeholders, whereas the monitoring framework lacked indicators on cooperative and governance achievement. Consequently, institutional development achievements were limited and, to the extent they were achieved, poorly quantified. Effective institutional development and governance improvement require in-depth prior assessments, detailed and systematic methods for institutional reinforcement across all stakeholders, and a comprehensive monitoring framework with process-based outcome indicators. This requires sound capacity and expertise on the part of the World Bank team and the government and development partners, for example by involving institutional specialists.

3.5 Reinforcing the role of IPOs and producer cooperatives in agricultural value chains requires fulfillment of key prerequisites. Strengthening IPOs into accredited, recognized, and professionalized development partners can be a commendable approach on its own, but its utility could be questioned if other conditions remain unfulfilled. The experience of this project showed that buy-in from both the state and the private sector on a well-defined and well-balanced demarcation of roles and powers is needed to avoid a dynamic of competition, adversity, and conflict. It was also apparent from this project that a solid and loyal base of professionalized cooperatives is required to ensure true representativity. It also leads to a more equitable power distribution throughout the value chain, which is further promoted by total transparency between different actor groups. Strengthening producer cooperatives is equally contingent on a set of conditionalities, including well-defined strategies and procedures, an explicit choice on the cooperative type to be supported, and adequate certification and compensation modalities.

3.6 A diverse set of productivity enhancement interventions can support overcoming challenges of rural poverty, lack of competitiveness, demographic pressure, and land scarcity. The PSAC made significant strides in improving agricultural productivity, through increasing access to improved planting material, and providing technologies for enhanced labor productivity. Productivity enhancement provided opportunities in keeping up agricultural production with demographic growth, despite limited opportunities for agricultural land expansion. Importantly, to guide which productivity innovations are deployed and where, profound ex ante knowledge of the production base is essential, especially for perennial crops.



3.7 Sustainability of project achievements can be compromised if contingencies among development pathways are not recognized. The long-term goal of increasing producer incomes is typically conditional on simultaneous advances in multiple development pathways, such as increased productivity, improved market access, and strengthened governance. In the case of the PSAC specifically, further improving value chain governance will be critical to preserve progress made on productivity and market access.

3.8 A pilot project is only truly useful if capitalized on by the government. In view of limited financial resources and the fragile postcrisis context, this project appropriately applied an integrated intervention package in confined pilot areas to identify promising activities for progressive expansion. However, during design and implementation, it failed to develop strategies and mechanisms to achieve this expansion after project closure. In parallel, the government did not establish the support structures—adapted to its actual human and financial resource capacity—required for expansion after closure. As a result, rather than expanding project successes beyond the pilot areas after project closure, certain achievements on increasing productivity and market access were reduced or lost.

3.9 Co-financing provides critical leverage and ownership; however, sustained effects require co-management and arrangements for postproject continuation. The PSAC combined financial resources from a range of public and private partners to multiply its impact. Although co-financing can empower partners by enhancing their capacity and project ownership, this is a complex process involving distribution of powers and frequent negotiations on operations and budget allocations. The time required to achieve an equitable co-management dynamic often exceeds the short duration of a project. Moreover, the PSAC demonstrated that abrupt termination of co-financing at project closure without follow-up arrangements can damage trust relationships with implementing partners and significantly compromise the sustainability of project achievements.

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<sup>1</sup> Agricultural output per hectare and individual crop yields remain well below those of regional peers. Moreover, there is variation across the agroecological zones within the country: the southern forest zone generally has higher productivity than the northern savannah zone. Cash crops are also more concentrated in the former; cocoa, rubber, and oil palm form the basis of the forest zone's diversified production mix, whereas cotton and cashew are the driving cash crops in the savannah zone (World Bank 2013, 2021a).

<sup>2</sup> An interprofessional organization (IPO) is an agricultural value chain organization composed of agribusiness companies and farmers associations that aims to develop the industry while

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ensuring a fair distribution of value addition along the chain. IPOs also implement development programs with their own funding from voluntary member contributions (World Bank 2013). An agricultural council is an institution established by the government to play a regulatory role within the sector (World Bank 2013). As the Agriculture Sector Support Project (PSAC) explicitly aimed for project ownership by the private sector, the project was implemented by IPOs in the oil palm, rubber, and cotton sectors (by, respectively, the Oil Palm Interprofessional Association [AIPH], the Association of Natural Rubber Professionals of Côte d’Ivoire [APROMAC], and the Cotton Interprofessional Organization [INTERCOTON]). In the cashew and cocoa sectors, however, the PSAC was implemented by the sector councils (the Cotton and Cashew Council [CCA] and the Coffee and Cocoa Council [CCC], respectively), as IPOs did not exist within these sectors at project design. Project implementation was further supported by the National Rural Support Agency, the National Agricultural Research Center, and the Interprofessional Fund for Agricultural Research and Advisory Services—all three parastatal structures that play a key role in agricultural research and extension in Côte d’Ivoire.

<sup>3</sup> The ordinance No. 2011-473 on agricultural IPOs is an ordinance issued by the government in December 2011 (Côte d’Ivoire 2011). It sets out the definitions, principles, and rules governing agricultural IPOs and specifies their missions, the internal modalities of representation, and the framework of collaboration with the institutions representing the government. It also specifies the criteria based on which an IPO is officially recognized and accredited.

<sup>4</sup> A total of 67.6 billion francs was disbursed by project closure: 26.8 billion francs by the International Development Association, 17.8 billion francs by the French Development Agency, 17.2 billion francs by IPOs and councils, 4.2 billion francs by beneficiaries, and 1.9 billion francs by the treasury (Côte d’Ivoire MINADER 2018).

<sup>5</sup> For example, in the rubber sector, although farmers had to cover 40–50 percent of improved seedling costs under traditional subsidy schemes, the PSAC reduced this to 5 percent, according to Project Performance Assessment Report interviewees.

<sup>6</sup> Although several respondents reported on dispersion of activities, indicating that the three pathways may have been implemented in isolation at times or in specific places.

