



## 1. Project Data

**Project ID**

P145799

**Project Name**

Mali- NRM Changing Climate (PSG)

**Country**

Mali

**Practice Area(Lead)**

Environment, Natural Resources & the Blue Economy

**L/C/TF Number(s)**

IDA-H8900

**Closing Date (Original)**

31-Mar-2019

**Total Project Cost (USD)**

19,158,792.14

**Bank Approval Date**

06-Dec-2013

**Closing Date (Actual)**

30-Sep-2019

**IBRD/IDA (USD)**

**Grants (USD)**

Original Commitment

12,000,000.00

0.00

Revised Commitment

11,878,308.14

0.00

Actual

10,952,979.03

0.00

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**Group**

IEGSD (Unit 4)

**Project ID**

P129516

**Project Name**

Mali- NRM Changing Climate (PSG) ( P129516 )

**L/C/TF Number(s)**

TF-16288,TF-16307

**Closing Date (Original)**

**Total Project Cost (USD)**

8205813.11

**Bank Approval Date**

06-Dec-2013

**Closing Date (Actual)**



	IBRD/IDA (USD)	Grants (USD)
Original Commitment	0.00	8,425,925.00
Revised Commitment	0.00	8,205,813.11
Actual	0.00	8,205,813.11

## 2. Project Objectives and Components

### a. Objectives

The Project Development Objective (PDO) as articulated in the Project Appraisal Document (PAD, paragraph 9) ) was to:

***"expand the adoption of sustainable land and water management practices in target area in Mali."***

The Project Development Objective (PDO) as articulated in the Financing Agreement (FA, page 5) was to:

***"expand the adoption of sustainable land and water management practices in the Target Area within the Recipient's territory."***

The PDO in both documents was identical except where underlined. A split rating will be applied because activities were re-aligned and resources were re-allocated from one component to another with changes to the key outcome indicators. The PDO and the theory of change remained the same.

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

Yes

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

No

### c. Will a split evaluation be undertaken?

Yes



#### d. Components

The PDO was supported by four components as follows:

**1. Knowledge management, Governance and Communication (appraisal cost: US\$4.86 million, actual cost: US\$2.80 million).** This component included the following three sub-components:

**1.1. Information system and knowledge management.** This sub-component would contribute to building the capacity of the national information system for adaptation to climate change. Main activities would include: (i) Strengthening the existing National Environmental information Management System (the 'SNGIE'); (ii) Supporting the sharing of climate hazards and adaptation data and knowledge; (iii) Training and sensitizing on the use of seasonal hydrological and meteorological forecasts by food crop producers; (iv) Strengthening the capacity of local food crop producers in the use of simple climate change adaptation technologies and practices; and (v) Building the capacity of national institutions and local stakeholders in the planning of Sustainable Land and Water Management (SLWM), land use changes and adaptation to climate change strategies.

**1.2. Natural Resources Management Governance at local level.** This sub-component would aim to strengthen grass-root mechanisms for preventing competition, over-exploitation and degradation of the productive resources (rangelands, croplands, water resources, forests), through management tools and equitable regulations on access to and use of local natural resources (such as the regulations concerning the importance of mobility in pastoral areas, as this is stressed by the recent Mali's 'Pastoral Charter'). The main activities would support: (i) the preparation and adoption of participatory community resource use plans, which include resilience objectives, SLWM issues and biodiversity conservation, for their integration in 14 commune development plans (PDESC); (ii) the review and revision of the Communes development plans (PDESC) for the purpose of integration of SLWM, biodiversity conservation and climate changes adaptation; and (iii) the implementation of pilot activities of the revised PDESC including the strengthening of transparency and accountability in Natural Resource Management (NRM) through the translation and dissemination of key regulations governing land use, biodiversity conservation and natural resources management.

**1.3. Communication for resilience enhancement.** This sub-component would focus on selected activities of the action plan which are relevant to address climate change adaptation challenges at both national and community levels. The main activities would include: (i) Sensitizing communities and decision makers on the risks and challenges of climate changes, including their impacts on natural resources, socioeconomic activities and livelihoods in rural areas; and (ii) Carrying out of awareness raising and education activities for promoting discussion platforms among local stakeholders and extension services (agriculture, pastoralism, etc.) on the appropriate SLWM and biodiversity conservation solutions in each beneficiary commune.

**2. Scaling-up Sustainable Land Management practices (appraisal cost: US\$7.06 million, actual cost: US\$7.49 million).** This component would support sustainable land management practices and initiatives aiming at: (i) improving the sustainable use of biodiversity resources in the targeted areas through a landscape approach; (ii) reversing the reduction of forest coverage to contribute to the Great Green Wall Initiative (GGWI) objectives and the enhancement of carbon stock; and (iii) strengthening the resilience of rural producers' assets in the targeted areas and communities to climate change challenges. The component included the following two sub-components:



**2.1. Conservation and valorization of biodiversity.** This sub-component would aim at contributing to sustainable landscape management, sustainable consumption practices, and rolling-back the biodiversity erosion through specific knowledge production/sharing and capacity building in the project target area by: (i) Promoting sustainable management of biodiversity in accordance with an ecosystem-based adaptation approach; (ii) Supporting the promotion of indigenous sustainable modes of production and consumption including low-carbon energy and woodless construction technologies; and (iii) Supporting community-based reforestation initiatives.

**2.2. Forests and rangelands management.** The sub-component would help develop sustainable forest management tools and skills for the three forests of the project area (Lorack Bane, Gadjaba Khadiel and Ouagadou), and contribute to the management of rangelands including pastoralism corridors to both increasing the socio-economic resilience of households and reducing the pressure from inadequate pastoralism on forest ecosystems. The following activities would be financed: (i) Supporting the preparation, adoption and implementation of participatory management plans of the Ouagadou, the Gadjaba Khadiel and the Lorack Baneforest ecosystems; (ii) Promoting the use of improved agroforestry and other related SLWM technology packages in the adjacent lands of the three targeted forests (Ouagadou, the Gadjaba Khadiel and the Lorack Bane); (iii) Supporting the management of rangelands considering climate change challenges; and (iv) Strengthening the capacity of local NRM committees in the integrated management of bushfires.

**3. Diversification of local livelihoods (appraisal cost: US\$6.69 million, actual cost: US\$6.15 million).** This component would aim at reducing the vulnerability of these groups by providing them with opportunities in jobs and revenues generation. The activities would be include: (i) Financing sound income generating activities (IGA) which do not threaten the conservation of biodiversity; and (ii) Training the beneficiaries of funded IGA on management (procurement, accounting, saving and reinvestment for business development), and demonstration of opportunities from sustainable management of forest and non-timber forest products.

