

Targeting and community development approaches: IFAD's experience in Morocco

Evolution of IFAD's targeting in Morocco

The 1999 Country Strategic Opportunities Paper (COSOP) is the latest strategy document to have been produced by IFAD for Morocco; a new paper is under preparation and will be submitted for approval to the Executive Board in December 2008. The strategy set forth in the 1999 COSOP represented a specific step forward in the evolution of IFAD's targeting approach in Morocco.

The *first stage* (1979-85) of IFAD's interventions in Morocco was characterized by large projects (total costs in excess of US\$400 million). These were mainly funded by the Government and other donors (such as the World Bank), whereas IFAD provided less than 5 per cent of total project costs. The projects were designed to serve particular subsectors (e.g. agricultural credit supply) or large geographic regions, but contained no mechanism to serve special categories of beneficiaries.



A woman collects water from the newly constructed Canal de Rocade irrigation canal. The accessibility of water will allow a shift from traditional subsistence farming to one that is market oriented. IFAD photo by Joseph Marando

The *second stage* (1985-98) involved medium-sized projects (total costs US\$42-53 million) with a narrower geographical concentration and increased IFAD financing (20-40 per cent of total project costs). While serving the general population, these projects began to include components targeted at special categories of beneficiaries, in particular women and young people.

The *third stage* (1999 onwards) included a strategy that set forth the following steps: (i) identifying disadvantaged zones (provinces and communes); (ii) prioritizing the most disadvantaged communities within the above zones; and (iii) targeting particularly disadvantaged households

or categories (women, young people) within such communities.

In practice, two approaches have emerged. The first, partly inherited from previous interventions but modified following the formulation of the COSOP, consisted of promoting cooperatives of herders in low-rainfall rangelands. The second approach, new to IFAD's portfolio and to Morocco as a whole, consisted of systematically targeting entire "douars"¹ in the mountain areas.

Targeting pastoral cooperatives

Low-rainfall rangelands cover three quarters of Morocco's land area. Decades of ever-increasing livestock numbers have led to overgrazing of pastures and progressive degradation of the vegetative cover. The combination of complex rangeland tenure systems and state subsidies have contributed to a significant increase in livestock numbers and to complicated regulation/sanctioning of rangeland management. In two IFAD-supported projects – the Livestock and Pasture Development Project in the Eastern Region – Phase I (PDPEO I), and the Tafilalet and Dadès Rural Development Project (PDRT) – the approach has been to help establish pastoral cooperatives along traditional ethno-lineage networks, the idea being that by revitalizing the traditional social capital it should be possible to establish sustainable rangeland management systems and improve economic opportunities for poor herders.

Cooperatives of herders were set up with the initial goal of establishing fallow rotation plans on pastures. While successful cases have been recorded, the effectiveness of this approach has been mixed, for three reasons: (i) conflicts within and among cooperatives have, in some instances, resulted in little respect for fallow rotation plans, as occurred in the southern part of the PDPEO I project area and in PDRT; (ii) while pastoral cooperatives showed wide variations in the categories of herders involved (from those with 20-50 head to those with

¹ The word "douar" originally translated into "a group of tents", but today it is normally used to mean a hamlet or small village, the basic administrative unit in Morocco.

hundreds), the projects did not initially include specific interventions for small-scale herders to help mitigate shocks during dry years; and (iii) the initial support to cooperatives was provided following a top-down administrative culture. Standardized, one-fits-all interventions established at the project design stage were applied even when they were not cost-effective or justified by local needs.

In view of the above, the new phase of the Livestock and Rangelands Development Project in the Eastern Region (PDPEO II), still at an early stage of implementation, attempts to address several of these issues, that is, by: (i) engaging public authorities in Morocco to identify institutional solutions to the complexity of rangeland tenure systems; (ii) providing organizational and managerial support to pastoral cooperatives; (iii) devoting more attention and resources to income diversification, particularly for small-scale herders; and (iv) introducing a more participatory approach to planning interventions. The public administration is now encouraged to draw up cooperative development plans on a contractual basis, which means that roles and responsibilities for provision, management and maintenance of project services and infrastructure are agreed upon from the outset and shared between the public administration and grass-roots associations.

A new approach to demand-driven community development: Douar development plans

Pioneered in the mountainous areas of Al Haouz Province, the *douar* development plan approach starts with the targeting of *douars* based on a set of poverty indicators followed by the selection of *douars*, field visits and sensitization activities. The purpose of the preliminary field activities is to conduct a needs assessment and prepare a *douar* development plan in consultation with the community involved. The plan includes a set of interventions, including both social services and basic infrastructure (e.g. provision of drinking water, literacy classes, construction of feeder roads) as well as income-generating activities (e.g. small-scale irrigation, fruit-tree planting, bee-keeping, handicrafts).

Douar development plans are validated through discussions among communities, project staff and local administrations, and include agreements on cost-sharing and responsibility for the management and maintenance of infrastructure. This is expected to enhance the chances of sustainability. Implementing such an approach has involved a shift from a narrow concept of participation, understood as beneficiaries providing free labour, to an expanded notion of participation as awareness-raising and consultation with concerned communities, and, finally, to participation in the

sense of negotiations on planning, management and maintenance of project interventions.

The 2006/7 Country Programme Evaluation (CPE) on Morocco concluded that one of the advantages of the *douar* targeting approach was its focus on the geographical concentration of activities. This focus reinforces synergies among different components, i.e. greater productive assets are accompanied by better knowledge of agricultural techniques and by improved health (for example, thanks to potable water components) and mobility (following construction of feeder roads), thus contributing to greater productivity of land, capital and labour. This also reduces the risk of dispersing activities and administrative funding available for follow-up. In particular, the evaluation demonstrated that, while projects adopting the *douar* targeting approach are relatively new, they have generated socio-economic impacts that are comparable with or greater than those of completed or more “mature” conventional projects.

A sheep herder drinks water from a cistern built by the Livestock and Pasture Development Project in the Eastern Region. IFAD photo by Alberto Conti



Further information:

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