<sup>7</sup> The criteria for official recognition and accreditation of IPOs are specified in the 2011 ordinance on IPOs (see endnote 3; Côte d’Ivoire 2011). The Association of Natural Rubber Professionals of Côte d’Ivoire was accredited in February 2020. The cashew IPO was accredited in October 2022.

<sup>8</sup> The websites of the Network of Farmers Organizations and Agricultural Producers of West Africa (<https://roppa-afrique.org>) and Inter-réseaux (<https://inter-reseaux.org/en>)—the organizations that have been following the evolution of farmer organizations in the subregion for years—show a multitude of examples.

<sup>9</sup> The lack of success of traditional approaches has also been demonstrated in the last decades by a vast evidence base from Inter-réseaux, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and other institutions and was further confirmed by the interviews conducted for the Project Performance Assessment Report.

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<sup>10</sup> As an example, postharvest losses for cereal grains in Côte d’Ivoire are estimated at 11–18 percent (APHLIS 2021).

<sup>11</sup> The Gender Innovation Lab also conducted a detailed study on the impacts of productivity interventions in the rubber sector (Donald, Goldstein, and Rouanet 2022).

<sup>12</sup> Although the National Agricultural Research Center distributed planting material for a total area of 3,936 hectares in 2015–16, this figure increased to 6,705 hectares in 2016–17 because of the increase in coated seed production capacity (National Agricultural Research Center data).

<sup>13</sup> Similar concerns on insufficient production base knowledge—with associated price and processing capacity risks—were also raised for the rubber sector.

<sup>14</sup> For example, for the roads rehabilitated by the PSAC (1,740 kilometers in total), only 5 percent received (or will receive) maintenance by the Road Management Agency (AGEROUTE) every year between 2019 and 2024.

<sup>15</sup> See endnote 7.

<sup>16</sup> Although it should be acknowledged that a significant number of training sessions allowed for specific improvements of certain problems.

<sup>17</sup> See endnote 9.

<sup>18</sup> For example, the final implementation report notes that for the rubber sector, the expectations of the directors of the cooperative societies mainly concern the purchase price of rubber from producers, which is too low to finance operations and services to be provided to members. In fact, this is a problem common to all sectors.

<sup>19</sup> Transparency issues, and the differentiation between producers and agro-industries and exporters in particular, are a recurring and widely recognized problem of IPOs in Côte d’Ivoire and the subregion.

<sup>20</sup> The cashew factory in Yamoussoukro could play such a role if its cost structure is made completely transparent and widely disseminated within the IPO.

<sup>21</sup> For example, the final implementation report states that according to field surveys, more than 70 percent of producers lack the financial means to employ a laborer to maintain their rubber fields, whereas less than 40 percent of producers implement the knowledge gained from their training because of a lack of means.

<sup>22</sup> This contingency is also demonstrated by the political and institutional limitations for operationalizing the national strategy for road maintenance and rehabilitation (see paragraph 2.30).

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## Appendix A. Project Design and Ratings

**Project design.** The Agriculture Sector Support Project's support to government reforms in the agricultural sector focused on three elements of value chain development: production technologies, markets, and governance. The project implemented an integrated package of interventions in pilot areas, tailored to five important cash crops in Côte d'Ivoire, given differences in the levels of development across them (appendix D). Correspondingly, Agriculture Sector Support Project components were organized by cash crop value chain, with a dedicated component 1 on cocoa, plus the couplings of rubber and oil palm (component 2), and cotton and cashew (component 3). A fourth project component dealt with project implementation and support.

**Component 1**—Promotion of the public-private partnership platform for sustainable cocoa development in southwest Côte d'Ivoire (appraisal estimate: \$10.0 million; actual at project closing: \$9.7 million). The goal of this component was to support the Coffee and Cocoa Council in establishing the coffee-cocoa public-private partnership platform and in implementing the Quality, Quantity, Growth program on improving cocoa productivity and livelihoods. Its subcomponents included (i) support to training programs on good agricultural practices, enhancement of the control of cocoa diseases through designing an early-warning system and pest management plan,<sup>1</sup> increase of production and mass dissemination of improved planting materials to replant estates, and design of a market-based funding mechanism for farmer access to inputs; (ii) rehabilitation and maintenance of feeder roads and support to subprojects implemented by cocoa cooperatives; and (iii) fiduciary, operational, and monitoring and evaluation assistance to the public-private partnership platform and support to farmer cooperatives' restructuring, capacity building, and management.

**Component 2**—Support to smallholder rubber and oil palm extension in southeast Côte d'Ivoire (appraisal estimate: \$16.0 million; actual at project closing: \$16.0 million). The goals of this component were to support the government and interprofessional organizations (IPOs) to improve links among farmers and agribusiness companies; to strengthen inclusion of smallholders, women, and youth into the supply chain; and to ensure social and environmental sustainability. Its subcomponents included (i) establishment of nurseries and distribution of improved planting material and kits for (re)planting smallholder plantations; (ii) rehabilitation and maintenance of feeder roads and support to environmental and social impact assessments studies; and (iii) fiduciary, operational, and monitoring and evaluation assistance to the IPOs (for securing accreditation and licensing); support to rubber cooperatives' restructuring, capacity building, and management; and piloting of market links between two oil palm cooperatives and one processing company.

**Component 3**—Support to the cotton sector and promotion of cashew processing in central and northern Côte d’Ivoire (appraisal estimate \$16.0 million; actual at project closing \$16.0 million). The goals of this component were to strengthen the cotton sector development strategy established since 2008 and improve the overall performance of the cashew value chain. Its subcomponents included (i) support to agricultural research programs and extension services on improved planting material and good agricultural practices, and support to development of animal traction in cotton production; (ii) rehabilitation and maintenance of feeder roads and extension of a pilot markets and price information system initiated in 2009 for cashew (collection, processing, and dissemination of real-time price and market information, training sessions, and advice to farmers on markets and trade); and (iii) reestablishment of the cashew IPO; fiduciary, operational, and monitoring and evaluation assistance to the IPOs; restructuring and capacity building of cooperatives; and support to domestic cashew processing through developing medium-size industrial units. However, the domestic cashew processing component was dropped at project restructuring because of high prices of raw cashew nuts and consequently lack of competitiveness with exporting (World Bank 2018).