**4. Coordination and monitoring & evaluation of project activities (appraisal cost: US\$2.81 million, actual cost: US\$3.73 million). This component included the following two sub-components:**

**4.1. Monitoring and Evaluation.** This sub-component would finance the following activities: (i) setting up the M&E system; (ii) supporting the staffing of the Agency for the Environment and Sustainable Development (AEDD) M&E, Fiduciary and internal auditing units; (iii) collecting, analyzing and sharing any appropriate information on lessons learned including carbon sequestration trends; (iv) environmental and social safeguard management and monitoring; and (v) updating the GEF Biodiversity Management Effectiveness Tracking Tools (METT) and the other Focal areas' tracking tools (TT).

**4.2. Project coordination.** The following activities would be financed: (i) the project launching workshop; (ii) Organizing the Steering Committee sessions; (iii) Preparing the consolidated annual work and budgeting plan (AWBP); (iv) Managing the implementation memoranda signed with the key institutions responsible of the execution of components/major activities; (v) Training the project team in management (monitoring & evaluation, procurement, financial management, environmental and social safeguard, etc.) as approved through the training plan; (vi) Coordinating the implementation activities at national and local levels; and (vii) covering the operating costs.



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

**Project Cost.** The total project cost at appraisal was estimated to be US\$21.42 million. The actual cost as reported by the ICR (page 2) was US\$20.16 million.

**Financing.** The proposed financing instrument was an Investment Project Finance (IPF) to support Mali in improving the management of its natural resources and contributing in the global climate change mitigation effort. The total financing includes US\$12 million IDA Grant, US\$6.57 million GEF Grant, and US\$1.85 million grant from the Less Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) budget. The actual amounts disbursed according to the ICR (page 2) were US\$10.95 million, US\$6.50 million, and US\$1.70 million for the IDA Grant, the GEF Grant and the LDCF, respectively.

**Borrower Contribution.** The Borrower was expected to contribute US\$1.0 million of counterpart funding. The Borrower fully contributed the expected amount.

**Dates.** The project was approved on December 6, 2013 and became effective on March 24, 2014. The Mid-Term Review (MTR) was conducted on February 1, 2017. The PAD did not include a specific date for the MTR. The project closed on September 30, 2019 compared to an original closing date on March 31, 2019. The ICR did not explicitly explain the reasons for the six months delay. However, it could be inferred from the ICR text that the extension was to accommodate for the initial implementation delays that the project experienced. The project was restructured twice, both Level 2 restructuring. The first was on June 21, 2018, when the amount disbursed was US\$8.62 million, in order to scale up the project from 14 to 30 communes, introduce changes to the Results Framework, changes in components and cost reallocation between disbursement categories, and extend the original project closing date by six months. The second was on April 25, 2019, when the amount disbursed was US\$10.27 million, in order to reallocate funds between disbursement categories. The ICR did not report on when the project closing date was extended.

### 3. Relevance of Objectives

#### Rationale

**Context at Appraisal.** Mali has a total population estimated at 14.5 million people, predominantly rural, with an average annual population growth rate of about 3.4%. The country is divided into five main ecosystems presenting a wide range of agro-ecological environments. Poverty is more prevalent in rural areas (57.6%) where most people continue to derive their livelihoods from agriculture and livestock; food insecurity and malnutrition are high. Livelihoods are essentially based on agriculture in the Sudanese and the Guinea savanna zones, and on livestock in the Sahelian zone. Land degradation is severe (shrinkage of pasture lands, depletion of farmlands fertility and degradation of forest ecosystems), with a total annual cost estimated at around 12% of GDP. The project were to specifically address this problem through



promoting sustainable land and water management (SLWM) practices in targeted landscapes and in climate vulnerable areas.

At appraisal, objectives were in line with the objectives of the Sahel and West Africa Program (SAWAP, 2011) of expanding sustainable land and water management (SLWM) in targeted landscapes and in climate vulnerable areas of the West African and Sahelian countries. Objectives were also in line with the the Malian National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA, 2007). NAPA identified a total of 19 priority projects which aim at: (i) highlighting key climate risks; (ii) identifying sectors, communities and areas that are particularly vulnerable to climate variability and change; (iii) identifying adaptive sectoral measures; and (iv) identifying adaptation priority projects. Objectives were in line with the Government's Strategic Growth Framework for Poverty Reduction (2012–2017), which focused on strengthening the foundations of long-term development and equitable access to quality social services by, among others, strengthening the resilience and creating economic opportunities for rural households in Mali and preserving the environment and natural resource base in a climate change context. Objectives were also in line with the Country Strategic Investment Framework (CSIF) for Sustainable Land and Water Management (SLWM) which was adopted by the Government in July 2010. The CSIF called for Effective transfer of natural resources management to decentralized entities and Local Governments (regional assemblies and communes), and for Effective coordination of land management and environmental programs, among others. Objectives were also in line with Bank's Interim Strategy Note (ISN, 2013), which highlighted land degradation, natural resources depletion, and climate change adaptation issues.

Furthermore, the objectives were in line with several GEF strategic goals, namely: addressing and reversing current global trends in land degradation, specifically desertification and deforestation; and supporting countries to become climate-resilient by promoting both immediate and longer-term adaptation measures in development policies, plans, programs, projects, and actions, among others.

At project completion, objectives continued to be in line with the Government's national development objectives reflected in the Strategic Growth Framework for Poverty Reduction (2012–2017), which focused on strengthening the foundations of long-term development and equitable access to quality social services, among others. Objectives also continued to be in line with Bank's Country Partnership Framework for Mali (CPF, FY16–FY19). Specifically, with the CPF's Focal Area 2 (Create Economic Opportunities), which sought to increase productivity and market access in key agricultural value chains and improve water and natural resources management, and also with Focal Area 3 (Build Resilience), which sought to strengthen safety nets and reduce the risk of the poor and vulnerable to exogenous shocks.

Objectives also were in line with global priorities related to the current 2018–2022 GEF-7 land degradation strategic focal area, which emphasizes sustainable land management of dryland landscapes to enhance on-the-ground implementation of land degradation neutrality (LDN), and create an enabling environment to support LDN implementation globally. Finally, objectives continued to be in line with SDG 15 of the 2030 Agenda, which aims to “protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.”

