



Project evaluation: summary report

Supporting the National Programme for Sustainable Small-scale Irrigation in Mali (PASSIP)

Project number:	2013.2246.0
CRS purpose code	31110 Agricultural policy and administrative management
Project objective:	Private sector and state actors are leveraging the potential of small-scale irrigation to improve the economic situation and food and nutrition security.
Project term:	April 2014 – March 2017
Project volume:	EUR 27,277,568, including two combined financing arrangements amounting to EUR 6,600,000 (European Union, EU) and EUR 10,067,568 (Canadian Government)
Commissioning party:	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Lead executing agency:	Ministry of Agriculture
Implementing organisations (in the partner country):	The National Department for Rural Engineering (Direction Nationale du Génie Rural, DNGR) and its regional structures
Other participating development organisations:	EU and Canada (delegated cooperation)
Target groups:	Smallholders and microentrepreneurs of both genders in the processing sector

Project description

Mali's natural resources offer significant potential for small-scale irrigation of a possible surface area exceeding 800,000 ha. According to estimates, only 25-30% of this potential is being used so far, although small-scale irrigation plays a key role when it comes to increasing and diversifying agricultural production and thus improving nutrition. This fact is reflected in the country's development plans, which give priority to the goals of safeguarding agricultural yields by expanding irrigation and to improving the population's nutritional status. The National Programme for Small-scale Irrigation (Programme National d'Irrigation de Proximité, PNIP) lays the foundations for coordinated activities by the government and donors with the aim of planning, building, operating and maintaining small-scale irrigation systems in line with common standards.

Agriculture accounts for 42% of GNP (2012), and small-scale irrigation in particular should offer opportunities for significantly increasing and diversifying food production. However, the lack of capacity on the part of private and public actors means that the potential of small-scale irrigation to achieve economic development and healthy nutrition is not being tapped. The majority of Malian farmers of both genders are inadequately trained and organised to maintain and efficiently

operate small-scale irrigation systems in the long term. Women, in particular, have limited access to irrigated land. People often have insufficient knowledge of good nutritional practices and inadequate food supply. The Malian administration lacks the capacities and skills to develop and tap the potential offered by small-scale irrigation. Employees of private sector service providers and non-governmental organisations are inadequately trained.

Private sector and state actors have so far been unable to sustainably leverage the potential of small-scale irrigation to improve the economic situation and food and nutrition security (core problem).

The Supporting the National Programme for Sustainable Small-scale Irrigation in Mali (PASSIP) technical cooperation (TC) measure (PN 2013.2246.0) has supported the Ministry of Agriculture in drawing up PNIP and is part of a joint financial cooperation (FC) and TC programme proposal. TC promotes enabling conditions in the small-scale irrigation sector, better training, optimising the use of small-scale irrigation plots in the long run and improved nutrition. This will enable the rural population to use the economic potential offered by small-scale irrigation to make farming profitable and to improve their food and nutrition situation. The intervention strategy of the TC measure aims to build capacities at individual, organisational and societal level.

The module objective of PASSIP is: Private sector and state actors are leveraging the potential of small-scale irrigation to improve the economic situation and food and nutrition security. The objective is in line with that of the National Programme for Small-scale Irrigation (PNIP) and BMZ's rural development objectives.

PASSIP operates in three interlinked fields of activity. The first field of activity, Coordinating development of the small-scale irrigation sector, helps to implement PNIP. The second field of activity, Training state and private service providers in small-scale irrigation, strengthens the ability of private sector and public actors (intermediaries) to advise the population on the optimal use of small-scale irrigation, and on how to improve their income and their food and nutrition situation. The third field of activity, Leveraging small-scale irrigation plots and improved nutrition, mainly focuses on activities within the framework of the delegated cooperation arrangement with the EU in the Sikasso and Koulikoro regions (Initiative de Renforcement de la Résilience par l'Irrigation et la Gestion Appropriée des Ressources, IRRIGAR) and the Canadian cofinancing arrangement (Renforcement de l'Agriculture Irriguée, REAGIR) in the Mopti and Koulikoro regions.

