Document: EB 2008/95/R.19

Agenda: 11(a)(iii)

Date: 17 November 2008

Distribution: Public

Original: English



President's report

Proposed Ioan and grant to the Islamic Republic of Mauritania for the

Value Chains Development Programme for Poverty Reduction

Executive Board — Ninety-fifth Session Rome, 15-17 December 2008

For: Approval

Note to Executive Board Directors

This document is submitted for approval by the Executive Board.

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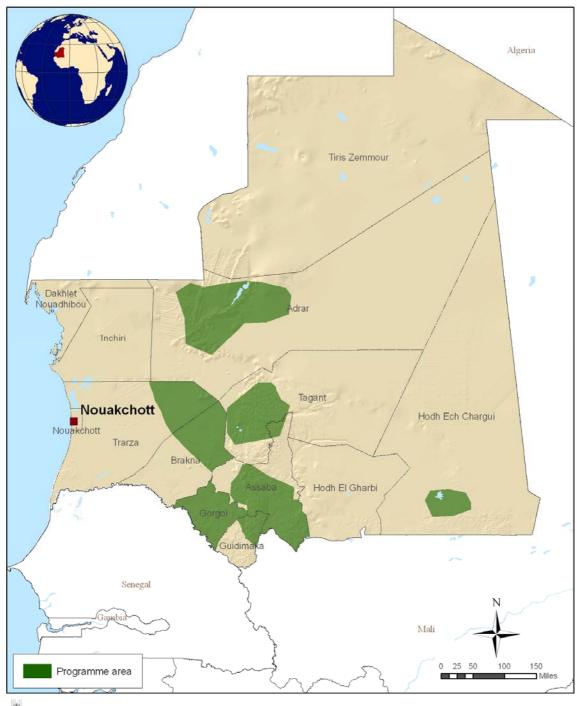
Recommendation for approval

The Executive Board is invited to approve the recommendation for the proposed loan and grant to the Islamic Republic of Mauritania for the Value Chains Development Programme for Poverty Reduction, as contained in paragraph 35.

Map of the programme area

Mauritania

Value Chains Development Programme for Poverty Reduction



JIL IFAD

The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of IFAD concerning the delimitation of the frontiers or boundaries, or the authorities thereof.

Map compiled by IFAD

Islamic Republic of Mauritania

Value Chains Development Programme for Poverty Reduction

Financing summary

Initiating institution: IFAD

Borrower: Islamic Republic of Mauritania

Executing agency: Ministry of Rural Development

Total programme cost: US\$17.8 million

Amount of IFAD loan: SDR 3.856 million (equivalent to approximately

US\$6.0 million)

Amount of IFAD grant: SDR 3.856 million (equivalent to approximately

US\$6.0 million)

Terms of IFAD loan: 40 years, including a grace period of 10 years, with a

service charge of three fourths of one per cent

(0.75 per cent) per annum

Cofinancier: Italy – Facility to Support Rural Finance (RuralFin)

supplementary funds

Amount of cofinancing: RuralFin supplementary funds: US\$2.0 million

Terms of cofinancing: Grant

Contribution of borrower: US\$2.6 million

Contribution of beneficiaries: US\$1.2 million

Appraising institution: IFAD

Cooperating institution: Directly supervised by IFAD

Proposed Ioan and grant to the Islamic Republic of Mauritania for the Value Chains Development Programme for Poverty Reduction

I. The programme

A. Main development opportunity addressed by the programme

1. The Value Chains Development Programme for Poverty Reduction aims to achieve growth by developing seven agricultural value chains (vegetables, dates, milk, poultry, skins and hides, red meat and non-timber forest products) that involve poor rural women and men as both key players and main beneficiaries. This programme comes at an important time in Mauritania's development. By 2010, according to projections, two thirds of its population will live in urban areas. Nouakchott, Mauritania's capital, is already a major consumer of agricultural products, most of which are imported (cereals, but also vegetables, milk, dates and poultry). Given the surge in food prices, partly structural in nature, there is an important economic justification for substituting some imports with increased national production. The programme's support to the selected agricultural value chains will achieve the double objective of fighting poverty and increasing national production, thus reducing the country's reliance on food imports and vulnerability to food import price increases.