The statement of objectives to *expand the adoption of sustainable land and water management practices in target area in Mali* lacked a connection to higher level objectives namely, sustaining a more equitable



poverty reduction, and empowering local stakeholders (governments, communities, rural professional organizations, NGOs and Civil society organizations) to fully participate in local development.

Based on the above-mentioned assessment, Relevance of Objectives is rated Substantial.

## Rating

Substantial

## 4. Achievement of Objectives (Efficacy)

### OBJECTIVE 1

#### Objective

PDO: to expand the adoption of sustainable land and water management practices in the Target Area within the Recipient's territory.

#### Rationale

**Theory of Change.** To achieve the stated objective the project aimed to address three drivers of unsustainable land and water use, namely, the lack of knowledge, inadequate governance, and the lack of alternative opportunities due to poverty. The following activities would be supported: first, the project would support closing the knowledge gap, improving governance of natural resources, and broadly sensitizing the general population to SLWM practices and the risks of climate change. This would help create an enabling environment in which SLWM practices could be adopted on a wider basis. Second, the project would directly increase adoption of SLWM practices by scaling up locally appropriate techniques through pilot farmers. This would be complemented with the provision of training, equipment, and investments in crops and working animals to increase soil fertility and reduce erosion of pastures. As a result of these activities, farmers would become advocates of SLWM practices with the potential to influence their cooperatives to adopt more SLWM practices over time. Third, the project would finance sub-projects aimed at diversifying livelihoods and boosting incomes. The activities promoted aimed at reducing the need for grazing, reducing the encroachment of agriculture into the forest, and providing an alternative for women to abandon unsustainable fuel wood collection and charcoal production as a livelihood. The pressure on the natural resource base was expected to decrease by providing alternatives for people to shift away from unsustainable land and water use. These activities would also contribute to higher-level outcomes related to rural economic growth with a focus on gender quality; and to global environmental goals to address and reverse current trends in land degradation, specifically desertification and deforestation.

The achievement of the PDO was underpinned by two critical assumptions: first, the lack of information and poor governance of natural resources are drivers of unsustainable land and water use; and second, poverty and lack of opportunities are drivers of unsustainable land and water use in rural areas of Mali.



Overall, the first two chains stated in the ToC were directly linked to the PDO, and the third chain (IGAs) complemented the PDO by aiming to reduce unsustainable land and water management practices.

### **Outputs (as reported in the ICR Annex 1- no targets were provided).**

#### **Knowledge management, governance, and communication**

- 15 studies completed. However, the ICR did not provide further information on the impact of such studies.
- 79 training sessions for beneficiaries and technicians implemented (total of 2,290 participants).
- A database at National Environmental Information Management System was updated ([www.sngie.ml](http://www.sngie.ml)).
- 32,118 broadcast messages on climate risks and adaptation options have been made in public across 9 local radio stations, and the training of technicians.
- 14 Social, Economic, and Cultural Development Plans were revised and adopted by the municipal councils.
- Sketch on sustainable land management and climate change translated into three local languages (Soninke, Peul, and Bambara).
- 2 documentary films about the project activities were completed in three languages (French, English, and Portuguese) for the first documentary and four languages (French, Bambara, Soninke, and Peul) for the second.
- 6,000 communication material produced (flyers, t-shirt, notebook, diary, caps, and calendars).
- Acquisition and programming of 300 mobile phones per 300 village focal points trained to use them in sharing and disseminating weather information.
- 7 automatic weather stations acquired, installed and secured in 7 communes of the project for the collection and transmission of meteorological data.
- Three Local Groups of Meteorological Support (GLAM) created and are functional.
- 1,400 producers supplied with rain gauges and trained in how to use them.
- 370 village focal points and 18 radio communicators trained to collect, analyze, use and distribute weather information.
- 3 years of weather forecasts disseminated (2016, 2017, and 2018) with information and advisory support to beneficiaries in the project area

#### **Scaling-up sustainable land management practices**

- Sustainable land management practices were applied to a total of 3,667 hectares.
- Eight studies completed. The ICR did not elaborate on the benefits of these studies nor how they contributed to the PDO.
- Three management plans and management developed, validated and adopted.
- 26 training sessions for 1,130 trained actors.
- Dissemination of the Nubian vault technology through the construction of 28 buildings (community and private).
- 6 buildings with Nubian vault technology.





- Forest areas (4) have been set up (Nioro and Nara) for a total of 140 (25 ha enrichment and 10 ha enclosure per site) with a water source (drilling and castle).
- 800 ha of assisted natural regeneration (200 per site) were carried out in the municipalities of Guétéma, Kadiaba Kadiel, Fallou, and Niamana.
- 5 ha of reforestation/afforestation and 50 ha of RNA made in the communal forest Sebete.
- Delimitation and mapping 4 communal forests (Kiban, Boron, Sebete, and Toubakoro).
- Recovery works - 200 ha of degraded land at Gadiaba-Kadiel and Guétéma.
- Works development in the communal forest Sebete (5 ha of reforestation/afforestation with wire mesh fence, 50 ha of RNA in the mountains, and a nursery of 400 m<sup>2</sup> fenced mesh with a well).
- 15 developed natural resource management agreements.
- 14 anti-firefighting brigades in place and operational.
- 5 studies completed. No further information was provided in the ICR on the impact of such studies.
- 14 communal transhumance management plans covering 14 target communes
- 6 training sessions for 230 trained actors
- Materialization of 245 km transhumance tracks in the provinces of Banamba (Sebete: 12 km; Toubacoro: 13 km; Kiban: 25 km) and Nara (Dilly: 97 km; Fallou: 35 km; Ouagadou: 37 km; Niamana: 26 km)
- 1,510 ha enrichment at 12 grazing areas (grazing areas) by the RNA at 100 ha pastoral perimeter, 40 ha by seeding 60 ha reforestation
- 14 Pastoral Cooperative Societies (CPS) created
- 12 kits (materials) to support the enrichment of pastoral areas have been acquired
- 11 positive wells were drilled in Dilly (1), Koronga (1), Fallou (1), Dabo (1), Niamana (1), Boron (1), Kadiaba Kadiel (1), Yérééré (1), and Kiban (3) of which 3 were converted to grazing Kiban well
- Two ponds arranged in the common Kadiaba Kadiel.
- 1 study completed.
- 14 training sessions for 1,400 trained actors.
- 1,332.3 ha of crops realized that 642.25 a of certified seed, 49 ha basic seed and 641.05 ha in other technologies SLWM (compost, Zai, half moon, stony cordon labor in ridges, RNA).
- 3 ha of market garden perimeters in a wall system put in place in Nioro (2) and Banamba (1) provinces.
- 1,400 selected producers formed on 6 technologies Sustainable Management of Land (NAS, composting, ridge tillage, cords, stony, zai and half-moon) (see DNA brochures).
- 1,400 producers supported by improved seeds and agricultural equipment (donkey carts and so on).
- 4 fields schools implemented in the provinces of Nioro (1), Nara (1), and Banamba (2).

