

Mali: Emergency Programme for Northern Mali I-III

Ex post evaluation

OECD sector	72010 – Emergency aid	
BMZ project ID	1993 66 089 – Northern Mali I (NM I) 1996 65 175 – Northern Mali II (NM II) 1997 65 801 – Northern Mali III (NM III)	
Programme-Executing Agency	Republic of Mali	
Consultant	Hydroplan, Herdecke Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammen Arbeit (GTZ)	
Year of ex-post evaluation	2006	
	Project appraisal (planned)	Ex post evaluation (actual)
Start of implementation	NM I 2nd quarter 1994 NM II 2nd quarter 1996 NM III 1st quarter 1998	NM I 4th quarter 1995 NM II 3rd quarter 1996 NM III 3rd quarter 1998
Period of implementation	NM I 36 months NM II 24 months NM III 16 months	NM I 54 months NM II 63 months NM III 45 months
Investment costs	EUR 22.8 million	EUR 22.8 million
Counterpart contribution	-	-
Financing, of which Financial Cooperation (FC) funds	EUR 7.7 million	EUR 7.7 million
Other institutions/donors involved	GTZ	GTZ
Performance rating	3	
• Significance / relevance	2	
• Effectiveness	3	
• Efficiency	4	

Brief description, overall objectives and project objectives with indicators

The objective of the open multi-sectoral programme was to make a contribution to restoring the social and physical infrastructure in urban (Programme Northern Mali I) and rural (Programme Northern Mali II-III) areas situated in the regions most heavily affected by the rebellion of Tuareg nomads in northern Mali in the period 1990 to 1994. The programme comprises in particular measures to build primary schools, administrative buildings and health stations. The first programme phase was implemented with AGETIPE, the social investment fund, as operative project-executing agency. The following two phases were implemented in cooperation with the Technical Cooperation (TC) project entitled "Programme North Mali", which comprised reintegration measures for returning refugees, measures to support the decentralisation process and rural water supply as well as further training measures directed at peasants' organisations; all these measures were conducted in parallel. The main focus of the measures was stabilising and securing peace (overall objective). This goal was considered to have been achieved if the

population concerned appreciates the support as positive and sees perspectives for further development. The programme objective was to make a contribution to a better supply with social and physical infrastructure in the programme area. The indicator defined for measuring the achievement of the goals was the proper use of the social and physical infrastructure at the time of the final evaluation.

Programme design / major deviations from the original programme planning and their main causes

Construction measures were implemented and consulting services rendered. As had been planned at project appraisal the construction measures covered the reconstruction of the social and economic infrastructure in the 6th region, in which the majority of the population of the northern region is concentrated. Upon request of the government the regional capitals of the 7th and 8th regions were selectively included in programme phase I and the adjoining Mopti and Ségou regions were in individual cases included in phase II and III. Altogether 71 buildings were newly built or rehabilitated (of which 24 in phase I, 47 in phases II and III). The main focus of the investment measures was on schools (27 plus one nursery school), court houses and administrative buildings (19 town halls, 3 court houses, several district administrations, one fiscal authority), health centres (5) and a few markets, police stations and rural guest houses. In most instances the buildings and facilities were equipped with furniture in order to ensure that they could go into operation swiftly. From today's perspective it would have been desirable to provide the health posts with initial medical supplies. In general, the buildings erected are solid. However, most of the buildings show signs of dilapidation and aging, which are due to insufficient maintenance and sometimes also neglect (waste, toilets). Clay buildings require regular care and maintenance and in many places the sandy ground makes the buildings susceptible to erosion. Beginning or advanced damage from erosion can be found in buildings constructed in all programme phases and, what is worse, there is usually little understanding, neither on the part of users nor of superior administrations, of the necessity to conduct preventive measures.

As regards the consulting services AGETIPE was assigned in the first phase to monitor the implementation of investment measures in the district capitals. It was supported by the German consulting firm Hydroplan in working out the implementation concept. During the implementation phase AGETIPE cooperated closely with local consultants. In phases II and III the GTZ was active on behalf of Financial Cooperation (FC) as consultant and awarding authority.

Due to the assignment of local contractors and the use of local building materials the project had a temporary impact on the local economy. However, it was only partially possible to produce a long-term effect on the local economic cycle. Considerable employment effects were achieved in all phases of the project. Long-term jobs were created for teachers in the schools, for nursing staff in the health centres and for auxiliary staff in the rural guest houses.

As far as possible the measures to be implemented were determined in a participatory and decentralized manner. Nevertheless the extent of public participation was limited and the discussion on the project concept was mainly oriented towards political requirements. The projects were implemented in accordance with the ideas and wishes of the target group (refugees, the population that had remained, local leaders and public servants from the old district administrations). This greatly helped to support the credibility of German development cooperation (DC).