**Component 4**—Project implementation and support to sector coordination (appraisal estimate: \$8.0 million; actual at project closing: \$6.0 million). The goal of this component was to facilitate and ensure proper coordination of activities, including (i) project coordination, management, and monitoring and evaluation and (ii) support to sector coordination for the development of strategies and policy framework to coordinate and implement the National Agricultural Investment Plan.

### Côte d’Ivoire Agriculture Sector Support Project (P119308)

Tables A.1 and A.2 show the project ratings from the ICR, the ICR Review, and the PPAR.

**Table A.1. ICR, ICR Review, and PPAR Ratings**

Indicator	ICR	ICR Review	PPAR
Outcome	Moderately satisfactory	Moderately satisfactory	Moderately satisfactory
Risk to development outcome	Moderate	—	—
Bank performance	Moderately satisfactory	Moderately satisfactory	Moderately satisfactory
Quality of monitoring and evaluation	Modest	Modest	Modest

Sources: World Bank 2018, 2019.

Note: The ICR is a self-evaluation by the responsible Global Practice. The ICR Review is an intermediate Independent Evaluation Group product that seeks to independently validate the findings of the ICR. ICR = Implementation Completion and Results Report; PPAR = Project Performance Assessment Report; — = not available.

**Table A.2. Ratings Table: ICR Review and Project Performance Assessment Report**

ICR Review	PPAR
<p>Relevance of the objectives</p> <p>The ICR Review rated the relevance of objectives as <b>substantial</b>. It indicated that the project was well aligned with the World Bank Country Partnership Framework for Côte d'Ivoire FY16–19—specifically with objective 1 on “improving productivity in agriculture/agribusiness value chains”—and with the national government’s development priorities as articulated in the National Agricultural Investment Plan.</p> <p>The ICR Review further explained that at project appraisal, Côte d'Ivoire was emerging from a decade of political instability, which undermined agricultural growth and exacerbated poverty. Agriculture, especially the main export commodities (cocoa, rubber, oil palm, cotton, and cashew), was expected to drive postconflict economic growth and poverty alleviation in the country. Correspondingly, the PSAC aimed at supporting the country’s agricultural transition to become more competitive, sustainable, and private sector led and to ensure sustained increases in producers’ incomes. The ICR Review noted that the focus on five agricultural commodity crop sectors in different regions across the country with variable value chain designs could have been more contained.</p>	<p>This PPAR rates the relevance of objectives as <b>high</b> on the basis that the PSAC’s objectives were not only relevant throughout its entire project cycle but remain so to date. As illustrated by the ICR Review and in paragraph 1.4, the PSAC’s objectives were aligned to the World Bank Country Partnership Framework for Côte d'Ivoire FY16–19, which was extended until the end of FY21. They are also well aligned with Côte d'Ivoire’s current National Development Plan 2021–25 and National Agricultural Investment Plan 2018–25, as the national government continues to focus on boosting agricultural competitiveness and accelerating sustainable private sector–led growth (see paragraph 1.4). Several World Bank–financed projects under implementation or preparation have expanded and built on the achievements of the PSAC, such as the Cashew Value Chain Competitiveness Project (ongoing) and the Cocoa Integrated Value Chain Development Project (in the pipeline).</p>
<p>Achievement of objectives (efficacy)</p> <p>The efficacy of the three objectives contained in the PDO was rated as follows.</p> <p>Objective 1 (Improve Access to Technologies for Smallholder Farmers) was rated as <b>substantial</b>.</p> <p>The ICR reported that this objective was surpassed. An estimated total area of 50,678 ha was planted or replanted with improved material, against a target of 45,500 ha. According to informal interview data reported in the ICR, cocoa farmers revealed that disseminated cocoa hybrids produced 1.5 ton/ha of cocoa in 18 months against 500 kg/ha in three years for traditional varieties. For cotton, secondary data from INTERCOTON showed an increasing trend in cotton yields from the start of the project: before the project (from 2005 to 2011), average yield was estimated at 937 kg/ha, whereas during the project (from 2012 to 2017), it increased to 1,037 kg/ha. For cashew nuts, an ex post stakeholder survey revealed that farmers who adopted the new practices experienced a yield increase of 52% (from 325 kg/ha to 521 kg/ha) compared with the nonadopters. As for rubber and oil palm, maturity was not reached by project closure; hence, agricultural productivity outcomes as a result of the project’s intervention were not observed.</p>	<p>The efficacy of the three objectives contained in the PDO was rated as follows.</p> <p>The PPAR concurs with objective 1 being rated as <b>substantial</b>.</p> <p>The PPAR demonstrates that this objective has been largely achieved, with significant improvements in production and productivity across all target value chains. Secondary data, field observations, and stakeholder interviews confirmed productivity increases for cocoa, cotton, and cashew. As for rubber, the trees planted under the PSAC are just entering into production, hence increased productivity due to the PSAC could still not be established.</p> <p>Related improvements have been listed in chapter 2. Structures for accessing and establishing improved planting material were established or their capacity reinforced, and they are generally still in place (see paragraph 2.25). The PSAC also strengthened the capacity of relevant institutions (ANADER, CNRA, FIRCA, councils, and IPOs) in various ways and in a sustainable manner (see paragraph 2.26).</p> <p>The PPAR also highlights some weaknesses. Access to some production inputs has not proven fully sustainable. A notable example is in the cocoa sector, in which the production and dissemination of improved seeds have been abruptly halted by the government since 2018 to avoid risk of global</p>



