



**IFAD**  
**INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT**  
**Executive Board – Seventy-Fourth Session**

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**PLANNED PROJECT ACTIVITIES**  
**2001 – 2002**

Since document EB 2001/74/R.26 was dispatched to Executive Board Directors, one additional project – the Maghama Improved Flood Recession Farming Project, Phase II (Mauritania) – has reached a sufficiently advanced stage of preparation to warrant inclusion in the Annex A portion of the document. The relevant project summary is attached.

In addition, three new projects have entered the official pipeline, as follows: Western and Central Africa (Africa I) – Community Development and Peasant Innovation Project (Niger); Eastern and Southern Africa (Africa II) – Smallholder Cash Crop Development Programme (Rwanda); Asia and the Pacific – Second Smallholder Livestock Development Project (Bangladesh).



<b>Region:</b> Western and Central Africa	<b>Country:</b> Mauritania
<b>Project Name:</b> Maghama Improved Flood Recession Farming Project, Phase II	<b>Per Capita GNI<sup>1</sup>:</b> 390
<b>Project Cost (USD million):</b> 11.5	<b>Population (million)<sup>2</sup>:</b> 3
<b>IFAD Loan (USD million):</b> To be determined	<b>Leading External Financier<sup>3</sup>:</b> IFAD
<b>Proposed Terms:</b> Highly concessional	<b>Cofinancier:</b> To be determined
<b>Present Status:</b> Under formulation	<b>Appraising Institution and Loan Administrator:</b> IFAD and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)

## Project Objectives

Mauritania's agriculture is highly dependent on a limited and extremely variable rainfall. Rainfed farming and flood recession agriculture, the main sources of income for the majority of farmers, rely on traditional production methods, with practically no modern inputs. Overgrazing, deforestation and soil erosion, aggravated by repeated droughts, are contributing to expanding the desert area, thus shrinking the amount of usable land. The overall aim of the proposed project is to contribute to the goals of the national Strategic Framework for Poverty Reduction (CSLP), which are to reduce poverty, improve living conditions and develop local capacity in rural areas. More specifically, the project will seek to improve in a sustainable manner the: (i) capacity of both grass-roots organizations and decentralized institutions to assume increased responsibilities for local development; (ii) access of the rural population to basic infrastructure and services; and (iii) incomes of the rural poor, in particular those of the most vulnerable groups, landless and small farmers, women and youth. The project will build on the achievements of the Maghama Improved Flood Recession Farming Project (Loan 318-MR), which closed in June 2001, particularly the establishment of flood recession infrastructure and of land tenure arrangements favourable to the most vulnerable groups.

## Project Beneficiaries

The project will focus on some of the poorest rural areas in Mauritania – all in the Gorgol province – where poverty affects 77%<sup>2</sup> of the rural population. The project area lies in the flood plains in the district of Maghama along the right bank of the Senegal River. The flood plain is about 50 km in length and 3-12 km wide. All village communities will be covered in this second phase intervention (28 villages were covered in Phase I). The total population is estimated at about 50 000, including the semi-urban area of Maghama town. The target group will comprise over 2 000 extended family households. Generally landless and largely dependent on the land tenure arrangements established during Phase I, these households rely on income diversification as their main coping mechanism, including local wage labour, temporary migration and various non-farm activities. The project will pay particular attention to women who are especially vulnerable due to their heavy workloads, the lack of basic infrastructure, and the low availability and quality of education and health services. It will also focus on young people, who have limited access to land, no access to credit, extremely limited know-how and few opportunities, at the local level, for employment and/or income-generation.

<sup>1</sup> 1999 data; gross national income (GNI) in United States dollars (formerly referred to as GNP).

<sup>2</sup> According to 1996 estimates.

<sup>3</sup> The external financier who, at the request of the Government, takes the lead in project design, pre-appraisal processing and the mobilization of external resources.



## Project Components

- (a) **Consolidation of land tenure arrangements and development of local capacity.** Through this component, the project will: (i) help develop the capacity of targeted organizations to organize communities and beneficiary groups, organize and participate in local development planning, and initiate and implement common interest activities. Targeted organizations will include beneficiary associations (particularly those of women, youth and other vulnerable groups), community-based organizations, professional and market-oriented organizations, rural communes, and organizations providing local services; (ii) provide, as part of its capacity-building activities, functional literacy and information, education and communication (IEC) programmes for women and, on-demand, organizational and managerial training; and (iii) help consolidate or establish conflict-resolution mechanisms to address land tenure disputes, natural resource management issues and herder-farmer conflicts.
- (b) **Agricultural development and rural income diversification.** The aim of this component is to help farmers in the area exploit the agricultural potential created by the flood recession works established during Phase I of the project. This will be achieved by assisting local farmers to establish sustainable agricultural production systems, and by facilitating their access to technical and managerial know-how, product and factor markets, and appropriate financial services. Support will also be provided to promote and develop sustainable non-farm income-generating activities targeted to women and youth.
- (c) **Basic rural infrastructure.** The project will provide support for the consolidation of the flood recession infrastructure established during Phase I, rehabilitate the rural road networks and help rehabilitate and/or establish facilities for primary education, basic health care and potable water, as well as other basic community infrastructure.
- (d) **Project management, coordination and monitoring and evaluation (M&E).** Support will be provided to ensure that the delivery of support services to target beneficiaries is efficient, timely and transparent; that participatory M&E systems are established; and that the project structure is successfully disengaged by the end of project.

## Project Implementation

Responsibility for implementing this six-year project will rest with the Ministry of Rural Development. Implementation will be undertaken by existing public and private institutions under framework agreements and/or contractual arrangements. A small project coordination unit will be responsible for overall project management and coordination, including M&E. A project steering committee, which will include beneficiary representatives, will be responsible for overall orientation and for ex-post review of progress towards objectives.

## Important Features

The project supports the CSLP and is consistent with IFAD's strategy of focusing on areas where the most vulnerable of the rural poor live. IFAD's Executive Board has approved IFAD's participation in the Debt Initiative for Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) and its enhancement. Mauritania has formulated and adopted a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and is nearing the completion point, i.e. the time when the debt relief will accrue. The development goals of the project are consistent with the country's PRSP. This second-phase project, in line with recommendations of the country strategic opportunities paper (COSOP), will aim at consolidating and broadening the support provided to beneficiaries during Phase I and will implement an exit strategy based on an explicit graduation process of community-based organizations.



### **Main Issues**

During formulation/appraisal, the following issues will be addressed: (i) finalization of implementation arrangements and assessment of the possibility of using the Flexible Lending Mechanism; (ii) environmental issues arising from the establishment of flood recession infrastructure; (iii) development of collaboration mechanisms with other ongoing projects, including the IFAD-funded Poverty Reduction Project in Aftout South and Karakoro, and other donor-funded projects active in the concerned communities in the department of Selibaby.

### **Previous IFAD Operations**

Nine projects have so far been approved in Mauritania for a total of SDR 45.42 million. Only one project is currently under implementation, the Poverty Reduction Project in Aftout South and Karakoro, the loan agreement for which was signed on 16 November 2001.