

Cape Verde: Afforestation on Maio and Santiago (Forest Programme II)

Ex post evaluation

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| OECD sector | 31220/Forest development | |
| BMZ project ID | 1996 65 597 | |
| Project executing agency | Direcção Geral de Agricultura, Silvicultura e Pecuária (DGASP) | |
| Consultant | GFA | |
| Year of ex-post evaluation report | 2010 (sample 2010) | |
| | Project appraisal (planned) | Ex-post evaluation (actual) |
| Start of implementation | Q 3 1996 - Q 2 2001 | Q 3 1997 - Q 4 2005 |
| Period of implementation | 60 months | 90 months |
| Investment costs | EUR 2.56 million | EUR 2.2 million |
| Counterpart contribution | ./. | ./. |
| Financing, of which Financial Cooperation (FC) funds | EUR 2.56 million | EUR 2.2 million |
| Other institutions/donors involved | ./. | ./. |
| Performance rating | 2 | |
| • Relevance | 2 | |
| • Effectiveness | 3 | |
| • Efficiency | 3 | |
| • Overarching developmental impacts | 2 | |
| • Sustainability | 2 | |

Brief description, overall objective and project objectives with indicators

In total, the project intended to rehabilitate about 2,410 hectares of degraded land on the islands of Santiago (80% of investment volume) and Maio (20% of volume) through afforestation and erosion protection measures. Those were aimed at increasing soil fertility and the availability of water (project objective), to be measured against the following indicators:

- More than 80% of erosion protection structures are still in place in the project areas (retaining walls, terraces, small dams) and are adequately maintained.
- The tree populations planted by the project are put to appropriate use (survival rate at least 70%).

As overall objective, a contribution was to be made to improving income and living conditions of the affected population (about 5,000 people) by means of more efficient and ecologically more viable agro-silvo-pastoral production systems. Due to complex causal relations and various exogenous factors, no indicators were specified. Finance was provided for smaller-scale structures to improve water retention, afforestation work, the procurement of material and equipment and vehicles as well as the upgrading or extension of building infrastructure for the project executing agency as

well as consultancy inputs. Amounting to about EUR 2.2 million, the costs of the project were financed in full by a FC grant. The residual amount from the total commitment of EUR 0.4 million was reallocated to the project "Resource Conservation Fogo" (BMZ ID 2005 65 770).

Project design/major deviations from original planning and main causes

Instead of the 1,360 hectares planned at project appraisal, 1,446 hectares were finally planted (i.e. 106 %). However, of the 1,050 hectares originally planned for pasture improvements, only 810 hectares were actually treated (i.e. 77 %), with the target well exceeded on Santiago and a considerable shortfall on Maio. Almost twice as many water retention walls were erected than planned (16 as compared with 31). In addition, cisterns and goat stalls were built on Santiago, which were not originally planned. Farmer organisations were mainly contracted for implementation, effectively creating a cash-for-work programme, which was very popular. This initial acceptance by the population was largely caused by short-term benefits; building on this positive attitude, nonetheless, a genuine appreciation of and commitment to the project developed over time, as its longer-term values gradually became apparent.

Key results of impact analysis and performance rating

The key concern of the project was to contribute to conserving soil fertility and increasing water availability through ecologically viable, agro-silvo-pastoral production systems – with mechanical structures for reducing erosion and the appropriate use of woodlands. Considering not only the satisfactory acceptance of those measures, but also their continuation – partially independent from project funding, their economic appreciation by the target group appears confirmed. For lack of data, however, it is not possible to quantify this impact.

Although the project's (main) objective was environmental protection and resource conservation, it was primarily seen initially by the target group as a job creation scheme, since it generated quite a large amount of temporary employment, which was particularly important on Maio, also many jobs for women. Moreover, women specifically benefited from project measures, such as increased vegetable-growing and the increased availability of (drinking) water, firewood and fodder. This is particularly relevant in the project region Rui Vaz (Santiago), where the ratio of women benefiting is about 30 % higher than men. Due to its design, the project principally aimed at poorer population segments in the relevant regions and has helped to strengthen participatory, self-organisational capacities.

