



Project evaluation: summary report

Supraregional: Sustainable Agriculture (NAREN)

Name of the measure according to the contract:	Sustainable Agriculture (NAREN) sector project
Project no.:	PN: 12.2503.6-001.00
Country/region:	Supraregional
CRS sector code:	43040 Rural development
Project objective:	Proven concepts and instruments for sustainable agriculture are integrated more effectively into international cooperation.
Project term:	January 2013 to December 2015
Project volume:	EUR 4,800,000
Commissioning party:	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Target groups according to the offer:	BMZ and German development cooperation projects funded by BMZ

Project description

Since German development cooperation began to focus on rural development some years ago (L'Aquila Initiative 2009, the post-MDG debate, etc.), the importance of sustainable agriculture has steadily become more apparent, both at bilateral and international level. On one hand, this is reflected in the BMZ 'Rural development and its contribution to food security' and 'Promoting sustainable agriculture' strategy papers. On the other, the topic's significance to BMZ is clearly demonstrated by the human and financial resources it has pledged to its 'One World – No Hunger' (SEWOH) Initiative; SEWOH contributes to the operational setting of NAREN. Agricultural production, storage and processing are essential elements of hunger alleviation. For this reason NAREN is a key partner in efforts to network and harness synergies with other issue areas. It develops practical instruments to implement sustainable agriculture at operational level and promotes the use of good farming practices. Examples here are the integration of sustainable agriculture methods in SEWOH's global 'Soil' and 'Innovation Centres' projects which can draw directly on NAREN's experience and approaches.

In spite of the great importance attributed to sustainable agriculture, numerous shortcomings exist in terms of the mainstreaming and long-term dissemination of the relevant sustainability concepts in international cooperation (core problem). Accordingly, the module objective of the Sustainable Agriculture sector project is *'Proven concepts and instruments of sustainable agriculture are integrated more effectively into international cooperation.'*

The project helps BMZ to define and disseminate its position on sustainable agriculture in guidance documents, strategy papers and coordination processes. It carries sustainable farming concepts and methods over to projects in partner countries, providing relevant training and knowledge management.

Basis for assessment of the OECD–DAC criteria:	Individual 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: very successful Effectiveness: successful Impact: successful Efficiency: successful Sustainability: successful</p>

The TC measure is rated **'successful'** with 12.6 points.

Relevance

The project provides advice to the BMZ 'One World – No Hunger' Initiative, which attaches great developmental importance to hunger and poverty reduction and rural development and requires appropriate guidance and support to achieve its aims. The project assists directly with all areas of sustainable agriculture considered highly relevant to the objectives of the commissioning party, BMZ, i.e. adaptation to climate change, sustainable production methods, post-harvest protection, seed convention, extension systems, gender, renewable resources, etc. Links to the core problems of rural target groups are established through implementing projects in the partner countries – the second target group of the project – even though the sector project has no direct impact on the rural population. Moreover, the subject of sustainable agriculture has become increasingly significant in the international community and calls for sustainable, implementation-focused concepts and measures. In the current phase its relevance was demonstrated by its contribution to the MDGs, the post-2015 debate and the preparation of the SDGs: improved food security and sustainable agriculture (SDG2), as well as measures to combat climate change, and the protection of ecosystems and biodiversity (SDG 13 and 15). As this is a sector project, it indirectly – through its advisory services to BMZ – helps to position relevant approaches in agriculture, disseminating these in international forums and alliances. An essential factor of the project's success in developing sustainable farming concepts and instruments was its close collaboration with German development cooperation programmes in the partner countries. Such collaboration makes it possible to introduce innovative elements into the programmes, and at the same time to make use of proven methods and experience gained from them to inform specialist circles and provide advice to BMZ. The timely, up-to-date and technically-sound advice made available by the sector project has led to a high level of satisfaction on the part of BMZ and the programmes in the partner countries.

Effectiveness

Overall objective (outcome): Proven concepts and instruments of sustainable agriculture are integrated more effectively into international cooperation.

Objectives indicator ¹	Target value according to the offer	Current status according to the project evaluation
1. With the support of the sector project, BMZ's position on sustainable agriculture has been taken into account in 10 guidance documents, strategy papers and coordination processes of international cooperation.	Baseline: 0, Target value: 10	<p>Indicator 1 has been partially achieved, progress has been made in 7 out of 10 processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape approach; (2) Preparation of the global 'Soil' and 'Innovation Centres' projects; (3) Positioning process on seed; (4) Contributions to and membership of the Global Soil Partnership and the Save Food Initiative; (5) Routine political discourses on bioenergy, GMOs, meat, pesticides and CSA; (6) Expert contributions to the German government's Soil Protection Report, Global Bioenergy Policy, ITPGRFA; (7) Cross-sectoral cooperation and preliminary work within SEWOH.

¹ Objectives indicator 1 partly does not fulfil the SMART criteria; that is to say, it is partly not specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound. This may somewhat restrict the meaningfulness of the findings.