### **Diversification of local livelihoods**

- 2 studies completed. No further information was provided in the ICR on the impact of such studies.
- 658 sub-projects were funded (Banamba: 140, Nara: 371, and Nioro: 147).
- 16,249 beneficiaries including 12,344 women, or 76% women beneficiaries.
- 12 simplified accounting training sessions for 766 trained beneficiaries.

### **Outcome**



**The assessment of the PDO relies on three elements as follows:**

**First, creating an enabling environment for the wider adoption of SLWM practices by strengthening knowledge, governance, and communication on SLWM, climate change, and adaptation.** By project completion all 14 communes covered under the project incorporated SLWM and climate adaptation into local development plans (100% of original target). Local Steering Committees for Development Coordination and Actions in each of the 14 communes drafted and adopted communal Social, Economic, and Cultural Development Plans (PDSECs), which integrate SLWM, conservation of biodiversity, and adaptation to climate change as strategic priorities for building resilience and reducing land degradation and deforestation (ICR, paragraph 30). While the PDSECs became the guiding documents for all activities in the commune and resource allocation from national sources and mobilization of funds from external partners, the project did not follow the implementation of the PDSECs after closure (ICR, paragraph 30). Also, 15 community or inter-community NRM agreements (target: 14) that define access and user rights to shared natural resources were signed by stakeholders in each of the project communes, as well as for the commune of Tougouné Rangabé in Nioro province, which covers much of the Lorack Bane forest. These agreements were expected to decrease conflicts between communities due to competition for natural resources. The project also implemented a comprehensive media campaign with 17,000 messages over the life of the project (174% of the original target) to sensitize the general public to the impacts of climate change and the need to adopt SLWM practices to preserve biodiversity and prevent the degradation of ecosystems. To support agriculture management by local farmers, the project supported the collection, analysis, and dissemination of rainfall and weather forecast for three years (2016, 2017, and 2018) to help farmers make informed decisions. Seven automatic weather stations were installed in seven project communes for collection and transmission of meteorological data. The project also supplied 1,400 producers (no target provided) with rain gauges and trained and engaged 370 village focal points and 18 radio communicators in the collection, analysis, and distribution of weather information using mobile phones.

**Second, expanding the adoption of SLWM practices on cropland, pastureland, and forestland in the project area.** By project completion SLWM practices were being applied on a total of 3,667 ha of cropland, pastureland, and forestland in the project area, well short of the expected target (34% of the original target of 10,748 ha). The ICR (paragraph 35) explained that "the gap in the achievement of outcome indicator #1 relative to its original target relates to interventions that were planned on 7,952 ha in the protected part of the Lorack Bane forest and which could not be undertaken due to land tenure issues." To improve soil fertility of crop land, the project supported 1,652 farmers (118% of original target of 1400) to adopt locally traditional and SLWM practices such as the use of organic manure, crop residue, ridge tillage, and planting pits to harvest rainwater. Pilot farmers identified by local communes received training, equipment, crops, and technical assistance to adopt SLWM practices. To assist natural regeneration on 828 ha of cropland and range-land, the project supported local communities through using techniques for fire suppression, weed control, and effective pruning of bushes, among others. To monitor and protect against forest fires, a seven member community fire brigade was established (no target provided) and operational at the village level in each of the 14 project communes. Their role also included reporting slash-and-burn practices to the competent authorities. To improve sustainability of pasture lands, the project provided enriched forage seeds and enclosed 12 pastoral sites on 790 ha of pastureland, and 245 km of transhumance trails were demarcated (no targets provided). The project enabled the creation of 14 pastoral cooperatives and the adoption of 14 communal transhumance management plans covering 14 project communes (100% of revised target). To promote reforestation and afforestation on forestland, the project provided support to local farming cooperatives in mapping and demarcating four communal forests covering 820 ha. Three participatory forest management plans were approved and adopted by the ministry in charge of the environment for the protected



forests of Gadiaba Kadiel and Lorack Bane and by the Governorate of Koulikoro for the forest of Ouagadougou (100% of the original target).

**Third, strengthening the livelihoods of vulnerable communities and reducing pressure on natural resources through IGAs related to SLWM.** The project provided 658 sub-grants to 16,249 beneficiaries organized individually or in groups for IGAs (470% of original target). According to the ICR (paragraph 36) "anecdotal evidence from project reports and the final stakeholder workshop confirmed the causality between IGAs and their positive impact on household incomes and on reducing pressure on the natural resource base to support SLWM." The IGAs reached 16% of the population in the 14 project communes (258,978 people/16,249 beneficiaries) and 15% of all households in the same area (41,279 households/2,708 beneficiary households). Of the 16,249 beneficiaries, there were 12,334 women or 75% of all IGA beneficiaries and 67% of all project beneficiaries (134% of target achieved). About 55% of IGAs were approved for sheep fattening and 8% for bovine fattening. Sheep/bovine fattening could potentially reduce the pressure on pastureland through reducing the movements of herds and their need for grazing, and through limiting wild fires by preserving herbaceous species that act as firewalls. This was expected to reduce the pressure on pastureland, and strengthen the resilience of local communities against the impacts of land degradation. Another 15% of the IGA projects supported market gardens. These were expected to have a positive impact on land degradation, as they reduce the encroachment of agriculture into the forest. The remaining 20% of IGAs covered various commercial activities, such as the manufacture of agricultural tools, arboriculture, fish farming, poultry farming, and beekeeping, and a few sesame and milk processing projects. These activities would provide alternative livelihoods mostly to women who were previously engaged in unsustainable fuelwood collection and charcoal production. Overall, these activities were expected to reduce the pressure on pastureland, and strengthen the resilience of local communities against the impacts of land degradation.