ICR Review	PPAR
<p>Objective 2 (Improve Smallholder Farmers' Access to Markets) was rated as <b>substantial</b>.</p> <p>The ICR provided evidence that outputs under this objective were also exceeded: 6,482 km of roads were maintained or rehabilitated against a target of 5,860 km. In turn, (i) the time to reach the main transportation road was reduced on average by 65%, facilitating farmers in transferring their commodities to the market; (ii) the turnover rate to collect products from the farm and channel them to the main processing plants or markets was multiplied on average by a factor of seven; and (iii) postharvest losses were reduced, and the quality of marketed products improved. However, the ICR Review also indicates that the project fell short in making inroads into sustainable certification and traceability of value chains, with some improvements in the oil palm value chain but lack of implementation of cocoa certification initiatives.</p>	<p>overproduction and price collapses (see paragraphs 2.27 and 2.28).</p> <p>The PPAR concurs with objective 2 being rated as <b>substantial</b>.</p> <p>Next to indicator achievements, PPAR interviews with PSAC beneficiaries demonstrated that this pathway on improving roads and market access is widely considered as the most prominent or impactful among the PSAC's interventions. In addition, the PSAC successfully initiated the development of a national strategy for road maintenance and rehabilitation including the technical instruments to ensure its implementation (see paragraph 2.29). Simultaneously, the PPAR highlights some weaknesses: road maintenance efforts decreased significantly after project closure, and to date the national strategy for road maintenance and rehabilitation is still not operational (see paragraph 2.30).</p>
<p>Objective 3 (Enhance Governance of the Selected Value Chains) was rated as <b>modest</b>.</p> <p>The ICR Review highlights that governance results achieved were mixed. Substantial results were achieved in the cotton value chain, whereas they were modest in the other value chains. In the cotton sector, there was a formal recognition of INTERCOTON as an IPO. In the cocoa sector, the cleaning up of illegitimate cooperatives was initiated only during the last year of the project, and gains were not substantial. In the cashew sector, an IPO was not established. Although the Oil Palm Interprofessional Association secured IPO accreditation in the oil palm sector, this was not the case for the Association of Natural Rubber Professionals of Côte d'Ivoire in the rubber sector.</p>	<p>The PPAR concurs with objective 3 being rated as <b>modest</b>.</p> <p>Although the PSAC has significantly strengthened and professionalized the IPOs (and councils) across the targeted value chains (see paragraph 2.31), there have been several shortcomings. First, only two IPOs were officially accredited during project implementation, whereas the other intended two were accredited only one to three years after project closure. Second, the PSAC has strongly fallen short in strengthening producer cooperatives, leading to low performance and a persistent credibility crisis (see paragraph 2.33). Third, the PSAC provided little reflection on issues of power imbalances and lack of transparency within the value chains (see paragraph 2.35). Finally, although the PSAC helped in clarifying the exact distribution of roles among MINADER, commodity councils, IPOs, and PPPs, it is still insufficient (see paragraph 2.37).</p>
<p>The ICR Review rated the overall efficacy of the PSAC as weakly <b>substantial</b>, combining the above-mentioned ratings of the three objectives.</p>	<p>The PPAR demonstrates that sustainably improving productivity and market access is contingent on institutional development and improved value chain governance. Significant achievements were made for objectives 1 and 2, but not for objective 3, whereas the PPAR shows that there are considerable doubts on the sustainability of various achievements. The PPAR rates the overall efficacy of the PSAC as <b>substantial</b> but only moderately so.</p>
<p>Efficiency</p> <p>The ICR Review rated the efficiency of the project as <b>substantial</b> based on the following.</p>	<p>The PPAR concurs with the efficiency of the project being rated as <b>substantial</b>.</p> <p>The PPAR did not reconsider the calculations of economic analysis, financial analysis, and cost-</p>

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**ICR Review**

With regard to the economic analysis, the economic rate of return for the whole project was calculated at 27% at appraisal and at 29% at project closure.

In terms of the financial analysis, the financial internal rate of return for the average production models per value chain ranged from 16% for oil palm to 113% for cashew. It is emphasized that subsidies were necessary to support technology uptake. In the absence of subsidies, small farmers would have experienced difficulties to cover their early negative cash flows.

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

Finally, in terms of operational efficiency, the project experienced administrative difficulties leading to delays in kicking off the project activities, delayed effectiveness and disbursement, and weak proactivity on the part of the PCU in anticipating and resolving problems. After the Mid-Term Review, project management and coordination improved.

**Outcome**

Given the substantial relevance of the project's objectives, the substantial efficacy with significant shortcomings in objective 3 that limited the overall impact of the project, and the substantial efficiency, the ICR Review rated the overall project outcome as **moderately satisfactory**.

**Risk to development outcome**

The ICR Review stated that the main risk for the sustainability of the project's gains in technology adoption and market access was the absence of effective governance in the commodity value chains. The project's partial failure to establish strong producer associations and IPOs as key elements of effective value chain governance entailed substantial risks.

The ICR Review indicated furthermore that the sustainability of rubber technologies could be limited if the heavy subsidy of planting material was progressively discontinued. It identified the development of other segments of the selected value chains, such as processing, as essential to sustain productivity and economic gains.

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**PPAR**

effectiveness, therefore concurring with the ICR Review assessment.

The PPAR focused on evaluating the project's operational efficiency. It confirms that the project experienced operational difficulties that delayed its early implementation. A notable example, in addition to those already mentioned in the ICR Review, is the PSAC's co-financing setup, involving a range of public, private, and associative actors. Despite the setup being highly innovative, the partners involved each had their own procedures for collecting, allocating, and controlling financial resources. The complexity of ensuring that these financial flows could be combined and disbursed in correspondence with agricultural calendars was insufficiently considered during project preparation. The need to remediate this lack of thorough preparation was one of the causes for the slow implementation of project operations during the first two years. However, the PPAR also demonstrates how operational efficiency improved after the Mid-Term Review (see paragraph 2.13).

Given relevance is rated as high, efficacy as substantial but with moderate shortcomings in the achievement of objectives, and efficiency as substantial, the PPAR rates the overall project outcome as **moderately satisfactory**.

