

SAFE-World Project/Initiative Summary

Country: Sudan

Project/Initiative Title: UNFAO - Income Earning Activities for Rural Women - Northern Region, Sudan

Nos. farmers: 200

Hectares: 20

Agro-Ecological Zone: V

Improvement types

1x	2	3	4	5	6	7x	8	9
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Success and Limits to spread

Success	Limits
1b, 3e	3e,2b

A. Key Impacts

A1 - Productivity

	Before/Without	After/With	% change
Sheep/ Goats			New
Poultry			New

A2 - Impacts on natural capital

?? Care regarding possible adverse effects on environment considered in design- animals all penned. Thus free grazing was restricted except for a few instances when animals were allowed out of their pens to graze harvested crop fields under the care of young herders. This is, however, an indigenous practice of the area that the project endorsed and made a stipulation for participation.

?? Crop lands along the Nile are narrow strips and so valued by the farmers. They are basically crop farmers and thus understand the need for controls on livestock. The same regulations are imposed on herds on nomadic communities at the fringes of the farm land. They cannot enter the crop land without previous permission and penalties for crop damage by livestock can be severe. Thus environmental destruction limited. Women were advised to keep pens clean to avoid diseases on their stock and thus also to themselves. Animal dung was also used for fuel and for clay wall sealants thus limiting the amount of waste lying around. Manure is likewise valued as fertilizer for crops (indigenous knowledge). The dry, hot weather of the area likewise dries manure very fast.

A3 - Impacts on local community (social capital)

- ?? Increase in incomes of participants (and their households).
- ?? Project covered thirty-four villages, each with 10 initial participants/village. Seed monies provided as revolving fund, in kind. Payment for sheep-goat-cattle program in kind while for poultry - in cash.
- ?? Project strategies replicated in other projects of the region, particularly that of sheep and goats. Government proposes same strategy for future projects in the pipeline

A4 – Impacts on households and individuals (human capital)

- ?? Main target of the project was the vulnerable group, particularly female-headed households.
- ?? Project provided the participant households with fresh milk and eggs plus income for the women to invest in education and medical care for their young. It provided them the financial means to participate in decision-making, i.e. children, including girls, to go to school or not, decisions on improving the diet (men traditionally do all the marketing/buying of food for the household thus women may suggest what to buy but cannot impose conditions). When the money to buy food with is theirs (earned by them) they can decide what is to be bought. Project provided some training on market economics.
- ?? The project worked with Islamic communities where women did not have much rights to land, other resources. Therefore, project was involved with activities that did not compete with limited land. Nomadic communities were not involved except for nomadic families which were in the transition between nomadic and settled existence (often female-headed). In these cases, project took special attention to assist them and help integrate them into the settled communities. These were successful but their numbers were very limited to create any possible alarm on the part of the riverine settled communities.

A5 – Key changes in farm / regional system

- ?? Income earning activities in small livestock production (sheep/goats/poultry).
- ?? For sheep/goat a few dairy cow participants - increase in herd size thus yields after two years average. Proportion of participants still practicing - roughly 40 % of original numbers (originally over 200). Others have shifted to other livestock types after seven years.
- ?? Poultry raisers - profit margins after 1.5 years increases. Incomes of women raised from Nil to an average of US \$20 per month (roughly 50% of average civil service monthly income at that time - 1995-1990). Now almost all livestock producers (poultry) stopped enterprise due to unavailability of new stock. This enterprise was able to maintain profitability despite increasing costs of eggs/poultry meat in market as supply could not meet demand. The project could not saturate demand as supply of chicks was the limiting factor.
- ?? Poultry raising - about 100 households in Northern State. Very successful while project lasted as it propped up Ministry of Animal Resources component-hatcheries and veterinary staff operations.
- ?? Sheep, goat raising - about 200 initially doubled in 5 year period after initial distribution.
- ?? Approach copied by rural development projects that came after in same region.
- ?? Inter-disciplinary team approached to extension services (vets, agriculturists, nutritionists and social workers) retained until Ministry dissolved the unit and withdrew any facilities remaining for use elsewhere.
- ?? Even after 10 years since the project started and five years after Ministry dissolved project teams, a number of women beneficiaries are inquiring when Government/project will come to "collect the animal repayments, clear them of their debts and transfer the animals to new recipients, (Government involvement in the weakest link in the project design. Groups were formed and were made responsible for supervision of members and selection of new recipients but Government technicians were supposed to be involved.
- ?? In the case of poultry, livestock breeds were tested Egyptian breeds. In the case of sheep

and goats, desert breeds adequately documented to be hardy and of good quality were used. The region is considered disease-free and we tried to keep it so.