The project was particularly successful in delivering results against the first and third elements, but the outcome target was significantly under achieved for the second element (the adoption of SLWM practices reached only 34% of the intended target of 10,748 ha). This was explained in the ICR as an intractable land tenure issue, but in these circumstances it is disappointing the team did not find a more effective tool for measuring the impact of the other two components on measurable outcomes for improving sustainable land management issues. Having said that, progress on the other two key interventions was substantial and we can presume that these would significantly diminish the pressure on land and thus improve SLWM. Therefore, the overall rating is Substantial.

**Rating**  
Substantial

## **OBJECTIVE 1 REVISION 1**

### **Revised Objective**

PDO: to expand the adoption of sustainable land and water management practices in the Target Area within the Recipient's territory.



PDO was not changed, only outcome targets were revised.

### **Revised Rationale**

**Theory of Change.** Same as above.

### **Outputs**

Same as above.

### **Outcome**

The same assessment mentioned above applies here with the exception that the evaluation is against the revised targets.

**First, creating an enabling environment for the wider adoption of SLWM practices by strengthening knowledge, governance, and communication on SLWM, climate change, and adaptation.**

- The project also implemented a comprehensive media campaign with 17,000 messages over the life of the project (116% of the revised target of 15,000) to sensitize the general public to the impacts of climate change and the need to adopt SLWM practices to preserve biodiversity and prevent the degradation of ecosystems.
- To support agriculture management by local farmers, the project supported the collection, analysis, and dissemination of rainfall and weather forecast for three years (2016, 2017, and 2018) to help farmers make informed decisions. Seven automatic weather stations were installed in seven project communes for collection and transmission of meteorological data. The project also supplied 1,400 producers with rain gauges and trained and engaged 370 village focal points and 18 radio communicators in the collection, analysis, and distribution of weather information using mobile phones.

**Second, expanding the adoption of SLWM practices on cropland, pastureland, and forestland in the project area.**

- By project completion SLWM practices were being applied on a total of 3,667 ha of cropland, pastureland, and forestland in the project area (122% of the revised target of 3,000 ha). The ICR (paragraph 35) explained that "the gap in the achievement of outcome indicator #1 relative to its original target relates to interventions that were planned on 7,952 ha in the protected part of the Lorack Bane forest and which could not be undertaken due to land tenurial issues."
- To improve soil fertility of crop land, the project supported 1,652 farmers (103% of revised target of 1600) to adopt locally traditional and SLWM practices such as the use of organic manure, crop residue, ridge tillage, and planting pits to harvest rainwater. Pilot farmers identified by local communes received training, equipment, crops, and technical assistance to adopt SLWM practices.
- The project enabled the creation of 14 pastoral cooperatives and the adoption of 14 communal transhumance management plans covering 14 project communes (100% of revised target).



### **Third, strengthening the livelihoods of vulnerable communities and reducing pressure on natural resources through IGAs related to SLWM.**

- The project provided 658 sub-grants to 16,249 beneficiaries organized individually or in groups for IGAs (132% of revised target). According to the ICR (paragraph 36) "anecdotal evidence from project reports and the final stakeholder workshop confirmed the causality between IGAs and their positive impact on household incomes and on reducing pressure on the natural resource base to support SLWM."
- The IGAs reached 16% of the population in the 14 project communes (258,978 people/16,249 beneficiaries) and 15% of all households in the same area (41,279 households/2,708 beneficiary households). Of the 16,249 beneficiaries, there were 12,334 women or 75% of all IGA beneficiaries and 67% of all project beneficiaries (134% of revised target achieved).
- About 55% of IGAs were approved for sheep fattening and 8% for bovine fattening. Sheep/bovine fattening could potentially reduce the pressure on pastureland through reducing the movements of herds and their need for grazing, and through limiting wild fires by preserving herbaceous species that act as firewalls. This was expected to reduce the pressure on pastureland, and strengthen the resilience of local communities against the impacts of land degradation. Another 15% of the IGA projects supported market gardens. These were expected to have a positive impact on land degradation, as they reduce the encroachment of agriculture into the forest. The remaining 20% of IGAs were covered various commercial activities, such as the manufacture of agricultural tools, arboriculture, fish farming, poultry farming, and beekeeping, and a few sesame and milk processing projects. These activities would provide alternative livelihoods mostly to women who were previously engaged in unsustainable fuelwood collection and charcoal production. Overall, these activities were expected to reduce the pressure on pastureland, and strengthen the resilience of local communities against the impacts of land degradation.

Based on the above mentioned assessment, efficacy of the outcome after restructuring is rated High. This rating reflects the over achievement of the outcome indicator related to the application of the SLWM practices on 3,667 ha cropland, pastureland, and forestland in the project area exceeding the revised target of 3,000 ha. Also, under the project 1,652 farmers and herders (103% of the revised target) were introduced to SLWM techniques in their agricultural practices. A total of 2,708 households gained access to IGAs (135% of the revised target) and adopted alternative livelihoods that helped reduce pressure on degraded land areas and strengthened their resilience against the impacts of land degradation. The total number of beneficiaries reached over 18,000 people (122% of the revised target).

**Revised Rating**  
High

## **OVERALL EFFICACY**

**Rationale**



Overall Efficacy of the outcome pre-restructuring is rated Substantial. The provided evidence in the ICR point to the success of the project under the first and third elements of the PDO. However, the outcome target was significantly under achieved for the second element of the PDO (the adoption of SLWM practices reached only 34% of the intended target of 10,748 ha). Having said that, we can presume the impact on SLWM was still substantial.

### **Overall Efficacy Rating**

Substantial

### **OVERALL EFFICACY REVISION 1**

#### **Overall Efficacy Revision 1 Rationale**

Overall efficacy of the outcome after restructuring is rated High. This rating reflects the over achievement of the outcome indicator related to the application of the SLWM practices on 3,667 ha cropland, pastureland, and forestland in the project area exceeding the revised target of 3,000 ha. Also, under the project 1,652 farmers and herders (103% of the target) were introduced to SLWM techniques in their agricultural practices. A total of 2,708 households gained access to IGAs (135% of target) and adopted alternative livelihoods that helped reduce pressure on degraded land areas and strengthened their resilience against the impacts of land degradation. The total number of beneficiaries reached over 18,000 people (122% of the target).

### **Overall Efficacy Revision 1 Rating**

High

## **5. Efficiency**

### **Economic and Financial Analysis**

#### ***ex ante***

The EFA in the PAD did not directly estimate an overall economic rate of return for the project. Alternatively, the PAD (paragraph 47) stated that the "economic and financial viability of a range of SLWM technologies conducted by the on-going Mali Agricultural Productivity Project found an economic rate of return of 34% and a financial rate of return ranging from 27% to 64% depending on the agro-ecological zones for targeted technologies (with a 12% discount rate)."