Compared with the main prospective risks cited at project start, actual developments were as follows:

- The uncertain cooperativeness of the inhabitants in the project region on Santiago did not prove to be a problem. On the contrary, as already anticipated at the outset, the prospective income motivated the residents to ultimately accept the new farming and land use schemes (including improved goat keeping). The weak capacity of DGASP also noted at project appraisal did not prove to be an obstacle in this respect, as operational responsibility rests with the target group. There were no signs of any overuse of trees. On Maio, where implementation progressed far more slowly, available information indicates a meanwhile satisfactory acceptance.
- The risk of volatile rainfall did not prove to be a serious problem on Santiago. This was less the case for Maio, which is far more arid anyway, although positive developments have also been reported from there. Nevertheless, rainfall is

declining overall on Cape Verde with long-term adverse consequences for agriculture.

Altogether, risk assessment was realistic. Capacity constraints by the executing agency could be overcome by virtue of the consultancy assignment during implementation, whereas – with view to long-term operation and maintenance, the success in ultimately mobilising the self-interest of the population and their self-organisation is expected to ensure sustainable outcomes.

Assessing the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, overarching developmental impacts and sustainability, the developmental performance of the project is rated as follows:

Relevance: In view of the persistent acute erosion on large expanses of Cape Verde, the core problem of progressive degradation was correctly identified initially, with the underlying causal relations continuing to remain valid. The project fitted in well with national sectoral plans and international support measures, although there was no formal cooperation with other donors. It was aligned with the priorities of the Cape Verde government and those of German development cooperation. Today, it still corresponds with the development-policy goals and guidelines of BMZ in sustainable rural development and poverty reduction (MDG 1). Altogether, the sector does not pose any acute development constraint today, but the protection of land and water resources is, however, an essential prerequisite for further-reaching development efforts, as the conservation of a scarce natural resource base (natural capital) in an ecologically precarious zone has to be considered a key constraint. Accordingly, the relevance of the programme is assessed as good (Subrating 2).

Effectiveness: The project objective of setting up ecologically viable agro-silvo-pastoral production systems was largely met, as evidenced by the largely intact condition of the erosion protection measures and tree plantations. The operational side does not entirely meet initial expectations, but generally was and still is adequate. Altogether, we regard the effectiveness of the project as good (Subrating 2).

Efficiency: The costs of the main project components are assessed as favourable. They stayed below the envisaged budget, which allowed for additional measures to be carried out. This positive contribution could be made despite the executing agency's apparent lack of any pronounced cost awareness and frequent personnel fluctuations, which hampered project implementation. Local capacities were deliberately put to intensive use, which, however, resulted in the implementation phase taking longer than planned and the failure to perform some important tasks (e.g. monitoring) for lack of executing agency capacities. Although difficult to quantify, the stabilised resource base is to be considered a macroeconomic benefit (see above). Accordingly, this points to a positive allocation efficiency. The efficiency of the project is therefore judged as satisfactory (Subrating 3).

Overarching developmental impacts (impact): At the beginning, the overall objective was defined as a contribution to conserving soil fertility and water availability. Although no indicators were specified, the impressions gained *in situ* indicate a satisfactory condition of vegetation and an adequate availability of water; the overall objective can thus be deemed to have been achieved. Furthermore, the site visit indicated positive income trends, which can, however, only be partly attributed to the project at best.

Moreover, the greater importance attached to preserving the natural resource base, particularly the conservation of vulnerable vegetation, indicates that the project has

achieved broad and capacity-building results. For example, stallkeeping of goats, water-efficient drip irrigation and increased planting of fruit-trees – as promoted by the project – have been extended further. We therefore judge the achievement of overarching developmental impacts as good (Subrating 2).