2. Three international cooperation projects have introduced, on a pilot basis, approaches to sustainable production systems and post-harvest techniques recommended by the sector project.	Baseline: 0, Target value: 3	<p>Indicator 2 has been fully achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RISE (Response-Inducing Sustainability Evaluation) method which measures the sustainability of business operations has been implemented in 9 cooperation projects. • Two of the 9 projects have introduced RISE in combination with training schemes on sustainability (MOSA – Modules on Sustainable Agriculture). • Elements of climate change adaptation have been integrated in the projects.
3. Three international cooperation projects have incorporated agricultural consultancy approaches recommended by the sector project, and have carried out training measures.	Baseline: 0, Target value: 3	<p>Indicator 3 has been fully achieved:</p> <p>A survey of barriers and motivating factors for farmers with respect to small-scale irrigation systems was conducted as part of the AISP III programme in Zimbabwe. Recommendations were made and introduced to the project workers, to ensure that ongoing agricultural guidance is both more efficient and more target-group oriented.</p> <p>The CATS project (Caribbean) has run a RISE training course and provided MOSA training for agricultural advisors in the region, to improve the quality of their advice. The regional ‘Sustainable Use of Natural Resources’ programme in Central Asia has received specialist support in achieving broad pro-poor impact of the resource management approaches being piloted. Pro-poor concepts and approaches were adapted to the programme, discussed with programme staff and recorded in the form of reports. The ‘Natural Resource Management’ project in Paraguay has received specialist support for the implementation of its advisory approach.</p> <p>Financial and strategic options are currently being explored in cooperation with the University of Bern with respect to establishing RISE as a norm in regional institutes.</p>
4. Recommendations for international cooperation agreed between German and international actors exist for 9 best practices and instruments of sustainable agriculture.	Baseline: 0, Target value: 9	<p>Indicator 4 has been fully achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are over 40 good practices and documented methods in the field of small-scale irrigation. These have been agreed with German and international actors and the Mali government, and officially adopted as good practices. • Numerous jointly agreed fact sheets exist on the topics of agrobiodiversity and gender. Good farming practices are disseminated through the WOCAT knowledge platform. • 3 of 15 envisaged good practices have been developed for the GFRAS platform, and dairy farming studies have emphasised the significance of the dairy processing sector.

Overarching development results (impact)

As sector projects cannot directly impact on the agricultural target group in partner countries, but rather indirectly through advice to BMZ or implementing projects in the partner countries, evidence of their contribution to overarching development results can only be measured via a lengthy results chain. As a result of its close collaboration with programmes abroad, this sector project has a relatively strong influence on the implementation of practical activities. Under the RISE method (Response-Inducing Sustainability Evaluation), the extension needs of target groups at farm level are identified, and extension contents are designed accordingly. By participating in appraisal missions, the project introduces important considerations and approaches to sustainable agriculture when new projects are drafted. It also provides advice to global projects in

terms of content and strategy, which can be expected to have an indirect but positive impact on the rural target group in the longer term. Furthermore, by working across organisations and policy areas (KfW, BMZ, BMEL) the project increases its effectiveness and promotes the adoption of appropriate methods by other organisations, for example the Rapid Assessment of Food Losses method by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Proven approaches and concepts are processed and made available to potential users by means of international knowledge platforms such as WOCAT (World Overview on Conservation Approaches and Technologies), GFRAS (Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services) and the project's own platform, Agriwaterpedia. The sector project outputs (training courses, methods) should be further enhanced in future by mainstreaming them among regional and other organisations, which will improve the effectiveness of the project.

Efficiency

Efficiency is measured by the suitability of the instruments used, the allocation of time resources for the existing spheres of activity, and coordinated interface management with SEWOH stakeholders and the programmes in partner countries.

The efficiency of the project is rated as high: BMZ reports that it receives prompt, up-to-date and technically sound advice on day-to-day policy issues. There are numerous necessary cooperation relationships at an international level, and with other sector projects and global projects on topics such as soil, water, energy, agrobiodiversity, agricultural technology, post-harvest protection and agricultural advice. Such technical issues are not covered by other divisions or sector projects, which ensures good complementarity. The sector project is highly valued by programmes abroad for its practical methods and approaches and the thematically-diverse, professionally-sound advice it provides. This justifies its relatively high application of personnel. The time resources are spread fairly evenly between the individual spheres of activity, although the proportions fluctuate substantially within the individual topic areas.

Sustainability

The sector project has boosted the political mainstreaming of crucial topics in national and international processes, and has carried these over to implementation programmes in the partner countries. Examples are the provision of advice on seed in the context of interdepartmental dialogue between BMZ and BMEL on the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources (ITPGRFA) and the Plant Variety Protection Act in conformity with the UPOV Convention (Union internationale pour la protection des obtentions végétales); contributions to the Global Soil Partnership and the Climate Smart Agriculture Alliance. At implementation level, the participation of sector project experts in programmes and global projects has provided important long-term impetus in terms of sustainable approaches in agriculture and consultancy, which will be put into practice by the programmes and projects in the coming years or taken up in partner systems.

Although the stated goal of the sector project is to anchor German positions in international processes and among multilateral donors, this has not been developed proactively enough in the past. However, by continuously disseminating knowledge by means of knowledge platforms, actively participating in conferences and joining regional networks, the sector project has made a significant contribution to sustainable knowledge management at international level.

The large variety of topics, which can stand in the way of focus and profile development, is seen by both the sector project itself and BMZ as an obstacle to the implementation of measures. At the same time, this variety of topics is a quality feature which is highly valued by international programmes and BMZ; it is a prerequisite for addressing sustainability, which encompasses different themes depending on the context.

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