The project support focused on three broad categories of investments: (i) the income generating activities; (ii) the promotion of a range of SLWM practices; and (iii) the strengthening of natural governance and institutions. The economic analysis focused on the first two categories of investments. This was due to limitations on data collection in the project areas due to security concerns.

The analysis was based on secondary data and information derived from the results of previous studies and from ongoing investments operations. A standard benefit-cost analysis was conducted for a representative



business model of income generating activities of the project areas. The estimated economic rate of return runs ranged from 18.7% for small-scale irrigated vegetable production (one hectare), 18.5% for peanut butter production, 53% for small ruminant fattening, and 31% for beekeeping for honey harvesting. According to the PAD (paragraph 45) "these levels of economic viability are robust because they would withstand a 25% increase in total investment cost."

Implementing SLWM technologies was expected to generate multiple unquantifiable environmental benefits including: (i) increased primary production of ecosystems; (ii) increased biodiversity; (iii) increased recharge of ground water; and (iv) increased carbon sequestration (forest and soil).

### ***ex post***

The ICR (paragraph 43) reported that no ex post EFA analysis was conducted due to limited data availability on its impacts. This stemmed from "security concerns, presence of a wide variety of interventions, and potential long-term time frame for some of them to show impact." This made it "impossible to conduct a cost-benefit analysis (CBA) for the whole project or even for single activities (ICR, paragraph 43)." The expected project benefits according to the ICR were local benefits through improved agricultural productivity, national benefits through improved ecosystems and global benefits through the reversal of current trends in land degradation, stimulating conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and supporting enhancement of carbon benefits from reforestation and reduced forest fires.

**Cost-effectiveness of the project.** The project disbursed US\$20.2 million and reached about 18,300 direct beneficiaries, which corresponds to US\$1,100 per beneficiary. While this was significantly lower than the \$7,000 per beneficiary estimated at appraisal, it was higher than the costs in other comparable countries in the region. The unit cost of adopting SLWM practices was US\$2,000 per ha, which was in the upper range found for other African countries (US\$200–US\$2,300, with a median of US\$670).

### **Administrative and Institutional Efficiency**

The project closed six months later than the expected date. Extension of the closing date was needed to accommodate initial implementation delays. The project suffered initial implementation delays that resulted from the absence of a dedicated project implementation unit (ICR paragraph 47). While addressing land tenure issues was critical to overcoming unsustainable land and water use, the project design overlooked this aspect. Implementation efficiency was negatively impacted by the relatively high level of staff turnover in the ministries and agencies charged with implementing the project. The final cost of component 4 (project coordination, monitoring and evaluation) was US\$3.73 million or 33% over the estimated cost of US\$2.81 million, which accounted for 18% of the total project costs.

Overall, Efficiency is rated Modest. This rating reflects the absence of a meaningful ex post EFA, concerns on cost-effectiveness aspects and initial implementation delays combined with shortcomings on achieving the SLWM adoption target in the Lorack Bane forest.



## Efficiency Rating

Modest

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

	Rate Available?	Point value (%)	*Coverage/Scope (%)
Appraisal		0	0 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
ICR Estimate		0	0 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable

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

## 6. Outcome

### Pre-Restructuring

Relevance of Objectives was rated Substantial. Overall Efficacy was rated Substantial with moderate achievement on the adoption of SLWM practices, but significant progress on the livelihoods and institutional aspects. Efficiency was rated Modest based on the absence of a meaningful ex post EFA, concerns on cost-effectiveness aspects and initial implementation delays combined with shortcomings on achieving the SLWM adoption target in the Lorack Bane forest.

Based on the ratings assigned for the three elements (Relevance of Design, Efficacy and Efficiency), outcome is rated Moderately Satisfactory.

### Post Restructuring

Relevance of Objectives was rated Substantial. Overall Efficacy was rated High due to the over achievement of the project on the adoption of SLWM practices which reached 3,667 ha cropland, pastureland, and forestland in the project area exceeding the revised target of 3,000 ha. The project also exceeded its targets on the number of beneficiaries, households who gained access to IGAs, and farmers and herders who applied SLWM. Efficiency was rated Modest based on the absence of a meaningful ex post EFA, concerns on cost-effectiveness aspects and initial implementation delays.

Based on the ratings assigned for the three elements (Relevance of Design, Efficacy and Efficiency), outcome is rated Moderately Satisfactory.

### Weighted Outcome





The amount disbursed at Restructuring was US\$ 8.62 million which represents 78% of the total disbursed Bank financing which reached US\$10.95 million.

The Outcome rating pre-restructuring was Moderately Satisfactory which corresponds to 4 on a 1 to 6 scale, and post restructuring was Moderately Satisfactory which corresponds to 4 on the same 1 to 6 scale.

Thus, the Overall Weighted Outcome is Moderately Satisfactory.

#### **a. Outcome Rating**

Moderately Satisfactory

### **7. Risk to Development Outcome**

The following risks were identified by the ICR (paragraphs 90, 91, 92 and 93):

- The adoption of SLWM practices on 3,667 ha of land is at high risk. Post completion the practices of SLWM might be discontinued among farmers and pastoralist if maintenance and inputs costs become higher than the costs incurred before the project. Land tenure rights issues also need to be addressed else it is unlikely that further progress will be achieved going forward.
- Sustainability of pastoral perimeters. The pastoral perimeter of Guajaba-Kuagèlewas successfully implemented and continues to be operational serving the communes of Guétéma and Guajaba-Kuagèle. The perimeter serves herds coming from these two communes as a place to water livestock, provide fodder for livestock feed, and provide a rest place for herds. The municipalities have set up a management committee which allows them to levy a fee on the number of heads of the herd at the entrance to the perimeter. The resources of this inter-municipal fee allow the pastoral perimeter to be maintained, and the controlled movement of herds reduce their pressure on natural resources.
- Lack of political will to implement SLWM practices. Plans and agreements are a first step toward sustainable land and water management that must be followed by a strong commitment to act on their implementation. The project supported numerous studies, development plans, investment plans, and local agreements, which lay the foundation for action to restore land through SLWM practices. The forest management plans had been approved for two years before project closing, and yet the project was not able to meet its main outcome indicator primarily due to the challenges of restoration on publicly owned forestland.
- Security and political instability (a risk emphasized by IEG). Mali continues to experience security threats and possible political upheavals. Such events could undermine the project achievements and even reverse gains that resulted from the adoption of SLWM activities.