This PPAR demonstrates that most achievements of the PSAC have been preserved (or expanded in specific sectors), in particular in case of additional donor funding and follow-on projects. A notable example is the smooth transition from the PSAC to the Cashew Value Chain Competitiveness Project, with the latter capitalizing on and further developing achievements in the cashew sector. The Cashew Value Chain Competitiveness Project is supporting local cashew processing, as intended at PPAR appraisal. Activities in the cotton sector have also been consolidated after a four-year lag because of French Development Agency funding. The same can be expected for the cocoa sector if the World Bank's Cocoa Integrated Value Chain Development Project is approved.

Nevertheless, the PPAR concurs with the ICR Review that the main constraint to the sustainability of technology adoption and market access gains remains the lack of effective value chain governance. Moreover, it demonstrates there was no rigorous and systematic strategy to capitalize on achievements and ensure sustainability after the project's closure (see paragraph 2.12), which

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**ICR Review**

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**PPAR**

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## Bank performance

## Quality at entry

The ICR Review rated the Bank performance at entry as **moderately unsatisfactory**.

The ICR Review indicated that there was limited consistency between the substance of the PAD, which stressed PPP and institutional development as the drivers of market and technology access, and the PDO statement, which placed the three strategic pathways (productivity enhancement, access to markets, and institutional governance) on equal footing. This led to some ambiguities in implementation pathways and what the project would be held accountable for in terms of the hierarchy of the PDO objectives. The ICR Review also highlighted that the results framework did not have well-defined outcome indicators and that monitoring and evaluation arrangements were an additional weak point.

effectively led to limited capitalization on achievements and downscaling and discontinuation of certain activities (see paragraphs 2.41 and 2.42). The government has generally not taken advantage of the PSAC's most promising activities, methods, and tools by incorporating them into national or regional programs. For example, road maintenance efforts slowed down after project closure because of limited resources. No follow-up projects were noted for the oil palm and rubber sectors.

The PPAR concurs with the Bank performance at entry being rated as **moderately unsatisfactory**.

It concurs with the noted inconsistency between the substance of the PAD and the PDO statement. The PPAR further states that the project was overly ambitious given its limited implementation period and budget, entailing critical risks for the envisaged institutional development, governance improvement, productivity improvements, and overall project scope (see paragraph 2.7). Institutional and political risks were insufficiently recognized or underestimated (see paragraph 2.9). The assessment also found that weaknesses in preparing the complex fiduciary procedures that had to accommodate co-financing by public, private, and associative actors contributed to initial implementation delays (see paragraph 2.11). However, the PPAR also demonstrates that the PSAC's participatory design successfully built on and further reinforced existing institutional mechanisms (see paragraph 2.3). The project also drew on the strategies, laws, and regulations that guided agricultural policy at the time, thereby facilitating economic growth (see paragraph 2.2).

## Quality of supervision

The ICR Review rated the quality of supervision as **moderately satisfactory**.

The ICR Review reported that the World Bank supervision team initially faced difficulties in clearly identifying the priority areas of focus. However, the team became more proactively involved in closely monitoring the project implementation after the Mid-Term Review. The ICR Review indicated that the project had three different task team leaders during its lifetime, but that this did not prohibit activities from moving along and key achievements from being achieved.

The PPAR concurs with the quality of supervision being rated as **moderately satisfactory**.

The World Bank demonstrated flexible management and adequate responsiveness. Although the project start-up was difficult and much slower than planned in the PAD, the Mid-Term Review helped restructure the project in a realistic manner, abandoning unsuccessful subcomponents and reallocating funds to strengthen or expand healthy operations. This evaluation agrees with the ICR Review that the World Bank became more proactive after the Mid-Term Review.

## Overall Bank performance

The ICR Review rated the overall Bank performance as **moderately satisfactory**.

The PPAR concurs with the overall Bank performance being rated as **moderately satisfactory**.

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ICR Review	PPAR
<p>Quality of monitoring and evaluation</p> <p>The ICR Review rated the overall quality of monitoring and evaluation as <b>modest</b>.</p> <p>Some outcome measures were not well defined in the results framework. In addition, the ICR Review pointed to the weak capacity of the PCU to regularly monitor and report on progress for some outputs and to limited supervision support from MINADER. Subsequently, web-based monitoring and evaluation software was developed and used to monitor output and outcome indicators and procurement and financial activities. The ICR Review reported that several surveys and evaluation studies were conducted, mainly by the National Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics and the Gender Innovation Lab. However, the scope of these studies was limited to only two of the five value chains (rubber and cotton). It is also mentioned that given the limitation of the monitoring and evaluation framework to track development outcomes or objectives, secondary information had to be used to inform the ICR.</p>	<p>The PPAR concurs with the overall quality of monitoring and evaluation being rated as <b>modest</b>.</p> <p>The PPAR reports the following additional shortcoming in monitoring and evaluation: the monitoring framework was inadequate for the institutional development pathway (see paragraph 2.8), in particular for cooperative strengthening (see paragraph 2.344).</p>

Source: Independent Evaluation Group.

Note: ANADER = National Rural Support Agency; CNRA = National Agricultural Research Center; FIRCA = Interprofessional Fund for Agricultural Research and Advisory Services; FY = fiscal year; ICR = Implementation Completion and Results Report; INTERCOTON = Cotton Interprofessional Organization; IPO = interprofessional organization; MINADER = Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development; PAD = Project Appraisal Document; PCU = Project Coordination Unit; PDO = project development objective; PPAR = Project Performance Assessment Report; PPP = public-private partnership; PSAC = Agriculture Sector Support Project.

## References

World Bank. 2018. "Côte d'Ivoire—Agriculture Sector Support Project." Implementation Completion and Results Report ICR00004441, World Bank, Washington, DC.

World Bank. 2019. "Côte d'Ivoire—Agriculture Sector Support Project." Implementation Completion and Results Report Review ICR00004441, Independent Evaluation Group, World Bank, Washington, DC.

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<sup>1</sup> This was converted at Mid-Term Review to reinforcing the existing early-warning system managed by the National Agricultural Research Center.