B. Types of Sustainable Agriculture Improvements

- Type 1: Better use of available renewable natural capital
- Type 2: Intensification of single sub-component of farm system
- Type 3: Diversify by adding new productive natural capital and regenerative components
- Type 4: Better use of non-renewable inputs and technologies
- Type 5: Social and participatory processes leading to group action for making better use of natural capital
- Type 6: Human capital building through training-learning programmes
- Type 7: Access to Finance
- Type 8: Add value by processing to reduce losses and increase returns
- Type 9: Add value by direct or organised marketing of produce to consumers

	Yes/No	Narrative
Type 1	x	
Type 2		
Type 3		
Type 4		
Type 5		
Type 6		
Type 7	x	<p>?? Because of gender differences and the need to obtain the sanction of men for any activity initiated with women, the village elders and men were first sensitized and their approval obtained. The men were also involved in initiating the project and consulted as to source of stock, direction of operations. As regards the women, all communication had to be within the home compounds, including meetings. At later stages, women were allowed to meet in schools. Male veterinarians had to go through a long period of vetting and familiarization by the community and the men before they could be allowed to enter the home compounds and discuss issues with the women. However, this was successfully accomplished.</p> <p>?? Village involvement in planning, monitoring and evaluation was a must. The women likewise formed themselves into groups to do their planning and monitoring of activities. They helped choose new recipients and penalize members who were not performing according to conditions set and accepted. The women learned how to collect loans. Leaders gained stature in the community. Groups likewise as they became known as income-earners.</p>
Type 8		
Type 9		

C. Key Lessons: Success, Spread and Constraints

C2 – Aspects of local/national context contributing to success

- ?? Internal institutional factors - Project organized inter-agency extension teams. This prevented duplication of functions/activities promoted, enabled field staff to interact with community along their line of expertise. Prior to project, agricultural extension staff (veterinarians and agriculturists), nutrition technicians and social workers were all expected to do development activities including adult education, and establish pre-schools regardless of actual training. Project divided work and assigned activities to appropriate technician. As they worked as teams, they could share and exchange field observations and work.
- ?? Decision making done in consultation with communities involved in.

C3 – Limitations preventing spread

- ?? In case of poultry project - limited supply of chicks and feeds. Sudan imports most of its concentrates and hard currency is limited. Local feed raw material industries hardly developed. Government main source of chicks in rural areas - unable to maintain operation and management of hatcheries. Currency devaluation very severe.
- ?? National factors - inappropriate development priorities and lack of coordination between crop/livestock sectors of Government planning. Overemphasis on high external input agricultural activity but little support locally.
- ?? Government costs distorted. Government salaries very low but when external intervention is introduced, staff incentives, provision of equipment and facilities eat up much of project budgets. In the end Government cannot afford to operate/maintain these when it takes over but during the life of project, these costs drain project resources.
- ?? Government dissolved inter-agency team approach established, closed down the project (Government teams dissolved) and facilities provided distributed to other units. The project promoted community groups to run village-level operations but included the involvement of extension to insure that livestock being paid back and redistributed were sound, enable the Government to prevent possibilities of spread of diseases and to provide the women "new technology" through extension (technology network).
- ?? By making it a policy that the Government be informed when repayments/transfers were to be made, the project hoped this would insure the women contacted Government. This the women did and continued to abide with but with the dissolution of the extension teams and no extension being done, the system broke down.
- ?? Seed money for extension/replication of the program are available from Government and commercial banks but interest rates are so high and women cannot meet collateral that these opportunities are not availed of.

C4 – Policy issues

- ?? National factors - inappropriate development priorities and lack of co-ordination between crop/livestock sectors of Government planning. Overemphasis on high external input agricultural activity but little support locally.
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D. Contact Point for Project/Initiative

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E. Project Narrative

- ?? The project identified indigenous practices which, were appropriate and promoted these or slightly improved on them. For instance - penned livestock, tradition of maintaining livestock of traditional self-sufficient farming and doing away with livestock to go into mono-cropping, pump irrigated farming and doing away with livestock integration particularly where crop does not produce residue good for animals to eat. Project tried to revive integrated crop/livestock farming as a hedge against crop failure, market economy problems. Likewise, mono-cropping and pump irrigation tended to reduce women's involvement in farming and when economic situation was bad and men migrate, women left behind have little experience in farming to take over. With traditional self-sufficient farming, women were equal partners and thus could take over in times of migration. When livestock is penned, they become the responsibility of women and considered part of their domestic role. The project tried to elevate this into a source of income by increasing the stock.