### **8. Assessment of Bank Performance**

#### **a. Quality-at-Entry**



The project design benefited from the Bank's experience in addressing land degradation and deforestation. Key lessons learned from other projects in Mali and reflected in the design included: empowering local actors, tapping local know-how and adaptation strategies, and involving local communities in NRM. While project design was comprehensive in addressing unsustainable land and water use, it was challenging in the context of an under funded public sector and weak community organizations. The sequencing of activities could have benefited from better attention to establish better synergy between activities. A notable example was the lack of a pre-feasibility study for the Lorack Bane forest at the preparation stage which "would have facilitated timelier implementation and outcome of project activities (ICR, paragraph 58)." The project was designed without a dedicated project implementation unit (PIU), where implementation relied on a core team at the Agency for the Environment and Sustainable Development. However, the lack of a dedicated PIU contributed to implementation delays in the earlier stage of the project. A notable design shortcoming was the failure to address land tenure issues despite being key to overcoming unsustainable land and water use. At the appraisal stage, several risks were identified related to the capacity of the implementing agency, financial management and project related risks including design, environmental management and sustainability. The PAD (Annex 4) included a detailed discussion of risks and the suggested mitigation measures. However, the ICR did not report whether any of the risks identified at appraisal materialized during implementation nor how effective the mitigation measures were. M&E design had some shortcomings with regards to the specificity of indicators (see section 9 for more details).

Based on the above mentioned assessment, Quality at Entry is rated Moderately Satisfactory. This rating reflects moderate shortcomings in project design, a lack a pre-feasibility study for the Lorack Bane forest, concerns on implementation arrangements and some M&E weaknesses.

### **Quality-at-Entry Rating**

Moderately Satisfactory

#### **b. Quality of supervision**

The project was implemented under a challenging security situation that limited field visits. The Bank team relied on field officers to report on the implementation of activities due to the security situation. The Bank conducted biannual supervision missions to support the implementation activities. According to the ICR (paragraph 87) the Bank "provided adequate assistance on safeguards, FM, and procurement." Project implementation benefited from the stability of the Task Team leadership which only experienced one change throughout implementation.

The ICR (paragraph 89) reported that the underachievement of the project's outcome regarding the adoption of SLWM practices "was not candidly reported in the World Bank supervision documents and correspondence, which reduced the effectiveness of the M&E system." Further, the tracking of the project's outcome was undermined by the inconsistencies in the Restructuring Paper and the Results Framework (RF). For example, the target for the PDO outcome indicator #1 was reduced 72% without providing a clear rationale, and one PDO outcome indicator 'Land area under sustainable landscape management practices (ha) was added without a defined target (ICR paragraph 73). The supervision team should have addressed these issues earlier in the implementation period to enable accurate tracking of the activities and reporting



on outcomes. Also, the restructuring of the project came late in the implementation cycle and should have happened at an earlier stage to maximize benefits of the restructuring .

Quality of supervision is rated Moderately Unsatisfactory. This rating reflects a concern on poor reporting of achievements in the Bank supervision documents, late attention to M&E weaknesses, and late restructuring of the project.

Overall, Bank Performance is rated Moderately Satisfactory given the default methodological approach of consideration of the Efficacy rating in situations where the ratings are split. This rating reflects moderate shortcomings for Quality at Entry and significant shortcomings for Quality of supervision.

### **Quality of Supervision Rating**

Moderately Unsatisfactory

### **Overall Bank Performance Rating**

Moderately Satisfactory

## **9. M&E Design, Implementation, & Utilization**

### **a. M&E Design**

The PAD did not include an explicit Theory of Change (ToC), which was not a requirement at the time of appraisal. Nevertheless, the detailed project description in the PAD (Annex 2) reflected clear connections between the project inputs/activities, outputs, and expected outcomes. Also, the ICR (paragraph 7 and figure 1) included a good discussion on the ToC and the key underlying assumptions.

The Agency for the Environment and Sustainable Development (AEDD) had the overall responsibility for M&E activities. At the local level, the decentralized services of the participating institutions (National Directorate of Agriculture, National Directorate of Water and Forestry, and National Directorate of Animal Productions and Industries) would collaborate for data collection, compilation, communication to the M&E specialist within AEDD.

The PDO was to be assessed through three outcome indicators: 1. Increase in land area with SLWM practices in targeted areas, compared to baseline (hectares reported by crop, range, forest, wetlands, protected areas); 2. Changes (increase) in vegetation cover in targeted areas, compared to baseline; and 3. Direct beneficiaries of the project (number) of which female (percentage). While the first indicator was directly related to the PDO and measurable, the basis for the target of 10,748 ha was not clearly explained in the PAD. Also, the disaggregation to each of the categories proved difficult and was later dropped. The second indicator was dropped due to potential attribution issues and lack of reliable counterfactuals. The third indicator provided a count of beneficiaries, which did not provide any assessment



on impacts. In sum, with practically only one PDO outcome indicator, the M&E design fell short on comprehensively capturing the full impact of the project.

The Results Framework included fourteen intermediate outcome indicators to assess the different activities supported by the project. Most were linked to the activities and measurable, but there were no baselines available.

Overall, M&E design was weak particularly for the PDO level indicators, and the lack of any baselines undermined assessment of activities.

## **b. M&E Implementation**

M&E implementation was challenging due to the security situation. The Bank relied on local focal points as well as NGOs to collect monitoring data from project activities implemented on the ground. The baseline studies for vegetation cover and beneficiaries were not carried out as planned. M&E activities had an initial slow start, but according to the ICR (paragraph 74) "M&E data were consistently collected on the different aspects of project implementation." However, deeper technical assessment of land use change was needed to make use of satellite images of project areas. Also, the lack of information on the IGA beneficiaries regarding their previous livelihoods made it difficult to accurately assess their impact on reducing the pressure on natural resources and on helping to strengthen the economic resilience of households (ICR paragraph 76).

