



1. Project Data :
OEDID: L3217
Project ID: P005727
Project Name: Agricultural Research and Extension Project
Country: Tunisia
Sector: Research
L/C Number: L3217
Partners involved : UNDP
Prepared by : Jock R Anderson, OEDST
Reviewed by : Christopher J N Gibbs
Group Manager : Roger Slade
Date Posted : 02/26/1998

2. Project Objectives, Financing, Costs and Components :
 The general objective was to improve the institutional and organizational framework to increase the efficiency and relevance of agricultural research and extension. The **research component** was executed by the Ministry of Agriculture's restructured agricultural research organization. Project support, covering designated priority research themes, consisted of: (i) introduction of programming and budgeting by objectives; (ii) strengthening of organizational, managerial, monitoring and evaluation capacities; (iii) construction and improvement of laboratories, sheds, workshops, stables, offices, and staff housing for five main research centers, three regional research centers and eight field stations; (iv) provision of equipment, fellowships and consultants. Direct support was provided for research in cereals and grain legumes, forage crops and animal husbandry, vegetables, fruit crops, olives, forestry and soil conservation, farm mechanization, irrigation, and arid zone problems. For the **extension component**, the project's objectives involved : (i) concentration and improvement of extension support, mass media production, monitoring and evaluation at the central level; (ii) strengthening and improvement of 15 regional specialized extension services; (iii) strengthening of about 550 and construction of 54 local extension centers; (iv) provision of equipment, foreign and local training, and consultants; and (v) a pilot extension program for women.
 Loan 3217 was approved in June 1990, became effective in May 1991, and after a one-year extension, closed June 30, 1997. Total investment costs amount to US\$21m, of the US\$34m estimated at appraisal. US\$15.3m was disbursed of the US\$17m approved Bank loan. UNDP provided a grant of US\$1m to cofinance the TA and training expenses of the extension component. The ICR was prepared by staff of FAO CP.

3. Achievement of Relevant Objectives :
 Relevant objectives were mostly achieved, although more slowly than was planned largely because of the adoption of an approach of programming and budgeting by objectives, and to a lesser extent than was designed, in part because of the failure to address some generic and structural issues within the public service . Links between research and extension were further strengthened, but the process still has far to go .

4. Significant Achievements :
 Careful needs assessment was accomplished for the research system in the context of developing programming by objectives, although this virtuous and broadly consultative process had the effect of severely slowing disbursements for the research component and regrettably for delaying until very late the implementation of the needed new monitoring and evaluation arrangements. The public extension service was re-energized in various ways by moving away from a restrictive T&V model, including a modernization of the communications methods, and an even greater-than-planned reach to previously neglected women clients.

5. Significant Shortcomings :

Slowness in attaining public-service reforms, including: slow field posting of staff outside of Tunis, the restructuring of the research stations, and a failure to adequately address the staffing needs of M&E in both research and especially extension.

6. Ratings :	ICR	OED Review	Reason for Disagreement /Comments
Outcome :	Satisfactory	Marginally Satisfactory	Slow and partial attainment of objectives .
Institutional Dev .:	Partial	Modest	Same
Sustainability :	Likely	Uncertain	Public service reforms are still needed to ensure a sustainable set of changes, and these are acknowledged to be still difficult and uncertain to bring about.
Bank Performance :	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	
Borrower Perf .:	Deficient	Unsatisfactory	Same
Quality of ICR :		Satisfactory	

7. Lessons of Broad Applicability :

When institutional planning is not well developed for major revision of the style of provision of agricultural services, it would be better not to rush into a full project, and instead work to advance the reform and change agenda in a pilot or pre-project activity. Raising the professional status of extension staff to a substantially higher level than is presently the case is a matter not readily handled within the context of a Bank lending operation.

8. Audit Recommended? Yes No

9. Comments on Quality of ICR :

A realistic and frank assessment of the project record, seemingly softened to a patient tone by other experience of the slow pace of public-service reform in the country and region.