B. Proposed financing

Terms and conditions

2. It is proposed that IFAD provide to the Islamic Republic of Mauritania a loan in the amount of SDR 3.856 million (equivalent to approximately US\$6.0 million) on highly concessional terms, a grant under the Debt Sustainability Framework in the amount of SDR 3.856 million (equivalent to approximately US\$6.0 million) and a grant of Italian supplementary funds from the Facility to Support Rural Finance (RuralFin) in the amount of US\$2.0 million to help finance the Value Chains Development Programme for Poverty Reduction. The loan will have a term of 40 years, including a grace period of 10 years, with a service charge of three fourths of one per cent (0.75 per cent) per annum.

Relationship to the IFAD performance-based allocation system (PBAS)

3. The allocation defined for Mauritania under the PBAS is US\$11.9 million over the 2007-2009 allocation cycle.

Country debt burden and absorptive capacity of the State

4. Between 1980 and 2005, IFAD financed 11 projects in Mauritania, roughly one new project every two years. Eight of the projects are now closed. Disbursements of the three ongoing projects are on track. Under IFAD's Debt Sustainability Framework, Mauritania is categorized as being at medium risk of debt vulnerability and is therefore eligible for 50 per cent grant financing over the period 2007-2009.

Flow of funds

5. A special account, in United States dollars, will be set up in Nouakchott. Upon grant/loan effectiveness, IFAD will make a deposit corresponding to the initial financing requirements. The account will be replenished in accordance with established IFAD procedures. A programme account in local currency will be opened in a commercial bank acceptable to IFAD in Mauritania and will be managed by the programme unit. The Government of Mauritania will deposit its contributions into this account according to the agreed annual workplan and budget.

Supervision arrangements

6. The programme will be directly supervised by IFAD.

Exceptions to IFAD General Conditions for Agricultural Development Financing and operational policies

7. No exceptions.

Governance

8. High standards of governance will be assured through open competitions in the public, private and non-profit sectors for implementation contracts.

C. Target group and participation

Target group

9. The target group consists of women, young people and men who are living in the rural dry areas of nine regions (Adrar, Assaba, Brakna, Gorgol, Guidimaka, Hodh Ech Chargui, Hodh El Gharbi, Tagant and Trarza) and are already involved in the production of goods foreseen in the seven value chains. It is estimated that some 9,500 households will benefit directly from the programme and 32,000 households indirectly.

Targeting approach

10. In accordance with the IFAD Policy on Targeting, and based on an extensive analysis of vulnerability and poverty as well as of the potential opportunities for rural poverty reduction and agricultural development, the programme will include: (i) geographic targeting; (ii) self-targeting through the selection of value chains where there are concentrations of poor and vulnerable people; and (iii) enabling measures and empowerment and capacity-building measures to foster interaction between poor rural people and decision-makers (in value chain working groups) in order to establish a common strategy and commitment to the identified poverty reduction goals and approaches.

Participation

11. Programme activities have been built around the initial two-year programmes of work and budget proposed by the value chain members themselves at programme design. This practice will continue throughout the programme's life span. Furthermore, strong representation of the target group in the programme's steering committee is foreseen.

D. Development objectives

Key programme objectives

12. The programme's goal is to improve the incomes and living conditions of the target group, women and young people in particular. Its specific objective is to increase, in a sustainable manner, the target group's access to the added value that will be created through the development of the seven value chains.

Policy and institutional objectives

13. Policy dialogue is an integral part of the programme's design and future implementation. The Government will participate in the value chain working groups set up under the programme. This will allow for a public discussion with the Government of such issues as pricing policy, import and export taxes, subsidies, quality norms, and laws and regulations.

IFAD policy and strategy alignment

14. The programme is in line with: (i) IFAD's Private-sector Development and Partnership Strategy; (ii) the IFAD Rural Finance Policy; (iii) the IFAD Policy on Targeting; and (iv) the Framework for Gender Mainstreaming in Operations. It is fully consistent with the Mauritania results-based country strategic opportunities programme (COSOP), in particular with its third strategic objective: achieving sustainable agricultural development and food security.

E. Harmonization and alignment

Alignment with national priorities

15. The programme is the first intervention foreseen in Mauritania's results-based COSOP presented to the Executive Board in September 2007. The COSOP is fully aligned with Mauritania's second poverty reduction strategy framework (Cadre stratégique de lutte contre la pauvreté-CSLP II), and was in fact also developed in partnership with representatives of the Government, civil society, donors and other partners during an in-country workshop held in February 2007. IFAD interventions in Mauritania all relate to the second CSLP II pillar: anchor growth to the economic situation of the poor. The programme is also fully consistent with the country's rural sector development strategy, which underlines the importance of a value chain approach and of strategies for livestock development and agribusiness development.