No results model is available for the current project term, only a results framework drafted during the project appraisal. To enable planning of the follow-on measure from 2017, a results model was produced that is based on the results logic for the current term, which appears coherent. The results and formulated objectives were merely adjusted and expanded.

The TC measure cooperates closely with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the European Union within delegated cooperation arrangements (REAGIR and IRRIGAR). In the second and third fields of activity, it is involved in close cooperation with the country packages of the global programmes Green innovation centres for the agricultural and food sector and Food and nutrition security, enhanced resilience implemented as part of the BMZ special initiative One World - No Hunger (SEWOH).

The indicators are closely related to the fields of activity. Some of them are realistically geared to practical implementation and cover all three levels in line with the multi-level approach. Indicator 1 concerns the acceptance of PNIP as the frame of reference for small-scale irrigation projects in Mali. The indicator mainly refers to relevant donors, because smaller projects, e.g. those of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), are difficult to document. Indicator 2 refers to the increased yields obtained by producers receiving advice who practice small-scale irrigation. Indicator 3 concerns the user committees and the plots and small-scale irrigation systems they operate. This also includes irrigated land taken over by FC. Indicator 4 concerns the food and nutrition situation of the target group and the possibilities of them using their own stocks to meet their nutritional needs.

The evaluation team comes to the conclusion that, while the objectives indicators do in general comply with SMART criteria (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound), some of them are not worded clearly or realistically enough. Since the indicators are often worded unclearly and may be misunderstood, it is extremely difficult to come to objective conclusions with regard to the current status, which raises doubts as regards measurability. This limits the information provided by the findings. Thought should be given to rewording the indicators and to adjusting the way in which they are quantified and qualified. This also concerns making clear statements about the inclusion of irrigated land supported by FC in Timbuktu and Mopti.

The effectiveness criterion measures the project's achievement of objectives. The qualitative assessment of objectives achievement was based on feedback derived from different conversations, especially those with the officer responsible for the commission, the heads of the fields of activity and the project's own monitoring and evaluation unit. The actual and target situation of the indicators formulated at module objective level was compared to enable a quantitative assessment. The table on page 4 shows the detailed comparison.

Effectiveness is measured at the present time, i.e. based on the actual situation of the TC measure. Little consideration can be given to possible future progress or results. It must be borne in mind that the TC measure will continue for another 10 months and therefore has a full growing season during which results will surely be achieved. It must also be remembered that some activities could only be commenced shortly before the evaluation because REAGIR (Canadian cofinancing), for instance, was very late in getting off the ground and no cultivation period could be taken into account here. Nor was it possible to visit some of the intervention areas, which have therefore not been included in detail in the evaluation.

The basis for assessment of overarching development results (impact) is geared to the currently valid national strategies and their specific objectives, as well as the relevant orientation of activities.

Basis for assessment of the OECD-DAC criteria:	Individual and overall rating of the OECD-DAC criteria:
<p>To determine the TC measure's overall rating, calculate the average of the individual ratings of the five OECD-DAC criteria:</p> <p>14 – 16 points: very successful 12 – 13 points: successful 10 – 11 points: rather successful 8 – 9 points: rather unsatisfactory 6 – 7 points: unsatisfactory 4 – 5 points: very unsatisfactory</p>	<p>Relevance: 16 points, very successful Effectiveness: 9 points, rather unsatisfactory Impact: 12 points, successful Efficiency: 9 points, rather unsatisfactory Sustainability: 12 points, successful</p> <p>Overall, the TC measure is rated 'successful' with 12 out of 16 points.</p>

Relevance (Are we doing the right thing?)

PASSIP is aligned with BMZ's agricultural development objectives (gender equality, participatory development/good governance, combating desertification, adaptation to climate change, poverty orientation, rural development and food security). Together with the FC module Supporting the Implementation of the National Programme for Small-Scale Irrigation, it is part of the joint programme proposal on promoting agriculture and sustainable irrigated agriculture in Mali.