Except for one facility, all facilities established were being utilised at the time of the final evaluation. However, depending on the project type and the location, the utilisation of the buildings is more or less intensive and the quality of the services rendered is subject to different restrictions. Due to these restrictions in the use of facilities and lack of information it is not possible to precisely quantify the number of beneficiaries (in relation to the total number of persons covered by the construction measures).

Key results of the impact analysis and performance rating

The target group of the project was the population immediately affected by the rebellion and its aftermaths, which means both refugees and people from different ethnic groups who had stayed on in the area. The interventions concentrated on an area in the 6th region west of Timbuktu,

which has a size of around 36.000 km² and was particularly affected by the conflict. At the time around half a million people were living in the area; at times up to 20 % of them were refugees.

Measured by the low-level indicators usually defined for emergency programmes, the objectives of the project were achieved. Today, the northern region of Mali is politically pacified, the refugees have returned and the different ethnic groups are living peacefully side by side. The interview partners attribute the conflict to the feeling of neglect, discrimination and political domination of the north by the south, which has been very skilfully instrumentalised by some groups prepared to use violence. Due to the expansion of the infrastructure – irrespective of the quality of the services rendered – people in the region have the impression that the government and the community of donors are taking care of the north. The establishment of a large number of small municipalities – even though inefficient at times – is regarded as a possibility to introduce self-administration. The existence of outposts in the form of district administrations or constabularies is seen as a symbolic presence of the state and increase people's feeling of security. Thus, in the opinion of the target groups the FC project made a major contribution to promoting peace and to stabilising the region, though such impacts cannot be quantified.

Other major aspects with regard to the goal of restoring peace were: (i) the better infrastructure equipment of the northern region and the improved transport connections with other parts of the country, (ii) the fast integration of rebels into the security forces, (iii) the considerable changes in production methods in the Sahel, especially the reduction in livestock (which means a reduction of the potential for conflict with crop farmers) and (iv) the mostly consistent implementation of the process of democratisation and decentralisation including more self-administration.

Overall, we assess the developmental effectiveness of the project as follows:

Effectiveness

Overall, the programme objective – improvement in the supply of vulnerable population groups with social and physical infrastructure in the programme area – was sufficiently achieved (though given the character of an emergency programme the envisaged objectives were not very ambitious). A total of 71 infrastructure investment projects were implemented under phases I - III. The on-site inspection of 17 of the total of 71 facilities promoted (24%) showed that almost all facilities newly constructed or rehabilitated (administrative buildings, schools, health stations, markets) are used more or less intensively and are in good to medium condition (measured by local standards). However, depending on the project type and the location, the utilisation of the buildings is more or less intensive and the quality of the services rendered is subject to different restrictions. Court houses and administrative buildings are usually used only in the mornings. In comparison with the number of administrative deeds the buildings are too large. As regards the schools, there are not sufficient teachers and teaching materials. The health facilities do not have enough staff and drugs/medical consumables. In addition, hygiene standards are not optimal. Due to these restrictions in the use of facilities and lacking information it is not possible to precisely quantify the number of beneficiaries (in relation to the total number of persons covered by the construction measures). The regular maintenance of the buildings is not ensured in the long run. Though, in theory, responsibilities are clear, they are in practice distributed between different protagonists and, thus, are diffuse. The central administration does assume its responsibility, but it does not always do so in a satisfactory manner. According to information provided under the programme the beneficiaries of the projects, which directly focused the target groups, were given intensive instructions on the care and maintenance of the facilities built. However, at project evaluation it was difficult to find evidence of these efforts. Parents' representations have been set up at the schools but they have not been involved in the maintenance of the buildings. Health committees are planned to take care of the sale of drugs and shall be entrusted with social tasks. However, their profile is still unclear. It is planned, in line with the concept of delegating responsibilities to the municipalities, that the health committees shall take care of the maintenance of schools, health centres and markets. The municipal administrations are well familiar with the operation of the existing infrastructure, but they feel unable to cope with the responsibility for the facilities because up to now only insufficient funds have been made available for the totality of infrastructure facilities. Overall, given the acceptable degree of achievement of the project objective and despite the substantial reservations that exist, we rate the effectiveness of the project as sufficient (**sub-rating: 3**).

Significance / Relevance

The degree of achievement of the overall objective of making a contribution to the social and economic stabilisation of the northern region on the basis of the "Pacte National" was good to satisfactory. The measures were successful in the sense that the population is actually making use of the social and economic infrastructure facilities. Today, the northern region of Mali is politically pacified, the refugees have returned and the different ethnic groups are living peacefully side by side. The totality of measures implemented under the programme (including the measures financed by other donors and the GTZ) are highly appreciated by the Mali partners, the local district governments and the target groups. Almost all persons interviewed held the view that the living conditions in Mali have been improving since the mid-1990s. However, it has to be mentioned that there are other factors besides the FC/TC programme that influence the process of pacification and development. The programme phases subject to final evaluation here made a substantial contribution to pacifying the region and, thus, have prepared the ground for the following programme phases, in particular at the economically dynamic locations. Two unfavourable aspects have to be mentioned, namely that the utilisation of capacities is by far not as good as it might be and that the development perspectives within the region are very heterogeneous. Whereas some smaller towns and the areas near rivers have developed further the areas on the desert fringes show no signs of sustainable development. On the whole the measures – seen in the context of the totality of measures implemented by the community of donors in the programme region - were relevant from the perspective of development policy and justified at the time in the context of an emergency programme. All facilities are open to the entire population. However, the accessibility and degree of utilisation is strongly influenced by the low population density and the large distances to be covered outside the few cities. Overall, we classify the project's developmental relevance and significance as satisfactory (**sub-rating 2**).

