

Third Party Evaluator's Opinion on AGLIPO Agricultural Development Project (2)

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Criteria 1. Relevance

The objectives of the Project are very relevant and consistent with the priorities of investment in the agricultural sector even in the present time, which focus on improving the existing irrigation infrastructure and the construction of new irrigation channels and to reach the self-sufficiency of rice production. The Project is very well related to the national development policy of the country, where the poverty reduction, the improvement of the living standard of the rural population and the reduction of rural migration are highly considered priorities issues in the national government strategies for the period 2000-2010 of the Secretariat of State of Agriculture.

Some of the effects of the Project on the sectorial policy are the strengtheness of the country self-sufficiency in rice production; the motivation for improving the competitiveness of rice production by continuing working on the maintenance of the drainage systems in the region.

On the other hand, the Project had caused changes in the institutional policy of the INDRHI, mainly in those related to the decentralization of the administration of the irrigation infrastructure. As result of the Project implementation, the INDRHI has transferred to the "Junta de Regantes" (Water Users Association), the administration of the irrigation system. Within this decentralization process, the Junta de Regantes is responsible for maintaining the secondary and tertiary irrigation channels; water price assignation and collecting the payment for the water use; and the INDRHI keeps the responsibility of maintaining the main channels and the machinery, as well as the supervision of the Junta de Regantes performance.

Criteria 2. Impacts

The implementation of the Project had tremendous positives impacts in the achievement of the project objectives, 70 % of farmers interviewed during the ex post evaluation considered that their standard of living had improved, not only because of the income effect, as result of the infrastructure development, such as irrigation channels and drainages systems, but also because of the effects generated by the roads construction.

The constructions of the irrigation infrastructure, such as channels and drainages systems have generated positive impacts on the increment of farmer's income as well as in the improvement of their standard of living, which had motivated some people that migrated to return to the Project area. The Project had provided to the farmer's opportunities to incorporate more land into production, to carry out two harvesting season of rice production per year and to achieve an increment on yield per area, even though it was bellow the planned. It is important to point out, that the Project had strong impacts on the country capacity to achieve the self-sufficiency on rice production.

The construction of roads had positive impacts on the improvement of social life quality of farmers, because the cost of transportation had experimented a considerable reduction, due to the road facilities. Also with the new roads the family can get health and others services more promptly than before the Project. On the other hand, the educational standard in the zone is improving and more children are attending to the school than before. Farmers have better market opportunities for their products because more intermediary, rice traders and sellers can go easily to their farms to buy the production and for selling agricultural inputs. Furthermore, the production system is more efficient, because the access of the machinery for harvesting and maintenance of the irrigation system became much easier.