Harmonization with development partners

16. Development partners who could potentially be interested in the programme were invited to the in-country value chain development workshops organized by IFAD and the Government. These included non-conventional IFAD partners such as the Arab Authority for Agricultural Investment and Development, but also the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Development Programme, the World Food Programme, the World Bank and bilateral partners. Various partnership opportunities resulted from these meetings.

F. Components and expenditure categories Main components

17. The programme has four components: (i) facilitation; (ii) innovation and knowledge management; (iii) value chain support fund; and (iv) programme management and monitoring and evaluation.

Expenditure categories

18. There are six expenditure categories: (i) equipment; (ii) studies; (iii) training; (iv) value chain support fund; (v) salaries; and (vi) operating costs.

G. Management, implementation responsibilities and partnerships Key implementing partners

19. The value chain working groups are composed of, among others, members of rural organizations, the private sector and service providers. Once the programme of work and budget for each value chain is established and approved, the programme will launch a call for proposals and subsequently issue contracts to successful proponents (e.g. the private sector, NGOs, the public sector, rural organizations). Selected proposals must conform with the programme's strategy and implementation approach.

Implementation responsibilities

20. The Ministry of Rural Development will be the main implementing agent. The programme will put in place (i) supervision arrangements, (ii) a steering committee, (iii) a programme unit, and (iv) a technical commission. The steering committee will have overall responsibility for programme implementation, approve the annual workplan and budget, and review progress and monitoring and evaluation reports. The programme unit, established within the Ministry's Directorate for Policies, Cooperation and Monitoring and Evaluation, will be responsible for the programme's day-to-day management. The technical commission will be responsible for examining, evaluating and selecting the proposals to be financed through the value chain development fund.

Role of technical assistance

21. The programme's approach will be to facilitate and support the value chain working groups, enabling them to build long-lasting technical partnerships based on the needs identified in the annual workplans established by the working groups.

Status of key implementation agreements

22. The Government has officially confirmed the Ministry of Rural Development as the programme's lead implementing agency and approved the programme's institutional set-up and organigramme.

Key financing partners and amounts committed

23. The total programme cost is US\$17.8 million over six years. The sources of financing are an IFAD loan (34 per cent) and an IFAD grant (34 per cent), Italian RuralFin supplementary funds (11 per cent), the Government (14 per cent) and beneficiaries (7 per cent).

H. Benefits and economic and financial justification Main categories of benefits generated

24. Overall benefits expected from the programme include: (i) the increased value added created within the value chains and the share of this value added going to the target group; (ii) the assurance of stable and durable revenues for the target group resulting from market integration achieved through sustainable partnerships established with the private sector; (iii) the reduction in social costs linked to reduced migration from the rural areas; and (iv) additional agricultural production available on the national market, resulting in reduced imports and/or increased exports.

Economic and financial viability

25. The economic and financial analysis confirmed: (i) the selection made of the value chains to be supported under the programme; (ii) the viability of the development of these commodity chains, particularly from the point of view of the target group; and (iii) the programme's overall economic feasibility. The economic rate of return was estimated at 12 per cent.

I. Knowledge management, innovation and scaling up Knowledge management arrangements

26. The programme's overall strategy and organization have been developed to further the objective of promoting innovation and knowledge management; in fact, one of the programme components is "innovation and knowledge management". Participatory monitoring and evaluation will be the core of knowledge management activities. Direct supervision by IFAD will enhance headquarters staff's understanding of situations on the ground. Lessons learned will be disseminated through FIDAFRIQUE, thereby assuring regional coverage. Moreover, networking with projects in the region applying similar value chain approaches (in Burkina Faso and Senegal, for example) will encourage stakeholders to share knowledge gained from their experiences.

Development innovations that the programme will promote

27. Innovation is what the Government is expecting from the programme. Mauritanians have historically been traders and are quite knowledgeable about market access issues. However, the value chain development approach promoted by programme, which foresees that all value chain actors (public sector, private sector, civil society, etc.) come together to discuss strategy development, activities, regulatory frameworks, import/export prices, taxes, etc., is a major innovation in the country.

Scaling-up approach

28. The programme's scaling-up approach involves: (i) focusing during the first two programme years on vegetable and poultry value chains; (ii) slowly developing value chains for dates, non-timber forest products and hides and skins; and (iii) adopting an even more phased approach for milk and red meat value chains, the income-generation potential of which can only be realized through the involvement of private-sector operators working in direct partnership with the rural organizations.