Efficiency

We rate the production efficiency as slightly insufficient. Given the implementation conception chosen and the logistic difficulties prevailing in the programme area, we rate the implementation of the construction measures as adequate (labour-intensive, use of local materials etc.). However, the construction costs, especially transport costs, were far too high in some projects and many facilities were simply designed too large. This is due to the fact that status requirements have to be taken into account when buildings are designed. Another factor is the low population density due to which the buildings are only partially used. Moreover, due to the type of construction chosen the consulting costs incurred in phases II and III were relatively high in comparison with the total volume of funds provided. We rate the allocation efficiency as slightly insufficient. The individual projects were chosen in a largely participatory manner after the delimitation of the programme area and on the basis of the wishes of the target group. However, among the locations that were developed there were also sites that were clearly not suited as permanent settlements (this contrasts with the objective of pacifying the region). Given the follow-up costs and climate change (ecological sustainability) the vision to open up and develop the entire programme area by establishing multi-sectoral bases was, from today's perspective, unrealistic for the north of Mali. Though the projects did not have any impact on the persistently unfavourable climatic development and the chronic food deficit in the programme area, the question still has to be raised whether the expansion of sites on the desert fringes was possibly justified from an economic perspective. Even though people try time and again to settle in these areas the spread of the desert in the Sahel is a phenomenon that has been observed since the early 1980s. Since the first Sahel droughts occurred nomadic husbandry has been declining and never again reached its former extent. The discussion about alternative territorial planning models and service concepts was neglected by the programmes. Overall, we rate the efficiency of the project as not sufficient (**sub-rating: 4**).

In consideration of the sub-criteria mentioned above and taking into account the emergency character of phases I - III, we rate the developmental effectiveness of the project as sufficient overall (**overall rating: 3**).

General conclusions and recommendations

The participation and identification of the users with the facilities of social and economic are a necessary but not a sufficient condition for the sustainable operation. Further prerequisites include the accurate definition of the responsibilities for different tasks and ensuring the availability of funding for maintenance and operation of the social and economic infrastructure facilities created. Although user committees and parents' associations are capable of making own contributions on a smaller scale (e.g. organising cleaning services or planting of greenery) the municipalities and sector ministries must be involved in major repairs. Moreover, works that are indispensable for the stability of buildings (erosion protection) should not be left to the spontaneous own initiative of the parties involved.

Even if a project is implemented over several years and has an extensive, integrated and target-group oriented approach it is usually not possible to halt the migration away from areas that do not hold any economic potential. The type and scope of support provided in marginal areas should be reflected against this background.

Legend

Developmentally successful: Ratings 1 to 3	
Rating 1	Very high or high degree of developmental effectiveness
Rating 2	Satisfactory developmental effectiveness
Rating 3	Overall sufficient degree of developmental effectiveness
Developmental failures: Ratings 4 to 6	
Rating 4	Overall slightly insufficient degree of developmental effectiveness
Rating 5	Clearly insufficient degree of developmental effectiveness
Rating 6	The project is a total failure

Criteria for the Evaluation of Project Success

The evaluation of the "developmental effectiveness" of a project and its classification during the ex-post evaluation into one of the various levels of success described in more detail below concentrate on the following fundamental questions:

- Are the **project objectives** reached to a sufficient degree (aspect of project **effectiveness**)?
- Does the project generate sufficient **significant developmental effects** (project **relevance** and **significance** measured by the achievement of the overall development-policy objective defined beforehand and its effects in political, institutional, socio-economic and socio-cultural as well as ecological terms)?
- Are the **funds/expenses** that were and are being employed/incurred to reach the objectives **appropriate** and how can the project's microeconomic and macroeconomic impact be measured (aspect of **efficiency** of the project conception)?
- To the extent that undesired (**side**) **effects** occur, are these tolerable?

We do not treat **sustainability**, a key aspect to consider for project evaluation, as a separate category of evaluation but instead as a cross-cutting element of all four fundamental questions on project success. A project is sustainable if the project-executing agency and/or the target group are able to continue to use the project facilities that have been built for a period of time that is, overall, adequate in economic terms, or to carry on with the project activities on their own and generate positive results after the financial, organisational and/or technical support has come to an end.