The TC measure focuses its assistance on the areas of institutional support, the training of intermediaries and improving the economic and food situation of small-scale farmers. It is therefore entirely geared towards solving the core problem. PASSIP is fully integrated into PNIP and acts within this framework. Its actions are therefore completely in harmony with the national policy and strategies of the Malian Ministry of Agriculture (Ministère de l'Agriculture, MA), such as the Agricultural Framework Law (Loi d'Orientation Agricole, LOA), the national Agricultural Development Policy (Politique de Développement Agricole, PDA) and the Strategic Framework for Growth and Poverty Reduction (Cadre Stratégique de Croissance et de Réduction de la Pauvreté, CSCR), and takes guidance from these.

The relevance of the TC measure is rated 'very successful' with 16 points.

Effectiveness (Will we achieve the project's objective?)

Objectives indicator	Target value according to the offer	Current situation according to the project evaluation
<p>1. The Programme National d'Irrigation de Proximité (PNIP) acts as a reference system for 50% of all new small-scale irrigation projects of the National Department for Rural Engineering (DNGR) and of international donors. Baseline value (2013): Projects: 0</p>	50% of new projects	According to DNGR, 58% of new bilateral projects are in line with PNIP. More precise data are only expected at the end of the present term.
<p>2. 4,625 small-scale irrigation producers (1,513 of them women) who have received advice in the Koulikoro, Mopti, Timbuktu and Sikasso regions have increased their average yields per hectare of irrigated land by 20%. Baseline value (French version): Rice yields per hectare: Sikasso 1.84 t/ha, Mopti 2.68 t/ha and Koulikoro 1.65 t/ha. Potatoes: Sikasso 9.65 t/ha, Mopti 4.77 t/ha and Koulikoro 5.89 t/ha. No baseline values are available yet for vegetable production.</p>	4,625 producers of both genders who receive advice, of whom 1,513 are women; increased yields of the main crop products: 20%	At present, no objective statement can be made because no verifiable interim findings are available. The baselines were not established until December 2015 in three of four regions.
<p>3. 85% of all the small-scale irrigation systems supported by German DC are maintained by user committees in the Mopti, Timbuktu, Koulikoro and Sikasso regions. Baseline value (2013): Koulikoro: 5 of 16 systems, Sikasso: 3 of 15 systems, Dogon County (Mopti): 5 of 16 systems (micro-dams) and Inner Niger Delta (Mopti, Timbuktu): 85% of a total of 576 systems (village perimeters)</p>	85% in all regions	<p>EU cofinancing: 12 out of 17 systems are maintained in Sikasso (71%) and 17 out of 23 (74%) in Koulikoro.</p> <p>Canadian cofinancing: No statements are possible because it is still in the initial phase (effective start of work in late 2015). Timbuktu (IPRODI): 90%</p>
<p>4. 50% of the families with small-scale irrigated plots who take part in the TC measure meet 40% more of their nutritious food needs from food stocks. Baseline value (2013): 27.2% of families meet their nutritious food needs from their own food stocks.</p>	50% of families meet their food needs from their own food stocks and increase their consumption of nutritious foods by 40%.	The indicator was reworded based on a study but remains unclear and therefore difficult to measure. Differences also exist between the German and French versions. So far, it has not been possible to make any statements on the degree of achievement because the baseline study was carried out in late 2014 and the first comparative values will not be available until the end of 2016. No interim findings are available.

The evaluation team comes to the conclusion that objectives indicator 1 will probably be *fully* achieved and objectives indicator 3 will probably be *partly* achieved before the end of the current term.

No reliable statements can be made on objectives indicators 2 and 4 at the time of the evaluation. For three of the four indicators, either no baseline values were available at the time of the evaluation or they were only established at a very late stage.

The effectiveness of the TC measure is rated 'rather unsatisfactory' with 9 points.