J. Main risks

Main risks and mitigation measures

29. The programme faces two main risks relating to (i) its highly innovative approach and (ii) political instability. With regard to the first risk, the planned mitigation measures include the extensive human and financial investments foreseen under the programme for facilitation, communication and support for value chain structuring. With regard to the second risk, the programme unit's financial and administrative independence means that it will be able to function fully even under politically unstable circumstances. Past experience in Mauritania has shown that projects and programmes can remain fully operational during periods of political instability.

Environmental classification

30. Pursuant to IFAD's environmental assessment procedures, the programme has been classified as a Category B operation in that it is not likely to have any significant negative environmental impact.

K. Sustainability

31. Sustainability will be achieved once the value chains are fully operational and fully independent of programme support (where the final buyers are sustainably linked to the prime producers). During its six-year life span, the programme will build a strong base for the future sustainability of the value chains developed and promote a series of commercial links among the various value chain stakeholders.

II. Legal instruments and authority

- 32. A programme financing agreement between the Islamic Republic of Mauritania and IFAD will constitute the legal instrument for extending the proposed financing to the borrower. Important assurances included in the negotiated agreement are attached as an annex.
- 33. The Islamic Republic of Mauritania is empowered under its laws to borrow from IFAD
- 34. I am satisfied that the proposed financing will comply with the Agreement Establishing IFAD.

III. Recommendation

35. I recommend that the Executive Board approve the proposed financing in terms of the following resolution:

RESOLVED: that the Fund shall make a loan to the Islamic Republic of Mauritania in various currencies in an amount equivalent to three million eight hundred and fifty-six thousand special drawing rights (SDR 3,856,000) to mature on or prior to 1 October 2048 and to bear a service charge of three fourths of one per cent (0.75 per cent) per annum, and to be upon such terms and conditions as shall be substantially in accordance with the terms and conditions presented herein.

RESOLVED FURTHER: that the Fund shall provide a grant under the Debt Sustainability Framework to the Islamic Republic of Mauritania in various currencies in an amount equivalent to three million eight hundred and fifty-six thousand special drawing rights (SDR 3,856,000) and upon such terms and conditions as shall be substantially in accordance with the terms and conditions presented herein.

Lennart Båge President Annex EB 2008/95/R.19

Important assurances included in the negotiated programme financing agreement

(Negotiations concluded on 28 October 2008)

Pest management practices

1. The Government of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania (the Government) will comply with the International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides and ensure that pesticides procured under the programme do not include any pesticides classified as extremely hazardous or highly hazardous by the World Health Organization.

Monitoring and evaluation

2. Monitoring and evaluation arrangements under the programme will be such that they allow the information requirements of IFAD and the Government to be met in terms of programme activities, immediate results, and short- and longer-term impact, and will generate, organize and disseminate the information needed for strategic programme steering. Monitoring and evaluation will be an essential element of updating strategies and action plans and will cover every stage in the programme operating cycle. Particular attention will be paid to monitoring the effectiveness of targeting instruments (poverty and gender specificity). The programme will employ the results and impact management system (RIMS) that is to measure results and impact for all IFAD-funded programmes. In order to measure impact indicators, a survey will be conducted at the programme's outset on a representative sample of the programme's target groups. This survey will be repeated before the midterm review and before programme completion.

Implementation manual

3. Once the manual has been submitted to IFAD for review and comments, the programme unit will finalize it and submit it to the Ministry of Rural Development (lead agency for the programme) for approval.

Insurance of programme personnel

4. The programme personnel will be insured against health and accident risks in accordance with regulations in force within the Government's territory.

Recruitment

5. Programme staff will be recruited under national calls for offers published in the national press in accordance with the Government's current procedures, which will exclude all forms of discrimination. Contracts will be established in accordance with legislation in force within the Government's territory. The recruitment of key programme staff – namely, the coordinator, the administrative and financial officer, the monitoring and evaluation officer, the senior outreach officer, the communication and gender focal point officer, the webmaster, the officer in charge of the value chain support fund component, the officer in charge of the innovation and knowledge management component, and the agriculture and livestock officer – and any decision to terminate their contracts will be done in agreement with IFAD. Programme staff will be subject to annual performance evaluations, and their contracts may be terminated on the basis of the findings of those evaluations. Management of support staff will be subject to procedures in force within the Government's territory.