Sustainability: The sustainability of the project largely depends on the proper management of the tree plantations and the improved pastures as well as the maintenance of the mechanical protective structures. As ascertained *in situ*, the overwhelming majority of the inhabitants are aware of the value of the investments made and use them sustainably. On Maio, where the project implementation progressed slowly, the subsequent afforestations of the executing agency were reportedly very successful. This was certainly helped by the initial, immediately tangible economic benefits generated through the “cash-for-work” approach. There were no discernible indications of land use changes that could jeopardise project achievements. Goat keeping is being progressively intensified, e.g. through stabling and the introduction of superior breeds. Technical maintenance measures are hardly needed on the structures. The pronounced capacity constraints of the executing agency could only have an adverse effect, in the case of severe infrastructure damages exceeding the communities' maintenance capacities, e.g. after very heavy rain, for example. Despite these limitations, we assess the sustainability of the programme as good (Subrating 2).

Summary overall assessment: Weighing up the evaluation criteria above, we assess the developmental performance of the project as good overall (Rating 2).

General conclusions

- Capacity constraints on the executing agency's side, as in the present project, need not substantially impair the results of interventions with a close target-group alignment, provided (a) they generate adequate commitment and response by the target groups themselves and (b) that the executing agency's role is primarily limited to implementation (i.e. not actual operation), where deficits can – If necessary – be offset with specific consultancy inputs.
- The project under review was implemented in two geographically disjunct project areas. Due to the unreliable transport links and the disparate nature of the two islands, this combination would not appear to be very expedient, particularly in the case of low volumes of funding support. Such diverse regions with mutual accessibility problems should therefore not be amalgamated in one project. Instead, it would have made more sense to concentrate on one island with development prospects, as was also done in the subsequent project on Fogo.

Notes on the methods used to evaluate project success (project rating)

Projects are evaluated on a six-point scale, the criteria being relevance, effectiveness (outcome), “overarching developmental impact” and efficiency. The ratings are also used to arrive at a final assessment of a project’s overall developmental efficacy. The scale is as follows:

- 1 Very good rating that clearly exceeds expectations
- 2 Good rating fully in line with expectations and without any significant shortcomings
- 3 Satisfactory rating – project falls short of expectations but the positive results dominate
- 4 Unsatisfactory rating – significantly below expectations, with negative results dominating despite discernible positive results
- 5 Clearly inadequate rating – despite some positive partial results the negative results clearly dominate
- 6 The project has no positive results or the situation has actually deteriorated

A rating of 1 to 3 is a positive assessment and indicates a successful project while a rating of 4 to 6 is a negative assessment and indicates a project which has no sufficiently positive results.

Sustainability is evaluated according to the following four-point scale:

Sustainability level 1 (very good sustainability)

The developmental efficacy of the project (positive to date) is very likely to continue undiminished or even increase.

Sustainability level 2 (good sustainability)

The developmental efficacy of the project (positive to date) is very likely to decline only minimally but remain positive overall. (This is what can normally be expected.)

Sustainability level 3 (satisfactory sustainability)

The developmental efficacy of the project (positive to date) is very likely to decline significantly but remain positive overall. This rating is also assigned if the sustainability of a project is considered inadequate up to the time of the ex post evaluation but is very likely to evolve positively so that the project will ultimately achieve positive developmental efficacy.

Sustainability level 4 (inadequate sustainability)

The developmental efficacy of the project is inadequate up to the time of the ex post evaluation and is very unlikely to improve. This rating is also assigned if the sustainability that has been positively evaluated to date is very likely to deteriorate severely and no longer meet the level 3 criteria.

The overall rating on the six-point scale is compiled from a weighting of all five individual criteria as appropriate to the project in question. A rating of 1 to 3 indicates a “successful” project while a rating of 4 to 6 indicates an “unsuccessful” project. In using (with a project-specific weighting) the five key factors to form an overall rating, it should be noted that a project can generally only be considered developmentally “successful” if the achievement of the project objective (“effectiveness”), the impact on the overall objective (“overarching developmental impact”) and the sustainability are considered at least “satisfactory” (rating 3).