Overarching development results (impact) (Are we contributing to the achievement of overarching development results?) The TC measure is oriented towards currently applicable national strategies (PNIP, LOA, PDA and CSCRP) and their objectives, and gears its activities accordingly. However, no clear statements can be made concerning more long-term results owing to its relatively short term of two years. It can be presumed, though, that the project will make a positive contribution to overarching political results in its general set-up and strategic orientation. The contribution made to gender equality, in particular, is rated positively owing to the broad impact of the project approaches, the specific range of services offered to women and multiplication effects. Here too, long-term results may only become visible during the term of the follow-on measure at the earliest. PNIP transposes overarching development results from the national level for implementation at the local and regional level (via PASSIP), and examines their effectiveness. Conversely, the lessons learned and results achieved are transferred back from the local and regional level to the national level, where they are incorporated into national programmes and strategies. The fact that the TC measure predominantly addresses intermediaries and smallholders is a good precondition for achieving broad impact, also by means of multiplication effects.

The impact of the TC measure is rated 'successful' with 12 points.

Efficiency (Are the objectives being achieved cost-effectively?)

While the instrument mix is aligned with the programme's (PASSIP) requirements, the financial and human resource capacities are reaching their limits. Administration accounts for a large share of the overall project, and more stringent security requirements also place a burden on administrative processes. Handling local subsidy agreements and monitoring makes up a large proportion of administrative tasks. Use is made of opportunities for consultation and coordination with other donors and programmes. PASSIP actively participates in the donor coordination round for the small-scale irrigation sector. Concertation with individual FC projects is insufficient, which has an impact on the information status related to irrigated land and their how it is exploited. It must be asked if the delegated cooperation arrangements with the EU and Canada can really be considered as such, or if the two partners rather see GIZ as a subcontractor that is there to put their plans and approaches into practice. This is particularly true of cooperation with Canada. On a positive note, it should be said that no parallel structures are being set up. As far as possible, activities are carried out together with partners and private service providers. Nor are existing structures being replaced.

At present, there is a certain degree of imbalance between the use of resources and the results achieved so far, which are sure to increase by the end of the term. There is a need to improve PASSIP in this respect.

The efficiency of the TC measure is rated 'rather unsatisfactory' with 9 points.

Sustainability (Are the positive results durable?)

PASSIP's results extend to all three levels since the project works together with local, regional and national partners as a component of the national strategy on small-scale irrigation. Results are to be transferred to the micro/target group level by strengthening the capacities of DNGR at macro level and those of private and state intermediaries at meso level. However, this has only been realised in part so far. Intermediaries and service providers do not yet have the required educational and technical skills and ability to apply the project's approach that would enable them to carry out their advisory role comprehensively at grassroots level. This role involves training the rural population and empowering them to durably acquire the necessary knowledge in the long run and procure important inputs.

The inadequate linkage of fields of activity 2 and 3 is due both to the delayed start of cofinancing arrangements and to insufficient monitoring of the quality of training provided to intermediaries and their aptitude for passing on knowledge and lessons learned, and for promoting practical implementation. In some cases no examination is made of whether the acquired knowledge is actually used.

On the positive side, PASSIP is strictly based on national, regional and local structures, and disseminates activities on a broad scale via these structures, also in cooperation with intermediaries. There is no substitution of structures, nor has PASSIP set up any parallel structures. The question remains, though, whether sustainability can be achieved since it is foreseeable that national, regional and local structures as well as the coordination bodies CNOS and CTRC will be hard put to carry out ambitious and important activities themselves in the long run without external financing. However, it will not be possible to continue providing support services to actors at regional and national level in the medium term without continued external support from donors owing to the low levels of funding that these actors receive, although capacities for disseminating methods and implementing strategies are in principle available. This also has direct consequences at target group level. PASSIP does not have a specific strategy to address this problem. The sustainability of results at micro, meso and macro level therefore largely depends on the partners and their ability to implement and finance their strategies and activities.

The project (PASSIP) is aware of the possible risks to sustainability and takes them into consideration in its plans. However, it has very little scope for influencing the risks, especially at political level.

The security situation and the related restrictions on the freedom of international staff and consultants to travel are also important issues that have a direct effect on the implementation of activities and their monitoring in the field. These re-

strictions are more severe in the northern parts of the country because they also affect national personnel. These factors constitute a major risk to sustainability.

The sustainability of the TC measure is rated 'successful' with 12 points.

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