Equality

6. No form of discrimination on the basis of sex, age or ethnic or religious affiliation will be admissible in the recruitment of programme personnel, in accordance with legislation in force within the Government's territory. However, all skills being equal, the Government undertakes to give preference to women, in particular for the technical positions to be filled under the programme.

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Fraud and corruption

7. The Government will promptly bring to the attention of IFAD any allegations or concerns of fraud and/or corruption in relation to the implementation of the programme of which it has knowledge or becomes aware.

Suspension

- 8. IFAD may suspend, in whole or in part, the right of the Government to request withdrawals from the loan account and the grant account if:
 - (a) The financing agreement has not become effective by the stipulated date or such other date as may be set for such purpose;
 - (b) The counterpart funds are not available under conditions satisfactory to IFAD;
 - (c) IFAD has given notice to the Government that credible allegations of corrupt or fraudulent practices in connection with the programme have come to the attention of IFAD, and the Government has failed to take timely and appropriate action to address the matter to the satisfaction of IFAD;
 - (d) The implementation manual, or any provision thereof, has been suspended, rescinded in whole or in part, waived or otherwise modified without the prior consent of IFAD, and IFAD has determined that such event has had, or is likely to have, a material adverse effect on the programme.

Suspension in the event of non-compliance of audit requirement by the Government

9. IFAD will suspend the right of the Government to request withdrawals from the loan account and the grant account if it has not received the audit reports within the six months following the six-month period set forth in the financing agreement.

Conditions precedent to withdrawal

- 10. (a) No withdrawal will be made in respect of expenses concerning all categories until the programme unit coordinator and the administrative and financial officer have been recruited with the agreement of IFAD;
 - (b) Once these conditions have been met, a first disbursement of US\$800,000 will be paid into the special loan and grant account.

Conditions precedent to effectiveness

- 11. The financing agreement will become effective upon the fulfillment of the following conditions precedent:
 - (a) The Government has delivered to IFAD a favourable legal opinion, acceptable in form and substance, issued by the authority having competence within the Government's territory;
 - (b) The special loan and grant account and the programme account have been opened and the counterpart funds, i.e. the amount of US\$400,000, have been included in the finance law; and
 - (c) The steering committee and the programme unit have been created by ministerial decree.

Appendix I EB 2008/95/R.19

Key reference documents

Country reference documents

Annuaire Statistique 1995-2005
Rural sector development strategy
Livestock development strategy
Agribusiness development strategy
Micro-enterprise development strategy
Gender development strategy
Enquête Permanente sur les Conditions de Vie des Ménages (2000 & 2004)
Poverty reduction strategy paper

IFAD reference documents

Project design document (PDD) and key files
COSOP
Administrative Procedures on Environmental Assessment
IFAD Strategic Framework;
IFAD Learning Notes (targeting, gender, community development funds, etc.)
Framework for gender mainstreaming in PMD operations
IFAD Procurement manual
RIMS
Publication on Migrant laborers and Remittances

Other miscellaneous reference documents

Abdelkader, Iseelmou Ould. 2006. Etat des lieux et perspectives du secteur rural-aspects institutionels et fonciers

Cuna, L., Dominic Smith et al. 2006. Making Value Chains Work Better for the Poor FAO/Banque Mondiale. 2002. Initiative Elevage, Pauvreté et Croissance PNUD, 2007-2008. Rapport sur le Développement Humain UNICEF, MSAS. Février 2007. Projet CERF/Mauritanie. Dépistage Mensuel WFP, 2006. Mauritanie. Analyse de la Sécurité et de la Vulnérabilité WFP. 2006. Mauritania. Profile of cereal and livestock markets World Bank, 2006. Country Assistance Strategy for Mauritania