# **Appendix B. Fiduciary, Environmental, and Social Aspects**

## **Financial Management**

Regarding financial management, the Implementation Completion and Results Report Review highlighted that most of the financial management teams in the implementing agencies faced delays in recruiting specialized accountants, including the limited knowledge these accountants have on World Bank procedures (World Bank 2019). Training on World Bank financial management procedures and capacity-building initiatives (installation of a computerized accounting system, procedures manual, and so on) have been undertaken to address this problem.

## **Procurement**

The Implementation Completion and Results Report Review noted that setbacks on the procurement of goods and services were occasionally encountered, as none of the implementing agencies had experience with the World Bank's procurement procedures (World Bank 2019). However, after the corrective actions implemented during project reviews, procurement performance improved significantly.

## **Environmental and Social Safeguards**

As stated in the Implementation Completion and Results Report Review, based on the environmental category B of the project at the time of its appraisal, environmental and social safeguards documents were prepared and disclosed as required. During implementation, there were minor instances of road encroachment on established crop plantations within the road right-of-way and partial damage to crops that were promptly addressed. The Implementation Completion and Results Report underscored that environmental and social safeguards had been mainstreamed in the implementation procedures of the interprofessional organizations and councils (World Bank 2018). The Project Performance Assessment Report found that this mainstreaming remains in place to date.

## **References**

World Bank. 2018. "Côte d'Ivoire—Agriculture Sector Support Project." Implementation Completion and Results Report ICR00004441, World Bank, Washington, DC.

World Bank. 2019. "Côte d'Ivoire—Agriculture Sector Support Project." Implementation Completion and Results Report Review ICR00004441, Independent Evaluation Group, World Bank, Washington, DC.

## Appendix C. Methods and Evidence

This report is a Project Performance Assessment Report (PPAR). This instrument and its methodology are described at <https://ieg.worldbankgroup.org/methodology/PPAR>.

This PPAR is part of a cluster of PPARs on technology and innovation in the agriculture sector. This PPAR cluster aims at increasing understanding on how agricultural technologies are used in the World Bank portfolio to increase agricultural productivity and build integrated value chains and on whether, and to what extent, technology transfer, adoption, and impacts are sustained. The Agriculture Sector Support Project complied with the inclusion criteria for the cluster (has a completed Implementation Completion and Results Report Review; includes technology innovations to enhance productivity; includes value chain aspects; has adaptable and transferable project design) and was selected in a complementary fashion with other projects to compose a PPAR cluster covering different aspects of agricultural innovation through technology.

This PPAR used a mixed methods approach and was conducted in three stages. Stage I consisted of a literature and key document and data review, a stakeholder mapping exercise, and exploratory interviews with key stakeholders. In stage II, a team of Independent Evaluation Group staff and consultants conducted a three-week field mission in Côte d'Ivoire, which included semistructured group and individual interviews with various stakeholders and site visits. In stage III, this PPAR was drafted, presenting the main evaluative findings and lessons related to the project, based on triangulation of existing and newly collected evidence. Further information on the first two stages is provided below.

### Stage I: Desk Review and Exploratory Interviews from Washington, DC

The preparatory desk phase included the following:

- Desk review of available key documents (Project Appraisal Document, Implementation Status and Results Reports, Mid-Term Review report, Implementation Completion and Results Report, Implementation Completion and Results Report Review, World Bank Country Documents, Gender Innovation Lab impact assessments, Government and Project Coordination Unit end-of-project evaluation reports, and so on). This review enabled the establishment of a gap map, clearly describing the remaining gaps in information and questions.
- Stakeholder mapping: a tentative list of stakeholders was developed and then expanded through snowball sampling.

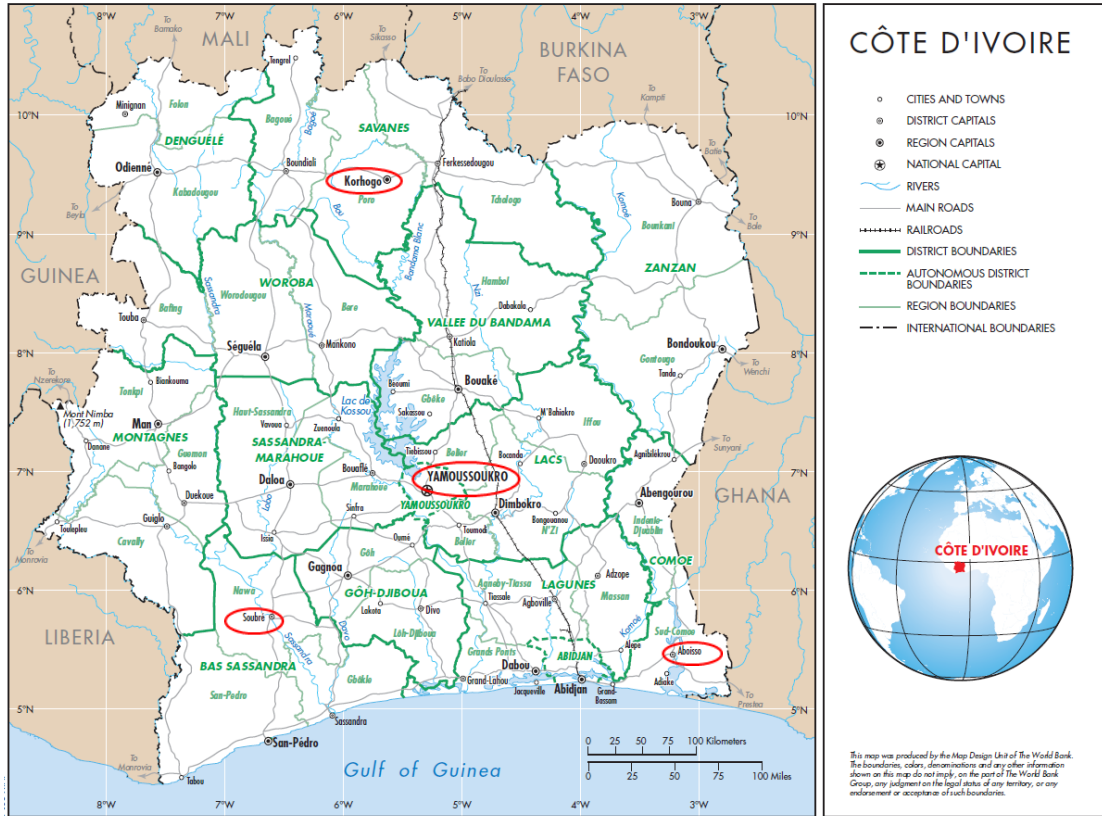
- Exploratory interviews with key stakeholders and development of a comprehensive interview protocol and stakeholder questionnaire templates.

