

Project Performance Assessment: Rural Poverty-Reduction Programme Mongolia

The Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD

Eighty-fourth Session of the Evaluation Committee

2 July 2014



Methodology and Process

- PPA objectives:
 - Provide an independent assessment of the overall results;
 - Generate recommendations for on-going and future operations
- The findings are based on :
 - Project Completion Report Validation (desk review)
 - Further desk review, interviews at IFAD HQ
 - Field visit to 2 provinces (Bulgan and Arhangai)
 - Interviews with government, beneficiaries and other key partners.

Project Goal and Objective

Goal:

- Achieve sustainable and equitable poverty eradication for about 80,000 vulnerable rural households living in an environment with increasingly degraded natural resources.

Objective:

- Increase sustainably the **productive capacity** of herders, cultivators and the general public, and to offer **increased access to economic and social resources**, including education, health and social services.

Basic Project Information

Components:

- (i) Livestock and natural resource management
- (ii) Other economic activities
- (iii) Rural financial services
- (iv) Social development

Timeline: 2002-2011 (extended 6 months)

Total Project Costs: US\$ 19 m IFAD Loan: US\$ 14.8 m

Mongolia

Rural Poverty-Reduction Programme

Project performance assessment



27-07-2012



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.

IFAD Map compiled by IFAD

Country Context

- The mining economy continues to grow rapidly, but extensive livestock production remains the second most important economic sector
- The livestock sector is dependent on access to grasslands and therefore vulnerable to climatic and natural resource management risks
- Profound and comprehensive demographic and socio-economic changes (e.g. rural urban migration)

Main Findings

- **Social development.** Successful in providing key services hospitals, school dormitories, kindergartens and literacy training.
- **Productive capacity of herders, cultivators and general public.** Successful with vegetable and crop cultivation, some income generating activities but unlikely that herders have increased productivity substantially.

Other Findings

Relevance:

- Responded to the needs of poor rural households **but** some assumptions were open to doubt and some were overly optimistic.
- **Targeting.** The project sent out mixed messages regarding targeting and the policy of reaching 90-95 per cent of population would have had high transaction costs.
- **Risk Management.** The emergency fund was the only project intervention concerned with risk management.

Other Findings

- **Innovation and scaling up.** Range Management Monitoring Committees had high transaction costs and lacked ownership **but** the project took risks and tackled difficult institutional issues. Mobile kindergartens scaled up.
- **Gender.** Likely that women benefitted from social infrastructure; efforts to target women with rural finance were not met but overall there was good participation of women.
- **Performance of partners.**
 - IFAD.** Participatory design but some weaknesses, M&E, coordination with similar projects.
 - Government.** Some delays in counterpart funding, M&E, coordination with similar projects.

Conclusions

- Relevant to the problems facing rural Mongolia – some assumptions can be questioned.
- Targeting in a pastoral economy is different from targeting agricultural and urban populations.
- The Range Management and Monitoring Committees were captured by government.
- Encouraging work with microfinance and social infrastructure.
- Need to consider risk more comprehensively.
- Despite efforts to establish an M&E system there is little reliable data.

Recommendations

- IFAD to convene a process to clarify the lessons for future project design, including IFAD pastoral projects in other continents
- Inform pasture herder groups about the reasoning for abandoning the Range Management Monitoring Committees
- IFAD to explore alternative targeting practices in pastoral populations
- Risk management strategies should be included as a key project/programme component
- Support Government in M&E