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# **CAFRAD RELATED ACTIVITIES TO FOOD SECURITY AND FOOD SAFETY: TRAINING WORKSHOPS ON THE PREPARATION AND EVALUATION OF AGRICULTURAL PROJECTS**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

In the year 2000 and 2001, the African Training and Research Centre in Administration for Development (CAFRAD) was solicited by the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA) to organize two high-level training programmes for Anglophone African countries on the preparation and evaluation of agricultural projects.

In response to BADEA's request, CAFRAD organized two training sessions, both funded by BADEA and facilitated by a team of resource persons from FAO (Rome).

Hereunder is some information on the training content of both activities.

## **TRAINING WORKSHOP ON THE PREPARATION AND EVALUATION OF AGRICULTURAL PROJECTS, TANGIER (MOROCCO), 3-21 APRIL 2000**

The Workshop was attended by 19 participants from Ministries of Agriculture, Finance and Economic Planning, Food and Fisheries, and Water and Rural Development of the following countries: Angola, Botswana, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya (3), Lesotho, Liberia, Mauritius, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Swaziland, Tanzania (2), Zambia (2) and Zimbabwe.

It was organized in response to the critical skill gaps identified in the field of project identification, preparation and evaluation within the various national and international institutions involved in the financing and management of agricultural projects in Africa.

The overall objectives of the Workshop were the following:

1. Upgrade and improve competencies and knowledge in agricultural project management;
2. Analyze the various problems facing agricultural projects;
3. Introduce a case study on agricultural project management by each participant; and
4. Exchange views and experiences concerning applied management systems in agricultural projects in the participants' respective countries.

The training programme was based on the participatory approach through a combination of lectures in plenary sessions, group work, role-playing, case studies and computer exercises.

Field visits were also organized for the purpose of applied exercise on farm models. That experience allowed Workshop participants to gather some practical data about two different farming systems. The information collected was then analyzed and included in the computer software.

The Workshop time-table was divided into three weeks, approximately 15 working days.

The first week, 3-7 April 2000, focused on the following aspects: analysis of the place of agriculture in the socio-economic development of Africa; overview of the project cycle; preparation of agricultural projects (pre-feasibility and feasibility); concepts of appropriate technology; impact of macro-economic policy on food security; marketing aspects in project preparation; time analysis and work plan, and technical aspects of feasibility studies.

The second week, 10-14 April 2000, was devoted to the financial aspects of the project cycle which included general accounting principles, financial analysis, dead Centre and sensitivity, cash flow and qualitative criteria of decision-making and financial problems.

The final week, 17-21 April 2000, dealt with balancing conceptual and theoretical aspects with emphasis on applications and exercises. The real data collected from the field visits was examined and inserted into WINDSAI and NGAMO softwares. These are different techniques developed by the FAO Resource Persons. Applied exercises also included cost-benefit analysis, economic analysis of the project, risk analysis, critical values, sensitivity and impact analysis (social and environmental impact). Apart from the exercises, a session was devoted to implementing, monitoring and controlling the project and the overall evaluation of the Workshop, both oral and written.

The overall evaluation was positive and participants recommended that additional and longer workshops are needed, particularly in computer software and other applied exercises, in order to enable them to sharpen their skills in financial and economic analysis of agricultural projects. Participants also felt that this kind of workshops were required so that other colleagues from their respective Ministries could enjoy the benefit of such training.

Further recommendations include the addition in future Workshops of sessions on the implications of WTO Agreements for Africa and in particular their impact on the work of Government officials in the Ministries of Agriculture.

#### **TRAINING COURSE ON CAPACITY-BUILDING IN AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT PREPARATION AND MONITORING, TANGIER (MOROCCO), 27 OCTOBER - 16 NOVEMBER 2001**

This three-week training course was attended by 18 participants from 16 selected Anglophone African countries: Botswana, The Gambia, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Swaziland, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

The programme was intended to enhance Agricultural and Rural Development Project Preparation and monitoring skills of 20 participants from selected Anglophone African countries in order to improve the sustainability of development actions in their countries and better allocate development funds.

The curriculum design focused on investment project preparation, with provision for equipping participants in undertaking project case exercises using FAO WinDasi, Project monitoring and evaluation (M & E).

After dividing the trainees in four teams (A, B, C and D), two one-day field visits were made to the "Loukkos Perimeter", an agricultural area of about 80 km away from Tangier. The area provided a suitable scenario for case exercises in project design, project cost estimation/tabulation, and financial and economic analysis. The first field visit focused on the analysis of the situation in that zone (including identification of development potentials, problems and options, leading to an outline specification for a project; in the second visit (one week later) more detailed information was gathered, including data on farm inputs, outputs, activities, and project support costs and requirements.

Case exercises were carried out by the four teams of participants: i) Irrigation Rehabilitation and Development Project for 3000 farm households (Teams A and D); ii) Rainfed Agriculture Development Project for 2000 farm households (Teams B and C).

The course evaluation, based on the participants' responses to a questionnaire, was carried out towards the end of the third week. Evaluation results indicated a high positive outcome. Most participants stated that they substantially benefited from the training programme. The project case exercises proved to be a useful vehicle for reviewing the various concepts and analytical tools covered, including farm models/budgets, cash flow analysis, project's financial viability, and economic pricing.

## **ENVISAGED WORKSHOP ON MANAGING WATER RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA WITH EMPHASIS ON LOCAL COMMUNITIES' PARTICIPATION**

This Workshop approved by CAFRAD Governing Board in July 2004 was envisaged to be carried out in 2005. But todate, it did not take place due to the lack of funding.

CAFRAD is still keen to organize this activity and efforts are being deployed to secure the necessary funds for its implementation.

It will be a 5-day Workshop and it will be conducted both in English and French with simultaneous interpretation. The target group will be Directors of Departments in charge of Water Resources from Ministries of Environment, Agriculture, Water and Rural Development, etc. Officials from NGOs, training and research institutions, civil society and the private sector will also be invited to participate.