**Restructuring and revision of the RF.** As part of the 2018 restructuring the RF was revised as follows: of the 14 original intermediate outcome indicators, 4 were dropped, 1 was moved to the PDO level, and 5 were revised. One new indicator was added. Notable changes included the reduction of the target for outcome indicator #1 by 75% from 10,748 ha to 3,000 ha. The ICR (paragraph 64) attributed this significant reduction to land tenure rights. Specifically, "living off public land, the stakeholders had lower levels of ownership of the resources and, in the absence of proper incentives, considered their individual interests. The project was unable to overcome this obstacle to effectively engage this group of stakeholders in the expansion of SLWM practices on this part of the project area. It was also reported that this area faced security risks during the last years of project implementation." Another notable change was the upward revision of the target for the number of alternative income-generating activities financed by the project from 140 to 500. This was to reflect a shift in the focus of the project after the significant reduction of the outcome indicator #1 target. While these changes were understandable, this Review does not agree with the assessment of the ICR that the ToC was not affected. The focus of the project shifted from the adoption of SLWM activities -which was the core activity that would contribute to achievement of the PDO, to a complementary activity (Income Generating Activities or IGAs) that was expected to support the PDO by reducing unsustainable land and water management practices.

Overall implementation was challenging due to security concerns, and the revision of the RF was carried out late in the implementation cycle.



### c. M&E Utilization

M&E utilization was mixed. On one hand, the ICR (paragraph 78) stated that the "project monitoring was adequately used to inform project management and improve project performance." On the other hand, the expansion of SLWM activities lacked reporting on key aspects. This lack of information undermined the project management and prevented "course correction and potentially to better outcomes for the Lorack Bane forest (ICR paragraph 78)." At restructuring, M&E data were used to adjust the outcome targets for each of the outcome indicators.

Overall, M&E quality is rated Modest. This rating reflects design weaknesses including lack of a baseline, poor design of outcome indicators, and limited utilization of M&E data due to lack of detailed reporting.

### M&E Quality Rating

Modest

## 10. Other Issues

### a. Safeguards

The project was an environmental category B-Partial Assessment. The following six safeguard policies were triggered at appraisal: Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01, Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04, Pest Management OP 4.09, Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11, Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12, and Forests OP/BP 4.36. The environmental and social impacts of the project were mainly related to the implementation of components 2 and 3. The expected impacts of the project included: (i) water pollution and prevalence of water-borne disease around small irrigation or multi-purpose water point areas; and (ii) increase in illegal poaching following the publication of the wildlife inventory results; (iii) introduction of inappropriate plant species for afforestation. Positive impacts on the environmental and social side included: (i) improvement of livelihoods; (ii) reduction of resource use conflicts; (iii) strengthening of social cohesion; (iv) reduction of unemployment rate among unqualified youth; (v) increase of knowledge base and improvement of production practices. An Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) and a Pest Management Plan (PMP) were prepared, and disclosed in country on June 11, 2013 and at the Bank's Infoshop on June 12, 2013.

**Environmental safeguards.** 670 physical investments under component 3 were environmentally and socially screened. This resulted in 218 notices of expected environmental and social impact for IGAs (ICR paragraph 81). The Bank provided safeguards training and capacity building to 127 staff of the implementing agencies in the proper implementation of World Bank policies. After the MTR, the project appointed environmental and social focal points in each implementation agency to improve safeguard monitoring.

**Social safeguards.** The project established a simplified grievance redress mechanism (GRM) mainly for component 3 on IGA sub-grants. Most of the complaints received related to the delay in disbursement. The ICR did not report on the number of complaints received nor whether these complaints were resolved.



**Safeguard compliance.** The ICR (paragraph 82) reported that "the project complied with all applicable and triggered safeguards policies and was consistently rated Satisfactory and Moderately Satisfactory."

**b. Fiduciary Compliance**

**Financial Management.** The ICR reported limited details on financial management. The core implementation team included financial management (FM) specialists. The World Bank team provided adequate assistance financial management (ICR paragraph 87).

**Procurement.** The World Bank team provided adequate assistance on procurement (ICR paragraph 87). No further details were reported in the ICR.

**c. Unintended impacts (Positive or Negative)**

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**d. Other**

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**11. Ratings**

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

**12. Lessons**

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

- **Addressing land tenure issues is critical to ensure a successful outcome for land restoration projects.** The project experience showed that without addressing the underlying land tenure insecurity, land degradation outcomes will not materialize, and they will not be sustainable. It is also important to build in short-term incentives, while the longer-term benefits of land restoration materialize.
- **Implementing a project without a dedicated PIU is possible with a proper incentive structure in place.** The project relied on a core team of staff appointed within the implementing agency to coordinate the daily management and monitoring of tasks. Staff



incentives were addressed through a national incentive framework, using counterpart funding. This allowed for bonuses and other benefits to align public official's responsibility with project implementation. This also ensures that public officials would not be pulled into competing priorities of the implementing agency.

The following lesson is emphasized by IEG:

- **Restructuring of projects needs to be timely and comprehensive to maximize the benefits of the restructuring process.** The project experienced a relatively late restructuring process. This left limited time for benefits to materialize by completion. Also, the restructuring needs to be comprehensive and involve the revision of the PDO especially when critical activities are scaled back.

### 13. Assessment Recommended?

No

### 14. Comments on Quality of ICR

Quality of Evidence.

The ICR acknowledged that M&E design had weaknesses and utilization was limited. The ICR (paragraph 76) also reported that baseline studies for vegetation cover and beneficiaries were not carried out as planned. Also, the impact of IGAs on reducing pressure on natural resources or helping strengthen the economic resilience of households could not be accurately assessed due to limited information. Overall, quality of evidence was relatively poor-which is beyond the control of the ICR.

Quality of Analysis.

The ICR provided clear linking between evidence and findings to the extent possible - given the M&E weaknesses.

Lessons were generally based on evidence and analysis. They were based on the project experience.

Results Orientation.

The ICR included a good discussion on outcomes despite concerns on the accuracy of the M&E data. However, the discussion could have benefited from a better balance between shortcomings and actual achievements.

Internal Consistency.

Various parts of the ICR were internally consistent and logically linked and integrated.



Consistency with guidelines.

The ICR is substantially longer than what is stated in the guidelines.

Conciseness.

The ICR provided thorough coverage of the implementation experience and candidly reported on shortcomings. There was enough clarity in the report's messaging. However, discussion of outcomes suffered from a poor M&E design combined with limited M&E utilization. The ICR did not report on whether the project closing date was extended as part of the changes introduced during the first or second restructuring of the project, and included limited information on financial management and procurement.

Overall, the Quality of the ICR is rated substantial, despite some shortcomings.

**a. Quality of ICR Rating**  
Substantial