## Stage II: Field Mission in Côte d'Ivoire

A team of Independent Evaluation Group staff and consultants conducted a field mission in Côte d'Ivoire from June 6, 2022, to June 23, 2022. The field mission included the following:

- Semistructured group and individual interviews with staff from the World Bank, Project Coordination Unit, relevant government ministries and agencies, interprofessional organizations and commodity councils, sectoral bodies, donors, development partners, research institutes, processors and export companies, and farmers and farmer organizations. Most interviews were conducted in person; virtual meetings, using Microsoft Teams software, were used only if respondents could not be physically present. The semistructured interview questions focused on four areas: (i) long-term adoption dynamics and crop productivity outcomes; (ii) key explanatory factors for (the lack of) institutional development of the value chains, and how this in turn impacted sectoral governance and performance; (iii) appropriateness of the project's financial setup, and how financing evolved after project closure; and (iv) higher-level outcomes (namely, producers' incomes and export competitiveness), and how these have been impacted by interplay of the three strategic pathways and the financial setup.
- Site visits to verify the status of technology adoption and infrastructure. Field visits were conducted to the main intervention sites of the project: Aboisso for the oil palm and rubber sectors, Soubré for the cocoa sector, Korhogo for the cotton sector, and Korhogo and Yamoussoukro for the cashew sector (figure C.1).
- Collection of additional reports and data on activities and results from implementing agencies.

Figure C.1. Map of Côte d'Ivoire and Indication of Field Visit Locations



Source: World Bank, adapted by the Independent Evaluation Group.



## **Appendix D. Additional Information**

### **Description of Production Systems and Value Chains at Project Appraisal**

This section is reproduced from the Agriculture Sector Support Project's Project Appraisal Document (World Bank 2013) to reflect the status of crop production and value chain development at project design and appraisal.

#### **Cocoa**

The cocoa sector constitutes the central pillar of the rural economy, with approximately 800,000 farmers involved. However, Côte d'Ivoire's leading role as the world's top cocoa producer is threatened by stagnating productivity because of aging plantations requiring replacement, low yields, deteriorated quality, and disease spreading. Moreover, the subsector is adversely affected by poor transport conditions, heavy taxation, and discrediting of most producer organizations. As a result, most cocoa farmers have fallen below the poverty line. The government launched a sector reform in November 2011, which reaffirmed the central role of the private sector in the value chain management through a public-private partnership embodied by the Coffee and Cocoa Council, acknowledged the need to strengthen producer associations and their involvement in the sector management, and reduced fiscal and parafiscal levies. The government also initiated the major Quality, Quantity, Growth program to improve on-farm productivity, as replanting of cocoa with high-yield varieties and improved management practices could triple output per hectare.

#### **Rubber and Oil Palm**

The rubber and oil palm sectors have rapidly expanded as a result of increasing international prices, with Côte d'Ivoire being the largest African exporter of both commodities. The two value chains are well structured in relation to a mix of small-, medium-, and large-scale plantations (100,000 and 36,500 farmers involved for rubber and oil palm, respectively). The government's 7th Rubber Development Plan and 3rd Oil Palm Development Plan aim to double production by 2020, for rubber largely on small- and medium-scale plantations. However, the fast expansion raises social risks, with large investment interests and high starting capital needs threatening to obstruct smallholders from entering or staying in the value chains. Land tenure insecurity and poor transport conditions affect producers at all scales. Furthermore, environmental risks demand for developing and enforcing appropriate certification guidelines.

## **Cotton**

Cotton has historically been the foundation of the economy in northern Côte d'Ivoire. However, the sector was hit hard by the crises in the early 2000s, which isolated the northern zones from their main (overseas) markets and deteriorated sector governance. As a result, production and the number of producers fell with 70 percent by 2008. In that same year, a rehabilitation program was launched to build an interprofessional organization and regulatory agency for the value chain, confirming the liberalized institutional framework of the sector established in 2002 that forbade monopolistic arrangements for services provisioning or marketing. This led to a remarkable recovery in production and number of producers in subsequent years, with 104,000 farmers involved in 2013. Continued growth will require (i) improved transport infrastructure to enhance market access, (ii) increased mechanization and improved agricultural practices to enhance productivity, (iii) rebuilding capacity and cohesion of producer organizations to become truly credible and equitable partners to the ginners, and (iv) clarifying institutional roles and enforcing transparency. A new government strategy for the cotton sector was launched in March 2013.

## **Cashew**

The cashew sector strongly expanded in recent years, with its 250,000 farmers involved propelling Côte d'Ivoire to the world's second largest producer and top exporter of raw cashew nuts. Remarkably, this happened without any government support and with difficulties for most producing areas to access Abidjan as port of export. However, current productivity is very low (average yields of 300 kilograms per hectare compared with up to 2,000 kilograms per hectare in Vietnam) and quality substandard, requiring improved varieties, agricultural practices, and storage. Domestic processing is also less than 5 percent, resulting in missed opportunities for value addition and employment. A new government strategy for the cashew sector was launched in March 2013.

## **Data on Results Achievement**

The Implementation Completion and Results Report contained a range of indicators on results achieved for project outputs and outcomes (World Bank 2018). This first included indicators from the Agriculture Sector Support Project results framework, which are reproduced in table D.1. Moreover, the Implementation Completion and Results Report explicitly acknowledged that some outcome measures were not well defined in the results framework and that it lacked proper indicators to measure achievements for markets and governance (project development objectives 2 and 3). Therefore, the Implementation Completion and Results Report used additional information sources to assess project effectiveness, among others the Project Coordination Unit's ex post

evaluation survey and impact evaluations performed by the Gender Innovation Lab. A key selection of these additional results is presented in table D.2.