Cadre logique

Objectifs	Indicateurs objectivement vérifiables	Moyens de vérification	Hypothèses / Remarques importantes / Mesures de limitation des risques
Objectif global Accroître les revenus et améliorer les conditions de vie des populations rurales les plus pauvres et notamment des femmes et des jeunes	 Incidence de la pauvreté réduite de 4% dans les régions d'intervention Nombre de ménages, individus (par genre), groupements et communautés bénéficiant (a) directement (obj. 9500 familles) et (b) indirectement des actions du programme (obj. 32 000 familles) 	 EPCV 2008, 2012 et 2016 Enquêtes programme sur la pauvreté (dont SYGRI) Examen à mi-parcours et évaluation finale Recueil des opinions des bénéficiaires, acteurs et partenaires 	 Aléas naturels (sécheresses, crises acridiennes) Retour de l'instabilité politique
2. Objectif spécifique Par la promotion et le développement d'un nombre limité de filières, intégrer les populations cibles dans l'économie rurale et accroître la valeur ajoutée (en volume et pourcentage) leur revenant	Nombre d'individus (par genre), de ménages, de groupements et de communautés rurales pauvres participant aux filières Montant et part de la valeur ajoutée leur revenant Estimation de la pérennité des deux résultats ci-dessus	 Etudes/Dossiers par filière Bases de données sur les actions du programme, les bénéficiaires, les acteurs et leurs partenariats Rapports du S/E Rapports d'activités du programme 	 Limitations du secteur privé mauritanien et climat des affaires qui reste difficile Réformes en cours, flexibilité de la stratégie et des instruments du programme
3. Résultats			
Composante 1: Facilitation Les Groupes de Travail par Filière (GTF) et les Pôles Géographiques d'Intervention sont fonctionnels, les pratiques de cogestion des filières et de dialogue de politiques sont renforcées et des formes innovantes de partenariats institutionnels, juridiques ou commerciaux sont mises en œuvre	 Chaque groupe (7) élabore ou met à jour son Plan d'Action par Filière et négocie un programme de travail annuel avec le ProLPRAF Chaque PGI (5 à 10) a réalisé une étude locale de marché et s'est doté d'une stratégie locale par filière Thèmes abordés (au moins 3 par an); Évolutions des politiques, de la réglementation et des pratiques cohérentes avec la stratégie du ProLPRAF Nombre et typologie des partenariats (obj. 35), participation des femmes et des jeunes 	 Rapports du S/E Actes des réunions inter-acteurs, etc. Bases de données du programme Textes juridiques, réglementaires et administratifs 	 Caractère innovant de cette approche Animation, progressivité dans la démarche du programme Capital social et pouvoir de négociation des populations cibles limités Stratégie et organisation du ProLPRAF et moyens apportés pour renforcer ces deux points
Composante 2: Innovation et GDC Les acteurs des filières se dotent d'une masse critique de compétences techniques et d'un réseau fonctionnel d'acquisition, de partage et de valorisation de celles-et réalisent des tests pratiques sur les innovations identifiées	 Dossiers et bases de connaissances par filière élaborés, mis à jour et enrichis, et diffusion et utilisation de ceux-ci Nombre et type des innovations identifiées, testées et diffusées Nombre et type de bénéficiaires touchés par ces actions 	 Rapports du S/E Enquêtes auprès des acteurs Innovations identifiées testées et diffusées Innovations reprises au stade de diffusion dans les plans d'action 	 Hétérogénéité des acteurs Réalisation de synthèses et traductions par l'équipe du programme, volet communication du programme Distances et enclavement Importants appuis à la mise en réseau, utilisation de technologies modernes de communication Capacité de suivi Implication des acteurs dès la conception des tests
Composante 3: Fonds d'Appui aux filières Les initiatives inscrites dans les plans d'action sont mises en œuvre par les acteurs des filières	 Au moins 150 initiatives cohérentes avec la stratégie du programme sont appuyées Nombre de personnes (par genre) ménages, groupes, communautés bénéficiaires appartenant au groupe cible participant Nombre et type d'emplois créés 	 Rapports du S/E (dont bases de données du programme et comptabilité) Rapports/Interviews des acteurs de chaque action 	 Faiblesse du nombre de demandes d'appui ayant une qualité suffisante Rôle proactif de l'équipe du Programme Temps de réactivité des procédures du programme par rapport aux initiatives des acteurs trop long Flexibilité, adaptabilité de ses instruments en particulier composante 2 permettant de prendre en charge plus rapidement des études et tests
Composante 4: Gestion du Programme La gestion du programme est menée de façon efficiente et le système de suivi-évaluation fournit dans les délais les informations pertinentes	 Rythme de présentation des demandes de décaissement Niveau du compte spécial Respect des délais de préparation du PTBA et de soumission des documents contractuels et qualité des documents Système S&E opérationnel dès l'année 1 Qualité de l'information produite par le S&E et respect des délais 	 Rapports de supervision Etats comptables et documents du programme Avis des acteurs de filières Bases de données à jour Rapports et autre matériel produit Avis des utilisateurs 	 Nombre et diversité des actions appuyées, distances, difficultés de communication Outils de gestion performants et adaptés, personnel suffisant en nombre et competences Implication des acteurs dans le recueil et la saisie des données de base