**Table D.1. Results Indicators from the Agriculture Sector Support Project Results Framework**

PDO	Indicator	End Target <sup>a</sup>	End Value
PDO indicators			
All	Number of direct project beneficiaries	179,100	200,805
	Female beneficiaries (%)	0	12
1	Areas of village plantations with improved planting material (ha)	45,500	50,678
	Cocoa (ha)	12,000	13,662
	Rubber (ha)	18,500	19,625
	Oil palm (ha)	15,000	17,391
2	Rural roads maintained or rehabilitated under the project (km)	5,908	6,482
3	Share of processed cashew in total export of cashew nuts (%)	25	0
	Total amount of funding from interprofessional investments funds established or strengthened with project support (million CFAF)	15,000	15,540
Intermediate results indicators			
1	Number of cocoa farmers trained in good agricultural practices	13,000	19,727
1	Number of farmers who have partially or completely replanted with improved plant material (cocoa)	6,700	12,000
1	Number of socioeconomic subprojects co-financed with cocoa farmer cooperatives	69	69
1	Number of rubber and oil palm producers having benefited from a technology supported by the project	14,750	19,844
1	Number of cotton producers having adopted a technology supported by the project	115,000	88,364
1	Total cotton production	350,000	413,205
1	Animal traction kits provided to cotton producers under the project	20,000	20,500
3	Number of rubber and oil palm cooperatives benefiting from project support in capacity building	21	21
3	Number of cotton cooperatives benefiting of capacity building from the project	120	120
3	Number of value chains in accordance with the ordinance No. 2011-473 on IPOs	4	2
	Rubber	1	0
	Oil palm	1	1
	Cotton	1	1
	Cashew	1	0

Source: World Bank 2018.

Note: IPO = interprofessional organization; PDO = project development objective.

a. Several of which were revised at project restructuring.

**Table D.1. Additional Results Data from the Implementation Completion and Results Report**

<b>PDO</b>	<b>Finding</b>	<b>Source</b>
1	Cocoa yield Cocoa hybrids disseminated produced 1,500 kg/ha of cocoa in 18 months against 500 kg/ha in three years for traditional varieties.	Informal interviews with PSAC cocoa farmers
1	Cotton yield Average yield from 2005 to 2011 estimated at 937 kg/ha. Average yield from 2012 to 2017 estimated at 1,037 kg/ha.	Secondary data from the Cotton Interprofessional Organization
1	Cashew yield Average yield for trained producers who adopted new practices (49%): 521 kg/ha. Average yield for trained producers who did not adopt new practices (51%): 325 kg/ha.	Ex post stakeholder survey
1	Rubber tree growth Average tree height two years after planting estimated at 1.89 m for farmers applying good agricultural practices compared with 1.36 m for control group.	Gender Innovation Lab impact evaluation
2	Time to reach main transportation road: reduced by 65% across targeted value chains. Turnover rate for product collection and transport: multiplied on average by factor of seven.	Ex post evaluation report by PCU
2	Market and price information system for cashew—integrated market information system for cashew established: tracing flow of cashew nuts from collection points to port, warehouse receipt system.	ICR00004441
3	Cocoa sector governance Cleaning up of illegitimate cooperatives. Diagnostics applied to 230 cooperatives, and 80 of them strengthened; one representative producer union established. Establishment of legitimate colleges of producers problematic.	Ex post evaluation report by PCU
3	Oil palm sector governance Capacity building to 11 farmer organizations. The number of farmers belonging to a professional organization tripled. Piloting of contractual arrangements between a processing company and two cooperatives. IPO accredited.	Ex post evaluation report by PCU
3	Rubber sector governance Management strengthening of cooperatives. Establishment of legitimate colleges of producers problematic. IPO not accredited.	Ex post evaluation report by PCU
3	Cotton sector governance Consolidation of cooperatives and producers' unions: 15 new cooperatives created from 240 informal organizations; 67 cooperatives consolidated from 294 existing organizations. The number of farmers who are members of a farmer association increased from 43% to 91%.	Ex post evaluation report by PCU

PDO	Finding	Source
3	<p>Development of performance contracts between producers and ginners. IPO accredited.</p> <p>Cashew sector governance Cleaning up of illegitimate cooperatives. A total of 60 cooperatives trained, and six unions of producer cooperatives and buyers formed. Establishment of legitimate colleges of producers problematic. IPO not established.</p>	Ex post evaluation report by PCU

Source: World Bank 2018.

Note: IPO = interprofessional organization; PCU = Project Coordination Unit; PDO = project development objective; PSAC = Agriculture Sector Support Project.

## Photos from Site Visits

### Photo D.1. Status of Road Rehabilitated and Bridge Constructed by the Agriculture Sector Support Project



Source: World Bank evaluation team.

**Photo D.2. Status of Facilities for Cocoa Coated Seed Production at the National Agricultural Research Center Soubré Site Constructed by the Agriculture Sector Support Project**

a. Seedling nursery



b. Hangar



c. Washing place



d. Packaging place



Source: World Bank evaluation team.

**Photo D.3. Status of Equipment for Cocoa Coated Seed Production at the National Agricultural Research Center Soubré Site Procured by the Agriculture Sector Support Project**



Source: World Bank evaluation team.

**Photo D.4. Status of Hospital and School Constructed by the Agriculture Sector Support Project**

a. Hospital exterior



b. School interior



c. Hospital interior



d. School exterior



Source: World Bank evaluation team.

## References

World Bank. 2013. "Côte d'Ivoire—Agriculture Sector Support Project." Project Appraisal Document PAD508, World Bank, Washington, DC.

World Bank. 2018. "Côte d'Ivoire—Agriculture Sector Support Project." Implementation Completion and Results Report ICR00004441, World Bank, Washington, DC.